

Few questions arise at Altmar hearing on its dissolution plan

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Debra J. Groom / The Post-Standard
By

Altmar, NY -- Questions about sidewalks and the cemetery were the only issues raised during Wednesday night's public hearing about the dissolution study plan for the village of Altmar.

The public hearing, part of the process for abolishing the Altmar village government, lasted only 15 minutes. About a dozen people attended.

The dissolution study plan was introduced to residents in May with a presentation by officials with the Center for Governmental Research in Rochester, who helped a village committee study the impact on the village and town of Albion if the village dissolved into the town.

At the public hearing, Bryan Myers -- who began the dissolution process when he petitioned the village board one year ago today -- and Albion Town Supervisor Carl Anson Jr. wanted to know what was going to happen to village sidewalks that are in disrepair.

"If the village dissolves, how will the sidewalks be left?" Anson asked. He wondered if they would be fixed by the village before the village government is abolished or if it would be the town's responsibility.

Village Clerk Margaret Bailey said the village should "see what sidewalk and paving projects need to be done." Village Trustee Tom Reff, who was running the meeting in the absence of Mayor Corey Holcomb, said the village board would have to discuss what the village would repair before the village is abolished.

Concerning the cemetery, Reff said now also may be the time to finally map the cemetery so all the graves are easy to find. He said this was brought up to him years ago when he was mayor, but it got pushed to the back burner.

John Bartow, executive director of the Tug Hill Commission, said there may be state grants available to help the village with the sidewalk and cemetery issues. He also told the board there may be grants to help pay legal fees for converting the village's fire department into a fire corporation.

If the village dissolves, the fire department -- which is owned by the village -- must become either an independent fire company or a fire district. And Bartow said lawyers are needed to complete all the paperwork for the transfer.

With the conclusion of the public hearing, the village board now is set to approve the dissolution study plan at its Aug. 3 meeting. Once that is done, residents have 45 days to file a petition with the village to force a vote on the

dissolution plan.

If no petition is submitted, the dissolution plan moves forward and Altmar will be abolished as of Jan. 1, 2013. If a petition is submitted, a vote would be held within about 60 to 90 days after the petition is submitted on whether voters accept the dissolution plan.

If they vote to accept the plan, Altmar will be abolished on Jan. 1, 2013. If they vote against the plan, the village will not be dissolved.

Any petition submitted to the village board must be signed by 25 percent of the registered voters in the village, or about 60 people.

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