

Village of Afton
Board of Trustees Meeting
Jack D. Bolster Community Center, Afton, NY
September 11, 2023

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Trustees held September 11, 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, Clerk/Treasurer Palmatier, DPW Supervisor DeBetta and Village Code Enforcement Officer Jeffrey Butler.

Absent: Trustee Winans.

Visitors: Donald Ouimet, Linda & Gerry Matthews, Daron Schultes, Jerry & Nancy Harris, Gerianne & Michael Hurney and Nicholas Colosi.

- A motion made by Trustee T. Lawrence authorizing Clerk/Treasurer to pay the following audited vouchers. Along with the vouchers from the August 14, 2023 regular meeting. Seconded by Trustee Humphrey. All in favor motion passed.

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

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

General Fund Voucher's # 87 - 107, totaling \$44,654.08.

Water Fund Voucher's # 28 – 32, totaling \$1,201.80.

- Motion to accept previous minutes with no additions or correction, made by Trustee D. Lawrence. 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 prepared the shoulder of the roadway on Long Hill Road, they plan on oiling and stoning tomorrow. Once this is finished this will conclude the Chips road repairs, will begin the paperwork to be processed. There was a tree removed on Spring Street They have painted the village fields for the AYSO youth sports organization.
- Police Department. No report.
- Code Enforcement: Report read aloud by Code Enforcement Officer Butler. There were discussions about the trash in front of a business along Route 7, the cat house that sits along a village leased property and an eviction notices on Main Street. The Village Board of Trustees expressed to Code Enforcement Officer Butler that there needs to be letters sent in regards to some of the ongoing issues that have not been addressed, to move forward with appearance tickets.

- Planning Board: Planning Board Chairman Gerry Matthews informed the Village Board of Trustees that Chenango County has held a workshop out lining solar energy regulations. The County has their own plan in place for solar fields, however they are recommending that villages and townships come up with their own plan. Their recommendations are to have a closing plan for when these solar fields are no longer in use, to help with the cleanup process. Mr. Matthews informed the Village Board of Trustees that the Planning Board will not move forward with a plan of recommendation unless asked by the Village Board of Trustees. Trustee T. Lawrence expressed to Chairman Matthews that he should speak with the Town Supervisor, as they would have more information on this subject to help with this process, as they have already been through it. Trustee T. Lawrence stated that the Town has done a bonding on the current solar field for the cleanup process, once the field is no longer in use.
- A motion made by Trustee D. Lawrence to allow for the Planning Board to look into and form a Solar Field Guidelines along with a cleanup plan on behalf of the Village of Afton, NY. Seconded by Trustee Humphrey. All in favor, motion passed.
- Finance/Insurance: Up to date, remains the same.
- 4 Towns Forward: No representative
- Historian Report: No report. As this is pending until the Town & Village decide on an appointment.
- Dog Control Officer: - No report.
- Afton Central School – Visitor Nicholas Colosi, Afton Central School Superintendent expressed that it's a busy start to the new school year. The school has begun implementing the one bus run for all students. These changes come with new routes and new personal, we ask for flexibility as we maneuver through this process. We like everyone are experiencing staffing issues. Currently we have our middle and high students working remotely while we address an air quality control problem. Our staffing is present in the building at this time. We are hopeful that this will be just a week of adjustments, we will know more information by tomorrow. There were the discussions of the availability of aids placed on the bus runs as well as the possible mergers with other area schools for the sports academic programs. Mr. Colosi indicated that there are about 40 children on each bus run, that not all buses have aides on them. The school is looking into getting bigger buses, of course the Department of Transportation needs to ok this process. Mr. Colosi stated that the school wants to offer as much as possible when it comes to the sports academics. The school does realize that once a merger is formed with another school it is difficult to undo that process. We are at a better standing for sports academics than most other schools. Trustees T. Lawrence expressed that the Afton Youth Sports Organization (AYSO) had sent a letter to Mr. Wilson, regarding the sports fields. The numbers for the AYSO program are good, that these kids coming up through with this program will be the future athletes for the school. Mr. Colois stated that Mr. Wilson had busied himself with personally fixing the fields. Mr. Colosi indicated that the school will be hosting games with other schools, in turn they will do the same for Afton. Currently they are working on holding a pep-rally, along with a sponsored dance. We are working in conjunction with the Fire Department in hopes to have a bomb fire during the pep-rally.

