

Village of Aurora Board of Trustees March 19, 2025, Public Hearing & Regular Meeting Minutes

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

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

Absent: Mayor James Orman

Others Present

Village Officials: Clerk Ann Balloni, ZBA Chairperson Karen Hindenlang, Historian Dr. Linda Schwab, Account Clerk Christine Tanner, and Engineer Ken Teter

AuroraFest Committee: Mary Weber

Barton & Loguidice: Chris Lawton

Inns of Aurora: Jodi Bennett

Members of the Public: Grace Bates, Susan Forbes, and Frank Zimdahl

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance: Deputy Mayor Murphy called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and all rose for the Pledge of Allegiance

Public Hearing for Local Law #1 of 2025: Waiver of the Tax Levy Limit

On motion by Trustee Murphy, second by Trustee Balloni, the Village Board voted to open the public hearing for Local Law #1 of 2025 at 6:01 p.m.

AYES: Balloni, Bianconi, Miller, and Murphy

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Orman

Motion carried.

Public Comment: No public comment

On motion by Trustee Balloni, second by Trustee Miller, the Village Board voted to close the public hearing for Local Law #1 of 2025 at 6:02 p.m.

AYES: Balloni, Bianconi, Miller, and Murphy

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Orman

Motion carried.

Public Hearing for Local Law #2 of 2025: Designating Local Landmarks

On motion by Trustee Murphy, second by Trustee Balloni, the Village Board voted to open the public hearing for Local Law #2 of 2025 at 6:03 p.m.

AYES: Balloni, Bianconi, Miller, and Murphy

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Orman

Motion carried.

Public Comment

Dr. Linda Schwab: see attached comments

Karen Hindenlang: see attached comments

Susan Forbes: reads attached letter from Katharine Dooley

On motion by Trustee Murphy, second by Trustee Balloni, the Village Board voted to close the public hearing for Local Law #2 of 2025 at 6:11 p.m.

AYES: Balloni, Bianconi, Miller, and Murphy

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Orman

Motion carried.

Changes to the Agenda: Add AuroraFest location request and schedule a special meeting to New Business and remove introduce budgets and CPP appointment from New Business.

Approval of Minutes

February 19, 2025: On motion by Trustee Bianconi, seconded by Trustee Balloni, the Village Board voted to approve the February 19, 2025, Public Hearing and Regular Meeting minutes.

AYES: Balloni, Bianconi, Miller, and Murphy

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Orman

Motion carried.

March 4, 2025: On motion by Trustee Bianconi, seconded by Trustee Balloni, the Village Board voted to approve the March 4, 2025, Special Meeting minutes.

AYES: Balloni, Bianconi, Miller, and Murphy

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Orman

Motion carried.

Announcements: No announcements

Visitor Welcome: No comments

Treasurer's Report: Ms. Tanner explained that there is a \$719 overage discrepancy that Ms. Tanner, Williamson Law Book, and Cayuga Lake National Bank are working to resolve, and they believe it dates back to a reconciliation issue from 2019. Ms. Tanner noted that the discrepancy will be carried over until it is resolved.

On motion by Trustee Murphy, second by Trustee Miller, the Village Board voted to accept the July 2024 Treasurer's Report with the noted discrepancy.

AYES: Balloni, Bianconi, Miller, and Murphy

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Orman

Motion carried.

Bills

General: On motion by Trustee Balloni, seconded by Trustee Miller, the Village Board voted to approve the General Fund Abstract #10 for payment.

Voucher #373-407

Total: \$12,429.03

AYES: Balloni, Bianconi, Miller, and Murphy

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Orman

Motion carried.

Water: On motion by Trustee Miller, seconded by Trustee Bianconi, the Village Board voted to approve the Water Fund Abstract #10 for payment.

Voucher #349-368

Total: \$32,250.42

AYES: Balloni, Bianconi, Miller, and Murphy

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Orman

Motion carried.

Sewer: On motion by Trustee Bianconi, seconded by Trustee Balloni, the Village Board voted to approve the Sewer Fund Abstract #10 for payment.

Voucher #339-354

Total: \$8,85.32

AYES: Balloni, Bianconi, Miller, and Murphy

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Orman

Motion carried.

Reports

Code Officer: No report

Historian (see attached): Dr. Schwab continues to research Henry Wells (addendum attached), attempts to gain access to historical archives on campus, work on preservation, and respond to queries.

