

Village of Owego Board of Trustees Meeting

A special joint board meeting was held on Monday, September 14, 2015 at 7:00 pm at 56 Main Street, Owego, New York, 13827, to establish a Joint Fire District. The following people were in attendance:

Mayor:	Kevin Millar
Trustees:	Earl Hartman Rob Manville Steve May Phoebe Morris Mike Phelps
Clerk-Treasurer:	Rod Marchewka
Village Attorney:	Robert McKertich
Fire Chief:	Dan Gavin
Absent:	Trustee Ceccherelli

Town of Owego:

Town Supervisor:	Don Castellucci
Town Clerk:	Michael Zimmer
Town Councilman:	Dean Morgan
Town Councilman:	Craig Jochum
Town Attorney:	Irene Graven
Absent:	Councilwoman Roberts Councilman Moulton

Town of Tioga:

Town Supervisor:	Lewis Zorn
Town Councilman:	Robert Klossner Gerald Hyatt Robert Strong Drew Griffin

Insert "A" – Sign In Sheet.

There was a quorum from Village of Owego, Town of Owego, and Town of Tioga.

Meeting called to order at 7:07 pm by Mayor Millar with the pledge of allegiance.

Mayor Millar stated the joint meeting is mandated by the state law.

Public Comment:

Jim King – Village of Owego Fire Department – brief overview included:

- Better operational management
- Village is under financial pressure and it could affect the fire department in the future
- Village board has purchased unnecessary equipment in the past
- Lost money in the “Sweet Fund” by using the principal
- Failure of Village Board to replace ambulance in a timely manner

The fire district should be within the boundaries of the Village of Owego.

Discussed a consolidation study started in 2006 by then mayor, John Loftus.

John Loftus – yes, we wanted to do a study but the Town of Owego Fire Board would not cooperate. We never intended to eliminate the Owego Fire Department. Looking at a way to use tax dollars wiser and smarter.

Rusty Fuller – no one has worked harder to preserve the Owego Fire Department over the past few years than me. Money spent on fire equipment is not the village board’s fault, it is the fire department itself that has mismanaged their funds.

The fire department has not given out enough information about their proposals – their budget is almost identical to the Village of Owego Budget, except that it is higher.

Moving too fast – it feels like the same strong arm tactics that happened when the fire department wanted changes in manuals.

Willy Davis – 57 McMaster – I think this is a scary move. Could have bad tax implications for village tax payers.

Jim Wagner – Captain EMT – I moved here to be in this department - this is something we need to preserve the Owego Fire Department.

Karl Jones – some people don’t want an Owego Fire Department. The Town Fire Tax Rate went up 22.8% last year.

Fire Commissioners will be voted on.

Robin Shaver – it is a privilege to cover the Village of Owego as an EMT.

Jim King – fire department buildings are in dis-repair.

John Loftus – when I was trustee and Bill Franz was the mayor station #2 was built – we took care of the fire department buildings. Not much has been done since.

Legal Counsel for the Owego Fire Department David Gorman:

- The new fire district would have state spending limitations how much they can spend depends on total assessed value of property in the district
- \$2,000.00 for the first million of assessed value and \$1,000.00 for each additional million per assessed value
- This does not include exclusions
- If the department goes over their budget – they must get voters’ approval
- 2% budget cap also applies. It could be overridden by approval of fire commissioners

- There will be no contract with the fire commissioners – the Owego Fire Department will be the commissioner’s fire department
- Village currently owns most of the fire department assets. We would expect them to transfer them to the new fire district – including equipment, buildings, and Sweet Fund assets

Board Member Discussions:

Town of Owego –

Motion by Councilman Morgan, seconded by Councilman Jochum, to approve the Resolution below with the additional meeting date of September 22, 2015:

RESOLUTION

Whereas, it has been proposed to establish a joint fire district encompassing all of the Village of Owego and all of the Town of Tioga’s “Owego Fire Protection District” with such fire protection district encompassing the following territory:

BEGINNING at a point in the westerly line of the Village of Owego and the easterly line of the Town of Tioga at the current southerly boundary of the highway (Route 17C).

THENCE S 66°52’53” W, 150.00 feet along the southerly boundary of the highway to appoint.

