

WORKSESSION MEETING

APRIL 25, 2011

The Board of Trustees held the Worksession Meeting of April 25, 2011 at the Village Municipal Building, 167 North Main Street, Liberty New York. Mayor Winters opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

PRESENT: Mayor Richard Winters, Trustee Joan Stoddard, Trustee Shirley Lindsley, Trustee Corinne McGuire and Trustee Luis Alvarez. Also Present: Judy Zurawski, Clerk/Treasurer.

ALSO PRESENT: Daniel Ratner Sr., Keith Smith, Scott Kinne, Steven D'Agata, Police Chief Robert Mir, Ann Mir, Lynn Winters, Charles Barbuti, Jeremy Gorelick, Jack Tompkins, Tina Tompkins, Paula Williams, Herbert Clark, Roberta Byron-Lockwood, Elizabeth Montag, Peter Jones and Dan Hust of the Sullivan County Democrat.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Motion by Trustee McGuire, seconded by Trustee Stoddard and unanimously carried approving the following minutes:

REGULAR MEETING - APRIL 11, 2011

Motion by Trustee Stoddard, seconded by Trustee Lindsley and unanimously carried approving the following minutes:

PUBLIC HEARING - APRIL 20, 2011 Re: Budget

CORRESPONDENCE: Mayor Winters said the Village has received and sent the following correspondence and it is available for review in the Clerk's Office:

INCOMING

- List of 2011 Grant Recipients from Sullivan Renaissance
- Letter from Sullivan County IDA Re: Response to e-mail 4/13/2011
- Letter from Nicholas DeSantis Re: Noise Ordinance 4/21/2011

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Mayor Winters opened the meeting to comments from the Public.

Daniel Ratner Sr. (West Lake Street) said the ground breaking for the new Park will be Saturday, April 30th at 1:00 p.m.

Jeremy Gorelick (Liberty Chamber) discussed the Schedule of Events that will take place in Liberty over the Memorial Day Weekend. They include:

YARD SALE-O-RAMA - Saturday, May 28th and Sunday, May 29th
ART-IN-THE PARK ART & CRAFT SHOW - Saturday, May 28th

FOOD FEST - Saturday, May 28th
TALENT SHOW - Saturday, May 28th
DUCK RACE - Saturday, May 28th
LIBERTY MEMORIAL DAY PARADE - Monday, May 30th
MEMORIAL DAY SERVICES - Monday, May 30th.

Charles Barbuti (Dwyer Avenue) asked about the status of the Village and the Red Meat Facility.

Mayor Winters said to his knowledge the Village has done everything it needs to do.

Jack Tompkins (Carrier Street) read the following statement:

“In 1870 the Village was created, it was a time when farming was the main economy of the area. A time much slower then today, people then used horse and buggy, telecommunications were very minimal at best. A time, when the few typewriters available were still manual.

It is understandable that in those times that the populous needed to live in a Village. The land surrounding the Village was used for crops, and dairy animals. A Village offered Quality of Life services such as running water and sewer, not to mention that life in the Village offered safety just by the population living in close quarters as well as a social life that is the foundation of the bonds we have today.

The Village is now 140 years old and has seen prosperous times. In the 1960's things began to change. Blinded by many years of success we became blind to the possibility of failure. With 50 years plus to recover it's safe to say those times have passed and there is no reason to believe that they will return. Sure we may see little sparks and hopes of growth here and there through grant funded political vehicle programs like the CDC, IDA and numerous others. The question is, is that real growth? Is it sustainable on its own? History and current Village affairs show that it is not.

It is now 2011 and times have changed. You will not get to where you're going, certainly not on time, with a horse and buggy, almost everyone has a cell phone, and computer. Our social lives are no longer in the Village, they are behind the largest screen you can get for your computer.

There are many sides and many more opinions to our situation. What should we do? Should we consolidate services? Should we dissolve the Village all together? Should we continue to hang on through cuts to the people who want to provide us with services? Maybe try to squeeze another nickel from the dime holding taxpayer to scrape by another year.

I say we must dissolve the Village and join forces with the Town to even begin to consider the possibility of a better tomorrow.

