

August 26, 2014

A Joint Meeting of the Nunda Village Board of Trustees and Nunda Town Board of Councilmen was held on August 26, 2014 with the following present:

**Village Board: Mayor Robert Cox**

**Deputy Mayor Fritz Amrhein**

**Trustees: Jeffery Essler**

**Darren Snyder**

**Gary Galton**

**Village Clerk Lori Gray**

**Town Board: Supervisor Thomas Baldwin**

**Councilperson: Doris Marsh**

**Kirk Brickwood**

**Dave Thompson**

**Jim Forrester**

**Citizens:**

**Robert Weir**

**Gary Brink**

**Ron & Betty Adam**

**Tim Stoufer**

**Jim Byrnes**

**Theron Foote**

**Pat Foote**

**Isabelle Weir**

**Mel Allen**

**Reggie Grosse**

**Margaret Grosse**

**Nancy Vogt**

**Merilee Walker**

**Jessie Beardsley**

**Alicia Pritchard**

**Tim Cassidy**

**Richard Beardsley**

**Joseph Colombo**

**Jeff Wilcox**

**Terry Lowell**

**Shannon Bugman**

**Barb Baldwin**

**Cathy Walsh**

**Gerry Gibson**

**Janine Gibson**

**Marlin Hopkins**

**Ken Veneron**

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Cox called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

### **ROLL CALL**

All Present

### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Deputy Mayor Amrhein led the Pledge of Allegiance

### **WELCOME & OPENING REMARKS**

Supervisor Baldwin welcomed everyone and stated that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the Joint Nunda Police Department, different viewpoints and what to do going forward. To begin, they want to hear

everyone's voice on both Boards. Try to understand the opinions of the Boards and then open to the Public. Supervisor Baldwin made note that there is a lot of experience in the audience.

### **POLICE COMMISSIONERS**

Village Police Commissioner Galton would like to bring people up to date with facts. The Village part of the contribution is approximately \$62,000, the Town \$59,000 for a total of \$125,000. The cost to Village taxpayers is approximately \$1.70 per \$1,000 assessment, and as County Taxpayers we also pay for Sheriff Services. The Village is looking for places to trim budgets. Perhaps the Police Budget could be cut by half and be more efficient.

Village Police Commissioner Amrhein stated that there is a difference between the Police Budget and Streets Budget, with the Police being considerably more. The Village needs to better build up its infrastructure and is looking for relief.

Town Police Commissioner Thompson has been involved with the Police Department for many years. In looking at the service provided for the money, it is equal, even better than other communities. We receive 80 hrs per week of protection for minimal money. The Department is doing a good job, service is excellent.

Town Police Commissioner Brickwood stated that 17 years ago upon moving to the Village, he was afraid for his children. His question to the Village, for \$170.00 savings per year off his taxes, where would the money go? We would not get the coverage through the Sheriff's Department or State Police. If this is a total budgetary concern, then he disagrees. Taxpayers would be appalled by the raises given to Village employees this year.

### **VILLAGE TRUSTEES/TOWN COUNCILMEN**

Trustee Snyder stated that he was just elected and served as a police officer for 3 years. The Police Department needs less people and will work more often. Police Chief Wilcox does a good job for the time given. Trustee Snyder would like a full-time person again. We are running more of a Police Academy. If we are going to be in the Police Business, we need stability, officers that are familiar with our community, and professionalism. If we rely on the Sheriff's Department, we will lose coverage being on the edge of the County.

Trustee Essler stated that he has been on the Village Board of Trustees for 9 years, serving as Mayor for 4 years. The Village had a lot of issues under a different Police Chief with children in the Village Square. When Phil Brooks was Town Supervisor, the Boards made an agreement to increase funding. The number of problems was better. New officers can be settled down. Chief can work with them. Trustee Essler is a supporter of the Police Department and suggests making the share of costs 50/50 between the Village and Town.

Councilperson Marsh is in support of the Police Department. She had been a Principal of Keshequa Middle/High School when Jeff Essler had been Mayor. The Police worked hard to get students under control. Our officers live in town. She does not see a red & white car in Dalton very often. Not sure how long it would take an emergency vehicle to respond. Someone needs to be a training ground. Let it be us.

Councilman Forrester stated that this needs to be a discussion about value. The Brickwoods may be safe but drug deals are occurring on the west side of East Street. First, professionalism needs to be addressed. Second, we have an inadequate training program. Third, there is an improper focus. Officers should be here to serve and protect, not to harass and ticket. Leadership is irrationally protected. They do not enter into dialogue. We should reduce the number of officers. Have full-time and part-time.

## **MAYOR/SUPERVISOR**

Mayor Cox spoke about taxes. Taxes would not go down by reducing the Police Budget. The Village is unable to finance infrastructure. We are held down by the Tax Cap. It has been six years since being able to pave a full street. As for police services received, that is subjective. When the Mayor served as Police Commissioner, he went to the Chief regarding speeders. The response was that they were “too busy”. He then went to the Sheriff’s Department and they came out. As for being a training center, we are not a college. The Mayor is in support of the Police Department but stated that it needs to be reorganized.

Supervisor Baldwin is a supporter of the Police Department. Why are we a training ground? We put a little amount of money towards it. If we want more professional officers, it will cost more money. Police protection is important for this town. Past problems were embarrassing. We do have drug deals going on, some harassment going on. However, the police are essential to the Town of Nunda. Last budget year, they felt the need to raise an additional \$9,000. The Town absorbed the cost. The Boards need to reach a consensus. He appreciates the respect shown by the Boards to each other this evening.

