

Village of Owego Board of Trustees Meeting

A regularly scheduled Village of Owego Mayor and Board of Trustees meeting was held on Monday, November 16, 2015 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
DPW Supt.:	Jeff Soules
Police Chief:	Karen Vinti
WWTP Supt.:	Ron Horton

Sign in Sheet – Insert “A”.

Pledge and invocation.

Public Comment:

Russell Stout – 117 Halstead Avenue – Sewer rate should be based on usage. Not fair to small homeowners.

Heinz Hoffman – 7 Orchard Avenue – I have a rental property – sewer rate went from \$200 a quarter to \$571 – too much – I have mostly single people in my apartments.

Earl Hartman – village has been working with the Public Service Commissioner and the Village cannot receive information from United Water (privacy issues).

Dennis Curatolo – 175 Front Street – Buildings that have no usage and are not occupied should not be billed.

Motion by Trustee Hartman, seconded by Trustee May, send to the Planning Boards for a 239 Review to have a rezoning of 95 West Main Street from Residential to business. 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 Hartman, to schedule a public hearing for Monday, December 7, 2015 at 7:00 pm at 20 Elm Street regarding parking on Armstrong Place. 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 Morris, seconded by Trustee Ceccherelli, to schedule a Public Hearing for Monday, December 21, 2015 at 7:00 pm to appeal the old Architectural Review Board Law. 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 approve the Minutes of November 2, 2015 as submitted by the clerk-treasurer. Roll Call Vote: Trustee Ceccherelli, Trustee Manville, Trustee May, Trustee Morris, Trustee Phelps, and Mayor Millar voted aye. Trustee Hartman abstained.

Motion Carried 6-0-1

Motion by Trustee Morris, seconded by Trustee Ceccherelli, to approve the Treasurer's Report as submitted by the clerk-treasurer.

Discussed:

**FICA
Liability Insurance
Waste Water Upgrade Expenses
Insurance
Computer Software**

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 Reports:

WWTP Supt. Horton -

Date: 11/16/15

To: Village Board of Trustee's
From: Ron Horton, Supt. WWTP

Re: Department Update

1. Job meeting was held on the 27th. Progress of the various contractors was covered. Discussion on the work schedule as we move towards the colder months of the year. It appears the GC won't be ready much before the end of December for a possible start up and the Electrical contractor is estimating a January time frame for his work. It was decided that it was unrealistic to expect a start-up during the winter months. There will not be a complete shut down over the winter but the GC and the Electrical contractor will have crews working on items for the spring start-up.
2. Construction update: 1 WAS pump installed and plumbed in, 2 RAS pumps installed, roof on headworks building has been installed, blowers have been installed, electrical work in blower building and headworks continues, center wall and walkways in north tank has been poured, finish grade on East side of headworks has been completed, interior chamber of grit vortex has been poured, windows and doors on headworks building are being installed, buytl seal on walkways has been installed, bituminous coating has been placed on North tank walls (75%) complete, roof on blower building installed (90%) complete.
3. Cleaned wetwells at Delphine St, Green St. and Fifth Ave. pump stations.
4. Repaired broken manhole cover on North Ave. near Talcott St. intersection.
5. Trucked surplus crusher run and Pa mix from the main plant to DPW for storage.
6. As a result of the plant start up being delayed until after the first of the year we contacted our contract haulers and made them aware of our ability to continue to accept waste until at least Jan.

- 1. We will update them after the December job meeting as to how much longer we'll be accepting septage.
- 7. Replaced MH frame and cover at Fulton and E. Main St.

