

Village of Owego Board of Trustees Meeting
Minutes of January 19, 2010

The regular Village of Owego Board of Trustees Meeting and the special scheduled public hearing were held on Tuesday, January 19, 2010 (due to Monday being a holiday). The meeting was held 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: Connie Sternberg
Melody Patterson
Grace Thomas
Adam Jung

Deputy C/T: Lynne Mieczkowski
DPW Supt: Jeff Soules
WWTP Supt: Ron Horton
Police Chief: Rick McCulskey
Fire Chief: Ed Bidwell
Village Attorney: Irene Graven

Absent: Trustee Erik Young
Trustee Jane Woody

Insert "A" Visitor's List

The meeting was opened with the Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Arrington spoke to the instances which occurred at the 12/19/2009 meeting. He stated he felt the discussion got out of hand and he apologized to the members of the board for letting that happen.

The Public Hearing on the 2010 CDBG application was opened at 7:10 p.m. Mr. Bernie Thoma from Thoma Consultants addressed the board. The Village of Owego is going to re-submit its CDBG Application that was applied for last year. It was not approved in 2009. One of the requirements is to hold 2 Public Hearings for submission.

There were no questions from the audience. Trustee Sternberg asked who the grant is targeted for? Who would benefit by it and how much? The Village could apply for up to \$400,000 – and the funds will be targeted to rehabilitating income property in the central area of the Village.

Motion by Trustee Patterson seconded by Trustee Sternberg to close the Public Hearing.

Unanimously Approved

Privilege of the floor was offered to those in attendance.

Ken Smith, Village resident from 247 Main Street inquired as to purchases that the Village are committed for. Mr. Smith assumes there would be bonding involved. How much and what is annual interest rate? The Clerk spoke to what the Fire Department is paying for; however no bonding is involved. The only bond which the Village is committed for, is a 5 year bond for street repair from previous mayor for \$300,000.00.

William Russell, Superintendent of Owego Apalachin School District, addressed the board requesting support for the rezoning issue of the OAMS property on Elm Street.

Ann Lockwood, George Street resident, inquired about the Village retirement bill that is paid in December of each year – projections are at approximately \$50,000 more for 2010-2011.

Lee Dunham spoke regarding the Riverwalk and lights that are out (large square ones).

Herb McDowell asked what the budget has set aside to maintain the Riverwalk.

Ken Smith inquired about stimulus dollars for roads. Mayor Arrington stated those road stimulus funds do not apply to Villages.

Clerk Treasurer

- Correspondence from the “Pumpelly House Estate” and “Owego Central Market Place” stating intentions to renew their beer and wine renewal

Motion by Trustee Patterson seconded by Trustee Jung approving the parade permit and other activities submitted for National Police Week, scheduled for May 3, 2010.

Unanimously Approved

Motion by Trustee Sternberg seconded by Trustee Thomas approving the expenditure of \$1,500.00 to assist the Boys & Girls Club in purchasing equipment for its Technology Center. Funds to be expended from 7145.40.400 (clerk’s budget).

Unanimously Approved

Motion by Trustee Jung seconded by Trustee Patterson approving resolution for annual compensation of the Clerk Treasurer. Trustees Patterson, Thomas, Jung and Mayor Arrington voting aye. Trustee Sternberg voting nay.

Motion Carried

Trustee Sternberg commented that with the increase in retirement, the salary should be considered at a lower amount.

- Correspondence from Fire Department from Mr. Dennis Reynolds. Meeting to be held (regarding the railroad tracks issue by Boys & Girls Club)

Motion by Trustee Sternberg seconded by Trustee Thomas to accept the December Treasurer's Report.

