

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
VILLAGE OF LAKEWOOD
March 9, 2026**

The fourth meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Village of Lakewood, N.Y., was held,
Monday, March 9th, 2026, 6:30 P.M

Present:	Randall G. Holcomb	Mayor
	Ben J. Troché	Deputy Mayor/Trustee
	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
	John C. Certo	DPW Supervisor
	Marilyn Fiore-Lehman	Village Attorney
Absent:	Jeff Swanson	Code Enforcement Officer
	Kurt Hallberg	Fire Chief

**A work session was held with a presentation from the Chautauqua Lake Partnership's
Director Jackie Damore**

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 February 23rd, 2025.

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

AUDIT OF CLAIMS

Motion by Trustee Shedd, seconded by Trustee Barnes, that the claims as audited by the Auditing Committee of the abstract dated February 28th 2026 & March 9th, 2026 be approved and that the Clerk Department shall execute said abstract and direct payment by the Treasurer Department.

- Abstracts (#42 & #42 & 42-Month End)
 - o General Fund: \$49,512.52 (checks #10076 thru #10109),
 - o T&A Fund: \$36,645.90 (checks #22389 thru #22410), \$24,394.98 (check #22388)
 - VOIDED CHECKS:
 - #22400 – M&T, ACH Payment
 - #22401 – National Grid, ACH Payment
 - #22410 – Windstream, ACH Payment

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

REPORTS

DPW Supervisor John C. Certo:

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Since November 25, 2025 the crew has been out plowing 36 times. With the warmer weather they have been fixing & replacing signs and filling potholes. They hope to get some cold patch to fill more of the potholes they come across.

Police Chief Matthew Bentley:

Since the last meeting, the Department has handled 530 incidents. They have installed a new drug drop off bin in the front of the police department. This is in collaboration with MED-Project, which allows them to keep the supply of drugs dropped off to a minimum. LPBD has been working on a missing persons case for Daniel Emerson. Channel 7 news was here today for an interview, the investigation is ongoing.

Fire Chief Kurt Hallberg:

Chief Hallberg was absent but Mayor Holcomb gave his report.

The LFD has handled 205 alarms as of 11am on March 10th. The new heavy rescue is in and getting its final touches. The department responded to a large house fire in the Town of Busti on March 6th on Route 394. The Fire Investigators determined the cause of the fire to be electrical and the home was uninsured. Lastly, the team responded to a possible lake rescue near the bridge from a possible man down on the ice. It turned out to be a tarp on top of the ice.

Village Attorney Lehman:

No Report.

Clerk/Treasurer Apryl Troutman:

Our office has begun the budget process. Budgets have been turned in by the department heads and we will be following our typical calendar. On March 20th, the budget will be presented to the Board of Trustees.

Code Enforcement Officer Jeff Swanson:

Absent.

Mayor Holcomb:

No Report.

COMMITTEES

No Reports.

OLD BUSINESS

Discussion on the Police Vehicle Bid

Trustee Troché asked what the time frame for delivery would be.

Chief Bentley stated he and Officer Dan Hafner would call to find out the window, but they had been a bit preoccupied.

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Trustee Barnes said it is a shame that Dodge made the Chargers electric, so now everyone has begun replacing them with the Durango.

Trustee Troché asked if we will need to buy all new equipment.

Chief Bentley said yes, because it's going to be replacing a Charger.

Trustee Shedd asked if this vehicle would be purchased through state contract.

Clerk/Treasurer Troutman stated they did not go through the OGS bidding system, but it was posted in the newspaper and was also sent to the five closest dealerships in New York State. This bid was the only response.

RESOLUTION #21-2026 to Accept the Police vehicle bid proposal

Motion by Trustee Barnes, seconded by Trustee Troché to accept the bid proposal from Emerling Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram, Springville, NY, for a 2026 Dodge Durango Pursuit AWD police vehicle at a cost of \$47,770.50.