Now I am very aware of the Naysayer's. And I know it's hard to make this decision when we consider all the obstacles that seem to be in the way. Like the loss of a touchable Government, jobs, and possibly protection from the Police, just to mention a few.

Yet in truth, there are only two questions that need to be answered to tell you if we should make the decision to dissolve:

1. Is the Village in a position where it can say and pay for the things it would like to do or does the Village have to ask if it can afford to do the things it needs to in order to function?
2. If there were no such thing as the Village of Liberty, would we create it today?"

Mr. Tompkins went on to list the benefits from dissolving the Village:

- ❖ "It will reduce the layers of unnecessary Government. In these times two Governments performing many of the same tasks is a waste of time and money.
- ❖ It will tear down the barriers in place between citizens caused by a Government within a Government. I'm sure everyone agrees that we can accomplish a better tomorrow if everyone has a say and we all work together.
- ❖ The people of the Village will not feel as though they are subsidizing the Town by paying taxes for services they don't receive.
- ❖ It will end the wastefulness of plowing to the end of a Village or Town line and then picking up the plow just to continue down the same road. It would also eliminate all the other problems that come from having a Street Department and a Highway Department separated and performing the same task.
- ❖ It will allow us to hand our children a more efficient place to live. Considering the debt we have on all levels of government, it is no longer a question; it is our responsibility to cut cost at all costs.

Last of all I would like to bring up the Police Department, which seems to be the biggest obstacle that stands in the way of all the benefits mentioned.

Here are the sides:

The people of the Village would like to keep the services of the Police Department. The Town says they do not want to add the Police Department to their taxes. I would like to suggest allowing democracy to decide through unofficial votes. One vote should be held first in what is now the Village where people in the Village can decide to keep the Police and pay for it through the creation of a special district, or to be rid of it all together. Then upon the results, saying the Village vote was to get rid of the Police Department, the Town could have an unofficial vote which excludes the Village residents as to whether they want to take on the Police Department, have Constables or neither.

These unofficial votes would not mean anything, except to provide the public with an opportunity to put forward their true feelings without being influenced by outside forces.

It will also provide the Town Government guidance in its planning for the Village to dissolve.

Working with the Town:

The main reason I say dissolve the Village is because of the separation it causes between us as a community. Tit for tat – people are sick of it. What a drain on otherwise very caring and productive people. It stunts our growth and divides us. Our families and friends live in the Village and in the Town. No we are all not residents of the Village, but without a doubt we are all residents of the Town.

We let party lines, Government territory lines and our own selfish interest stand in the way of what is the right and responsible thing to do for our children and their future. I don't think we do it because we are bad people, I think we do it because we don't take the time to think about the results of actions on the future.

Let us focus ourselves on one body of Government and strive as a Town pushing ahead with first a plan to dissolve and then collectively working to make our comprehensive development plan a reality.

Without dissolving the Village we will find it becomes the weight that holds us back from reaching our ultimate goals, of a better tomorrow and the possibility to prosper again."

TABLED UPDATE ON ORCHARD STREET APARTMENTS - SURPLUS LAND
BUSINESS: BID OF 112-4-23 AND 112-4-24

Mayor Winters said Tax Map # 112-4-24 (surplus parcel) has been put out to bid with a minimum bid of \$1,250. This surplus land is approximately 10' wide by 98' long in the shape of a rectangle. The subject property has frontage on Orchard Street and Lake Street.

This bid opening is set for Monday, May 2, 2011 at 3:00 p.m.

CONSIDER MUNICIPAL COOPERATION AGREEMENT WITH TOL RE: JUSTICE COURT

Mayor Winters said the rider that was drawn up by the Village's Attorney will be sent to the Town and once all information is reviewed by the Town and Village it can be finalized.

This item was tabled until the Village Meeting of Monday, May 9th.