Unanimously Approved

Trustee Jung

- Meeting is scheduled for week of 1/19/2010 to discuss changes to the Violence in the Work Place Policy

Trustee Patterson

- Cemetery Grant being reviewed in Albany
- Food Bank at Station 2 on 1/20/2010

Trustee Sternberg

- Flood Mitigation Meeting – 1/25/10
- Neighborhood Improvement Committee Meeting 1/21/10
- Status of inspection of Village Buildings
- Code Officer/Notification of fire calls
- Reviewing utility costs
- Fire Reserve Funds
- Vehicle Replacement Schedule

Assistant Fire Chief Dan Gavin responded to a concern/question brought up by Trustee Sternberg regarding a 5 year vehicle/equipment plan which the Fire Department should have.

Assistant Chief Gavin stated that the Village Fire Department has always had an equipment replacement plan - every chief has: we got out of step when we got rid of our American Eagle tanker and we have got to revise it as we have just purchased a new tanker. The plan was all revised with the previous administration so obviously now we have a new truck. We will have to revise the plan - and the previous plan was not followed by the previous administration. That is why we are in the predicament we are in with the ambulances. They were set up for a 3 year replacement and that was not done.

Assistant Chief Gavin and Chief Bidwell have to re-do the entire truck replacement plan including fire apparatus and EMS apparatus. We are fixing problems caused by the previous administration and that is with a lot of things. We cannot do our own agenda because we are still fixing problems; and yes the listing is something we are working on.

Chief Bidwell stated by the time it gets to Assistant Chief Gavin the Chief will have enough money to buy something if he needs it. Right now we are on a thin budget if anything breaks down. We are pretty

much out of luck if we loose a truck. We do not have the funds to get another one. That is not my fault and it will not be Assistant Chief Gavin's fault either – we are that far in the hole.

Trustee Sternberg stated she thinks that what is still not known is how to address the need for another ambulance in the not to distant future.

Mayor Arrington said the board should give the chiefs the opportunity to complete their plan and let's see where we are – one thing I don't want to see is us having everything purchased at the same time and having everything fail at the same time. That then puts us in a cycle we can never get out of. Mayor Arrington stated he is confident in the Chief's ability to put a plan together. He has faith in them to succeed.

Trustee Thomas

- TING Steering Committee Meeting update (working on water road use(traffic patterns, weight limits), survey quality agreements
- Appointment scheduled with Allen Watkins (United Water) and Justine Lewis from Department of Health to discuss quality of water and wellheads
- Status of Preserve America Grant

Motion by Trustee Thomas seconded by Trustee Patterson approving the use of the remaining funds in the Preserve America Grant to finance the Youth Educational Training and printing of pamphlets.

Unanimously Approved

Trustee Woody

Absent

Mayor

Motion by Trustee Sternberg seconded by Trustee Thomas requesting the Planning Board to review the zoning request for the Elm Street/OAMS issue from industrial to business.

Unanimously Approved

Motion by Trustee Sternberg seconded by Trustee Patterson to request the Planning Board to review zoning issues throughout the Village.

Unanimously Approved

Motion by Trustee Patterson seconded by Trustee Thomas to erect a monument in Draper Park in memory of Village employees who have passed away in the line of duty – expense not to exceed \$2,000.00. Trustees Patterson, Thomas, and Mayor Arrington voting aye. Trustee Sternberg voting nay.

Unanimously Approved

Fire Department Report

Chief Bidwell and Assistant Chief Gavin will meet with Clerk Treasurer as “the Fire Department leaders” and design an action plan to take care of this replacement issue – it is our responsibility as Fire Chiefs to carry that out. So we will be down to the Clerk’s office and we will work the numbers, this is not something she should be doing on her own.

The clerk stated she would not do it on her own – the chiefs have always had that responsibility.

Assistant Chief Gavin further commented that he wanted the board to understand that a lot of things have not been done in the previous administrations, not just the one we took over, but previous ones as well as in NEPA Mandates, OSHA and everything else – I have been working the numbers with Chief Bidwell, on my own, with the Mayor and with Trustee Woody – she has been updated as much as the Mayor as to getting us to full staff. The money is not there. I have even prepared all the numbers for Trustee Woody on maintenance on our Scott Air Bags – they have not been maintained since we bought them. If they are put on people’s backs and sent into a burning building don’t you think they should be checked once a year? The Chief and I believe it should be done, at \$29.00 per pack. At some point we will come to the board and tell you we have exhausted our budget just trying to get us up to status quo – one Scott Bottle that a fireman wears on his back is \$900.00.

