

Village Board of Trustees
Regular Meeting
January 2, 2024

“ DRAFT ”

MAYOR TRAVER CALLED THE MEETING TO ORDER AT 7:00 PM AND LED THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Roll Call	Trustee Boucher, Trustee Carpenter, Trustee Cutler
Absent	Trustee Williams
Code	Dave Armando
Attorney	
Water	
Street	
Clerk	Janelle Rose
Public	Kyle Cozzens, Frank Burkhardt, Jim Thatcher, Mike & Melanie Dickinson, John Huggins

THESE ARE NOT OFFICIALLY ADOPTED MINUTES AND ARE SUBJECT TO BOARD AND STAFF REVISIONS. ANY REVISIONS WILL APPEAR ON THE FOLLOWING MONTHS MINUTES AND WILL STATE SUCH APPROVAL OF SAID MINUTES.

The mayor asked for a moment of silence for Tim Morency who recently passed away. Tim was a retired member of our Police Department as well as the Fire Department.

The mayor asked for a motion to set a public hearing for February 5th at 6:45 p.m. prior to the regular meeting for the CDBG Planning Grant. This second public hearing is required for grant completion.

A motion was made by Trustee **Cutler**, seconded by Trustee **Carpenter**. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

MINUTES – December 4 , 2023

A MOTION TO ACCEPT THE MONTHLY MINUTES WAS MADE BY:
Trustee **Carpenter**, SECONDED BY Trustee **Cutler**.

All Ayes. Motion Carried.

REPORTS – December 2023

A MOTION TO ACCEPT THE FOLLOWING MONTHLY REPORTS WAS MADE BY:
Trustee **Cutler**, SECONDED BY Trustee **Carpenter**.

Clerk/Treasurer, Village Justice, Street, Water Department, Code Enforcement.

All Ayes. Motion Carried.

AUDIT OF BILLS

Accept the Audit of Monthly Bills
MOTION BY Trustee **Carpenter**, SECONDED BY Trustee **Boucher**.

All Ayes. Motion Carried.

General PBA ~~~~~ \$8,819.36

General Abstract #7 ~~~~~ \$101,609.09
Water PBA ~~~~~ \$1,789.34
Water Fund Abstract #7 ~~~~ \$14,132.23

NEW BUSINESS

Resolution 23 of 2023-2024

Authorizing a contract with CT Male for Grant Admin for CDBG Water lines for Cooper, Prospect and Grove Streets

Motion By: Trustee Cutler

Seconded By: Trustee Carpenter

Date: January 4, 2024

WHEREAS, the Village of Fort Edward has applied to the Office of Community Renewal for CDBG funds to finance the community development activities to replace water lines on Cooper Street, Prospect Street and Grove Streets in the Village of Fort Edward; and

WHEREAS, the Office of Community Renewal has selected the Village of Fort Edward to receive an award in an amount not to exceed \$1,000,000.00 in grant funds; and

WHEREAS the Village of Fort Edward Board of Trustees is requesting CT Male Associates for the mutual consideration set forth and agrees CT Male will provide grant setup and administration services for the FY 2023 CDBG Public Water Award (410PW134-23 to support final design and construction of the new water lines, valves, and hydrants on Cooper, Prospect and Grove Streets within the Village; and

WHEREAS the Village of Fort Edward agrees to pay CT Male Associates as compensation for services as follows: Not to exceed fee of \$32,500.00 including direct expenses and based on the established hourly rates indicated in the contract agreement for completion of the Scope of Services; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Board of Trustees hereby authorizes the Mayor to execute a contract with CT Male for the grant setup and administration services in an amount not to exceed \$32,500.00; and

This resolution shall take effect immediately.

All Ayes. Motion Carried.

