

July 28, 2014

The Town Board of the Town of Clayton held a special meeting on the first floor of the Opera House, 405 Riverside Drive, Clayton, NY with the following persons present:

Justin Taylor	Lance Peterson	Robert W. Cantwell III
Christopher Matthews	Mary Zovistoski	Bob Boulton
Kathleen E. LaClair (absent)	Janet Sullins, Deputy Clerk	
Terra Bach	Denise Trudell	Kim Johnston
Erin Greene	Katie Clark	Pam McDowell
Asa Stackel	Janice Beattie	Gayle Cady
Phil Beattie	Polly Baril	Bud Baril
George Bowes	Fred Bach, Jr	Phil DeLuke
Mike Geiss	Larry Johnston	Dennis Weller
Jeff Garnsey	Julie Garnsey	Ken Knapp
Ellen Stiefel	David Storandt	Beth Law
Martin Sandige	Miriam Bowes	Tom Gillette
Gordon Stiefel	Karl Bach	

Supervisor Taylor opened the meeting at 6:00 PM with the Pledge of Allegiance, welcoming all who attended and asking for feedback on how they feel the Town is operating. He introduced the panel, the Town Board, his Executive Assistant, Terra Bach and the Deputy Clerk, Janet Sullins. The Village is having a meeting at the same time, discussing sewer laterals. He asked for comments on what the Town has done wrong, what could we have done differently, how we can make improvements.

Phil Beattie, Washington Island: He noted there is no one from the Village Board, nor the Mayor, to speak about what the Town is about. He thinks the Town meeting and what the Town is doing is more important than sewer laterals. Supervisor Taylor said the meetings were scheduled without the other knowing. Mr. Beattie still felt the Village could have postponed their meeting.

He congratulated the Town on the LWRP, but how are we going to pay for all the activities? How much is it going to cost, and where will the money come from? The website says there is a five year Capital Improvement Plan, but he could not find it. Mr. Beattie read from the website that when the budget is done, the 5 yr plan is included.

Supervisor Taylor: Capital Plan isn't finished yet, but there are good ideas for major things, like pool improvements and highway projects. Mr. Beattie said he also did not see an audit report, which Supervisor Taylor said is a public document, and can be found in the Town Clerk's office. It is sent in to the Comptroller every year. Mr. Beattie said the Village says they have one, but it is not the standard model. Supervisor Taylor said that is a reference to GASB 34, which is a very labor intensive document, which shows long term liabilities, age of infrastructure, among other things. Last year, there was an evaluation of the sewer and roads.

Lastly, he asked if there was anyone present representing the new hotel, which there was not. He credited the Board with doing a great job of a ten year project. He questioned the fairness of the hotel's current tax payment arrangement.

Supervisor Taylor explained the PILOT program, and indicated it would have been nice to

have a representative from the hotel, as they are a key player in the Town's economics.

Ken Knapp, Clayton: Thanked the Board for their ideas. Clayton has come leaps and bounds in the last decade, and seeing the Town and Village work together for the common vision for the Town results in the business we are seeing. Clayton is now a destination. It has a strong sense of community spirit compared to a lot of other communities, and a sense of region. He encouraged everyone to go onto www.scenic.com to check out the State Area of Scenic Significance designation. He gave a vote of confidence for the hotel, but felt the Town could have drawn more on local resources for help with things like the dock project.

Dennis Weller, Clayton: Said that we have come a long way and is looking for a new vision- what's next? Supervisor Taylor said that the Board has accomplished many things, like energy conservation, going green, maintaining buildings and highways. Keeping a reasonable tax rate is key. He wants to hear more from the public about where we should be heading. Do we need a full-time Town Administrator to report to the Town Supervisor? We need to market Clayton as a community, not just as a tourism center; the Chamber does a good job of that. We need to market it as a place to live, work, have good schools and good quality of life. We need to work on infrastructure for more industries and manufacturing. County Rte 3 is a great place for that. Our planning, zoning and codes people are so busy we've added extra staff.

Councilman Peterson: We have had some large projects in the past four or five years: the salt storage shed, the gazebo, solar panels, the Village sewer, transient docks, and now Rte 12 Sewer. We have to keep moving ahead, but we have to take care of what we have, and move cautiously. Supervisor Taylor said that we have been able to take advantage of about 5 million dollars in grant monies from different levels of government. Investing in grant writing helped. Perhaps we could have a budget line for marketing Clayton. We have put out RFPs for this.

Janice Beattie, Clayton: Brought up the subject of how we almost had a boat building operation in Clayton, but we let that get away. Supervisor Taylor advised that there was difficulty in finding the right property for the scale of their operations. We would have had to commit too much funding to improving the property. Cape Vincent was a better fit for all involved and we are glad they settled there.