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

NEW BUSINESS

Discussion on the CLP's submission of an application for Article 15 permit(s) for application of herbicides

Trustee Barnes said this is an effort by the DEC, requested by Glenn Sullivan, President of Ready Scout, LLC, a lake consulting firm in NY. Mr. Sullivan has been doing the Village's Herbicide permitting for years. This Resolution is a way to consolidate the permitting so that all participating municipalities would be on one versus multiple as in years past. Then as for the lake, the permitted area would be treated with herbicides. Mr. Sullivan has already requested the wetlands permit, which is why the DEC is requesting this resolution to go any further with it. The Chautauqua Lake Partnership will be the one applying for this. This permit is for all municipalities affected. The resolution was read into the record by Trustee Barnes:

WHEREAS, the Chautauqua Lake Partnership is considering whether to undertake the application of herbicides to areas of Chautauqua Lake bordering the Village of Lakewood's jurisdiction;

WHEREAS, pursuant to Article 15 of the New York State Environmental Conservation Law and Part 327 of the Official Compilation of Codes, Rules, and Regulations of the State of New York, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation must issue a permit prior to the application of herbicides to waters within the State of New York; and

WHEREAS, the Village of Lakewood is a riparian owner;

Now, therefore be it,

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RESOLVED, That the Board of Trustees of the Village of Lakewood does hereby approve the Chautauqua Lake Partnership's submission of an application for Article 15 permit(s) and a New York State Pollution Discharge Elimination System (if so required) related to the application of herbicides to areas of Chautauqua Lake bordering the Village of Lakewood.

John Jablonski, 213 Spruce Street, stated he had looked at the three reports that came out this past Summer about the plants and the insects. Chautauqua Lake has had seven years of intensive herbicide use in the southern basin, and the lake had the worst conditions to date, especially here in Lakewood. If you compare the data of the northern basin, where harvesting has been happening since he was young, and the southern basin where harvesting has been happening much longer than his lifetime; the northern basin has a healthy diversity of plants, approximately nine plants in abundance, with only 12% of diversity of plants there. In the Southern Basin, it is 22% with three plants Elodea, Coontail, and Milfoil, the plant they have been treating and targeting for the last seven years. These three plants are the reason behind the mess of last summer. This indicates that we should be doing what has been done in the Northern Basin, which is not using herbicides. Mr. Jablonski stated the best thing the Village could do is to fund the Chautauqua Lake Association harvesters which the area really needs. Milfoil, which is the biggest problem plant, and the use of herbicides for curly leaf pine weed, if not done at the right time, can kill off all the other pond weeds, including the good pond weeds. He believes from an economic standpoint and a lake health standpoint, giving money to the CLA to aggressively harvest where it's needed most has a better ecological effect on the lake. Also, if the Village donates funds to the CLA, that money would then be multiplied through the community, through purchases of equipment, maintenance of equipment, hiring several people who work all summer long, who spend money in our communities. The CLA quit using herbicides because at the end of the day, back in the 1990s they realized that when they used herbicides for milfoil, guess what came back, milfoil.

Jane Conroe, Chair of the Chautauqua-Conewango Consortium, is a part of the waterkeeper that began many years ago that offers factual and helpful information to the community. The plants actually growing in Lakewood in dense quantities and Milfoil is not one of them. The 2025 Plant Study states that there are zero sites for Milfoil in moderate density. The fact that the permit is asking to either kill curly leaf pondweed or milfoil, the Village doesn't need to. The permit is for specific plants that Lakewood does not have. The plants here were in fact Elodea and the water weed which are native. One can question why the south basin is so much worse than the north basin, reality is they are treated differently. Ms. Conroe believes that targeting the specific channels on the map given to the Board would be efficient and she does think that the CLA could do this with harvesting, but what herbicide would be used here if treated? After having a meeting with the Chautauqua Lake Watershed Conservancy, it is her understanding that the CLP would be using copper. Copper products are toxic. This permit is not clear on what herbicide they would be using. She has done this work with these herbicides now for at least 10 years, and she does not understand the permit that the Board would be voting on tonight.

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Trustee Cooper asked both Jane Conroe and John Jablonski, with their extensive background, if they knew the CLA's percentage of time they are harvesting on the Southern Basin versus the Northern Basin.

Jane Conroe, Chair of the Chautauqua-Conewango Consortium, explained she would have to go back to the data of the CLA, but when they speak publicly it has been fairly even. As far as time allocated, they have two crews in the north basin, two crews in the south basin. When the emergency of last summer occurred, they spent more time in the south basin with much more to harvest. Often, they go where they are needed.

