

TOWN BOARD COMMITTEE MEETING – September 20, 2017

The Town Board of the Town of Catskill held their committee meeting on Wednesday, September 20, 2017 at 6:30 pm at Town Hall. Supervisor Davis welcomed all in attendance and the meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance. The following members were present:

Doreen Davis, Supervisor
Robert Antonelli, Councilman
Jared Giordiano, Councilman
Patrick McCulloch, Councilman
Paul Vosburgh, Councilman

NEW BUSINESS:

Supervisor Davis asked for a resolution to schedule public hearings for Local Law 4 and 5 of 2017, Signs and Appearance Tickets. *Resolution #88-217 with motion by Councilman McCulloch seconded by Councilman Vosburgh to schedule public hearings for Local Laws 4 and 5 of 2017 for Tuesday, October 3, 2017 at 6:00 pm and 6:15 pm respectfully. Adopted Vote: 5 Yes*

CONTINUING BUSINESS:

Supervisor Davis introduced the members of the Town Board as well as the Town Assessor and those representing Delaware Engineering to those in attendance. She asked Mary Beth Bianconi to give a short history of the sewer project.

Ms. Bianconi stated the project began in 2008 as there was a request for proposals for an engineer for a sewer system in Leeds. The reason for this was NYSDOT inspected the bridge and found effluent in the stream. This has been ongoing for twenty years. This reason as well as businesses in Leeds who were issued warnings from the DOH spurred the project. At that time it was too expensive to address the problem as there were not enough people, high cost of construction and there was no sewer plant in Leeds. The VOC was mandated by the state to repair their wastewater facility. There was a public hearing in 2008 and the cost per household was \$2,000 and the project ceased.

A year later, Cornell University conducted tests in the creek for the bacteria count of the waste and found a high concentration of bacteria coming from human waste not only in Leeds but in Jefferson Heights. The project was looked at again and the town worked with the village to find a solution. An income survey was done. During this time the towns focus was updating the Cementon Sewer Plant as there were issues and finding funding to do this. In 2011 the feasibility study was looked at again and it was now feasible to send the waste to the VOC. A public meeting was held on June 5, 2012 and again on June 29, 2012. This study now included Jefferson Heights. The board decided to advance the project. By mid-2014 we had a certainty of cost and potential of the project to form a sewer district. A public hearing was held August 5, 2014 regarding the district and another held August 20, 2014 for the board to adopt a resolution subject to a permissive referendum to create the district. The board then bonded the money for the project and secured a zero percent interest loan for 30 years. The board was also able to secure a \$3.15 million dollar grant. At the end of the project, we will know all the costs and the board will close on that final amount.

At this time the town is also looking at other opportunities to decrease the cost but programs are very competitive. The town can bond money for a public improvement and use taxpayer money but when the improvement is on private property, you are not allowed to use taxpayer money (lateral connections). The town is looking into a CDBG funding to subsidize the cost of the lateral connection however it requires individual income participation as it is income eligible. It is a federal program and it is challenging for people to receive funding.

Ms. Bianconi reviewed the costs of infrastructure in towns and villages in Greene County as well as NYS. This is information available on the NYS Comptroller's website.

The system being constructed is a long term durable system. There is net level debt over a long period of time. The portion of costs the town controls will stay the same. The part that is flexible will be the charges from the Village. The town and village have an agreement with the term being 40 years with five year renewals.

Construction of the project will finish around the end of this year. The road reconstruction and restoration will be done to the extent we can and some places will be done next spring. In 2018 everyone will be able to connect to the system. In 2018 there will be limited increase in taxes as there is a small portion of the debt to pay. Once one connects a bill will be received from the Village of Catskill for the treatment of the sewer.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Questions arose regarding not hooking into the system. Ms. Bianconi stated you will still pay for the debt service of the project as that is NYS law but if you don't connect you won't be charged by the village. The administration fee is waived if you connect within six months and six month extension. Mr. Smigel stated there is section of the sewer use law that newly installed septic system has a grace period.

The six month timeline starts when you receive your letter to connect. Supervisor Davis and the board declared a moratorium to connect due to inclement weather beginning November 1st and ending May 1st of 2018. Ms. Bianconi stated having a public sewer increases your property value and mortgagees such as Fannie Mae and Mac require public sewers.

A resident had a question about connecting where the pipe already runs past his house. Mr. Smigel stated that is Phase 3 of the project and will be next year's construction.

There was a question regarding road restoration. Mr. Smigel stated the roads in Jefferson Heights have been paved and the trenches repaired. The Town Highway wanted to wait a year before resurfacing. There is an ongoing list of properties that need to be touched up.

A person stated she feels it is an infringement on her rights to have to be hooked up.

A person asked what the final cost will be. Ms. Bianconi stated the project is currently under budget but they cannot give a number as they do not know what it will be until it is complete.

Supervisor Davis spoke about the economic development the project will bring and how the tax burden will be spread across businesses also.

A question was raised about the VOC treatment plant and how much money is involved. Ms. Bianconi stated the amount is not one million dollars. The Allen Street pump station will have a generator installed as part of mitigation and there is also a mechanical screen being installed at the plant. It is part of the project so the cost is built in. It is a requirement of NYS.

Supervisor Davis asked if the board had anything they wanted to say. Councilman McCulloch mentioned the concern about the tax bill and stated once the project is complete we will have another meeting. Supervisor Davis concurred. Once we receive the certificate of completion, we will have another public session.

Councilman Giordiano stated if anyone needed help in completing any paperwork, the Greene County Department of Aging will help.

With no further business a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Councilman Giordiano seconded by Councilman Vosburgh. Meeting ended 7:57 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Izzo
Town Clerk