

**Village of Afton**  
**Board of Trustees Meeting**  
**Jack D. Bolster Community Center, Afton, NY**  
**January 9, 2023**

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Trustees held January 9, 2023 in the Susquehanna Room, 105 Main Street, Afton, NY

Meeting called to order at 7:00 pm, by Acting Mayor, Trustees Lawrence.

**Present:** Acting Mayor, Trustee Lawrence, Trustee Humphrey, Trustee Komorowski, Clerk/Treasurer Palmatier, DPW Supervisor DeBetta, Officer in Charge, Stanko and Village Code Enforcement Officer Jeffrey Butler.

**Absent:** Trustee Winans.

**Visitors:** Jodie Humphrey, Maryann Palmetier, Patricia Wenner, Stanley Haynes, Donald Ouimet, Judy & John Hinman, Anthony Kilgallon, Joyce Humphrey, John Lawrence, Melissa Matthews, Angelina Echevarria, Heather Earl, Cynthia Hervocho, Tyler Lawrence and Brendon Becker, Lamont Engineers.

- A motion made by Trustee Humphrey authorizing Clerk/Treasurer to pay the following audited vouchers. Seconded by Trustee Komorowski. All in favor, motion passed.

**General Fund Voucher's # 214 - 237, totaling \$106,711.53.**

**Water Fund Voucher's # 88 – 99, totaling \$5,743.98.**

- Motion to accept previous minutes with no additions or correction, made by Trustee Humphrey. Seconded by Trustee Komorowski. All in favor, motion passed.

**Monthly Report:**

- **DPW/ Water:** Report distributed, read aloud by DPW Supervisor Bailey DeBetta. In addition to his report DPW DeBetta informed the Village Board of Trustee that all tests have been completed on the new water tank and approved by the Chenango County Health Department. We are stilling waiting on NYSEG to restore the power. The new radios for the trucks will be installed, other than the new truck which has not arrived. I've been told two more weeks, which is what I've been hearing, hopefully it will arrive soon. Trustee Komorowski informed DPW DeBetta that last month the Village Board of Trustees voted to increase the water rates for the next billing cycle by 10%. Supervisor DeBetta stated that he had spoken with Bainbridge they are looking at the same rate increases.
- **Police Department.** Report distributed, read aloud by Office in Charge, Stanko. Trustee Komorowski asked Office in Charge Stanko if the two people that were going door to door looking at collecting pin numbers from area resident's phone bills were found, as this information was circulating on Facebook. Officer Stanko stated that no such complaint came into the Police Department.
- **Code Enforcement:** Report distributed, read aloud by Code Enforcement Officer Butler.

- Planning Board: Trustees Humphrey informed the Village Board of Trustees that the Planning Board worked on laws pertaining to fencing. They looked over the laws that were from Bainbridge and Oxford for review. Choosing a combination from both on what would best suit the Village of Afton's needs. The Planning Board intends on having a written proposal by their next meeting to be presented to the Village Board of Trustees for review.
- Finance/Insurance: Up to date, remain the same.
- 4 Towns Forward: Chamber Members, Judy and John Hinman explained the idea behind the 4 Towns Forward Committee. Its' made up of mostly Chambers, but also Towns, Villages as well as Mayors, of Afton, Bainbridge, Sidney and Unadilla to join forces to obtain grant funding as a whole to better all communities. They informed the Village Board of Trustees of the current upcoming events that are planned. There will a music festival held in July at the Great Sidney Airport to benefit all 4 communities. They are planning on holding a concert at this time with a B list for entertainment. They are hopefully to draw a crowd of over 5000 to attend. There will be a gala hosted by Afton Chamber at the Afton River Club in April to benefit 4 Towns Forward. There will be music, food and raffle baskets, gift certificates and actions as well as fun and games for all. Acting Mayor, Trustee Lawrence asked if there would be tickets sold for the event at the River Club. Mrs. Hinman states that there will be, they are looking at possibly selling regular admission as well as VIP tickets. That information will be posted once they have worked out the details.
- Visitor John Lawrence expressed that the combination of the 4 Towns Forward combines grant writing abilities to assist all communities. Trustee Humphrey asked how does it work, are grants divided equally? Mrs. Hinman states that it depends on how the grants are written, as well as what the need may be for that pacific community.
- Clerks Report: The Village Clerk /Treasurer Palmatier informed the Village Board of Trustees, that there was no other business other than the reports that were already given in the voucher bill pay folders.
- Historian Report: No report.
- Dog Control Officer: - Report distributed. Deputy Mayor, Trustee Lawrence states that this report along with all others will be place on the Village web page for public viewing.
- Afton Central School – No representative. Deputy Mayor, Trustee Lawrence expressed that currently there is still a lot of illness going around at school.

#### **Old Business:**

- Visitor Brendon Becker, Lamont Engineers informed the Village Board of Trustees that the capital project on the water tank is completed, however we are still waiting on NESEG as, DPW Supervisor DeBetta indicated. Mr. Becker stated that even though there was added costs totaling \$41,412.19 on this project, we were under budget. Mr. Becker submitted an invoice for payment on the balance of the project. He'd like for the village to hold off on paying all but a \$20,000.00, until NYSEG has finished with the electrical connection. He stated that typically completion of the job is done before final payment is made. Mr., Becker informed the Village Board of Trustees that there is a 1 year warranty on the sight work pertaining to this project.

