

VILLAGE OF HICKSVILLE
SPECIAL COUNCIL MINUTES

Monday June 12, 2017 5:00pm

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Diane Collins.

The invocation was given by Council President Ron Jones.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all present.

Roll call was taken with the following persons in attendance: Mayor Diane Collins; Council members Ron Jones, Shelia Baker, Ron Beverly, Mike Barth, Eric Bassett, Mike Headley; Solicitor Troy Essex; Fire Chief Scott Cramer;

Utility Clerk Dawn Hostetler recorded minutes in the absence of Fiscal Officer Cheryl Smith.

This Special Council Meeting was called to discuss issues pertaining to the Village EMS Department, Fire Department and Fire Levy.

Mayor Collins started by stating her three main concerns were: Do we need a full-time fire chief. EMS coverage and morale. The Fire levy and what is best for the Village between 2 or 4-mil.

Discussion: Eric Bassett had heard from multiple residents and felt a 4-mil levy adding personnel would be a hard sell. Solicitor Essex explained that the verbiage would be the same and covers all working aspects. Bassett also stated he felt there was some animosity between the Fire and EMS departments. He then gave information that only 21 out of approximately 300 Villages/Towns our size had a full time Fire Chief. Scott Cramer stated Daytime coverage is the hardest for volunteer personnel. Our EMS covers 100 miles and a population of around 7,000 and many feel 2 FTE's are too many except when they are the ones in need of the service. Most people do not understand what it takes to run Fire and EMS Departments 24/7. Chief Cramer helps when he can and explained per State regulations each EMS run must have 2 EMT's and a driver, with a full time Chief they could roll on the first page.

The discussion turned to morale and leadership. The EMS is ultimately under the Fire Chief, Mike Barth stated he had talked with EMS Chief Kessler and she is happy with Chief Cramer but not the hours and feels coverage help is a priority. Ron Beverly agreed that the Fire Chief is underpaid and should be compensated for his hours but the problem is with the EMS staffing and another FT EMT should be hired. Sheila Baker asked if a full time Fire Chief had ever been addressed by council before. The answer was yes and Mike Barth shared that at some point the lack of volunteers would require something done. Four County Career Center has been contacted by both the Mayor and EMS Chief and neither was given a very positive response.

Mayor Collins questioned if Hicksville did not provide service who would? It was thought possibly the County commissioners or the Sheriff's department. She also discussed County wide or at the least, shared West End coverage with 2 possible stations. This was being looked into by Chief Kessler.

Chief Cramer stated and the Mayor agreed that our Safety and Emergency Services are in the middle with our industry growth and housing development they need to grow also. When asked if any of our current volunteer EMT's would be interested in a full-time position Cramer stated yes, 3 that he knew of.

Ron Beverly and Ron Jones agreed that the personnel decision needed taken care of first and then the Levy amount decided on. Ron Beverly stated a Full-time EMT should be hired ASAP, followed by a Full-time Fire Chief in April and the Levy on the November Ballot should be for 4-mil.

Motion #1 made by Ron Beverly to Hire a Full-Time EMT immediately, seconded by Mike Barth. All Voted Yes.

Ron Beverly then made Motion #2 to rescind Ordinance 2017-01 and 2017-07 and write a new ordinance requesting 4-mil tax levy to be decided by the voters, seconded by Ron Jones. Beverly, Jones, Barth, Headley voted Yes, Baker and Bassett Voted No.

Ron Jones then asked the No voters, Bassett and Baker their thoughts, due to his concern that council was not united. Bassett stated again his discussions with residents and some of our firemen and felt 2-mil had a better chance to pass. Ron Jones questioned if the Firemen would be campaigning and on board with the current 2-mil. Mike Headley stated education and a united front would be needed for either to pass.

Mike Headley then made a Motion to rescind the above Motion #2 and continue with the 2-mil Ordinance 2017-01 and 2017-07, second by Eric Bassett. All Voted Yes.

Motion #3 to Hire a Full-time Fire Chief was made by Ron Beverly and seconded by Mike Headley. Beverly, Bassett, Jones, Barth, Headley voted Yes. Baker Voted No.

With no other business to discuss, Shelia Baker made a motion to adjourn. Eric Bassett seconded. All voted yes. Council was adjourned at 6:25 pm.

Mayor

Fiscal Officer