

**COMMITTEE DAY
TUESDAY
FEBRUARY 15, 2011**

Members present:

Bill Farber, Barry Hutchins, Brian Towers, John Frey, Rick Wilt, Bob Edwards, Clark Seaman, Ermina Pincombe and Neil McGovern

**SOLID WASTE COMMITTEE
9:00 AM**

Also Present: Tracy Eldridge, Don Rhodes (Laberge Group), Rod Eldridge (Sterling Environmental) and Pete Klein, Press

Solid Waste Management Plan Proposals:

Tracy introduced Mr. Rhodes and Mr. Eldridge. They reviewed the proposal they submitted.

Mr. Rhodes and Mr. Eldridge left at this time.

9:45 AM Tracy introduced Willy Grimmke of Spectra Engineers and Steve Lynch of R.S. Lynch & Co.

Mr. Grimmke and Mr. Lynch reviewed the proposal they submitted.

Linda Mitchell entered during the presentation.

Mr. Grimmke and Mr. Lynch left at this time.

10:30 AM Tracy introduced Gregg McCarron of SCS Engineers.

Mr. McCarron reviewed his proposal.

Mr. McGovern left during the presentation.

Mr. McCarron left at this time.

11:25 AM Tracy introduced Paul R. Czerwinski and Jillian M. Blake of Barton and Loguidice.

Mr. Czerwinski and Ms. Blake reviewed their proposal.

Mr. Czerwinski and Ms. Blake left at this time.

Tracy asked the Committee what direction they would like to go. Mr. Towers stated that he would like some time to digest what was heard today. He feels all four that gave proposals are capable of providing the basic plan that DEC and DANC are going to require us to have. We have to decide what additions we want to add to the plan. We also need to look at the overall direction or philosophy that each individual might have. Mr. Towers asked Tracy to re-run the one page document from DANC about what is in the waste stream for everyone. Mr. Frey stated

that some of them got what we are doing in Hamilton County and some did not, rather than re-educate somebody, that is going to be something he remembers when it comes to choosing.

INTERNAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
1:30 PM

Employee Evaluations

FINANCE COMMITTEE
2:00 PM

Also Present: Beth Hunt, Barry Baker and Bill Hotaling

Mr. Farber stated that this meeting was called to look at tax installment payments. The last time we looked at installment payments we were waiting until we got the Systems East Tax Collection Software in place so that people had the ability to pay by credit card and see how that impacted the needs and desires. We are at the point to reevaluate it. Mr. Hotaling has done some additional research and found the specific options that are available to us.

Mr. Hotaling reviewed the following options.

Option 1: The County becomes the tax collector. The first payment is made to the town in January; subsequent payments are made to the County Treasurer. The subsequent payments to the County Treasurer can be spread out from January right through to December. You can structure them anyway you want as far as fees.

Mr. Farber asked Mr. Hotaling to explain what he means by “the County becomes the tax collector”. Mr. Hotaling explained that people don’t have to participate; they can pay their taxes in January and be done. If they wish to participate they pay half in January, after that the taxes go directly to the County. The County will make the town whole prior to that, like they usually do. Mr. Baker added that the County can set whatever interest, penalty program they want.

Option 2: Mr. Hotaling explained that the other option is that everything stays the same, the towns are the collectors, the warrant ends April 1, you pay half of your taxes in January and you spread the rest of it out between February 1 and April 1. Mr. Baker explained that partial payments would mean a certain percentage is due by January 31 and then they can make any payment amount up until the end of the warrant date. Mr. McGovern asked if we have enough staff to handle this. Mr. Farber clarified that this option would not be an impact on the county, would only impact the towns. Mr. Farber asked what if someone starts making payments at the town level and then doesn’t completely pay their tax liability. Mr. Hotaling stated that what is left would be turned over to the county as delinquent.

Mr. Towers asked what the downside is financially for the county having to wait for payment. Mr. Farber stated that with option 2 the county will not be waiting, but the town could be. With this option the towns can opt in or opt out.

Mr. McGovern asked if the county is set up to accept credit cards. Beth Hunt stated not yet, but should be able to for the next round of taxes. Mr. Baker stated that in the research he did, even the counties that do installment payments and take credit card payments, don’t allow installment payments to be made by credit cards or on-line transactions. On your tax bill you have both

options; they give you a window to decide if you want to opt in to the installment payment program, if you do you have to have 50% (cash, check or money order) in by a certain date.

Mr. McGovern asked what the percentage rate is of counties that are currently offering installment programs. Mr. Baker guessed that maybe a third at the most. Mr. McGovern stated that when this was first discussed, it was discussed that wouldn't it be easier to just take cards. Mr. Hotaling stated the problem with the constituents is probably because the interest rates are too high. Mr. McGovern discussed the penalty rates at the village, town and county. Mr. McGovern further stated that we have to make sure the numbers are crunched, what happens if 20-40% of the people opt for this.

