

**Village of Aurora Board of Trustees February 19, 2025, Public Hearing and Regular Meeting 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:** Clerk Ann Balloni, ZBA Member Alexis Boyce, CPP Members Jim Burkett & Chris MacCormick, Historian Dr. Linda Schwab, and Account Clerk Christine Tanner

**Aurora Farmer's Market:** Ellen Hall, Vic Munoz, and Ron Woodburn

**Aurora Historical Society:** Shirley Egan, Ken Larson, and CJ Koepp

**Inns of Aurora:** Jody Bennett

**Members of the Public:** Katie Fong, Susan Forbes, and Pat Foser

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

**Public Hearing for Local Landmark Update – Barler Hall & Campbell Hall, Boathouse Lawn, and Cherry Ave/Court St Neighborhood**

On motion by Trustee Murphy, second by Trustee Miller, the Village Board voted to open the Public Hearing to update the local landmark list at 6:01 p.m.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

**Public Comment**

**Ken Larson:** see attached comment

**Susan Forbes:** see attached comment

**CJ Koepp:** (reads a letter submitted by Andrew Roblee & Nicole Fragnito, Preservation Association of Central New York, Wayne Goodman, Landmark Society of Western New York, Jay DiLorenzo, Preservation League of Central New York, and Bethany Parisi, Historic Ithaca) see attached letter

**Chris MacCormick:** Mr. MacCormick voiced support for the designations as a Community Preservation Panel member and resident of Court Street. Mr. MacCormick lamented the limited purview of the CPP in the revised Village Zoning Law and opined that the CPP review process is not “onerous or punitive” but “collegial” and CPP review of the proposed properties is not a change in procedure. Mr. MacCormick added that, initially, local landmarks were limited to the “grand buildings” and praised Aurora for recognizing the historical contribution of the working class, not just the “movers & shakers who moved and shaked buildings away from the lake”.

**Alexis Boyce:** Ms. Boyce questioned how village officials made the decision to recommend designating properties on Wells campus now that it has closed. Wells has argued that the designations will further restrict their ability to sell the campus. Ms. Boyce asked if professionals were consulted on the impact of designating Wells property as local landmarks on the salability of the campus. Ms. Boyce recommended

contacting experienced planners and economic development agencies before moving forward with the designations.

**Dr. Linda Schwab:** see attached comment

**Shirley Egan:** see attached comment

**Jim Burkett:** Mr. Burkett referenced the letter read by Ms. Koepp and voiced his support. Mr. Burkett noted that Mr. Netsch may not be as well-known as other architects, but that does not make his work any less important. Mr. Burkett advised the Village Board to “do the right thing”.

Several comments were emailed and will be posted and attached to the minutes.

On motion by Trustee Balloni, second by Trustee Bianconi, the Village Board voted to close the Public Hearing to update the local landmark list at 6:24 p.m.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

### **Regular Meeting**

**Changes to the Agenda:** Add to New Business: Fiscal Advisors resolution, Intro to the tax cap law resolution, support for the Patrick Tavern porch project, and Executive Session.

### **Approval of Minutes**

**January 15, 2025:** On motion by Trustee Bianconi, seconded by Trustee Murphy, the Village Board voted to approve the January 15, 2025, regular meeting minutes.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

**January 22, 2025:** On motion by Trustee Bianconi, seconded by Trustee Murphy, the Village Board voted to approve the January 22, 2025, special meeting minutes.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

### **Announcements**

**Mayor:** Mayor Orman noted for the record how appreciative he is for Christine Tanner’s help with village office duties.

**Clerk:** Ms. Balloni reported that the NYSDEC will once again treat Cayuga Lake for the Hydrilla infestation this summer.

Ms. Balloni informed the Village Board of recent record disposal (attached).

**Visitor Welcome:** No comments.

**Treasurer's Report:** No report.

Account Clerk Christine Tanner explained that she has been working with Williamson Law Book to learn how to generate all the overdue treasurer's reports. Ms. Tanner noted that because the treasurer has not closed out the months July – December 2024, the reports are on hold. Mayor Orman emphasized the importance of accurate, up to date financial figures as the Village continues to negotiate for funding for the water plant, abandoned by Wells College due to their closure.

Ms. Tanner added that, working with Williamson Law Book, she has automated the vouchers, is now receiving electronic statements, and set up direct deposit for the employees.