Trustee Cooper stated the people that he knows that live along the lake, and with his own experience, it's tough to get a boat out of the bay. Many people say they couldn't take advantage of the docks at the Lakewood Rod & Gun Club and nearby homes as well. He asked why this is happening.

Jane Conroe, Chair of the Chautauqua-Conewango Consortium, the north basin is under control, it is deeper. The south basin really is a treasure, where the fishermen have always been, but it is shallower than the north. There's less depth to take care of what's going on. She strongly believes that these herbicides have intensified the growth of the plants. There's twice as much biomass in the south basin than there is in the north basin. Biomass is how much plant material growing and living.

Trustee Shedd inquired about the copper herbicides. He asked if this is different than the herbicides Clearcast or ProcellaCOR.

Jane Conroe, Chair of the Chautauqua-Conewango Consortium, there were four herbicides that were requested in the letter of notification, and it doesn't say which the permit is for. There are four different chemicals, and they are the ProcellaCOR and Clearcast and then there are two different copper products.

Trustee Barnes let the Board know this letter of notification was from the Chautauqua Lake Partnership.

Jane Conroe, Chair of the Chautauqua-Conewango Consortium, stated the DEC's policy states that each permit should only have one chemical product.

Trustee Barnes there's going to be four single permits, rather than four permits per municipality. They are trying to consolidate it, so all the participating municipalities are under the one permit.

Ruth Wahl, a member of the Winchester Dock Association & member of the Alliances Lake Management Committee, also is a riparian owner along the lake commented on the fact

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she did not receive any letter of notification. It is very concerning that the public is not being notified or when the actual dates the herbicide application may take place.

Nancy Jones, 215 Locust Street, the reason that the south basin is so bad is partially due to the currents. When the weeds are cut, they're not all picked up which leads them to fall to the surface and regrow. At 83 years old she has never seen the lake so bad, which in turn led to a late July closure of the Lakewood Beach. She doesn't believe there is a perfect solution to the weed issue, but strongly believes we need to look into dredging, harvesting, and herbicides.

Trustee Shedd stated that he is fairly balanced on this topic. When he initially saw the maps, he believed that it shows a very targeted area with navigation lanes, which are the more difficult areas to keep open. This approach seems more responsible than others he has seen. I also heard from our CLP representative, Jackie Damore, during the work session that it was Clearcast and ProcettaCOR that were the two that were being applied there, which are perceived to be fairly safe. But when he hears that there's a question about the products that we're actually talking about, then it makes him pause a little bit. He does agree with Mrs. Jones and Mr. Jablonski that the lake conditions aren't getting better after applying herbicides for close to ten years. The question about the biomass and harvesting is that they at least pick up between 85-95% after being cut. When herbicides are used all of those crops fall to the bottom to decay or float to the south basin. He asked the board to table this resolution, so he can research more into the situation.

Trustee Barnes stated the Curly Leaf pondweed herbicide is usually applied in April. This is why the permit is being done now, so the crop doesn't grow too much and then rot at the bottom of the lake.

Trustee Cooper and Troché both talked about tabling this until the next meeting on March, 23rd.

Trustee Barnes stated tabling this until the next Board meeting would be too late. There are six other municipalities voting on this tonight. If the Board does not move forward now, they will not be included in this application.

Trustee Shedd did not feel confident in this answer.

TABLE the CLP's submission of an application for Article 15 permit(s) for application of herbicides to areas of Chautauqua Lake bordering the Village of Lakewood.

Motion by Mayor Holcomb, seconded by Trustee Shedd to table the CLP's submission of an application for Article 15 permit(s) for application of herbicides to areas of Chautauqua Lake bordering the Village of Lakewood. The Board of Trustees will hold a special meeting on Friday, March 13th at 4:00pm once they have more information. Glenn Sullivan of Ready Scout, LLC will be present via ZOOM.

