

**Village of Afton
Board of Trustees Meeting
Jack D. Bolster Community Center, Afton, NY
August 11, 2025**

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Trustees held August 11, 2025, in the Susquehanna Room, 105 Main Street, Afton, NY.

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

Deputy Mayor, Trustee D. Lawrence informed everyone that there is a time for public comment on our agenda, kindly let the village board get through their business. The floor will be open once we reach that part of the agenda for those who would like to speak.

Present: Deputy Mayor, Trustee D. Lawrence, Trustee Humphrey, Trustee T. Lawrence, Trustee L. Matthews, Clerk/Treasurer Palmatier, DPW Supervisor DeBetta and Officer in Charge Frank Ventura.

Visitors: Donald Ouimet, Angelina Echevarria, Julie Sutton, Jay Hager, Michael Lawrence, Esther Rowe, Dale Dewy, April Leggett, Marge Petrie, Laurie Flash, Diane Miller Jim Parkinson, Nancy & Jerry Harris, David Dodge, Jason Wicks, Joel Lawrence, Becky Komorowski, Daron Schultes, Jordan Loucks, Judy & John Hinman, Sue & John Weibel, Gerianne Hurney, Sam Sickler, Kelly Graven-Briggs, Maryanne Palmetier and Tammy Stevens.

- A motion made by Trustee T. Lawrence authorizing Clerk/Treasurer to pay the following audited vouchers. Seconded by Trustee L. Matthews. All in favor motion passed.

General Fund Vouchers # 46 - 72, Totaling \$14,720.54.

Water Fund Vouchers # 22 – 29, Totaling \$4,719.50.

- Motion to accept previous minutes with no additions or corrections made by Trustee Humphrey. Second, by Trustee T. Lawrence. All in favor, motion passed.

Monthly Report:

- DPW/ Water: Verbal report given by DPW Supervisor DeBetta.
- Police Department. Report distributed, read aloud by Officer in Charge Ventura.
- Code Enforcement: No report as there is a vacancy. Deputy Mayor, Trustee D. Lawrence stated that the village is looking to fill the position, if anyone who lives within the village, may be interested.
- Planning Board: Planning Board Chair, April Leggett informed the Village Board of Trustees that they had a quorum, therefore they had no meeting. However she wanted to address the following:

- ✓ Having affordable housing within the village for younger professionals and couples. As this will help benefit the community.

- ✓ She has spoken with Len Carson from DC Marketing in regards to the LED gateway sign. Due to changes set forth by DOT on placement allowances for the sign. Mr. Len has decided to relocate the sign for placement at Mirabito.
- ✓ Abandon houses – She intends on speaking with County and looking thought out the village to obtain an idea of how many houses are abandon and report this information back to the Village Board of Trustees.
- ✓ Microphones – She suggested that the board should use them during meetings are there are those in attendance that cannot hear well.
 - ✓ Commerce of Chenango – She suggested that the village become members.
- ✓ Fair – She praised the events at the fair and stated that it showed economic development.
- ✓ Permits for Fairgrounds – She feels as though the permitting process for the fair should be, eliminated. That Sunday's should be allowable for events to take place at the fairgrounds.
- Deputy Mayor, Trustee D. Lawrence expressed to Planning Board Chair, April Leggett that she spoke with Commerce of Chenango Member, Tyler Oliver about two yellow houses, he will be emailing her some information. She will look into the possibly of a microphone. Deputy Mayor, Trustee D. Lawrence said that the board has historical waived the events for the fair. The law states a clause in regards to no activity or entrainment on Sundays. This consideration is in place for the village as a whole for all residents who live here.
- Finance/Insurance: Clerk/Treasurer Palmatier informed the Village Board of Trustees that the 2024 / 2025 Audit has been, submitted to the New York Comptroller Office.
- Parade Committee: Daron Schultes stated that the Christmas parade committee has held a meeting. They have decided an on theme for this year's parade; it will be "Dr. Seuss Whimsical Christmas". The parade will take place on Saturday, December 6, 2025, at 5 pm. They are looking at scaling back on the actives throughout the day, to start around noon – 1:00 pm. Their next meeting will be here in the Susquehanna Room, on Thursday, August 21, at 7pm, for anyone wishing to join the meeting. They have had a few new members join; they will be holding meetings every third Thursday of the month, until November.
- 4 Towns Forward: Visitor Judy Hinman said that the Music Festival went well; there were 1800 who attended. Each four Town Chamber will get a portion of the proceeds of the event. On April 26, 2026, Guildford will be hosting a UTV and ATV poker run. This event has been, held in the past and has done well with generating a draw to area businesses. Trout Creek and Masonville have hosted them for years with great success. There will be a meeting tomorrow on the homelessness and poverty within the communities. The Afton Arts and Crafts Festival is in two weeks.
- Historian Report: No report.
- Dog Control Officer: - Report distributed