**Bills**

**General:** Trustee Murphy questioned the monthly payment to Orkin for the post office. Orkin was called in last summer to alleviate a bug infestation, but Trustee Murphy asked if paying them a monthly fee necessary? Trustee Balloni remarked that an annual contract divided into monthly payments could benefit the village in the long run. Mayor Orman commented that the infestation was more than a few bugs. Village staff will consult with the post office and DPW on the necessity.

On motion by Trustee Murphy, seconded by Trustee Bianconi, the Village Board voted to approve the General Fund Abstract #9 for payment.

Voucher #343-363 and 365-372

Total: \$18,498.28

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

**Water:** Trustees Balloni and Miller questioned the enormous electric bills for the water plant. Mayor Orman explained that other buildings on Wells campus are on the same electric meter, and he is working with Wells to ensure that they pay their fair share.

On motion by Trustee Balloni, seconded by Trustee Miller, the Village Board voted to approve the Water Fund Abstract #9 for payment.

Voucher #347-348

Total: \$12,904.43

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

**Sewer:** On motion by Trustee Bianconi, seconded by Trustee Balloni, the Village Board voted to approve the Sewer Fund Abstract #9 for payment.

Voucher #333-338

Total: \$5,801.42

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

**Reports**

**Code Officer:** No report

**Historian** (see attached): Dr. Schwab reported on extensive work regarding Wells College and Village archives.

**Aurora Historical Society** (see attached): President Egan submitted the AHS annual report. Ms. Egan reported that the AHS received funding from the Pleasant T. Rowland Foundation for the restoration of the Patrick Tavern porch. The project requires a New York State Department of Transportation permit because the project is partially located in NYSDOT right-of-way. The AHS is also researching survey quotes and requesting support from the Village Board.

On motion by Trustee Miller, second by Trustee Murphy, the Village Board voted to endorse the Aurora Historical Society Patrick Tavern Porch project.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

### **Old Business**

**Boiler Quotes:** The Village received three quotes from E&V, Hills Heating and Holbrook Heating. The E&V quote was only for an oil furnace and the trustees tabled a decision until a propane option is also submitted from E&V.

### **New Business**

**Aurora Farmer's Market:** Organizers requested use of the space behind the firehouse for the 2025 market.

On motion by Trustee Miller, second by Trustee Murphy, the Village Board voted to allow the Aurora Farmer's Market to operate behind the firehouse, May-October.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

**Village Zoning Law Section 700 Amendments:** Trustee Murphy remarked that the new procedures for the Community Preservation Panel (CPP) instituted by the zoning committee and county planning, should remain in the Village Zoning Law as they are consistent with the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) procedures. Additionally, Trustee Murphy confirmed that a reference mistake in section 700 may be corrected administratively.

### **RESOLUTION #25-01 to ADOPT AMENDMENTS TO THE 2024 VILLAGE ZONING LAW**

**WHEREAS,** it is the intention of the Village of Aurora to maintain a viable land use law as the Village of Aurora Zoning Law, and

**WHEREAS,** the Community Preservation Panel (CPP) has requested revisions to Article VII Historic Preservation in the Village Zoning Law; and

**WHEREAS**, the Village of Aurora Board of Trustees, at their November 20, 2024, regular meeting introduced the amendments to the Village Zoning Law; and

**WHEREAS**, the Village Board held a public hearing to receive comments for and against the amendments on December 18, 2024; and

**WHEREAS**, the Village Board received zero (0) comments from the public; and

**WHEREAS**, the Cayuga County Planning Board GML 239 Review Committee found no inter-municipal impacts and had no comments; 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, the following members of the Village Board of Trustees being present:

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

The instant 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:

1. The Village Board of Trustees hereby adopts the proposed amendments to Local Law #1 of 2025 in the form annexed hereto.

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

Trustee Balloni - NAY  
Trustee Bianconi - NAY  
Trustee Miller - NAY  
Trustee Murphy - NAY  
Mayor Orman - NAY

Motion defeated unanimously.

