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SE Town Board Recap 10/5/06

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Hi All,

Wed Oct 11, 2006 4:15 pm

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Last Thursday night, October 5th, I attended a Town Board Work Session. Although lacking an overt dust-up this was a real barn burner that flew by. Of course the meeting was under an hour which always helps.

"Lynne Eckardt"
 <midfarm@bestweb.net>

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The high drama was provided by Paul DiNardo of AWS Garbage fame. And throwing a complete curve that literally stunned the audience (well... at least the back row) Paul Johnson actually told Mr. D that he wasn't allowed to speak. As always Mr. DiNardo was accompanied by a compadre sporting black ostrich cowboy boots to die for. No fashionista myself (like that's not obvious) I've always tried to stay out of this arena but those ostrich boots are just too much to resist.

The Trophy of Irony was won handily by Councilman Johnson who said that the carting industry needed more 'competitors'. Gee ya think? No slouch on the uptake I guess this revelation hit Mr. J after the 72 indictments were handed down earlier this year. Or maybe after the two recent bids came in.

Supervised Life Styles was back with a vengeance and deeply discounted plan for the old Bloomer property. Judging by the attitude and WWTP limit things didn't look too promising.

And surprise, surprise we're going to form a 'Rec Center Committee'. This is a tried and true way to stall any program and make it seem like the Town Board really, really cares and is really, really doing something. Mazel Tov on the recycling of an old favorite: The 'Committee Shuffle'. On a bright note, I do get the feeling that those who elect to serve on this committee will be savvy enough to work around this roadblock.

As always the sarcastic and uncalled for commentary is mine alone. It represents no organizations that'll have me. Thank God.

Special Meeting:

1. Motion-2007 Budget to Town Clerk

This was done as prescribed by law.

2. Motion- Set the following Public Hearings:

Thursday, October 19, 2006, Civic Center

7:32PM: Local Law to Amend Chapter 110- Scenic Roads

7:33PM: Local Law to Amend Chapter 123- Subdivisions

7:34PM: Local Law to Amend Chapter 138: Zoning

All the above relate to the abolition of the Conservation Commission. Motion passed 3-0

Work Session:

1. Garbage Contract

This was deferred to #3. The Rec Center was discussed (see below).

Some Board members didn't feel that the 2nd bidder (Sani-pro) [editor's note: bid in at \$2.5 million] met specs as they are just starting up. Councilman Bonanno called the Westchester Solid Waste Commission and Sani-Pro is qualified. Councilman Johnson said that the industry needs 'competitors'.

According to Mr. Johnson the performance bond will be most important no matter what bidder is chosen.

Mr. Bonanno mentioned that we had been paying too much for the last three years [editor's note: new bid \$1.48 million]. Supervisor Dunford said that that was a 'big assumption.' Pat Bonanno then asked Mr. DiNardo why he had called him at home. Mr. DiNardo said that he wanted to show him the AWS facilities. Mr. DiNardo said that Mr. Bonanno hadn't called him back- Mr. Bonanno said that he had- twice. This will be on the October 19th agenda.

2. SLS (Supervised Life Styles) This is proposed for the Bloomer property on the corner of Route 6 and Bloomer Road (across from Putnam County Savings Bank). The applicant was represented by Ken Rose of the Sayegh Law Firm and the engineering firm of Insite- this project was formerly represented by Jimmy Reitz.

The project is down from three buildings to one 44-bed building.

The Brewster Heights waste water treatment plant was discussed at length. At peak last year the plant was at 140,000 GPD- capacity is 150,000 GPD. Each bed is figured at 85 GPD- including staff this comes in at 3800 per day.

Special District's Manager, Michael Levine, said that the plant was almost at its SPEDES limit now. Town Counsel, Willis Stephens, mentioned the hefty fines for exceeding this limit. Attorney Rose, asked for an expeditious decision on the WWTP to see whether or not this project will work as they've been in front of the Board for a year. Supervisor Dunford said that this project was on the 'fast track' as some projects are before the Board for eight or ten years.

3. Recreation Center:

A committee will be formed to look into different facilities. This will be on the October 19th meeting agenda.

4. Pure Tech: Mt. Ebo South

The applicant was represented by Michael Ligouri of Hogan and Rossi. This 39,000 square foot building will be expended by 120% The building is owned by the IDA- the Public Hearing was held. This will be on the October 19th agenda.

