

REGULAR MEETING OF THE NORTH HORNELL VILLAGE BOARD

MONDAY, MARCH 8, 2004

Mayor Stephen Terry called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

Attendance: Mayor Stephen Terry
Trustees: J. Falci, G. Thomas, and W. McNelis
Mike Hatter, Cornell University
Village Clerk: M. Heers

The minutes of the last regular meeting were approved on a motion by J. Falci, second by G. Thomas and carried.

Mayor Terry explained how he promised voters that if he were Mayor he would commission a study to look into different options for village government He then introduced Mike Hatter of Cornell University who conducted the study.

Mr. Hattery explained that this is a draft study and after the citizens and Board have had a chance to review it and submit questions and comments and those are reviewed he will issue the final study.

There had been two previous studies and these are both referenced in the report and I was asked to look at the basic same set of options listed in the 1992 report and they are:

Retain the existing form of government and make no new cooperative service delivery changes.

Form a coterminous Town-Village

Retain the existing form of Village government and increase contracting with the City of Hornell for certain services.

Dissolve the Village

Merge the Village and the City of Hornell.

The numbers you see in the report are based on 2003 numbers. All the tables are based on the costs to home owners for a median value house based on the 2000 census. We looked at what kind of changes there might be in service delivery in each of those options and the results of the options compared with the Village's current situation. The only option, which leads to a decrease in costs as it is currently calculated, is the merger with Hornell. This is a draft and we might find some problems and this might change. It has to be balanced against the changes in service delivery and in the change in local control for village resident.

He did not make any specific recommendations as citizens and communities have preference for how they want things done and every community has to decide which way is best for them.

Mayor Terry decided the reports would be distributed to the Trustees and to the original committee that started the study. Residents can come into the office in the morning to look at the report. We will give out copies to the village residents for no charge and persons outside the village will have to pay 25 cents a page.

Questions

Mr. Giles: Have you taken debt load into consideration?

Hattery: Yes and no but mostly operating cost.

Mrs. Giles: If we dissolve into the Town they would be more responsible for cost of the fire department.

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Mr.Libordi: You said coterminous was an increase of \$79 per household, but we would be in control and receive all the money from any pilots that occurred.

Hattery: Any merger would have to have a dissolution plan of how to divide the governmental assets before merger could be accomplished.

Mr. Giles: Is there any specific legislation for merger with the City?

Hattery: There was a merger statute that was almost passed by the legislature. There has been some interest in the legislature that indicates if a community wants it, it could be a local bill for the merger process.

J. Dick: If the village would merge with the city, would Town residents have a chance to vote on it, as they would lose the tax base?

Hattery: There was no merger law floating around in the previous study in order for the Village to join the City it would have to be through the annexation procedure. But a merger statute I am not as clear on that whether the Town would have a vote or not.

T. Fitzpatrick: I am assuming that merger with the City would be a savings. My question is that I have property in the City with a house half the value of the one I own here in the village and my taxes were more than they are here in North Hornell. How can that be a savings if they are going to take our house values and apply it to the City tax base?

R.Orday: I have computed my taxes based on the library tax, county tax and my taxes will go up \$436 in the City.

Norfolk: I have heard that when the school merged that the taxes went out of sight and they were promised one thing and it did not happen. You would lose control and you would not get your street plowed on time.

Mrs. Weirick: When you were asked to do this report, why, what was the reason for it?

Falci: We were looking down the road at what is our projected tax revenue coming in 2015 and what our options going to be.

J. Bebout: Are there any outstanding problems in the village that would be solved by going to the City?

Hattery: The village has benefited fiscally in pilot payments from the City and that is going to change down the road. Also the agreement with the City on sewer treatment will end and charges may be added.

R. Rink: Are you looking at the bigger picture, that is, if the village goes to the city there is going to be a line north of here with no fire protection, That puts a great deal of pressure on the village of Arkport to carry. I thought we were looking at what these options are going to do as far as the valley is concerned. As far as I am concerned the City is trapped and so is North Hornell, the land is all north of here. We have got to have the Town, they have all the land and they should fight for it. If I lived in the Town I would tell the City of take a walk, and then we are right back into politics again. I hope this would transcend politics; all we really are talking about is saving 50 dollars. Some other option will cost 300, it depends how much fear they want to throw into it. Someone will say Seneca Road has to be resurfaced and it is going to cost so much per homeowner and those are fear tactics. Maybe we should talking about the valley.

Mayor Terry: Well the village was the only entity willing to pay for a study.

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Libordi: I am glad the Village spent the money on this study. If North Hornell does not look out for itself no one will.

Mayor Terry: Copies will be given to the original committee and Trustees, and residents will get one copy free and all others will pay 25 cents a copy.

T. Fitzpatrick: Will this be up to a vote by the village residents?

Falci: If we decide to merge I am sure it would be a vote of the people.

Hattery: Please submit all questions by the April meeting.

FIRE DEPT.

The report of the fire department was approved on a motion by W.McNelis, second by J. Falci and carried.

Noted the new tanker was put into service. Permission granted to participate in the Hornell St.Pat's parade on a motion by G. Thomas, seconded by J. Falci. The annual firemen banquet will be held on April 27th.

DPW

The report of the DPW was approved on a motion by W. McNelis, second by J.Falci and carried.

HUNT ENGINEERS

A contract submitted from Hunt Engineers for services in Marick Park at a cost of \$7600 was approved on a motion by J. Falci, second by G. Thomas and carried.

BILLS

The following bills were approved on a motion by J. Falci, second by G. Thomas and carried.

Sewer \$1252.54
General \$7,672.40

Mayor Terry adjourned the meeting into executive session at 8:00 P.M.

Executive session adjourned at 8:15 on a motion by J. Falci, second by W. McNelis and carried.

Meeting adjourned at 8:16 by J. Falci, second by W. McNelis and carried.

Village Clerk