Resolution 24 of 2023-2024

Acceptance of Highway Department Contract for June 1, 2023 – May 31, 2026

Motion by **Trustee Cutler**

Seconded by **Trustee Boucher**

Dated: January 2, 2024

WHEREAS, the Fort Edward Department of Public Works (DPW) contract expires on May 31, 2023; and

WHEREAS, the Highway Committee has met with Highway representatives and come to an agreement; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Village Board of Trustees does hereby accept and approve the DPW contract which covers the time period of June 1, 2023 - May 31, 2026, and authorizes retro pay for from June 1, 2023, through January 7, 2024; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, this resolution takes effect immediately.

ALL AYES. MOTION CARRIED

OTHER BUSINESS

- **Empire State Trail Towns** – Kyle Cozzens read the program to the board and public. “Technical assistance will build on what is already in place with the infrastructure and resources. A town that welcomes this program will submit an application which must go through a municipality. Promote Fort Edward will go through the town for this application as it will increase the pool of resources and is a bigger area. Most of the trail towns are in the village”. The mayor asked if the town takes the grant, and if the town pays from the A fund that would mean that the village and the town pays. Kyle stated that “there is a big hurdle with camping in the village as the village code does not have anything in it specifically stating no camping, only no camping on village owned property or parks, etc.” Kyle mentions “our first step is to amend the camping options within the village code. The code should specify permitted camping which would be issued through the village clerk’s office, the type of camping and locations where camping is allowed. The yacht basin is the best area, especially with the marketplace being right on the trail if restrooms are needed. Beyond the pond at Mullen Park is the feeder canal. The locks allow camping. Promote Fort Edward will talk to the canal system to promote this through all channels”. The mayor mentioned that there is a way we can write this into our village local law. Kyle informed the board that the timeline for this program moves quickly. The deadline for the application is February 2, 2024. The provisional trail towns are not notified in late February, and the trail town virtual orientation for selected communities is March 6, 2024. The program is implemented through the spring and summer and if all the requirements are satisfied then official trail town status is awarded at the end of the year. Kyle said “once selected, I would like to have a steering committee throughout the summer as there are different steps. The steering committee will identify issues and try to solve them. Parks and trails have action items. Some other requirements are to fill out a report. The first step is getting the trail town designation which leads to more people stopping and make it more bike friendly”. Mayor Traver stated that this is a good opportunity for Fort Edward. Trustee Cutler wondered if there would be any money from the state. Kyle responded “The town applied for the NY Forward grant however Fort Edward didn’t have enough happening at that time. The Canal Corp has grants available and the first year it is open to towns on the Champlain section. John Huggins commented by saying “DOH funds these types of programs with understanding where the trail is for signage”. Trustee Cutler stated that maybe the

island could be incorporated into it. Mike Dickinson, market manager for the Fort Edward Canal Street Marketplace added that with camping, there would be a need for extra help in cleaning up. Also, a drop box or Venmo would be beneficial as the tourists would pay per site and someone could be there to greet the ones staying. Kyle said “I got the inspiration from Woodstock. There is a kiosk in the center of the village and right along the trail there is a shack with information. With Fort Edward having the marketplace, it could serve as a welcome center. There is a lot of potential from this program”. The mayor said that having the presence on websites would be beneficial as well. Kyle was also thinking that having extra brochure holders and banners at the marketplace as a welcome center would help as well. Melanie Dickinson said that since we’ve already gone through the process last summer with the Glamping idea, it is a good spot for campers. The mayor mentioned consulting with our attorney on how to legally collect money for camping.

- **LaBella Proposal** – The mayor, attorney Fuller and trustee Cutler met with LaBella. They broke down the scope of the project to get it out to bid. CDBG wants a shovel in the ground this year. Jim Thatcher explained that the lump sum column, fixed cost we need desperately. Jim mentioned that we do not need an engineer there daily. The mayor talked about our first phase and how Bob Dickinson was there during the project, and he couldn’t tell them anything, it had to come from the engineers. The mayor said it is a pretty straightforward job, there is no sewer involved. The mayor said with a project small like this, we won’t get top notch. The mayor stated that they do need to approve this tonight so we can go out to bid by February. A motion to approve was made by Trustee **Cutler**, seconded by Trustee **Boucher**. All ayes. Motion carried. Trustee Carpenter stated that the residents on these streets have been waiting for a very long time to get this project done.

