

VILLAGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

SEPT. 21, 2015 7 PM

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Mayor Neville opened the meeting at 7 pm.

Present were: Mayor Neville, Trustees Conger, Evener, Morey and Holl, Code Enf. Officer Mike Andersen, Police OIC Tim Williams, Chad Shurtleff-Public Works Supervisor, Steve Teeter-Electric Utility Supervisor, Vicki Marks-Deputy Village Clerk, Debbie Barron-Deputy Village Treasurer, Peter Grossman-Attorney for the Village, William Troy-Attorney

There were 43 members of the public present for the portion of the meeting held at the Village Office.

There were 192 members of the public present for the portion of the meeting held at the Groton Central School auditorium on Peru Road.

Pledge of allegiance.

Trustee Conger made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 17th meeting, seconded by Trustee Holl, carried.

Trustee Evener made a motion to approve the claims presented for review, and to adjust the budget as follows:

GENERAL FUND

From: Contingent Fund-1990.4-\$5,400

To: Police-Vests-3120.22-\$250
 Off-Street Parking-Main St Parking lot-5650.4-\$5,050
 Youth Services-Pers Srves-7310.1-\$100

Seconded by Trustee Morey, carried. The above adjustments and claims paid are covered by the following lists of abstracts of audited vouchers:

GENERAL (A4)	\$128,144.74	JOINT REC (J4)	\$1,541.11
WATER (F4)	29,712.42	COM DEV (PI 15-9)	800.90
SEWER (G4)	11,569.35	COM DEV (Microent Grnt)	21,232.68
ELECTRIC (E4)	47,879.08		

Electric - Supervisor Teeter reported that the Dept. has been trying to catch up on tree trimming and trim areas where paving will be taking place. The final specs on the new bucket truck have been finalized. The annual inspection on the bucket truck and digger-derrick will be done this week.

Admin. Rankin noted that MEUA has been discussing extension of our hydro-electric with the New York Power Authority. The talks so far have been productive and would extend the contracts through 2040.

Public Works – Supervisor Shurtleff noted the Dept. has been spending time on repairing hydrants that are in need. There were two water breaks last month – West Cortland Street and South Main Street. A service on Carpenter Ave was dug up and lowered which has been continually freezing during the winter months. Replace 60 feet of 6 inch sewer line on West South St. last week. Streets to be paved were milled last week. Drainage issues on South Parkway will be addressed when the paving takes place.

Supervisor Shurtleff presented a quote from JW Stanley for partial paving of the Main Street parking lot in the amount of \$10,100, being the lower of two quotes. They have requested a 50% down payment. Trustee Holl made a motion to authorize the payment of 50% to JW Stanley in the amount of \$5,050, seconded by Trustee Morey, carried.

Joint Recreation – Trustee Conger noted that the summer program had 198 participants. This is up from 92 in 2012. The program in total yields a net profit. The Lifeguards give back event yielded \$150 for the Groton Food Pantry plus canned food. The pool closed on August 23rd due to the fact that most of the guards were college students. The program purchased a new sign to announce programs and it is located across from the Legion. Fall programs of football, cheerleading, cross country and soccer are (or will be) underway.

Trustee Conger reported that a meeting – “Achieving Youth Results” will be held at the Village Office on October 7th.

Sewer – Trustee Morey reported that Pall Corp. will be setting up a location at the wastewater treatment plant to clean their tractor trailer skid units. This will be a revenue producer for the Dept.

Police – Lt. Williams reported that the Dept. has responded to 1,016 incidents to date, ahead of last year’s numbers. There are continuing problems with 156. Fall firearms training starts the first week of October. Officer Davenport has completed his CFO training and is on his own. Officer Forney attended Investigations School. Sept. 25th the Girls Scouts are hosting an event to meet the local police officers.

Trustee Evener offered the following resolution:

To Commemorate Our Hometown Electric Utility and Its Tradition of Service

WHEREAS, we, the citizens of Village of Groton, place high value on local control over community services and therefore have chosen to operate a community-owned, locally controlled, not-for-profit electric utility and, as consumers and owners of our electric utility, have a direct say in utility operations and policies; and

WHEREAS, Groton Municipal Electric provides our homes, businesses, farms, social service, and local government agencies with reliable, efficient, and cost-effective electricity employing sound business practices designed to ensure the best possible service at not-for-profit rates; and

WHEREAS, Groton Municipal Electric is a valuable community asset that contributes substantially to the well-being of local citizens through energy efficiency, customer service, environmental protection, economic development, and safety awareness; and

WHEREAS, the electric utility industry is changing and will continue to change over the next few years, with the goal of allowing individual consumers to choose their power supplier while continuing service from their current electricity distributor, and

WHEREAS, deregulation of the electric utility industry has renewed public interest in and appreciation for the concept of locally controlled, community-owned public power systems;

WHEREAS, as this community's public power system, Groton Municipal Electric first and only purpose is to work in partnership with its customer-owners to furnish an essential public service and the best customer service to community citizens at lower-cost rates;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: that Groton Municipal Electric will continue to work to bring lower-cost, safe, reliable electricity to community homes and businesses just as it has since 1933, the year when the utility was created to serve all the citizens of Village of Groton; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: that the week of October 4-10, be designated the 29th annual Public Power Week in order to honor Groton Municipal Electric for its contributions to the community and to make its consumer-owners, policy makers, and employees more aware of its overall contributions to their well-being; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: that our community joins hands with more than 2,000 other public power systems in the United States that through local, community-ownership ensure cost-cutting service for electricity customers.

Seconded by Trustee Conger, carried.

