

Dissolution Study Committee (DSC)

Minutes

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Dec. 8, 2010

Civic Center Planning Office
6 – 7:30 p.m.

Chairperson: Tim Connolly

Present: Michele Arnold, Tim Connolly, Ruth Garner, Cindy Goliber, Eleanor Hopke, Jack McGuire, Mario Pusateri, Marie Regan, Rose Rivezzi, Will Siegfried, Steve Warr, Mike Zagrobelny

Excused: Alexandra Jacobs, Mark Lee

Absent: Dan Parker

I. Minutes: 11/10/10 minutes approved

II. Announcements: Charlie Zetteck (CGR) is conducting the mtg via teleconferencing, due to hazardous driving weather

III. Subcommittee Reports:

A. Courts – looked at outcomes, options; more study needed

B. DPW & Utility – looked at utilities in 3 categories:

1. Hydro issues of revenue and debt; general subcommittee consensus is that should the Village dissolve, Hydro debt & revenue both go town wide rather than remaining within the water-sewer district. Debt & revenue to remain within the water-sewer district or be spread throughout the town would be options developed by the overall committee and incorporated within the plan.

The new hydro will be up & running at some time in the future. Unknown at this time of the staffing & maintenance needed. Possible due to the technology being installed, would require minimal staff etc.

2. Sewer/Water issues of revenues, required special district; at the current capacity of the Water Treatment Plant & the Sewer Plant should the Village dissolve, could the facilities take on additional customers. Bob stated the Wal-Mart property would be no problem and the facility could handle some additional customers, but recommended facilities using large amounts of water & sewer ie: meat processing plants, cheese companies would not work without an expensive upgrade to the facility or installation of a satellite facility. Storm surge was his biggest concern.

3. DPW requires further in-depth discussions w/ Bob Henninger and Bruce Henderson present to answer the subcommittee questions

C. Fire & Rescue – separated into 2 categories:

1. Fire – used Seneca Falls (SF) as example; SF chose to expand the Town’s fire protection district to include the village. This involved the SF Fire Department becoming an incorporated fire dept. to be able to contract with the town. Under their plan, the village fire department assets would transfer to the town as well as the costs associated with those assets (maintenance, gas, upgrades, etc.). The debt associated with the village fire truck would be spread among all the residents in the newly defined town since all would likely benefit from its use.

Looked at finances: costs, operations, equipment, assets, debts, donations, tax dollars, Discussed *fire protection districts vs fire districts* and *paid drivers vs. volunteer drivers*.

2. Rescue – post dissolution, town will most likely contract with Potsdam Volunteer Rescue Squad (PVRS) to provide service to the former village residents. Currently the village has budgeted \$30,000 to the Rescue Squad for 2011.

PVRS is currently dispatched by the Potsdam Police Dept. Most of the remaining rescue squads in St. Lawrence Co. are dispatched by the county’s 911 center. A meeting was held in November to discuss the county dispatching PVRS. Pending a membership vote of the Rescue Squad, dispatching of PVRS by the county 911 center will be tried for 6 months.

Other issues- the PVRS building and the lease agreement with the Village, Potsdam Police Dept, etc.

D. Police – subcommittee, Chief Tischler and Lt. Murray discussed:

- how the department deals with college students including parental notification
- the role of the police department in community - resolved that it is a delicate balance between amicability, and a measured professional response to situations
- monthly/ periodic reports to the Village Board regarding police activities
- county budget ramifications and defined Sheriff Dept’s job of prisoner transport and road patrol, their role in Potsdam Village
- alternatives post dissolution, including options of police districts, sheriff substation, state police coverage etc.

The downsides of town-wide police:

- Huge area to cover
- Add 2 people per shift
- Response time may be a problem depending on location of call and officer
- Dispatcher system was explained

Chief Tischler will meet w Sheriff Wells to discuss options for Potsdam Village law enforcement services: sheriff hub site, fees, possibility of village police working for/with county, etc.

E. Code – comparing the Village code to the Town's. The different aspects of the village code were divided equally among the subcommittee members. Committee members categorized the village code according to these 4 criteria:

- No longer would apply;
- Re-written as Town law, no substantive change, redefine as applicable within former Village boundary;
- Needs to be reconciled with existing Town law, that is similar in nature;

- Applied to special districts - e.g., water rates.

Further local and comp data is being collected, as well as verifying assets, revenues/expenses and staffing.

F. General – Staffing:

- need to confirm the staffing summaries of full- and part-time town and village employees
- meeting with town and village staff to develop a more comprehensive list of positions and duties
- need to note which tasks/services must be maintained under state law if the village dissolves

Assests:

- review property use for town and village properties

Union Contracts:

- compare and contrast union contracts for town and village employees—
- find where the points of contention will be
- discuss impact of upcoming negotiations for the Potsdam Village Police union and CSEA
- details on what services are provided and how they are managed with respect to recreation

Upcoming tasks:

- develop a consolidated Potsdam town budget, and a preliminary report of anticipated changes in tax rates
- review administrative personnel functions and make recommendations for potential village assignments to town personnel by duty/position.
- review and plan for other changes post dissolution

IV. CGR Discussions:

A. Town/Village Budget Comparison (budget excel sheet at file repository) – this tool reflects:

1. current situation (“*Community Now*”) and likely changes (“*New Town*”)
2. definition – “*Town Outside*” means outside of both Norwood and potsdam Villages
3. formatted to highlight function by function breakdown
4. formatted to highlight budget by account funds
5. sum of Town and Village
6. easy-to-discern changes in sum for *New Town* post-dissolution
7. detailed sum accounts – salaries, sick time, no benefits

V. Village Comprehensive Plan Update

VI. MISC:

A. xx

VII. Public Reflections:

VIII. Next meeting: Wednesday, 1/12/11 Civic Center Community Rm, 6 – 7:30 pm

IX. Adjournment: 7:30 pm

Submitted by Michele Arnold