

Work Session of the Village Board of the Village of Brockport was held in the Village Hall Conference Room 49 State Street Brockport, New York, February 22, 2016 at 7:00pm.

PRESENT: Mayor Margaret B. Blackman, Trustee/Deputy Mayor William G. Andrews, Trustee Annette M. Crane, Trustee Katherine J. Kristansen, Treasurer Daniel P. Hendricks

EXCUSED: Trustee John D. LaPierre

ALSO PRESENT: per the sign in sheet: Rhett King, Mary Rich, C.E. Hamlin, Aaron Cerbone, Joan Hamlin, Linda Ketchum, Jo Matela, Lori Skoog, Tonya Krueger, Mark Krueger, Mary Jo Nayman

This was a work session, not a regular meeting. No public comment.

- **GUESTS with 5 minute speaking time each:** Mayor Blackman asked that each e-mail their statements electronically to the Village Clerk for insertion into the minutes.
 - Rhett King – NY Villagers for Efficient Government –
 - Request Village Board pursue a dissolution study from CGR –

Statement read into the record by Rhett King:

Madam Mayor and Trustees,

Thank you for allowing us time to speak tonight.

From the NY Department of State's 2012 publication, and I quote, "Democracy, like a precious jewel, shines most brilliantly in the light of an open government."

Clearly, our village is very serious about having a conversation. So much so, that in just a few months, villagers will be casting their vote on whether to dissolve the village government and unify our community or keep the status quo. We implore this board to take action by hiring the Center for Governmental Research to provide us with independent, invaluable information, helping village electors make an informed decision. This study, meant to be a pre-vote study of current government efficiencies, analysis of costs, and the impact of the dissolution vote is not meant to be the final dissolution plan.

During the last dissolution discussion, CGR presented Brockport electors with unbiased, well researched information. Since CGR had "no skin in the game" we felt the information was presented fairly and without bias. Mr. Zettek worked to put the concepts into layman's terms.

More recently, the Village of Macedon Board hired CGR to develop a high level analysis of fiscal and service impacts of their potential unification with the town. It took approximately three weeks to complete at a cost of \$5000. While no study, no matter how much time or money is invested, can possibly illuminate every potential issue of dissolution, this study is a first step, meant to facilitate a conversation amongst residents and between our governments as well.

To help fund this study, we were told by NY State that the village would qualify for a state grant covering 90% of the cost. For example, a \$7500 study would result in a \$750 final cost to the village. As electors, we feel this cost is an important investment in all of us as we try to determine whether we want to unify under one local government or remain a divided community. Regarding our community, since the petitions were certified, have any of you reached out to the Town to discuss what would be in the best interest of the community?

We believe that every elector participating in the referendum should be well-informed. All we ask is that our Village Government be open and invite CGR to conduct the study that will place unbiased information into everyone's hands. Tonight, please join in the conversation that your electorate is already having. Once again we are formally petitioning you, to take your first step and vote to approve the CGR study.

Again, just to clear up an apparent misunderstanding, we are asking for a pre-vote study regarding current government efficiencies, costs, and the impact of the dissolution vote. We are not asking for the final plan.

Please, let the bright light of information and democracy shine on every Brockport resident. Thank you for your time.

- Jo Matela – ProBrockport -

Statement read into the record by Josephine C. Matela:

To: Village of Brockport, Board of Trustees

Thank you for allowing me to speak to you on this very important issue.

First of all I want to say that I am opposed to the dissolution of the Village of Brockport. The reasons are the same as they were the first time around.

With all the votes and all the plans the ultimate result is that there is no plan that binds the Town to anything. And the result of the process leaves in its wake hard feelings and between the town and the village residents and will also ultimately cost us the loss of the Brockport Police Department and Code Enforcement and other village services.

A study by CGR or MRB and using taxpayer's money to fund this study is frivolous and unnecessary.

The Village of Brockport, the largest village in Monroe County, needs to be true to its village residents and continue to deliver services to its residents that the residents need and want.

Village Board responses:

- o Mayor Blackman – Mayor Blackman inquired if any member of the Village Board wished to make a motion to pursue, as petitioned, a dissolution study of the Village of Brockport.

Statement read into the record by Mayor Blackman:

A traditional dissolution study that provides definitive answers on costs and savings takes 6 to 9 months to complete. A 13-page preliminary study, like that done for Macedon by CGR, can be quickly completed in a few weeks. But it doesn't say anything that you and we don't already know from having been down this road before. We know that every village dissolution is unique, that efficiencies resulting from village dissolution typically range from 2-5% due to consolidation of some, and loss of other, services, along with the village no longer subsidizing town operations. And, it's important to add, much of the savings come from the aggressive state incentive to dissolve offered as an annual tax credit to the dissolving village.