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

TABLED

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RESOLUTION #22-2026 to approve the following 2026 LAROW dock permit applications

1. Sherri R. Grask, 159 E Terrace – Front St and Glenwood Ave LAROW
2. Charlotte J. Johnson, 319 E Terrace Ave – Velie St LAROW
3. Eric Steinbrenner, 5 Pleasantview Ave – Pleasantview Ave LAROW

Motion by Trustee Shedd, seconded by Trustee Troché to approve the 2026 LAROW dock permit applications for Sherri. R Grask, 159 E Terrace – Front St and Glenwood Ave LAROW, Charlotte J. Johnson, 319 E Terrace Ave – Velie St LAROW, and Eric Steinbrenner, 5 Pleasantview Ave – Pleasantview Ave LAROW.

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

RESOLUTION #23-2026 to authorize the following fund transfer for a fuel island repair

Motion by Trustee Barnes, seconded by Trustee Troché \$45.40 from T1093.71 {Fuel Facility O&M} to A5110.40 {Street Maintenance – Contractual}.

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

ANYONE TO BE HEARD

John Jablonski, 213 Spruce Street, thanked the Board for considering the comments tonight on lake management. Secondly, he is in full support of installing sidewalks on Fairmount Ave. He often sees a lot of people carrying their groceries, either on foot or biking. He urges the Board to work with the state and try to find a solution to get as much of that project installed as possible.

Jane Conroe, Chair of the Chautauqua-Conewango Consortium, explained a new industrial development project has been brought to the attention of the New York State Government about data centers. These facilities use huge amounts of water and electricity to produce Artificial Intelligence data. She believes the state is looking into a three-year moratorium on this, but believes all local governments should be aware as well.

Nancy Jones, 215 Locust Street, spoke against the sidewalk project because of the impact on homes and businesses properties.

- **Trustee Troché** stated that everyone has the right to public comment and he appreciates them, but the sidewalk project is a NYSDOT project and concerns should be directed to them.

Rich Fischer, 45 W Fairmount Ave, also spoke against the NYDOT sidewalk extension project. All the hearings, everyone is against this project. He also brought up short-term rentals, he has found multiple online that are not permitted to be within the Village.

- **Village Attorney Lehman** said there has not been any short-term rentals been brought up recently for her to know of any issues.

Laura Smith, Elmcrest Ave, attended the recent public hearing with the NYSDOT and was surprised that there is nothing in the project proposal for the removal of the concrete barrier.

- **Trustee Barnes** let Ms. Smith know that the Board did send a letter to the Senator

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Borello and Assemblyman Molitor asking for the cement barrier to be removed due to safety issues.

Ms. Smith also thanked the Board for taking their time on topics to get more information before passing resolutions.

Shaunah Pilling

Deputy Clerk

RECESS

Motion by Trustee Barnes, seconded by Trustee Shedd, to recess the regular meeting of the Board of Trustees at 7:40 PM, to enter into executive session to discuss a personnel matter.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Present at the executive session, were Mayor Holcomb, Trustees Barnes, Cooper, Troché and Shedd. As well as Clerk/Treasurer Apryl Troutman and Village Attorney Lehman. Motion by Trustee Cooper, seconded by Trustee Barnes to adjourn the executive session at 8:53 PM.

RESOLUTION #24-2026 – APPOINT DEPUTY CLERK & DEPUTY TREASURER

Motion by Trustee Barnes, seconded by Trustee Shedd, to approve the appointment of Shaunah Pilling as the full-time Deputy Clerk, effective March 11, 2026, at an annual salary of \$43,680. Mrs. Pilling will receive an additional \$1/hour upon her one-year anniversary (resolution #72-2025) of Village employment, on 6/16/2026 and the six-month probation will not apply to this position appointment.

Motion by Trustee Barnes, seconded by Trustee Shedd, to approve the appointment of Kimberly Fairbanks, as the full-time Deputy Treasurer to fill a vacancy, effective March 11, 2026, at an annual salary of \$41,600. Per the recommendation of Clerk/Treasurer Troutman, after successful completion of a six-month probationary period, Mrs. Fairbanks' salary will increase by \$.50/hour and after one year of service, the salary will increase by an additional \$1/hour.

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

REGULAR MEETING (Adjournment)

Motion by Trustee Troché, seconded by Trustee Barnes and unanimously carried to adjourn the regular Board of Trustees meeting at 9:00 PM.

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

Apryl L. Troutman
Village Clerk and Treasurer