

**Waterbury Village Board of Trustees Meeting
Steele Community Room
28 North Main Street
February 22, 2017**

Attendees: P. Howard Flanders, Village President; Natalie Sherman and Lawrence Sayah, Trustees; William Shepeluk, Municipal Manager; Lovell Beaulieu, Waterbury Record; Anne Imhoff, ORCA Media; and Denise McCarty, Board Secretary.

Public: Sargent Jerry Patin (VSP), Chris & LeeAnne Viens, David & Margaret Luce, Carla Lawrence, Polly Sabin, Barb Farr, Marc Metayer, Mary Koen, Marie Andre-Gervais, Jan Gendreau, Cindy Parks, Paul & Jane Willard, Everett Coffey, Mike & Diane LaRock, Sally & Gary Dillon, Amy Anderson, Mike Merchant, RJ Caldwell (Waterbury PD), Anthony Mazzilli (Waterbury PD), Ken Sargeant, Dorianne Cedeno, Chris Palermo, Gordon Miller, Steve Odefey, Margaret Quinn, Phoebe Pelkey, Will Bucossi, John Sherman, Alan Aitken, Marcella Pelkey.

Opening and Call to Order

P. Howard Flanders, Village President called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Consider any modification to the agenda

The agenda had no modifications.

Public

There were no comments from the public.

Informational Meeting to Provide Information to the Public about Articles on the Warning and Allow the Public to Ask Questions with a Focus on but Not Limited to Article 7, Proposed Changes to the Village Charter

The following is the motion for proposed changes to the Village Charter:

I move that the Trustees and Water-Sewer Commissioners take action to prepare amendments to the charter of the Village of Waterbury to present such amendments to the voters no later than November 30, 2017, and that such amendments, at minimum, will result in the following:

- the retention of all real estate presently owned by the Village
- the retention of revolving loan funds presently owned by the Village
- the ability to manage assets, including the ability to buy and sell real estate for the benefit of Village residents
- one governing board of five members to oversee the Village's reserve funds and all other assets owned by the Village
- the abolition of the Village's authority to provide all other government functions, including the provisions of the police services

Sargent Jerry Partin from the Vermont State Police discussed VSP the services to expect if the police department is eliminated. The Middlesex barracks covers calls in 18 towns with 18 troopers, typically 2 troopers on at a time. He described the different kind of calls that are received.

Discussion followed as to what the VSP would cover if there were no Village police department versus what they currently cover. J. Patin distributed VSP statistics for the Town of Waterbury and stated that the VSP does not go into towns with a police department while they have coverage. The VSP doesn't go into every town, every day.

A member of the public asked why the topic of eliminating the police department was being brought up again. P. Howard Flanders stated that at last year's Village Meeting, there were comments about simplifying Waterbury's government. In order to strip away overlapping governmental functions and have one government, the police department would have to be eliminated.

The Municipal Manager reviewed the history of the police department during his 29 years of employment for the Village of Waterbury, when there were two fire departments, two highway departments, etc.; that have since been combined into one. W. Shepeluk gave a budget breakdown of the Village budget; how much of the budget goes toward the police department of which a majority is salaries and benefits.

Public comments followed:

With the amount of tourists and traffic in Waterbury at any given time of the year, would imposing a local tax that would support the police department be possible? Discussion followed.

Should the community be concerned with safety and crime during the 2018 Main Street Reconstruction Project? Sargent Partin stated that he didn't feel this would be an issue as long as the business owners remain vigilant in keeping their properties secure as they always have.

Concerns were discussed about not having a police department and the impact on a particular family who has a foster home and how important it is to have law enforcement responding that knows the case history of the family or the children involved. If VSP responded to those calls, this knowledge base would be lost.

Anthony Mazzilli stated that he started with Waterbury Police Department in 2004. He spoke about what the police department offers to the Village that is unique. They install car seats, check on properties when owners are away, talk to kids. That sort of community involvement would go away if WPD goes away.

Is getting rid of the Police Department just a vehicle to have a merger? Why does this topic of getting rid of the police department keep coming up? Discussion followed.

The community (both the Village and the Town) need to start acting like one community and ante up the money for better police services. The tax rate for the Village cannot support paying for services that are benefiting the entire community. The current police force model is unsustainable. In order to fix this, the model needs to change.

RJ Caldwell expressed his concerns that Waterbury needs a police department but with the current staffing, it is impossible to clean up calls from the night before, respond to a barking dog complaint, a car accident, and whatever else comes in. A dispute in the Shaws parking lot could turn into an altercation. You get what you pay for. Discussion followed.

Minutes

N. Howell Sherman made a motion to approve the Trustees meeting minutes of February 8th as presented. The motion was seconded by P. Howard Flanders and passed unanimously.

Adjourn

L. Sayah made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:37 pm. The motion was seconded by N. Sherman and passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise McCarty
Board Secretary

Approved on: _____

P. Howard Flanders

Lawrence Sayah

Natalie Sherman