OPD Chief Vinti –

- Attended Lights on the River Meeting
- Attended Police Academy Graduation
- 90 Temple lost power as well as the fire department

DPW Supt. Soules:

MEMO

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

From: Superintendent of Public Works - Jeff Soules

Date: November 13, 2015

RE: DPW Activity Report

- Expanded nature trail and placed wood chips along pathways
- Met with Jon Norris regarding new joint DPW building
- Ready for Holiday Showcase
- Demo bid opening will be Monday the 16th
- New Hospice tree planted
- Cleaned up Skateboard Park
- Burials
- Pushed up leaf compost piles
- Cleaned human feces off playground equipment in Marvin Park
- Leaf machines are out
- Install truncated dome bump pads on newly paved intersections @ handicap walks
- Code violations for residential refuse/high grass - 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

Any questions or concerns please call me.

BUY OUT 2 DEMO BID 11/16/2015				
Name of Company	Address	Phone	Email	Price
All Around Storage & Excavating LLC	660 Riverside Dr. Johnson City, NY 13790	607-729-3156		\$105,943
LCP Group Inc.	450 Commerce Rd. Vestal, NY 13850	607-592-2866		\$109,724
Dan's Hauling & Demo	POB 409 Wynantskill, NY 12198	518-438-9800		\$196,402

No action taken at this time.

Trustee May wanted to know what the status of new proposed joint DPW building was.
Jeff Soules – working with engineers.

VOOBM 11-16-2015

Trustee Reports:

Trustee Ceccherelli –

The OHPC voted to deny 51 Front Street's Application for a Variance.

Trustee Hartman –

Wanted to know if the fire police are set for Lights on the River?
Chief Vinti – the fire police were at the Lights on the River meeting also.

Trustee Phelps –

Does the fire department need their own generator at central station?
Supt. Soules – will look into possible grants. Cost was approximately \$30,000 with installation for OPD generator.

Trustee Manville – working on sewer billing problems, looking at single family, multi-family, business, and vacant. Would like to meet again and also would like Ron and Kim there for their expertise.

Trustee May – would like an attorney/client session.

Mayor Millar – no report.

Public Comment:

Heinz Hoffman – what is going on with the Fire District Proposal?

Rusty Fuller – the fire department will be an independent contractor. The Village of Owego can hire whoever has the best price.

Attorney/Client Session began at 7:45 pm and ended at 8:05 pm

Original Siena College Survey below:



November 11, 2015

Dear Village of Owego [Resident/Business Owner]:

The Siena College Research Institute (SRI) is conducting this brief survey on behalf of the Village Board of Trustees so as to understand public opinion on important local matters. Each survey has a unique coding number to ensure there are no duplicate responses. Please be assured that SRI will provide summary data to the Board of Trustees, but will not disclose the identity of any participant. If you prefer, you can complete the survey online using your unique coding number: <coding #> by going to www.siena.edu/sri/owego2015. We ask that you return the survey by mail or complete it online by **January 15**. Should you have any questions, please contact Dr. Don Levy, SRI's Director at 518-783-2901 or dlevy@siena.edu. Thank you for your participation.

1. Do you live in the Village of Owego?

Yes
 No

2. Are you registered to vote here in the Village of Owego?

Yes
 No

3. Check which of the following apply to you [check ALL that apply]:

- Own residential property in the Village of Owego
- Own/operate a business in the Village of Owego
- Own non-residential property in the Village of Owego

4. Is the Village of Owego on the right track, or is it headed in the wrong direction?

- right track
- wrong direction
- don't know

5. For each of the following components of the Village of Owego's government, indicate whether you think they are doing an excellent, good, fair or poor job.

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Don't know
Dept. of Public Works					
Clerk's office					
Police Department					
Fire Department					
The Mayor					
Zoning & Planning					
Village Board of Trustees					

6. As a place to live, is the Village of Owego...

- getting much better
- getting somewhat better
- remaining about the same
- getting somewhat worse
- getting much worse
- don't know

7. In the past 12 months, have you had anyone deliberately vandalize, try to steal, or steal any property that you own, or anyone attempt to break into your home?

Yes
 No

8. In the past 12 months, have you had an experience in which someone attacked you, tried to take something from you by force, or physically threatened you?