Mr. Farber stated that the county will make the first decision, do we authorize it? The second decision is made at the town board level. Mr. McGovern stated that approving it at the county just kicks it down the road to the town, and people will read it in the paper that it is available, we need to crunch the numbers. We need to look at the worst case scenario, what happens if every lakefront owner took us up on this in Lake Pleasant, 2% sounds inviting until it doesn't add up. Mr. Baker stated that from his survey, somewhere between 10 & 12% of parcel owners in other counties have opted in. Mr. Frey stated that he does not spend 50% of his money before April. He feels it will be somewhere between 10-20% may do this, it has gained traction in his town from one person asking about it. Mr. McGovern stated that the reason people don't want to use credit cards is because the credit card companies have gotten dinged around by the government and now they want their interest, the same thing happens with us, this seems small unless the interest rates change, in which case everyone of your comptrollers or town clerks is going to want to invest that money.

Mr. Frey asked under option 2, can we set the % of the first payment. Mr. Hotaling and Mr. Baker believe it has to be set at 50%. Mr. Hotaling asked if it would really help people if they could spread it out over 3 months. Mr. Frey stated that he is hearing yes, it would help. Mr. McGovern stated that if they paid the same amount, the 50% or nothing in January, by the current matrix we work under, they paid it all at the end of March, they would pay 3%.

Mr. Farber stated people really want to give Inlet the opportunity to do this if the Inlet Town Board has decided that it is something they want to do, but you have to be sensitive to the fact that it is going to raise the bar for every other town and in some of the towns it may or may not have negative implications that the towns feel they are going to be challenged to deal with, whether it is additional administrative work for a collector or cash flow issues. There are several layers of questions that need to be answered, first is the County Board willing to authorize it; the second will be at the town level. Mr. McGovern stated that he wants to make sure he has all the information before he would want to authorize it because he feels like it is going to put, perhaps, each town at risk. If there is no risk, prove there is no risk and he will not have a problem with it. It sounds to him that he could pay nothing on the town/county taxes for 5 months and still only pay 5%. You pay 5% at one day late for village tax.

Mr. Towers asked Mrs. Hunt to get numbers on the delinquency rate from year to year.

Mr. Frey asked if under option 2 can we set the fees. Mr. Baker stated yes. Mr. Farber asked if we would establish the fees consistently. Everyone agreed that from an administrative standpoint we would have to. Mr. Frey stated that if we set it more that 1% but not 5% it should elevate anyone's fears that if everyone jumped on this, you make it so that if someone really wanted it they could use it, it wouldn't cost them an arm and a leg, and it wouldn't cost us anything. Mr.

Hotaling stated there is also an option to do this just for seniors. It was discussed making this an option just for seniors.

The senior exemption was discussed. Mr. Farber asked if there is some correlation between having to do the senior exemption and the installment payments for seniors. Mr. Hotaling stated that Inlet is the only town that doesn't have the senior exemption.

Mr. Farber asked Mr. Baker to get more information on what the City of Albany has done with its seniors. Mr. Baker stated he would and distribute it to the Board members.

Mr. Farber asked what the timeline is if we want to do this. Mr. Hotaling stated that he would have to go back and look at the law.

Mr. Edwards introduced Collie Smith, Mayor of the Village of Speculator and Bonnie Page, Village Clerk.

Mayor Smith stated that he first approached this Committee about the issue of the County making the Village whole for back taxes 25 years ago. There were people in the Village that felt very strongly about this. He was promptly shot down and told that the County didn't have to do this and therefore there was no reason for the County to do this. While it isn't a necessity for the County to do this, it would be a very good thing for the County to do if for no other reason than that it is done in almost all other counties in New York State. He got the impression and there is the feeling that the Village is an ugly step child of both the Town of Lake Pleasant and Hamilton County and that they have gone off in a separate direction by forming the Village. They formed a village because it was the only way the hamlet of Speculator could provide the infrastructure they needed for business. In doing this they have been quite successful and if you look at the sales tax that is generated in southern part of Hamilton County most of it comes from the Village of Speculator and a great deal of it has to do with the fact that they have water and sewer and they have provided a place that is good for business. This has been good for Hamilton County. What the Village is asking really doesn't amount to very much. He feels it would be a great gesture on part of the County to recognize that the Village has played a part in the prosperity of the County and it would mean a lot to a number of people in the Village who feel quite strongly about this.

