

Village of Afton
Board of Trustees Meeting
Jack D. Bolster Community Center, Afton, NY
August 14, 2023

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Trustees held August 14, 2023 in the Susquehanna Room, 105 Main Street, Afton, NY

Meeting called to order at 7:00 pm, by Deputy Mayor, Trustee D. Lawrence.

Present: Trustee D. Lawrence, Trustee Humphrey, Trustee Winans, Trustee T. Lawrence, Clerk/Treasurer Palmatier, DPW Supervisor DeBetta and Village Code Enforcement Officer Jeffrey Butler.

Absent: Mayor Dedman and Officer in Charge Stanko.

Visitors: Donald Ouimet, Linda Matthews, Maryann Palmetier, Julie Grover, Jerry & Nancy Harris and Karen Davis.

- No motion made authorizing Clerk/Treasurer to pay the following audited vouchers.

General Fund Voucher's # 51 - 86, totaling \$56,513.66.

Water Fund Voucher's # 18 – 27, totaling \$16,266.78.

- Motion to accept previous minutes along with Special Meeting minutes from July 24, 2023 with no additions or correction, made by Trustee Humphrey. Seconded by Trustee T. Lawrence. All in favor, motion passed.

Monthly Report:

- **DPW/ Water:** DPW Supervisor DeBetta informed the Village Board of Trustees that the crew has finished updating sidewalks on Spring Street, along with the placement of 2 new fire hydrants. They have prepared the village fields for the AYSO youth sports organization. This month the tree service will be giving estimates for the removal of some trees, and paving will take place on Long Hill Road, by Suit-Kote.
- **Police Department.** No report.
- **Code Enforcement:** Report distributed, read aloud by Code Enforcement Officer Butler. Mr. Butler expressed that the 2 yellow houses have overgrown debris and infringe on the property owner next door. Trustee T. Lawrence expressed that the village will be addressing that situation as soon as the proper paperwork is in place. He has already spoken with DPW Supervisor DeBetta about a clean-up plan. Trustee T. Lawrence, Thanked Mr. Butler for his efforts on the clean-up of the trash located at 311 Main Street, as it is starting to look better.
- **Planning Board:** Trustees Humphrey informed the Village Board of Trustees that the Planning Board did not have much for discussion this month.

- Finance/Insurance: Up to date, the village just renewed their current insurance policies.
- 4 Towns Forward: Visitor Linda Matthews informed the Village Board of Trustees that a summit meeting was held at the Main Street Grill, for discussions of homelessness and financial despair for the surrounding areas. All 4 Towns Forward representatives were present, as well as area church council and community organizations. They are in the process for setting up different community outreach programs to help with these ongoing issues in all the communities.
- Historian Report: Report distributed.
- Dog Control Officer: - Report distributed.
- Afton Central School – No representative.

Old Business:

- Discussion of meeting procedures has been on going. Deputy Mayor, Trustee D. Lawrence stated that the village is not looking at changing any of their meeting procedures. We are only looking at guidelines pertaining to public comment.
- Discussion of election poll watchers has been on ongoing. Deputy Mayor, Trustee D. Lawrence stated that the information on this topic from both Chenango County and New York State Conference of Mayors and Municipal Officials – (NYCOM) is very conflicting, as they are not the same. Visitor Linda Matthews expressed that there will be a training hosted by the County in September.
- Discussion of Norfolk Southern Corporation Lease Agreement, is ongoing as communications continue. Remains the same.
- Discussion of proposed fence code, has been sent to the attorney for review before moving forward. Remains the same.
- Update on the purchase of the 2 yellow houses. As voted on at the May 8, 2023 board meeting the village has agreed to place a bid on these properties. The County has accepted the bid made by the Village. The paperwork has been signed by Mayor, Dedman, and returned to the County for processing.
- There was discussions among the Village Board of Trustees as to the purchase of solar flashing speed signs. Trustee Humphrey has questions as to if it was necessary to obtain grant funds for such a purchase. The speeding within the village has gotten out of hand, perhaps the village could just buy them out right. Deputy Mayor, Trustee D. Lawrence expressed that she had spoken with the school, to see if they have funds in the Safe Routes to School Grant. Trustee T. Lawrence asked DPW Supervisor DeBetta if he could check to see what pricing J. C. Smith has on these for now.

New Business:

- A motion made by Trustee Humphrey to grant an easement at the property located at 45 Long Hill Road. Seconded by Trustee Winans. All in favor, motion passed.
- A Resolution was made by Trustee Humphrey that the Village of Afton location code 40350 has established a standard work day for its employees and will report days worked to the New York State &

Local Employee's Retirement System based on the time keeping system or the record of activities maintained and submitted by these members.

Title: Village Mayor standard work day of 6 Hours

Title: Village Trustee standard work day of 6 Hours

Title: Village Code Enforcement Officer Standard work day of 6 Hours.

