

A Town Board Workshop was held Monday, July 9, 2012, at 6:00pm at Town Hall, 18 Russell Avenue, Ravena, New York

PRESENT: Stephen D. Flach, Supervisor
Dawn Rogers, Councilwoman
Thomas A. Boehm, Councilman
Thomas E. Dolan, Councilman
Peter E. Masti, Councilman

ALSO PRESENT: Diane L. Millious, Town Clerk
Gregory Darlington, Chief of Police

Supervisor Flach opened the Meeting and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Town Clerk Millious read the following Notice of Special Workshop.

**NOTICE
SPECIAL
TOWN OF COEYMANS
TOWN BOARD
WORKSHOP**

Pursuant to Section 123 of Town Law, please take notice that the Town Board of the Town of Coeymans has scheduled a Special Town Board Workshop for Monday, July 9, 2012 at 6:00pm. The Town Board will be meeting with the Ravena Rescue Squad and Fire Commissioners to discuss funding and the possibility of redistricting. The Workshop will be held at Town of Coeymans Town Hall, 18 Russell Avenue, Ravena, New York.

**By Order of the Town Board
of the Town of Coeymans
Diane L. Millious
Town Clerk**

AGENDA

- Ambulance Districting
 - Current operating cost of Ravena Rescue Squad.
 - Areas to be covered by the district.
 - Towns/municipalities are located within the area.
 - Assessed valuation of the proposed area.
 - Funded through property taxes or service contract.
 - Cost to taxpayers i.e. – dollars per thousand.
 - Will this be an Advanced Life Support District?
 - Will ALS personnel be available each shift as required by the State?
 - Can we take over paramedic – have our own on-call paramedic?
 - Will there be a back-up responder for the district?
 - If agreed upon, an application for a determination of public need has to be made in writing to the appropriate regional council.
 - A Public Hearing has to be held for public comment on the proposed district.

OPENING COMMENT

Supervisor Flach welcomed everyone and added that it would be an informal Workshop and then asked that they go around the room and have everyone introduce themselves and state where they are from.

Those in attendance were:

William Price, Ravena Rescue Squad	Todd Polverelli, Coeymans Police Dept.
Ginny Pearson, Ravena Rescue Squad	Alice Ross, Ravena Rescue Squad
Bill Bailey, Village Board	Nancy Warner, Village Board
Marty Case, Village Board	Mike Beachler, Coeymans Hollow Fire
Rocco Persico, Village Board	Bill Bruno, Coeymans Fire
Scott VanWormer, New Baltimore Fire	Frank Chmielewski, Coeymans Hollow Fire
Christopher Norris, New Baltimore Board	Alan VanWormer, New Baltimore EMO
Susan O’Rorke, New Baltimore Super.	Alex Betke, Coxsackie Supervisor

Supervisor Flach stated that the reason for the Workshop was to figure out what needs to happen with the Ravena Rescue Squad as far as funding and to discuss redistricting and the ins and outs and pros and cons. He added that the reason that there are so many people from so many organizations is because they all have different ideas about districting, which might be a great thing or not so great a thing for the Town of Coeymans, Town of New Baltimore and Ravena Rescue Squad. He continued by saying that they need to get a feel for what the leaders of all the organizations are thinking.

DISCUSSIONS

The following topics were discussed amongst the Town Board and those present from the various organizations.

Key points of the discussion by members of the Town Board, Ravena Rescue Squad and others present were as follows:

- Ravena Rescue Squad has gone to a fully paid staff and no longer has any volunteers, which saved over \$10,000.00 in insurance costs.
- The full paid staff is 24/7 day a week operation and do not have a second, which has precipitated their discussions with the fire companies.
- Looking to come on board with Fire Company EMT’s who are certified to come on for second call, mainly at the scene of a fire in case a fire fighter gets hurt and the ambulance is on another call.
- They are using their reserve funds year after year and by the end of 2013 they won’t have much left.
- The Town of Coeymans denies them of the money that they figure they need to run the ambulance and they have asked the Town of Coeymans to increase the budget since 2008.
- They do not get enough income to run the Ravena Rescue Squad and they need to buy an ambulance this year.
- At the end of 2012 they will not have enough in their reserve to get them through 2013.
- They are getting less money from insurance companies, i.e. - Medicare, Medicaid, last year they collected \$251,000.00 and had budgeted \$285,000.00.
- They are down on calls thus far for the year, which is a loss so far of \$20,000.00.
- They are running a deficit and if they can’t come to some type of arrangement, they are going to close the doors.
- Without New Baltimore it would be another \$70,000.00 to \$80,000.00 that the Town Board would have to come up with.
- Their staff has not gotten a raise in 2 years and they will start losing quality EMT’s.