We have gone ahead, talking to the Mayor and Trustee Woody, Assistant Chief Gavin has done a gear inspection of most of the guys being sent into burning buildings and one sent to ”interior fire fighters” and one to a fire fighter one class. You get thrown out of the class if you are not in appropriate gear, if it’s torn or it’s discolored anything that violates FPA mandates. You cannot attend the class. I had one individual - her gear was at the 10 year mark, it must be thrown away at that point in time – I have bought her new gear. In all, I bought 5 sets of gear for approximately \$10,000 which has put a huge impact on our equipment budget. This was gear that had to be purchased (i.e., ripped, torn, or unsafe to wear into a burning structure). We did not want to spend that much on gear. We originally began speaking about 3 sets just to get the ball rolling. I changed to “Globe” – I believe the gear from Globe is a better product so hopefully we will not have so many problems. We are ripping out knee pads in the old pants and what not; we should be status quo this year on gear.

A few more things that Chief Bidwell was brought up on as not doing at the last meeting: Turn-out gear from 5 people on the terminated list has been collected. These are people that I went to their homes to retrieve this gear – and in that I have collected 3 pagers.

Replacement gear costs as what was just ordered is worth approximately \$1,760.00 per set. Some of the returned gear cannot be worn. It will be thrown away (will be taken to Taylors) some is useable gear – one set of gear returned is brand new – has never been worn.

Cost of pagers now \$425.00 – this is all work in progress that we are taking care of. We have just taken a big hit to our equipment.

Chief Bidwell and Assistant Chief Gavin have worked together on the NIOSH report 2003, NIOSH, due to the in line of duty death, and gave suggestions as what we could do to prevent another incident. They are just suggestions. Fire chiefs went one step further and took those six suggestions and made action plans for them. Everything that we pretty much had action plans for are all in our SOP's and By-Laws – you just did not know about that. I also gave the Mayor a hand written explanation for everything being done to get us status quo on that.

The NIOSH report which Trustee Woody went to the Mayor on and the Mayor to the Fire Chiefs has all been addressed.

We are continuing to go forward to collect gear but to be honest – unless there is a documented record I cannot get anything back – we are working on it.

In February we are going to start our OSHA Training.

The Mayor thanked Chief Bidwell and Assistant Chief Gavin for providing this information.

Status of physicals – 55/60% of physicals reported as being done.

Met with Dr. Nichols regarding specifics for physicals.

Chief Bidwell stated he will be meeting with Cindy at the Clerk's Office to review the member listing before it is released (i.e., active, terminated, inactive, etc.)

At the next Village Board Meeting 2/1/2010 – chief Bidwell will report on the number of members and what companies could obtain new members.

Three out of the five companies have reported back to the Chief as to how they would like to see the categories assigned.

Chief Bidwell will inform the companies how he would like to see the categories done – he will work with companies for a final determination.

Mayor Arrington asked for a moment of silence for a life long fire and EMT leader Leroy Kemp.

Village Attorney

- Local Law regarding restricted parking on East Avenue

The Mayor has requested Chief Bidwell, Chief McCulskey and Supt. Soules to look into the security at Central Fire Station.

Privilege of the Floor was again offered to those in attendance.

Jamie Striley, 72 West Avenue, thanked Fire Chief Bidwell and Assistant Fire Chief Gavin for the very explicit Fire Report.

Lee Dunham, 330 Main Street, thanked the Fire Chiefs for the excellent report. Mr. Dunham is supportive of a monument for Village employees.

Herb McDowell thanked the police officers for taking care of an incident at his home.

Motion by Trustee Sternberg seconded by Trustee Patterson to amend prior motion to add “request a sealed bid for brush truck”.

Unanimously Approved

Motion by Trustee Patterson seconded by Trustee Sternberg to adjourn at 8:45 p.m.