BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
VILLAGE OF LAKEWOOD
October 26th, 2026

The seventeenth meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Village of Lakewood, N.Y., was held, Monday, October 26th, 2026, 6:30 P.M

Present:	Randall G. Holcomb	Mayor
	Ben J. Troché	Deputy Mayor/Trustee
	Ellen E. Barnes	Trustee
	Scott A. Cooper	Trustee
	John L. Shedd	Trustee
Also Present:	Apryl Troutman	Village Clerk/Treasurer
	Shaunah Pilling	Deputy Clerk
	Kurt Hallberg	Fire Chief
	John C. Certo	DPW Supervisor
	Matthew Bentley	Police Chief
	Marilyn Fiore-Lehman	Village Attorney
Absent:	Jeff Swanson	Code Enforcement Officer

A work session was held with a presentation from Mr. Stephen Wieloszynski and Mr. Andy Johnson, EcoStrategies and owner of 125 East Fairmount Avenue also known as Fairmount Commons.

Mr. Johnson explained his plans in detail (please see the October 8th, 2026 ZBA/Planning Board meeting minute for reference.) Mr. Johnson's plans can be reviewed at any time in the Village of Lakewood Clerk and Treasurer's Office.

Trustee Barnes loves Mr. Johnsons plans and stated they need to get busy on changing the zoning.

Trustee Troché asked if there are any interested businesses for potential development.

Mr. Johnson replied that there are not. It is currently just for his business, EcoStrategies. He has outgrown their Falconer location and wants to move back "home" to Lakewood.

Trustee Barnes stated the other corners surrounding Mr. Johnsons property are already in a business district and then a cemetery. She believes his building would be a beautiful addition to the community. She respects the way Mr. Johnson has been communicating with the neighbors and having the natural barriers.

Bob Stevens, 6 Fairwood Drive, asked about the ponds and the safety precautions that would be installed as there are many young children that live on Fairwood Drive. He also asked where the water from these ponds would be coming from. He stated there's no flowing water through there, there's low spots that get marshy in the spring, winter, but there is no spring here. The creek or drainage ditch on the southeast side of Mr. Johnson's property is as dry as a bone right now. Mr. Stevens has lived there for 23 years, and has never seen water flowing through there.

Mr. Johnson replied to Mr. Stevens concerns, he stated the lower ponds are going to be small, wildlife, stormwater wetland ponds. They're only going to have a couple feet of water in them. They are not going to be fishable, swimmable ponds. However, the larger pond up by the office is about an eighth of an acre. There only needs to be about five to ten acres max of watershed to fill it and be able to maintain a depth of six to eight feet max. There is enough watershed. He has checked the soil types and the contributing watersheds based on the size. It will work since we live in a humid climate and get five feet of water a year between rain and snow, and the soils are tight and good. Next, addressing the safety concerns. The ponds are going to be designed and built for safety so that if anything gets in, it can get out with proper side sloping. He stated he is going to do additional things with fencing and other barriers for kids and other variables, that's a definite. Mr. Johnson will be mindful of that and sensitive to it.

Jim Johnson, 7 Fairwood Drive, asked will there be a public hearing on this.

Attorney Lehman answered that yes there will be one before zoning laws change.

John Jablonski, 213 Spruce Street and member of the Village of Lakewood ZBA/Planning Board, stated that he gave each Board member a handout and that Mr. Johnson has previously come before the Zoning and Planning Board on October 8th, 2026 in which the proposal was well received. The Planning Board recommended that the B1 zoning change be approved. Mr. Jablonski has a concern that according to compliance with the comprehensive plan, as noted in the information before the Board members, that in the comprehensive plan it recommends that area be mixed use residential commercial with a parkway like atmosphere, and it recommends that design guidelines be adopted for that parkway-like atmosphere, would be maintained, which would perfectly align with what he's trying to do. He is just recommending that the Board look at doing that as part of this proposal. The main concern is that you could have a Walgreens or something like that, according to our zoning, under the B1, which would not be compatible with the residents surrounding the property. Also, another possibility if it's rezoned to B1 and if any of the property is sold off in the front that it could be a restaurant, pharmacy, or similar. He asks that those be taken into consideration as the Board proceeds on this.

