

A Workshop for the Sharing of the Village Court with the Town of Kingsbury was conducted on Monday May 4, 2015 at 6 p.m. at the Hudson Falls Village Hall; 220 Main Street, Hudson Falls.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

James T. Lindsay, Supervisor
Paul Bromley, Councilman
Richard Doyle, Councilman
William Collins, Councilman
Henry Freebern, Councilman
Michael Keenan, Town Judge
Jeffrey Meyer, Attorney for the Town
John Barton, Mayor
Lisa Ringer, Village Court Clerk
William Nikas, Village Attorney
Matthew Mabb, Village Judge
Bill Toscano, The Post-Star
Mark Frost, The Chronicle
Jane and Tim Havens

Supervisor Lindsay opened the Workshop Meeting at 7 p.m. by speaking about the resolution adopted by the Village Board agreeing to share Village Court with the Town Court at \$200.00 a month. The Town and Village Judges would share the bench and the office; and the Town Court Clerk and Village Court Clerk would have separate offices. Supervisor Lindsay is concerned with the space necessary for the storage of the Town Court Clerk's records. The current records occupy a space of 13 'x 30', with approximately 176 boxes. Town Court Clerk, Laura Barody, reported to Supervisor Lindsay the records do need to be purged.

Supervisor Lindsay would also like to discuss the use of computers with two Judges and two Court Clerks. Judge Keenan commented a lot of work could be done on the laptops and could easily be moved around. Judge Mabb commented the desk top on the bench could be used by both Town and Village Court Clerks. The Judges would also share an office.

Supervisor Lindsay reported that he had a discussion with the District Attorney and Mike Mercure, public defender about holding Court in the evening hours. They reported it would be possible but it would be difficult. After speaking to an Assistant District Attorney, Judge Keenan does not think night court would be a good idea. Judge Mabb spoke to Tony Jordan and more than likely if Court was held at night you would have to hire two more people and there would be no savings in sharing the courts. A discussion followed in which it was determined that holding Court in the evening hours will not be possible.

Judge Keenan does not have a Court Security Officer at this time. Keenan commented it is in his budget but he does not feel the need for the security. Keenan feels the biggest problem is the lack of privacy in an attorney/client conversation. Judge Mabb commented that the judge's chambers are used for attorney/client conversations during Village Court. Mabb also commented his security officer keeps peace in the hallway outside of the courtroom and escorts defendants who need to be processed or if DNA testing is required. Mabb reported the current court officer for the Village would be able to work during Town Court hours also.

Councilman Doyle had questions to the Village about holding Court in the evening because that was part of the offer to the Town. Mayor Barton stated he would have to discuss it with the Village Trustees and possibly consider the option of two separate entrances. A discussion followed.

Councilman Freebern questioned for what period of time would the \$200.00 per month charge be applied and what would that entail, for example what if the roof were to start leaking? Mayor Barton responded the Village is envisioning being the landlord and the \$200.00 charge would be applied until the Village Court is dissolved. Councilman Bromley stated the Village needs to come up with a figure now for the Town if the Village Court is dissolved. Mayor Barton asked if there was a reasonable number the Board was thinking of if the Village were the landlord. Councilman Freebern commented it is up to the Village to tell the Town. A discussion followed.

Judge Mabb commented the Village Board could dissolve the Village Court by resolution or public referendum and it must be done by April 2016, otherwise they would have to wait for four years. Mayor Barton commented it cannot be done before the end of Judge Mabb's term. Councilman Bromley asked Mayor Barton what the likelihood of the Village Court being dissolved was. Mayor Barton responded that he would be guessing, but the Village Board is looking towards it. Councilman Doyle asked if the Village Court were dissolved would it be necessary for two Judges. Judge Keenan said it would make sense to have two Town Judges, even if one was part-time and the duties were broken up.

Councilman Doyle asked if there was any grant money available for building a second entrance to the Village Court to offset the cost of its construction. Judge Mabb commented you could apply for a grant for next year.

Mayor Barton will discuss with the Village Trustees the determination that Court being held in evening hours will not be a savings to the taxpayers. Barton will also discuss the installation of a wall and two doors to separate the court room from the other Village offices, the term of the \$200.00 charge agreement and if the Village Court dissolves what the monthly fee would be to the Town and the term of that agreement. Barton will be in contact with the Town by the end of the week.

A discussion was had in regard to the term of an agreement for the sharing of the court room. Attorney Meyer commented that the cap on such an agreement is twenty years.

The workshop was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia A. Bardin, Town Clerk

<http://www.kingsburyny.gov>