

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

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

Meeting called to order at 7:00 pm, by Mayor Dedman

**Present:** Mayor Dedman, Trustee D. Lawrence, Trustee Humphrey, Trustee T. Lawrence, Trustee Winans, Clerk/Treasurer Palmatier and Village Code Enforcement Officer Jeffrey Butler.

**Absent:** DPW Supervisor DeBetta.

**Visitors:** Maryann Palmetier, Linda Matthews and Jerry Harris.

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

**General Fund Voucher's # 108 - 134, totaling \$20,133.25.**

**Water Fund Voucher's # 33 – 49, totaling \$3,872.08.**

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

**Monthly Report:**

- DPW/ Water: No report.
- Police Department. No report.
- Code Enforcement: Report read aloud by Code Enforcement Officer Butler. There were discussions about the overnight parking of cars and bigger trucks parking on Main Street, we will be heading into the wintertime hours that require no parking in certain areas, tickets will need to be written for violators.
- Planning Board: Trustee Humphrey informed the Village Board of Trustees that the Planning Board is working on forming Solar Field Guidelines along with a cleanup plan on behalf of the Village, as discussed at last month's board meeting. He explained that there are three different classifications made up of tier's, each tier relates to different types of structures pertaining to solar panels. Tier 1 would consist of home or roof top use, Tier 2 would be ground construction use and tier 3 would be for industrial use. Each tier would have a maximum amount of energy percentage that is expected to be used over a certain amount of time. There were discussions among the board of the required setbacks that would need to be met with each tier. Trustee Humphrey informed the Village Board of Trustees that he had a call from a gentleman asking about possibly turning the Afton Presbyterian Church into home with an office. Trustee Humphrey stated that the location of the church is in the residential transition zoning, allowing for these changes.

- Finance/Insurance: Up to date, remains the same.
- 4 Towns Forward: No representative.
- Historian Report: No report.
- Dog Control Officer: - Report distributed.
- Afton Central School – No representative.

**Old Business:**

- Discussion of meeting procedures. - Trustee D. Lawrence came up with public comment guidelines to outline the public comment section of the village board meeting process.
- A motion made by Trustee Winans to except the written public comment guidelines as they are written. These guidelines will be presented to the public at our next regular scheduled board meeting. Seconded by Trustee T. Lawrence. All in favor motion passed.
- Discussion of election poll watchers has been on ongoing. Trustee D. Lawrence expressed that she has called over to the Chenango County Board of Election 3 times now, with no returned phone call. The village did receive guideline information from Mr. Gerard Matthews. There is still some clarification needed on the certificate information needed for those who will be poll watchers. Visitor Linda Matthews stated that the County informed them at training that each district makes up their own forms to be used. There were many discussions of the policing and conduct codes that will be followed and met going forward during the election process.
- Discussion of Norfolk Southern Corporation Lease Agreement, Mayor Dedman stated that he has finally received a reply of his sent email, however we are still in ongoing communications. There were discussions of the Village Board of Trustees of the possible termination or arbitration of the contract with the lease agreement, as the information received indicates that the rental fee will continue to increase on a compound basis.
- Discussion of proposed fence code will be sent to the attorney for review to begin the process of writing the law and determine a public hearing for such.
- Progress on the purchase of the 2 yellow houses, Trustee T. Lawrence expressed that DPW Supervisor DeBetta has been working on the cleanup. Trustee T. Lawrence expressed that he's still working a written long-term plan for these properties to be presented to the Village Board of Trustees for review before being sent to the Village Attorney.
- Water bill discussion, Trustee D. Lawrence asked if the water balance has been paid with the ongoing litigations of water use on Long Hill Rd. Clerk/Treasurer Palmatier expressed that the billing was sent to the Village Attorney at his request to be presented to the landowners Attorney on their behalf. This was a few months ago, last week a reminder billing was mailed. There were ongoing discussions of unpaid waters and assessments how they are processed.
- Trustee T. Lawrence asked Mayor Dedman if the proposed lease agreement from Julie Grover for the Village owned property located on East Main Street has been sent to the Village Attorney. Mayor Dedman has not finished reviewing the proposed agreement.

- Trustee D. Lawrence asked where we are with the purchase of the solar flashing speed signs. Mayor Dedman was able to get 3 solar / speed signs under the proposed cost of \$10,000.00. They are on order and should arrive soon, the thought is to place one on a mobile trailer to be placed throughout the village at hot spot locations where speeding is occurring the most.
- Trustee D. Lawrence expressed to the Village Board of Trustees that the village web page is just too busy with old information. There were discussions among the board of the possibility of a Facebook page or a new web page.

### **New Business:**

- A motion made by Trustee T. Lawrence to keep the Senior Citizens and Disability Income Levels for the 2024 Assessment Roll from Chenango County as they currently are. Seconded by Trustee Winans. All in favor, motion passed.
- A motion made by Trustee T. Lawrence to close the village office at 1:00 pm on Wednesday, October 11, 2023. Seconded by Trustee D. Lawrence. All in favor, motion passed.

### **Recognition of Visitors:**

- Visitor Jerry Harris informed the Village Board of Trustees that he was able to get 2 estimates for the required mussel study with the help of the Clerk/Treasurer Palmatier. At this point we will need to wait until May 2024 to move forward. We have time on our side it may be better to gather more estimates on the required mussel survey study. He has asked that Clerk/Treasurer Palmatier to reach out to the other contractors in this field to get more estimates. Mr. Harris has also asked Trustee D. Lawrence to continue to move forward with the contact list of individuals that are willing to help oversee the process of the proposed boat ramp. There were many discussions with the Village Board of Trustees on the current proposed costs of the mussel survey study as well as what the additional costs may look like providing that mussels were found, as any mussels found would require them to be rehomed. Then there is the added costs of the design and materials for the building of the boat ramp placement. The Village Board of Trustees discussed the costs of cleaning and dredging the current boat ramp location, as this may be a better option. Mr. Harris indicated that he had spoken with the previous administration who referred him to speak with the Town, as they have more equipment to help with the dredging process, it was his understanding that the Town was not interested in helping. Mr. Harris stated that he is aware of another community that does the river dredging and uses the gravel for their roadway repairs. Trustee D. Lawrence indicated that she would reach out to soil and water to see if there is any funding available to help offset the cost. Trustee Humphrey will reach out to Brendon Becker, Lamont Engineers to see if there is any additional funding with grants.
- Visitor Linda Matthews asked if there was a better way of communicating with residents about the boil water advisory, as they were not aware of the advisement until later that afternoon. The door to door was good, but theirs was placed on an outside door that they don't typically use. She suggested that perhaps the Fire Department could come through the village with a megaphone. Mayor Dedman stated that he's looking into ways that are better pro-active to get information out.
- A motion made by Trustee Humphrey to adjourn our regular meeting at 8:40 pm. Seconded by Trustee D. Lawrence. All in favor, motion passed.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Ann Palmatier, Clerk / Treasurer