



# Prospect to dissolve after vote

Posted Wednesday, July 22, 2015 4:00 pm

## DAVE GYMBURCH

Although it no longer will be a village as of Dec. 31, “we’ll still be Prospect,” Mayor Frances Righi and Clerk/Treasurer Marcia Ellis both said after residents voted overwhelmingly Tuesday to dissolve the village.

Prospect instead will be a hamlet within the Town of Trenton, following a 91-7 vote by residents in favor of dissolving the village. It has about 290 residents.

“To lose a village after 125 years....It’s pretty sad,” Righi said today.

The dissolution was in conjunction with Prospect still owing about \$544,000 in outstanding Workers Compensation debt, involving settlements of injury claims from two firefighters; the village abolished its volunteer fire department about two years ago. The debt was “the only reason” for dissolving the village, said Ellis. She noted “if we did not dissolve...we would owe Workers Compensation the lump sum within six months of Dec. 31.” The village’s revenues include an annual property tax levy that Ellis said is about \$27,000. Righi previously said the village would have had to bond for the debt with a six-month payback period.

Righi remarked, “we have to get out from...that debt.” Ellis said “now that we are dissolved...we can negotiate with Oneida County to come up with a repayment plan over 10 to 20 years.” She also said “we did a lot of outreach to make sure the people understood” the need to dissolve.

The dissolution includes the Town of Trenton creating a special debt district, to include village real property, involving repaying the balance of Prospect's obligation to the Oneida County Self Insurance Plan. It also calls for special district created by the town to provide street lighting and water.

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"Now the real work...starts" for the village board, observed Righi. Village officials will work with the Town of Trenton regarding dissolution details, and will seek the best arrangements "that we can for everybody," she commented. Among concerns had been the village water system, she said, but added that Prospect will continue to have the service and "the only thing different" will be that the town will handle billing.

As part of the dissolution plan, all real property owned by the village is to become town property, and the town will assume all staffing and maintenance responsibility now held by the village. Righi said the mayor position will be dissolved, as will the village Board of Trustees.

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