Mr. Segrue, Chairman of the Zoning Board of Appeals and Planning Board, the Planning Board previously looked at the project and appreciates all that Mr. Johnson has already done. They are in favor of the project. The Planning Board is aware that they will have a lot of things to consider if it ever comes back to them such as Fire Department turnarounds, lots sizes, number of lots, and more. His Board loved the proposed building and he hopes it goes to a Public Hearing.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Trustee Shedd, seconded by Trustee Barnes, to approve the minutes of the last meeting of the Board of Trustees held on September 28th, 2026.
Adopted: 4 ayes, no nays (Barnes, Cooper, Troché, Shedd)

AUDIT OF CLAIMS

Motion by Trustee Barnes, seconded by Trustee Troché that the claims as audited by the Auditing Committee of the abstracts dated October 13th, 2026 and October 26th, 2026 be approved and that the Clerk Department shall execute said abstract and direct payment by the Treasurer Department.

Abstracts (#18 & #18)

- T&A Fund: Abstract #18 $52,380.50 (checks #10677 thru #10710)
- General Fund: Abstract #18 $200,221.37 (checks #22927 thru #22968)
  - VOIDED CHECKS:
    - #22953 – M&T Bank, ACH to vendor
    - #22954 – National Grid, ACH to vendor
    - #22967 – Windstream, ACH to vendor

Abstracts (#20 & #20)

- T&A Fund: Abstract #20 $49,397.70 (checks #10711 thru #10744)
- General Fund: Abstract #20 $121,174.99 (checks #22969 thru #23006)
  - VOIDED CHECKS:
    - #22969 – National Grid, ACH to vendor
    - #23005 – Windstream, ACH to vendor

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

REPORTS

DPW Supervisor John C. Certo:
Over the last few weeks, the DPW crew has been busy filling pot holes. They looked at another sidewalk down on Lakeview between Summit and Terrace that needed to get fixed and they addressed that. The sidewalk was about 120 feet. The crew has since begun to break down the one blacktop truck and put the leaf box on it. Both trucks are ready for Monday leaf pickup, but they have been out sucking the leaves in the heaviest places in the Village. Lastly, the crew begin prepping the trucks for snow, so when they are done with leaf season, they are ready to go for snow.

Police Chief Bentley:
Since the last meeting, the LBPD has handled 1045 calls. The newest part-time hire is here in the audience, Matthew Canby which is one of our resolutions for tonight. Another resolution for tonight is the permanent appointment of Sergeant Matt Lundsten. He scored number one on the test overall in the entire county with a 95. The department participated in trunk or treat at the Aspire Building on Mall Boulevard on October 23rd. They had approximately 1200 kids come through, so it was quite the event. Next, Chief Bentley and K9 Handler Swan on the 30th will be participating at trunk or treat at Southwestern Elementary School. Another exciting event they took part in was at a child's birthday party. The LBPD was a part of a basket raffle at the Lakewood Memorial Library fundraiser last month. The winner got to have a police officer come with a patrol car. Officer Nino Calamari went up to Busti Church of God for a birthday party with 15 boys. They got to sit in the car, hold the siren, ask questions, it was a great time. Chief Bentley was happy that they were able to partner with the library to get that done.

Next, the department finished the biannual in-service training for the year. They touched on topics like domestic violence updates, DWI case law updates, and they did some tactical medic stuff. Officer Swan and Canine Kor, got certified being a canine explosives handler. He will still have to go to school at the end of this year, December going into January, but he's at least certified, and he is a handler.
The department had contacted the state for new e-bike and e-scooter information, and it was received last week. The LBPD is working with the clerk's office to get some information put out in their portion of the building, and they will have some out front in their portion too. It'll have the new laws and everything that's on there, and just some literature that the public can come and pick up.
Lastly, Chief Bentley was recently informed that there would be a Bruce Blakeman rally on Wednesday. He and DPW Supervisor Certo wish to put some no parking signs up on Chautauqua Avenue between the railroad tracks and Fairmount Avenue to make sure emergency vehicles can get through.

The Board agreed that this would be a good idea.

Fire Chief Hallberg:
861 alarms so far this year. The LFD has had many public appearances recently between our open house on October 3rd and the library had them for multiple events. They were at Southwestern for Fire Prevention Week with Celeron and Busti Fire Department as standbys for football. They have been doing a lot of burn and smoke drills with Celeron. They have a ladder drill coming up to help the Packard Estates; they need new ropes and a ball at the top of their flagpole, so that's going to be a drill for people working on getting on the truck and setting that up and helping them at the same time. We also participated in a raffle that Olivia Derby from Lakewood Memorial Library talked to Chief Hallberg about too, but haven't heard from anybody yet about who won it.