Yes
 No

9. Over the past five years the taxes in the Village of Owego have been essentially unchanged. As you think about what you pay in taxes to the Village, would you say...

- The taxes here are a bargain. I could pay more for the services that we receive.
- The taxes here are fair. I pay about the right amount all things considered.
- The taxes here are too high. I don't think they are fair, nor do I think we receive the level of services that justify the taxes we pay.
- don't know

10. In general, would you consider paying more in taxes to the Village of Owego if that increase provided you with more local services or are you opposed to paying more in taxes regardless of that increase being used to provide more services?
____ Would consider paying more in taxes
____ Opposed to paying more regardless of any more services
____ Don't know
11. Now, thinking specifically about the Owego Police Department (OPD). The OPD currently accounts for about one-third of the Village's budget. Do you think that percentage is...
____ too much
____ about right
____ too little
____ don't know
12. As you may know, there has been a great deal of discussion in the Village about the OPD. Some are in favor of dissolving the Owego Police Department, others are in favor of the OPD remaining as it is and still others believe that it should be enlarged. In general, which of those three options is your first choice?
____ dissolve the OPD
____ keep the OPD as it is
____ enlarge the OPD
____ don't know

Any decision by the Village to dissolve, maintain or enlarge the OPD involves many considerations. For each of the following, indicate whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, strongly disagree or if you would need more information before you could say.

13. Dissolving OPD would bring taxes down to a more affordable cost.

- Strongly agree Somewhat agree Somewhat disagree Strongly disagree Need more information

14. Having the County Sheriff provide security rather than the OPD would provide the Village with better police coverage.

- Strongly agree Somewhat agree Somewhat disagree Strongly disagree Need more information

15. Dissolving the OPD would allow the Village and Village taxpayers to have financial stability.

- Strongly agree Somewhat agree Somewhat disagree Strongly disagree Need more information

16. Dissolving OPD would lead to a lower sense of security in the Village.

- Strongly agree Somewhat agree Somewhat disagree Strongly disagree Need more information

17. Enlarging the OPD as recommended by the OPD chief would enhance the level of public safety.

- Strongly agree Somewhat agree Somewhat disagree Strongly disagree Need more information

18. Maintaining the OPD as it is currently budgeted would benefit the community by ending this discussion over the possible dissolution of the OPD.

Strongly agree Somewhat agree Somewhat disagree Strongly disagree Need more information

19. Relying on the Sheriff could lead to lower levels of response in the case of an emergency.

Strongly agree Somewhat agree Somewhat disagree Strongly disagree Need more information

20. The truth is the Village simply can no longer afford its own police force.

Strongly agree Somewhat agree Somewhat disagree Strongly disagree Need more information

21. Eliminating the OPD and replacing it with coverage from the Sheriff's Office would provide the Village with the same level of protection as the Town of Owego.

Strongly agree Somewhat agree Somewhat disagree Strongly disagree Need more information

22. Not having a Village police department would hurt businesses here in the village.

Strongly agree Somewhat agree Somewhat disagree Strongly disagree Need more information

Now having considered these statements about dissolving, maintaining or enlarging the OPD, review each of the following four potential plans. For each indicate whether you strongly support it, somewhat support it, somewhat oppose it or strongly oppose it.

23. NO CHANGE. Keep the OPD as it is currently budgeted at an estimated annual cost to the Village of \$917,688.

Strongly support Somewhat support Somewhat oppose Strongly oppose

24. INCREASE THE SIZE OF OPD to a size recommended by the Chief that would add a sergeant, 3 patrolmen and some support staff at an annual cost to the Village of \$1,233,612 or an approximate 34% increase in cost.

Strongly support Somewhat support Somewhat oppose Strongly oppose

25. ELIMINATE OPD and replace with coverage from the Sheriff's Office. Annual savings of \$917,688 or about 1/3 the current budget.

