

Village of Aurora Board of Trustees September 18, 2024 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 Orman

Others Present

Village Officials: Clerk Ann Balloni, ZBA member Laura Holland

Aurora Historical Society: Shirley Egan and Ken Larson

DRI Committee: Linda Dugan, Alyssa Gunderson, and Frank Losurdo

Inns of Aurora: Jodi Bennett and Corey Guerette

Members of the Public: Grace Bates

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.

Changes to the Agenda: Add purchasing a boiler for the water plant, Herrtronic's proposal to replace the fire department alarm system, and consulting proposal from Mary Beth Bianconi under New Business.

Approval of Minutes

August 21, 2024: On motion by Trustee Balloni, seconded by Trustee Miller, the Village Board voted to approve the August 21, 2024 regular meeting minutes.

AYES: Balloni, Bianconi, Miller, and Murphy

ABSENT: Orman

NAYS: None

Motion carried.

September 12, 2024: On motion by Trustee Balloni, seconded by Trustee Miller, the Village Board voted to approve the September 12, 2024 special meeting minutes.

AYES: Balloni, Bianconi, Miller, and Murphy

ABSENT: Orman

NAYS: None

Motion carried.

Announcements

Clerk: The village board received a thank you card from the AuroraFest Committee (attached).

The post office roof project will begin within the next couple of weeks, with JFK Roofing doing the work. The roof was damaged during a storm and the cost is covered by the village insurance.

Corey Guerette informed the board that the sidewalk, Village Market, and parking lot will be temporarily closed for roof repairs at the Aurora Inn and Village Market, during the week of September 30.

Visitor Welcome

Alyssa Gunderson: Ms. Gunderson expressed concern over the lack of crosswalk striping, following the paving of Rt 90. Ms. Gunderson operates Peachtown Elementary School and often walks the students to the library which requires crossing Rt 90 in two locations. Ms. Gunderson requested that the crosswalk signs be placed by the library and Wells Road until NYSDOT completes their painting and striping. The clerk will contact the village DPW.

Treasurer's Report: No report

Budget Modifications

GENERAL FUND

\$24,000.00 A599 Fund Balance Transfer to:

\$ 4,800.00 A5110.1 Street Maintenance – Personal Services
370.40 A9030.6 Social Security
14,400.00 F8310.1 Water Administration - Personal Services
1,029.60 F9030.8 Social Security
3,400.00 F9060.8 Hospital & Medical Insurance (3 months)

Estimated salaries for Robert Yager and Dave Wenzel for 3 months. Dave has asked for Health coverage which is paid out monthly.

On motion by Trustee Bianconi, seconded by Trustee Balloni, the Village Board voted to accept the Budget Modifications in the General Fund.

AYES: Balloni, Bianconi, Miller, and Murphy

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Orman

Motion carried.

WATER FUND

\$ 20,000.00 FROM F231 Water Repair Reserve Transfer

TO F8340.2 Transmission & Distribution – Equipment

To go towards the purchase & install of the Boiler for the Water Plant Facility.

On motion by Trustee Bianconi, seconded by Trustee Balloni, the Village Board voted to accept the Budget Modifications in the Water Fund.

AYES: Balloni, Bianconi, Miller, Murphy

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Orman

Motion carried.

Bills

General: On motion by Trustee Balloni, seconded by Trustee Bianconi, the Village Board voted to approve the General Fund Abstract #4 for payment.

Voucher #132, 133, 135-139, 141-148, 150, 151, 153, 155-157, 159, 162-164, and 166

Total: \$10,105.35

AYES: Balloni, Bianconi, Miller, Murphy

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Orman

Motion carried.

Water: On motion by Trustee Balloni, seconded by Trustee Bianconi, the Village Board voted to approve the Water Fund Abstract #4 for payment.

Voucher #134, 138, 140, 146, 149, 154, 158, and 160-162

Total: \$9,332.03

AYES: Balloni, Bianconi, Miller, Murphy

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Orman

Motion carried.

