

Village of Aurora Board of Trustees August 20, 2025 Minutes

The meeting was held at the Aurora Firehouse Meeting Room at 6:00 p.m.

Present: Mayor James Orman, Trustees JD Balloni, Matt Bianconi, John Miller, and Janet Murphy

Others Present

Village Officials: ZBA members Alexis Boyce and Laura Holland, Historian Dr. Linda Schwab, Treasurer Christine Tanner, and Engineer Ken Teter

Aurora Historical Society: Bonnie Bennett, President Shirley Egan, Cynthia Koepp, Nancy Gil, and Treasurer Ken Larson,

Inns of Aurora: CFO Jodi Bennett

Members of the Public: Tee-Ann Hunter

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance: Mayor Orman called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. and all rose for the Pledge of Allegiance

Changes to the Agenda: No changes

Approval of Minutes

July 16, 2025: On motion by Trustee Murphy, seconded by Trustee Miller, the Village Board voted to approve the July 16, 2025 regular meeting minutes

AYES: Balloni, Bianconi, Miller, Murphy, and Orman

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

July 23, 2025: On motion by Trustee Murphy, seconded by Trustee Miller, the Village Board voted to approve the July 23, 2025 special meeting minutes

AYES: Balloni, Bianconi, Miller, Murphy, and Orman

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

Announcements

Mayor

- The fourth speed bump between Lafayette St and Cherry Ave was removed
- Wells College has not acknowledged any viable offers for the purchase of the campus
- Thank you to the Aurora Volunteer Fire Department Water Rescue for their assistance with locating a drowning victim in Seneca County

Visitor Welcome

Nancy Gil: Ms. Gil introduced herself as the former Planning Board Chair for the Village. Ms. Gil expressed concern regarding the Wells College archives and emphasized the need to keep Aurora history in Aurora.

Ken Larson: Mr. Larson read a petition (attached) signed by 66 people, requesting that the Village formally ask for inclusion in the process of transferring Wells archives.

Treasurer's Report: On motion by Trustee Murphy, seconded by Trustee Balloni, the Village Board voted to accept the July Treasurer's Report.

AYES: Balloni, Bianconi, Miller, Murphy, and Orman

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

Bills

General: On motion by Trustee Murphy, seconded by Trustee Balloni, the Village Board voted to approve the General Fund Abstract #3 for payment.

Voucher #35-64

Total: \$15,262.16

AYES: Balloni, Bianconi, Miller, Murphy, and Orman

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

Water: On motion by Trustee Murphy, seconded by Trustee Balloni, the Village Board voted to approve the Water Fund Abstract #3 for payment.

Voucher #16-35

Total: \$110,878.31

AYES: Balloni, Bianconi, Miller, Murphy, and Orman

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

Sewer: On motion by Trustee Murphy, seconded by Trustee Balloni, the Village Board voted to approve the Sewer Fund Abstract #3 for payment.

Voucher #9-19

Total: \$68,921.01

AYES: Balloni, Bianconi, Miller, Murphy, and Orman

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

Reports

Code Officer: No report

Historian (see attached): Dr. Schwab reported on the 1795 Wood Law Office, a new post office exhibit, and advocated for the restoration of Chimney Corner.

Old Business

Wells College/Village Archives: The Trustees discussed consulting with the Village Attorney for inclusion in the hearing with Wells and the Attorney General's Office, regarding Village historical documents

stored on Wells campus. Dr. Schwab and Aurora-Ledyard Historical Society President, Shirley Egan, strongly advocated for the Village inclusion and offered their assistance.

On motion by Mayor Orman, second by Trustee Miller, the Village Board voted to authorize Village Attorney, Tom Blair, to proceed with Village inclusion at the hearing proceedings for the Wells/Village archives.

AYES: Balloni, Bianconi, Miller, Murphy, and Orman

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

New Business

Grant/Water Plant Updates: Village Engineer, Ken Teter, discussed the following:

- Water Plant filters installed, reimbursements from Northern Borders grant coming in regularly
- Negotiations continue with Wells College to separate the electric for the water plant from the other campus buildings
- Teter and B&L completed the PER for the water plant upgrades
- Rescinding 2020 \$3 million WIIA grant and reapplying for 2025 \$5 million WIIA grant (must complete SEQR process)
- Passing a Bond resolution for the water plant upgrades

RESOLUTION NO. 25-30

Proposed Action: Village of Aurora Water System Improvements

RESOLUTION DETERMINING THE SELECTION OF THE PROPOSED VILLAGE OF AURORA WATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS PROEJCT

