

Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Village of Lake George, NY, held at the Village Hall on Tuesday, November 28, 2023 at 12:00 pm. Zoom teleconferencing was not available as we were unable to connect.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Raymond Perry, Mayor
Jose Filomeno, Trustee
Alyson Miller, Trustee
John Root, Trustee

ABSENT: Joe Mastrodomenico, Deputy Mayor

Also Present: Clerk Julie Allen, Superintendent Keith Lanfear, Director of Planning and Zoning Dan Barusch, and Carol Sullivan.

At 12:09 pm Mayor Perry opened the Special Meeting.

Dan Barusch began the meeting explaining that he was there to present the Village Board with updates and allow for discussions on several ongoing studies and projects.

Mr. Barusch first opened the discussion on the comprehensive plan update. He explained that local governments are recommended to update their plan every ten years. He went on to state that the Village of Lake George had not updated their plan since 2004. He said that updating the plan is a very long process and requires a third party to help write. Mr. Barusch said that there are grants that he can apply for that can help pay for the project. He said that there is currently funding available to apply for that has a 90/10 split, meaning the Village would only be responsible for providing 10% of the cost of the project. He went on to say that on average these projects take a year and a half to two years to complete. This means if the project is started in 2024, it should be completed by the end of 2025 to 2026. If the Village Board approves moving forward with having the Comprehensive plan done, then Mr. Barusch will work with the Treasurer to have it put into the upcoming budget. Mr. Barusch said he will need to know if the Village will want the longer or shorter version done. He said the shorter version will cost approximately \$40K while the longer version will cost approximately \$75K. The Village responsibility would be \$4K or \$7.5K respectively. Mr. Barusch said the longer version would include the land use section which adds more time and money. He said the more granularly you look, the longer it will take and the more it will cost.

Mayor Perry said that he would like to see the longer, more in depth plan done. He said that there were things in the last comprehensive plan that had not been addressed.

Dan Barusch said that near the end of the plan there is a section to address getting the items completed.

Trustee Root questioned if the Village should write a new plan or just update the old plan.

Mayor Perry said that the old plan was out of date and did not consider new technology.

Trustee Filomeno said he felt it would be smart to go granular and not rush it out the door. Trustee Filomeno asked if the writers of the plan would keep the Board and public updated, to which Dan Barusch replied yes, they would. Mr. Barusch said that the writers would create a website, take minutes to meetings, and post the information on the website to keep the public informed.

Trustee Miller said she feels it's a good time to complete a study as the County is also

undergoing theirs at the same time. She asked if the study being done by the County would help.

Dan Barusch said the Village could build off what the County is doing and that he was on the committee for Warren County.

Mayor Perry stated he felt it was the right time to do the study, especially because others were doing it at the same time.

The next topic up for discussion was the consolidation study. Dan Barusch said that the subject had come up a lot over the last couple years. He said after the dissolution vote, both the Town and the Village had made resolutions stating they would investigate doing the analysis. He went on to explain that the consolidation study and the comprehensive plan were totally different studies and should not be done at the same time.

Trustee Filomeno said he did not want to wait two years for the comprehensive plan to be done. He said he felt that people needed the information that a comprehensive plan would bring to make informed decisions when voting on consolidation. He said he felt that the comprehensive plan and the consolidation study were like the horse and the carriage. That the comprehensive plan needs to come before the consolidation study. He went on to say that the Village has a new Mayor, and that the Mayor has been doing a great job since taking office. He said he would like to focus on building up instead of tearing down the Village.

Dan Barusch said Trustee Filomeno made a great point. He said that when we hired the best in the business to do the dissolution study, it still did not eliminate all misinformation. He went on to say that if the Village does the comprehensive plan, there will be more information available to the public that is not all numbers. He said that people need more information than numbers and that a comprehensive plan can give them that.

Trustee Root said he felt that the resolution that was passed promising tax reductions was passed based on misinformation. He said he would like to set the record straight and then do the comprehensive plan.

Mayor Perry said that of all the Village residences only two had come and voiced concerns over the tax deduction and the consolidation study.

Trustee Root said he felt that one unified Lake George would be stronger. He said that the Village relies too heavily on revenues that can go away, whereas the Town has taxes to rely on.

Dan Barusch reminded the Board that they can rescind the resolution that offered the tax break.

Mayor Perry said that the Village attorney said they do not need to.

Trustee Root questioned if voter initiative could force a consolidation study. Dan Barusch responded that it could, but there would need to be two petitions for both the Village and Town, and he couldn't see them getting enough people to sign for the Town.

