



REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE VILLAGE OF WATKINS GLEN HELD TUESDAY, JULY 18, 2023

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The public session of the meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm by Mayor Laurie DeNardo.

Present were Mayor Laurie DeNardo, Deputy Mayor Peter G. Cheroch, Trustee Nan Woodworth, Trustee Bob Carson, Trustee Margaret Schimizzi, Superintendent of Public Works Terry Wilcox, and Clerk Fred Warrick. Also present were Water Supervisor Meghan Fox and Electric Supervisor Tom Ballard. There were approximately six other people in attendance.

PUBLIC BE HEARD

Kristin VanHorn, Schuyler County Planning Director reviewed with the Board that last October the Board passed a resolution to apply for the Appalachian Regional Commission Funding for the Clute Park lift station and force main reroute. The grant is a 50/50 grant at 2.4 million. ARC has approved the application and would fund the project by providing 1.2 million. The Village would be required to fund the other half, a match of \$1,163,500 and must decide by resolution when ready.

Michael Learn addressed the Board about ongoing concerns over the lack of parking and accessibility to local businesses for disabled people. Some improvements have been made but there are still several issues that need to be addressed. He encouraged the Board to continue working with community members to make Watkins a more accessible Village to the disabled.

Frank La Face, with his son Giuseppe offered his thanks to Village crewmembers stating that the Village looks well kept.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes for the Regular Meeting held on July 11, 2023

Trustee Nan Woodworth made a motion to approve the minutes for the regular Board meeting held on July 11, 2023. Trustee Margaret Schimizzi seconded the motion. The Board then voted on the motion. Trustee Bob Carson abstained due to his absence from that meeting. All others were in favor. Motion Carried.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Deputy Mayor Peter G. Cheroch made the motion to approve all Department Head reports. Trustee Nan Woodworth seconded the motion. The Board then voted on the motion and all were in favor. Motion Carried.

VOTING ITEMS

Resolutions

Trustee Nan Woodworth motioned to approve a resolution in opposition to the New York State Senate Bill S-00139B and Assembly Bill A-1358B.

WHEREAS, New York Senate Bill number S-00139B has been passed which, if adopted by the NYS Assembly (A 1358-B) and signed by the Governor, would require all Judges presiding in the 100 largest Town and Village Courts to be licensed to practice law in the State and to have been admitted to the NYS Bar for at least five years; and

WHEREAS, The Town and Village Courts in Schuyler County are among the nearly 1,200 Justice Courts in the State of New York that collectively handle close to 1 million cases each year; and

WHEREAS, The Town and Village Courts are known as the "Courts Closest to the People" and have broad jurisdiction, presiding over civil and criminal matters, thereby performing a vital role in the New York State Unified Court System; and

WHEREAS, The Village Court of Watkins Glen is a vital service to our residents and the Schuyler County

community as a whole; and

WHEREAS, The Justices in Schuyler County's Town and Village Courts have pledged to be ever mindful of their neutrality and impartiality, and render equal justice to all, while continually adhering to judicial rules of ethics and pronouncements of the New York State Commission on Judicial Conduct; and

WHEREAS, The Justices are required to be on-call 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to review/sign arrest and search warrants, perform arraignments, and issue orders of protection; and

WHEREAS, The Justices of Town and Village Courts ensure that the rights afforded to defendants by the Constitutions of the United States and the State of New York are provided and protected; and

WHEREAS, The Justices of Town and Village Courts preside over trials involving misdemeanor and violation level offenses, thereby ensuring that the victims of those offenses can be heard; and

WHEREAS, The Town and Village Courts provide a venue for Citizens to pursue a low- cost and efficient procedure for individuals to resolve civil disputes and landlord/tenant matters; and

WHEREAS, The Justices preside nightly and weekend and holiday mornings at the Schuyler County Arraignment Part ('CAP') conducted in the County Jail, (CAP) that ensures that arrested citizens are promptly afforded legal representation, the opportunity to plead to alleged charges, and be processed for release, bail, or incarceration;

WHEREAS, The Justices continually strive to improve the administration of justice through participation in mandatory education programs, seminars, meetings of the Chemung/ Schuyler County Magistrates Association and the New York State Magistrates Association; and

WHEREAS, The New York State Office of Court Administration must certify all as having successfully completed mandatory training both following election and in each subsequent year; and

WHEREAS, The New York State's Commission on Judicial Conduct's most recent annual report (2023) identifies that only 13% of the complaints filed against the judiciary were against Town and Village judges while the remaining complaints were against either "State-paid" judges, (constituting approximately 40% of the judiciary) who accounted for approximately 67% of the complaints received, or against non-judicial entities (20%); and

