

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
VILLAGE OF LAKEWOOD
March 23, 2026**

The sixth meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Village of Lakewood, N.Y., was held,
Monday, March 23rd, 2026, 6:30 P.M

Present:	Randall G. Holcomb	Mayor
	Ellen E. Barnes	Trustee
	John L. Shedd	Trustee
	Scott A. Cooper	Trustee

Also Present:	Apryl Troutman	Village Clerk/Treasurer
	Shaunah Pilling	Deputy Treasurer
	Matthew Bentley	Police Chief
	Kurt Hallberg	Fire Chief
	John C. Certo	DPW Supervisor
	Marilyn Fiore-Lehman	Village Attorney
	Jeff Swanson	Code Enforcement Officer

Absent:	Ben J. Troché	Deputy Mayor/Trustee
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A work session was held with no action

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Trustee Shedd, seconded by Trustee Barnes, to approve the minutes of the last two meetings of the Board of Trustees held on March 9th, 2026 and a special Board of Trustees meeting on March 13th, 2026.

Adopted: 4 ayes, no nays (Barnes, Cooper, Holcomb, Shedd)

AUDIT OF CLAIMS

Motion by Trustee Shedd, seconded by Trustee Barnes, that the claims as audited by the Auditing Committee of the abstract dated March 23rd, 2026 be approved and that the Clerk Department shall execute said abstract and direct payment by the Treasurer Department.

- Abstracts (#44 & #44)
 - o General Fund: \$50,219.23 (checks #100110 thru #10144), \$1,407.54 (checks #10145 thru #10147)
 - o T&A Fund: \$146,880.32 (checks #22411 thru #22450)
 - VOIDED CHECKS:
 - #22437 – National Grid, ACH Payment
 - #22449 – Windstream, ACH Payment

Adopted: 3 ayes, no nays (Barnes, Cooper, Holcomb), 1 abstain (Shedd)

REPORTS

DPW Supervisor John C. Certo:

The DPW Crew picked up trees from March 14th through the 16th from the high wind storm we recently had. The 17th they were back out plowing snow. DPW Supervisor also has been in

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contact with Rock of WNY for the installation of the boat launch dock, they are hoping to have it done by March 31st.

Police Chief Matthew Bentley:

Since the last meeting, the Department has handled 527 incidents. Chief Bentley gave an update on the missing Village resident Daniel Emerson. They are currently working in conjunction with the Sheriff's office. Emerson's vehicle was found underneath the bridge about a week ago, and the vehicle was extricated from the lake this past Friday. He was not located inside the vehicle, but the back driver's side window was open, creating a theory that he escaped the vehicle which is making this a recovery mission going forward. The Chautauqua County Dive team has been out looking for him with their underwater sonar, they do believe he is still somewhere in the area where the truck was found and now its just a matter of finding him. The LBPD is still following leads and working with the Sheriff's office to create a timeline of the events leading up to the truck entering the water.

In other news, the Department is finishing their last rounds of in-service training. Chief Bentley also has been in contact with Motorola about LPR's (License Plate Readers). He is going to have a meeting with them to see what they can offer compared to Flock.

- **Trustee Barnes** thanked Chief Bentley and the rest of the LBPD on the extra work they are doing on the Emerson case, as well as all the help from the Sheriff's Department.

Fire Chief Kurt Hallberg:

The LFD has handled 254 alarms so far this year. The new heavy rescue is not in service yet, it still has some finishing touches to be added. As soon as it is ready, they will bring it over for the Board to see. Engine 372 target date for arrival is April 28th.

Code Enforcement Officer Jeff Swanson:

The Village will be getting another new restaurant soon, Jersey Mikes Subs, will be located in the TJ Maxx Plaza. CEO Swanson has submitted his Annual Report to the Department of State, he has also finished his annual training for the year in Rochester.

