

Minutes of the Joint Village of Lake George Board of Trustees and Town Board Meeting held at the Town Administration Building on Monday, June 10, 2019 at 5:00 p.m.

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

**COUNCIL PRESENT:** Dennis Dickinson, Supervisor  
Vinnie Crocitto, Councilperson  
Dan Hurley, Councilperson  
Marisa Muratori, Councilperson

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Nancy Stannard, Councilperson

Also Present: Clerk Debra J. McKinney, Clerk Deborah Foley, Superintendent Dave Harrington, Thom Randall (Journalist), Mike Goot (Journalist), Sean Doty (Chazen), Village Attorney Matt Fuller, Mona & Dick Seeger, Jim Gray, Kate Breslin, Fred Austin and others.

At 5:00 p.m. Supervisor Dickinson called the Special Joint Meeting to order and noted that the purpose of this meeting is so that the Town Board can be updated on the status of the Waste Water Treatment Plant Improvement project.

Mayor Blais stated that the Village is under Consent Order by NYS DEC to construct a new Waste Water Treatment Plant and have it up and running by 2021. He introduced Sean Doty of Chazen Engineering and asked him to explain the status.

Mr. Doty reported that several bids for General Construction, Electrical and HVAC were opened on April 20, but no plumbing bids were received. The plumbing portion was rebid and opened on May 31. There is a 90-day period from the opening in which the bids must be awarded. The not to exceed cost is estimated at \$24M; the serial bond maximum has been increased. He noted that he does not see rebidding the project as a positive scenario, because the cost will continue to increase. The consent order will not change; the schedule will just be compressed.

Village Attorney Matt Fuller spoke and has been working with DEC in regards to the Consent Order. He commented that a request to DEC to push the date out may not be realistic. He reported that they negotiated the SPDES permit deadline which will be eight years. If not done now, he estimated a 2% to 3% increase in costs per year to build a new plant. He surmised that he doesn't see DEC allowing a change in deadline by years.

Mayor Blais noted that we have a contract with the Town of Lake George to treat effluent from the Caldwell Sewer District (CSD), and part of the contract would be to agree on any capital expenditures. With the estimated project cost of \$24M, and with the grants awarded so far, a balance of about \$17,250,000. remains. We have also requested an exemption for this debt and any related expenses from the constitutional debt limit. He further went on to discuss funding options and costs. He informed the Boards that the Plant affects the regional economy, and he has made a

request for annual funding from Warren County as well. If the flows remain the same as the past year, the CSD would be responsible for approximately 50% of the debt service. He gave some estimates of the users' cost. Mayor Blais went on to say that he is looking for some consensus from the Boards. He feels optimistic; he's had discussions with NYS staff and thinks we will get some relief.

Attorney Fuller pointed out that we worked on the income survey and filed a hardship application with EFC. We were awarded a 0% interest rate over a period of 30 years. This is a substantial savings, which benefits both municipalities. Mr. Doty gave the figures for the cost savings with this and noted that the median household income was \$41,850.

Councilperson Marisa Muratori inquired as to whether there would be another round of grant funding. Mr. Doty replied that yes there is Consolidated Funding grant with a deadline soon. There is also the Empire State Development grant that we could apply for, and there may be a DEC Water Quality Improvement grant, which the Village has already received once, so we're not confident that we are eligible again. Sean noted that the Village is and has been applying for everything and any grant funding that's available.

Ms. Muratori asked if maybe the schedule could be delayed by six months. Mr. Fuller replied that we do have some time built in on the construction schedule, but you've got to remember that the plant has to be up and running for three or four months before the deadline.

Ms. Muratori noted that they are asking us to commit to and build a very expensive plant, that we cannot afford. She asked if there would be any way to extend the deadline and get more grant funding. Mr. Doty noted that there is a funding matrix and receiving some additional grants may decrease some of the others, but reassured her that we will continue to apply for grants.

Mayor Blais commented that the biggest opportunity that we might have a chance at, is the Federal funding that comes to the State. He noted that we will still be seeking funding while under construction. The discussion continued in regards to grant funding, as well as about the short term financing with EFC that we currently have that needs to be changed over to long term financing within a period of three years.

Supervisor Dickinson asked about the bid award deadline. Mr. Doty replied that he thinks the deadline is four or five days after the July Village Board meeting. Supervisor Dickinson continued and stated that during his tenure as supervisor he has always made sure that prior to the start of a project, he makes sure they have financing in place. He said, "This doesn't set well with me." He remarked that we cannot afford this project. He proposed that the Town Board sit down and make some decisions.

Councilperson Dan Hurley pointed out that the sewer rates will go from \$54 per unit to \$160 per unit. He continued and asked about the number of bids received and talked about the bids and the bidders. Mr. Hurley continued and asked more questions about the plant itself and what the plan is. Mr. Doty replied to his questions.

The floor was open to comments.

Mayor Blais asked Attorney Fuller what are the alternatives. What if the Village and Town say No? Attorney Fuller noted that if we don't comply with the State's requirements, then eventually the Federal government will enforce and impose fines.

Discussion continued about the type of plant that we are intending to construct, which makes it unique due to the prohibition of the direct discharge of effluent. Sean Doty noted that this is a complete replacement as opposed to a rehabilitation which drives the cost. They talked about the total dissolved solids, about nitrates and denitrification and about the infrastructure necessary to handle the maximum capacity of 1.75M gallons per day. Mr. Doty explained why it is necessary to build a new plant with a new design.

Supervisor Dickinson noted that the Town Board needs to analyze the figures. He requested a meeting with Mr. Doty and Superintendent Harrington to review the facts. They agreed to set up a meeting soon.

Mr. Doty from Chazen presented some graphs comparing the Village flows versus the Town flows. He reviewed the improvements that the Town has done to their system. Discussion, questions, and explanations continued about those. Mayor Blais asked if there was any problem with the Village's metering system. Mr. Doty said that "so far as he can tell it is a reasonable system to use." Councilman Hurley asked to see the meter calibration results.

Councilman Hurley requested a copy of the plans and bid specifications for the Town. Mr. Doty agreed to get those for them.

Attorney Fuller pointed out that as a result of several conversations with the State, DEC and EFC, they have found that it's not just the cost to replace the plant, but with the SPEDES permits, which are renewed in five-year increments, they have a new policy for inclusion of an Asset Management Plan, for the purpose of planning for the future. It is a huge component, and municipalities must set aside funds for this as well.

The meeting adjourned at 6:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra J. McKinney, CPPB  
Purchasing Agent  
Village Clerk