

January 18, 2018

The Town of Corinth Town Board and Village Board held a joint meeting on January 18, 2018 at 6:00PM at the Town Hall.

Present: Richard Lucia, Town Supervisor
Edward Byrnes, Councilman
Jeffrey Collura, Councilman
Joshua Halliday, Councilman
C Eric Butler, Councilman
Robert Hafner, Town Attorney
Rose E. Farr, Town Clerk

Present: Dennis Morreale, Village Mayor
Timothy Halliday, Village Trustee
Melanie Denno, Village Trustee
Maureen Kelly, Village Trustee
Nicole Colson, Village Clerk/Treasurer
Karla Buettner, Village Attorney

After roll call and the pledge of allegiance the following business was conducted:

Supervisor Lucia introduced Tammy and Brian Martineau who are taking over Emergency Management with Sue Winslow for the Town and Village.

Attorney Hafner updated the group on where the Town and Village were regarding their Fire Contract. The Village first presented a contract for \$424,427.00 which included \$50,000.00 for the reserve. The Town had to cut their budget and ended up cutting the \$50,000.00 for the reserve. After that the Village sold some equipment and they had \$15,000.00 bringing the amount of the reserve down to \$35,000.00. He explained that the Town Board had instructed him to rewrite the Fire Contract with two major changes. First the amount should be \$374,427.00 leaving out the \$50,000.00 for the reserve since the Town could not find enough money in their budget to include the \$50,000.00 and secondly the Town wished to add a provision that in the future the fire department expenses would be split 50/50. Attorney Hafner said that the Village Attorney said the 50/50 split had not been this way for a number of years. Attorney Buettner said that the Village had responded and said the amount and the 50/50 split was not acceptable.

Councilman Collura asked the Village Clerk/Treasurer if the Town paid for 2/3 of the equipment, trucks, etc. Clerk/Treasurer Colson asked if he meant 2/3 of the new fire truck and if he did her answer was no. Councilman Collura asked how it was divided. She told him that she would have to go back over the five years and see what she could find. Councilman Collura asked if the

Town paid 2/3 of the reserves. Clerk/Treasurer Colson said that she wouldn't say it was two-thirds.

Mayor Morreale said that there are a lot of expenses that the Village pays and does not ask the Town to contribute. The Town Board asked if they had a list of the expenses. Fire Chief Kelley said he had that list.

Village Trustee Kelly said she felt that right now the boards needed to work on how to get a contract signed for this year and not focus on the breakdown of what the Town pays and what the Village pays. She said the Village brought to the Town in March/April a budget and all seemed ok at that time. She said that the Village was to put \$100,000.00 in reserve and the Town was to put \$50,000.00. She asked Clerk/Treasurer Colson how much the village put in reserve this year. Clerk/Treasurer Colson said that Village put \$150,000.00 in reserve for their 2017-18 budget. Trustee Kelley said she thought that the Town took the \$50,000.00 out of their budget thinking that it was savings when in fact the Village had already put that \$50,000.00 in based on the meeting the Town had with Fire Chief Kelley. Trustee Kelly said therefore this would be an additional cost on the Village taxpayers.

Councilman Collura said that the Town is just trying to find a way so their taxpayers are paying their fair share of the contract. Mayor Morreale said that this could be worked out later but right now it needed to be working on a solution to the contract for this year. Councilman Halliday asked if he understood that the Village was not asking for an additional \$50,000.00 but only for \$35,000.00. Mayor Morreale said that that was right.

Mayor Morreale said that the Village has spent many hours with facts and figures to try to determine the fairest way for the taxpayers of all Corinth. Mayor Morreale said he did not believe that either board has a complete understanding of the difficulties both boards face. Mayor Morreale said that at the last joint meeting the Town told them that they could not afford the \$50,000.00 and the village board went through their budget and in an effort to assist the Town they found \$15,000.00 from the sale of some equipment that they felt could be placed in the reserve account. Mayor Morreale said he hoped the Town could go back and look over their budget to see if they could find money to settle this contract.

Mayor Morreale said that he had heard that some of the public were saying that the Village is not going to provide fire protection for the Town and the fire department is not going to respond. Mayor Morreale said that this is absolutely untrue the fire department will be responding wherever the fire is.

Supervisor Lucia said that the committees could work on this at a later date and report back to the boards. Supervisor Lucia said as far as the Town was concerned it was a budget matter. Supervisor Lucia said that when the Town Board met with Chief Kelley in March the Town Board thought everything was okay but when the Town started doing their budget meeting in October the auditor told them they had to cut \$300,000.00. Supervisor Lucia said that the Town even had to cut jobs.