A few weeks ago, CEO Swanson assisted the LFD at the fire on Route 394 in the Town of Busti with an emergency demolition. The company that did the demolition was informed that the Village or Town was not to be held liable, but after the home was taken down, they asked how they were getting paid. CEO Swanson informed them they would have to go after the homeowners. He asked for clarification on this from Village Attorney Lehman.

- **Village Attorney Lehman** explained that to her understanding from working in the City of Jamestown, if there is an emergency demolition it would be called for by a city official, then the city would pay the bill, and then they would file litigation or put a lien against property for the property owner so if the property is sold the municipality would recover some of that money.
- **Mayor Holcomb** asked who is to make the call for emergency demolition in the city.

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- **Village Attorney Lehman** stated that it is often Code Enforcement, but could be the Fire Department because they would be on scene. They could work in conjunction as well.

CEO Swanson requested a policy and procedure to be added for the steps needed to be followed for emergency demolition cases as there currently is not one. He also stated that he would get in contact with the City of Jamestown's CEO to see what policies and/or procedures they have in place, so the Village is ready if/when this happens here.

- **Trustee Barnes** asked if it is the property owners' responsibility to clean the property up or is it the municipalities or the demolition company.

CEO Swanson said it is up to the property owner.

Village Attorney Lehman:

No Report.

Clerk/Treasurer Apryl Troutman:

The Office of the State Comptroller has recently released the fiscal stress monitoring of Villages and some cities. She provided the information to the Board members and is available online for anyone to look at. The Village fiscal score is 9.6 and the Environment score is at 3.3. In previous years the fiscal score has been at 0, but it probably has gone up with the use of the ARPA funds that the Village received during Covid years. Also, the way the Village budget has gone the past several years, the typical reliance on the fund balance year after year to fund our appropriations can affect the score. The Village is not on any radar in any fiscal stress by any means, but this is a good report to follow. The components they utilize to come up with the fiscal score are year end fund balance operating deficits or surpluses, cash position, use of short-term debt for your cash flow, and fixed cost evaluated by local governments only.

- **Trustee Shedd** asked what the highest the Village fiscal score has been in the past.

Clerk/Treasurer Troutman said years ago the Village had a fiscal score close to 20 because of having two large bans. It skyrocketed due to the heavy reliance on long term debt. She also wanted to mention that the 2026-2027 tentative Village budget has been prepared, presented to the Clerk's office and the Board members. It is also online for the public to review or anyone is welcome to come to our office to review it as it is.

Mayor Holcomb:

Mayor Holcomb thanked Clerk/Treasurer Troutman for the information on the Village Budget. The 2026-2027 tentative budget is considered an all-in budget, meaning we take all the requests from each department and their department heads to combine them into one budget. This tentative budget came in with less than a one percent increase over last years budget, which is

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wonderful. The Board of Trustees will now review it line by line to see if there is anything that could be done positive or negative. There will then be a public hearing. Mayor Holcomb also wanted it to be known that if the tax rate stays the way with the budget suggestion and the new assessments the rate would be at \$6.46. Mayor Holcomb asked Clerk/Treasurer Troutman to highlight some things in the proposed budget.

- **Clerk/Treasurer Troutman** stated this would be the lowest tax rate since the last 1990's, early 2000's, so over 20 years since we have seen a number this low. It eliminates the Village's heavy reliance on the use of the fund balance. She started in 2019 and every year she has seen each budget rely on the fund balance to offset the appropriations, but in this budget, they have taken that number down to zero meaning zero reliance on the fund balance. This would play a large role in decreasing the fiscal stress monitoring number. The village should always have a healthy fund balance, which are appropriations for three to six months of service. If something were to happen and operations were to shut down, we would need that time to get through. The fund balance has taken a hit over the past few years, this budget will help grow it. It increases our annual investment into each of the established reserve accounts that were set up just a few years ago. Each budget has slowly invested into those. This budget would increase the amount to each reserve this year. It's .88% increase in appropriations over the prior year, which is an increase, but she has seen much larger ones. It fully funds essential service staffing levels. The police department's been able to hire and maintain their full-time staff. They do have one opening for a part-time position, but this tentative budget leaves that open so that position could be filled. Lastly, it maintains the current level of services that residents are accustomed to. These are just a few of the highlights Clerk/Treasurer Troutman has noticed.
- **Trustee Shedd** is curious with the estimated revenues, if the Village was hedging anything for what we are seeing on the lawsuits related to the estimate reevaluations or are we still at full value.
- **Clerk/Treasurer Troutman** stated that the assessment value that we received from the assessor has taken into account any litigation that's happened. Some assessments that haven't been settled, but any that have been settled, we have the current amount in the revenue side, which was very conservative.