Strongly support Somewhat support Somewhat oppose Strongly oppose

26. REPLACE OPD AND NEGOTIATE WITH SHERIFF'S OFFICE FOR FULL COVERAGE IN THE VILLAGE with an estimated annual cost of \$651,000 or a 29% decrease in cost.

Strongly support Somewhat support Somewhat oppose Strongly oppose

27. If you had to choose one of the four options, Which ONE would you choose?

- NO CHANGE
- INCREASE THE SIZE OF OPD
- ELIMINATE OPD

____ REPLACE OPD AND NEGOTIATE WITH SHERIFF'S OFFICE FOR FULL COVERAGE IN THE VILLAGE

28. Are you or a member of your household employed by the Village of Owego?

____ Yes

____ No

29. How long have you lived in the Village of Owego?

____ Less than five years

____ At least five years but less than 10

____ At least 10 years

____ Don't live in the Village of Owego

30. Are you:

____ 18-24

____ 25-34

____ 35-44

____ 45-54

____ 55+

31. Please check your gender: ____ Male ____ Female

Discussion on changes included:

1.) Who gets the survey

a. Business owner vs. land lord

b. Renters

c. Registered voters

2.) Focus and intent of survey

3.) Focus on Police Department only

After board review:

5 Question Survey – See Insert “B”.

Survey Cover Letters 1 and 2 were also discussed – See Insert “C”.

Motion by Trustee Hartman, seconded by Trustee May, to reduce the 31 survey questions to 5 survey questions. Roll Call Vote: Trustee Ceccherelli no, Trustee Hartman aye, Trustee Phelps aye, Trustee Manville aye, Trustee May aye, Trustee Morris no, Mayor Millar no.

Motion Carried 4-3

Motion by Trustee Hartman, seconded by Trustee Manville, to adjourn at 9:33 pm.

Unanimously Approved

"B"

SURVEY: OPTIONS FOR POLICING SERVICES FOR THE VILLAGE OF OWEGO, NY:

(Please answer the following questions a best you can and as directed at each question)

1. Are you registered to vote in the Village of Owego?

- Yes
 No

2. Check which of the following apply to you [check ALL that apply]:

- Own residential property in the Village of Owego
 Own/operate a business in the Village of Owego
 Own non-residential property in the Village of Owego

3. The OPD currently accounts for about one-third of the Village's budget at (\$917,688). Do you think that percentage is:

- too much
 about right
 too little
 don't know

4. Potential Options for policing the Village are: (Note: All budget numbers shown for any options are targets as there are mandated benefits growth costs beyond the Village or County control that cannot be accurately projected at this time)

1. NO CHANGE. Keep the OPD as it is currently budgeted at an estimated annual cost to the Village of \$917,688+.

- Strongly support Somewhat support Somewhat oppose Strongly oppose

2. INCREASE OPD TO OPTIMAL SIZE: 1 Chief, 2 sergeants, 6 patrolmen and increase support staff at a estimated cost of \$1,233,612+ or an approximate 34% increase in cost.

- Strongly support Somewhat support Somewhat oppose Strongly oppose

3. ELIMINATE OPD and replace with standard road coverage from the Sheriff's Office. Estimated annual savings of \$917,688+ or about 1/3 the current budget projections.

- Strongly support Somewhat support Somewhat oppose Strongly oppose

4. REPLACE OPD AND NEGOTIATE WITH SHERIFF'S OFFICE FOR FULL COVERAGE IN THE VILLAGE with an estimated annual cost of \$651,000+ or a +/-29% decrease in cost.

- Strongly support Somewhat support Somewhat oppose Strongly oppose

5. Based on the four preceding options, Which ONE would you choose?

- NO CHANGE
 INCREASE THE SIZE OF OPD
 ELIMINATE OPD
 REPLACE OPD AND NEGOTIATE WITH SHERIFF'S OFFICE FOR FULL COVERAGE IN THE VILLAGE

Cover Letter ① "11"

Dear Village of Owego [Resident/Business Owner]:

The Siena College Research Institute (SRI) on behalf of the Village Board of Trustees is conducting a formal survey of Village residents/voters and business regarding the providing of future policing services to the Village.