Carol Sullivan said that the Village would keep their debt if the Town and Village consolidate. She said that this was one of the items of misinformation that was going around during the dissolution study. She asked Dan Barusch what would happen to the funding for one comprehensive plan if they found out that we were doing a consolidation study at the same time?

Dan Barusch responded that it could affect it, but most likely would not. He recommended that the Village would determine which study they want to proceed with and make a resolution for it at the next Village Board meeting.

Trustee Miller asked Dan Barusch if he thought the 90/10 grant would still be available for the comprehensive plan in two years.

Dan Barusch responded that it was a new grant, but he thinks it will. He went on to say that the grant money available for the consolidation study had been around for a long time and would not be going anywhere. He said that the results for the consolidation study would be basically the same as for the dissolution, but the process is different. He explained that in cases of consolidation, Towns and Villages would not work as well as the Town and Village of Lake George do.

Trustee Filomeno stated that he respects Trustee Root for standing his ground on his position. He said that he also believes the consolidation plan should be done, but after the comprehensive plan. Trustee Root asked Dan Barusch if the decision to do the consolidation study could be put in as part of the comprehensive plan. Dan Barusch said that they could put the consolidation study in as a theme.

Trustee Root thanked Trustee Filomeno for his recognition. He restated that he felt the Village is too reliant on revenues. He said he is concerned that if people have no disposable income, then the Village will not be able to sustain itself.

Mayor Perry responded that the Village went through Covid unharmed as well as recessions just fine.

Dan Barusch began the discussion on the workforce housing study. He said that the study initially started out to find housing for J1 students. He said that it evolved into looking at the housing needs for all types including seasonal, local, and people who are displaced due to costs. He said in the study there was a matrix with recommendations to look at. Some of the recommendations included; creating a rental registry and inspections, developing a more formal registry, and assembling a list of all available housing, which would include sites that could be used to create housing. He said there were also bigger picture items like establishing a fund for housing, establishing an authority that can help with housing efforts, and to pursue a seasonal housing project through public/private partnership. He said they were back in discussion with the International Residence Hall to look at the Harbor Hotel site. He said that a new facility would help to address not only seasonal but year-round housing. He said that there were several strategies like a housing fund, and a housing authority. He said that he and the Mayor were meeting later that day with the County to go over these strategies. He said there was a need for housing throughout the County. Mr. Barusch explained that there are a total of eight strategies that can be used, and they are looking at all of them. He said they are working with different entities to work on their individual areas. He said one strategy is Zoning, and that they have adopted policies like the new condo law to help. He went on to say that planning for transportation linkages was a major need. He said most people using the housing are only using bikes. He said they need to expand on existing partnerships like student connections.

Trustee Miller said she would like to see the Village focus on both the need for student housing and family housing. She suggested some Occ Tax to be used towards housing.

Dan Barusch said the study started as a workforce study but ended up being for much more. He said the density provision would help to look at the local level with things like holding rent costs for a few years.

Trustee Filomeno mentioned that Saratoga did well by having mixed use dwellings.

Carol Sullivan said that going forward the Village needs to keep in mind transportation needs. She said that the trollies do not go far enough and that people need ways to get back and forth to work.

Trustee Miller said she wants the Village to work with Warren County to get this done.

The table for the Business Improvement District was tabled due to time constraints.

Dan Barusch said that the Town had done water flow meters over by Million Dollar Beach for two months. He said we have good capacity. He said the only line that was even close to capacity was the 14" line over by Million Dollar Beach that was at about 56%. Mr. Barusch said that what it came down to was that there was a lot of I&I (Inflow and Infiltration) and the highest flow day was in April due to the extreme rain.

