

Minutes of the Special Joint Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Village of Lake George, NY and the Town Council, held on Monday, August 22, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. at the Town Administration Building located at 20 Old Post Road, Lake George, NY. Zoom teleconferencing was available.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Robert M. Blais, Mayor  
John Earl, Deputy Mayor  
Joseph Mastrodomenico, Trustee  
Ray Perry, Trustee  
John Root, Trustee

**TOWN COUNCIL PRESENT:** Supervisor Dennis Dickinson  
Marisa Muratori  
Dan Hurley

Also Present: Clerk Debra McKinney, Attorney Matt Fuller, and Project Manager Dan Barusch.

Others in attendance that signed in as follows: John A. Cocozza-Hill, Dolores Marinelli, Janine Behan, Emily & Bill Manion, Clara Conte, Charles Devries, Cindy Grosso, Michael Grosso, Joseph Culver, Mark & Simone Ramsey, Jeff Blau, Sharyn Ruzza, Sandy Spellburg, Ron Goodspeed, Dale Perry, Janet Loonan, Barbara Neubauer, Joanne & Walt Mamrosch, Robert Kramer, Patricia Hurly, Larrie Gouge, Leo & Jane Guiariglia, Robert Mastrandtoni, Robert A. Mastrandtoni, Phyllis Meader, John Carr, Carollee Labruzzo, JoAnne & Louis Ramm, John & Kary Bishop, Bob Purrott, Sheila Edwards, Mona & Richard Seeger, Tom McKinney, Sally & Ron Mogren, Douglas Frost, Ed Pontacoloni and others. There were also several Zoom participants, as well.

Supervisor Dickinson called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and announced that this is an informational meeting about the dissolution of the Village. He noted that there are public hearings scheduled for public comment at later dates. Project Manager, Dan Barusch pointed out that although there will not be a public question and answer session tonight, there is a form to fill out to submit questions to the consultants, who will then answer your questions via the website that they have set up.

Ben Syden, Vice President and Kathleen Rooney, Local Government Specialist, of Laberge Group who have been working to prepare an interim study then began review of the Interim Study. Mr. Syden noted that this is a Joint Village & Town Board meeting. He noted that the study will be available on the website, [www.labergegroup.com/lakegeorge](http://www.labergegroup.com/lakegeorge) and suggested if you'd like more information or would like to ask questions, you can check there and sign up for weekly updates. Mr. Syden, along with Kathleen Rooney reviewed the Village of Lake George Interim Dissolution Study outlined as follows:

- How Did We Get Here?
- The Interim Dissolution Study Process
- What is an Interim Dissolution Report?
- Does it make “sense” or “cents”?
- How will Village Governance change?
- Will my services change?
- Citizen Empowerment Tax Credit
- Potential Post Dissolution Fiscal Impacts
- Board of Trustees Alternative to Dissolution
- Next Steps
- Public Comment

The consultants explained each bullet point in detail, then asked for questions from the Board members.

Trustee Mastrodomenico asked about the Legacy District and how it affects Village residents. Mr. Syden explained that only Village residents would be in the Legacy District.

Councilperson Muratori asked about reasons for why Villages dissolve and about the outcomes and residents' reactions. Mr. Syden noted that every Village goes through the process for different reasons. Mr. Syden replied that there are no general reasons, but he gave some examples of some villages that have chosen to dissolve and why.

Mayor Blas brought up the alternative solution that the Village Board proposed and questions about why didn't you do it before, and where is the money coming from? He wanted to give a little background. He commented that we have two very well-run communities that have been working together, and both are healthy financially. That's why the Village came up with an alternate solution. He noted that when we first started working on a new WWTP, we were saving money to cover the cost. Tourism swells our need for a new plant, so it was decided to increase the parking fees to help cover the cost. Since those fees have been increased, the credit card revenues have amounted to \$2.3M to date. Now that the WWTP is almost complete, and has come in within the budget, these funds can be applied to Village taxes next year, that can be guaranteed. Mayor Blais commented that there is nothing in this report that is guaranteed except that the Mayor and the Village Board will disappear. Mayor Blais said, "Remember that they are using \$4.2M of Village money that we have generated because we've been successful, to get rid of us. Not on my watch."

Supervisor Dickinson asked about the Village's share of Wood Park and what would happen to it. Mr. Syden commented that it would have to be negotiated with the County, but you've got to assume that everything the Village owns would be transferred over to the Town.

Mr. Syden noted that if the vote is for dissolution, they highly recommend that the dissolution date would be set for December 31, 2024.

Councilperson Muratori asked to clarify why communities might dissolve. If given the Village's alternate response to this and their resolution to bring the taxes down equal to the report's findings. She asked if there were any other efficiencies to consider. Mr. Syden replied, there would be very few citing the Village's uniqueness. You don't see the same type of savings as you see in other communities.

Mr. Syden commented that it's a positive step in that the interim study has been done. It was not required. It was done to provide a level of knowledge to the taxpayers. It was done as a joint effort; that is a credit to the leadership of both governments. It's a positive step that the Village has found other alternatives. It is a positive step to find solutions. It's a positive step to have three public hearings for comments. It's a positive step that the web site is provided.

Supervisor Dickinson thanked everyone for coming, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra J. McKinney  
Village Clerk