

**Village of Afton**  
**Board of Trustees Meeting**  
**Jack D. Bolster Community Center, Afton, NY**  
**May 11, 2020**

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Trustees held May 11, 2020 on Zoom.

Meeting called to order at 7:00 pm, by Mayor Janice Nickerson.

**Present:** Mayor Nickerson, Trustee Muller, Trustee Lawrence, Trustee Simonds, Trustee Humphrey, Clerk/Treasurer Palmatier, DPW Superintendent Andrew Acla, Village Code Enforcement Officer Jeffrey Butler and Officer in Charge Quanison Wright.

**Visitors:** Brendon Becker, Charles Torres, Kathy Ryan, Kelly Lawrence, Joel Lawrence, Lori Petzack and Michael Carlin.

- Mayor Nickerson asked Trustee Humphrey if he had previously audited the vouchers. Trustee Humphrey stated yes, Mayor Nickerson asked for a motion to pay the vouchers.
- A motion was made by Trustee Simonds authorizing Clerk/Treasurer to pay the following audited vouchers, Seconded by Trustee Muller. All in favor, motion passed.  
**General Fund Vouchers # 312 - 342, Totaling \$47,524.54.**  
**Water Fund Vouchers # 92 – 103, Totaling \$28,056.35.**
- Motion to accept previous minutes with no additions or corrections made by Trustee Lawrence, seconded by Trustee Simonds. All in favor, motion passed.

**Monthly Report:**

- DPW/ Water: Report distributed prior to zoom meeting. Report read aloud by DPW Superintendent Andrew Acla.
- Police Department. Report distributed prior to zoom meeting. Report read aloud by Mayor Nickerson.
- Code Enforcement: Report distributed prior to zoom meeting. Report read aloud by Village Code Enforcement Officer, Jeffrey Butler.
- Planning Board: Trustee Humphrey informed the Village Board of Trustees that the Planning Board held a Zoom meeting last week. Trustee Humphrey stated that the Planning Board is working on gathering information to begin the dating of the Village Code Book. Trustee Humphrey stated that this would be a long updating project.
- Finance/Insurance: Mayor Nickerson stated that she met with the Village Insurance Representative to go over the current years' policy. Mayor Nickerson stated that Mr. VanGorder was to attend this meeting. He had a few questions that needed answering. Mayor Nickerson stated that she and Clerk / Treasurer Palmatier would reach out to insure he has the information needed.

- Christmas Parade Committee: Trustee Simonds stated that she spoke with the Committee. They are getting ready to place flowers within the urns on Main Street. Mayor Nickerson asked Trustee Simonds if there were any discussions about getting new flower boxes. Trustee Simonds stated no, there was not.
- Parks Committee: Trustee Muller informed everyone that the Parks Committee has canceled the current scheduled events, due to the Coronavirus. Trustee Muller stated that the next event would be the Sidewalk Day, held in August 2020. Currently that event is in the air, as we are unsure what will happen given the situation. Mayor Nickerson asked Trustee Muller if she would be ordering the swing and bouncing equipment for Leggett Park. Trustee Muller states that the location needs to be sited first. Trustee Simonds informed everyone that the Parks Committee has already secured the bands Short Change and Sun Down for the dances that they host in October and February.
- Historian Report: Report distributed prior to zoom meeting. Mayor Nickerson stated that the report was available at the Village office if anyone wants a copy.
- Dog Control Officer: - No Report.