- **Trustee Shedd** let Chief Hallberg know that the Open House was a great event for the Community and the rest of the Board agreed with him.

Code Enforcement Officer Swanson:
Absent.

Village Attorney Lehman:
No report.

Clerk/Treasurer Troutman:
The Village of Lakewood has a Dog Control Officer (DCO) again thanks to the Town of Busti. Jeff Johnson from Gerry, NY, who is also is the DCO for the Town of North Harmony and Town of Ellery, is now also employed by the Town of Busti and will cover the Village of Lakewood. His phone number is 716-720-2882, it is listed on the Village of Lakewood website as well.
The Clerk and Treasurers office recently received the renewal information for the village employees' health insurance. It's been distributed to the Board, the employees, and is available

for everyone to review. If a change in plan were to happen, the office would just have to have that Board approve prior to December 1st to allow time for new enrollments and processing.

Mayor Holcomb
Mayor Holcomb read into the record an email correspondence from Cameron Shultz of the NYSDOT. It read "After the public hearing, the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) received letters in response to our May 27, 2026 letter to the municipalities from the entire Village of Lakewood Board. The responses expressed overwhelming support from the Village leadership for the project alternative as presented at the public hearing. Taking into consideration the Village Board's knowledge and understanding of the community and the desires of the community, NYSDOT decided to progress the alternative presented in the public hearing as the preferred alternative."

If the public would like to view these plans, they are available in the Village Clerk and Treasurers office.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

OLD BUSINESS

Discussion was had on the tax levy reserve fund.

Trustee Barnes as the Board stated in the at the last meeting, after they completed their review of the 2026-2027 budget and tax levy, it was determined the village property tax levy did exceed the allowable limit under New York State's property tax law. The state law provides a very straightforward remedy for this. The excess levy amount is required to be placed in a dedicated reserve fund, which the Board did. This account was created at our last meeting, and it will be used to reduce this coming budget year's tax levy. The amount calculated to be $284,983. The Village is in compliance with the required reserve and ensure full compliance with the General Municipal Law Section 3-C. This is a routine compliance step under New York State law, the tax levy difference and putting this into the account will not affect current village services, public safety operations, infrastructure projects, or day-to-day operations. It is a statutory compliance measure that allows the excess levy amount to be returned to the taxpayers through a reduction in the 2027-2028 budget tax levy, and so transparency is very important to the entire board. And this evening, she would like to make a motion that this Board agree to move money from the unassigned fund balance in the amount of $284,983, and put it into the created tax cap reserve fund.

Trustee Cooper stated before they get to that point, are there other possibilities of using money from other accounts.

Trustee Barnes said yes, but after speaking with the Mayor and going through a lot of the Departments accounts there are some places they could pull from, but the unassigned fund balance is taxpayer money, too. She would like to stress going forward that Department heads really will have to be very tight with their budgets. Some of that money that actually will end up

back in the fund balance at the end of the year, as it always does. And going forward from there, the Board would work on letting it grow again.

Trustee Shedd asked what percent of the unassigned general fund would this be?

Clerk/Treasurer Troutman did not have that figure in front of her, but she stated that currently there is $819,415 in that account. Three to six months of operational funds are recommended to be in the fund balance. The current budget of expenditures, which does include some grant funding, is $5.7 million. So, three to six months is half or a quarter of that figure.

Trustee Troché is *against* taking it out of the unassigned general fund balance. He thinks we need a soft landing for next year because it's going to be a tough budget. He states that the Village does have to stay within our means right now, and I agree with Trustee Barnes. It's going to be a tough year moving forward, and we have to be strict with our budget. He would like to give some direction to the department heads because right now, what we passed in their budget to them is what they're allowed to spend as it should be. He is just worried about spending so much out of the general fund without concrete direction to the department heads moving forward, especially with what would happen next year with some of our capital gains and stuff.

Trustee Barnes agreed with Trustee Troché that there needs to be some direction for the department heads when it comes to spending.

Trustee Cooper asked if this is something in preparation for the next budget that they could start earlier on, such as meeting with department heads and looking at current expenses? After talking with DPW Supervisor Certo about the cost of snow blades, salt and everything else has been exponential, which is hard to prepare for.