Trustee Halliday said that the Village Board understands that the Town Board met with Chief Kelley in March or April and then in November the Town Board found they did not have the money. Trustee Halliday said that by the time the Town found they didn't have the money the Village budget had already been certified and sent it in to the State. He said this was with the Village putting in the \$50,000.00. He said the Village thought everything was ok with the Town. He said the Village cannot back it out. He said so the Village residents have footed the bill already for the \$50,000.00. Trustee Halliday said that Fire Chief Kelley found the \$15,000.00 that was going to go for some other equipment and the Village agreed to put it toward the \$50,000.00.

Mayor Morreale said if the Town refuses to pay the Town residents living in the Village will be stuck to pay for it and deal with it. Mayor Morreale said that that is the Town's choice not his.

Attorney Hafner asked if the money in the reserve fund the Village had already put in. He said he did not realize it was put in before it was paid. Trustee Halliday said this is due to the Town's and Village's fiscal year running differently.

Mayor Morreale told the group that there needed to be major repairs on the brush truck that is solely used for the Town. He said that line on the budget is at 147%. He said that makes it over 47% of what was budgeted but the Village is not coming back to the Town and asking for that money.

Mayor Morreale said that he feels in every budget there are things that can be cut or put off to next year. He said that is what he is asking be done.

Trustee Kelly said that they were hoping since the Town is two weeks into their budget they might have been able to find some money somewhere to offset this amount.

Supervisor Lucia said that this Town is not going to be anything if the two boards do not work together.

Fire Chief Kelley said that Kevin Granger compiled a list of all equipment owned by the Fire Department and what was used for the Town. He says it shows all the standards that the department has to follow as well as what they do on a daily basis. He says it shows what money is spent on the Town only and what money is spent on the Village.

Councilman Byrnes said that when the board met with Fire Chief Kelley earlier in the year the Town Board had no intent of renegeing on the \$50,000.00, however there were challenges with the assessments, etc. He said the Village approved their budget in June and there were still negotiating going on with some assessments. Attorney Buettner asked about what assessment challenges he was speaking. He said Bannon and Indeck. Councilman Byrnes said we lost a lot of assessment and that created a great challenge for the Town Board.

Councilman Butler questioned why the Village put the Town to give an additional \$50,000.00 in the account before they actually had the money. Fire Chief Kelley said that the next truck purchased would be geared for use in the Town. Councilman Butler said he wanted to know why the money was placed in the reserve before the contract was even signed. Trustee Halliday told him that it was because of the different times of the two budgets. He said the Village budget has to be certified before the Town is even working on theirs. Trustee Halliday told him the Village had to encumber the money way before the Town budget was discussed.

Mayor Morreale tried to explain the Village Budget process and how it works. He deferred to Clerk/Treasurer Colson to explain. Clerk/Treasurer Colson explained that the Village already put that money in the reserve. She said that it is frowned upon by the Comptroller's office to place money in a reserve fund because the entity can chip away at it if some unexpected expense comes up. She also said that there had never been an issue with a contract not being signed after the Village placed the money in the budget. Attorney Hafner explained that if the Village had an idea that the Town was going to do this they could have held off putting this money in until after the contract was signed. Attorney Hafner said it does not have to be done this way.

Trustee Kelly said that the Village did not think the Town would do this and the Town didn't think they would do this.

Mayor Morreale told the group that Fire Chief Kelley brought his budget to the Village Board and the Village Board looked it over and asked that it be reduced and it was.

Fire Chief Kelley invited the Town Board liaisons to come to the Fire House and go over every piece of equipment they have to help the Town Board understand where the money goes each year.

Councilman Byrnes commented on the dedication and service of the fire company and how grateful he is for their sacrifices.

Fire Chief Kelley said he hoped the two boards could get together and make a decision that could be worked with. He said he hoped all further discussions were for Corinth as a whole. He said that the liaisons need to get together with the fire department to begin negotiating next years' contract as soon as possible.

Councilman Collura told the group that he was still struggling with this. He said that the 2017 Fire Budget was \$635,042 and \$150,000 of that went to reserve so that is approximately \$485,000 without the \$150,000 reserve and the Town was asked to pay \$374,000.00 and the village pay \$110,000.00. Trustee Denno said that she thought she knew what Councilman Collura was getting at. She said that the total budget was \$312,000.00 plus the LOSAP and the debt of the building, then they added in the \$100,000.00 for the reserve. She said then that number was multiplied by .64 and that came to \$374,000.00. She said then they added the extra \$50,000 for the reserve so it came to \$424 427.00. Attorney Hafner said that the way he understands it is the Town pays 64% of the \$100,000.00 plus an extra \$50,000.00. Attorney

Buettner said the extra \$50,000.00 was due to the fact that the new truck would be solely used for the Town. Councilman Collura said so 64% of the \$100,000 came from the Town. He was told that was right. Councilman Collura asked if that was equitable.