### **Old Business:**

- Fire Hydrants – The Village Board of Trustees asked DPW Superintendent Andrew Acla if the hydrants have a date of delivery. Mr. Acla has received an estimate on the cost of the valve shut off at the hydrant, rather than shutting off the entire line while replacements are made. Trustee Humphrey, stated that Mr. Acla needs to receive another estimate. Trustee Humphrey stated that yes, this may be a little expensive, but he thinks it is what is best for the residents. Mr. Acla stated that he feels as though Spring Street will be the problematic area.
- Playground Equipment - The Village Board of Trustees asked DPW Superintendent Andrew Acla, how the work was coming along for the placement of the playground equipment. Mr. Acla stated that the DPW crew had removed the brush along the property line. They have also placed a sub base in for the sidewalk to be set. They have removed the cobblestone from the play area. Mr. Acla stated that he feels as though the department has matters that are more pressing currently. Mr. Acla informed the Village Board of Trustees that he has received a call from Suit-Kote, they will be ready to pave High Street between May 26 -27, tentively, weather permitting.
- Health Insurance Discussion – Mayor Nickerson explain that the Village had previously made a motion during their July 13, 2015 meeting, to discontinue health insurance benefits for its full time employees. Discussions were made with the Village attorney pertaining to this motion already set in place. Mayor Nickerson asked the Village Board of Trustees for a new resolution affirming that the health insurance is not a benefit being provided by the Village to its full time employees.
- A motion was made by Trustee Muller affirming the motion that the Village will not carry Health Insurance for its full time employees already set into place at the July 13, 2015 Board Meeting. Seconded by Trustee Simonds. All in favor, motion passed.

- Discussions of Health Insurance buyouts for future DPW Superintendent were made. It was decided that due to no Health Insurance being offered, there is no call for a Health Insurance buyout to continue. As this would be part of the Health Insurance benefit plan for those choosing not to participate in the Health Insurance that would have been offered.
- A motion was made by Trustee Muller to allow the current DPW Superintendent Andrew Acla to continue to receive the Health Insurance decline buyout option of a \$2,000.00 yearly payment. These payments will continue to be made in \$1,000.00 increments payable twice a year, in September and February. Seconded by Trustee Lawrence. All in favor, motion passed.
- Crosswalks - The Village Board of Trustees asked DPW Superintendent Andrew Acla how the crosswalks were looking. Mr. Acla stated that they were waiting to have two consecutive days of dry weather.
- Sidewalks - The Village Board of Trustees asked DPW Superintendent Andrew Acla how the replacement of the sidewalks were coming along. Mr. Acla stated that the DWP were working on it.
- Tree Removal - The Village Board of Trustees asked DPW Superintendent Andrew Acla how the list of trees needing removal was coming along. Mr. Acla stated that he feels as though the trees are a code issue. Trustee Lawrence stated she and Trustee Humphrey had asked Mr. Acla to get them estimates from tree removal companies. Mr. Acla stated he does not have time and this is a code issue. Trustee Lawrence asked Mr. Acla which is it, is it a code issue or is it that you do not have the time. Mr. Acla stated that he does not have the time. Trustee Lawrence stated duly noted.

### **New Business:**

- Trustee Simonds asked why the Village had a billing to Cobra for \$635.00. Trustee Humphrey also asked Mr. Acla to explain the billing. Mr. Acla stated that the salt ate the hinges on the dump truck. Which caused the hinges to brake off from the weld.
- Village Code Enforcement Officer Jeffrey Butler stated that he has been looking through the Codebook trying to find the correct wording for housing appearances, in regards to junk and debris. Mayor Nickerson asked Trustee Muller if she was aware of any codes pertaining to this. Trustee Muller suggested calling the County Board of Health. That the situation could be of an injury or a threat to the surrounding neighbors. Mr. Butler stated that he would reach out to Isaiah Sutton at the County for assistance.
- In his report, Mr. Butler stated that he had helped Chenango County with four homes that were on the delinquent tax sale roll. Trustee Lawrence asked Mr. Butler how that process worked.
- At this time visitor, Lori Petzack expressed that, she feels as though the Village needs to hire an Auctioneer to insure that the Village is properly listing their back tax delinquent properties.

