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News Coverage on Local Restructuring

Consolidation study recommendations draw fire at New Paltz Town Hall meeting

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After a 19-month study, with little public engagement outside of the Steering Committee and Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC), New Paltz Town Hall was filled with residents interested, concerned or wanting to express their thoughts on the proposed Government Efficiency and Effectiveness Project. This project was the result of a joint village and town grant award for \$50,000 to study all government options. They hired Fairweather Consultants to guide them through the process and put together a steering committee made up of town, village, school district and SUNY-New Paltz representatives, as well as town and village residents. Nineteen months later, the report was accepted by the steering committee and presented to both boards for acceptance.

Two ways this could happen, theoretically, would be a five-percent total reduction in the budget and/or a revenue stream from the New York State Department of State, which funded the \$50,000 study. A glaring glitch in this potential revenue stream, according to Fairweather Consultants, is that the Department of State and the Department of Finance in New York, while pushing for consolidation throughout the state, do not recognize a "coterminous" government as a "consolidated" government. Town supervisor Susan Zimet claimed, prior to public input, that this was very likely an oversight of the state, and speculated that she believed that governor Andrew Cuomo's upcoming budget might "rectify that language," which in her estimation would allow for state funding.

Press Clip Relevance

This clip highlights the complexity of choices and structures that local municipalities are faced with when considering restructuring. In this case, the option that the municipalities had decided was the best for them did not conform with the language of the State Law designed to facilitate

restructuring.

Source URL: <http://nyconstitution.org/press-clip/news-coverage/local-restructuring/new-paltz-times-consolidation-study-recommendations-dra>

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