

Village of Aurora Board of Trustees January 15, 2025, 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, CPP Chair Jim Burkett, ZBA Chair Karen Hindenlang, Historian Dr. Linda Schwab, and Account Clerk Christine Tanner

Aurora Historical Society: Shirley Egan and Ken Larson

CLEAN Rep: George Patte

Inns of Aurora: Jody Bennett

Members of the Public: Kevin Fitzgerald

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

Changes to the Agenda: Add boiler quote and Patrick Tavern support letter under New Business. Reschedule Bates Donation to a special meeting. Add Executive Session and move Account Clerk hours to after Executive Session.

Approval of Minutes: On motion by Trustee Murphy, second by Trustee Bianconi, the Village Board voted to approve the December 19, 2024, minutes, with corrections (Trustee Bianconi was not in attendance).

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

Announcements

Mayor

- WebEx scheduled with the Department of Health for an update on the water plant situation
- Wells Public information meeting on January 21 at 8:00 p.m. at the Morgan Opera House.
- January 11 water main break behind the boathouse.

Visitor Welcome

George Patte from Cayuga Lake Environmental Action Now (CLEAN) requested support from the Village Board urging the NYSDEC to conduct a full environmental review of the Cargill Salt Mine expansion.

Village of Aurora Resolution #25-02 Regarding Cargill Incorporated's Permit Application for the Cayuga Salt Mine

January 15, 2025

Motion: Trustee Miller

Second: Trustee Bianconi

WHEREAS, Cargill Incorporated has submitted a permit application (0-9999-00075/00001) to renew and modify its Mined Land Reclamation Permit for the Cayuga Salt Mine, which includes plans to flood the abandoned S3 Zone of the mine beneath Cayuga Lake with wastewater, potentially impacting the environment and the community;

WHEREAS, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has declared itself the lead agency under the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQR) and issued a Negative Declaration despite the application being classified as a Type I action, which typically requires a more thorough environmental review;

WHEREAS, significant concerns have been raised regarding the adequacy of Cargill's application, including compliance with the Mined Land Reclamation Law, monitoring and treatment of waste materials, the potential for groundwater pollution, the stability of the mine, and the long-term reclamation of the affected areas;

WHEREAS, the proposed flooding of the S3 Zone raises serious questions about the safety and environmental integrity of Cayuga Lake, particularly in light of prior instability noted in this area and the implications of storing not-fully-saturated brine beneath the lake;

WHEREAS, various stakeholders, including environmental groups and local officials, have expressed concerns regarding the potential adverse impacts of Cargill's proposed activities, highlighting the need for a more comprehensive environmental impact statement and public engagement;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Village of Aurora formally requests that the DEC:

1. Deny Cargill's permit application or, alternatively, rescind the Negative Declaration and require the preparation of a comprehensive Environmental Impact Statement to assess all potential environmental risks associated with the proposed activities.
2. Conduct a public hearing to allow for community input and address the substantive concerns raised by residents and stakeholders regarding the application.
3. Ensure that Cargill's Reclamation Plan and accompanying bond are revised to adequately address environmental protection and public safety, and that sufficient measures are implemented to prevent potential pollution and ensure the long-term stability of the mine and surrounding areas.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be sent to Comment.CayugaSaltMine2023@dec.ny.gov, DEC Commissioner Dereth Glance (dereth.glance@dec.ny.gov), OGS Commissioner Jeanette Moy (officeofthecommissioner@ogs.ny.gov), and DEC Permit Administrator Jonathan Stercho (jonathan.stercho@dec.ny.gov) to ensure that the voices of the Village of Aurora's residents are heard in this critical decision-making process.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Trustee James Balloni: AYE

Trustee Matthew Bianconi: AYE

Trustee L. John Miller: AYE

Trustee Janet Murphy: AYE

Mayor James Orman: AYE

Treasurer's Report: No report

Budget Modifications

General Fund

\$27,770.00 From A599 Fund Balance

\$19,820.00 To F8340.2 Transmission & Distribution-Equipment

\$7,950.00 To F8340.4R /transmission & Distribution-Contractual

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

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

Bills

General: On motion by Trustee Murphy, second by Trustee Bianconi, the Village Board voted to approve the General Fund Abstract #8 for payment.