There was a brief discussion in regards to last month's agenda item of abandonment of sidewalk by Melanie Morton, whose property is located on the corner of Sykes Street and Linderman Ave. Upon conclusion, it was the consensus of the Board that the sidewalks that were removed a few years back do not have to be replaced.

Trustee Conger made a motion to approve the following housing rehab projects:

- a) Amber Jackson – 117 Williams St. – 100% dpl - \$23,905
- b) Dave Vorhis and Janet Hall – 125 Church St. – 100% dpl - \$26,095

Seconded by Trustee Morey, carried.

Mayor Neville appointed CARLY HOWARD as a part-time paramedic, provisional. Trustee Evener made a motion to approve the appointment at the part-time paramedic pay rate, seconded by Trustee Holl, carried.

Karen McMahon came before the Board to discuss lack of Police Commission meetings and inquired about a complaint she made against a police officer in February. Mayor Neville noted that it was turned over to the Officer in Charge and is being handled and investigated internally. She also stated she disagreed with the Board's decision in regards to Mrs. Morton's sidewalk.

Mary Farrell came before the Board and stated that for the 5th year in a row she has come to ask for "No Parking" signs on the corner of Sykes Street and Linderman Ave. A truck parks there but is not ticketed. She was told signs could not be put up due to lack of funds.

Terry Walpole stated it was his understanding that a vehicle cannot obstruct a sidewalk. The response was that this is correct.

Skip Schell noted that the Village web site was not up to date. He also noted that the Police Dept. is not rolling the phone over to the Sheriff's Dept. when they are not there. Lt. Williams stated that there have been some issues with the phone and sometimes the officers forget.

Mayor Neville temporarily suspended the meeting and declared the Public Hearing on Local Law No. 3 of 2015 in regards to zoning amendment open.

Clerk read the Notice of Public Hearing.

Clerk read a letter from Tompkins County Planning Dept. in regards to their review under sections 239 –l and –m of the General Municipal Law.

Katrina Medeiros, attorney representing Rich Uhl, stated that they are disappointed that the Village Board did not adopt the Planning Board's recommendation that the proposed roadway be a dividing line between the single-family and low-intensity districts. As a single family zone, Mr. Uhl will not have money to build a road. With the Planning Board's recommendation, the objectives of both having single family housing (on the west side as a buffer) and having a road constructed can be met.

Trustee Evener stated that the neighbors don't want a buffer zone and have single family housing on the site and the Village wants a street that can be dedicated. The Village Board considers Planning Board recommendations but does not always implement them.

Linda Bonavia stated she backs the Village Board decision. She can't see the logic of the split zoning on the proposed street. She felt the residents in the area would not be satisfied with anything but single-family homes.

Terry Walpole inquired that since he owns a two-family residence which will be Medium Intensity-Single Family District; will it be a grandfathered use? Attorney Grossman stated that it would be.

Being no further comments, Trustee Conger made a motion to close the public hearing, seconded by Trustee Evener, carried.

Trustee Evener made a motion that Local Law No. 3 of 2015, "A local law to amend Chapter 200 of the Code of the Village of Groton to amend Section 200-3, the definition of a " Dwelling Unit, One Family," to Add a new Article VI-A, Medium Intensity Single-Family Residence District, to amend Article VIII, Section 200-39. "Intent", to amend the Village of Groton Zoning Map to Rezone certain areas of the Village from Medium Intensity District to Medium Intensity Single-Family Residence District and certain areas from Low-Intensity Districts to Single-Family Residence District; and to amend Chapter 200, Schedule II, Land Use Activities", be adopted, seconded by Trustee Morey, and upon roll call:

Trustee Conger voted "aye".

Trustee Evener voted "aye".

Trustee Holl voted "aye".

Trustee Morey voted "aye"

Mayor Neville voted "aye"

The local law was duly declared adopted. [SEQR determination of a Type I Action and no significant environmental impact was resolved at the August 17, 2015 meeting.]

The meeting was adjourned to the Groton Central High School auditorium on Peru Road.

The board met briefly to consultant with the attorneys.

At the High School, Deputy Mayor Evener asked for a motion that the meeting be reconvened. Trustee Conger so moved, and was seconded by Mayor Neville, carried.

Mayor Neville opened by saying : I thank you all for attending the meeting this evening. It is good to see that many are interested in our Village and the many issues we face. We here to listen to your concerns and I assure that we have taken measures to make (we hope) the community better and the Village Board will continue to do so. You must understand that sometimes government does not move as fast as any of us likes. It frustrates us as government officials. But due to many legal and procedural issues, it is the system that we have to deal with.

Attorney Bill Troy stated that he has been retained by the Village provide for the enforcement of the Building Nuisance Law (Local Law No. 4 of 2014). The Village on Friday (9/18) filed a complaint in Tompkins County Supreme Court against four properties owned by Norfe Pirro. The text of the complaint is posted on the Village web site. He then reviewed how the lawsuit works and noted that it will be a while before it comes up on the court docket. He further stated that since it is a matter of litigation he was not a liberty to discuss the details of the case.

Clerk Rankin read the "ground rules" for those wishing to speak at the meeting.

19 members of the public came before the Board to speak.

Generally, the comments presented were that residents do not feel safe to walk on Main Street, the amount of drugs that have come into the community, the lack of police presence downtown, and the need for more community involvement. They also noted the substandard conditions of some of the multiple residence housing they had seen and/or heard of.

Lt. Williams that enacting drug arrests are challenging due to the transient population that the Village has. The Dept. tries to proceed to process these as much as we can, and it is not a simple process. A lot of information that is needed to arrest suspected drug dealer/users depends on information obtained from the community. He further stated that he had received the message from the public loud and clear, and he will endeavor to get the officers out and more noticeable.

The meeting was closed at 9:12 pm.

CHARLES V. RANKIN
Village Clerk