

A Special Workshop Meeting of the Otsego City Commission was held Tuesday, November 23, 2021.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Trobeck at 7:00 p.m. with the following Commissioners present: Stacey Withee, Brent Milhiem, Dustin McNees and Lauri Krueger. Absent: None. Also present: City Manager, Aaron Mitchell.

Mayor Trobeck introduced the City Commission, City Manager, Department Heads, and City Staff to the audience.

A. DISCUSSION ITEMS:

1. PRESENTATION – PA 33 OF 1951

Mayor Trobeck presented a slide show to illustrate the current state-of-the City in regards to funding and how the City got to where it is financially today.

PA 33 of 1951, was explained as a financial means to create a special assessment district and the levying of mills to fund the Police and Fire. The details of the special assessment district were discussed in detail.

The audience and Commission commented/asked questions on the following:

1. Would this be proposed to the residents every year?
2. Does the City Commission vote on the Special Assessment District?
3. How can the voters stop the Special Assessment District?
4. If this can legally be done, tell the Community and see what they think.
5. Is the DDA still capturing funds from the LCSA money?
6. What is the plan moving forward?
7. How far out can the City's finances go?
8. When will we need new fire trucks?
9. How can we get more people to these meetings to be transparent?
10. People don't want to see cuts to the Police Department or Fire Department.
11. City Staff has gone above and beyond to take care of the City's assets and receive grants.
12. What level of service do the citizens want?
13. Why is a ladder truck needed?
14. ISO Ratings were discussed.

Commissioner Withee explained that she had reviewed her tax bills and she is paying less now than she did in 2008. She commented that taxes are now approximately 14% lower, so how can the City ever fix the funding issues with the amount we are currently receiving – more income is needed.

The Commission asked the audience to tell people about the potential Special Assessment District and invite to the upcoming meetings.

- Monday, December 13, 2021; 7:00 p.m. – Informational Meeting
- Saturday, January 8, 2022; 10:00 a.m. – Informational Meeting

REMARKS FROM THE AUDIENCE

None.

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Commissioner Milhiem – he commented that per the information presented, the City collected more taxes in year 2012, than in 2021. He commented that if the City is receiving less now than it was in 2012, how can the City continue to survive on the current tax revenue. He commented that the City has had to deficit spend, and the funds will run out in two years. He thanked the audience for attending. He stated that he had sent out personal invitations and he didn't have anyone show up. He commented that the Commission likes to hear from the community and we want to present the facts. He stated that there is a long road ahead for the Commission.

Commissioner Withee – she echoed Commissioner Milhiem's comments. She stated that in 2012 we were collecting more taxes than we are now. She stated that the Commission doesn't like to have to ask for more money, but the problem needs to be fixed.

Commissioner Krueger – she thanked the audience for attending. She commended Mayor Trobeck and City Manager Mitchell for the beautiful slide show. She commented that no one wants to pay more in taxes, but the City can't survive on 2012 income. She stated the Commission tries to be transparent and has done much research to get to here. There could be cuts such as no First Responder Services – which has saved so many lives.

Commissioner McNees – he commented that it sucks that we have to pay taxes, but the cuts could affect Medical First Responders, Police and Fire.

Mayor Trobeck – she thanked the audience for attending. She asked that everyone invite people to the remaining meetings and help us let the people know.

The meeting was adjourned on a motion by Commissioner McNees, seconded by Commissioner Krueger. CARRIED – 8:12 p.m.

Angela M. Cronen, MMC
City Clerk