Mr. McGovern stated that one of the people the Mayor may be referring to is shortly to possibly be Mayor. He further stated that he didn't really understand why it was such a thing, it was just a principle. That all small school districts were given this courtesy, which is pretty much what he feels it is, in order to make them whole so that they can plan their budgets accordingly. He further stated that it is a very small number that gets put out as delinquent for the Village. In his time with the Village he doesn't recall once or twice that they were in small claims court. It is a very insignificant amount of dollars, but it does put them in the same collegial treatment as the rest of the County.

Mr. Towers asked Mrs. Page what the numbers are. Mrs. Page stated that information was sent to the County this time last year. Not much has changed. It averages \$35,000-\$40,000 at the time the County would take it over. It is the same people. She met with Mrs. Hunt a couple of weeks ago. It is the same people that she has to deal with also.

Mr. Hotaling asked what happens when the County foreclosures on property in the Village. Mrs. Page stated they are on their own. Mr. Farber stated that the law is pretty specific that they have to be involved in the court action or the County cuts off their lean.

Mrs. Page stated that the last time the Village foreclosed on anyone was in 1984. Mr. McGovern stated this is not the kind of exposure that the City of Gloversville puts on Fulton County or anything in our region you can compare it to. Mr. McGovern further stated that it is more of a formality. It is more that they are the only taxing authority of any size that is not given this privilege. Mr. Towers asked if it is by statute that the County needs to make the towns and school districts whole or are each brought in separately. Mr. Hotaling answered that it is by statute. Mrs. Page stated that there are only 4 counties that don't do this.

Mr. Edwards asked what happens if we are doing this and we foreclose. Mr. Hotaling stated that the county will sell the property and get the money. Mr. Farber stated that the county gets the money based on the equity that we foreclose on. People bid on properties based on the value of the property, not based on what we are owed. When the County forecloses on the property they get the same amount irrespective of how much liability they take on.

Discussion continued.

The Committee asked Mr. Baker to get more information on both of the items discussed today.

CENTRAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE
3:30 PM

Also Present: Sheriff Abrams

Sheriff Abrams presented the Sheriff's Office Annual Report.

Court Security.

If the County is the provider of the service, the County has to provide what is requested. It is the County's option to be the provider or not. The County needs to reach an agreement with the State by April 1st or the State will have to take it over.

Hiring a temporary part time or full time deputy.

There is a line in the budget for part time help. The Sheriff does have someone in Northville who is interested. His is an ex-Gloversville PD that was laid off. It would be for 10 hour shifts on the weekends and holidays.

Mr. Farber stated the process would be the Sheriff would put in the request, the Board could approve by 10 day letter or resolution.

The Sheriff stated that the civil service exam was given, there are four individuals eligible. Should he pursue this? He can get by, but it will diminish services they can provide. The part time position would be used until he could fill the position permanently.

Mr. Farber clarified that there are two options here. He could use the part time to fill in and move rapidly towards bringing in another full time officer or he will probably need additional time with the part time officer if we don't fill in with another full time position.

The Sheriff stated to get a new employee certified it will cost about \$12,000 and will take about 6 months.

The Sheriff stated he would like to have a part time officer until it is decided that the position will roll into a full time or he can hire full time. An extended part time position is not the solution.

Mr. Farber stated he would more comfortable with finding a strategy to implement the part time for right now. He is concerned with what the State budget is going to be. Everyone agreed.

Loss of the State navigation money.

The money is in the County budget, we were getting 50% reimbursement from the State. It is about a \$15,000 reimbursement. It doesn't look like we are going to get it for 2010 either. The Sheriff uses 4 temporary people for the summer navigation program. He suggested we keep them, but we are looking at a \$15,000 hit.

911 in Hope.

The Sheriff clarified that all the 863 numbers will roll to Fulton County and the 924 numbers will roll to Hamilton County.

Real Property Execution.

The Sheriff discussed this with the County Attorney; he wasn't able to give him a lot of help with it. He has a real property execution that needs to take place in Blue Mt. Lake. The County could make over \$12,000. He talked to other Counties they stated they do it with their County Attorney.

Mr. Farber stated that he will reach out to the County Attorney. The Sheriff suggested contacting Erie County; he knows their County Attorney helped created a manual for their county regarding this.

Mr. Farber asked when the Sheriff needs an answer on the Navigation Officers. He stated May; he believes he has the same individuals coming back this year. The Sheriff stated that we are still renting a boat for \$5,000; it will be about \$20,000 to buy. He is looking into a law enforcement program through Yamaha, they have jet skis. We may be able to do that and give it the officer that we are renting the boat for.

Everyone present was in favor of doing the Navigation Program this year, but would like all options reviewed as to how we move forward.

**INTERNAL MANAGEMENT
4:00 PM**

Employee Evaluations