- Trustee Muller explained to Ms. Petzack that the County handles all properties that may go back for owed taxes.
- The Mayor informed the Village Board of Trustees that she has requested that the Village Attorney send a certified letter to the property owner located at 222 Main Street. Pertaining to the variance request through the Zoning Board of Appeals. Per the decision handed down, the property owner was informed that there should be no living on the premises, nor water or electric hook up.
- Chicken discussions - Village Code Enforcement Officer Jeffrey Butler informed the Village Board of Trustees that he has had a resident inquire about the placement of chickens on their property. The Mayor stated that she is aware of other Cities and Counties allowing residents to have chickens. That perhaps if the chicken count were limited to a certain number and coops were far enough back on a property line and roadway so that neighbors do not see them, there might be a possibility.
- Trustee Muller stated that if you change this law to allow for chickens, then you would be opening the door for all types of bird animals. She stated that you could not accommodate everyone, she feels as though the law should remain as is.
- Trustee Humphrey stated that the Planning Board could still come up with a list of ideas to present to the Village Board of Trustees for review. Trustee Muller stated that Trustee Humphrey is correct that is the job of the Planning Board.
- Trustee Simonds asked DPW Superintendent Andrew Acla if the sidewalks could be removed from one side of the Street on Spring Street. That way we would need to fix or repair only one side of the Street. Trustee Muller stated to Trustee Simonds that this is not a good idea. Trustee Humphrey agreed. DPW Superintendent Andrew Acla feels as though the Village should hire the sidewalks out. He used the Town of Oxford as his reference, stated that this is what they do. Mr. Acla feels as though this is a code issue.
- Trustee Simonds asked the Mayor if the Village could place bids out for sidewalk repair/replacement. Mayor Nickerson stated that it would be up to the board. She feels as though there are other duties already being left undone that require attention, such as hydrants, playground equipment installation and trees. Mayor Nickerson stated that the only thing that is a constant is brush up pickup and water checks.
- At this time, Mr. Acla seemed to get upset with Mayor Nickerson. Expressing to her that he would not be talked to like that. Mayor Nickerson stated that she has spoken with other Villages to see what they are doing in and throughout their Villages. She stated that she is aware of what should or should not be done within the Village.
- Trustee Simonds asked Mr. Acla if the DPW would place a lock on Davy's Field, as people are walking their dogs there. Mr. Acla stated that the field should already have been locked. Trustee Simonds stated that it is not. Mr. Acla stated that he would have Don Look at it tomorrow.
- Mayor Nickerson asked the Village Board of Trustees who would like to hire out the sidewalks. Trustee Lawrence asked for this to be tabled for the time being.
- Organizational Meeting – Mayor Nickerson stated that this is on hold.

- Web Page Discussions – Mayor Nickerson stated that the Village is looking at the idea of hiring an I.T. person. Mayor Nickerson stated that currently that Mr. Torres has volunteered to help the Village with setting up a Facebook Page. One has been hired.
- Signs Discussions – Trustee Lawrence stated that she and Trustee Humphrey were looking at the three parking spots available at Leggett Park. It appears as though there are some homeowners who are parking their vehicles in these locations during all different hours throughout the day. Trustee Lawrence stated that there needs to be a sign placed at this location indicating No Parking Zone or Leggett Park Parking only or 1 Hour Parking. If there are violators, they should be giving a warning first, then ticketed after the first offence.
- Trustee Lawrence suggested that a sign to be placed on the dumpster at the DPW Building. The sign should state that you would be ticketed for illegal dumping.
- Trustee Lawrence asked DPW Superintendent Andrew Acla if he could order the necessary signs or would he want the village to do so. Mr. Acla stated that he would order them as long as he has the correct wording for the signs.
- Mayor Nickerson informed the Village Board of Trustees that NYSEG is moving the utility light poles along State Route 7 up by the Dollar General. This will give the Village the opportunity to place streetlights on these poles.
- DPW Superintendent Andrew Acla asked when the solar light for the streetlights are projected to be placed. Mayor Nickerson stated that she had signed the necessary paperwork to begin the process.
- Trustee Lawrence, Thanked Mayor Nickerson for her personal purchase and placement of the “Afton Strong” signs placed in the Village.
- Trustee Lawrence stated that last month, right after the last board meeting she and Mayor Nickerson gave out 120 facemasks to those in the community who needed them. Trustee Lawrence also went to the local Businesses who were essential as well as those who were doing curbside services to inquire if they were in need of facemasks. Trustee Lawrence explained that the Village, along with the Town received the facemasks from the Department of Health and Emergency Management, Matthew Beckwith to be disturbed in our area. Trustee Lawrence stated that we still do have a few left if anyone is in need.
- A motion made by Trustee Simonds for a purchase of a laptop for the Village Office at no more than \$500.00. Seconded by Trustee Lawrence. All in favor, motion passed.
- A motion for the purchase of cameras and software system at no more than \$1,000.00, be to placed at the DPW/ Police Building at 19 Court Street was made by Trustee Simonds. Seconded by Trustee Lawrence. All in favor, motion passed.
- A motion made by Trustee Simonds to purchase flags for the placement on the Main Street District at no more than \$500.00. Seconded by Trustee Lawrence. All in favor, motion passed.

