

A Regular Board Meeting was held on Thursday, December 19th, 2002, in the Village Hall at 7:00 p.m.

Present: Glenn Weyant, Mayor
Paul Morra, Trustee
Daniel Powell, Trustee
Jill Dodds, Clerk

Also present: Joe Prout of the Daily Mail, Mrs. Maria Morra and Keith Griffin, Building Code Enforcement Officer.

The Mayor opened the Meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Trustee Morra made a motion to approve the minutes of the previous Regular Board Meeting held on November 21st, 2002 and the Special Meeting held on December 13th, 2002. Trustee Powell seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

Trustee Powell made a motion to approve the vouchers for December, (General #180-212: Water #82-97). Trustee Morra seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

REPORT OF THE MAYOR:

The Christmas Tree was cut and erected at the Memorial.

Meeting with Warren Dietz from the Comptroller's Office and Judge Noreen Valcich. Public Hearing on re-establishing the Village as an assessing unit.

Tree Light Ceremony – very successful and I wish to applaud everyone who helped to put it together. We received some suggestions which will be incorporated into next year's event.

Meeting with Rich Miller of Fraser Engineering on the Bike Path remedial work.

Special Meeting to pass resolution authorizing the signing of the CWC Agreement.

Took pictures for the Façade Improvement Grant.

Met with Paul Bulmer of Stewarts. They are trying to select a site within the Village.

Met with Bob Arnold and Andy Raymond of SARA. They felt we did a great job putting the Records Room together and we they will be available to steer us through the grant process for the next phase in 2003.

Talked with bond counsel regarding the refinancing of the fire truck and I will be setting up a conference call with Bruce Whitaker of the Bank of Greene County. Trustee Powell thought that the fire truck was going to be part of the whole refinancing effort which is now stalled in the Assembly and Senate. The Mayor explained that we were continuing our efforts to push the Home Rule Bills through but he had some concern over the legality of refinancing the truck for ten years. He will be discussing this with bond counsel but the feeling was that we may be able to refinance the fire truck this January for eight years at a much better interest rate. The rate is currently 5.75% but Mr. Whitaker indicated that we might be able to lower that to around 2%.

Spoke with Jen Reich about the policing of the Village, especially during the winter season and why she under-ran budget by about \$60,000. This was predominantly due to

the cut backs on hiring. The Mayor impressed upon the Chief that this Board will not tolerate the burglaries that have been occurring in businesses in the Village or the drug activity on the streets. In fact, tomorrow I will be having a meeting with the State Police. Chief Reich's hands are tied in that she only has one full timer but she did assure me that we would be having foot patrols on the weekends throughout the Village starting on December 28th.

Financial status: General \$70,000
 Water \$50,000 (plus \$27,000 in outstanding bills due)
 Garbage \$1,800
 Publicity & Events \$3,000

With regard to our debt service, we have only one more which is due April 15th, 2003.

REPORT OF THE HIGHWAY DEPT:

All Christmas lights checked and put up.

We assisted the Town with putting theirs up and assisted the Village of Hunter with cleaning their sidewalks with our Bobcat.

Skateboards and equipment not being used for the winter is being stored at the water plant.

Changed some street signs.

Constantly repairing and servicing the equipment.

Snow plowing and clearing the roads as necessary.

Tapped some water mains and located shut offs.

Organizing all the water parts that we have in stock and storing those at the water plant.

The Mayor asked Trustee Powell for his input on the possible purchase of a one ton truck. He had asked Ed VanValkenburg to get some quotes in. The County bid had been extended but Trustee Powell did caution that orders had to be in around mid February at the latest. After that time we would not be able to get a 2003. The Village of Catskill has some that we could look at. We should get in touch with Louie O'Connor on 943-5505. Some discussion over whether to go with standard shift or automatic. Trustee Powell made the point that if the automatic transmission goes bad it is very expensive to repair.

REPORT OF CODE ENFORCEMENT:

A quick review of the report showed that of the 14 permits issued this year, three were new homes so the assessed valuation in the Village should go up the year after next. Just recently, in reviewing the Town budget, it appears that the Village assessed value had gone up by around \$350,000. This is the second year of increase and if it continues to grow steadily it will help our tax base.

RESOLUTION #26:

This relates to the appointment of election officers for next year's Village election and sets for the time and place of polling. Trustee Powell made a motion to adopt the Resolution. Trustee Morra seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

GREENE COUNTY – MAXIMUM INCOME LIMITS:

This is a yearly requirement for Senior Citizens and the Disabled. The Mayor made a motion to keep it at \$15,000 as last year. Trustee Morra seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

REPORT OF TRUSTEE MORRA:

Trustee Morra reported that the garbage fund is now able to cover the tipping fees of the Village.

Regarding the budget of the Town of Hunter. They have raised the tax of Village property owners by one cent per thousand, while reducing the tax of property owners outside the Village by one cent per thousand in spite of the fact that the Village tax base has increased by \$346,085. The Town performs little or no services for the Village, and any such services have been poorly performed for the past year or more. In view of the foregoing I have been conducting a study to determine the procedure the Village would have to follow to secede from the Town. I had a meeting with an attorney who is an expert in municipal matters and I have a booklet from the Conference of Mayors on this subject. Therefore, I wish to say that at this time I am in the process of having the Town budget checked to determine that all charges to the Village are proper and we are setting up a meeting with the Conference of Mayors to do that. According to the preliminary study I have conducted, the tax savings to the Village taxpayers by seceding from the Town would be substantial. Therefore I recommend that the Village Board conduct an official study and hold Public Hearings on the Village seceding from the Town of Hunter. Some discussion ensued about the need for Public Hearings. It was agreed that if the study concluded that Public Hearings were necessary, then they would be held. On the subject of cost, the Mayor mentioned that there was a Department of State Planning Grant that might be utilized. It was agreed that the motion of Trustee Morra was to conduct such a study. Mayor Weyant seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

The Mayor asked about the Water Department collections. We still have some outstanding bills but reminder letters had just been sent out and the Clerk indicated that payments were coming in and would probably continue to trickle in up to the end of December.

Regarding the tax collections, this year we have picked up momentum in collecting more money to help us manage the Village. Of the \$310,000, we have collected \$302,000. He would not be surprised if over the next couple of years we reduce the amount of arrears which is a major milestone for us.

In connection with the Water Department, Trustee Powell mentioned that he felt we should get in touch with an engineer to inspect the #3 reservoir which is breached at the back end. The Mayor noted that this has been breached since we took over but it runs into #1 and whilst the Highway Department had worked on building it up we will get Joe

Myers to take a look at it and if we need to we will get Fraser to go up there. He believes that Fraser do have a plan already to remediate it.

The Mayor expressed his condolences to the family of Kenny Curtis, a long time employee of the Village, who passed away on December 18th.

The Mayor wished everyone a safe and happy holiday.

There being no further business, Trustee Morra made a motion to close the meeting. Trustee Powell seconded. All in favor. The Meeting was adjourned.