

# RECEIVED

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SPECIAL MEETING  
TOWN OF MONROE  
TOWN BOARD

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Bais Ruchel Paradise Hall  
5 Israel Zupnick Drive  
Monroe, New York 10950  
September 8, 2015  
7:07 p.m.

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## ATTENDEES

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HARLEY DOLES SUPERVISOR

13

GERARD McQUADE COUNCILMAN

14

DANIEL BURKE COUNCILMAN

15

DENNIS McWATTERS COUNCILMAN

16

RICHARD COLON COUNCILMAN

17

PETER TILEM TOWN ATTORNEY

18

MICHAEL DONNELLY ATTORNEY

19

MARY ELLEN F. BEAMS TOWN CLERK

20

21

22

23

24

25

1 TOWN OF MONROE

2 MR. DOLES: Ladies and  
3 gentlemen, before we begin -- ladies  
4 and gentlemen. Ladies and  
5 gentlemen -- ladies and gentlemen, we  
6 have an overflow capacity here. We  
7 anticipated to have many, many  
8 hundreds of people showing up. We  
9 could never imagine that the response  
10 would be as great as it is.

11 We ask you -- we ask you to be  
12 good neighbors, at this time. The  
13 need to be good neighbors, there's no  
14 time like right now to begin that  
15 practice. I'm asking all of you to  
16 please have a seat so that we can  
17 begin the town hall meeting at this  
18 time to discuss issues relating to  
19 annexation.

20 Ladies and gentleman, we're  
21 going to begin in a couple of  
22 minutes. We need to have everybody  
23 seated. Those of you who are on the  
24 side and there are no seats, I'm  
25 asking -- I'm asking that you

1 TOWN OF MONROE

2 cooperate with the authorities here.

3 We have representatives from  
4 the Public Safety, we have  
5 representatives from the State  
6 Police. We probably have  
7 representatives from the sheriff's  
8 office.

9 We ask that you just, again, be  
10 good neighbors and try to respect  
11 each other's rights to be able to attend  
12 this meeting for you to be able to  
13 hear what is going to be said tonight  
14 and what is going to be determined  
15 this evening, as well.

16 That being said, welcome and  
17 good evening. My name is Harley  
18 Doles. I'm the supervisor with the  
19 Town of Monroe.

20 For the record -- for the  
21 record, please note that if there's  
22 going to be calling out, you will be  
23 immediately removed. There will be  
24 no second warning. If there is  
25 calling out, you will be immediately

1 TOWN OF MONROE  
2 removed. There will be no second  
3 call out. There will be no second  
4 chance. Tonight is the night that we  
5 are going to do the peoples' business  
6 for all 40,000 plus people in the  
7 Town of Monroe.

8 There is not a voice out here  
9 that we have not heard from. There  
10 is not a voice or a family out here  
11 that we do not feel for. This is a  
12 major deciding issue in the lives of  
13 not only our families, our friends,  
14 but this community.

15 That gentleman is now leaving  
16 the room. Direct him out, please,  
17 now. Direct him out, please, now.

18 If we may continue. If we may  
19 continue. If we may continue. If we  
20 can't continue, the room will be  
21 cleared and the Town Board will  
22 conduct its discussions and decision  
23 in accordance with state law and in  
24 accordance with open meetings law.

25 However, if we cannot learn

1 TOWN OF MONROE

2 this evening how to get along for the  
3 next half hour to an hour, then I  
4 will clear this room in its entirety.

5 That being said, to my  
6 immediate left is Councilman and  
7 acting supervisor Gerry McQuade. To  
8 his left is Councilman Dan Burke. To  
9 his left is annexation counsel Mike  
10 Donnelly, and for the record, our  
11 town clerk, Mary Ellen Beams.

12 To my right is councilman Dan  
13 Burke. Councilman McWatters and town  
14 -- I'm sorry, Rick Colon. I  
15 apologize, Rick. Rick Colon. Dan  
16 Burke to my -- Dennis McWatters to my  
17 immediate right and at the very end  
18 of table the town attorney Peter  
19 Tilem.