Sewer: On motion by Trustee Balloni, seconded by Trustee Bianconi, the Village Board voted to approve the Sewer Fund Abstract #4 for payment.

Voucher #138, 145, 146, 148, 149, 152, 154, 155, 159, 162, and 165

Total: \$4,508.70

AYES: Balloni, Bianconi, Miller, and Murphy

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Orman

Motion carried.

Reports

Historian (see attached): Dr. Schwab reported on the current St Patrick's display at Patrick Tavern, an article in the Southern Cayuga Tribune on the display, recent correspondence, and the ongoing concern over the future of the Wells College archive collection.

Miscellaneous

Aurora Historical Society: President Shirley Egan and Ken Larson gave an update on the ongoing projects at Patrick Tavern. Ms. Egan referred to a request to the village to give their support to the AHS goal of compelling Wells College to turn over Wells archives to the village. The request is under consideration during New Business.

DRI Committee (attached): Ms. Dugan, Ms. Gunderson, and Mr. Losurdo discussed submitting alternate proposals for the community center, recreation areas, etc. given the uncertainty over Wells College owned properties. Mr. Losurdo added that some proposals could be submitted jointly with other projects, such as the Inns of Aurora dock proposal.

Swim Program (attached): Christy Gunderson submitted a detailed summary of the program which began on June 27 and ended with the Aurora Fire Department Swim Across on August 17.

Old Business

Ad-Hoc Committee: The committee formed by the Village Board of Trustees requested direction from the trustees on their role in the Wells College closure. Mary Beth Bianconi, a member of the committee, submitted a proposal to the trustees offering to work as a consultant, pro-bono. The trustees will consider Ms. Bianconi's proposal under New Business and review how her assistance can help identify the role of the committee.

Bates Donation Agreement: Ms. Bates reminded the village board that her response to the village's comments to the donation agreement were sent to the village on August 19, and she has not received any feedback. Ms. Bates handed out a "to do list" for the trustees to keep the process in motion.

On motion by Trustee Bianconi, seconded by Trustee Balloni, the Village Board voted to authorize Trustee Murphy to meet with the village attorney, Ms. Bates, and Ms. Bates attorney Earle Thurston to review the donation agreement and consider at the October 16, 2024 village board meeting for finalizing/approval.

AYES: Balloni, Bianconi, Miller, Murphy

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Orman

Motion carried.

New Business

Hire Water Plant Operators: On motion by Trustee Miller, seconded by Trustee Balloni, the Village Board voted to hire Bob Yager at \$35/hour and David Wenzel at \$25/hour + benefits to operate the Wells Water Plant.

AYES: Balloni, Bianconi, Miller, Murphy

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Orman

Motion carried.

Resolution to Request that Wells College Archives Remain within the Village:

Resolution Concerning Wells College Archives

Introduced: Trustee Balloni

Seconded: Trustee Bianconi

Date: September 18, 2024

Whereas, the histories of the Village of Aurora ("Village") and Wells College ("Wells") are intimately connected by the shared histories of the peoples, times, and locations that shaped them; and **Whereas**, up to 62% of the Archives of Wells as listed on the New York State Library site, according to the Village Historian (Letter to Wells College June 26, 2024, attached), deal with the Village, either exclusively or through the people, families, and historic homes and other buildings of Aurora; and **Whereas**, many important documents pertaining to the Village, such as maps from 1794 and 1795 and records from early settlers were given to Wells while Professor Temple Rice Hollcroft served as both the Village Historian and the College Historian; and

Whereas, the donors believed depositing them with Wells was a safe and permanent way to keep their records in Aurora; and

Whereas, the Village has received communications from various descendants of the donors to the Wells Archives, from the Chief Curator of History at the New York State Museum, as well as from residents of the Village and many alumnae of Wells, stating their preferences that the Wells Archives “stay local”; and

Whereas, municipal governments in New York State are charged with encouraging the coordinated collection and preservation of nongovernmental historical records of the histories of their communities, for which it is appropriate to preserve collections of private letters, papers, books, maps, pictures, photographs and other media and make them available to the public; and

