

**Village of Fort Edward  
Board of Trustees – Regular Board Meeting  
Monday, August 5, 2024, at 7:00 p.m.**

Mayor Traver called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**Roll Call:** Trustee Williams, Trustee Boucher, Trustee Cutler  
**Absent:** Trustee Carpenter

**Present:** Nasrene Haj, Jeanie Mullen, Kyle Cozzens, Frank Burkhardt, David Earsing, Sarah Pope, Steve Davie, Jim Thatcher.

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**Approval of Minutes from July meeting**

**Motion by:** Trustee **Carpenter**

**Seconded by:** Trustee **Cutler**

All ayes. Motion carried.

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**Approval of Reports – Clerk, Code, Street, Sheriff’s Report, Water**

**Motion by:** Trustee **Williams**

**Seconded by:** Trustee **Boucher**

All ayes. Motion carried.

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**Audit of the Bills – Abstract #3**

**General - \$80,009.67**

**Pay Before - \$7,916.34**

**Water - \$1,438.25**

**Pay Before - \$2,063.78**

**Motion by:** Trustee **Cutler**

**Seconded by:** Trustee **Williams**

All ayes. Motion carried.

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**Summary**

The meeting covered a wide range of topics including financial reports, board member appointments, facility permits, tree maintenance, property agreements, sale discussions, pickleball activities, pathway repairs, water project updates, sidewalk and speed limit concerns, traffic safety measures, signage improvements, crosswalk maintenance, speed limit adjustments, community events, funding proposals, infrastructure projects, property development, and water infrastructure.

A motion to approve the July minutes was made by **Trustee Williams**, seconded by **Trustee Boucher**.

All ayes. Motion carried.

** Outline**

**1. Financial Reports Review •**

- Review of police personal services expenditures.
- Discussion on outstanding bills and the need to catch up on pending payments.

A motion to approve the monthly reports was made by **Trustee Boucher**, seconded by **Trustee Williams**.

All ayes. Motion carried.

## 2. AUDIT OF THE BILLS

A motion to pay the bills was made by **Trustee Cutler**, seconded by **Trustee Boucher**.

All ayes. Motion carried.

## 3. New Board Member Appointment •

- Appointment of a new planning/zoning board member at a rate of \$25 per meeting.

### **Resolution 8 of 2023-2024**

#### **Appointment of Planning/Zoning Board Member**

**Motion by: Trustee Williams**, seconded by **Trustee Boucher**.

All ayes. Motion carried.

**Date:** August 5, 2024

**WHEREAS**, the village board of Trustees are seeking two members to the combined Planning and Zoning Board; and

**WHEREAS**, Nasrene Haj expressed her interest to the board of Trustees at the July 1 Village Board meeting to be appointed to this board; and

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, the Village Board of Trustees does hereby approve Nasrene Haj as Chairperson of the Planning/Zoning Board for the Village of Fort Edward at a rate of \$25.00 per meeting. This resolution shall take effect immediately.

All ayes. Motion carried.

### **Resolution 9 of 2023-2024**

#### **Closure of Great Meadow Correctional Facility in Comstock, NY**

Motion by: **Trustee Boucher** Seconded by **Trustee Cutler**.

Date: August 5, 2024

All ayes. Motion carried.

**WHEREAS**, the Governor of New York has announced the closure of the Great Meadow Correctional Facility in the Town of Fort Ann, and

**WHEREAS**, the closure of the facility is currently slated for November 6, 2024, and

**WHEREAS**, the Great Meadow Correctional Facility is currently the top employer in Washington County with an estimate of 560 in its employ who are responsible for the operation of a correctional facility with a capacity of 1,595 inmates, and

**WHEREAS**, the economic impact of such a closure is not merely to the Town of Fort Ann and Washington County, but to the other local municipalities, surrounding region, local school districts and local businesses that currently support the facility and staff, including the Village of Fort Edward, and

**WHEREAS**, the facility when abandoned will cause an additional blight on the local region due to the State's lack of planning on any future use of the facility, which will sit abandoned, unmaintained, and deteriorating as have other facilities previously operated by the State, and

**WHEREAS**, Great Meadow has one of the only full mental health facilities as well as an intermediate level care facility and the effect of eliminating the availability of these mental health resources will be harmful to and dangerous for not only those individuals who must now be distributed to facilities without this level of support but as well as those entering the system who would be transferred to Great Meadow to

assist with their personal needs, and

**WHEREAS**, Great Meadow's Behavioral Health Unit (BHU) is a state of the art, self-contained unit with all housing, treatment classrooms, and recreational facilities and including 40 BHU beds, 102 Intermediate Care Program beds, 6 residential Care Treatment Program beds capable of 1:1 suicide watch, and 8 overflow dorm-style beds, and

**WHEREAS**, there is currently a statewide shortage of both BHU and ICP beds for incarcerated individuals in need, closure of Great Meadow will leave no facilities for care for individuals in crisis, and

**WHEREAS**, abandoning this BHU capability demonstrates a callous disregard for the mental health needs of incarcerated individuals and greatly diminishes their chances of returning to a safe, productive life after incarceration, and

**WHEREAS**, in the past five (5) years nearly \$200 million in capital improvements to Great Meadow have been undertaken including a new facility powerhouse with a new boiler totaling \$14 million, the rehabilitation of infrastructure plumbing and individual cell plumbing in 1,168 cells in A,B,C, and D Blocks, a new elevator in the Behavioral Health Unit, upgrades to the education building (Building 9) including new windows and HVAC totaling \$15 million, a perimeter wall upgrade and repair for \$11million, a facility wide fire alarm upgrade totaling \$13 million, facility-wide CCTV system installation including over 2300 cameras and related infrastructure, and an upgrade to the wastewater treatment plant totaling over \$3.1 million, and