- If firemen EMT's come on board, they will be paid employees and get an hourly rate of Ravena Rescue EMT's.
- This year they are asking for \$150,000.00 from the Town of Coeymans and in 2011 they got \$81,000.00.
- Total expenses for 2011 were \$400,825.84 and 2012 was \$452,266.00 and their preliminary budget for 2013 is \$456,400.00 and the payroll is \$316,000.00.
- Sources of income are medical recovery and the Towns of Coeymans.
- In 2011 they had 1,084 calls and so far this year through June they have had 483.
- They get reimbursed for transports and get paid for about 70% of them.
- Missed calls so far this year are 41.
- The Town paid \$187,000.00 for paramedics.
- The \$316,000.00 payroll provides 28, 12 hour shifts
- The Town of Coxsackie has two districts, and it is municipal.
- The Town of New Baltimore is split in half and covered by Ravena Rescue and the Town of Coxsackie and there are two districts.
- Albany County Sheriff's Department covers some calls and it averages 4-5 calls a month.
- Ravena rescue will provide mutual aid for the Town of Coxsackie.
- In Albany County ALS responds to 100% of the calls, in Greene County it is on a priority system and they don't go to every call.
- They will not have the funds to operate at the present funding level and will need a different funding cash flow to continue to operate.
- Ravena Rescue Squad needs a new ambulance.
- As of June 30, 2012 they have \$63,323.50 owed to them from the people who have no insurance, which they will not get.
- If it became municipal, will the Ravena Rescue Squad be willing to move over their assets.
- The Town has the option to either form or not form a district.
- The formula that the Ravena Rescue Squad currently uses to bill the Towns of Coeymans and New Baltimore.
- Insurance recoveries for ALS are returned to both Towns
- Approximately \$15,000.00 - \$20,000.00 is returned to the Town for ALS.
- To meet the Squads budget request the Town has to come up with \$70,000.00 by raising taxes and/or they can discuss establishing a district.

Supervisor Flach stated that Mr. Alex Betke, Supervisor for the Town of Coxsackie where they have two districts, was present and he would explain to them Municipal Districting.

Key points of the discussion were as follows:

- Coxsackie has an Ambulance District that is run by the Town Board.
- Two options would be: It would be an A-Fund charge to every taxpayer in the Village & Town or they would set up some sort of district that would be a separate line on their tax bill, which would be an A-Fund type charge but in a district.
- A benefit of a district is if there are any PILOT Agreements they don't apply to the district so the full assessment goes into that district and it is not exempted.
- There is a process in forming a district and there has to be a Local Law done by the Town Board and subject to permissive referendum.
- They would have to set a taxing limit on the district and they would work with the Rescue Squad to determine what the budget would be and in turn they would set some type of baseline limit in terms of what can be raised via taxes.
- The district would operate much like it is now with the Town Board as the administrative staff making the decisions.
- The Town would have a billing company; they would have to go through a Certificate of Need process to have it transferred out of the Ravena Rescue Squads name.
- It should be done in January at the beginning of the year and not in mid year, which would give them ability to set their tax rate in the prior year's budget.

- Ravena Rescue is a corporate entity and assets would have to be dealt with via whatever by-laws and corporate documents that they have and there may be a charge to the district for the assets and the Town would have to work with Ravena Rescue in terms of what would be transferred over and what the cost would be.
- The district would encompass whatever they want to make it to encompass and it would not be into New Baltimore, the district would have a separate contract with New Baltimore.
- Employees of the Ravena Rescue Squad would become Town employees and be vested under whatever process the Town has and would be paid in the Town's payroll schedule under the district funds.
- It would be town employees, town equipment and a town building, unless they lease it from the Rescue Squad.
- The Supervisor would be the responsible party for Medicaid & Medicare and through the billing company all of the revenue would come to the Town and would have to be allocated to the district.
- ALS would be contracted and paid out of the district.

Supervisor Flach continued by asking about Ravena Rescue continuing to be their own entity like the Fire Companies and creating an Ambulance District.

Key points of the discussion were as follows:

- There would have to be a Local Law and referendum.
- There would have to be a Board of Commissioners.
- The Town Board would appoint the first Board of Commissioners.
- After the appointment there would be an election for Commissioners and the top vote getter would be a five-year term, which would start the staggering and you would not be electing a Board all at one time.
- In addition to the Commissioner, they will need a staff of a treasurer and clerk, which will be an added cost.
- Staff would be considered public employees and in the State Retirement System.
- There would be election costs for the Commissioners.
- The district would be a government entity and would have to report to the Comptroller's Office every year.
- The Board of Commissioners would control the amount of money that could be spent, which has no limit and they would be their own authority.
- Going into the Town of New Baltimore would be an option and if so there can not be a jurisdictional limit for being a Commissioner.

A question and answer period followed.

CLOSING COMMENTS

Supervisor Flach stated that there are a number of options and they have to get some numbers and if they decide to have a separate district there would be a Public hearing and continued by saying that they need to figure out what Ravena Rescue Squad needs to continue to operate and there is no question as to whether the ambulance service is needed in our Town because it is important to our community. He added that people need to know what things cost and if they really want the service, it has to be conveyed to them.

Supervisor Flach asked if anyone else wished to comment.

Councilman Boehm stated that he wanted to thank every one for coming out and many agencies were represented, which shows that people care in this community and the dialog was very helpful and productive.

Supervisor Flach asked if anyone else wished to comment.

Councilman Boehm stated that at the next Town Board Meeting they should formally establish a Committee and also discuss the possibility of working with Alex Bettke to push forward with the best option.

Councilman Dolan interjected that there is a Workshop next Tuesday.

Supervisor Flach stated that they would bring it up at the next Workshop Meeting.

Councilman Boehm stated that there should be representation from Coeymans Fire Department, Coeymans Hollow Fire, the Town of New Baltimore, Village of Ravena, and Police at the Workshop.

Supervisor Flach stated that anyone wishing to volunteer for the Committee should contact his office. He continued by asking if there were any other comments, hearing none he asked for a motion to adjourn.

ADJOURNMENT

On motion of Councilman Boehm, seconded by Councilman Masti, the Town Board Workshop was adjourned.

VOTE – AYES 5 – NAYS 0 – SO MOVED

Time – 7:37pm

Respectfully Submitted,

APPROVED:

Diane L. Millious, Town Clerk