COMMENTS:

Garbage Contract:

Oh goody, my favorite topic- right up there with the always sketchy Sheriff's Patrol and completely coincidentally also up for renewal. While on that topic it should be noted that they'll be a special guest appearance by Sheriff Smith at an upcoming TB meeting. Thanks to Councilman Bonanno for following up on this travesty and complete waste of taxpayer money.

Anyhow, back to garbage. We'll entitle this gem: 'Fuzzy Math'. Councilman Bonanno wisely observed that since the AWS contract price had dropped \$100,000 from last year we'd actually been paying too much for garbage collection for the last two years. To this Supervisor Dunford replied, "That's a big assumption." Huh? Certainly no math whiz myself, even I understand that saving 100 grand in '06 (with one **additional** bulk pick-up) means we were definitely paying too much in '04 and '05. By the way, if you were unlucky enough to have a commercial dumpster in Southeast during this time period that's where you really got hosed. In fact, you couldn't even get a bid from another carter back then. None of them 'covered this area'.

So, bottom line, we have paid too much for much of our quality time spent with AWS- and commercial business owners far, far more. As Councilman Johnson has since so shrewdly opined: we need more 'competitors' in the business.

Supervised Life Styles:

Hmmm, shuffling the tarot cards on this baby I see the 'Grim Reaper'. I get the distinct impression that this is not one of our Town Board's most favored projects. It's been downsized by around two thirds and the Board still wasn't impressed, but then the WWT facility (Brewster Heights/Eagles Ridge) has had ongoing problems and hefty bills for years.

When the applicant grumbled about data gathering and instruction from the Board in a timely fashion Supervisor Dunford quipped: "Oh, you're on the fast track, some projects have been before the Board for 8 or 10 years.' What annoys me no end about this self-serving and gratuitous comment is that projects 'before the Board' for this length of time have inevitably started, stalled, stopped and restarted- all on their own. I've never seen any project take longer than a couple of years if the applicant remained diligent. Complete hogwash- and it's one reason that 'The Meadows' ran into the problems it did.

Recreation Committee:

In one of my favorite ploys the Board is throwing this 'to committee'. Here's how this goes unless pressure is applied. A few months pass before the committee is formed (what with the holidays and all...). Next a TB liaison is chosen. Hmmm, let me guess... Councilwoman Mitts and Councilman Bonanno are up for reelection in '07 but Bonanno's gone 'off the reservation' so Mrs. Mitts will be the chosen one. A committee chair will be appointed (fight hard against this and choose your own) and then the fun really begins.

Let's take a peek at the probable timeline:

- Committee finally appointed (3 months)
- Committee reviews of all sorts of facilities (6 months)
- Committee fights amongst themselves over which is most affordable/fits the needs of local residents (3 months)
- Committee must then find a site for said facility (if you use the 10 acres we have at Tilly Foster this will take no time at all- otherwise all bets are off). Or if Mr. Lepler is

ready to finally unveil 'Leplerville!' he might offer you land on Route 22- this will set the rec center back at least 2 years. This one's tough to predict except I kinda sorta thing the Town Board will attach the Rec Center to a new Town Hall/Library/Southeast Museum on the Tilly Foster parcel as the proverbial 'carrot on a stick'? The price tag on this combo will easily exceed \$12 mil.

- After all this work the DEC will finally be ready to set guidelines for capping the landfill... at a cost far exceeding \$4 million. No funding will be available for anything else- **ever again**. Frenzied crowds and local activists set up guillotine at the renovated and now glitzy Metro North Station mini-plaza (complete with trademark 'Liebell street clock'). Beheadings begin. Back to square one. Errrr, sorry, Lunesta must have kicked in... where was I.

Seriously, I have two suggestions to offer: Years ago a committee looked into locating a YMCA somewhere in the county and the best spot was out near 'The Highlands'. Sure, the Town of Carmel and the always charming Mr. Camarda make noise about a location off Route 6 but I don't see this as ever happening. So rather than a rec center SE residents have to fund initially and perennially perhaps the 'Y' idea should be revisited.

Sorry to be slightly cynical on this but this is the same town that approved an 'in-line skating rink' over a year ago and not a damn thing has been done. Hey, I've got it... why not go with the in-line site at Lake Tonetta? It's in the wetland buffer and it's even approved... unless the Town has allowed approvals to lapse.

That's it from my desk. As always please feel free to e-mail me your comments or questions.

With Best Regards,
Lynne Eckardt

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Lynne Eckardt
[lynneeckardt](#)

Oct 11, 2006
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