WHEREAS, the Village of Aurora (Village) is located in the Town of Ledyard, Cayuga County, New York; and

WHEREAS, for many years the Village has struggled with water quality issues due to an outdated water treatment system owned and operated by Wells College, and a water intake location that has shown to be susceptible to storms causing high turbidity issues; and

WHEREAS, the treatment process for the College has been in service since the early 1900's and is in need of significant improvements to its filtration and other processes; and

WHEREAS, the College has officially closed and no longer operates the water treatment system (Village staff has operated the system since October 1, 2024) providing water to Village users; and

WHEREAS, the Village has indicated it would like to continue operating and purchase selected portions of the former Wells system (as described in a recently signed Purchase and Sale Agreement) so that the Village can provide an improved water supply to the entire Village of both reliable and adequate quality; and

WHEREAS, the Village prepared a Preliminary Engineering Report (PER), dated July 2025, which evaluated source water system improvement alternatives and recommended two viable options:

1. Fully upgraded and improved water treatment facility and intake from Cayuga Lake utilizing the existing water treatment facility structure, storage tank and piping;
2. New Cayuga County Water & Sewer Authority (CCWSA) connection and transmission main to the Town of Springport; and

WHEREAS, the NYSDOH/EFC has assured us a rapid review of the PER and will subsequently score the DWSRF Project #18564 (same project number); and

WHEREAS, the Village project is listed on the Environmental Facilities Corporation's (EFC) 2025 Intended Use Plan (IUP) as DWSRF project #18564 and currently on the Multiyear List only. Once the project is rescored and progresses it can move to the Annual List and qualify for low-interest or zero-percent loans and potentially additional grant funding; and

WHEREAS, the Village has made its project selection based on current information and the following objectives:

1. To provide safe, clean, reliable water to all Village users
2. To deliver timely results
3. To be proactive and forward thinking
4. To be fiscally responsible by maximizing all funding opportunities
5. To provide design flexibility keeping long-term options in mind
6. To minimize all risks for the future water system
7. To fully involve and inform all levels of political leadership as to the circumstances surrounding the project and the funding challenges
8. To think locally, but consider the current regional water goals
9. To be mindful of the reality that the future ownership and use of the Wells College campus is uncertain
10. To be aware that seeking funding requires a project to be selected
11. To proceed towards the most fundable project until circumstances change and the Board will then consider other project options
12. To be a project leader for the Village and the surrounding communities/businesses who also seek reliable drinking water; and

WHEREAS, in the past a regional project in partnership with the CCWSA for an alternate source to Owasco Lake has been discussed and is fundable with the State programs because of the potential for consolidation, regionalization and cost reduction by working with neighboring communities that will also benefit from this new source water alternative; and

WHEREAS, the potentially benefiting neighbor communities are the areas served currently by the CCWSA and the City of Auburn.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Village Board selects to proceed with PER Alternative No.1: the proposed improvements to such drinking water system includes a new extended and deeper intake from Cayuga Lake (including a possible partnership with CCWSA to over-size the intake for future regional purposes), significant improvements to the existing water treatment system within the former

Wells College Service Building, additional upgrades both in and around the former Wells storage tank, including a new connecting “loop” water main between the two tanks in the Village; and

BE IT HEREBY FURTHER RESOLVED that this Village project will be transformative for the region and have a substantial impact on local communities since many municipalities will gain an alternative to the current problematic Owasco Source serving both Auburn and the CCWSA service area; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Resolution will be filed in the Office of the Village Clerk in files that are readily accessible to the public and made available upon request, subject only to the limitations established by New York’s Freedom of Information Law.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Resolution shall take effect immediately, and shall be filed in the Office of the Village Clerk within five (5) days hereof.

The question of the adoption of the foregoing resolution was duly put to a vote on motion by Trustee Miller, seconded by Trustee Murphy, and upon roll call, the vote was as follows:

	Yea	Nay	Abstain
Janet Murphy, Trustee	X		
John Miller, Trustee	X		
Matt Bianconi, Trustee	X		
J. D. Balloni, Trustee	X		
James Orman, Mayor	X		

The foregoing resolution was thereupon declared duly adopted.