Trustee Barnes said this is what makes this whole situation difficult, the cost of everything is rising. The error was made, but that wasn't any fault of the department heads. Going forward we want to have the services that are there. At this point they haven't gone through half of the fiscal year yet, and usually in the second half of the fiscal year, there's always situations and expenditures that pop up that have to get done, and keeping the money in the budget will give us that, and whether we take it out of the fund balance in the second half of the fiscal year or we take it out now, which could be a toss-up too. Because if it isn’t in our budget, we would have to go to the unassigned fund balance at that point also. She would urge that the Board adopt something for the department heads for very strict spending. If it isn't in progress or whatever and it isn't absolutely necessary that it doesn't get spent for the rest of the year. She knows that is an awful pressure to put on somebody, but they are going to have to do something like delaying purchases, if possible.

Resolution #117-2026 to authorize the following budget transfer for fiscal year 2026-27 to account for the excess tax levy

Motion by Trustee Barnes, seconded by Trustee Shedd to authorize the following budget transfer for fiscal year 2026-27 to account for the excess tax levy as follows:

- Debit revenue account A 101001.00, Real Property Taxes $284,983
  Credit general ledger account A 695.00, Deferred Taxes Reserve - Excess Tax Levy $284,983
- Debit general ledger account A 917.00, Unassigned Fund Balance $284,983
  Credit general ledger account A 914.00, Assigned Appropriated Fund Balance $284,983

Mayor Holcomb asked Clerk/Treasurer Troutman to pull the board.

- Trustee Cooper – Aye
- Trustee Troché – Nay
- Mayor Holcomb – Aye
- Trustee Barnes – Aye
- Trustee Shedd – Aye

THE MOTION WAS CARRIED.

Discussion was had on the Gifford Avenue tree cutting issue.

Trustee Barnes asked Attorney Lehman if there was any conclusion to whose property the trees that were cut down were actually on.

Attorney Lehman stated there are a couple issues with this property**.** First being that these trees were not planted by the Village, they were planted by a private citizen.

Trustee Barnes stated they had permission by the Village according to the residents at 2 ½ Gifford Avenue.

Attorney Lehman explained there is no evidence of this, unless it was stated in previous minutes somewhere it may not be true. The Village has not invested any money into the planting of the trees or maintenance. They were allegedly planted by a resident and also maintained by a private resident for many years. Other than if there's a safety concern now because there's stumps and roots that are hazardous. The DPW would have to make that call, and that's something that if the Village expends money to remove that the hazard that's identified as such, then that's something the Village can go back after and seek to recover from the individuals that removed the trees. It's certainly a case of criminal mischief, but she doesn't know that the Village is the proper complainant because the Village had nothing to do with the planting of the trees.

RECESS REGULAR MEETING

Motion by Mayor Holcomb, seconded Trustee Troché to recess the regular meeting at 7:19PM to enter into an executive session regarding a legal matter.

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Present at the executive session, were Mayor Holcomb, Trustees Barnes, Troché, Shedd and Cooper. As well as Clerk/Treasurer Troutman, Village Attorney Lehman, Deputy Clerk Pilling, DPW Supervisor Certo, Fire Chief Hallberg, and Police Chief Bentley.

EXECUTIVE SESSION (Adjournment)

Motion by Trustee Barnes, seconded by Trustee Shedd, and unanimously carried to adjourn the executive session and re-open the regular meeting of the Board of Trustees at 7:38.
Adopted: 4 ayes, no nays (Barnes, Cooper, Shedd, Troché)

NEW BUSINESS

Resolution #118-2026 - 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 2026 Fall Planning & Zoning Training

Motion by Trustee Troché, seconded by Trustee Barnes 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 2026 Fall Planning & Zoning Training to be held at Salamanca BOCES Center on Wednesday November 4, 4 to 8:15 PM and/or Southern Chautauqua Federal Credit Union on Thursday November 5, 4 to 8:15 PM. The cost is $25/night.
Adopted: 4 ayes, no nays (Barnes, Cooper, Shedd, Troché)

Resolution #119-2026 – authorize the permanent appointment of Police Sergeant, Matthew Lundsten, effective October 26, 2026.

