

**TOWN OF CANTON  
VILLAGE OF CANTON  
JOINT BOARD MEETING**

**Via ZOOM**

June 29, 2020

6:00 PM

Minutes

Present: Supervisor Mary Ann Ashley, Council members Bob Washo, James Smith, Tim Danehy and Council member Karin Blackburn, Village Mayor Michael Dalton, Trustees Carol Pynchon, Klaus Proemm, Anna Sorenson and Beth Larrabee by Zoom

Also, in attendance Town Clerk Lisa Hammond, Town Attorney Eric Gustafson, Village Attorney Gerald Ducharme, Economic Developer Leigh Rodriguez, Assessor Cindy Brand, Historian Linda Casserly, Jeni Reed, Adam Atkinson, Tom Ryan, Toby Irvin, Ellis Giacomelli, Bill Russell, and Michael Caracciolo

A. Supervisor Mary Ann Ashley called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., noting that Economic Development Assistant Jeni Reed is moderating the meeting tonight. Introductions of board members were verbally made.

B. Ethics Law Discussion:

Supervisor Mary Ann Ashley noted that both the Town and Village passed an Ethics Law that included an Ethics Board and after doing so issues were brought up about comparison of our language and the New York State language. Village Attorney Gerald Ducharme stated that “the issue that was brought up to both himself and Town Attorney Eric Gustafson was whether the board would be properly constituted if it did not have an elected or appointed officer or employee and we believe that it is properly constituted. There was a case directly on point that was decided, less than a year ago but address that issue. So, I think we are both comfortable with that and if you have your own ethics board. I think one thing that the town and village would need to do would be to decide if the town and village boards are going to adopt procedures, that the ethics board will follow such as provisions regarding the filing of the of the financial statements, etc.” Ducharme added that you can authorize the ethics board to come up with its own procedures and it sounds sanctions, the ethics board is basically advisory. The other option you have would be simply use the County Board of Ethics.

If the Town and Village have their own boards, they will have to put procedures and rules in place.

Council member Bob Washo added “that after being reminded of the county ethics board, I’m personally uncomfortable recommending or appointing my own potential jury and I understand, having some local control over it. I think there is already an entity in

place in the county and possibly the state. I don't think the State requires us to have it because they probably like to see it be outside of our local jurisdiction." Washo is interested in looking further into shipping it out to the county.

Attorney for the Town Eric Gustafson noted that he spoke with County Attorney Stephen Button and they are willing to do this for Canton, as they do it for other municipalities.

Village Trustee Carol Pynchon expressed her concerns that this was not brought up at the time of adoption and she thought the boards were going along on a path that was thought to be a good one.

Town Council member Bob Washo noted that that it did come up and he did raise the issue and it did not seem to get gather any traction.

Village Attorney Gerald Ducharme stated that "the statute says that the County Ethics Board it renders advisory opinions to local municipalities upon our request. Ducharme thinks that our local boards would establish the rules for disclosing financial disclosures. And if they are not followed the County Ethics Board would render an opinion as to how we would handle that.

Attorneys for both the Town and Village are going to explore the details of using the County's ethics board for Canton cases.

Village Trustee Beth Larrabee stated for full disclosure to everyone that her husband happens to be a member on the County Ethics board adding that they do a good job and work hard.

#### C. Village Streets Annexation-Outer State/Judson/Miner

Council member Bob Washo stated that he wanted to clear up some things that were in the media that might be misleading about this annexation due to the fact that there are a couple outer Miner Street residents present at this meeting. Washo wants to let them know that we're not annexing anything in the Town of Canton to the Village on the section of Miner Street. We are talking about 100 feet from basically the St. Lawrence University parking lot to the bridge on the Village side.

Supervisor Mary Ann Ashley noted that there are a few streets, not that big., that would make sense to have them annex into the village for purposes of maintenance paving and speed limit issues.

Town Attorney Eric Gustafson stated that the annexation of a particular parcel of property into the village is governed by the General Municipal Law and that he and Village Attorney Gerald Ducharme have looked at various options under the statute and noted that there's none of them that quite fit the scenario that we have in front of us.

The general municipal laws are broad enough regarding these agreements that it will allow municipalities, by agreement do things that municipalities can do on their own.