As we all know, services not provided by the town with which the village consolidates are replaced by special taxing districts, 7 of them in the case of Macedon and likely 5 to 6 in the case of Brockport. These would include lighting, sidewalks, brush pickup, water and sewer debt to 2031 and village debt, including health insurance payments to retirees. Post-dissolution, residents of the village alone are responsible for payments to these taxing districts.

Brockport's biggest loss of service and savings gain would obviously come from the elimination of the Brockport police department. And that is the critical question village residents must ask themselves—do we want to eliminate our local police? If we dissolve, would the Town of Sweden even consider a town police force? The final Lyons Dissolution plan called for a town-wide police force; the town denied it.

In the end, regardless of any study plan, what happens to Brockport with dissolution is up to the Town of Sweden. For these, among other reasons, we are not in favor of undertaking the study you request.

- o Trustee/Deputy Mayor Andrews –

Statement read into the record by Trustee/Deputy Mayor Andrews:

I am adamantly opposed to commissioning a so-called dissolution study for three main reasons.

First, such studies are a cruel and cynical hoax. They are worse than worthless. They lead people to believe that they would, in fact, be carried out, when we know that would not happen. Once the village was dissolved, the Town Board could repeal any and every provision of the plan. For instance, any plan worth its salt would require retention of the police department and an effective code enforcement program. Yet, we know that the dissolutionists want to eliminate the police and eviscerate code enforcement. I doubt that the Town Board could refuse their demands. I will not support such a dishonest subterfuge.

Second, I will not trust the fate of this village to outsiders, however expert, brilliant, and well-meaning they may be. Brockporters should decide their own fate, as I am confident they will do in voting down dissolution even more resoundingly than six years ago. They know best their own interests and are perfectly capable of acting accordingly without outside help.

Third, I want no outsiders' plan, because I have my own, which is to help defeat dissolution and to continue to work with my colleagues on this Board to serve the interests of Brockporters to the best of

my ability, to continue to hold the line on taxes, to continue to work aggressively to secure outside funding, to continue to find ways to economize on village expenses, and to continue to provide our neighbors with the services they want and need.

- o Trustee Crane –

Statement read into the record by Trustee Crane:

I have reviewed the dissolution study prepared for the Village of Macedon by CGR, as well as several other dissolution studies they have prepared. Several of their reports, including Macedon's, assume in their tax calculations that should the Village dissolve, it would receive generous additional State Aid in the form of Consolidation Incentive Aid.

In its *Guide to Local Government Dissolution and Consolidation*, the New York Conference of Mayors (NYCOM) strongly advises localities not to include this aid in the tax rate projections because the Aid is not guaranteed. It is dependent on the State legislature appropriating the money in each annual State budget. In these reports, tax rate projections without the additional State Aid tend to be mere footnotes.

Yes, the studies by CGR and similar consulting firms tend to favor dissolution. It is worth considering the fact that if a vote goes in favor of dissolution, these firms hope to be hired to do a much more extensive and expensive survey.

- o Trustee Kristansen –

Statement read into the record by Trustee Kristansen:

I do not agree that an outside study needs to be created. The village board has listened and continues to listen to the residents of this village regarding fiscal and non-fiscal matters in our village since the last dissolution vote. Many of those concerns that were presented in 2010 have been addressed and changed for the better as a direct result of the 2010 vote. We, the village board (along with various other volunteer committees and boards of the village) have been entrusted with the position of serving the Village of Brockport residents as fiscal and non-fiscal decision makers, policy makers and supporters in the best interest of the residents of our village. It is our responsibility as trustees of the village to research, listen to, disseminate, collaborate and consequently decide on whatever matter is at hand in the best interests of the whole village. This is exactly what we are and will continue to do as we move through this process that you as a group of residents of the village have asked us to do. I am confident as a Village of Brockport trustee that the Board's process will be factual, correct, thorough, collaborative and informative to the village residents as they make their decision regarding the dissolution petition.

- o Trustee LaPierre – (excused)

Statement from Trustee LaPierre read into the record by Mayor Blackman:

I am not able to be at the meeting Monday, Feb. 22nd but have been able to read the request to address the Village Board by Mr. King. If I were able to attend, I would not support any recommendation to employ CGR or any other company for a quick study of the value of dissolving the Village.