WHEREAS, This Bill attempts to usurp the right of voters to elect those in their communities that they believe to be fair and impartial, and who would best serve that community, whether they be attorneys or non-attorneys; and

WHEREAS, This Bill implicitly suggests that members of a community are incapable of making informed decisions about who should sit in judgment of matters from the straight- forward to the highly complex as may arise in their local courts; and

WHEREAS, this legislative body views the intention of this Bill is not to actually improve the courts, but a blatant and unconscionable attempt by the New York State Bar Association, an organization that represents approximately only fifteen percent (15%) of the State's attorneys, to generate increased opportunities for its members, and to dictate who voters may choose to serve in our local governments;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Governing board of the Village of Watkins Glen strongly, and in unequivocal terms, calls on both the leadership in the Senate and Assembly, and the Governor to reject this poorly conceived and hastily fashioned seizure of voters' rights to determine, for themselves, who they would choose to sit as their judges as has been the case for almost two hundred years.

Trustee Bob Carson seconded the motion. The Board then voted on the motion and all were in favor. Motion Carried.

Trustee Bob Carson motioned to approve a resolution approving a Municipal Utility Easement by and between Natasha Hospitality, LLC and the Village of Watkins Glen.

WHEREAS, the Village of Watkins Glen (“Village”) is the owner of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative – Village Gateways Project; and

WHEREAS, the South Gateway while under construction has been found to be encroaching onto the premises owned by Natasha Hospitality, LLC, whose address is 435 South Franklin Street, Watkins Glen, NY; and

WHEREAS, the Village recognizes the need to enter into a Municipal Utility Easement agreement due to the encroachment;

NOW, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Village of Watkins Glen Board of Trustees has reviewed and approved the Municipal Utility Easement by and between Natasha Hospitality, LLC and the Village to be executed by the mayor.

Deputy Mayor Peter G. Cherock seconded the motion. The Board then voted on the motion and all were in favor. Motion Carried.

[Grand Prix Festival – 3rd Street](#)

Trustee Bob Carson motioned to approve the use of 3rd Street from Franklin to the first alleyway as a staging area for vendors who are not specifically in an agreement with Watkins Glen Promotions for the event. Trustee Nan Woodworth seconded the motion. In further discussion, vendors not participating under a direct agreement with WGP must obtain their vendor permit at the Village office. The Board then voted on the motion and all were in favor. Motion Carried

[Building and Maintenance Lead](#)

Trustee Bob Carson motioned to approve Scott Taylor to provisionally assume the added responsibilities of the Building and Maintenance Lead position for Park Maintenance, spending up to 20 hours/week acting in that capacity, with a pay rate change to \$23.70/hr.

[Park Campground Pavillion](#)

Trustee Bob Carson made the motion to approve the Parks Dept. request to dedicate the campground pavilion in the name of James L. Stewart. Trustee Nan Woodworth seconded the motion. The Board then voted on the motion and all were in favor. Motion Carried.

[Village Recycling](#)

Trustee Nan Woodworth motioned to approve the annual contract renewal for Village recycling with Cardinal at \$60,000 per year. Trustee Margaret Schimizzi seconded the motion. The Board then voted on the motion and all were in favor. Motion Carried.

[AUDITS](#)

[General Audit](#)

Trustee Nan Woodworth made the motion to approve the general audit dated July 14, 2023 in the following amounts:

General	\$24,785.58	Sewer	\$111,104.70
Electric	\$8,628.96	Water	\$8,508.70
Joint Activity (CVWRF)	\$22,500.39		
Summer Rec	\$300		

Deputy Mayor Peter G. Cherock seconded the motion. The Board then voted on the motion and all were in favor. Motion Carried.

BOARD CONCERNS

Debt Management Plan

Mayor Laurie DeNardo discussed with the Board the desire to create a debt management plan for the Village to adopt.

Village Recycling Program

71.84% of responses encouraged the Board to keep the current recycling service. The Board may consider a minimal fee added to resident utility bills to help cover the growing costs.

Town of Dix

The Village is working with its attorney on resolution regarding the Town's water debt and fire contract.

ADJOURN

With no further business to come before the Board, Trustee Bob Carson motioned to adjourn at 7:00 p.m. Deputy Mayor Peter G. Cherock seconded the motion. The Board then voted on the motion and all were in favor. Motion Carried.

Meeting Adjourned.

Respectively Submitted,

Fred Warrick
Village Clerk