RESOLUTION NO. 25-31

Proposed Action: Village of Aurora Water System Source Improvements Project

RESOLUTION DETERMINING THAT THE PROPOSED VILLAGE OF AURORA WATER SYSTEM SOURCE IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT IS A TYPE 1 ACTION AND Will NOT HAVE A SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT

WHEREAS, the Village of Aurora (Village} is proposing the Village of Aurora Water System Source Improvements Project (Project}, located in the Village of Aurora, Cayuga County, New York; and

WHEREAS, the Project has been classified as a "Type I Action" as defined by the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) in 6 NYCRR Part 617.4; and

WHEREAS, the Village of Aurora Village Board sent a letter and Part 1 of a Full Environmental Assessment Form (FEAF) to other potentially "Interested Agencies" and "Involved Agencies" (as these terms are defined in the SEQRA Regulations found at 6 NYCRR Part 617.2), indicating the Village's desire

to serve as the "Lead Agency" (as this quoted term is defined in the SEQRA Regulations) and to complete a coordinated review of the Project (in accordance with 6 NYCRR Part 617.6); and

WHEREAS, responses from Interested and Involved Agencies were requested, and each of the potentially Interested and Involved Agencies has agreed to, or raised no objections to, the Village of Aurora Village Board serving as Lead Agency for the Project; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the SEQRA Regulations, the Village of Aurora Village Board has considered the significance of the potential environmental impacts of the Project by (a) using the criteria specified in Section 617.7 of the SEQRA Regulations, and (b) examining the FEA for the Project, including the facts and conclusions in Parts 1, 2 and 3 of the FEA, together with other available supporting information, to identify the relevant areas of environmental concern:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED that, the Village of Aurora Village Board hereby establishes itself as Lead Agency for the Project; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that based upon an examination of the FEA and other available supporting information, and considering both the magnitude and importance of each relevant area of environmental concern, and based further upon the Village's knowledge of the area surrounding the Project, the Village of Aurora Village Board makes the determination that the Project will not have a significant adverse environmental impact and that the Project will not require the preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that as a consequence of such findings and declaration, and in compliance with the requirements of SEQRA, the Village of Aurora Village Board, as Lead Agency, hereby directs the Village of Aurora Mayor to sign the FEA Part 3 - Determination of Significance indicating that a Negative Declaration has been issued for the Project; this Resolution shall take effect immediately and will be properly noticed.

The question of the adoption of the foregoing resolution was moved by Trustee Murphy and seconded by Trustee Balloni duly put to a vote, and upon roll call, the vote was as follows:

James Orman, Mayor AYE

John Miller, Trustee AYE

Matthew Bianconi, Trustee AYE

Janet Murphy, Trustee AYE

J. D. Balloni, Trustee AYE

The foregoing resolution was thereupon declared duly adopted.

25-32 BOND RESOLUTION

(SUBJECT TO PERMISSIVE REFERENDUM)

At a regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Village of Aurora, Cayuga County, New York, held at the Village Hall, in Aurora, New York, in said Village, on August 20, 2025, at 6 o'clock P.M., Prevailing Time.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor James Orman, and upon roll being called, the following were

PRESENT: Trustees James Balloni, Matthew Bianconi, L. John Miller, Janet Murphy, and Mayor Orman

ABSENT:

The following resolution was offered by Trustee Murphy, who moved its adoption, seconded by Trustee Miller, to-wit:

BOND RESOLUTION DATED AUGUST 20, 2025.

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING, SUBJECT TO PERMISSIVE REFERENDUM, THE ISSUANCE OF AN ADDITIONAL \$600,000 BONDS OF THE VILLAGE OF AURORA, CAYUGA COUNTY, NEW YORK, TO PAY THE COST OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF A WATER SUPPLY, TREATMENT AND TRANSMISSION SYSTEM IN AND FOR SAID VILLAGE.

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees of the Village of Aurora, Cayuga County, New York, on May 20, 2020, duly adopted a bond resolution authorizing the issuance of up to \$10,400,000 bonds of said Village to pay the cost of the construction of a water supply, treatment and transmission system in and for the Village of Aurora, Cayuga County, New York, including costs incidental thereto; and

WHEREAS, it has now been determined that the maximum estimated cost of such class of objects or purposes is \$11,000,000, an increase of \$600,000 over that previously authorized; and

WHEREAS, all conditions precedent to the financing of the capital project hereinafter described, including compliance with the provisions of the State Environmental Quality Review Act, have been performed; and

WHEREAS, it is now desired to authorize the issuance of an additional \$600,000 bonds of said Village to pay such costs thereof; NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED, by the affirmative vote of not less than two-thirds of the total voting strength of the Board of Trustees of the Village of Aurora, Cayuga County, New York, as follows:

Section 1. For the class of objects or purposes of paying additional costs of the construction of a water supply, treatment and transmission system, in and for Village of Aurora, Cayuga County, New York, including costs incidental thereto, there are hereby authorized to be issued \$600,000 bonds of the Village of Aurora, Cayuga County, New York, pursuant to the provisions of the Local Finance Law.