Whereas, the Village has long been the owner of certain Village Archives and historic collections that are under responsibility of the Village Historian and the Village Clerk (the Village’s Records Officers), in conjunction with the Village of Aurora Historical Society (AHS), with which AHS the Village has an existing agreement for the stewardship by AHS of all Village historical resources, including the Village-owned historic 1793 Patrick Tavern building; and

Whereas, the Village finds that it is in the interest of the public health, safety, and welfare and serves an urgent and vital Village purpose to request Wells to transfer to the Village the historical archives consisting of books, records, photographs and other media in the Wells College Library Archives whether they strictly relate to the history of one party or to the other (the “Wells Archives”), thereafter to be preserved and identified as the “Wells Collection,” made available to the public in an appropriate manner, and ultimately digitized to promote public access and searchability while protecting the originals; and

Whereas, AHS is a non-profit, tax-exempt education corporation authorized by the New York State Board of Regents that has a track record for its stewardship of Village historic resources and fundraising for the preservation of such resources in order to make them available to the public in an appropriate manner; and

Whereas, AHS has offered to assist the Village by (a) providing existing restricted monies for the proposed Village request of Wells to acquire and preserve the Wells Archives, (b) offering to take a lead role in communications with Wells for exploring the potential terms and conditions under which the Village’s request to Wells might be accepted by Wells; (c) offering to assist the Village by locating suitable interim storage space for the Wells Archives and raising funds toward the purpose; (d) offering to assist the Village in siting, designing, obtaining grants for, and constructing a suitable permanent Village archival facility that is of sufficient size to house the existing Village Archives and the potential addition of the Wells Collection.

NOW THEREFORE, Be It Resolved:

1. To authorize and direct the Mayor to make a formal request of Wells for the transfer to the Village of Aurora by gift or otherwise of historical archives consisting of books, records, photographs and other media in the Wells College Library Archives whether they strictly relate to the history of Wells or to the Village (the “Wells Archives”), thereafter to be preserved and identified in the Village Archives as the “Wells Collection.”
2. To request the AHS to take a lead role, in consultation with 2-3 Village officials to be selected by the Mayor, in confidentially approaching and communicating with Wells to explore the potential terms and conditions under which the Village’s request for the transfer of the Wells Archives might be acceptable to Wells.
3. To appoint a Village Archives Study Committee to work with the AHS to (a) locate suitable interim storage space that could accommodate the Wells Archives should they be transferred to the Village and raising funds toward the purpose; and (b) work on a plan for siting, designing, obtaining grants for, and constructing a suitable permanent Village archival

facility that is of sufficient size to house the existing Village Archives and the potential addition of the Wells Collection.

Trustee James Balloni: AYE
Trustee Matt Bianconi: AYE
Trustee L. John Miller: AYE
Trustee Janet Murphy: AYE
Mayor James Orman: ABSENT

At least 3 of the above-mentioned Trustees voted in favor and the resolution is duly adopted.

Mary Beth Bianconi Consulting Proposal (attached): On motion by Trustee Balloni, seconded by Trustee Miller, the Village Board voted to accept Mary Beth Bianconi's proposal to work as a consultant with the Village and Wells College, pro bono.

AYES: Balloni, Bianconi, Miller, Murphy

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Orman

Motion carried.

Boiler Purchase: On motion by Trustee Bianconi, seconded by Trustee Miller, the Village Board voted to spend up to \$25,000.00 for a new boiler to heat the water treatment plant and the water operator's house.

AYES: Balloni, Bianconi, Miller, Murphy

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Orman

Motion carried.

Herrtronics Alarm System Proposal (attached): On motion by Trustee Balloni, seconded by Trustee Bianconi, the Village Board voted to accept the Herrtronics proposal to repair/replace the alarm system for the firehouse.

AYES: Balloni, Bianconi, Miller, Murphy

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Orman

Motion carried.

Adjournment: On motion by Trustee Murphy, seconded by Trustee Miller, the Village Board voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:08 p.m.

AYES: Balloni, Bianconi, Miller, and Murphy

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Orman

Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Balloni
Village Clerk