20 If any of you feel as though  
21 speaking before, I would assume, well  
22 over a thousand people is an easy  
23 thing, it's not an easy thing,  
24 especially when you have a thousand  
25 people with their families that are

1 TOWN OF MONROE

2 looking for an absolute perfect  
3 answer of which I don't think anyone  
4 could ever provide, not when you have  
5 -- not when you have so many people  
6 with so many different, but so many  
7 similar dreams for their children and  
8 for their community's future.

9 Whether you live in the Village of  
10 Harriman, the Village of Monroe, for  
11 the Village of Kiryas Joel, Orange  
12 County, or anywhere in this country.

13 The one thing that you expect  
14 from your elected officials is for  
15 them to listen.

16 Some of you feel as though --  
17 sir, sit down, please. Sir, sit  
18 down. Thank you. Please remain  
19 seated. Those who have seats, if  
20 you'd like right now to give up your  
21 seat to somebody and move to the  
22 side, please do so now, we'll give  
23 you two minutes. Otherwise, please  
24 remain seated.

25 We have before us an approval

1 TOWN OF MONROE

2 of 163.8 acres, with a disapproval of  
3 507.4 acres before the Board. We  
4 need a motion to be able to enter  
5 that into discussion.

6 I'm sorry, my apologies.

7 Counsel has informed me, I failed to  
8 do a pledge of allegiance. So, with  
9 that being said, please raise for the  
10 pledge of allegiance.

11 Ladies and gentlemen, we have  
12 before the Board a motion for the  
13 approval of is 163.8 acres, with  
14 disapproval of 574 acres. The Board  
15 has come to a general consensus that  
16 that is something which we would like  
17 to present. We need a motion to that  
18 effect.

19 Counsel, annexation counsel  
20 town counsel, if we are procedurally  
21 doing something incorrect, please  
22 stop us so that we can take the  
23 corrective steps.

24 MR. COLON: I'll second that.

25 I'll second that motion for

1 TOWN OF MONROE

2 discussion.

3 MR. DOLES: Counsel wanted to  
4 speak about behavior, however, I  
5 think that it was discussed already.  
6 I think we've done an adequate job.

7 MR. TILEM: I think you did a  
8 fine job. Thank you.

9 MR. McQUADE: Okay, so that's  
10 over with.

11 MR. DOLAN: Michael, please.  
12 Again, this is the first time I think  
13 in the history of Orange County,  
14 probably in the United States that  
15 we've had such an audience for an  
16 issue that sometimes tends to go  
17 unnoticed, but certainly it hasn't  
18 here tonight.

19 MR. TILEM: As everyone present  
20 knows, there are two annexation dates  
21 pending before the village board and  
22 the town board. The first petition  
23 was filed December of 2013, and seeks  
24 to annex approximately 507 acres of  
25 land from the unincorporated portion



1 TOWN OF MONROE  
2 of Town of Monroe into the Village of  
3 Kiryas Joel.

4 In August of 2014, the second  
5 petition was filed with both boards  
6 in which 164 acres of land is sought  
7 to be annexed, again, from the town  
8 into the village.

9 A SECRA study and analysis with  
10 the public hearing, as many of you  
11 can recall, was conducted. An  
12 environmental impact statement in its  
13 final form was accepted and issued by  
14 the lead agency earlier in August  
15 earlier this summer, and the village  
16 of Kiryas Joel has issued its SECRA  
17 finding statement, as well its  
18 resolution in approving both the 507  
19 acre petition as well as the 164 acre  
20 petition.

21 Tonight it is the time for the  
22 town Board to vote on both of those  
23 petitions and the issue its SECRA  
24 finding statement. I believe that the  
25 town board members should discuss the

1 TOWN OF MONROE

2 rationale for any decision they make  
3 and they should vote by roll call and  
4 that those should be properly  
5 recorded.

6 MR. DOLES: Michael, thank you  
7 very much.

8 We have a motion that we need  
9 to be made concerning an approval of  
10 163.8 acres, with disapproval of  
11 507.4 acres.

12 MR. McQUADE: I'll make the  
13 motion.

14 I move that the town of Monroe  
15 consent to the 163.8 acre annexation.  
16 The town board hereby finding that  
17 it's in the overall public interest  
18 and then disapprove the 507.4 acre  
19 petition. The Town Board hereby  
20 finding that it is not in the overall  
21 public interest to grant that  
22 petition.