Title: DPW Superintendent standard work day of 8 Hours

Title: Clerk / Treasurer Standard work day of 8 Hours

Seconded by Trustee Winans. All in favor motion passed.

- A motion made by Trustee Humphrey to accept the resignation from Angelica Rowe as Officer in Charge effect August 21, 2023 or up until October 1, 2023 until such a replacement is hired. Seconded by Trustee T. Lawrence. All in favor, motion passed. Deputy Mayor, Trustee D. Lawrence expressed that at this time Anjelica has made some changes in both her personal and her professional life.
- A motion made by Trustee Humphrey to place an advertisement for a Part- time Police Officer dedicated to working up to 20 hours a week. Seconded by Trustee Winans. All in favor, motion passed.
- A motion made by Trustee Humphrey to move \$10,631.08 from (A9725 DPW Equipment Capital Reserves Saving) for purchase of a John Deere Z960M ZTrak mower. This purchase has already been voted on at the April 10, 2023 board meeting. The mower has been on backorder, therefore the funds were placed in the savings account from the 2022 – 2023 budget appropriation. Seconded by Trustee Winans. All in favor, motion passed.
- A motion made by Trustee Humphrey to move a total of \$936.13 from (1989.40 – General Contractual Support) out of General Budget for the following Budget Appropriations: (A1910.40 – Unallocated Insurance – for \$936.13).
Seconded by Trustee T. Lawrence. All in favor, motion passed.
- A motion made by Trustee T. Lawrence to move a total of \$390.76 from (1990.40 – Contingency) out of Water Budget for the following Budget Appropriations: (A1910.40 – Unallocated Insurance – for \$390.76).
Seconded by Trustee Humphrey. All in favor, motion passed.
- A motion made by Trustee Humphrey to close the village office on Thursday, August 17, 2023.
Seconded by Trustee Winans. All in favor, motion passed.

Recognition of Visitors:

- Visitor Donald Ouimet, Thanked DPW Supervisor DeBetta for clearing and cleaning out the shoulder of the road that had been washed out on Long Hill Road, due to the rains.
- Visitor Julie Grover was here to speak with the Village Board of Trustees as directed by Trustee T. Lawrence. Ms. Grover is looking to enter into contract with the Village of Afton to utilize the small strip of land along the river for crop planting proposes. Ms. Grover was told that the village will need to look into the propose use of this parcel before moving forward. Trustee T. Lawrence stated that Ms. Grover was looking at a contract for a 3 – 4 year period. He will recommend that this be done on a year to year basis. At this time the village is also looking into the possibility of a new boat ramp placement in

that area. Deputy Mayor, Trustee D. Lawrence stated that no one is opposing the planting of the crops, we just need to look over the paperwork first.

- Visitor Karen Davis asked the Village Board of Trustees what the ordinances were on the height in which lawns must be mowed. She has concern for her neighbor, who she said received a phone call about his unkept lawn. Mrs. Davis expressed that his lawn is not that high. Village Code Enforcement Officer Jeffrey Butler expressed that he did not call her neighbor. It was explained that the village sends letters in regards to these matters. Mr. Butler stated that he'd speak with the property owner about this matter. Mrs. Davis, thanked everyone.
- Visitor Jerry Harris expressed that there needs to be a discussion as to which location is best for the proposed boat ramp. He has met with the soil conservation and a biologist about the possibility of 3 locations. He said that the soil conservation will do all the required permits as well as the design process on behalf of the village. He indicated that the biologist needs to do a study to see if the river has endangered mussels at the proposed locations. If so, depending on which location is chosen the village will need to create a new habitat for the mussels. They will supply the village with a list of contractors who could do the work to create the new habitat. Mr. Harris stated that once a location is determined than Bailey will need to call dig safe to ensure that there are no unseen cables or utility lines. Deputy Mayor, Trustee D. Lawrence states that she would get together with Mayor Dedman to discuss the possible placement.
- Visitor Jerry Harris informed the Village Board of Trustees that he has obtained a copy of the guidance set forth by Homeland Security and FEMA in regards to the allowable use of the open space for the FEMA bought properties. Mr. Harris will drop a copy off at the village office.
- Visitor Jerry Harris asked the Village Board of Trustees what they intended to do with the 2 yellow house. Deputy Mayor, Trustee D. Lawrence expressed that these houses keep going through a never ending cycle of being purchased on back tax sale only to end up there again. The village is looking to either obtain grant funds to have them torn down or to resell them under the stipulations of what the expectations are in having them torn down with the possible placement of a new dwelling at each location.
- A motion made by Humphrey to adjourn our regular meeting at 8:20 pm. Seconded by Trustee Winans. All in favor, motion passed.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ann Palmatier
Clerk / Treasurer