Old Business

Bates Donation Agreement:

VILLAGE OF AURORA BOARD OF TRUSTEES

RESOLUTION #25-08 AUTHORIZING THE DONATION OF REAL PROPERTY AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A VILLAGE PARK

Introduced by: Trustee Balloni

Seconded by: Trustee Miller

Dated: March 19, 2025

WHEREAS, Village of Aurora resident Grace W. Bates (“Bates”) is the owner of real property located at and known by the address of Main Street and Poplar Ridge Road, Village of Aurora, County of Cayuga, State of New York, Tax Map Nos. (all or part) 193.05-01-05, 193.09-01-04.1, and 193.05-01-06.1; and

WHEREAS, Bates desires to convey certain portions of the Property, as described more particularly in the Donation Agreement attached hereto as **Exhibit A** (the “Donation Parcel”), to the Village of Aurora, subject to a Conservation Easement conveyed to the Finger Lakes Land Trust, Inc. by Bates (**Exhibit B**), and conditioned upon the Donation Parcel:

- (1) being used to establish a Village Park to be known as “Aurora Lakeshore Park” that will provide a variety of recreational opportunities for community members and visitors to the Village of Aurora;
- (2) ensuring scenic views of Cayuga Lake;
- (3) providing for the continuance of lakeshore wildlife habitat that also provides the opportunity for the public to connect with nature; and
- (4)

WHEREAS, the conveyance of the Donation Parcel is a Type II action under 6 NYCRR 617.5(c)(39) of the State Environmental Quality Review Act (“SEQRA”) and thus is not subject to review under SEQRA.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, as follows:

1. The foregoing recitals are hereby incorporated as if set forth herein at length.
2. The Village Board of Trustees hereby authorizes the Mayor to execute and enter into the Donation Agreement, and any and all real estate transfer documents and other such ancillary documents necessary to effectuate the transfer of the Donation Parcel to the Village.
3. Upon conveyance of the Donation Parcel to the Village, the Donation Parcel shall be deemed Village of Aurora parkland to be known as the “Aurora Lakeshore Park” and shall be used in the accordance with the conditions set forth in the Donation Agreement and Conservation Agreement.
4. The conveyance of the Donation Parcel is a Type II action under 6 NYCRR 617.5(c)(39) of the State Environmental Quality Review Act (“SEQRA”) and thus is not subject to review under SEQRA.

Upon Roll Call Vote:

Roll Call Vote	Yay	Nay	Abstain
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Trustee Matt Bianconi	X		
Trustee John Miller	X		
Trustee Janet Murphy	X		
Trustee JD Balloni	X		
Mayor James Orman	- Absent		

Firehouse Boiler Quotes

E&V: \$29,842.97 (oil, no propane quote)

Hills Heating & Air Conditioning: \$32, 175.00 (propane, no oil quote)

Holbrook Heating & Air Conditioning: \$38,800.00 (oil), \$46,600.00 (propane)

On motion by Trustee Balloni, second by Trustee Miller, the Village Board voted to award the contract for the new firehouse propane boiler system to Hills Heating and Air Conditioning for \$32,175.00.

AYES: Balloni, Bianconi, Miller, and Murphy

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Orman

Motion carried.

Engineer Water Plant Options: Mr. Lawton from Barton & Loguidice and Mr. Teter discussed the options presented to the Village Board at a special meeting on March 4; the Village permanently operating the former Wells College water plant or extending a line from Springport which imports Owasco Lake water. Mr. Teter noted that a suggestion to pipe water from Poplar Ridge was not viable. The two options both cost around 10 – 11 million dollars and both options come with significant increases in village water/sewer rates.

Trustee Bianconi questioned the impact if Wells College is sold, and Mr. Teter replied that would help stabilize the rates.

Mr. Lawton emphasized the increase in WIIA grant funding and advised the Village Board to reject the \$3 million awarded in 2021 and apply for a new \$5 million grant. Mr. Lawton added that the deadline to apply is May 30, 2025.

Trustee Miller expressed concern with the grants awarded for upgrades to the water plant, noting that 70% of water projects in New York are on pause due to the withholding of grant money at the federal level. Mr. Lawton said that he will contact New York State for verification on the funding. Mr. Teter reminded the Board that he and Mr. Lawton's fees are covered by the grants, and he submitted the first request this week to gauge the reimbursement timeline.

Mr. Teter explained that the water fund budget will need \$200,000.00 for operation and maintenance of the water plant and the sewer fund budget will lose \$46,000.00 in revenue from Wells College. The water and sewer funds must be self-sustaining which means an increase in water and sewer rates is necessary for the operation and maintenance of the water plant in the water fund and the loss of revenue from Wells College in the sewer fund.

Mr. Bianconi questioned the lifespan of the current system "as is" and Mr. Teter replied, "five years". Mr. Bianconi then asked the timeline for the upgrades and Mr. Teter answered that the new filters should be installed by the end of 2025.

On motion by Trustee Murphy, second by Trustee Miller, the Village Board voted to move forward with the purchase of the former Wells Water Plant as the preferred alternative for the Village's water supply.

AYES: Balloni, Bianconi, Miller, and Murphy

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Orman

Motion carried.

