

**TUCKAHOE, SHINNECOCK HILLS, SOUTHAMPTON CAC October 4, 2011**

**DRAFT MINUTES**

Meeting site: Tuckahoe School, commencing at 7:00 pm

**CAC members in attendance:** Evelyn Boxer; Lorraine Duryea; Marilyn Fitzgerald; Frances Genovese; Bonnie Goebert (co-chair); Joanna Komoska; Ken Moffa; Diane Sadowski; Bob Schepps (co-chair); Rick Sobrevinas; and Susan Van Olst;

**Visitor:** Chris Dyer, Tuckahoe School Superintendent

**Absent CAC members:** Bill Dalsimer; Linda Goldsmith; Valerie Harte; Milt Johnson; Ken Moffa

**Approval of minutes:** The minutes of September 6, 2011 were approved.

**Agenda Items:** (Bob Schepps, presiding)

1) Revisiting the Town Board members Nuzzi and Graboski's proposal to lower the size of the Zoning Board of Appeals and the Planning Board from seven to five members for a trial period: Although we voted in our September CAC meeting to oppose the reduction, we are looking for clarification regarding the benefits provided to volunteer Board Members. Since the proposal to lower the number of members is based on cost cutting, if they do not receive benefits then there may not be great cost savings. But the Southampton Press reported that these Board Members receive benefits and perhaps life benefits from the Town. One member commented that if the Town wants to cut costs, they should consider removing gratis use of Town automobiles. We learned that there was a public comment period on this proposal, but no one responded.

2) Chris Dyer spoke to the CAC, invited by Rick Sobrevinas, about problems confronting Tuckahoe school and how the CAC might be of help. Tuckahoe School is not permitted by New York State to raise property taxes for school expenses by more than two percent. The taxes on the average property owner in Tuckahoe School District is very high – three times higher than in Southampton School District. Teachers are guaranteed by law a certain increase in salaries. The school feels squeezed as a result. One of the reasons for the greater taxes on Tuckahoe property owners are the four golf courses in the district. New York State gives them a tax break – they pay about one-third of what other property owners pay per acre. The law allows citizens to petition the state to request greater parity.

One way the school could reduce costs would be to find a way to lower tuition costs for the 111 students who go to high school in other districts. The students are offered

a choice between Southampton District where the tuition rate is \$28,000 per year and Westhampton District where tuition rate is \$21,000. New York State indicates that of the 27 districts that tuition out their high school students, Southampton's tuition rate is highest. A referendum at the school might result in eliminating the choice of schools, using only Westhampton if the tuition for Southampton is not reduced.

Consolidation of Southampton and Tuckahoe School Districts has been proposed which would equalize the tax disparity between the districts. New York State is supportive of consolidation of school districts. A referendum would be necessary in both districts. It takes 25 petitioners in each district to place this proposal on the ballot.

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Comments from CAC after Chris Dyer's departure: 1) Our co-chairs questioned whether these concerns about the Tuckahoe School District and their taxation were within our reasonable focus for a CAC; 2) some members of the CAC might wish to form another committee unrelated to the CAC to pursue these School District-related issues; 3) many commented on the unfairness to Tuckahoe residents of coping with the large tax burden imposed by the large number of tax reduced □ properties in the school district; 4) there was concern that we not combine the Citizens for Change zoning issues with the school taxation inequities involving the golf courses.

3) A Town Manager Position: We revisited the recommendation of May's CAC presentation by the League of Women Voters on Southampton Town of creating a professional Town Manager position. There was little support for the proposal with the negative comments being a) that we don't trust that the position would remain apolitical; b) we want current government participants deeply accountable and not delegating responsibilities they should be managing to this new position; c) this would be more of a tax burden without an increase in effective government; d) the timing is poor, given our deficit situation in Town.

Bob moved and Bonnie seconded that,

*We do not support the hiring of a Town Manager for Southampton. After discussion, we were not able to identify merit to this new position.*

The motion passed with one dissenting and one abstaining vote.

4) Future priorities for the CAC (held as a general discussion – not voted upon):

a) Putting Tuckahoe "on the map" – making Tuckahoe real (dispel that it is "not a destination")

b) Taxation for condos and town houses – exploring how they are taxed and our opinions;

c) Beautification of the Corridor/ County Road 39 area and also back roads;

d) The relationship of the Town to the golf courses (invite Charles & Jill Schwartz?);

e) Uses for the about-to-be-vacant Parrish Museum space in Southampton Village;

f) Southampton College Campus and the Hospital's interest in relocating there;

g) Vacant stores and derelict places on County Road 39.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 pm. to meet again November 1, 2011 at 7 pm.

Submitted by

Joanna Komoska

CAC Secretary

cc: Supervisor Throne-Holst

Town Board members

Town Attorney

Jeff Murphree

Tom Neely

Town Clerk

Tax Receiver

Hon Mark Epley, Mayor, Village of Southampton

Water Mill CAC, Sag Harbor CAC, North Sea CAC, Hampton Bays CAC