

League of Women Voters
Observer Report
Village of Campton Hills

MEETING: Special Meeting/Public Hearing Village Board

DATE: July 29, 2008 REPORTING: D & D Bakk

BOARD IN ATTENDANCE: Trustees Anderson, George, Kopec, Lenkaitis, Millette, Strauss, President Smith, Clerk Higgins. Absent: Village Attorney Braithwaite

WAS PRESS IN ATTENDANCE: YES: *Kane County Chronicle, Daily Herald, Examiner*

DID PRESS COVER SIGNIFICANT ISSUES: All reported passage of Appropriation Ordinance

SUMMARY OF MEETING: A statement was read by President Smith at the beginning of the meeting to explain why the meeting was called to “redo” the previously passed Appropriation Ordinance. Per Attorney Braithwaite’s advice, the explanation was to allow the Trustees the ability to make necessary revisions due to the alleged incorrect information provided by a village resident at the previous July 15, 2008 public hearing. Motion made and previous Ordinance 08-26 was repealed by the board. A public hearing followed for comment on the new proposed Appropriation Ordinance. President Smith announced public comments would not be followed by questions or answers. Three residents responded and topics included concern over the large increase over last year’s appropriation, size of contingency, road repairs, fiscal responsibility, and need for public participation in financial meetings, for example, transparency.

A motion to approve the Proposed Appropriation Ordinance was made and seconded. Discussion followed. Village Treasurer Catalano suggested her recommended adjustments. Participants and a board member were not happy however at the oversight of not having a copy of this report for all to view. Trustee Strauss stated he believed he was attending the meeting to approve the identical or something very close to what was approved at the last meeting. The clerk hastily copied this report and distributed. Catalano explained she reduced the contingency to below 10% of the total budget by increasing each line item by 10%. An additional \$187,000 was added to professional services (attorney, accountant, and audit fees, and IT) Motor fuel tax was reduced \$200,000 to more accurately reflect the expected receipt. A call of the question was made and the board unanimously approved the \$3,315,000 FY 2009 appropriation.

Other business: Consideration of possible action relative to an intergovernmental agreement with the Campton Township Highway District relative to Plato Township roads. A fee schedule was distributed to board for review and action next meeting on August 5, 2008.

MOST CRITICAL ISSUES(S): Issues may exist in the procedures followed for the public hearing and subsequent motions. This was the second time the village attempted to pass an Appropriation Ordinance and we question the repeal of the first ordinance. It appears that action items are left until a critical stage before they are addressed. One trustee said he received the revised proposed appropriation ordinance only 10 minutes before the meeting. The ordinance is required to be approved before August 1, but the municipal fiscal year begins May 1.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Although this was the observers first time at monitoring this board meeting, it is imperative that future meetings be covered by representatives from an impartial organization (aside from the media.) Several controversies regarding the push for dissolution, on-going and expensive lawsuits, and the Nov. referendum question on the ballot to dissolve the village need to be presented using correct procedures in order to prevent potential public mistrust.