CONSIDER EMERGENCY LOANS FROM APPLICANTS RE: CDBG FUNDING

Motion by Trustee Stoddard, seconded by Trustee Lindsley and unanimously carried approving the following Emergency Community Block Grant Loans:

HILLSIDE GREENHOUSES	- \$3,000.00
FLOYD AND BOBO'S BAKERY	- \$3,000.00
GOZZA GRAPHICS	- \$3,000.00
FAST TAX INCOME TAX CENTER	- \$3,000.00
JB MAK BUILDING AND RENTAL CENTER	- \$3,000.00
LIBERTY WINES AND LIQUORS	- \$3,000.00
PHOENIX ENTERPRISES	- \$3,000.00

These loans will be for twelve (12) months at two (2) percent.

CONSIDER CDBG LOAN – THE SHOE BOX – DEBORAH/SAMANTHA BURGER \$20,000.

Motion by Trustee Stoddard, seconded by Trustee Lindsley and unanimously carried approving a Community Development Block Grant Loan to Deborah and Samantha Burger in the amount of \$20,000. This loan is to open a shoe store, which they plan on calling The Shoe Box.

This loan is contingent on a lease in the Village of Liberty and the loan closing will not take place until the Village has the lease and the full funding package.

This loan will be for eighty-four (84) months at two (2%) percent interest.

CONSIDER SETTING PUBLIC HEARING RE: TAXI LAW CHANGE

Motion by Trustee Stoddard, seconded by Trustee McGuire and unanimously carried to set a Public Hearing on Monday, May 9, 2011 at

6:50 p.m. to amend Chapter 75 of the Code of the Village of Liberty, which addresses Medicaid Taxicabs.

NEW CONSIDER VOTE ON 2011/2012 VILLAGE OF LIBERTY BUDGET
BUSINESS:

RESOL.# Motion by Trustee Stoddard, seconded by Trustee Alvarez and
12-2011: unanimously carried approving Resolution #12-2011.

WHEREAS, the tentative budget for the year 6/1/11 to 5/31/12 has been duly presented to the Board by the Budget Officer and a duly advertised Public Hearing has been held thereon,

RESOLVED, pursuant to Section 5-508 (4) of the Village Law that said tentative budget, as changed, altered and revised, be and hereby is adopted as the budget of the Village of Liberty for the year 6/1/11 – 5/31/12.

GENERAL BUDGET	-	\$3,566,415.00
WATER BUDGET	-	\$ 933,582.00
SEWER BUDGET	-	\$ 840,690.00
SANITATION BUDGET	-	\$ 769.189.00

TAX RATE	-	\$21.16 PER THOUSAND
WATER RATE	-	\$5.97 – INSIDE
		\$8.00 – OUTSIDE
SEWER RATE	-	\$5.81 – INSIDE/OUTSIDE

SANITATION RATE	BASED ON CLASS
	\$240.00 – RESIDENTIAL
	\$480.00 - TWO FAMILY
	\$720.00 – THREE FAMILY
	\$500.00 – SMALL COMMERCIAL
	(NO DUMPSTER)
	\$1200.00 - DUMPSTER

THE MOTION WAS PUT TO VOTE, WHICH RESULTED AS FOLLOWS:

MAYOR WINTERS	-	YES
TRUSTEE LINDSLEY	-	YES
TRUSTEE MCGUIRE	-	YES ADOPTED
TRUSTEE ALVAREZ	-	YES
TRUSTEE STODDARD	-	YES

Mayor Winters explained to the public the reason for the change that brought the budget down under a one (1%) percent increase was the fact that the Office Staff also gave up their raises.

CONSIDER ALLOWING EMPLOYEES TO CARRY OVER VACATION TIME

Motion by Trustee Stoddard, seconded by Trustee McGuire and unanimously carried approving the following vacation carryovers for Village of Liberty employees:

JUDY ZURAWSKI - 35 Days
ALICE GONZALEZ - 25 Days
PAMELA WINTERS - 21 Days
JOHN PICARD - 48 Days

CONSIDER LITTLE LEAGUE PARADE – APRIL 30, 2011

Motion by Trustee Stoddard, seconded by Trustee McGuire and unanimously carried approving a **parade permit** to hold a **Little League Parade Day** on **Monday, April 30, 2011** at 11:30 a.m. sponsored by the Town of Liberty and the American Legion.