Old Business:

- Progress on the 2 Yellow Houses. Deputy Mayor, Trustee D. Lawrence said that she had reached out to Commerce of Chenango Member, Tyler Oliver. In the meantime, Planning Board Chair April Leggett has reached out to Brendon Becker to get assistance in applying for grant funds to have the houses taken down. We will continue to move forward with this process, if we are able to secure funds from multiple sources, we can use them elsewhere within the village.
- Village Attorney - Deputy Mayor, Trustee D. Lawrence informed the Village Board of Trustees that Mr. Nathan VanWhy has left Coughlin & Gerhart. Therefore, the village will need to decide if they wish to remain with either Mr. VanWhy or Coughlin & Gerhart, or seek different council for their needs.
- Charging Station – Trustee T. Lawrence informed the Village Board of Trustees that the County have issued the permits to move forward with this project. They are working on the design, once done a pre-construction meeting will be held before the start of the construction phase begins.

New Business:

- A motion made by Trustee L. Matthews to accept the resignation of Patrick Dedman, as Mayor effective July 28, 2025. Seconded by Trustee T. Lawrence. All in favor, motion passed.

Deputy Mayor, Trustee D. Lawrence announced that no one that is currently on the board wants the position of the Mayor. She said that she as Deputy Mayor would be stepping in as Acting Mayor to ensure that the village business is, carried out. That if anyone who does live within the village, who is interested in becoming the mayor to inform the trustees with a letter of intent. She stated that she could understand why no one would want to do the job with the ongoing divide that continues.

- Camera discussion: Acting Mayor, Trustee D. Lawrence stated that in the past there have been discussions of placement of security cameras on this building. There were many discussions on the number of cameras needed, to be placed, facing the parking lot as well as the entryway to the building.
- A letter of request from the Afton Driving Park and Agricultural Association. They are requesting a waiver of fees at the Afton Fair Grounds for the events of the fair from August 5, 2025 thru August 9, 2025.
- A motion made by Trustee T. Lawrence to waive the permits for the events, at the Afton Fair from August 5, 2025 thru August 9, 2025. Seconded by Trustee Humphrey. All in favor, motion passed.
- A motion made by Trustee L. Matthews to move \$1,419.60, from Capital Reserves Water Improvement Savings Fund for payment of Invoice # 00024 - to Lamont Engineers for engineering services as follows:
(F8397.20 – Contractual – Lamont Engineers– for \$1,419.60). Seconded by Trustee Humphrey. All in favor, motion passed.
- A motion made by Trustee L. Matthews to accept the audit of the Clerk/ Treasurers fiscal year 2024/2025. Seconded by Trustee T. Lawrence. All in favor, motion passed.
- A motion made by Trustee T. Lawrence to close the village office at noon on Wednesday, August 13, 2025. Seconded by Trustee L. Matthews. All in favor, motion passed.
- A motion made by Trustee T. Lawrence to close the village office on Thursday, August 21, 2025. Seconded by Trustee Humphrey. All in favor, motion passed.

Recognition of Visitors:

- Acting Mayor, Trustee D. Lawrence announced that moving forward with the recognition of visitors; she would like to remind everyone of the guidelines for public comment. She will be using the sign in sheet to call on each individual, giving them 3 minutes to speak, once those 3 minutes are up your speaking time will conclude. A reminder that the village board must be, addressed as a whole and not directly to one individual board member.
- Visitor Angelina Echevarria expressed her concern of the sidewalk by her home, as the concrete is sticking up and it is a trip hazard, as she has tripped herself while getting her mail. DPW Supervisor DeBetta said that he would look at it.
- Visitor Julie Sutton thanked the village board for all that they do that goes unnoticed. She states that she is embarrassed and appalled at the attack towards the board.
- Visitor Jay Hager expressed his concern over the spruce tree in the triangle, he feels as though it blocks the view of traffic.
- Visitor Dale Dewey thanked the Village Board Members and said that we will support you. Do not wave the white flag we need to move forward. He then stated that there was over 2600 people who attended the fair.
- Visitor Marge Petrie stated that wanted to know more about the water treatment plant. She said that she would wait for Becky Komorowski to speak.
- Visitor Dianne Miller asked if the meeting tonight had started early. As people were still arriving as the meeting was being, called to order. Acting Mayor, Trustee D. Lawrence did think it had, but after checking her time against the time with the clock on the wall, it appeared to be off by 5 minutes. Ms. Miller then expressed her dissatisfaction with the village board the first time she attended a meeting; she said that she had been, skipped over, and not having an opportunity to speak. Acting Mayor, Trustee D. Lawrence, apologized.
- Visitor Jerry Harris expressed his concern over the property located at 100 E. Main Street. He indicated that there is a series of code infractions, which need addressing. He suggested to the Village Board of Trustees that perhaps the Officer in Charge Frank Ventura could take over the duties of the Code Enforcement Officer. He stated that there are laws that are not being met or protecting the homeowners who do take care of their properties.
- Visitor Nancy Harris asked what the money was for that the village voted to move to pay Lamont Engineers. Acting Mayor, Trustee D. Lawrence said the funds were for the contracted service by the engineer for the water meters. There were many discussions about the water quality and where it comes from along with the amount of grant funds the village can or will receive for water. Historically, the village has been, informed by the state that they do not charge its residents enough for water service.
- Visitor David Dodge expressed that he do not want a sewer system, there is no need. He lives on a fixed income and cannot afford it. There were many discussions on whether residents and businesses would leave the area. There have been dye tests conducted by Lamont that shows that there are falling septic systems within the village.

- Visitor Jason Wicks said that the Planning Board has made suggestions that are not being, addressed. We have requested that the permit process, be re-written to abolish the Sunday activity rule. Acting Mayor, Trustee D. Lawrence said that the board has historically waived the events for the fair. If the board were to lift the Sunday activity rule, it would open the door for all and any event. The board needs to take inconsideration the period of the event, noise level, and location. You can still submit at letter of request to the village for consideration, as the board has always granted permission for events that benefit the fair. Next year we will need to work out the parking situation for across the fairgrounds.
- Visitor Becky Komorowski said that she put it on Facebook about the village discussion of the wastewater sewer, as the village has not made anyone aware of this project. Trustee T. Lawrence said that he reached out to Brendon Becker for clarification as to when the village held the resolutions. A resolution seeker was, done in September of 2019. The seeker was completed and finalized in November of 2021. The next step was to pass a bonding resolution, which was, been done in 2021 for 15 million. However, Environmental Finance Center (EFC) Grant wanted the budget increased due to inflation. Therefore, in 2024 the village reposted the bonding resolution to 16 million. Everything had, been posted in the allowable time period with no petitions filed, creating a permissive referendum.
- Visitor Susan Weibel suggested that the village look into getting a robo call system to get information out to village residents when there might be an issue with the water, or when any other important information needs to, be made availed to the public. As when the village had the last water issue, she was not aware of the situation, until a co-work had asked how her water was. She suggested that the village reach out to the Village of Bainbridge as they have a system in place that they use for their residents. DPW Supervisor DeBetta said that he would reach out to Bainbridge for more information.
- Visitor Gerriane Hurney said that the sewer issue scares her, if the taxes go up she cannot afford it. She feels as though our water source is more important.
- Visitor Kelly Graven-Briggs said that she finds this all very interesting, as she has never attended a meeting before. She said I am impressed with everyone's ideas. I feel the way we move forward is with dialog and sharing. She said that she appreciates the input and work that the board does.
- Visitor Maryann Palmetier thanked the board for a great job.
- Visitor Tammy Stevens, who is a member of Afton Youth Sports Organization (AYSO), thanked DPW Supervisor DeBetta for his help. She said anytime we ask we ask for assistance, it is received it is appreciated.
- A motion made by Trustee T. Lawrence to adjourn our regular meeting at 8:52 pm. Seconded by Trustee L. Matthews. All in favor, motion passed.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ann Palmatier,
Clerk / Treasurer