Looking at where CGR has been involved with dissolution of villages studies; I note that the initial study has a cost of \$5,000. Should the vote be to dissolve, a firm would charge \$50,000 for a study, which would still be conjecture and not able to be factual: it would be based on several "what if's" and be of most value to the company presenting the report. I wonder if a potential \$50,000 study influences the \$5,000 study and is why the potential (and not guaranteed) bonus of State monies is used to make the dissolution always positive. Looking at such studies on their web site, I did not find where they had not proposed consolidation. I wonder why.

Should a vote be to dissolve the Village, the Village Board will take the responsibility to create a plan for the Town of Sweden to take over the complete governing of the Village. This will be voted on by the residents of the village but will only be of value to the Town if they decide to follow the plan. History in such situations indicates they will not accept the plan and will make their own plan.

The issue comes down to taxes, only taxes. The cost of water from Monroe County Water Authority will increase for most households. The sewer fee will be replaced with a tax district to pay-off the bond and pay for the maintenance of the system. Both systems need care and resolution of problems: residents will pay for these costs.

Street maintenance must continue as will sidewalk repair, sidewalk plowing, leaf pickup. This cost will be borne by the residents. As will street lighting, snow plowing, street maintenance, etc., etc.

The Police Department can be dissolved like the Village, but who will give the fastest response in

Monroe County? Who will monitor the bars, the young people populating our streets at night, the drunk drivers on our streets? The Sherriff's Department can only respond with the "closest car"...perhaps many, many minutes away. The police cannot become a tax district without NYS Legislation approval, highly unlikely.

So, reduced taxes will come at the expense of reduced services. And new tax districts.

We don't need a study to determine that. The residents of the Village understand this. They don't need a \$5,000 study (with the promise of a \$50,000 study) to make their decision.

My answer to the request for a study is no...hell no!

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No motion was offered. Copies of Village Board member statements were made available.

ACTION ITEMS (time sensitive):

- o Approval of bills –

→ Trustee Crane moved, Trustee Andrews seconded, carried 4/0 that the bills be allowed and paid upon audit.

A/P Clearing Account

	<u>Abstract Date</u>	<u>Amount</u>
FUND (A): <u>General</u>	2/17/16	\$167,781.07
FUND (F): <u>Water</u>	2/17/16	\$63,697.28
FUND (G): <u>Sewer</u>	2/17/16	\$100.79
FUND (H): <u>Capital</u>	-	-
FUND (T): <u>Trust & Agency</u>	-	-
		\$231,579.14 total

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION / REVIEW: with Treasurer

- o NYS OSC – Statewide Fiscal Monitoring System – fiscal stress score – received 2/22/16

Treasurer Hendricks referred to the material in the packet in which the NYS Office of the State Comptroller (OSC) determined the fiscal stress score for the Village of Brockport as 12.1%, the lowest score received, since the inception of the Statewide Fiscal Monitoring System. (The lower the score the better.) The designation indicates that the Village of Brockport is not showing signs of fiscal stress per the OSC definition.

- o 6/1/16-5/31/17 Budget preparation –
 - General, Water, Sewer Funds
- o Resolution to pursue a CLG grant -

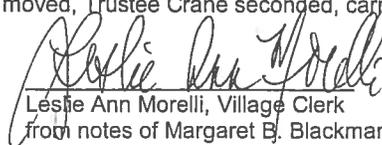
→ Trustee Andrews moved, Mayor Blackman seconded, carried 4/0 to adopt the following resolution: RESOLVED, to authorize the Village's grantwriters, J. O'Connell & Associates, to prepare an application for a NYS CLG (New York State Certified Local Government) grant in an amount not to exceed \$9,600 with the Village to provide in-kind support in the amount of \$2,560 in the form of staff and volunteer labor, with the provision that it will apply for additional outside funding to reduce the amount of CLG funds required. This is to hire a consultant to conduct an intensive level historic resources survey of the west side of Brockport. The goal of conducting this survey is to determine if the west side qualifies for State/National Registers listing and if so to then pursue those historic listings. The project total for this survey and related database work is \$12,153. Of this, 7,292 would be from the CLG grant, \$2,560 from an in-kind match from the Village and 19% match \$2,301 in cash contribution from private funding or a supplement grant from the Preservation League of New York.

Note for the record:

J. O'Connell & Associates contact is Tom Lajewski
Village Board contact is Trustee/Deputy Mayor William Andrews
Historic Preservation Board contact is Chair Kevin McCarthy
Village Office contact is Deputy Clerk-Treasurer Erica Linden

ADJOURNMENT:

→ At 7:55pm, Trustee Kristansen moved, Trustee Crane seconded, carried 4/0 that the meeting be adjourned.


Leslie Ann Morelli, Village Clerk
from notes of Margaret B. Blackman, Mayor