Mr. Beattie, Clayton asked where the ToC docks were. Supervisor Taylor said they expect an attenuator bid in September, and expect that we will have floating docks in approximately ten weeks.

Bud Baril, Chairman of the JT Town and Village Planning Board: He advised they are working diligently with Jefferson County to update the Village Zoning Laws. Supervisor Taylor added that the Comprehensive Plan is 90% complete and needs fine-tuning. Doug Rogers and Mike Geiss are assisting with this. Consider the Rte 12 corridor between Clayton and Fishers Landing; there is a lot going on there. The hotel was a great partnership of the CLDC, Town and Village.

Supervisor Taylor advised we need the comprehensive plan to apply for grants, but it needs updating now that we have the hotel. Councilman Cantwell said consolidation and new housing would help. We need ideas. Mr. Beattie said we shouldn't consider fiber optics; Supervisor Taylor said that over 15 years ago, they formed a company to bring it to Clayton from Watertown, but it was bought out by DANC, and there is fiber optics in the town. And soon, we will be switching to Westelcom in the downtown area. Mr. Beattie suggested we let the bigger companies take care of that. Supervisor Taylor said we had the idea before the bigger companies did. There are three crossings of the river from here

to Canada. We thought we would make a fourth, and it would be a great entity for us, but we were told we couldn't.

Jeff Garnsey, Clayton: He has a fishing charter, and said that half of the people he takes out want to be in and stay in Clayton, and now with the hotel they have another option. He is very proud of our community, and to be from Clayton. The hotel completes the picture now that Frink Snowplow is gone and cleaned up. It is up to us to protect the river and monitor it, looking out for Clayton. He thanked the Town Board and everyone who got us this far. Supervisor Taylor responded that there aren't many people who come to the Town Board meetings, but if they weren't doing something right, there would be. Another example of doing a right thing is the monies invested in solar power for some of our buildings. That will pay itself back in a few years.

Mrs. Beattie, Clayton, Inquired about consolidation. She said that the view Jeff Garnsey was talking about is a Village scene. What about making the Town better? Supervisor Taylor responded that at the recent meeting over on Grindstone, an out of-towner asked why we have a village. But, to dissolve the Village, they would have to vote themselves to dissolve. They would have to evaluate their options. There would be districts, as town landowners wouldn't want to pay for lights or sewer or anything the people in the village pay for.

Mr. Beattie said that efficiencies would have to be studied. The supervisor offered the courts as an example of one entity that could be consolidated as a first step. Mr. Beattie said abolish the village and get a town administrator; that would be the best value for our tax dollars. Ken Knapp added everything has to be looked at from all sides, worked through thoughtfully.

Mr. Beattie, Clayton asked whether the Riverwalk is in the Town or Village. It is in both. Perhaps the Town and Village could work together to bring Riverwalk II to fruition. It is a sensitive topic, crossing municipal boundaries, but it would be ideal to have it done.

Dennis Weller, Clayton: Voiced concerned about the infrastructure outside, bringing people into the village. Plus, parking is an issue. Talk to the County and State about the infrastructure. Supervisor Taylor said another thing the Town wants to bring in is natural gas. We have talked to National Grid about a survey, looking regionally, not just for Clayton. Local alone is too costly. We expect the CLDC to take the lead on it. As far as infrastructure is concerned, there will be Dept of Transportation involvement in repairing and repaving.

Councilman Cantwell: Regarding Village parking, there has been a committee working on improving it. He said there are 417 spaces in the Village, from Mary Street to the water. There have been 13 suggestions made and a few implemented. The village has done okay, but a thought about a trolley to bring people in from satellite lots could be a temporary solution. The problem is and always will be that the village is mainly a peninsula, limiting itself.

Fred Bach, Clayton: The State owns the roadway around the village and it will be turned over to the Village in 2016. Before then, the State DOT will be rebuilding curbs and sidewalks on part of that, and repaving all of it. Mr. Bach suggested we bring in the natural gas lines before they do that, while roads are torn up. Supervisor Taylor said they already plan to bury some overhead lines when they do the repairs. Ken Knapp said the LWRP may contain that. Supervisor Taylor said he would pass the gas suggestion on to the Village.

Bud Baril, Clayton: Not all available parking is well marked, for example, the spaces around the municipal building. And the lot by the museum is also not as well-marked as it could be. Mr. Peterson and Mr. Cantwell had an idea about better signage for public lots. Other ideas from Mr. Baril are on a typed sheet he handed in at the start of the meeting.