Voucher #303, 304, 306, 308, 310-316, 318-324, 328, 331-334, and 337-342

Total: \$16,036.62

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

Water: On motion by Trustee Murphy, second by Trustee Balloni, the Village Board voted to approve the Water Fund Abstract #8 for payment.

Voucher #302, 305-309, 315, 320-324, 333, 335, and 336

Total: \$39,430.08

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

Sewer: On motion by Trustee Murphy, second by Trustee Balloni, the Village Board voted to approve the Sewer Fund Abstract #8 for payment.

Voucher #304, 306, 309, 316, 317, 320, 327, and 332

Total: \$5,127.41

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

Reports

Code Officer (attached): Officer Rhea reported on recent permit activity.

Historian (attached): Dr. Schwab reported on recent queries and submitted her response (attached) to a letter from Wells College attorneys Bond, Shoeneck, and King (attached) disputing eligibility of local landmark designations recommended by the Community Preservation Panel (see January 8, 2025, CPP meeting minutes).

Old Business

Bates Donation Agreement: On motion by Trustee Balloni, second by Trustee Murphy, the Village Board voted to schedule a special meeting to finalize the Bates Donation Agreement on January 22, 2025, at 5:30 p.m.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

Purchase and Sale Agreement (PSA): The Village Board reviewed the counteroffer from Wells attorney to the purchase offer for the water plant, water tower, and the water operator's house.

On motion by Trustee Balloni, second by Trustee Murphy, the Village Board voted to authorize the village attorney to resend the Purchase & Sale Agreement to Wells attorney with the original offer.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

New Business

Local Law #1 of 2025 To Amend the Village Zoning Law

Trustee Murphy remarked that the Village Zoning Law was recently adopted in July and amendments are premature until the law has been tested.

Trustees Miller and Bianconi requested additional time to consider the amendments.

On motion by Trustee Miller, second by Trustee Balloni, the Village Board voted to table the vote for Local Law #1 of 2025 until the February 19, 2025, meeting.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

Landmark Recommendations: On motion by Trustee Murphy, second by Trustee Balloni, the Village Board voted to accept the Boathouse Lawn, Barler & Campbell buildings, and Cherry Ave/Court St neighborhood recommendations from the Community Preservation Panel for landmark designation, and schedule a public hearing for February 19, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

REV Theatre Program: On motion by Trustee Murphy, second by Trustee Bianconi, the Village Board voted to co-sponsor the REV Theatre Program youth production with the Aurora Free Library, each paying \$275.00 for the performance.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

Blake Thermal Quote: On motion by Trustee Murphy, second by Trustee Bianconi, the Village Board voted to accept the quote of \$1,156.17 from Blake Thermal for boiler service at the water plant.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

Patrick Tavern Support Letter: On motion by Trustee Miller, second by Trustee Murphy, the Village Board voted to send a letter to Farm Credit East supporting the nomination of Patrick Tavern for the Lipinski Award.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

Executive Session: On motion by Mayor Orman, second by Trustee Murphy, the Village Board voted to enter into Executive Session at 7:05 p.m. to discuss employee concerns and sale/lease of real property.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

No action was taken during Executive Session.

On motion by Trustee Bianconi, second by Trustee Murphy, the Village Board voted to adjourn Executive Session at 7:33 p.m.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

Account Clerk Hours: On motion by Trustee Balloni, second by Trustee Murphy, the Village Board voted to increase the account clerk's hours to a maximum of 25 hours/week.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

Adjournment: On motion by Trustee Miller, second by Trustee Murphy, the Village Board voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:35 p.m.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.