## **COMMUNITY FORUM**

Privilege of the floor given to:

Robert Weir stated that he has lived here for 80 years and has seen it all, good, bad and indifferent. His statements include 1.) He would like Council Brickwood to sit on his porch on Mill Street. Quite a truck route. 2.) Councilman Thompson should go to Lima & Livonia regarding their Police Department. They use the Sheriff’s Department. 3.) He agrees with Trustee Snyder. And, stated that we do not need triple coverage on a shift. He is not against having an officer like George Byrnes was in the past. 24 hrs a day coverage. When extra coverage is needed, call the Sheriff’s Department. There is no coverage from our local department from 12 Noon to 4 PM. No speeding violations are noted. Mill Street should be renamed “Thrill Street Raceway”.

Terry Lowell, having been involved from the onset of the Police Department, stated that the worst thing you can do is have the community get into a battle about the Police Department. It will not be effective with issues hanging over head. Take it to the people. Should go to referendum in November. Set the parameters, let the people decide.

Merilee Walker stated that she worked 30 plus years for the Village of Nunda. Police writing tickets should offset the cost of the department. As for training, we can’t expect officers to stay with part-time hours. If receiving a ticket, does not expect special treatment. The southern end of Livingston County is not going to get the coverage from other departments. People forget about the past because our officers are doing a good job.

Tim Stoufer stated that he is in support of the Police Department. Nunda is a nice place to live because of the Department. He has worked in the system for many years and can see the deterrent by having a local department. The Sheriff’s Department can not guarantee response time to be less than ½ hour when there are only 3 cars on at night. When serving on the ambulance, it was nice to have local support.

Gerry Gibson stated that he liked what Trustee Snyder had to say. Fairness is needed.

Janine Gibson stated her frustrations with harassment incidents.

Isabelle Weir wanted to remind people of the last point of her husband's speech. Also, she suggested that two people from each Board should form a task committee to address issues. Two years ago, during a two week period, home health aides were stopped because police thought they were coming from Bill's Restaurant. Another time they were stopped while going to give medication to another patient. She is looking for a happy resolution.

Nancy Vogt is one who has been stopped while coming home from Kiwanis. Officers are chasing people away and it is getting ridiculous. Officers are more excited about stopping someone. They may be good kids but adult cops are needed.

Jessie Beardsley would like to know why road blocks are being set up just to make money during Nunda Fun Days and the Car Show. Police do not need to sit across from a bar to bust a person for having 1-2 drinks. He does not agree with drinking and driving, however officers are intimidating folks.

Mel Allen is a former police officer. He doesn't want to see the Police Department disbanded. But, we need to get control of the officers. A lot of hours are not covered locally, but are covered by Sheriffs & State Police.

Jim Byrnes stated that to have full-time officers will blow the budget. The Nunda Police Department is the most cost effective department compared to other municipalities. If we ever lose the Nunda Police Department, we will be very sorry.

Cathy Walsh related incidents involving her husband. He is stopped often because he comes home from work late at night. When coming home one night, he saw a situation that required police assistance. He approached an officer that was on his cell phone, and the officer never addressed the situation at hand.

Gary Brink stated that the Town and Village need to come together on a comprehensive plan that will stand the test of time.

### **RESOLUTIONS (IF WARRANTED)**

Trustee Snyder stated that we can't pay people a lot of money. The Sheriff's Department pays \$20 per hour. We need to get an older person versus younger. Do things a little differently.

Supervisor Baldwin questions if we can get the same type of coverage for less money, cutting the budget as suggested by Trustee Galton by \$30,000 for each municipality. Can have different management, will cut down on harassment.

Supervisor Baldwin called for a motion to cut the Police Department Budget by \$60,000. None received.

Councilman Forrester responded to Supervisor Baldwin that he would like to see a Joint Task Force be formed to address the issues brought forth this evening.

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the Nunda Village Board of Trustees and Nunda Town Board of Councilmen does hereby form a Joint Police Task Force Committee consisting of two members from each Board; having been appointed by the Mayor and Town Supervisor; for the purpose of offering viable options to the budgetary and

organizational issues of the Nunda Police Department to be submitted by September 30, 2014. The motion was made by Councilman Forrester, seconded by Deputy Mayor Amrhein.

Tim Stoufer stated his objection to the Legal Notice of meeting given to the public, lacking information that the Police Budget would be discussed.

**VOTE**

Mayor Cox.....Yes

Deputy Mayor Amrhein....Yes

Trustee Essler.....Yes, with idea. Already have two members from each Board. Need to make headway. Sounds like training issue. Need to come to conclusion.

Trustee Snyder.....Yes

Trustee Galton.....Yes

Supervisor Baldwin.....Yes

Council person Marsh.....Yes, agree with Trustee Essler

Councilman Brickwood.....Yes

Councilman Thompson....Yes, agree with Trustee Essler

Councilman Forrester.....Yes

**Motion passed unanimously**

Supervisor Baldwin stated that if the committee can not come to a consensus, then it should go to election next year and hold the budget as is.

**BE IT RESOLVED** that if the Joint Police Task Force is unable to come to a consensus, the Police Budget will remain that same as in 2014, and the status of the Joint Town/Village Police Department will be taken to public vote at each respective municipality’s election in 2015. The motion was made by Supervisor Baldwin.

Councilman Brickwood would second the motion with the elimination of the Police Budget remaining the same as in 2014.

Supervisor Baldwin withdrew his motion.

Tim Stoufer asked that a legal opinion be checked regarding the Police Task Force Meetings being open to the public.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Supervisor Baldwin thanked the Mayor, the Boards and the public for their attendance.

With no further business to be discussed, the motion to adjourn was made by Trustee Essler at 8:18 P.M., seconded by Deputy Mayor Amrhein. Carried unanimously by both Boards.

Respectfully submitted,

Lori J. Gray  
Village Clerk-Treasurer