Gayle Cady, of Washington Island, Clayton: Mentioned the parking spaces the Town is renting for its employees. Why can't people park a couple of blocks away? Other shopkeepers do. Councilman Peterson said that other shopkeepers *do* rent spaces, and Councilman Matthews said that if the Town didn't rent them someone else would. But Mrs. Beattie thought of it as another perk, wasting the taxpayers' money. She didn't think it had been disclosed to the public, but was assured it was brought up at the last meeting. She said that when people leave for the winter, and shops close up, the meters are taken off and there is plenty of free parking close by. Ken Knapp said that in the case of the code enforcement officer, as one example, he needs to have his vehicle close to go out on inspections during the day.

When Mr. Beattie brought up the fact that the Village streets are too narrow, he was told it was a village issue, but that some were widened a while ago, and part of Hugunin St. was made one way. It is also a credit to the Village for redoing the sewer infrastructure recently.

Andy Bach, Clayton: Inquired about the Route 12 water issue, and was told it is on the radar, maybe as a five-to fifteen-year plan. It would probably come in from the Bay as it is already heading to Fishers Landing from there. Then there would be a gap from Lyellton Drive to the village line.

George Bowes, Clayton: He wrote a letter to the Board about the zoning on Route 12. Zoning laws need to be changed; they are too outdated. Supervisor Taylor said he just recently received maps of all the properties to the Orleans line, and most is commercial property. The people in the Marine Development area don't want to be infringed upon. But Mr. Bowes said it is too restrictive; you can't add on or change anything on an existing structure, and the 200 foot corridor is too narrow. Supervisor Taylor said the corridor may be going both ways, north for sure and maybe south, to expand, and maybe to 400 feet. Miriam Bowes, Clayton said it would encourage more businesses if that were to happen. She asked when will action on the zoning laws begin. Supervisor Taylor told her that any changes go to the Planning Board first, then Jefferson County for review, and back for any revisions, so a few months at least. Bud Baril said that recently he obtained some maps from a Jefferson County Planning Board member, so they already have some info.

Supervisor Taylor then presented a PowerPoint slideshow depicting a positive argument for the implementation of a Town Administrator. The slideshow showed the differences of how elected officials are chosen, and why they are actually voted in. It also broke down what the responsibilities of an Administrator versus a Supervisor would be, and the roles of the other Board members. This was suggested to the Town Board several meetings ago. We have been fortunate to have full-time elected officials for the last 15 or 16 years.

Mrs. Beattie felt that adding an Administrator would require another assistant. Supervisor Taylor said there would be just the one. Mr. Beattie said that merging the Town and Village would be the most economical way, more concise. Dennis Weller asked if papers had been put together – yes, duties have been laid out. What about salary? \$60,000/yr contractual; could control length of service. Everything is just in discussion phase; nothing is firm. Have other places done this? Are there people to fit this position? Yes, and people who are dealing with project issues, etc. Clayton is the first town to

have a full-time Supervisor. You need that to have strong leadership to take on the projects we have to date. The supervisor would go back to truly being a part-time position; right now, Supervisor Taylor said, he works about 60 hours a week for the Town, in his part-time position.

Highway Superintendent Bob Boulton: We need to keep our concept of what we want for the Town to keep the ball rolling, and an administrator would facilitate that. The Supervisor said he and the board would be out with the people instead of taking care of everyday issues. Ken Knapp said that today's supervisor has to deal with exponentially more than say when Gordon Cerow was in office. He is impressed that the Hwy Superintendent supports it. Supervisor Taylor said it's about efficiency; wisely spending tax dollars.

Councilman Matthews: Whenever we have another meeting like this, we should encourage the Village board and Mayor to attend. Lots of the issues brought up tonight are village ones. Ken Knapp thought a winter meeting would be good as lots of people are just too busy in the summer. Councilman Cantwell also wants Village input. He thanked everyone for coming. Also, he thinks we shouldn't stop, but reset. Councilman Peterson had nothing to add. Councilwoman Zovistoski said she would like to see more affordable housing. Keep living in Clayton viable and the schools full. Mr. Cantwell agreed; kids and seniors broaden the tax base to keep up with contractual obligations.

Fred Bach, Clayton: Regarding taking over the loop, if consolidation happens afterward, we don't want to look back and say we should have done things beforehand. Councilman Peterson agreed.

Supervisor Taylor said it's good to say we want to do things, but we need plans for those ideas. We can't implement visions without them. Gordon Stiefel, Clayton said goals and objectives are crucial.

This meeting was adjourned at 7:52 pm. Motion Cantwell; 2nd Peterson. Carried.

Respectfully submitted

Janet Sullins
Deputy Clerk