

Village of Owego Board of Trustees Meeting

A regularly scheduled Village of Owego Mayor and Board of Trustees meeting was held on Monday, January 4, 2016 at 7:00 pm at 20 Elm Street, Owego, New York, 13827. The following people were in attendance:

Mayor:	Kevin Millar
Trustees:	Jenny Ceccherelli Earl Hartman Rob Manville Steve May Phoebe Morris Mike Phelps
Clerk-Treasurer:	Rod Marchewka
Village Attorney:	Robert McKertich
Police Chief:	Karen Vinti
WWTP Supt.:	Ron Horton
DPW Supt.:	Jeff Soules

Sign in Sheet – Insert “A”.

Pledge and invocation.

Public Comment:

Jim King – emailed fire department information that was requested to mayor and trustees.

Correspondence from Laura Rod (as she could not make the meeting) is added to the minutes as follows:

Laura Rodd
105 Chestnut Street
Owego, NY 13827

Village of Owego Offices
178 Main Street
Owego, NY 13827
Official Correspondence

To the Elected Officials of the Village of Owego including the Clerk-Treasurer, the Trustees and the Mayor

I am asking that a copy of this email correspondence is included in the public record of the Village Board Meeting Minutes for tonight January 4th, 2016 during which time the creation of a proposed fire district will be discussed. I also ask that it is read by the Clerk-Treasurer into the public record during privilege of the floor if I am unable to be physically present at this meeting.

I, Laura Anne Rodd, believe that the most important question that needs to be answered now by our elected Village Trustees is this:

Why is this village board rushing so quickly to pass a resolution to change our village charter and place the creation of a proposed fire district on the March ballot when basic financial, safety and managerial questions that this change would bring have not been addressed at this point.

Simple questions of the most basic kind that taxpayers have an absolute right to know such as

1. What is the valuation of public assets, in structures, vehicle, apparatus, and gear that is being demanded by OFD to be turned over directly at no cost to this proposed independent entity?
Please include all fire station structures and a complete list of all current OFD physical assets so that taxpayers can see how much is being given away.
2. By transferring over this property can the fire department sell, disburse or abandon these now public assets at will including our historic main fire station on North Avenue?
3. Is there a legal clause in the approximately 15+page legal document currently under review that deals with this possibility? What if the proposed fire district were to become insolvent for some reason what happens to these assets then? Would they revert to the village in public trust or are they to be auctioned off or simply seized?
4. How much higher will the ACTUAL (not TENTATIVE- which by definition means not certain, or stated or created without confidence) PROPOSED FIRE DISTRICT TAX LEVY be for the first 3 years (which is a small span of time that should easily have been planned for by OFD)? Reference the information given to the Tioga County Courier on December 16th, 2015 by Chief Gavin and Mr. James King. What is this number per \$1000 assessed value for a property?
5. How was the TENTATIVE TAX LEVY ARRIVED AT that was given to the press and public on December 16th, 2015 in the Tioga County Courier, and did it include the price of hiring fire district employee(s) (including for example the paid day time EMTs, office personnel, an attorney, an auditor, building maintenance staff to make repairs that DPW will no longer cover, their own insurance coverage, and the fee for outsourcing EMS fees to a billing company for hospital transports)?
6. Stated in that same guest column article in the Courier Chief Gavin and Mr. James claimed that there was a list of currently tax-exempt properties that would be levied a fire district tax including religious buildings used as residences and IDA sponsored properties. What exact properties fall under this heading and what is the amount of revenue that can be generated from these properties using TENTATIVE LEVY per \$1000 of assessed property value?
7. What will happen to fire/ems contracts with the village that are still active if the district is created?
8. Who is on the list of appointed fire commissioners? What was the process employed for generating this list and how were appointees selected?
9. Has the village board investigated separating the EMS from OPD and spending what little remains of the Sweet Fund (on emergency equipment) so that the village can benefit from billing for hospital transport to help relieve resident's tax burden? This new source of money could help support OFDES's future operation, create an equipment fund for the fire department with any remainder going into the village's general fund? What documentation is available to show the public the board's findings on this possible source of revenue?
10. Is OFD currently in complete compliance with NYS/PESH regulations and laws? And if not, why? How can the public trust that a district with no oversight from the village will follow mandated laws and rules when they have no history of willingly doing so without board intervention and pressure? Taxpayer's have a right to know since any fines or lawsuits brought against the proposed fire district will translate into a higher tax levy for residents.
11. Why is Trustee Hartman planning to vote on this radical resolution concerning the fire department when there is a clear conflict of interest, that being his membership in OFD and the fact that he was aware that OFD was creating this proposed, radical change to local fire/emergency coverage for months without saying a word to the board about it during public meetings when his chief responsibility is to report such things as Fire Commissioner. This omission is suspect and throws his credibility for representing his ward and residents of the village as a whole through an unbiased vote in great question. He has already demonstrated a biasness toward favoring a minority special interest group of which he is an active member.