COMMITTEES

No Reports.

OLD BUSINESS

Resolution #26-2026 – authorize the 2026 Farmers and Artisans Market

Motion by Mayor Holcomb, seconded by Trustee Barnes to approve the 2026 Farmers and Artisans Market as follows:

- i. Every Thursday, 9 am to 2 PM, June 18th through September 3rd
- ii. Located on Chautauqua Ave; between Alta Way and Trade Co Alley
- iii. Taryn Wilson will serve as the Market Manager (volunteer)

Adopted: 4 ayes, no nays (Barnes, Cooper, Holcomb, Shedd).

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Resolution #27-2026 – Authorize Village personnel to attend the Southern Tier West Annual Local Government Conference to be held at Houghton College, Thursday June 4th, 2026

Motion by Trustee Barnes, seconded by Trustee Cooper to authorize the Clerk, Deputy Clerk, Deputy Treasurer, Code Enforcement Officer, Mayor, Members of the Board of Trustees, Zoning/Planning Board and other officials to register and attend the Southern Tier West Annual Local Government Conference to be held at Houghton College, Thursday June 4, 2026.
Adopted: 4 ayes, no nays (Barnes, Cooper, Holcomb, Shedd)

Resolution #28-2026 - Approve LAROW Dock Permit Applications

Motion by Trustee Cooper, seconded by Trustee Barnes to approve the following LAROW Dock Permit Applications.

- i. Lubic – 68 E Terrace Ave – Maple Ave LAROW
- ii. Cezniak – 205 W Summit – Division Street LAROW
- iii. Johnson – 178 Front St – Woodlawn Ave LAROW

Adopted: 4 ayes, no nays (Barnes, Cooper, Holcomb, Shedd)

Resolution #29-2026 - Authorize the following fund transfer

Motion by Trustee Shedd, seconded by Trustee Barnes to approve the following fund transfer:

- i. \$500 from A1620.40 (Buildings – Contractual) to A1620.41 (Buildings – Natural Gas)
- ii. \$1,400 from A3410.40 (LFD – Contractual) to A3410.41 (LFD – Natural Gas)
- iii. \$1,000 from A3410.40 (LFD – Contractual) to A3410.42 (LFD – Electric)
- iv. \$500 from A5110.40 (St Maint – Contractual) to A5110.41 (St Maint – Natural Gas)

Adopted: 4 ayes, no nays (Barnes, Cooper, Holcomb, Shedd)

Resolution #30-2026 - Authorize the following Budget Modification

Motion by Trustee Shedd, seconded by Trustee Barnes to approve the following budget modification:

- i. \$5,000 from A5110.40 (St. Maint. Contractual) to A5110.43 (St. Maint. Vehicle Maint.)
- ii. \$1,500 from A5110.40 (St Maint. Contractual) to A5110.41 (St Maint. National Fuel)

Adopted: 4 ayes, no nays (Barnes, Cooper, Holcomb, Shedd)

Discussion was had on the upcoming Village-Wide Yard/Garage Sales.