**Fiscal Advisors Resolution:**

**Resolution #25-02 to Request Fiscal Advisors to Assist the Village with the Aurora Water Project**

**Date:** February 19, 2025

**Introduced:** Trustee Miller

**Second:** Trustee Bianconi

WHEREAS, the Village of Aurora has and continues to face significant financial burdens as a result of the sudden closure of Wells College; and

WHEREAS, the Village has an already in-place Agreement with Fiscal Advisors of Syracuse, New York to provide financial planning assistance and guidance relative to the previous major water project from 2018-20 which never was undertaken; and

WHEREAS, the Village again is in need of assistance in financial planning and guidance as it pertains to the present financial crisis and uncertainty;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Village requests the services of Fiscal Advisors at this time to assist the Village, as needed. to navigate the financial issues, it now faces.

**Roll Call Vote**

**Balloni** - AYE

**Bianconi** - AYE

**Miller** - AYE

**Murphy** - AYE

**Orman** - AYE

At least 3 of the above named voted in the affirmative for approval of this resolution at a regular meeting of the Village of Aurora Board of Trustees, February 19, 2025.

**Introduction to Local Law #1 of 2025:**

**VB RESOLUTION #25-03**

**RESOLUTION INTRODUCING LOCAL LAW #1 OF 2025 ENTITLED  
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 the Aurora Firehouse meeting room, 456 Main Street, at 6:00 p.m. on February 19, 2025, the following members of the Village Board of Trustees being present:

JIM ORMAN, MAYOR  
JAMES BALLONI  
MATTHEW BIANCONI  
L. JOHN MILLER  
JANET MURPHY

The instant 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:

1. The Village Board of Trustees hereby introduces Proposed Local Law # of 2025 in the form annexed hereto for consideration and adoption.
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 will hold a properly noticed Public Hearing on the Proposed Local Law # of 2025 to be held on March 19, 2025, beginning at 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 AYE

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

**Introduction of Local Landmark Amendment:** The Trustees discussed landmark status, historic designations, CPP review, discussion with consultants, salability of Wells campus, and whether to move forward with the amendments.

On motion by Trustee Miller, second by Trustee Bianconi, the Village Board voted to table introducing the local landmark amendments.

AYES: Bianconi and Orman

NAYS: Balloni, Miller, and Murphy

Motion denied.

The Village Board agreed to move forward with the amendments while seeking advice from consultants.

**VB RESOLUTION #25-04:**

**RESOLUTION INTRODUCING AN AMENDMENT TO LOCAL LAW #2 OF 2024, APPENDIX IV, 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 for the local landmark list; and

**WHEREAS**, the Community Preservation Panel held a properly noticed public hearing for comments for and against the recommendations on January 8, 2024; and

**WHEREAS**, the Community Preservation Panel approved additions to the list at a regular meeting on January 8, 2025 and submitted the following recommendations to the Village Board of Trustees for consideration:

(I will list the Cherry Ave/Court St properties, along with Barler, Campbell, and the Boathouse Lawn)

**WHEREAS**, the Village Zoning Law (Local Law #2 of 2024), per section 705.B. 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, the following members of the Village Board of Trustees being present:

JAMES BALLONI  
MATTHEW BIANCONI  
L. JOHN MILLER  
JANET MURPHY  
JAMES ORMAN, MAYOR

The instant 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:

1. The Village Board of Trustees hereby introduces Proposed Local Law #2 of 2025 in the form annexed hereto for consideration and adoption.



2. The Village Board of Trustees hereby determines that the aforementioned Local Law 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.

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

Now upon the Motion of Trustee Balloni and Seconded by Trustee Murphy 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 AYE

At least 3 of the above-named Village Board of Trustee members having voted in the affirmative, this resolution is adopted this 19<sup>th</sup> day of February 2025

**Executive Session:** On motion by Trustee Balloni, second by Trustee Miller, the Village Board voted to enter into Executive Session at 7:15 p.m. to discuss employee concerns and sale/lease of real property.

The Village Board did not take any action during Executive Session.

On motion by Trustee Bianconi, second by Trustee Murphy, the Village Board voted to adjourn the Executive Session at 7:47 p.m.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

**Letter Authorization:** On motion by Trustee Miller, second by Trustee Balloni, the Village Board voted to authorize Mayor Orman to send a letter to Village Treasurer, Deborah Brooks, regarding her employment.

**Adjournment:** On motion by Trustee Bianconi, seconded by Trustee Murphy, 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.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Balloni  
Village Clerk