23 Do I have a second?

24 MR. COLON: I'll second that  
25 motion for discussion.

1 TOWN OF MONROE

2 MR. DOLES: Gentleman, each  
3 person, if you'd like, you can please  
4 opine on your position and then we  
5 will move forward.

6 Mr. McWatters, if you would  
7 like.

8 MR. McWATTERS: Thank you, Mr.  
9 Supervisor. I would like to take  
10 just a few moments to make some  
11 comments.

12 I would like to thank everyone,  
13 all you folks who wrote me or called  
14 me in the past four days to let me  
15 know how you felt about the  
16 annexation.

17 I apologize for not getting  
18 back to each one of you individually,  
19 although that would have been my  
20 preference.

21 I did listen to all your  
22 messages, I understand your concerns.  
23 I took the time to read everything  
24 that was presented by every one of  
25 the specialist, by every one of the

1 TOWN OF MONROE

2 attorneys and the villages document  
3 of Sunday night.

4 There was one overriding theme  
5 that I took from all the messages  
6 that I did receive, and that was to  
7 do the right thing. The dilemma  
8 becomes one of, What is the right  
9 thing?

10 Everybody presented their case  
11 and each one individually seemed to  
12 be the right answer.

13 The annexation issue itself is  
14 probably one of the most difficult  
15 decisions I've ever been faced with,  
16 other than the movie theater. I had  
17 to lighten it up a little bit.

18 I understand each argument both  
19 for and against. I empathize that  
20 there has been a frightening amount  
21 of misinformation or false  
22 information that has been spread  
23 through various media.

24 I have friends on both sides of  
25 the issue, and that makes me realize

1 TOWN OF MONROE

2 that I will not be able to satisfy or  
3 appease everyone with my vote, and  
4 that, for me, is troubling.

5 I am troubled by the apparent  
6 discrimination that exists in the  
7 village against certain members of  
8 the Monroe community. I am  
9 disappointed by the fact that the  
10 school district has not rebuked the  
11 statements that if the annexation is  
12 approved there will be an immediate  
13 reduction of budgeted programs in the  
14 Monroe-Woodbury Central School  
15 District. That lack of  
16 responsiveness has created the  
17 disturbing outbreaks of last Monday's  
18 town board meeting. The school board  
19 could have resolved that with one  
20 simple statement.

21 Folks, I am afraid that we,  
22 including the Board, this Board, are  
23 all guilty of behaving badly over the  
24 last 20 months. It is my firm belief  
25 that had there been a meeting of all

## TOWN OF MONROE

1  
2 interested parties before the  
3 annexation petitions had been filed,  
4 we may have been able to reach an  
5 agreement that would have been in the  
6 best interest of all of the town  
7 residents. And I would suggest even  
8 at this late date, as suggested in  
9 the county's CGR report, that we try  
10 to resolve our issues and not allow  
11 the courts to resolve this local  
12 issue for us.

13 Per the New York State law, if  
14 this motion is passed tonight, we  
15 still have the ability over the next  
16 30 days to have to such discussion.

17 Putting aside political,  
18 emotional or philosophical  
19 considerations, my vote is based upon  
20 the comment of the town's  
21 consultants. There needs to be a  
22 supplemental EIS that includes a  
23 longer term extrapolation of  
24 population growth so that a build out  
25 scenario could be developed to assess

1 TOWN OF MONROE

2 without a motion the environmental  
3 issues to develop proper remediation  
4 proposals.

5 The way the SECRA process rests  
6 at the moment, I do not believe that  
7 the best interest of all of the  
8 residents of Monroe is not to be  
9 served with a yes vote.

10 MR. DOLES: Is there another  
11 member of the Board that would like  
12 to speak?

13 MR. BURKE: I will say that  
14 I've read every document, read every  
15 piece of e-mail, I've spoken to two,  
16 three-hundred people on the phone.  
17 This was carefully considered and I'm  
18 ready to vote tonight.

19 MR. DOLES: Is there anyone  
20 else that would like to say  
21 something?

22 MR. COLON: Again, I would like  
23 to thank everybody for coming down  
24 tonight. I know this is a very hot  
25 and contentious issue because, as