- **Route 4 / School Crossing** – The mayor informed the rest of the board that two more caution cones have been placed on each side of the road during the crossings. There is a big problem with the northbound traffic. The sheriff’s have been there every morning and afternoon since the complaints started coming in regarding safety. It is getting better as the sheriffs have started writing tickets. The visibility of the sheriffs has helped as well. The question came up regarding the yellow flashing lights while school is in session above and below the school speed limit signs. The mayor would like to investigate who controls those lights. Is it the Village, School, or DOT? The mayor asked Janelle to make some calls and confirm it. The thought of getting new flashing lights was discussed as well. The mayor revisited the new crossing signs with flashing lights. DOT ok’d these and they will be installed the summer of 2024. The mayor explained that any caution sign that are made now are more colorful, bright neon and more visible. If we get some of these signs changed out, it may help. They have more of a reflective material on them now. The mayor informed the public that he will follow up with Brodie to make sure all crosswalks are painted each year. As far as the discussion and idea to change the village speed limit to 25mph, right now we just need to keep on the sheriffs. If they are more noticed and enforce our village laws, things should calm down. Trustee Carpenter mentioned that right now, traffic is doing 40 in a 30. Trustee Boucher said that the only thing that slows traffic down is the garbage trucks. The mayor said that with the focus right now on the school, he will make sure the sheriffs start focusing on other areas within the village. Kyle said “there is an article in the city of transportation officials that states the success stories of lowering the speed limits, there are case studies” he said. Kyle would like the village to look towards the future with more people here. “As speed limits increase, so does fatality”. The mayor said that success on Broadway may be hard. When you watch people driving by and think they are speeding, they aren’t and the ones who are do not look like they are. “There are a lot of speeders in the village”, stated the mayor. Trustee Boucher reminded everyone about all the stop signs that were installed within the village to slow people down, however right after they stop, they punch it. John Huggins spoke with Pete Williams about East Street being one of the wider streets within the village and when they are wider, they drive faster. John gave a suggestion of putting a single line down the middle of East Street which may help reduce speed. John said it’s been a proven strategy that streets that are wide add a center line. John mentioned that the state would reduce to 25mph and that there is a program in progress right now. Melanie Dickinson said if there is a line down the middle, people will not pass. Kyle said “there are two sides to this. Adding stop signs, lines in the road, lowering the limit and the other side is protecting people

on bikes as well as walking and kids walking to school. Lowering it to 25 mph, they have no reason to zoom. There are so many case studies showing benefits for communities by reducing the limit. People coming off the Amtrak train as well". The mayor explained that if they do look at reducing the limit, it's a several month process. Trustee Boucher thinks that we should wait and see what the sheriffs do with all the problem areas and see if it gets any better. The mayor said everyone is aware of wanting the limit lowered to 25 mph. Trustee Boucher said there is a speed trap hotline and FE was on it. It mentions places you don't want to speed because the cops are there.