Section 2. **SEQR DETERMINATION:** The project has been determined to be an "Type I Action" for purposes of the State Environmental Quality Review Act which it has been determined will not result in any significant adverse environmental effects.

Section 3. It is hereby determined that the maximum estimated cost of such class of objects or purposes is now determined to be \$11,000,000, and that the plan for the financing thereof is as follows:

a) by the issuance of the \$10,400,000 bonds of said Village authorized to be issued pursuant to a bond resolution dated and duly adopted May 20, 2020; and

b) by the issuance of the additional \$600,000 bonds of said Village authorized to be issued pursuant to this bond resolution;

provided, however, that the amount of serial bonds ultimately to be issued shall be reduced by the amount of any grant monies received therefor.

Section 4. It is hereby determined that the period of probable usefulness of the aforesaid class of objects or purposes is forty years pursuant to subdivision 1 of paragraph a of Section 11.00 of the Local Finance Law. It is hereby further determined that the maximum maturity of the serial bonds herein authorized shall exceed five years.

Section 5. The faith and credit of said Village of Aurora, Cayuga County, New York, are hereby irrevocably pledged to the payment of the principal of and interest on such obligations as the same respectively become due and payable. An annual appropriation shall be made in each year sufficient to pay the principal of and interest on such obligations becoming due and payable in such year. To the extent not paid from other sources, there shall annually be levied on all the taxable real property in said Village a tax sufficient to pay the principal of and interest on such obligations as the same become due and payable.

Section 6. Subject to the provisions of the Local Finance Law, the power to authorize the issuance of and to sell bond anticipation notes in anticipation of the issuance and sale of the serial bonds herein authorized, including renewals of such notes, is hereby delegated to the Village Treasurer. Such notes

shall be of such terms, form and contents, and shall be sold in such manner, as may be prescribed by said Village Treasurer, consistent with the provisions of the Local Finance Law.

Section 7. All other matters except as provided herein relating to the serial bonds herein authorized including the date, denominations, maturities and interest payment dates, within the limitations prescribed herein and the manner of execution of the same, including the consolidation with other issues, and also the ability to issue serial bonds with substantially level or declining annual debt service, shall be determined by the Village Treasurer, the chief fiscal officer of such Village. Such bonds shall contain substantially the recital of validity clause provided for in Section 52.00 of the Local Finance Law, and shall otherwise be in such form and contain such recitals, in addition to those required by Section 51.00 of the Local Finance Law, as the Village Treasurer shall determine consistent with the provisions of the Local Finance Law.

Section 8. The validity of such bonds and bond anticipation notes may be contested only if:

- 1) Such obligations are authorized for an object or purpose for which said Village is not authorized to expend money, or
- 2) The provisions of law which should be complied with at the date of publication of this resolution are not substantially complied with, and an action, suit or proceeding contesting such validity is commenced within twenty days after the date of such publication, or
- 3) Such obligations are authorized in violation of the provisions of the Constitution.

Section 9. This resolution shall constitute a statement of official intent for purposes of Treasury Regulations Section 1.150 - 2. Other than as specified in this resolution, no monies are, or are reasonably expected to be, reserved, allocated on a long-term basis, or otherwise set aside with respect to the permanent funding of the object or purpose described herein.

Section 10. Upon this resolution taking effect, the same shall be published in summary form in the official newspaper of said Village for such purpose, together with a notice of the Village Clerk in substantially the form provided in Section 81.00 of the Local Finance Law.

Section 11. PURSUANT TO THE PROVISIONS OF SECTION 36.00 OF THE LOCAL FINANCE LAW, THIS RESOLUTION IS ADOPTED SUBJECT TO PERMISSIVE REFERENDUM.

The question of the adoption of the foregoing resolution was duly put to a vote on roll call which resulted as follows:

Trustee James Balloni VOTING AYE

Trustee Matthew Bianconi VOTING AYE

Trustee L. John Miller VOTING AYE

Trustee Janet Murphy VOTING AYE

Mayor James Orman VOTING AYE

The resolution was thereupon declared duly adopted.