Thank You,
Laura Rodd.
607-687-0866

Motion by Trustee May, seconded by Trustee Morris, to approve the Resolution re-appointing Lynn Craig as Acting Village Justice thru April 4, 2016. Roll Call Vote: Trustee Ceccherelli, Trustee Hartman, Trustee Manville, Trustee May, Trustee Morris, Trustee Phelps, and Mayor Millar voted aye.

Motion Carried 7-0

Motion by Trustee May, seconded by Trustee Morris, to authorize Attorney McKertich draw up an RFP for a Power Purchase Agreement. Roll Call Vote: Trustee Ceccherelli, Trustee Hartman, Trustee Manville, Trustee May, Trustee Morris, Trustee Phelps, and Mayor Millar voted aye.

Motion Carried 7-0

Motion by Trustee Ceccherelli, seconded by Trustee Morris, to approve the Resolution appointing Carolyn Wright, Geoffrey Collins, Joan Davis, Reatha Woodburn, Cinda Goodrich, and Kristina Stevens as Inspectors of the Annual Election to be held on the 15th Day of March 2016 at a rate of \$110.00 per day for each inspector and at a rate of \$150.00 for Carolyn Wright as the chairperson. Roll Call Vote: Trustee Ceccherelli, Trustee Manville, Trustee May, Trustee Morris, Trustee Phelps, and Mayor Millar voted aye. Trustee Hartman passed and then voted aye.

Motion Carried 7-0

Motion by Trustee Ceccherelli, seconded by Trustee Morris, to approve the Justice Review submitted by Trustee May (copy to be sent to NYS Court Review). Roll Call Vote: Trustee Ceccherelli, Trustee Hartman, Trustee Manville, Trustee May, Trustee Morris, Trustee Phelps, and Mayor Millar voted aye.

Motion Carried 7-0

Motion by Trustee Ceccherelli, seconded by Trustee Morris, to approve the Village of Owego Board of Trustees Minutes of December 21, 2016 with a change of words of the word “to” to the word “may” in paragraph two of page 2. Roll Call Vote: Trustee Ceccherelli, Trustee Hartman, Trustee Manville, Trustee May, Trustee Morris, Trustee Phelps, and Mayor Millar voted aye.

Motion Carried 7-0

Motion by Trustee Hartman, seconded by Trustee Morris, to approve Payment of Bills as follows for the Month of December, 2015:

General Fund (A)	-	\$398,224.84
Sewer Fund (G)	-	\$ 52,281.14
Sewer Plant Upgrade (SU)	-	\$257,637.50
Trust & Agency (TA)	-	<u>\$ 73.30</u>
Total:		\$708,216.78

Roll Call Vote: Trustee Ceccherelli, Trustee Hartman, Trustee Manville, Trustee May, Trustee Morris, Trustee Phelps, and Mayor Millar voted aye.

Motion Carried 7-0

Department Head Report:

Police Chief Vinti – parade for the new elementary school is Wednesday, January 6, 2016 in the morning.