New Business

Generator Bids: Mr. Teter submitted a tabulation sheet of the three bids received for the new generator at the Wastewater Treatment Plant (attached). Funding for the generator is from a FEMA grant, administered through Homeland Security, awarded to the Village in 2023. Mr. Teter recommends the low bid, Curtis Power Solutions, for \$62,773.00.

VB Resolution #25-09 : to Award the WWTP New Generator Equipment Project Bid.

WHEREAS, the Village of Aurora was awarded a FEMA grant for the replacement of the Village's WWTP back-up power generator and related items (the "Project") for \$200,000; and

WHEREAS, the Village recently issued and circulated a public bid document for the generator and transfer switch equipment only; and

WHEREAS, the Village received three bids prior to Friday, March 14, 2025 at 2:00 PM; and

WHEREAS, the bids were fully reviewed by the engineer K. Teter Consulting for accuracy, compliance and completeness; and

WHEREAS, upon review and the recommendation of K. Teter Consulting to award the project to the lowest responsible bidder which was Curtis Power Solutions of Syracuse, New York in the amount of \$62,773.00;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Village of Aurora board accepts and approves the award of this project to Curtis Power Solutions in the amount of \$62,773.00 and agrees to enter into an Agreement with Curtis for same.

FIRST: Trustee Murphy

SECOND: Trustee Balloni

AYES: Balloni, Bianconi, Miller, and Murphy

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Orman

Carried.

Water Plant Filters: Mr. Teter explained that a \$1 million grant was awarded to Wells College for replacement of the filters in the water plant. When Wells College closed and the Village assumed water plant operations, the grant from Northern Borders Regional Council (NRBC) was transferred to the Village. Approximately half of the grant remained when the Village began plant operations. Village officials met with Fiscal Advisors to set up a payment schedule for Weslor Enterprises to move forward with the project while the Village awaits reimbursement.

On motion by Trustee Miller, second by Trustee Murphy, the Village Board voted to accept the Weslor Enterprises proposal of \$274,271.00 to complete the filter project at the water plant and authorize Trustee Murphy (Deputy Mayor) to sign the required New York State Department of Health form.

AYES: Balloni, Bianconi, Miller, and Murphy

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Orman

Motion carried.

PACE Lab Payment: On motion by Trustee Balloni, second by Trustee Miller, the Village Board voted to approve a \$582.00 payment to PACE Lab for water sampling related to a SPDS permit.

AYES: Balloni, Bianconi, Miller, and Murphy

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Orman

Motion carried.

Local Law #1 of 2025: Waiver of the Tax Cap

VB RESOLUTION #25-05 ENACTING LOCAL LAW #1 OF 2025 THE WAIVER OF THE MAXIMUM REAL PROPERTY TAX LEVY LIMIT

WHEREAS, the enactment of Chapter 97 of the Law of 2011 placed limits on the amount of real property taxes that may be levied by or on behalf of any local government thereby place a “tax levy limit” on municipalities that is found in General Municipal Law § 3-c; and

WHEREAS, subdivision 5 of General Municipal Law § 3-c expressly authorized the Village Board of Trustees to override the tax levy limit by the adoption of a local law approved by a vote of sixty percent (60%) of the Village Board of Trustees for one fiscal year; and

WHEREAS, by adoption of this local law, the Village Board of Trustees hereby reserves the right to override the limit on the amount of real property taxes that may be levied by the Village of Aurora and authorized the Village Board of Trustees to adopt a budget for fiscal year 2025/2026 in excess of the “tax levy limit” as defined by General Municipal Law § 3-c; and

WHEREAS, this is a Type II action pursuant to 6 NYCRR §617.5(c) (20 & 27) and is otherwise exempt from environmental review pursuant to the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (“SEQRA”); and

WHEREAS, at a regular meeting of the Village Board of Trustees of the Village of Aurora, County of Cayuga, State of New York, held at 456 Main St, Aurora, NY, at 6:00 p.m. on March 19, 2025, the following members of the Village Board of Trustees being present:

James Balloni
Matthew Bianconi
L. John Miller
Janet Murphy

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Village Board of Trustees of the Village of Aurora as follows:

1. The Village Board of Trustees hereby adopts Local Law #1 of 2025.
2. The Village Board of Trustees hereby determines that the aforementioned Local Law is a Type II action as defined in 6 NYCRR §617.5(c)(20&27) and accordingly, the Village Board of Trustees expressly determines that this action is not an action that requires review pursuant to the provisions of the New York State Environmental Quality Review Action (“SEQRA”);

3. The Village Board of Trustees has properly noticed a Public Hearing on the Proposed Local Law #1 of 2025 on March 19, 2025, beginning at approximately 6:00 p.m.;

Now upon the Motion of Trustee Miller and Seconded by Trustee Bianconi, a roll-call vote is tallied by the Village Clerk as follows:

Trustee Balloni – AYE
Trustee Bianconi - AYE
Trustee Miller - AYE
Trustee Murphy - AYE
Mayor Orman - ABSENT

At least 4 of the above-named Village Board of Trustee members having voted in the affirmative, Local Law #1 of 2025 is adopted this 19th day of March 2025.

