

Minutes of July 18, 2018, Germantown Town Board Public Hearing on the Germantown Police Assessment Report dated June 26, 2018, held in the Germantown Town Hall, Germantown, NY, commencing at 5:33pm.

Present: Supervisor Beaury
Councilman Moore
Councilwoman DuFresne
Councilman Sullivan

Absent: Councilman Kukon

Recorded by: Town Clerk, Joyce Vale

Supervisor Beaury opened the Public Hearing and Led with the Pledge to the Flag.

Town Clerk read the following:

Notice of Public Hearing of the Town Board of Germantown, County of Columbia,

Notice is hereby given that on July 18, 2018 at 5:30pm the Germantown Town Board will hold a Public Hearing on the Germantown Police Assessment Report dated June 26, 2018. The Public Hearing will be immediately followed by a Special Town Board meeting. The meetings will occur in the Germantown Town Hall, 50 Palatine Park Road, Germantown, New York.

Motion to open the Public Hearing made by Councilman Moore, seconded by Councilman Sullivan, with all in favor and none opposed.

Supervisor Beaury opening statement: At the request of the Germantown Town Board, an assessment of the Germantown Police Department was conducted by Harry Corbitt, Superintendent of the New York State Police-Retired.

Supervisor Beaury went over the protocol for tonight's hearing. 1.) The Town Board wants to make it very clear that we expect courteous and professional behavior from everyone. 2.) When it is your turn to speak that you come up to the podium, state your name and address your comments to the Town Board. 3.) All comments shall be restricted to the specific subject of the Public Hearing as advertised and only the specific subject. 4.) Please do not refer to anyone by name, if you do, you will be asked to stop. 5.) While someone is speaking, please do not be disrespectful or rude, if you are, you will be asked to stop. 6.) Speakers will be limited to 3 minutes.

Supervisor Beaury opened the floor to public comments.

Susan Sutherland from Church Avenue thanked the Town Board for obtaining an assessment report on the Germantown Police Department. Ms. Sutherland said the report includes a statement on page 5 that the Town Board has an obligation to ensure that best practices for the police department are implemented and now that the statement included in a public availability expert's report that it put the Town Board in a difficult position, especially since the report also stated the Town Board had received a similar negative assessment regarding the police department in 2015 and failed to take corrective action. Ms. Sutherland said based on the findings or the report she would not be surprised if the final conclusion is to abolish the Germantown Police Department and would urge the Town Board to gather and consider more information before taking a vote on this matter.

Brian DuBois said he's been a resident of Germantown for the past 32 years. Brian said he has been a volunteer firefighter for the past 25 years and have served with Town of Germantown Police Department honorably for the past 23 years and for 7 of the last 8 years as the senior executive of the department. Brian also said he is also a volunteer boy scout leader and a volunteer leader with the Explorer Post and have helped coach kid's sports. Brian addressed several aspects of Mr. Corbitt's report which included wearing body cameras. Brian said the NYS police and Sheriff's department don't wear them and they have never had a complaint or need to warrant them. Brian also mentioned in Mr. Corbitt's report saying that the police department is not an accredited agency and Brian is not aware of any part-time agencies that are accredited in NYS. Brian then said Mr. Corbitt is critical of their policy manual. In regards to

that Brian said we have a small office not a police station of which would cost the Town hundreds of thousands of dollars to build. Brian said they have the basic skills and some advanced skills, like the skill sets for a Homicide Investigation or Accident Reconstruction where turning it over to a larger agency equipped with the manpower and equipment to handle the task. The police department has been doing school dances, concerts, basketball games, as well as high school graduation, except this year. They have done the Memorial Day Parade, Fireworks , except this year, Octoberfest, Haunted Hay rides and Applefest. They are community oriented and do it for very little pay. Brian has not heard how many thousands of tax dollars more the Town will have to pay for police services if their department is disbanded. Brian said Mr. Corbett doesn't know him, has never met him or even spoken to him but he has an opinion of him. In closing, Brian feels the report is one-sided and designed to come to the conclusion the Town Board and Supervisor wanted. Brian asked, how accurate could it be without him ever being interviewed?

Resident Ky Wagman said most towns don't have a police department and personally she thinks we don't need a police department. Ky is in favor of dissolving the police department.

Martin Overington said he would like to see the full report from 2015. Martin said it sounds like Mr. Corbett comes from a big city and not a small community. Martin said he's missing the point. Martin also said one week was not enough time for the public to review this report. Martin supports the police force in many ways and their presence at community events. Martin is in favor of keeping the police department.

A resident agrees with Martin and would like to see the report from 2015. Supervisor Beaury will look into it. The same resident asked what happened as a result of that report, we never heard anything? Councilman Moore said the last report pre-dated everyone on this Town Board. Supervisor Beaury will look into the last report.

Brian DuBois said in respect to the last report he wanted a new policy manual and that he had given the police commissioners a draft copy in November 2016 and hadn't heard a word about it.

Audrey Berman supports the dissolution of the police department.

Motion to close the Public Hearing made by Councilman Moore, seconded by Councilwoman DuFresne, with all in favor and none opposed.

Public Hearing closed at 5:57pm.

Respectfully submitted,