

**Village of Chaumont
Public Forum Presentation
December 6, 2011**

Minutes below accompany PowerPoint Presentation:

*Options for the Future for the Village of Chaumont and the Town of Lyme:
First Report to the Community*

Study Committee members attending: Bill Borden, Valerie Rust, Sue Cornell, Scott Radley, Don Bourquoin (alternate). Consultants from the Center for Governmental Research (CGR) attending: Charles Zettek and Vicki Brown.

Others attending: members of the community, municipal staff and the media.

1. Committee Chair Bill Borden noted that the Village had successfully applied for a state grant in order to determine if it makes sense from a financial and quality of life perspective for a small village like Chaumont to become part of the Town of Lyme. He introduced Charles Zettek and Vicki Brown, staff from CGR, which has been engaged by the Village to assist the Study Committee.
2. Mr. Borden noted that in 2012 the Village is moving Village elections from March to November. If the Village Board ultimately decides to hold a referendum on dissolution, the vote would occur on November 6, 2012. However, he said, the Village Board has not yet made a decision on whether to hold a referendum.
3. Mr. Borden said that the PowerPoint presented that evening by CGR would present an overview of what the Study Committee has looked at so far – with the goal of generating questions by members of the public.
4. CGR Project Director Charles Zettek explained the dissolution process and noted that the goal of a Dissolution Plan is to balance services, costs and taxes. Other key points made by Mr. Zettek:
 - a. Every dissolution study is different because the variables in a community are different.
 - b. Financial projections in a Dissolution Plan cannot be guaranteed, since fiscal changes in a municipal environment may occur at any time. He noted that town boards generally follow Dissolution Plans but they are not obligated to depending on budget or other requirements in the future.
 - c. NYS currently provides a consolidation incentive – Citizens Empowerment Tax Credit (CETC). The CETC is derived from a formula and the CETC (projected to be \$31,500/year for Chaumont) would continue as long as CETC is continued in the state budget.

- i. “The way that other villages have thought of it is to not base dissolution on CETC but to ask, ‘Does dissolution make sense outside of CETC?’”
 - ii. Mr. Zettek added, NY law, as currently stated, requires that at least 70% of CETC must be used to reduce property taxes. For tax projections (noted in the accompanying PowerPoint) we have assumed 100% would be used to reduce property taxes.
 - d. To date, budget information for the Town is based on fiscal year 2011, but the information will be updated in 2012 to reflect the Town’s newest budget numbers.
 - e. Mr. Zettek said slides #17 and #18 explain why the ratio of Taxable Assessed Valuation (TAV) in the Village and Town represent a key factor for tax rate projections shown in the PowerPoint.
 - f. The Dec. 6, 2011 PowerPoint presentation is only a first look at what is likely to happen, but the Committee has to go back and make refinements. This first public hearing is just the first of 3 public hearings. The next one is likely to occur about May 1, with the third public hearing to be on the draft Dissolution Plan on approximately June 15.
5. Comments provided by members of the audience during the presentation:
- a. There was a previous dissolution vote in the Village in March 1999. The outcome was: 72 in favor of dissolution and 129 opposed.
 - b. Currently the Village has about 300 registered voters.
 - c. The Village currently makes donations to community organizations (e.g., library, community foundation, Lyme garden club). There is no indication at this point whether or not the Town would continue these donations if the Village dissolved.
 - d. Village Mayor Valerie Rust noted the Village Board is currently investigating what it would cost to have private trash collection. “We want to see if we were to contract out (refuse collection) what our options would be.”