THENCE N 22°58’37” W, 40.03 feet to a point in the southerly boundary of the highway, as it existed prior to 1930.

THENCE N 64°58’50” E, 137.20 feet along the southerly boundary of the highway, as it existed prior to 1930, to a point in the easterly line of the Town of Tioga.

THENCE S 39°07’01” E, 46.37 feet along the easterly line of the Town of Tioga to the Point of Beginning.

CONTAINING 6,087 square feet (0.140 acre) of land as shown on a map by Scott E. Edsall. L.S. No. 49784, dated May 5, 2015.

Whereas, the undersigned boards are considering whether to pursue such a joint fire district;

It is hereby jointly resolved by the undersigned boards that it is in the public interest to hold a public hearing at one location within the proposed joint fire district to take comment on the proposed formation of a joint fire district;

It is further resolved that such hearing shall be held on the 28th day of September, 2015, which shall be within thirty (30) days of this joint meeting;

The Clerk of the Town of Tioga is hereby directed to cause notice of the public hearing to be published in a newspaper having general circulation in the Town of Tioga and in the Village of Owego and in the Town of Owego, at least once; and to post such notice in five public and conspicuous places in the Town of Tioga in such locations which are within the “Owego Fire Protection District”, and an additional notice on Town’s sign board;

The Clerk of the Town of Owego is also directed to post such notice in five public and conspicuous places, in such locations which are outside of the Village, one of which may be the Town's sign board;

The Clerk of the Village of Owego is hereby directed to post such notices in five public and conspicuous places in the Village, one of which may be the sign board of the Village;

In each case, such posting and publications shall be made not less than ten days prior to the date of the joint public hearing;

The clerks of the Town of Owego, Town of Tioga and the Village of Owego are hereby directed to serve notice of the public hearing upon the members of their municipal board by mail, addressed to their last known post office addresses, at least ten days prior to the date of the joint public hearing.

The notice shall be as follows:

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE THAT there shall be a joint public hearing of the governing boards of the Town of Tioga, Town of Owego and the Village of Owego for the purposes of taking public comment on the proposed formation of a joint fire district, and upon the issues of the dissolution of the Owego Fire Protection District. Such joint fire district is proposed to encompass all of the Village of Owego and all of the Town of Tioga's "Owego Fire Protection District". The joint public hearing shall be held on the 28th day of September, 2015, at the Hubbard Auditorium, 56 Main Street, Owego, New York. All persons interested in the establishment of the joint fire district may be heard. The objects and purposes of such joint fire district is to permit the efficient operation of fire protection for the all of the territory of the Village of Owego and the territory now encompassed by the Town of Tioga's "Owego Fire Protection District".

This resolution has been approved by at least a majority of each municipal board as indicated by their signatures on this document.

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that a joint public meeting of the boards of the Town of Tioga, the Village of Owego, and Town of Owego shall take place at the Hubbard Auditorium, 56 Main Street, Owego, New York on Monday, October 26, 2015 at 7 PM for the purpose of considering the formation of the joint fire district, for the additional purpose of taking public comment about dissolution of the Town of Tioga's "Owego Fire Protection District", and to set a date for a public hearing to take public comment about abolition of the Village of Owego's fire department.

Town of Owego –

Supervisor Castellucci – yes

Councilman Morgan – yes

Councilman Jochum – yes

Motion Carried 3-0

Town of Tioga –

Motion by Councilman Strong, seconded by Councilman Hyatt, to approve the above Resolution with the amended meeting date of September 22, 2015.

Councilman Klossner – yes
Councilman Hyatt – yes
Councilman Strong – yes
Councilman Griffin – yes
Supervisor Zorn – yes

Motion Carried 5-0

Village of Owego –

Motion by Trustee May, seconded by Trustee Hartman, to approve the above Resolution with the amended meeting date of September 22, 2015.

Mayor Millar – no
Trustee Morris – no
Trustee Phelps – yes
Trustee May – yes
Trustee Manville – yes
Trustee Hartman – yes

Motion Carried 4-2

Motion by Trustee May, seconded by Trustee Phelps, to adjourn at 8:30 pm.

Unanimously Approved.