RESOLUTION NO. 25-33

Proposed Action: Village of Aurora Water System Source Improvements Project

RESOLUTION OF THE VILLAGE BOARD AUTHORIZING SUBMISSION OF A NEW YORK STATE WATER INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT ACT (WIIA) GRANT APPLICATION FOR \$5 MILLION FOR THE PROPOSED VILLAGE OF AURORA WATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT

WHEREAS, the Village of Aurora (Village) is located in the Town of Ledyard, Cayuga County, New York and is proposing the Village of Aurora Water System Improvements Project (Project), located in the Village of Aurora; and

WHEREAS, the Village Board prepared a Preliminary Engineering Report (PER) dated July 2025 recommending improvements to the Village water system, much of which was formerly owned and operated by Wells College before closing in April 2024; and

WHEREAS, the proposed improvements to such drinking water system includes a new extended and deeper intake from Cayuga Lake (including a possible partnership with CCWSA to over-size the intake for future regional purposes), significant improvements to the existing water treatment system within the former Wells College Service Building, additional upgrades both in and around the former Wells storage tank, including a new connecting “loop” water main between the two tanks in the Village; and

WHEREAS, the PER shows the estimated costs of these improvements to be \$11,000,000; and

WHEREAS, the NYSDOH & EFC will be reviewing, accepting and scoring the updated PER for the DWSRF Project # 18564; and

WHEREAS, in compliance with the SEQRA Regulations, the Village of Aurora Village Board as Lead Agency, have issued a resolution on August 20, 2025, indicating that a Negative Declaration has been issued for the Project; and

WHEREAS, on May 20, 2020 the Village Board passed a Bond Resolution for \$10,400,000 for this project #18564 and on August 20, 2025, the Village of Aurora Village Board passed a Supplemental Bond Resolution for an additional \$600,000, subject to permissive referendum, for a total estimated project cost of \$11,000,000; and

WHEREAS, in April 2022 project #18564 was awarded a \$3,000,000 New York State Water Infrastructure Improvement Act (WIIA) grant; and

WHEREAS, the Village Board now desires to pursue new grant funding for the project under the New York State Water Infrastructure Improvement Act (WIIA) grant application for \$5,000,000 and at the same time will rescind the existing \$3,000,000 WIIA grant previously awarded to the Village for a previous project under this same Intended Use Plan (IUP) project #18564, said rescinding the \$3M and pursuing the \$5M only if the initial review by EFC/DOH deems this application and report as being complete and likely to score well.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED that, the Village of Aurora Village Board hereby authorizes the submission of a New York State Water Infrastructure Improvement Act (WIIA) grant application for \$5,000,000; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Village Mayor is hereby authorized to submit an application on behalf of the Village for grant funding under the New York State Water Infrastructure Improvement Act (WIIA) program, and to execute any agreements, instruments or other documents in connection with the Village’s acceptance of any such grants and/or the funding thereof; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Village Mayor may authorize any required local match required with respect to financing or grants awarded to the Village for the Project through the use of cash and/or in-kind services: and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Resolution shall take effect immediately.

The question of the adoption of the foregoing resolution was moved by Trustee Miller and seconded by Trustee Murphy duly put to a vote, and upon roll call on August 20, 2025 the vote was as follows:

James Orman, Mayor AYE

John Miller, Trustee AYE

Matthew Bianconi, Trustee AYE

Janet Murphy, Trustee AYE

J. D. Balloni, Trustee AYE

The foregoing resolution was thereupon declared duly adopted.

Tree Report: Tee-Ann Hunter and Jennifer Connell discussed reviewing plans with Cayuga Landscape, seeking grant funding, and soliciting quotes from other vendors to plant/replace trees in the village. Ms. Hunter submitted options (attached) and will review with the Village DPW.

CPP Amendments (attached): On motion by Trustee Murphy, second by Trustee Bianconi, the Village Board voted to accept the recommendation from the CPP to amend the Village Zoning Law.

AYES: Balloni, Bianconi, Miller, Murphy, and Orman

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

Cayuga County Planning Department Contract: On motion by Trustee Miller, second by Trustee Balloni, the Village Board voted to accept the contract with the Cayuga County Planning Department to consult with the Village on the future development of the Wells College campus.

AYES: Balloni, Bianconi, Miller, Murphy, and Orman

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

LaFayette Pocket Park: Trustee Bianconi recommended signage for the pocket park at the end of Lafayette Extension and will work with the Village DPW to implement.

Adjournment: On motion by Trustee Murphy, seconded by Trustee Miller, the Village Board voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:36 p.m.

AYES: Balloni, Bianconi, Miller, Murphy, and Orman

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Tanner, Village Treasurer

