

Village of Owego Board of Trustees Meeting
Minutes of December 21, 2009

The regular Village of Owego Board of Trustees Meeting was held on Monday, December 21, 2009 at the DPW Annex, 20 Elm Street, Owego, NY beginning at 7:00 p.m., with the following people in attendance:

Mayor:	Edward Arrington
Trustees:	Adam Jung Connie Sternberg Melody Patterson Grace Thomas
Deputy C/T:	Lynne Mieczkowski
DPW Supt:	Jeff Soules
WWPT Supt:	Ron Horton
Police Chief:	Rick McCulskey
Village Attorney:	Irene Graven
Absent:	Trustee Erik Young Trustee Jane Woody

Insert "A" Visitor's List

The meeting was opened at 7:00 p.m. with the Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Leonard Hilldale, President of Hilldale Recycling is interested in having the former Owego-Apalachin School site's zoning to be changed from residential to commercial so that the following could happen:

1. Operate a furniture bank/recycling operation and bed give-away programs
2. Rent spaces to non-profit and commercial enterprises to support and maintain facility
3. Lease out athletic fields for \$1.00 to community based athletic programs
4. Possibly re-open auditorium for the arts
5. Possibly open a clothing bank for the community

Insert A – Beds for Kids Flyer.

Mayor Arrington stated that he will request the Planning Board review the change in zoning request.

Mike Santore Village resident and member of the Neighborhood Improvement Committee reviewed the purpose of the committee. The mission statement of the Neighborhood Improvement Committee is to develop and recommend a plan that gives the Village of Owego an effective means of dealing with neighborhood blight, vacant buildings, and the ability to protect and safeguard the rights, health, safety

and welfare of land lords, tenants and the community as a whole. The first recommendation of the Neighborhood Committee would be to require Certificates of Occupancy and inspections for every rental unit in the Village. Many municipalities at this time are doing this – the committee has contacted other area municipalities for their process. The committee is considering a no charge “fee” for the Certificates, but the committee will recommend enforcing a penalty of some nature for non-compliance. Mr. Santore stated to the Village Board that the Village has some very good landlords and apartments located in the Village. The committee will also be recommending minimum conditions that the apartments will have to meet. These requirements are similar to those required by HUD. Other requirements of the committee were presented.

Motion by Trustee Sternberg seconded by Trustee Patterson to direct the Village Attorney to draft a Local Law authorizing inspection of rental properties upon receipt of the final recommendation of the Neighborhood Improvement Committee.

Unanimously Approved

The scheduled Public Hearing to amend Chapter 172 of the Village of Owego Code as it relates to the removal of snow and ice from Village Sidewalks was opened.

Motion by Trustee Sternberg seconded by Trustee Patterson to close Public Hearing at 7:40.

Unanimously Approved

Motion by Trustee Sternberg seconded by Trustee Patterson approving the proposed Local Law #5 of 2009 as submitted.

Unanimously Approved

Clerk Treasurer

Motion by Trustee Thomas seconded by Trustee Sternberg to schedule a public hearing on 1-19-2010 for the resubmission of the 2009 Community Development Block Grant.

Unanimously Approved

Motion by Trustee Patterson seconded by Trustee Sternberg to schedule a 2nd public hearing for the 2010 CDBG Submission on April 5, 2010.

Unanimously Approved

Motion by Trustee Sternberg seconded by Trustee Jung to approve the following transfers:

From A3090	-	\$320,408.56	State Grant
To A6989.40.405	-	\$320,408.56	Riverwalk
From A1325.40.270	-	\$ 1,000.00	Insurance
To A3620.40.094	-	\$ 1,000.00	Demo

From	A9010.80.080	-	\$ 1,000.00	Retirement
To	A3620.40.094	-	\$ 1,000.00	Demo

Unanimously Approved

- Correspondence received from Beer Belly's, Original Italian, Owego EZ Mart regarding beer and liquor license renewals

Motion by Trustee Patterson seconded by Trustee Thomas approving minutes from 11/2/09 thru 11/16/09.

Unanimously Approved

- Submission of November Treasurer's Report for board review (report tabled)

Trustee Jung

- Meeting to be scheduled for Violence in the Workplace Comments

Trustee Patterson

- Food bank
- Parking on East Avenue

Motion by Trustee Patterson seconded by Trustee Thomas authorizing the Village Attorney to draft a Local Law to enact "no parking" on the south side of East Avenue.

Unanimously Approved

Trustee Sternberg

- No Flood Mitigation Report
- Physicals (for firemen)

Trustee Thomas

- Reported on TING Meeting

Trustee Woody

Absent

Fire Department

Chief Bidwell reported on requests made by Trustee Woody. She has asked for a list of active/inactive life members, etc. Chief Bidwell stated he has done that – then showed them to members of Fire Department and was chastised that he would bring it to the Village Board before sending it back thru the

companies and to the Fire Board. Final lists are being actively worked on – per Fire Chief. Assistant Chief Gavin is working on the equipment list. Equipment will be retrieved from non-active members.

Chief Bidwell stated that his intention was to take copies of a report of what he was going to distribute tonight to give to trustees, give one to each fire company for the 30th of December. So the companies could review and instruct the people to bring it back to Fire Board the following month (January 6th) and hopefully to get this done by the next scheduled all Village board Meeting.