- Discussion made about placement of trashcans on the Main Street Business District. Trustee Lawrence asked Mr. Acla if the Village still had metal trashcans in storage. Mr. Acla asked who would be responsible for the disposal of the trash from the cans. Mayor Nickerson stated that Mr. Acla and his Department would be responsible for the trash removal once a week. Discussion of a placement of another dumpster at the DPW Building was made in regards to the overflow of possible trash. It was thought that at this time of Coronavirus, people might try to dump their own household trash on the premises this has been tabled.

WHEREAS, the Village Board of Trustees of the Village of Afton is undertaking Water Storage Tank Replacement Project (hereinafter called “the Project”) to upgrade their existing infrastructure for the Village of Afton Water System.

WHEREAS, the Village has allocated Village Water Reserve Funds for the tank replacement and may seek additional funding sources for additional funds required;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE VILLAGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE VILLAGE OF AFTON AS FOLLOWS:

1. The Village Board of Trustees intends to proceed with the Water Storage Tank Replacement Project to replace the existing steel water storage tank located in the Village of Afton, and
  2. The Board of Trustees hereby determines that the project is a Type II action pursuant to the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA), Article 8 of the New York Environmental Conservation law and its implementing regulations, 6 NYCRR Part 617 and pursuant to potential funding program requirements; and
  3. The Village Board of Trustees hereby declares itself to be the Lead Agency for purposes of coordinated review pursuant to SEQRA; and
  4. The Board of Trustees has determined that this project is considered a maintenance project and will not have any negative impacts. Therefore, it is resolved that the Board of Trustees has determined there is no significant environmental impacts.
  5. The Village Board of Trustees hereby authorizes the Mayor to sign all environmental review and funding documents for the Water Storage Tank Replacement Project on their behalf.
- Trustee Humphrey made a motion for SEQR Resolution pertaining to the Water Storage Tank Replacement Project for upgrading the existing infrastructure to the Village of Afton Water System. Seconded by Trustee Simonds. All in favor, motion passed.

WHEREAS, the Village Board of Trustees of the Village of Afton is undertaking Water System Improvements Project (hereinafter called “the Project”) to upgrade their existing infrastructure for the Village of Afton Water System.

WHEREAS, the Village has received Office of Community Renewal (OCR) CDBG Block Grant funds to complete a water system study to identify potential projects needing to be completed for the Water System in which the Village will seek funding;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE VILLAGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE VILLAGE OF AFTON AS FOLLOWS:

1. The Village Board of Trustees intends to proceed with the Water System Improvements Project to replace various water system components located in the Village of Afton, Town of Afton and Town of Sanford, and
  2. The Village Board of Trustees hereby determines that the Water Storage Tank Replacement Project is a Type I Action and a coordinated review will be conducted pursuant to the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA), Article 8 of the New York Environmental Conservation law and its implementing regulations, 6 NYCRR Part 617; and
  3. The Village Board of Trustees hereby declares itself to be the Lead Agency for purposes of coordinated review pursuant to SEQRA; and
  4. The Village Board of Trustees hereby instructs the Mayor, with the assistance of the consulting engineer, to notify all potentially involved government agencies, or those agencies which may have discretionary decisions to make with respect to the Project, of the Village Board of Trustees desire to serve as SEQRA lead agency and to further initiate the coordinated review of the Water System Improvements Project under the SEQRA regulations; and
  5. The Village Board of Trustees hereby authorizes the Mayor to sign all environmental review and funding documents for the Water System Improvements Project on their behalf.
- Trustee Humphrey made a motion for SEQR Resolution for Water System Improvement Project to upgrade the existing infrastructure for the Village of Afton Water System. Seconded by Trustee Simonds. All in favor, motion passed.
  - A motion was made by Trustee Humphrey to move a total of \$11,482.16 from (1990.0 – Contingency Fund) in our General Budget for the following Budget Appropriations:  
(1325.10 – Clerk Treasurer – for \$ 1,819.79).  
(6410.40 – Publicity Contractual Expense – for \$ 807.76).  
(8160.40 – Refuse & Garbage – for \$ 55.00).  
(9010.80 – State Retirement – for \$ 3,415.00).  
(9030.80 – Social Security – for \$2,984.61).  
(9089.8 – other Employee benefit – for \$2,400.00). Seconded by Trustee Simonds. All in favor, motion passed.
  - A motion was made by Trustee Lawrence to move a total of \$321.45 from (1620.45 – Building Maintenance) in our General Budget from the following Budget Appropriations:  
(1620.44- Building Supplies/Equipment – for \$321.45). Seconded by Trustee Simonds. All in favor, motion passed.

- A motion was made by Trustee Lawrence to move a total of \$ 219.37 from (1640.44 – Garage Oxygen / Tools) in our General Budget for the following Budget Appropriations: (1640.43 – Garage Telephone / Cell – for \$219.37). Seconded by Trustee Simonds. All in favor, motion passed.
- A motion was made by Trustee Lawrence to move a total of \$4,224.52 from (5110.41 – Street Maintenance, Contractual Expense) in our General Budget for the following Budget Appropriations: (5110.20 – Street Maintenance Equipment/ vehicle Repair & Maintenance – for \$4,224.52). Seconded by Trustee Simonds. All in favor, motion passed.
- A motion was made by Trustee Lawrence to move a total of \$4170.29 from (1990.40 – Contingency Fund) in our Water Budget for the following Budget Appropriations: (1910.40 – Unallocated Insurance Water – for \$1,144.06). (8310.11 – Clerk Treasurer – for \$1,265.00). (8340.11- Superintendent– In the amount of \$1,159.44). (9010.80 –Retirement – for \$601.79). Seconded by Trustee Simonds. All in favor, motion passed.
- A motion was made by Trustee Humphrey to move a total of \$118.44 from (8340.43 – Supplies / Fitting) in our Water Budget for the following Budget Appropriation: (8340.44 – Building Maintenance – for \$118.44). Seconded by Trustee Simonds. All in favor, motion passed.
- Trustee Simonds asked if there was any information on the broken picnic tables. Mayor Nickerson stated that she asked Officer in Charge Quanison Wright to contact the bank to see if they have anything available on their camera footage.
- Trustee Lawrence stated that there is a parked car with a flat tire parked in front of the Bank.
- Officer in Charge Quanison Wright stated that the patrols are working night shifts currently.
- A motion was, made by Trustee Humphrey to allow the Mayor to sign the environmental review with Lamont Engineers. Seconded by Trustee Simonds. All in favor, motion passed.

### **Recognition of Visitors:**

- Visitor Charles Torres asked about the facemasks that were handed out to the Village Businesses and Residents. Mr. Torres thanked Trustee Lawrence for thinking of her community.