Old Business:

- Discussion of meeting procedures has been on going. 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. Information was distributed for the review of the Village Board of Trustees.

- Discussion of election poll watchers has been on ongoing. Trustee D. Lawrence expressed that the Village Board of Trustees were given more information on this topic from Mr. Gerry Matthews. Mr. Matthews stated that the information on this topic from New York State Conference of Mayors and Municipal Officials – (NYCOM) states there is a form to be filled out prior to the election. As well as each candidate can have up to three people to present them, but only one person on your behalf is allowed in the room during polling time and closing of the polls. Mr. Matthews indicated that he would be attending a training with the Chenango County Board of Elections this week. This is at the top of his list of questions, he will get back to the Village Board of Trustees with an answer.
- Discussion of Norfolk Southern Corporation Lease Agreement, is ongoing as communications continue. Mayor Dedman stated that he, along with Gerry Matthews and the Village Clerk came up with some past information to help with this process. We will reach out to our local representatives to help with the negotiation with the Norfolk Railroad to garner a fair lease agreement for the Village. It was stated that perhaps the Village of Bainbridge may be experiencing the same issues, they may be of some help.
- Discussion of proposed fence code. Trustee D. Lawrence asked Planning Board Chairman Gerry Matthews what the process was with the proposed code. Chairman Matthews stated that once it's submitting by the Planning Board to the Village Board of Trustees, and they are in agreement with the proposed code. It then needs to be sent to the Village Attorney for review of placement into law for a public hearing to be conducted.
- Update on the purchase of the 2 yellow houses. Mayor, Dedman said that were have received the paperwork back from the County, the village officially owns these properties. Trustee T. Lawrence expressed that he has been speaking with DPW Supervisor DeBetta on a cleanup plan. Supervisor DeBetta has been in the process of gathering pricing for different fencing to be placed around the perimeter of the property lines, once they have been initially mowed. There were many discussions as to what type of fencing would be best. Trustee D. Lawrence asked what the time line would look like for the cleanup process. DPW Supervisor DeBetta indicated that he thought that it'd take a week, once a discussion was made. Trustee T. Lawrence expressed to the Village Board of Trustees that he'd like to come up with a written long term plan for these properties to be presented at the next village regular monthly meeting for review before being sent to the Village Attorney.
- Cemetery discussion. This was not on the agenda. Trustee D. Lawrence asked if there was any information as to the possible water hook up for the Glenwood Cemetery. Mayor Dedman indicated that he was supposed to meet with the Cemetery Board to discuss the possible water hookup. Mayor Dedman said that not all Cemetery Board Members were available, therefore it was canceled. Trustee D. Lawrence stated that she has checked with the Clerk, at one time they had water services. It was stated that it would be the responsibility of the Cemetery to pay for a curb box to be installed by the DPW Crew.
- DPW Supervisor DeBetta presented the Village Board of Trustees with 3 estimates for solar flashing speed signs. There were discussions among the Village Board of Trustees as to the purchase of solar flashing speed signs.
- A motion made by Trustee D. Lawrence to purchase solar / speed signs at a cost up to \$10,000.00 with the funds to pay for this purchase to come from the Village of Afton General Fund Savings Account # 2 (A3042). Seconded by Trustee Humphrey. All in favor, motion passed.

- Trustee T. Lawrence presented Mayor Dedman with a proposed lease agreement from Julie Grover for the Village owned property located on East Main Street. He indicated that Ms. Grover would have liked to have a 5 year agreement, however he felt it best that it be a year to year agreement. Ms. Grover was in agreement with this decision. Mayor Dedman will review the agreement before a decision is made.

