

October 4, 2006 Minutes **Town Village Merger Task Force**

Present: Nick Heyniger, Steve Carter, Susan Inui-Kelly, Tom Rukowski, Candace Coburn

Reports from last week:

- Marilyn reported that Phil Swanson stated that referendums are NOT allowed. Scratch that idea. Discussed standing outside the voting area, but if the survey goes through that should be sufficient.
- Marilyn also reported that she agreed with Phil that the word “district” should be omitted from this vocabulary. None of these hamlets are currently considered districts, and Woodstock Village is Woodstock Village and should remain that, as should the others keep their village designation. If 'district' is used, it will kill it as people will immediately think they are either going to pay more, or are entitled to more services. We are striving to be one big happy family and it seems like the time is ripe now to get this done. We shouldn't get hung up on all those details that will be taken care of automatically with a merger, such as Ordinances. It didn't take long to hammer out the details for the Police Dept. to cover the town and it won't take long to work out the details for one govt. after the Village govt. is dissolved. That is my thought.

With this new information, some votes on when to vote have changed – here’s where we are (if I have any of this wrong, just give a holler...)

Susan – vote in 07
Steve – vote in 07
Nick – vote in 08
Mark - vote in 08
Wittie – vote in 08
Sally – vote in 07
Marilyn – vote in 08
Jan – vote in 08
Tom – vote in 08
Candace – vote in 07

1. Reviewed the survey questions. Here they are –be ready to vote on your 4 fav’s , and once they are set we will get into the other details – wording, scale...

- Do you think you are adequately informed on the merger issues?
- We are now considering a merger of the Town and Village. Are you:
---Strongly in favor ---Moderately in favor ---Somewhat doubtful ----Strongly opposed.
- If you support a merger, do you support a total merge meaning on governing board and one equal tax rate for all?
- Would you attend community meetings on the merger issues for more

information?

- If you are undecided, would you like:
 - a. to be contacted
 - b. to addend an information meeting
 - c. be sent information

• In considering a Town-Village merger, what is most important for you:
---Taxes ---Police ---Special Village Ordinances -----Having Everybody Equal.

• Do you feel there are duplication of services in our Town and Village?

• Would a merger help to address issues like the East End, Affordable Housing, Economic Development, and Creating a Woodstock Identity.
---Yes ---Perhaps ---No.

• On a scale of 1 to 10, how important is it to you to bring the Town and Village closer together as one community ----- .

• Do you feel a Merger would benefit our community?

2. Further discussion on whether to keep a Village district in place or not- again, as we get further into this, votes are changing. Where we are now (and give a holler if I have any of this incorrect)

District or no District:

| | |
|---------|-------------------------------------|
| Susan | Yes |
| Steve | No |
| Nick | No |
| Mark | abstained – wants to see the \$\$\$ |
| Sally | No (I might have this wrong) |
| Marilyn | No(I might have this wrong) |
| Wittie | Yes |
| Jan | Yes |
| Tom | No |
| Candace | No |

1. Pamphlet revisions. Discussed that we need to come to agreement on ALL the details

and issues – even (and especially) the tough ones. We will incorporate what has been discussed and review again next week.

2. Reviewed placing an article in the Vermont Standard. Here's a start:

Name ,,,,,Merger Minute ??? - feel free to give more ideas on the name!

Each week this same blurb:

This article was prepared by the Town / Village Merger Task ... We hope the following information will be interesting and helpful as our community considers merging the Village and Town into one governing body.

Then have:

Did you know?

- Many Vermont communities are seriously considering merging their town and village and _____ have already done so, including Stowe, _____ and _____. These communities are doing so for many of the same reasons Woodstock has and is considering a merger – strength of community and more efficient government.
- Woodstock is lucky – unlike other towns, we have already merged our Highway department (with a few small outstanding areas) we have a private water company and we have no outstanding bonds.
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Look for our article next week as we ----- to bring you information to you.

And how often – weekly? Biweekly? Monthly?

Time Line, Draft #1, Significant dates:

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| November 06 | Begin Vermont Standard weekly column |
| November 06 | Distribution of pamphlet |
| November 06 | Promotion of Web Site |
| December 06 | Survey |
| January 07 | Tabulation of Survey |
| March 07 | Referendum Question |
| March 07 | Figure out where the heck we are going |
| March 08: Merger Vote | |

Next Meeting: October 11, 2006 Town Hall 5:15 pm

NO MEETING ON OCTOBER 18TH

Agenda: (same as last week)

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| 1. Survey Questions | 5:15 – 5:35 |
| 2. Pamphlet revisions | 5:35 – 6:00 |
| 3. Vermont Standard Format | 6:00 – 6:15 |