

**Village of Fort Edward
Board of Trustees – Regular Meeting
Monday, December 2, 2024, at 7:00 p.m.**

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

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

Present: See attached

Approval of November minutes

Motion by: Trustee **Carpenter**
Seconded by: Trustee **Cutler**

Approval of Reports - Clerk, court, Code, Street, Water, Sheriff

Motion by: Trustee **Williams**
Seconded by: Trustee **Boucher**

Audit of Bills – Abstract # 7

General Abstract - **\$148,972.20**
Pay before **\$9,575.66**

Water Abstract - **\$6,090.99**
Pay before **\$1,630.92**

Motioned by: Trustee **Cutler**
Seconded by: Trustee **Williams**

Summary

The meeting focused on discussing the implications of ESMI's proposed chemical processing project, particularly concerning PFAS contamination and its potential health risks to the community. Key decisions included the need for transparency in the project's environmental impact assessments and the establishment of a public forum for community concerns. Additionally, the meeting addressed pollution concerns, planning for a special meeting, and discussing grant applications for property demolition.

 **Outline**

1. Approval of Reports •

The meeting began with a motion to approve various reports, including those from the auditor and the sheriff.

- There were no questions or changes raised regarding the reports.

2. Resolution #18 – NYS DOT Annual Highway Work Permit

WHEREAS, the Village of Fort Edward is a municipality in New York and from time to time, the Village Street Department may need to conduct activities and operations upon highways and/or within right-of-ways controlled by the State of New York; and

WHEREAS, as detailed on Perm 1, the State of New York requires municipalities to execute an Undertaking (entitled “UNDERTAKING for the benefit of The New York State Department of Transportation In Connection with Work Affecting State Highways”) once every twenty (20) years; and

WHEREAS, the Undertaking was executed on May 1, 2017, via resolution #80 of 2016-2017 and according to NYS DOT standards the Undertaking will not need to be renewed until May 1, 2027; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Village Board of Trustees authorizes Bryan Etu, DPW Superintendent, to execute the required PERM 1 forms and any other documents pertaining to said renewal.

ALL AYES. MOTION CARRIED.

3. Lead Service Line Inventory Project •

- The Department of Health is conducting a Lead Service Line Inventory Project, which has generated community interest.
- Information packets were distributed, and potential federal grants for the project were mentioned.

4. ESMI Chemical Processing Concerns •

- ESMI has applied for a permit to process PFAS-contaminated soil, raising significant community concerns.
- A public meeting is scheduled for Wednesday to discuss ESMI's plans and gather community feedback.

5. PFAS Health Implications •

- PFAS is identified as a major carcinogen and endocrine disruptor, with serious health implications for the community.
- Exposure to PFAS can lead to bio accumulation in the human body, posing long-term health risks, especially for children.

6. Transparency and Monitoring •

- Concerns were raised about the adequacy of monitoring and reporting of emissions from ESMI's facility.
- The need for independent monitoring was emphasized to ensure community safety and accountability from ESMI.

7. Community Concerns About PFAS Facility •

- Community members expressed strong opposition to the proposed facility due to past experiences with environmental contamination.
- Concerns were raised about the facility's potential to process hazardous materials and its proximity to residential areas and schools.
- A resident shared historical context about previous environmental issues in the area, emphasizing the need for caution.

8. Legal Actions and Moratorium •

- A lawyer from Earth Justice is available to assist in drafting a moratorium against hazardous waste processing in the village.
- The moratorium aims to protect community health and prevent further environmental degradation.

9. Public Participation and Meeting Format •

- There was a strong push for in-person meetings to enhance public participation and ensure community voices are heard.
- Concerns were raised about the effectiveness of virtual meetings, particularly for residents who lack internet access.

10. Environmental Review and Transparency •

- A resident urged the Village Board to conduct a thorough environmental review of the PFAS processing project to assess potential risks.
- The importance of transparency in the permit process was highlighted, especially regarding the health impacts on the community.

11. Health Concerns and Community Safety •

- A new homeowner shared personal health issues potentially linked to emissions from the facility, emphasizing the need for a zero-tolerance policy on hazardous materials.
- The community's overall safety and well-being were prioritized, with calls for immediate action to address environmental risks.

12. Community Concerns about PFAS Levels •

- Speaker 4 expressed deep concern about the PFAS levels in the community and the potential impact on children, urging immediate action to prevent contamination.

- The speaker highlighted the historical context of PFAS chemicals and their harmful effects, referencing similar situations in Michigan where communities suffered severe health consequences.

13. Risks of Proposed Facility Operations •

- Speaker 4 warned that the proposed methods for handling PFAS, such as burning or using activated carbon, could produce dangerous byproducts like hydrofluoric and sulfuric acids.
- The speaker called for community unity to oppose the facility and emphasized the need for proper regulatory oversight from the EPA and DEC.

14. Community Infrastructure and Health Concerns •

- Speaker 4 described the lack of adequate infrastructure in the community, including poor air conditioning and single-pane windows, which exacerbates health risks from PFAS exposure.
- The speaker urged local officials to prioritize community health and safety over corporate interests, emphasizing the emotional toll on families.

15. Regulatory Oversight and Decision-Making •

- Speaker 0 raised questions about the decision-making authority regarding the facility, seeking clarity on whether local or state officials would ultimately decide on permits.
- Speaker 2 confirmed that the DEC would be the lead agency but emphasized the need for local community involvement in the process.

16. Need for a Moratorium •

- Speaker 3 suggested that a positive declaration could slow down the process and allow for more community input and scrutiny of the proposed facility.
- The discussion highlighted the urgency of establishing a moratorium to prevent hasty decisions that could harm the community.

17. Community Mobilization for Upcoming Meetings •

- Participants discussed strategies for effectively voicing community concerns at the upcoming meeting, emphasizing the importance of organized and emotional testimonies.
- The group agreed on the need to consolidate their concerns to present a united front against the facility's operations.

18. Community Engagement and Meeting Planning •

- A virtual meeting is proposed due to time constraints, with the next meeting scheduled in a month.
- There is a need to build a website to disseminate information about the upcoming meeting and engage the community.

19. Pollution Concerns •

- Community members expressed their frustration over pollution issues and lack of communication regarding permits.
- Concerns were raised about the community being used as a dumping ground for hazardous materials without proper oversight.

20. Grant Application for Demolition •

- A grant application for \$275,000 was submitted for the demolition of two buildings and remediation of hazardous materials.
- The application includes an environmental review record and requires further detail on ground disturbance.

21. Food Truck Legislation •

- Discussion on updating village code to accommodate food trucks, as current regulations are outdated.
- The need for a streamlined application process for food trucks was emphasized to support local businesses.

22. Community Events Planning •

- Plans for a Founders Day festival on September 13 were discussed, aiming to promote community engagement.
- Collaboration with local businesses and organizations is being sought to ensure the event's success.

Motion to adjourn meeting was made by Trustee **Carpenter**, seconded by Trustee **Williams**.
All ayes. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Janelle Rose – Village Clerk