- Village Code Enforcement Officer, Jeff Butler asked Mr. Becker if there would be a gate when you drive up into the roadway. Mr. Becker stated no, as the access roadway leading to the water tank is part of someone's driveway. Mr. Becker stated that there is a gate around the tank itself.
- Mr. Becker informed the Village Board of Trustees that the two grants that they were looking to obtain are currently on hold. The village has received a letter of notification from NYS Water Infrastructure Improvement (WIIA) Grant Program, stating that they have run out of funds, they will not be accepting any further applications at this time. Also the DOS strengthen project has changed for Expected Family Contribution (EFC). They have increased the amount that they are willing to award to bigger grant project. They are awarding the shovel ready projects. Mr. Becker stated that the water grant bonding resolution was insufficient as they are requiring that the bonding process be for the entire project. He indicated that going forward the village will need to bond the whole expected project cost. Mr. Becker stated that the village will need to apply for all grants available to get the funding to help offset the project costs.
- Bond Resolution on the prior bond resolution, authorizing the increase in the maximum estimate cost of the village sewer project (the project) to increase up to \$16,600,000.00. At this time it was decided that this resolution will be tabled until all Trustees are present.

#### **New Business:**

- A motion made by Trustee Humphrey move \$2,706.27 from # 2 Capital Reserves Improvement Building Savings Fund for payment of Invoice # 16 - to Lamont Engineers for engineering services as follows:  
(8320.20 – Water Contractual – for \$2,706.27).  
Seconded by Trustee Komorowski. All in favor, motion passed.
- A motion made by Trustee Humphrey approving Shirley Butler & Diane Whipple as election inspectors for the Village of Afton, Election on March 21, 2023. Seconded by Trustee Komorowski. All in favor, motion passed.
- A motion made by Trustee Humphrey to accept the resignation of Charles Torres as a member of the Village of Afton Zoning Board of Appeals as well as a member of the Afton Police Committee. Seconded by Trustee Komorowski. All in favor, motion passed.
- Acting Mayor, Trustee Lawrence informed the Village Board of Trustees that she has been working on the new budget.
- Trustee Komorowski stated that she received her town tax billing and her village water billing just a day apart from one another. She questioned if the billings always come at the sometime. She was wondering if it could be changed so they don't come at the sometime. It was stated that the billing for each of these has historically been at the same time. This is mainly due to budgeting process for each government entity.

#### **Recognition of Visitors:**

- Visitor Tyler Lawrence expressed his willingness to help Code Enforcement Officer Jeff Butler and DPW Supervisor DeBetta with snow removal on the sidewalks in front the vacant homes within the village. Trustee Humphrey stated that all are required to remove

the snow from the sidewalks within 24 hours after a snowfall. Mr. Tyler Lawrence extended his offer to the elder residents who may need help clearing their sidewalks.

- Visitor Patricia Wenner asked about the removal of the vacant home. There were discussion of the number of vacant homes and how the cycle continues each time someone buys them at auction only to end up on the back tax sale list from the County. Code Enforcement Officer Butler stated that we are in the same boat as other villages when it comes to the vacant homes.
- Visitor Tyler Lawrence informed the Village Board of Trustees that he'd be interested in being consider for the Zoning Board of Appeals position. Acting Mayor, Trustee Lawrence informed all who were in attendance that if there is anyone else interested in becoming a committee member we are always looking for members.
- Visitor John Hinman, Afton Chamber Member thanks DPW Supervisor DeBetta for his help with the Christmas trees. Mr. Hinman expressed that they have had difficulties with getting a bucket tuck to place or remove the Christmas Candlesticks on the unity poles. They have reached out to a couple different possibilities for assistance, they are hopeful that they won't have hire it out. There were discussions of lowing the electrical connections by about four feet making it easier for the placement and removal process.
- Visitor Judy Hinman, Afton Chamber Member thanked Officer Stanko for the great job on the road closure for the Christmas Parade. She stated that the Chamber is looking at possibility of purchasing some signs to be placed throughout the village, stating do not park here after 2 pm. As there were some issues with parking in front of the VFW for breakfast. Officer in Charge Stanko stated that she had visited the area businesses beforehand, handing out flyers as she did last year letting them know that parking would be blocked off for the parade. Acting Mayor, Trustee Lawrence asked Officer Stanko about the tickets that were issued to some on Main Street, were those who were ticketed in violation of the overnight parking from 2 am to 6 am. Officer Stanko indicated yes. Acting Mayor, Trustee Lawrence expressed that the Christmas Parade is the biggest event that is hosted within the village, we need to work around the parking, its one day of inconvenience.
- Visitor Tyler Lawrence expressed that parking tickets need to written throughout the year. Trustee Humphrey stated that perhaps Mr. Butler could be writing tickets.
- A question was asked to visitor Joyce Humphrey, about the opening of the Bakery within the Halos Hub Building. Mrs. Humphrey indicated that the Bakery will not be opening as originally thought. However we have continued to work on updating the building, we have begun constructing a mural within the inside of the building. Trustee Komorowski stated that there is a community room available for the public use. There has been some roofing issues that they are currently dealing with.
- Acting Mayor, Trustee Lawrence asked the Village Board of Trustees for a motion to enter into executive session to discuss a personnel issues of an employed person.
- A motion made by Trustee Humphrey to enter into executive session at 8:01 pm to discuss personnel issues of an employed person. Seconded by Trustee Komorowski. All in favor, motion passed.

- A motion made by Trustee Humphrey to exit executive session at 8:31 pm. Seconded by Trustee Komorowski. All in favor, motion passed.
- Trustee Humphrey informed the Village Board of Trustees that he had briefly spoken with Brendon Becker, Lamont Engineers about the value replacement at the spring house. Brendon indicated that a shovel ready design could run \$40,000.00 to \$50,000.00.
- A motion made by Trustee Humphrey to adjourn our regular meeting at 8:38 pm. Seconded by Trustee Humphrey. All in favor, motion passed.

Respectfully Submitted

Ann Palmatier  
Clerk / Treasurer