**WHEREAS**, Washington Correctional and H Block (State Police Forensic Lab) is dependent on Great Meadow for their power supply, heating system, and sewer infrastructure, and

**WHEREAS**, the decision to close the facility is due to the inaction of the State to respond to long- known staffing and operational concerns presented over the past several years, and

**WHEREAS**, the estimated savings of the closure is projected at \$77 million in year 1 with an additional \$128 million annual thereafter, while at the same time adding \$165.5 million for refugee and migrant programs that not only have no economic return but are projected to cost localities an additional \$16.5 million in services, and

**WHEREAS**, many municipalities in the County, including the Village, face significant budget issues which will be exacerbated by the loss of income to residents who work at the Great Meadow Correctional Facility, and businesses that are supported by employees of Great Meadow Correctional Facility will also suffer significant losses in business; and

**WHEREAS**, the loss of these jobs will undoubtedly result in impacts to housing, school, and other businesses in the County and surround areas; now therefore be it

**RESOLVED**, that the Board of Trustees of the Village of Fort Edward hereby states its opposition to the closure of the Great Meadow Correctional Facility; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, the closure of the Great Meadow Correctional Facility be reconsidered and in lieu of reconsideration be stayed until such time as a proper economic impact be prepared and reviewed and those impacted by the closure have proper and suitable time to review and consider any and all options that they may avail themselves to in order to plan for the safety, security and future prosperity of themselves and families; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to Governor Hochul, Senators Stec and Ashby, Assemblypersons Simpson, Woerner and Bendett along with the members of the NYS Commission of Corrections; Allen Riley; Yolanda Canty; and Elizabeth Gaynes.

All ayes. Motion carried

#### 4. Facility Permits and Usage •

- Approval for a 12-under softball team to use Malden Park.
- Coordination for scheduling and facility usage.

#### **Resolution 10**

#### **Facility Use Permit – Adirondack USSSA Pride 12U Softball – Mullen Park**

**Motion by:** Trustee Williams **Seconded by:** Trustee Cutler.

All ayes. Motion carried.

**Date:** August 5, 2024

**WHEREAS**, the Fort Edward Village Board does hereby acknowledge receipt of the Facility Use Permit and supporting documentation from the Adirondack USSSA Pride 12U softball; and

**WHEREAS**, the Fort Edward Village Board does hereby grant the Adirondack USSSA organization, permission to use Mullen Park softball field located at Mullen Park and

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, this resolution shall take effect immediately.

All ayes. Motion Carried.

#### 5. Tree Maintenance •

- Assessment of dead trees in the village and the need for removal.
- Consideration of tree pruning and maintenance to enhance property value and safety.

#### 6. Property Agreements and Sale Discussions •

- Discussion on a potential property sale to a hardwood flooring business owner.
- Consideration of commercial space filling and apartment refurbishment plans.
- Importance of attracting businesses downtown for grant opportunities.

#### 7. Pickleball Activities •

- The courts are busy with pickleball activities on Tuesday nights and Saturday mornings.
- Benches have been installed, and efforts are being made to get people interested in playing.

#### 8. Pathway Repairs •

- The search for the pathway from the baseball field to McIntyre Park continues.
- Discussions with Glen Falls Hospital are ongoing to recreate the walkway for school kids.

#### 9. Water Project Updates •

- Work has been done on Burgoyne Avenue for the water project.
- Contracts have been signed with Bellamy Construction for further work on Cooper Prospect and Grove.

#### 10. Sidewalk and Speed Limit Concerns •

- Plans to consider sidewalk improvements in the Prospect Street neighborhood.
- Discussions on potential sidewalk installations on Cooper and Prospect Streets.

#### 11. Traffic Safety Measures on East Street •

- Concerns were raised about speeding and traffic violations on East Street.
- Suggestions for increased patrols, speed limit signs, and traffic control measures to enhance safety.

#### 12. Traffic Concerns and Signage •

- Concerns were raised about the safety of a two-way stop near railroad tracks, suggesting a need for a three-way or four-way stop.
- Discussion on the confusion caused by changing road configurations and the importance of clear signage for crosswalks and speed limits.

**13. Crosswalk Maintenance and Signage Standards •**

- Crosswalks are fading and need maintenance with reflective material for visibility.
- Emphasis on researching best standards for crosswalk design and the need for proper painting techniques.

**14. Speed Limit Adjustments and Traffic Management •**

- Proposal to adjust speed limits near railroad tracks to enhance safety.
- Concerns about traffic congestion and the need for better traffic management strategies.

**15. Community Events and Funding Proposals •**

- Discussion on funding proposals for community events like parades and fireworks displays.
- Mention of obtaining financial support from private businesses for community projects.

**16. Infrastructure Projects and Guardrail Maintenance •**

- Concerns raised about damaged guardrails and the need for accident reports and repairs.
- Discussion on infrastructure projects, including pipeline maintenance and road reconstruction.

**17. Water Infrastructure and Executive Session •**

- Updates on water infrastructure projects and the need for executive session discussions.
- Mention of financial contributions from private businesses for community projects.

**18. Property Development and Contractor Selection •**

- Discussion on property development plans, contractor selection, and project timelines.
- Mention of a potential contractor for roof work and flooring projects.

Respectfully submitted,

Janelle Rose  
Clerk-Treasurer