Each survey has a unique coding number to ensure there are no duplicate or fraudulent responses, and to ensure you remain completely anonymous. You may file your survey response by mailing it to (need address) or on-line at www.siena.edu/sri/owego2015 by using your unique code number on your survey. All surveys must be received by US mail or complete it online by no later than **January 15, 2016**. Should you have any questions, please contact Dr. Don Levy, SRI's Director at 518-783-2901 or dlevy@siena.edu. Thank you for your participation.

The core question of the survey is to determine whether the Village taxpayers wish to explore all economic options for policing services for the Village, where the options range from keeping the existing Village Police system as it currently is to contracting out for policing services.

The Village Board has been hearing from voices in the Village regarding the policing of the Village that range from keeping the current Owego Police Dept. at all cost to those demanding that the Board explore alternatives options for the Village taxpayer to consider. As it should in a healthy governmental system it has generated much discussion amongst the Village Board as they wrestle with the benefits and risks associated with the issue, regardless of the final option that may be adopted.

Some rudimentary explorations were made but it is the Board's desire that your responses to this formal independent survey will enable all Village taxpayer's voices to be heard and to help the Village Board both understand what the majority of Village taxpayer's desires and also how to best implement them.

The Village Board wishes that be made clear that there are associated cost to any form of policing for the Village, whether it is provided by the Village, County or State, and those costs will always escalate as base salaries and benefits increases are met under a respective Bargaining Unit's contractual agreements for the respective policing agency. So the question becomes "are here sustainable economy and/or safety benefits to Village taxpayers not having an Owego Police Department and contracting out?" If so what are the benefits? Are there negatives to not having a Village Police Department? If so what are they?

The policing services for the Village is important issue for you the Village taxpayers/voters and the Village Board so please take the time to do your attached survey and file it by mail or on-line as the Village Board wants and needs your input on the important issue.

Sincerely yours,

"C"
Cover letter (2)

Dear Village of Owego [Resident/Business Owner]:

The Siena College Research Institute (SRI) is conducting a formal survey of Village residents/voters and businesses regarding the providing of future policing services to the Village. The survey is being conducted on behalf of the Village Board of Trustees as a result of the findings of our Public Safety Committee.

The intent of the survey is to determine whether the Village taxpayers wish to explore alternate options for policing services of the Village. These options range from keeping the existing Village Police system as it currently operates to contracting out for policing services.

The Village Board has been hearing opinions from residents regarding policing of the Village that range from keeping the current Owego Police Dept. as is to those demanding that the Board explore alternative options for the Village taxpayer to consider. The Village Board decided that a formal survey should be conducted by an impartial third party. Siena was selected by majority vote of the board members following a competitive review process of several survey companies.

The Village Board wishes that it be made clear to the residents that there are associated costs to any form of policing for the Village, whether it is provided by the Village, County or State, and those costs will always escalate as base salaries and benefits increases are met under a respective Bargaining Unit's contractual agreements for the respective policing agency. The Village Board wants to the residents to consider the cost and service level impacts of each option and be involved in determining the best path forward regarding our police services.

Each survey has a unique coding number to ensure there are no duplicate or fraudulent responses, and to ensure you remain completely anonymous. You may file your survey response by mailing it to (need address) or on-line at www.siena.edu/sri/owego2015 by using your unique code number on your survey. All surveys must be received by US mail or complete it online by no later than **January 15, 2016**. Should you have any questions, please contact Dr. Don Levy, SRI's Director at 518-783-2901 or dlevy@siena.edu. Thank you for your participation.

The policing services for the Village is important issue for you the Village taxpayers/voters and the Village Board so please take the time to do your attached survey and file it by mail or on-line as the Village Board wants and needs your input on the important issue.

Sincerely yours,