CONSIDER LETTER FROM SULLIVAN COUNTY TREASURER RE: CDBG LOAN FOR ALFARO

Motion by Trustee Stoddard, seconded by Trustee McGuire and unanimously carried to send a letter to the County of Sullivan acknowledging our interest in the unclaimed property.

CONSIDER RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE 2011 MAIN STREET ANCHOR GRANT

RESOL.# Motion by Trustee Stoddard, seconded by Trustee McGuire and
13-2011: unanimously carried approving Resolution #13-2011.

WHEREAS, the New York State Housing Trust Fund Corporation's Office of Homes and Community Renewal has issued as request for applications for the 2011 New York Main Street Program; and

WHEREAS, such program provides monies to assist New York Communities with their Main Street and downtown revitalization efforts; and

WHEREAS, the Liberty Community Development Corporation proposes to submit an application for no more than \$500,000 to fund a Liberty Main Street Anchor Program;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Village of Liberty supports the above referenced application.

**CONSIDER MEMORANDUM RE: WATER/SEWER BILL DISPUTE 2
NORTH DELAWARE AVENUE**

Motion by Trustee Lindsley, seconded by Trustee Stoddard and unanimously carried to bill Water/Sewer Account #5-19700 an average bill for their high consumption period of December 1, 2010 – March 1, 2011. The new bill will reflect usage of 36,000 gallons at a cost of \$426.42.

After both the Water Department and the Mayor reviewed the situation and visited the house no explanation could be found for the high water usage.

**CONSIDER RECOGNITION FOR JEFFREY MILLER – SAM’S SERVICE
STATION**

Chief Robert Mir said that Jeffrey Miller has offered to service the Police cars, doing the labor for free and the parts needed will be at his costs.

The Board said they should recognize him with a Certificate of Appreciation. Chief Mir said he would set something up after the beginning of June.

CONSIDER NEW TIRES FOR POLICE VEHICLES

The Board authorized Chief Mir to purchase six new tires for his police vehicles so that he does not ruin the snow tires he currently has on the car.

**CONSIDER TERMINATING THE CONTRACT WITH ED WASHINGTON
FOR THE VILLAGE WEBSITE**

Motion by Trustee Stoddard, seconded by Trustee Lindsley and unanimously carried to terminate the contract the Village currently has with Edward Washington for the Village website.

Trustee Stoddard said the new website was greatly improved and the Board said they liked it very much.

**DISCUSSION OF GREEN LANE SEWER ISSUE AND PROPOSAL FROM
DELAWARE ENGINEERING**

Mayor Winters explained that the Village has a short window of time to begin the correction of the Green Lane Sewer issues. He explained that the cost of the project would be approximately \$200,000 and he thought it would be a good idea to also bond the aeration ditch problem and get it corrected all at once.

Motion by Trustee Stoddard, seconded by Trustee McGuire and unanimously carried to begin the bonding process by obtaining bonding attorneys to look for financing for these projects.

**TRUSTEE
REPORTS:**

Mayor Winters opened the meeting to comments from the Board.

Trustee Alvarez discussed the paint striping that needs to be done by the Village of Liberty Department of Public Works.

Trustee Stoddard discussed a couple of issues mentioned in the new NYCOM Bulletin – these issues include a state wide law for the payment of services provided to tax exempt properties (such as fire, police services) and a fair return on sewer profits to the general fund.

Motion by Trustee Stoddard, seconded by Trustee Lindsley and unanimously carried to send letters of support on these issues.

Trustee McGuire said she thought the letters to NYCOM in support of the issues discussed was an excellent idea.

Trustee McGuire discussed the letter received from Nichols DeSantis regarding the noise ordinance and his drum playing.

Trustee McGuire also mentioned the letter from Ira Cohen regarding the parcels in the Village that have such high taxes that are not selling at the auctions. The trustees did not think there was anything the Village could legally do on this matter.

Trustee Lindsley – No Comment

Mayor Winters thanked everyone for their efforts on the budget.

AJOURN: Motion by Trustee Lindsley, seconded by Trustee Stoddard and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting.

THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 8:40 P.M.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

JUDY ZURAWSKI, CLERK/TREASURER