Mayor Arrington asked the Chief – the individuals that were removed by action of the fire department – the request came from the fire department – the village board accepted the request and those people are gone. Are those people still on the fire department rolls or have they been removed? Chief Bidwell stated he believes they are still on at this point in time as far as being a member of the fire department.

Mayor Arrington stated the chief may want to make them an associate member – those individuals are not covered by the village insurance at this point in time; because the Village board action did remove them – they should not be in the fire department and they are not allowed to drive village fire equipment. The chief understands that. Mayor Arrington stated the individuals are at risk. The chief stated again he understands this but also states that the fire department building is a public building; if anyone came into the building off the street, fell and got hurt the village would still be liable. There should be no loitering in the building – but the village residents can walk into the building.

Mayor Arrington asked if Chief Bidwell has asked the fire companies to remove all alcohol from the buildings. Chief Bidwell responded that he had done that already. Mayor Arrington asked the Chief to verify the removal with his other Chiefs – having alcohol on the premises is a liability to the village.

Mayor Arrington inquired about an appointment of an assistant fire chief. Chief Bidwell stated he had. He continued by saying he had requested the fire board replace Mr. Christopher Ward with Mr. Michael Bidwell as assistant for 874. Chief Bidwell asked that it be approved by the village board tonight.

Mr. Michael Bidwell's qualifications – he has been a past chief in the Owego Fire Department; he has the time now to dedicate to the fire department. He will hold the position until the elections in May of 2010 – at that time he will determine if he wants to continue.

Motion by Trustee Patterson seconded by Trustee Thomas to approve the name of Michael Bidwell for Deputy Chief of 874, Owego Fire Department.

Trustee Sternberg asked how it came about for Michael Bidwell to be elected. Chief Bidwell approached Michael and Michael said if the approvals were forthcoming he would accept the position. One other fireman volunteered for the job – Ed Franz.

Trustee Patterson stated she has seen Michael's performance; he is a go getter, very good at command, and a good fire fighter.

Chief Bidwell stated this chief candidate was under discussion by the other chiefs. The recommendation was to go with Michael Bidwell – this was also approved by the fire board. Trustee Sternberg abstained. Trustees Jung, Thomas, Patterson, and Mayor Arrington voted aye.

Motion Carried.

Trustee Sternberg stated she was not clear as far as the people that the board terminated and the people who did not complete the Workplace Violence training. The Village Board terminated them so are they off the fire department rolls? Chief Bidwell stated yes they are off the rolls but a new list has not been made up. The people are still showing up as there, but they are not there. The chief has not made up a new list – the terminated people still show on the list but they are not in the department.

Trustee Sternberg asked if John Doe has been terminated and he is still on the fire roster and he jumps on a fire truck – the chief stated he can almost guarantee this would not happen.

Mayor Arrington stated the individuals that were terminated were not active fireman and Chief Bidwell stated the guys that were mad are not even coming around.

Trustee Sternberg said let's take another person that we know is still in the area- we had a Chief that was terminated is this person still on the rolls? Chief Bidwell said he is on paper only, at the present time. Chris Ward has not been around since he was terminated.

A lot of the terminated guys do not and have not answered fire calls. The only reason they want to be a member is so they can go to the banquets or help on some other fire department project. Now with no alcohol in the buildings, we will hold the banquets at some other establishments.

Chief Bidwell said he did not want to make up a hundred thirty lists – I want to do one list. We still have some undecided people – I want to do everything at one time.

Attorney Graven said as far as liability goes if the record is clear tonight (12/21/09) that the Fire Chief is working on the list to eliminate those who need to be off the list but there are still some issues that have to be decided – that will go a long way with questions regarding liability.

Fire Chief Bidwell is currently working the lists of fire fighters.

Mayor Arrington would like to get this issue behind us – there are individuals who are interested in joining the fire department and until membership/terminated/resigned information is complete no new members can be considered.

Chief Bidwell again confirmed that 200 fire fighting members is enough. This 200 number will not warrant a charter change.

Trustee Sternberg spoke to confidentiality of information of the fire department also a question on fire equipment; how many pagers do we have out – also burnout gear/coat/helmet/boots – approximate cost of \$1,400.

It is the chief's responsibility to know who has equipment and who does not. He is working this issue.

Trustee Sternberg would like a monthly report on vehicles.

Mayor Arrington stated the chief is responsible for maintaining the fire department equipment – knowing the condition of all equipment in the fire department. The chief does report to the village board any problems with equipment. All large equipment (trucks, etc.) goes thru yearly inspections.

Chief Bidwell feels that 45/50% of physicals have been completed.

Trustee Sternberg asked if the village fire department has to show that we are in compliance with training equipment, etc., can we prove it.

Chief Bidwell answered yes; we can prove we are in compliance.

Trustee Sternberg asked one more question of Chief Bidwell “When do you see your list of who is really on the roster and who is not being completed”. His answer to Trustee Sternberg was early February.

- NIOSH Report
- Rabies Clinic – 5/10/2010
- No alcohol in fire buildings (checking company rooms)

OPD

- Down one crossing guard (Village Clerk to advertise)

Village Attorney

- Time Warner Meeting
- Cemetery Grant Status
- Road Use Agreements

Mayor

- Attended BMTS Meeting
- Stimulus Funds - funding not available for Village Streets – funding going to state roads and bridges
- \$500K for Riverwalk approved

Motion by Trustee Patterson seconded by Trustee Jung to adjourn at 9:15 pm.