Discussion was held on State Street and the speed limit factor being maybe a small hiccup since part of the road is in the Village and part in the Town. This factor also becomes a maintenance issue of obligation to maintain the road.

Both Attorneys will reach out to the owners of property along State Street to see if there is an interest in annexation and report back to the board.

Council member Bob Washo suggested in the short term is to pursue what we need to do for State Street, and in the interim, create an inter municipal agreement on Judson and Miner Street.

Washo noted that the village is already committed to milling and paving to the bridge from the village limit on Miner Street, so therefore it seems like we should have at least an agreement in place.

In conclusion it was decided that State Street should be dealt with separately as it is the most difficult issue.

#### D. Canton Chamber of Commerce Municipal Funding Request:

A brief discussion was held on the Chamber Funding request. Council member Tim Danehy stated that this comes as we still have a spending freeze in place and a very uncertain financial future. Danehy stated he simply wants to talk about the process by which we want to determine the agreement as board members. Danehy stated that the Economic Development Committee Elected members, Karen Blackburn and himself from the Town and Anna Sorenson and Carol Pynchon from the village are engaging with the chamber and trying to find out what the expectations are going forward.

Supervisor Mary Ann Ashley stated from her point of view, it makes perfect sense for the Joint Economic Development Committee to meet with the Chamber executive team or president and just start the conversation about the current agreement, the history, and have a global conversation.

Copies of current agreements with the Town and Village will be shared with the Committee members to review. Mayor Mike Dalton noted that the funding is in place for this year's budget in the Village, but not allocated. Dalton supports the committee bringing back recommendations to the board. Council member Tim Danehy added that the Town has also approved the funds but has not allocated them.

#### Public Comment:

Michael Caracciolo of the Old Dekalb Rd, Canton was present and introduced himself as a 17-year-old student, currently studying at Clarkson University for computer

engineering. Caracciolo expressed his frustration on not having internet service at his residence. Caracciolo stated that his next semester is going to be fully online. Caracciolo noted that he knows that this has been a massive issue in other parts of Canton where there is no internet access.

Supervisor Mary Ann Ashley stated that “two and a half years ago, the current Town board started working on this. Ashley and Council member Tim Danehy made phone calls to the state requesting this on behalf of the town board.” We tried our best to try to get this changed. A lengthy discussion was held pointing out many issues such as something like this is affecting the tax base in Canton. Council member Tim Danehy noted that families may not want to move to this area due to lack on internet. Also, there are a lot of business in the Canton area that would draw people in to live here if the internet access was proper.

Toby Irwin of the Irish Settlement Rd was also present and has been a voice many times in the past about no internet service in the rural areas.

Council member Bob Washo thanked Michael Caracciolo for speaking up and encouraged him not stop here. Washo told Caracciolo to go to the county meetings and contact local legislators as well. Even go to the state level.

Economic Developer Leigh Rodriquez stated that “this is an economic development issue. Toby Irvin is a business owner and trying to run a business. Michael Caracciolo is a student, but this is an economic development issue and perhaps this is something that our ED team should explore and take charge of. I think there's a lot of opportunity here that we could miss out on. I want to take this up with our other economic development professionals in the region to try to continue to encourage this issue of getting Internet connection to these rural places that are harder to reach.”

Supervisor Mary Ann Ashley stated that she feels everybody agrees that we have the Economic Development Office spearhead this.

Leigh Rodriguez stated that she will make this a priority adding that it has been an issue that we have been aware of but maybe now we need to make it a priority. Rodriguez said there's been federal funding and state funding for broadband expansion. Rodriguez noted that we need this broadband even more now some residents have the opportunity to work from home in this way or learning in this way.

Michael Caracciolo will part of the group working forward to make this happen, along with universities and schools in the surrounding area.

Justice Committee member Jim Smith informed the boards that he met with the justices and their clerk and the village, the chief of the village PD to discuss how they're going to make things happen as far as getting back on schedule, they're planning on holding court for the first time on the fifth of August. Discussion was held on their plans moving

forward. Smith noted that Code Enforcement Officer Jeff Murray is on board with their tentative plans.

7:29 pm Motion to adjourn meeting by Council member Jim Smith, seconded by Council member Tim Danehy. All voted in favor. Motion carries.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Lisa Hammond". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "L".

Lisa Hammond, Town Clerk