Local Law #2 of 2025: Designating Local Landmarks

Trustee Bianconi expressed concern that it could be more difficult to sell Wells campus if additional buildings are designated as landmarks. Trustee Bianconi added that because he owns property in the proposed Cherry Ave/Court St Neighborhood District, he will abstain from voting.

Trustees Miller and Murphy remarked that the landmark status make the properties more attractive to developers, not less.

Trustee Balloni noted that most comments received were in favor of the landmarks.

VB RESOLUTION 25-06

RESOLUTION ENACTING LOCAL LAW #2 OF 2025 ENTITLED

TO AMEND LOCAL LAW #4 OF 2023 DESIGNATING CERTAIN PROPERTIES AS VILLAGE LANDMARKS

WHEREAS: the Village of Aurora is listed on the National Historic Register as an historic district with certain properties designated as local landmarks; and

WHEREAS: it is a duty of the Village of Aurora Community Preservation Panel to recommend updates to the local landmark list; and

WHEREAS: the Community Preservation Panel approved additions to the list at their January 8, 2025, regular meeting and submitted the following recommendations to the Village Board of Trustees for consideration (see attached list); and

WHEREAS: the Village Zoning Law (Local Law #2 of 2024), per section 706.3. requires the Village Board of Trustees to update the village landmark list by local law; and

WHEREAS: this is a Type 2 Action pursuant to the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (“SEQRA”) section 617.5(32) requiring no further environmental review; and

WHEREAS: At a regular meeting of the Village Board of Trustees of the Village of Aurora, County of Cayuga, State of New York, held at the Village Hall, 456 Main Street, Aurora, New York, at 6:00 p.m. on

February 19, 2025, Local Law #2 of 2025 was introduced and a public hearing was scheduled for March 19, 2025 at approximately 6:00 pm; and

WHEREAS: The Village Board of Trustees has properly noticed a Public Hearing on the Proposed Local Law #2 of 2025, held at the Village Hall on March 19, 2025 beginning at approximately 6:00 p.m.; and

WHEREAS: At a regular meeting of the Village Board of Trustees of the Village of Aurora, County of Cayuga, State of New York, held at the Village Hall, 456 Main Street, Aurora, New York, at 6:00 p.m. on March 19, 2025 the following members of the Village Board of Trustees being present:

JAMES BALLONI
MATTHEW BIANCONI
JOHN MILLER
JANET MURPHY

The Resolution came to be heard and considered:

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Village Board of Trustees of the Village of Aurora as follows:

The Village Board of Trustees hereby adopts Local Law #2 of 2025

Now upon the Motion of Trustee Murphy and Seconded by Trustee Balloni a roll-call vote is tallied by the Village Clerk as follows:

Trustee Balloni AYE
Trustee Bianconi ABSTAIN
Trustee Miller AYE
Trustee Murphy AYE
Mayor Orman ABSENT

At least 3 of the above-named Village Board of Trustee members having voted in the affirmative/negative, this resolution is adopted/denied this 19th day of March, 2025.

2025/2026 Budgets: On motion by Trustee Balloni, second by Trustee Murphy, the Village Board voted to schedule a special meeting on March 27, 2025, at 5:30 p.m. to introduce the 2025/2026 budgets and schedule a public hearing for April 10, 2025, at 5:30 p.m.

AYES: Balloni, Bianconi, Miller, and Murphy

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Orman

Motion carried.

Chris MacCormick Resolution:

Resolution #25-10: In Recognition of Chris MacCormick's 20 Year Membership on the Village of Aurora Community Preservation Panel

WHEREAS, Chris MacCormick was appointed to the Community Preservation Panel on March 2, 2005;
and

WHEREAS, Chris MacCormick has remained a member of the Community Preservation Panel for 20
years, 12 years as chairperson;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Village of Aurora Board of Trustees recognizes Chris
MacCormick for his outstanding dedication to the Village of Aurora.

FIRST: Trustee Miller

SECOND: Trustee Balloni

AYES: Balloni, Bianconi, Miller, and Murphy

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Orman

Carried.

AuroraFest Location: On motion by Trustee Balloni, second by Trustee Bianconi, the Village Board voted
to allow the AuroraFest Committee to have AuroraFest on the village lawn behind the firehouse.

AYES: Balloni, Bianconi, Miller, and Murphy

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Orman

Motion carried.

Adjournment: On motion by Trustee Balloni, seconded by Trustee Bianconi, the Village Board voted to
adjourn the meeting at 7:47 p.m.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.