Trustee Troché prepared a proposal for the Board to consider. Mayor Holcomb read the proposal in his absence. Trustee Troché would like the Board of Trustees to consider a \$5 fee for each participant. This fee would offset the cost associated with the debris pickup, employee hours, and office supplies utilized to provide this service. He believes moving forward offsetting costs where applicable is a smart idea, as costs have been increasing everywhere, continuing to

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diversify revenues will help with property costs and taxes. Neighboring municipalities charge a minimum fee of \$5 as well.

Trustee Cooper asked how does the Village manage the sales.

Clerk/Treasurer Troutman let the Board know that the Clerks office has a sign-up sheet which then they create a handout with a Village map of which homes are participating in the sales. This handout also has information on Village events like the Farmers Market and Thursday night music.

The board collectively decided against the proposal from Trustee Troché.

Resolution #31-2026 - Authorize the Dates for the Village-Wide Yard/Garage Sales

Motion by Mayor Holcomb, seconded by Trustee Cooper to authorize Friday May 29th & Saturday May 30th as the dates for the Village Wide Garage/Yard Sales.

Adopted: 4 ayes, no nays (Barnes, Cooper, Holcomb, Shedd)

Resolution #32-2026 to authorize Clerk/Treasurer Troutman to advertise for Invitations to Bid for the Annual Village-wide ‘junk pickup’

Motion by Trustee Barnes, seconded by Trustee Shedd to authorize Clerk/Treasurer Troutman to advertise for Invitations to Bid for the annual Village-wide ‘junk pickup’ with a proposed start date within the first week of June 2026.

Adopted: 4 ayes, no nays (Barnes, Cooper, Holcomb, Shedd)

Resolution #33-2026 authorize the rehire of James Fye

Motion by Trustee Shedd, seconded by Trustee Barnes to authorize the rehire of James Fye, a seasonal Parks Department employee, with a tentative start date of May 6th, and a starting rate of \$18.40.

Adopted: 4 ayes, no nays (Barnes, Cooper, Holcomb, Shedd)

James Fye has been with the Village seasonally for 13 years.

Resolution #34-2026 authorize the Public Works Department to mentor a student

Motion by Trustee Barnes, seconded by Trustee Cooper to authorize the Public Works Department to mentor an Erie 2-Chautauqua County BOCES Student, Mr. Leo Kavic.

Adopted: 4 ayes, no nays (Barnes, Cooper, Holcomb, Shedd)

Trustee Cooper added that he is a good kid and worker.

Resolution #35-2026 to authorize the Clerk’s Office to advertise for lifeguard positions for the 2026 season

Motion by Trustee Cooper, seconded by Trustee Shedd to authorize the Clerk’s Office to advertise for lifeguard positions for the 2026 season.

Adopted: 4 ayes, no nays (Barnes, Cooper, Holcomb, Shedd)

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Trustee Barnes stated that she is in connection with someone that is familiar with the local lifeguards and would be in contact with the Clerk's office when she has more information.

Trustee Shedd thanked former Trustee Nancy Jones for her dedication in years past to the beach.

The next Village Board meeting will be held on April 13th, 2026 and will begin with a work session at 5:45pm.

RECESS

Motion by Trustee Barnes, seconded by Trustee Shedd, to recess the regular meeting of the Board of Trustees at 7:15 PM, to enter into executive session to discuss a legal matter.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Present at the executive session, were Mayor Holcomb, Trustees Barnes, Cooper, and Shedd. As well as Clerk/Treasurer Apryl Troutman, Deputy Clerk Shaunah Pilling and Village Attorney Lehman. Motion by Trustee Cooper, seconded by Trustee Barnes to adjourn the executive session at 7:20PM.

REGULAR MEETING (Adjournment)

Motion by Trustee Barnes, seconded by Trustee Shedd and unanimously carried to adjourn the regular Board of Trustees meeting at 7:20 PM.

Adopted: 4 ayes, no nays (Barnes, Cooper, Holcomb, Shedd)

Shaunah Pilling

Deputy Clerk