Motion by Trustee Barnes, seconded by Trustee Troché to authorize the permanent appointment of Police Sergeant, Matthew Lundsten, effective October 26, 2026.
Adopted: 4 ayes, no nays (Barnes, Cooper, Shedd, Troché)

Resolution #120-2026 – authorize the hiring of part-time Police Officer, Matthew Canby.

Motion by Trustee Barnes, seconded by Trustee Troché to authorize the hiring of part-time Police Officer, Matthew Canby. Mr. Canby will be compensated at the starting rate of $27/hour and will have a tentative start date on or after November 11, 2026.
Adopted: 4 ayes, no nays (Barnes, Cooper, Shedd, Troché)

Resolution #121-2026 – authorize the following fund transfer to reimburse the general fund for Fall Fest expenditures (petting zoo, pumpkins, portable toilet rental)

Motion by Trustee Barnes, seconded by Trustee Troché to authorize the following fund transfer to reimburse the general fund for Fall Fest expenditures (petting zoo, pumpkins, portable toilet rental)

- $1,452 from T1093.41 Fall Festival to A7110.40 Parks – Contractual

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

Resolution #122-2026 – authorize the disposal of the following unneeded, old Lakewood-Busti Police Department office equipment

Motion by Trustee Shedd, seconded by Trustee Troché to authorize the disposal of the following unneeded, old Lakewood-Busti Police Department office equipment considered surplus and no longer serves a public use. The furniture is obsolete and has no resale value. Items will be thrown away or scrapped. Scrap funds will be deposited into A3120.20 Police – Equipment.

- Five (5) metal desks, one (1) wood desk, six (6) metal framed upholstered chairs, one (1) wood buffet table, one (1) wood shelf and two (2) wood lateral filing cabinets

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

Resolution #123-2026 – authorize the following budget modification for a budgeted 2025/26 that was paused by the Consultant

Motion by Trustee Barnes, seconded by Trustee Cooper to authorize the following budget modification for a budgeted 2025/26 that was paused by the Consultant

- Clinton Brown Co Architecture, 20-051 H – Village Hall; Schematic Design
  Increase A7520.24 Historical Property/Cap Outlay Prof Svcs, by $15,800
  Increase A101120.00 Non-Property Tax Distribution by Co, by $15,800

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

Resolution #124-2026 – accept the recommendation of the Lakewood Volunteer Fire Company, Inc and grant out of district status to Paul Taber

Motion by Trustee Barnes, seconded by Trustee Troché to accept the recommendation of the Lakewood Volunteer Fire Company, Inc and grant out of district status to Paul Taber

- The Board of Trustees, acting as the Board of Fire Commissioners, to grant Mr. Paul Taber out of district status

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

Resolution #125-2026 – authorize the repair of Lakewood Fire Department sign, paint damage

Motion by Trustee Troché, seconded by Trustee Shedd to authorize the repair of Lakewood Fire Department sign, paint damage from the Chautauqua Sign Co., who created the sign. Per the Procurement Policy under Exemptions, Section A, "Professional services or services requiring special or technical skill, training or expertise: The individual or company must be chosen based on accountability, reliability, skill, education and training, judgment, integrity and moral worth.

In determining whether a service shall fit into this category, the Trustees shall take into consideration the following guidelines:

(a). Whether the services are subject to state licensing or testing requirements.

(b). Whether substantial formal education or training is a necessary prerequisite to the performance of the services, and…

(c). Whether the services require a personal relationship between the individual and municipal officials.

Professional and technical services shall include but not be limited to the following: services of an attorney, services of a physician, technical services of an engineer or architect engaged to prepare plans, maps and estimates, securing insurance coverage and/or services of an insurance broker, services of a certified public accountant, investment management services, printing services involving extensive writing, editing or artwork, or programming services for customized programs or services involved in substantial modification and customizing or prepackaged software."

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

Resolution #126-2026 – to approve the lowest bid to remove trees on two Village owned parcels on Chautauqua Avenue

Motion by Trustee Troché, seconded by Trustee Barnes to approve the lowest bid to remove trees on two Village owned parcels on Chautauqua Avenue. Kravitz Tree Service was the lowest bid at $2,500.00.

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

REGULAR MEETING (Adjournment)

Motion by Trustee Shedd, seconded by Trustee Barnes and unanimously carried to adjourn the regular Board of Trustees meeting at 7:53pm.

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

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Shaunah Pilling

Deputy Clerk