New Business:

- A motion made by Trustee Humphrey to move a total of \$23.76 from (1989.40 – General Contractual Support) out of General Budget for the following Budget Appropriations: (A1910.40 – Unallocated Insurance – for \$23.76).
Seconded by Trustee T. Lawrence. All in favor, motion passed.
- A motion was made by Trustee Humphrey to move a total of \$15.84 from (1990.40 – Contingency) out of Water Budget for the following Budget Appropriations: (A1910.40 – Unallocated Insurance – for \$15.84).
Seconded by Trustee D. Lawrence. All in favor, motion passed.
- A motion was made by Trustee D. Lawrence to hold the hours for Trick or Treating for Halloween on Tuesday, October 31, 2023 from 5:00 pm until 7:00 pm.
Seconded by Trustee T. Lawrence. All in favor, motion passed.
- A motion made by Trustee T. Lawrence to close the village office on Tuesday, September 19, 2023.
Seconded by Trustee Humphrey. All in favor, motion passed.
- A motion made by Trustee T. Lawrence to close the village office on Tuesday morning, September 12, 2023, from 9:15 am until 11:15 am. Seconded by Trustee Humphrey. All in favor, motion passed.

Recognition of Visitors:

- Visitor Jerry Harris expressed that the discussion has been made as to which location is best for the proposed boat ramp. The location that is best suited would be the old Dougherty property where there is already an existing roadway. He was able to talk to a biologist for a required mussel study. He indicated that we need to know what the cost would be to move forward. He hopes to meet with him soon, so we can begin to move forward. The survey must be done by the end of September otherwise we will need to wait until May 2024. The costs of this would depend on whether they find any mussels that would require the village to relocate before moving forward with the new boat ramp location.
- Visitor Linda Matthews asked about the cat house being on the village leased property. She asked why, don't these people who are feeding them move them on their own property. It was stated that they don't want them on their property either.
- Visitor Daron Schultes informed the Village Board of Trustees that he has been asked by the Chamber of Commerce Members, John & Judy Hinman to organize the Christmas Parade this year, as they will be away at that time. He presented the Village board of Trustees with an outline of what the Christmas Parade will look like. The Christmas Parade is expected to take place on Saturday, December 2, 2023 at 5:00 pm. He has already spoken with several community members and organizations that are willing to help out. He would like someone representing the village to help and attend the meetings for the planning process. He would like to get the parking aspect on Main Street organized beforehand. It was stated that the only issue last year was with the VFW hosting their breakfast with Santa. Mr. Schultes

would like to place the Christmas Banner in early November. He will be talking to Kirk Hoyt from the Town to see if they could possibly use their bucket truck if necessary for the banner placement. He indicated that he will be reaching out to the Afton Fire Department, County Sheriff's Office and the New York State Police to see if they are available to help with traffic control. Mr. Schultz indicated that he'd like to host his first meeting on Wednesday, September 20, 2023, here at the Susquehanna Room if possible. Mr. Schultes was told that the Village Clerk would reach out to him to verify the availability of the room.

- Visitor Gerianne Hurney indicated that she would be interested in joining the Zoning Board of Appeals. Trustee D. Lawrence explained that the committee meets only when there is a variance request, which is not very often.
- A motion made by Trustee D. Lawrence to appoint Mrs. Gerianne Hurney as a Zone Board of Appeals Member. Seconded by Trustee Humphrey. All in favor, motion passed.
- A motion made by Trustee D. Lawrence to enter into executive session at 8:54 pm to discuss the medical, financial, credit or employment history of a particular person or corporation, or matters leading to the appointment, employment, promotion, demotion, discipline, suspension, dismissal or removal of a particular person or corporation. Seconded by Trustee T. Lawrence. All in Favor, motion passed.
- A motion made by Trustee D. Lawrence to exit executive session at 9:47 pm. Seconded by Trustee Humphrey. All in favor, motion passed.
- A motion made by Trustee D. Lawrence to adjourn our regular meeting at 9:59 pm. Seconded by Trustee T. Lawrence. All in favor, motion passed.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ann Palmatier
Clerk / Treasurer