

**Village of Chaumont**  
**Dissolution Study Committee Meeting**  
**Meeting #7 – November 26 @ 6:00 p.m., Municipal Building**  
**Minutes**

**Committee Members Present:** Scott Aubertine (Town Supervisor), Ed Demattia (Town Resident), Robin Grovesteen, (Village Resident), Bill Johnson (Town Resident), Scott Radley (Village Resident), Valerie Rust (Village Mayor), Pat Weston (Town Highway Superintendent)

**Public Members:** Terry Countryman, Julia Gosier, Art Montondo, Pat Reome, Pat Weart, Hartley Bonisteel Schweitzer, Reginald Schweitzer, Jaci Stemler, Dan Villa, Marcus Wolfe

**Consultants:** Carrie Tuttle, Star Carter, and Warren Salo, Development Authority of the North Country

**Meeting started at 6:00 pm**

1. Finalize Existing Conditions Report

No comments from Public Meeting and no comments from Committee. Report will be finalized.

2. Review Alternatives Presentation

The committee reviewed the first 10 slides of the Alternatives Presentation. The committee is assuming a “base case” scenario of Village Dissolution and also exploring ideas for sharing of services outside of dissolution. There was detailed discussion about the current costs for Village services, which costs can be eliminated in a dissolution scenario and which costs should be moved to the Town budget because the service will continue.

- a. Slide 3 – committee agreed the listed expenses would be eliminated in a dissolution scenario because these are Village government specific expenses that would not be transferred to the town.
- b. Slide 4 – committee discussed the unallocated insurance and agreed that \$13,000 should be moved to the Town to cover Village assets that the Town will take over. This is a conservative estimate and the insurance costs may be less if the Village sold assets before dissolution. The committee also agreed that the \$2,800 contractual costs paid to the Library should be moved to the Town.
- c. Slide 5 – committee discussed how much of the Personal Services and Contractual costs for “Buildings” and “Central Garage” should be moved to the Town. Some of these costs include costs for the Wastewater Treatment Plant office, and those costs should be moved to the Sewer District, not the Town General Fund. S. Carter will determine how much of these costs are not related to sewer. Slide will be revisited in second Alternatives meeting.
- d. Slide 6 – committee discussed the “Maintenance of Streets” and “Permanent Highway Improvements (Paving)” costs. The Town will take over Village street maintenance and paving, but it may be less costly for the Town highway staff to complete the work, due to less senior staff doing the work at lower wages. The conservative estimate would be to include all of the Village costs in the Town budget; the Town Highway Superintendent will review this and discuss at the second Alternatives meeting.
- e. Slide 7 – the “Brush and Weeds” category does not include mowing costs, which are accounted for in the “Parks” category. The Village clears snow from some areas that the Town would need to

consider, including the Fire Hall, Library, and private sidewalks near the school. The Town Highway Superintendent will review this and discuss at the second Alternatives meeting.

- f. Slide 8 – the committee discussed the “Parks” and “Playground and Rec Centers” costs. The Town will need to take over the costs for “Playground and Rec Centers”, as these costs are related to the Beach Park that the Town will take over: lifeguard salaries and expenses to maintain beach. The Town may consider creating a Parks Department to handle these services and costs; the Town will review and discuss at the second Alternatives meeting. The committee agreed that the costs for “Other Culture and Rec”, which in 2019 were \$400 for the Garden Club and \$100 for the Lyme Light newsletter, would be transferred to the Town.
- g. Slide 9 – the committee discussed the Zoning and Planning services and costs for the Village. The Zoning personal costs are mostly for the Zoning Officer salary, and the Village and the Town have the same Zoning Officer. It is not likely that the Town would want to reduce the salary budgeted for this position, since the duties would still include the Village area in a dissolution scenario. Some alternatives were discussed, including using the County for some of these services which are offered at no additional cost to Towns, but the Town has explored that option in the past and prefers to keep the zoning officer duties local for efficiency and faster service for residents. The zoning and planning cost would be transferred to the Town. One alternative to reduce costs outside of dissolution mentioned by the Village Planning Board Chair was to discontinue paying Planning Board members a salary and make them a volunteer board.
- h. Slide 10 – the committee discussed the street lighting options and agreed that the Town would form a district for the Village area and charge the properties in the district a flat fee based on the cost of lighting and the number of properties in the district. This is how they handle the lighting district in Three Mile Bay, but not all properties pay the same fee. The Town will need to decide how to charge properties for lighting. The committee also discussed Refuse and Garbage in great detail. Currently, Village taxpayers pay for Garbage and Recycling pick-up services as part of their Village taxes, which is based on the assessed value of their property. There was discussion as to whether this is a “fair” system, since taxpayers with a higher assessment don’t necessarily generate more garbage than their neighbor with a lower assessment, and yet they are paying more for the same service. Furthermore, property owners who are tax-exempt are not paying for refuse services at all, but still receive the service. Refuse services continuing after dissolution has been an important issue to Village taxpayers in past studies, and the committee doesn’t know if this is still an important issue or if the residents fully understand how it is paid for now. The committee agreed to plan for a Town Refuse District that includes the current Village area, move all the costs into the district and keep the same rate based property assessments, and bring it up at the Second Public Meeting in February so the Public can provide input.

The committee had been discussing alternatives for 2 ½ hours and several members had to take part in a Joint Village/Town meeting after the committee meeting, so the committee meeting was ended at Slide 10. The committee will discuss the remaining presentation slides at the second Alternatives meeting on December 18 at 6:00 pm and the Municipal Building.

**Meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.**

<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Month</b>	<b>Location</b>
#1 Kickoff and Demographics	June 3	Lyme School Library
#2 What Exists: Municipal Financials	June 26	Municipal Building
#3 What Exists: Municipal Officials & Employees, Public Works, Water & Sewer	August 1	Municipal Building
#4 What Exists: Local Laws, Fire & Ambulance	August 28	Municipal Building
#5 What Exists: Draft Existing Conditions Report	September 25	Municipal Building
#6 Public Meeting #1 - Existing Conditions	October 23	Municipal Building
<b>#7 Alternatives: Dissolution and Other Shared Services Options</b>	<b>November 26</b>	<b>Municipal Building</b>
#8 Alternatives: Second Meeting	December 18	Municipal Building
#9 Draft Alternatives Report	January 22	Municipal Building
#10 Public Meeting #2 - Alternatives	February 26	Municipal Building
#11 Final Dissolution Report and Plan	March 25	Municipal Building