

TOWN OF CHATHAM
488 Route 295
CHATHAM, NY 12037
WORKSHOP MEETING
May 7, 2015 7:00PM

PRESENT: Supervisor Jesse DeGroot, Councilman Henry Swartz , Councilman Maria Lull, Councilman Bob Balcom, Councilman Jean Rohde, Town Clerk Beth Anne Rippel, Recreation Director Shari Franks, Julia Horst, Town Attorney Tal Rappleyea

Others present: David Levow (Finance Committee), Sally Veillette

Supervisor DeGroot called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. and led the pledge to the flag.

Supervisor DeGroot updated the Board on what was happening with the Crellin Park/Recreation subcommittee and the tennis court situation. It has been determined that we can fit 3 more courts in at the park. The 2 courts that are there now are in need to repair so we may end up with 5 new courts depending how it looks as far as repairs go.

Some of the other things that have come out of the 2 meetings that they've had is that Mr. Slone has agreed to use Rock City road instead of Thomas when they leave the property, eliminating the road issues. He has also agreed to involve more local kids and plans to start out small and work from there. The 2 committee meetings that they've had have sort of solved the problem as far as whether they can fit the courts there. Going forward they will decommission this subcommittee and get together a new one to address how we want to make the tennis courts work at the Park and how that will fit with our program. This new committee will be put together by the 21st.

Councilman Lull asked if the new committee would include the applicant and the members of the Alliance? DeGroot responded yes. It's Mr. Slone's offer for the courts and it has to be determined the legalities, future maintenance, costs involved, who is going to handle what. Lull asked what the purpose was of decommissioning the current subcommittee, DeGroot responded that the primary purpose of the original committee was to investigate whether we could put courts at the park or not and that question was answered. The new committee would take it further and get into what the relationship means and who is going to do what.

Comptroller situation:

DeGroot spoke to Ray Preusser and he has agreed to come in and take a look at getting the Annual Update Document (AUD) report done and filed. Tammy Shaw will get things together for his review. If it's as simple as he thinks it will be he'll do it for free, if it's more involved he will let us know what it will cost.

We called this meeting to discuss what we might want to do about the office of the comptroller. DeGroot asked if the Finance Committee had met to discuss this issue. Balcom and David Levow said they had not met to talk about the comptroller. Levow thought that was what we were going to talk about tonight. Levow believes that we wanted to talk about what the requirements would be. Lull thinks we need to put together a job description. Levow suggested looking into what other towns are doing. DeGroot stated that that wouldn't be much help since we are the only town with a comptroller. Levow asked if all other towns are getting by without a comptroller then why do we need one. The Comptroller position was created by local law. DeGroot stated that an accountant reports only to the Supervisor and a comptroller works for the entire Town Board. It's a much stronger job if a comptroller reports to the Town Board as opposed to reporting to one office. It also takes the politics out of it. Whereas before every time the Town Board changed there was an opportunity to change accountants. Lull stated that since the comptroller position was created by local law it would have to be done away with by local law. DeGroot doesn't think doing away with it would be a great idea.

Lull provided copies to the Board of job descriptions from other towns in the state and the NYS Comptroller's office. (added to the minutes as per Lull's request)

Balcom stated that the comptroller does all the nuts and bolts after reading a job description from NYS comptroller's office. . DeGrootd said that the comptroller is more involved than an accountant.

Levow asked if maybe some of the duties could be assigned to an accountant. DeGrootd said that some of the duties are already done by our backup bookkeeper. Levow asked how much time was involved. DeGrootd stated that it was about 25 to 30 hours/week depending upon the time of the year. DeGrootd pointed to the reimbursement for the bridge project which is quite involved. An accountant may not be the person to follow this type of thing. He feels that the current setup is a good one having a comptroller, backup bookkeeper, supervisor and town clerk watching what goes through. You have different sets of eyes on Town finances and a good checks and balances system.

DeGrootd thinks another important issue is the mail situation. All bills which will go through the comptroller's office should be delivered to the town hall. This was something Deb had planned on implementing after the AUD report was done. Balcom and Rohde feel that we need a central receiving clerk for mail.

New accounting software would cost somewhere around 20K which could be money well spent, cost savings in productivity alone. The old system is "quirky".

Lull stated that in her searching that there were Towns whose comptrollers had their own page on the town website.

Sally Veillette asked if maybe the position could be advertised to draw from a broader audience, maybe Monster.

Lull stated that Karen Kazmar was interested in serving on the CAC. At this point the committee has not yet been established. Lull sent her information on a workshop she may want to attend and then get back to her.

Sally Veillette said she found that a local horse farm, Dreaming Tree Farm on Route 66, is closing and she asked Adam Slone on Thomas Rd. if he would consider a short term lease for the season for the current horse owners who board at the farm. If Slone and Blass reach an agreement would this fall under the moratorium? No, it is not a change of use but they would have to go the Planning Board. DeGrootd suggested they call Walt to confirm.

Motion was made by Councilman Rohde to adjourn at 7:30 PM and seconded by Councilman Balcom. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by,

Beth Anne Rippel
Town Clerk