DPW Supt. Soules –

MEMO

To: Village of Owego Mayor Kevin Millar and Village Board of Trustees

From: Superintendent of Public Works - Jeff Soules

Date: December 31, 2015

RE: DPW Activity Report

- Salted/plowed for ice storm
- Clear crosswalks and sidewalks
- Picking Christmas trees
- Haul fill
- Repaired non-working bridge lights
- Remove fire tower fence
- Meth lab remnants found in cemetery
- Leaf machines are out
- Code violations for residential refuse - ongoing
- Forever green property maintenance - ongoing
- Measure DSNY cut outs on going
- Repair DPW equipment
- Pot hole patching ongoing
- Brush and leaf pick up ongoing
- Planning, Zoning and Historic Preservation meetings scheduled

Motion by Trustee May, seconded by Trustee Morris, to approve O’Rourke, Inc. handling air quality testing for buyout properties. Roll Call Vote: Trustee Ceccherelli, Trustee Hartman, Trustee Manville, Trustee May, Trustee Morris, Trustee Phelps, and Mayor Millar voted aye.

Motion Carried 7-0

WWTP Supt. Horton – dump truck blew up while it was being repaired at Royal Ford. Attorney McKertich will review information and check on any liability.

Trustee Reports:

Trustee Ceccherelli – no report.

Trustee Hartman –

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Commissioner Report Summaries

Village of Owego, New York
Earl Hartman Trustee Ward 2/ Commissioner of: OFD, Planning & Zoning

Note to File:
Treasurer

Electronic copies of full report has been filed with the Clerk-

OFD:

- Tioga County EMS Medical & Training Coordinator Connie Fedorowicz presented the OFDEMS as “Squad of the Year” and OFDEMS volunteer Capt. Paul Cole as provider of the year.

(It is noted that after (35) years of service Connie will be retiring as soon as the County can find a new EMS Medical & Training Coordinator.)

- The OFD Chief presented Appreciation Award to Kevin Cumm. Kevin has been very instrumental and often the lead of the volunteer repair and upkeep work being done throughout the OFD Facilities.
- The Emergency Command Center room at Central Station that has been waiting for repairs since the 2011 flood is no longer waiting. OFD volunteers has fully repaired and finished the room and it will soon be operational again as an Emergency Command Center.
- The OFD volunteers have secured and installed two new hose drying racks are now in-place in Station 2 so it is no longer necessary
- The former Sherburne ambulance has been fully repurposed for OFDEMS use and is now operational and in service. All volunteer work that has saved the Village thousands of dollars.
- The NYS Hazmat Refresher/Certifications course will be held at the OFD Training classrooms on Tues., Jan. 5th 2016.
- A Public Hearing will be held on Jan. 6th, 2016 at 7pm, Hubbard Auditorium, 56 Main St. on the forming of a proposed fire district.
- Robin Shaver is now a licensed EMS ALS provider and is a volunteer with Owego OFDEMS.
- OFDEMS units and personnel will be participating in the OASD parade on Wed. Jan. 6th 2016

PLANNING / ZONING:

- There will be a Planning Board meeting at 6pm on Feb. 9th, 2016 to review the status of removing the Architectural Review panel from the OHPC requirements.

WWTP- EDU's

- Sent my EDU history data to those that requested it.

Submitted: January 4, 2016

Cc: Clerk/Treasurer, ERH files

Trustee Phelps – no report

Trustee Manville – would like to review the EDU schedule in January as outlined by Village Code.

Trustee May – had questions on the Capital Improvement Fee listed on the sewer bills. Also, asked when the 2014 Audit would be done. Clerk advised CPA coming in next week.

Trustee Morris – no report.

Motion by Trustee Hartman, seconded by Trustee May, for an executive session to discuss legal issues. Roll Call Vote: Trustee Ceccherelli, Trustee Hartman, Trustee Manville, Trustee May, Trustee Morris, Trustee Phelps, and Mayor Millar voted aye.

Motion Carried 7-0

Public Comment:

None

7:31 pm – into executive session

7:58 pm – back in regular session – no action taken

Meeting adjourned.

