

Town of Chatham
488 State Route 295
Chatham, New York

SPECIAL TOWN BOARD MEETING

Wednesday May 18, 2016 at 7:00 PM

held at

Tracy Memorial Village Hall
77 Main Street, Chatham NY

to continue discussions between the Town of Chatham and the Village of Chatham on renovations to and possible sharing of the Tracy Memorial Village Hall

PRESENT: Supervisor Maria Lull, Councilman Bob Balcom, Councilwoman Landra Haber, Councilman John Wapner, Julia Horst, Town Clerk Beth Anne Rippel, Mayor Tom Curran and Village Board member Jay Rippel, Lenore Packet, CABA President Tom Chulak, Mike Blasl and other community members..

ABSENT: Councilman Henry Swartz

Curran would like to see a committee formed to discuss joining the Village and the Town in the same building.

Lull - James Borgia-Forster, Town Justice, has expressed an interest in being involved in this committee.

Curran – the Tracy was built in 1810 for the residents of the Village of Chatham. At this time it is in need of significant repair. The architectural firm has been consulted about pursuing grant money to assist with the costs. An application has been submitted for a NYS Historic Preservation grant and they hope to hear the results in July or August. This could lay the ground work for all things to come.

Lull - Sharing space would save taxpayers money and bring people together. Lull would like to sell the Town Hall and put the property back on the tax rolls. She has spoken to B&L about a feasibility study and it would cost between 8 & 15K to determine how much space each municipality would need. The Town is not interested in spending money on this right now and Lull hasn't pushed the idea, she wants to see what the Town's financial situation is first.

Curran said that the Village fund balance is right where they want it and they don't want to generate any liabilities for the Village taxpayers. We should take baby steps. We already share highway services. He has the impression that the Town runs pretty lean as does the Village, so we'll have to focus on grant money to move forward.

Balcom is concerned about the immediate need for a lift to the second floor. Borgia-Forster will have to apply for an extension for the grant the Town Court received for the construction for the lift if it doesn't get moving soon.

Tom Chulak CABA President asked if the Town and Village currently had services they shared.

Balcom said yes, mainly equipment. Chulak thought maybe we could share DPW, Assessor and Building Inspector. Lull stated that the Town went from a full time BI to two part time inspectors and a 15 hour/week clerk therefore eliminating health insurance benefits..

Lull wants to know what the residents want; maybe there should be a referendum in November.

Mike Blasl – there should be a committee first, renovations will go forward with or without the Town .

Curran stated that there are bigger issues facing the Village/Tracy right now.

Jay Rippel wants to know how the Town will fit into the Tracy space. He doesn't see this happening in the near future. He also asked about the almost 100 acres behind the Town Hall on 295. Has the Town considered selling off the land and remaining on the Town Hall?

Wapner said that if moving proves not to be practical then why spend the energy.

Lull asked if Friends of the Tracy was raising money. Blasl responded that they have not yet received their 501 (c) (3). John Waite Associates Architects from Albany have identified a list of renovation projects. Fund raising will then be done to help defray the costs. Blasl hoped that in addition to grant money, private donors would see the merit in the restoration project and contribute financially.

Haber believes joint committees are a good idea, especially an economic development committee.

Layers of government work against us instead of allowing us to work together stated Curran.

Packet feels that the Town and Village each have their own identities and they should maintain their individualities.

There was no further discussion and the meeting was closed.

Respectfully submitted by,

Beth Anne Rippel, RMC
Town Clerk/Collector