- Visitor Kelly Lawrence expressed that a cost of living should be included in a yearly raise, not as an additional bonus.
- Visitor Charles Torres expressed that the streetlights are not solar, they are LED replacement heads.
- Visitor Lori Petzack informed Mayor Nickerson that she has a quote on a banner that she would like to place across Main Street. Ms. Petzack would like to place this banner in honor of Health Care Works and EMT.
- Visitor Lori Petzack asked the Village Board of Trustees if the Village would be willing to pay for the purchase of the banner out of their Community Beautification Funds.
- Trustee Humphrey stated that he would like to see this quote.
- Mayor Nickerson expressed that she was not in favor of the banner being placed across the Main Street Roadway. Mayor Nickerson suggested that perhaps Ms. Petzack contact HALos to see if the banner could be placed on their building.
- Visitor Lori Petzack expressed that she would like the village to pay for the banner. Initially Ms. Petzack gave a price quote of \$400.00. Ms. Petzack stated that the cost of the banner would depend on the size. A 25 foot X 2 foot double sided banner \$200.00. A 15 Foot X 2 Foot, one-sided banner would be \$120.00.
- No decision or motion was made on the purchase of a banner, at the request of Ms. Petzack.
- Visitor Lori Petzack stated that she feels as though a stop light needs to be installed near Horton Hardware. She stated that a motorcycle was speeding down Main Street.
- Visitor Lori Petzack asked Mayor Nickerson if she could give the go ahead to those who are asking, that we are back open for business as of Friday, May 15, 2020. As this is when the Governor Cuomo anticipated reopening.
- Trustee Lawrence asked Mayor Nickerson if we have received any recent updates. Trustee Lawrence asked Mayor Nickerson if she would continue to update the current Facebook page for the Village. Mayor Nickerson indicated that she would continue to do so.
- Mayor Nickerson responded by saying, we have not received any directive from Governor Cuomo's Office or that from our local County Officials as to what the opening protocols or the expectations will be on Friday, May 15, 2020.
- Visitor Lori Petzack stated that Jason Garner is planning to reopen on Friday, May 15, 2020. Mayor Nickerson responded by saying that they are Broome County. We are Chenango County.
- Visitor Kathy Ryan asked the Village Board of Trustees about the placement of a speed limit sign on the East Main Street, either before or after her home. She indicated that she had made a previous request that has not been met. She had requested that a 30 mile end

sign be placed or a begin 55 mile sign. Her concern is that almost all traffic speeds though this area.

- Trustee Lawrence stated to DPW Superintendent Andrew Acla that she thought that this had been looked into. Mr. Acla stated that he had called County, but had not heard back from anyone. There were many discussions as to what type of sign to place as well as where to place it. Mr. Acla stated that he would look to see what signs we have and talk to someone at County again. Mayor Nickerson stated that if the Village needs to place a sign for safety then just place it.
- Visitor Brendon Becker with Lamont Engineers explained to those in attendance that the village has entered into agreement for design and bidding services for the replacement of the existing water storage tank with a new concrete water storage tank at the same site. He has estimated the cost for design and bidding to be \$90,000.00. He stated that the Village has saved a good portion of funds, but additionally we are working on other funding resources. The Village is working with RCAP Solutions, Candace Balmer to send out income surveys to the area residence. We are planning to begin the project within this next year.
- Trustee Lawrence spoke of the Village Election postponement. As per Governor Cuomo Village Election will be pushed out until September 15, 2020, or until further directive is given.
- Visitor Lori Petzack expressed her dissatisfaction with the income survey. She stated that the village would be violating HIPAA Laws.
- Mayor Nickerson explained that the Village is working with and RCAP Solutions - Rural Housing Improvement, Candace Balmer, and all surveys are confidential.
- Trustee Humphrey informed Ms. Petzack that no one has to participate. However, by doing so it will allow the Village to get a better percent rate in responses to obtain more grant funds for the needs of the Village.
- Mayor Nickerson stated that if anyone has, questions, and concerns they may contact the office. Mayor Nickerson stated that she would keep updating on Facebook as well.
- A motion was made by Trustee Simonds to adjourn our regular meeting at 9:25 pm. Seconded by Trustee Lawrence. All in favor, motion passed.

Respectfully Submitted  
Ann Palmatier  
Clerk / Treasurer

