

**SPECIAL MEETING
Village of East Syracuse
Board of Trustees
November 4, 2013**

Mayor Robert T. Tackman called the special meeting of the Board of Trustees for Monday, November 4, 2013 to order at 4:30PM.

Present: Trustee James E. Carr, Jr., Deputy Mayor Barbara Falcone Quonce, Trustee Carol Para, Trustee Daniel J. Wagner, and Mayor Robert T. Tackman.

Also Present: Town of DeWitt Supervisor Ed Michalenko, Town Councilors: Ken Andrews, Irene Scruton, Kerry Mannion, and Jack Dooling, and Town Comptroller John Curulla. East Syracuse Fire Department members: Captain Michael Cramer, Lt. Nate Baker, Lt. Jason Haas, Lt. Andrea Herbuin, past Chief Tom Brewster, Matt Parker, Scott McInnis, Jack Gross, 1st Assistant Chief David Brewster, and East Syracuse Fire Department Inc. President James Brewster, as well as corporation counsel Mark Butler.

Approximately 6 Village residents and guests also attended. Representative from YNN, WSYR Channel 9, and CNY Central covered the presentation.

Purpose of meeting is to hear presentation on behalf of forming an independent East Syracuse Fire District.

Powerpoint presentation ***East Syracuse Fire Protection: Transparency, Accountability and The Future*** essentially is the same presentation made by the East Syracuse Fire Department Inc. on October 3, 2013 at East Syracuse Elementary.

Mark Butler presented the East Syracuse Fire Department Inc. proposal for Fire District formation focusing primarily on funding and tax issues.

Claims that current arrangement where the Town contracts with the Village for Fire Protection services lacks transparency, fails to support reserve funds for major equipment and apparatus purchases, and has over charged the Town for services while using fire protection revenue for general Village operations. For these reasons the East Syracuse Fire Department Inc., the members services not-for-profit entity, desires the formation of a district to provide these services for less than Village does currently, offer budgetary transparency, and operate under authority of an elected Board of Commissioners, instead of Village Board of Trustees.

East Syracuse Fire Department Inc. proposes an estimated District budget of \$1,122,263 (excluding costs for buildings). This would produce an ad valorem tax rate of \$1.16/assessed 1000. Village rate is currently \$1.30/1000.

Mr. Butler explained how Commissioners would be elected, that both Town and Village taxpayers would pay the same rate as a Fire District operating with its single purpose to provide public safety.

Village Board of Trustees and DeWitt Town Counselors questioned details of the presentation, including: challenging claims for reserves; options for bonding for equipment; some budget items, such as insurance costs and members activities; Foreign Fire Insurance payments (made for members services to East Syracuse Benevolent fund); accusations that Village subsidized operation is unfounded; reserve accounts (subject to permissive referendum); working relationships between entities; 3-year projections, state of volunteerism; costs for career firefighters; assessed values calculations (and possible error); purchase of Village equipment; debt and borrowing capabilities; buildings/fire stations ownership or lease; direct agreements with Corporations instead of District; other Districts in DeWitt costs and budget increases; uncertainty and consistency; and mix of volunteers and paid staff.

Mr. Butler explained the process for forming a District. Town and Village would conduct public hearing and put forward joint resolution, subject to permissive referendum.

Suggested that further review of the numbers is needed. Corrected, it appears that proposed district costs would be \$1.28/assessed 1000, compared to the Village's current \$1.30 rate.

Meeting adjourned at 6:20PM

Respectfully submitted by,

Patricia J. Derby
Village Clerk