Mayor Morreale asked if he had checked the communities around us that have a Village within the Town. Mayor Morreale gave the following figures that he had found out:

Lake George - Village pays - 23% Town pays - 77%

Councilman Byrnes said that Lake George has a lot of very big homes. Mayor Morreale said he tried to figure out from the information he got from the towns how much the Town's portion of the fire contract was. He said the reason he had to do it that way was because some fire companies don't just contract with one village they contract with numerous villages and he said there were also fire districts that are not owned by villages. He also said that there is a strange thing that the Town of Moreau does. He said they are not a district but a private entity. Fire Chief Kelley corrected the Mayor and said that Moreau is a Fire District. Attorney Buettner said that Moreau is a Fire District that contracts with South Glens Falls.

Town of Moreau pays \$515,000.00 and the Village of South Glens Falls pays \$60,000.00

Greenwich	Village pays – 36%	Town pays – 64%
Stillwater	Village pays – 13.43%	Town pays – 86.56%
Schuylerville	Village pays – 34%	Town pays – 66%
Ballston Spa	Village pays – 31.59%	Town pays – 68.41%

Mayor Morreale said that he assumes that these towns have gone through what is happening here and they have come to the conclusion that it costs a lot more to take care of the town than the village which is one square mile and does not need tankers. Mayor Morreale said that regarding the use of the tankers in the Village, he said that they could get away with not using the tanker in the Village since they have hydrants. He said rather than adding another piece of equipment that is solely used for the Town the Village uses the tanker and they have paid for those trucks all along. He said the Village pays for the brush truck that is used solely in the town. He also said the Village pays for and maintains the four wheelers that are used solely for the Town. Mayor Morreale said that is why there is a difference in percentages.

Councilman Byrnes said that he had a copy of the minutes from the April 1, 2010 Village Board meeting where it was said that this was going to be figured on assessment. Clerk/Treasurer Colson said that this was discussed but was not approved. Councilman Byrnes read her the next sentence in the minutes that said the use of assessment was approved. Councilman Byrnes asked if the Clerk/Treasurer if she could come up with those numbers for the next joint meeting. Councilman Byrnes said that the Town residents now pay \$1.34 per thousand and the Village residents pay \$.57 per thousand. Clerk/Treasurer said that she did not realize Councilman Byrnes was speaking about 2010 and not the present. Clerk/Treasurer Colson explained how she

arrived at the figures for this contract and said that she did not remember how the figures were computed in 2010.

Mayor Morreale said that only one of the above mentioned towns is based on assessment and that is Lake George and Greenwich. He says they go by line items and breakdown what expense is for the Town and what is for the Village. He said that it couldn't be done by assessment because some places the Town has a lot more assessment and some places the Village has a lot more assessment and it changes from year to year.

Councilman Byrnes asked if the Village understood that the Town did not realize the percentage until this year. Mayor Morreale said that he remembered many times sitting down with the Town Board and addressing this prior to this year. He also said that it had been brought up in many joint meetings about the difference and why there was a difference. Councilman Byrnes said he did not remember this and the whole Town Board was shocked when they realized this was happening.

Mayor Morreale said he thought the group should be focusing on how to agree on a contract to be signed and the percentages are to be negotiated and worked out in the future.

Councilman Byrnes asked what the Village wanted. Mayor Morreale said that they wanted the Town Board to go back in their budget and see what they could find. He said the Village did.

Trustee Kelly asked if anyone knew the actual number of homes in the Town and the actual number of homes in the Village. She said she didn't know what difference the assessment of a house has to do with the how a fire will be fought. She said that if there was a fire in the Village or the Town the same method for putting out the fire would be used. She said she thinks it is even.

Supervisor Lucia told her that there were 987 parcels in the Village and 2403 parcels in the Town, Supervisor Lucia said the assessment in the Village and Town are almost equal with the Village Assessment being \$351,000.00 and the Town's assessment being \$321,000.00. Village Attorney Buettner asked if that included commercial property since there was more of that in the Village than there was in the Town. Supervisor Lucia said it was everything in both the Town and the Village but does not include the wholly exempt.