- **Complete Policies – John Huggins** – John Huggins explained to the board that come June 1st which is the beginning of a new grant cycle, the village will have to have policies in place in order to be granted any funding. Pete Williams and John Boucher will meet with John to discuss Complete Streets policies as well as Safe Routes to School policy. If there is a policy stating the village comes together to ensure no deaths of a pedestrian, write a vision of ZERO fatalities, that is what they are looking for. Frank Burkhardt mentioned that the state highways have cameras through construction zones and if caught, it is a \$50 fine. John Huggins added that by painting all the crosswalks, painting solid lines down a wider street, with that, we should make sure that all stop bars are freshly painted as well. Kyle told the board that the crosswalk at the train station was done horribly. The spacing is not even. Kyle said that there is a lot of data out there on safe crosswalks as well. The village should look into that data. The mayor said the board would look at having some of these done professionally, however he did at one point and it is very expensive. Maybe the county could possibly stripe for us. John Huggins said that Whitehall received equipment through a grant to stripe crosswalks and stop bars. Mike Dickinson said that the county is doing East Road and reducing the speed limit and making it an ordinance. Kyle mentioned that after the sheriff's posted the enforcement at the school, he saw a lot of feedback on facebook agreeing and concerned.
- **Kayak Launch update** – Trustee Cutler updated the board that we received an email from Army Corp of Engineers on things still needed for the application. Trustee Cutler wonders if Candock could assist us with some of the questions that need attention in the application. With the three quotes we received, Candock is our best resource with their knowledge for assistance with the installation. Mike Dickinson asked if we do have high waters, do we remove the dock to avoid the risk of damage. The mayor explained that we have learned that the Baptist Church property goes right to the river. Trustee Williams is reaching out to Lynn Griffin in case we need to get an easement. Attorney Fuller pointed out that if an easement is needed, get the paperwork started.
- **Water Project #1** – The mayor said that the contract with LaBella needs to be closed out from the first water project that was started to get repayment to EFC. The board will have to figure out the best way to pay for the work already done. **Resolution #26**. A motion to close out this contract was made by Trustee **Boucher**, seconded by Trustee **Cutler**. All ayes. Motion carried.
- **Crossing Guard** – The Broadway crossing guard, Rob Spofford has been out due to an accident. The mayor asked if the board thinks an alternate should be hired. The board agreed that Rob must have a release note from the doctor as well as the physical therapist. Janelle will post the position on the village FB page as well as the website to see if we can get some interest.
- **CHPE** – The mayor explained that at next month's meeting, they need approval on the final design.
- **Annex building** – There is a survey in progress, however the board and school agreed to move the property line as the school is concerned about losing parking spaces. They want to cut off the boundary to allow for 2 or 3 parking spaces to go with the Annex once officially conveyed the Town and Village.
- **Canalside Energy Park** – the design is with Sean Doty from KSPE for review. The mayor will find out what they want for water. Will they need sewer? Anything along the canal bed will need to go to the Canal Corp.
- **West Summit Street** – The closing took place on the purchase of the village vacant land. Payment

has been made in full by Patrick Mullen.

- **138-140 Broadway** – The mayor and board will get all of the information for the contractors who received a RFPQ as no one has reached out or shown interest in this project to rehab these buildings to get them in sellable condition. They will try and contact them via phone or email again.
- **Irving Tissue** – Dave Armando updated the board that they are moving along with their project to build the 66,000 square foot warehouse. Dave has been inspecting weekly as they have been pouring the pylons. Dave also reported that cumbies was supposed to be down by the end of the year, but they had to wait for National Grid to cut the power to the building. Trustee Boucher asked what we could do about our code of the village because we have a lot of homes and properties that look terrible. Dave mentioned that we do have a section in our code for exterior and will review it and start sending out letters. Trustee Boucher stated that Washington Street is very discouraging. John Huggins mentioned that property trash is difficult, but you can fine them. The most successful approach is to designate a day to help and offer assistance, especially to the elderly. The mayor agrees to send letters and said that some will comply and some wont.
- **Yacht Basin Amphitheater** – The mayor is going to get ahold of Joe Roblee to see what he has accomplished as far as detailed plans. The mayor will pass that information along to Mike Dickinson. There is a call in to Stewart's and hoping for a nice donation from them as well. Mike Dickinson said the ballpark figure on this project is \$125-\$150 thousand. Mike said that the concrete will be donated. The mayor said that Don Valentine deals with the Amish, however Melanie Dickinson commented that the Amish only have specific designs. The mayor said that Clean Earth, ESMI, Irving and Stewarts all want to know what we are putting there. As before when the Gazebo was there, we will have evets, concerts, etc.

A motion to adjourn was made by **Trustee Carpenter**, seconded by **Trustee Boucher**.

All ayes. Motion Carried.

Respectfully Submitted,



Janelle M. Rose, Clerk-Treasurer
January 2, 2024