Dan Barusch went on to discuss the Town sewer study. He said they are doing a feasibility study to put in sewer lines on Lakeshore Drive. He said the last time it was analyzed was back in the 1980's. They are finishing up their studies by the end of this year. They were given money by a State Grant. He said they hired LaBella to do the study. He said the report identifies the boundaries. He said it would be an extremely expensive project and there would be limitations. He continued that there would need to be a pump station installed. The quote for the district was \$12M, but it will most likely be closer to \$15M. He said the Town will go after grants to see what money they may receive. He said the Town would need to receive at least 50% of the total cost to proceed. Mr. Barusch said the lynchpin of the entire project is how it will affect the Village system. He said at this point there is not enough capacity at the line that goes to the pump station or the pump station itself. He said that means there would need to be a line run down Canada Street or a multimillion-dollar project resizing the line. He said if they can bypass the pump station, then it will help to mitigate concerns about turning a \$15M project into a \$20M project. The other concern is real estate. They are not sure if there is enough room to upgrade the pump station in the park. Mr. Barusch said there needs to be work on the wet well. He said it will be one of the more difficult things to upgrade. He said the district is part of a much larger project that the Town is calling the Lakeshore Drive Construction project. He said it will realign the road, provide a multiuse path, lighting, pedestrian infrastructure, and bus stops. He said all together it would be a total of about \$30M. He said because of the cost, they are trying to piece meal the project. He said if they add another 20% – 25% to the flows of the system, then the increase of the O&M will help stabilize what others are paying into the system by reducing rates to the existing users.

Trustee Miller asked what kind of long-term effect this could have on the wastewater plant.

Mr. Barusch responded that the plant has more than enough capacity at 1.75M and they are only hitting 1M at peak. He said he will send over the finalized report to the Village as soon as it is completed.

Mr. Barusch went on to start the discussion on the water study for the Village. He said that the study went well and that answered all the questions it needed to. He said the takeaways are well under capacity, that they were able to see where there was water loss, and able to reduce that loss, plus it showed where upgrades were needed. He said that the water loss is down 20%, and all repairs needed are minor. He said the largest thing we would need is an additional filter at the plant.

Mr. Barusch said that the Town water feasibility study helped to determine potential boundaries, potential users, and potential debt. He said they identified the district size and found that it could be all under one district with about 1,000 parcels. He said the users would be paying into the district but only for debt. The way it would be structured would pay into the Village like they do with water now, and that any money they would collect would go into reserves for capital projects, and debt.

Mr. Barusch began the discussion on the DRI application. He said that if we receive the award, the Village share would be \$1.5M. He said the site visit went very well and the presentation went very well. He said he received an email from someone at empire state that said they did excellent. He said he feels that we have a compelling chance to win, and he feels we will hear back within the next two months. He said if this happens we will then need to come up with our share. He said if we get the DRI, then he would not be doing any more applications for grants other than for the Comprehensive plan. He said the money would need to be budgeted for the 2025–2026 year.

Mr. Barusch wanted to go over just a few things about pending zoning amendments. He said one of the things the Village needs to look at is the law on A frames. He said there needs to be a review about creating the chicken law. He said there is currently nothing in the law regarding scooters. He said that Jim Anagnos needs to be kept in the loop for special permissions that are given during events. Clerk Julie Allen suggested he be given copies of all approved event applications.

Clerk Julie Allen presented several invoices for payment at our payroll/audit to meet deadlines.

Trustee Filomeno, seconded by Trustee Miller, offered the following resolution:

RESOLUTION NO. 196, 2023

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Village Board authorizes payment to be processed for the Lite up the Village event vendors and winners, Best Paving for completed paving, and John Deere Financial for a lease on a new Backhoe. The checks will be issued at the next available payroll/audit.

VOTING	Ayes: 5	Perry, Filomeno, Miller, Root
	Nays: 0	
	Absent: 1	Mastrodomenico

RESOLUTION NO. 196, 2023 ADOPTED. November 28, 2023

Superintendent Keith Lanfear presented the results of the mini bid through OGS for a new F350 truck for the DPW department. He asked for the Board to award the bid to the lowest responsible bidder, VanBortel Ford. He said their bid came in at \$49,504.74 but then he asked them to add a light bar, and mud flaps for a total of \$50,015.74.

Trustee Root, seconded by Trustee Miller, offered the following resolution:

RESOLUTION NO. 197, 2023

WHEREAS VanBortel Ford, of 71 Marsh Road, East Rochester, NY 14445 was the lowest responsive, responsible bidder for the 2023 F-350 Truck OGS Mini Bid # 110723;

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Village Board hereby awards the OGS Mini Bid Contract # 110723 as per the specifications to VanBortel Ford, of 71 Marsh Road, East Rochester, NY 14445 for a total bid award of \$50,015.74.

VOTING **Ayes: 5** **Perry, Filomeno, Miller, Root**
 Nays: 0
 Absent: 1 **Mastrodomenico**

RESOLUTION NO. 197, 2023

November 28, 2023

A special meeting of the Village Board was set for Monday December 11, 2023 at 3:30pm.

Trustee Miller made a motion to adjourn at 3:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie K. Allen
Clerk