Trustee Denno said she was having a problem with this so she went to the Fire Chief and he explained it in detail to her. Trustee Denno said he explained what was used for the Town and what was used for the Village. She said after her discussion with the Fire Chief it made her think that it is not just the assessment but there are other things that are involved. She said to her it looks like approximately 70% of the equipment is what the fire department needs for the Town. She said that the fire department would use it in the Village but that equipment would be used more in the Town than the Village.

Councilman Halliday said he looked through a good portion of the document presented by the Fire Chief. He appreciates the work that went into preparing that document, but at the end of the day the fire department delivers a service whether the property is in the Town or Village, It does not make a difference on the service that is being provided. He said he hates that the Town and Village are arguing over this. He said the Town did meet with the Fire Chief and had a gentlemen's agreement but things changed when the Town budget process started and things had to be cut. He said he feels bad about not talking to the Village and Fire Chief about having to cut the \$50,000.00 and this should have been done. He said at the end of the day the Fire Chief's is to deliver a service to protect the citizens whether the property is in the Town or the Village it does not matter. He said that he thought the committee should discuss this matter and come back to the board at a later date on that matter.

Trustee Denno said she believes in compromise. She said she doesn't know why the boards cannot meet in the middle. She said she brought this up at the Village Board meeting and this failed. The \$50,000.00 was brought up and that passed. She said at last night's meeting she tried to accept the Town's offer and was told they could not do that. Trustee Denno said she did not know why the boards can't compromise and sign the contract and put everyone's mind at ease. She said the school Superintendent is concerned because of the Elementary School; the residents are worried. She suggested that the board let the liaisons do their job and come back to the board with what they have found. She said if the two boards can't settle this quickly then a deadline needs to be placed on this. Trustee Denno said she thought the Town and Village should split the \$50,000.00 and the Town should pay \$25,000.00.

A discussion was had regarding the \$15,000.00 that the village received from the sale of the truck and that this would be placed in the reserve.

Councilman Butler said he felt that the Town should have to pay the \$50,000.00 since he felt it was a gentlemen's agreement when they met with the Fire Chief. He also said that at least the Town needs to revisit their budget and see what they could afford to pay the Village.

The Town Board members asked Budget Officer Lucia if he thought he could find \$17,500.00 in the budget anywhere. He said all he could do was look into it and see what he could find. Councilman Butler asked the Village if they would accept \$17,500.00. Attorney Buettner said that both entities needed to discuss this with their boards before any decisions on either side could be made.

Mayor Morreale suggested that the Town Board get together and look at the budget to see what the Town can come up with a proposal and he would call a special meeting.

Mayor Morreale asked the Town Attorney if he could get back to the Village Attorney with the Town's proposal. Attorney Hafner said that the two attorneys have been working together.

Supervisor Lucia said that his suggestion is that the four people on the committee meet in the next week to discuss a couple of things and by next Thursday the Town can look at what they find.

Attorney Hafner spoke about the practical aspect. He explained that if the two people appointed to the committee met it would be ok but if the Supervisor was also included in the meeting the meeting would have to be in public.

Attorney Hafner told the group that usually the fire committee meet and then comes back to the board with recommendations.

Attorney Hafner said that he will wait for notice from the board on what is found after reviewing the budget. He said he will then report to Attorney Buettner and she can contact the Village. Mayor Morreale said that upon receipt of a proposal he will call a Special Meeting of the Village Board.

Supervisor Lucia said that he felt the boards need to get this off the table so that the boards can move on to other things.

Councilman Halliday told the Village Board that the Town wanted to have an informational meeting regarding water meters for their water district people and ask Don Rhodes to come and speak. Mr. Rhodes said that he had to talk to the Village before he could commit. Mayor Morreale said that it was ok as far as the Village was concerned.

Supervisor Lucia thanked the Village Board for coming,

Mayor Morreale asked if the Town was going to allow public speaking. Supervisor Lucia told him that this was a workshop and usually the public was not allowed to speak but he said they could.

Charles Pasquarelli stated that he thought the boards were attempting to work together and that is what he wanted.

Cecelia Lockhart said she was concerned about residents outside the Village not having fire coverage. Fire Chief Kelley told her that he will provided fire protection for the Village and Town and if the Village did not want that they would have to fire him.

Mayor Morreale said he wanted to thank the Town for hosting this meeting.

RESOLUTION #

MOTION TO ADJOURN

A motion was made by Councilman Halliday and seconded by Councilman Butler the following resolution was

ADOPTED Ayes 5 Lucia, Byrnes, Halliday, Collura and Butler
 Absent 0
 Nays 0

RESOLVED with there being no further business the meeting be adjourned at 7:15 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Rose E. Farr, RMC
Town Clerk

