

Zoom ID # 4118425407

VILLAGE OF CAYUGA HEIGHT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MONTHLY MEETING

September 17th 2025
7:00 p.m.

Present: Mayor Woodard; Trustees: Biloski, Conway, Hubbell, Rennekamp, Robinson, and Salton; Fire Superintendent Tamborelle, Police Chief Wright, Superintendent of Public Works Cross, Assistant Superintendent of Public Works Cowder; Village Attorney Shah; Village Clerk Walker.

1. Call to Order: Mayor Woodard calls the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

2. Approval of the August 20, 2025 Board Meeting Minutes (Exhibit 2026-057)

Resolution: 9881

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: the Village of Cayuga Heights Board of Trustees approves the August 20, 2025, Board Meeting Minutes as presented.

Motion: Trustee Robinson

Second: Trustee Hubbell

Ayes: Mayor Woodard; Trustees: Conway, Hubbell, Rennekamp, Robinson, and Salton

Nays: none

Abstentions: Biloski

Motion Carried

3. Report of Fire Superintendent Tamborelle: Submitted Report (Exhibit 2026-058)

- Fire Superintendent Tamborelle states that the CHFD open house was very well attended. He appreciated the Village DPW and CHFD attending, especially Officer Miller, who spent the whole day.
- Fire Superintendent Tamborelle states that the bids for the Cayuga Heights Fire Department bunker kitchen renovations were received and opened. We had five contractors submit bids ranging from \$147,000 to \$282,000.
- Fire Superintendent Tamborelle states that the lowest bid came in from Quick Construction, which is actually the same company that did the CHFD roof a few years ago.
- Trustee Salton inquires if there was much difference in the individual bids, scope, or if they were uniformly about the same.
- Fire Superintendent Tamborelle states that everyone bid off the same RFP; there was just the back sheet with a cost for completing the project. It was straightforward.
- Trustee Robinson states that he wants to know if the lowest bidder is qualified to complete this work.
- Fire Superintendent Tamborelle states that Quick Construction is a well-known company in this area, and he has no doubt that they will do a great job on this project.

•Clerk Walker states that the Board will need to pass a resolution accepting the bids and then award the bid to the lowest bid.

Resolution: 9882

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: the Village of Cayuga Heights Board of Trustees authorizes and approves accepting the bids submitted for the CHFD Bunker Kitchen Project as the final bids for this project.

Motion: Trustee Robinson

Second: Trustee Rennekamp

Ayes: Mayor Woodard; Trustees: Biloski, Conway, Hubbell, Rennekamp, Robinson, and Salton

Nays: none

Abstentions: none

Motion Carried

Resolution: 9883

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: the Village of Cayuga Heights Board of Trustees authorizes and awards the lowest bid for the CHFD Bunker Kitchen Project to Quick Construction Inc. in the amount of \$147,000. To be completed by May 31, 2026.

Motion: Trustee Salton

Second: Trustee Robinson

Ayes: Mayor Woodard; Trustees: Biloski, Conway, Hubbell, Rennekamp, Robinson, and Salton

Nays: none

Abstentions: none

Motion Carried

3. Privilege of the Floor:



Village of Cayuga Heights

MARCHAM HALL
836 HANSHAW ROAD
ITHACA, NEW YORK 14850

(607) 257-1238
fax (607) 257-4910

PLEASE PRINT			Do you wish to speak? Indicate Yes or No
Name	Address		
1. <u>JULIE LAMBIASE</u>	<u>406 E UPLAND</u>		<u>YES</u>
2. <u>Will Averee</u>	<u>504 highland Rd</u>		<u>NO</u>
3. <u>Joseph Ma</u>	<u>105 Lisa Pl</u>		<u>Yes</u>
4. <u>Jaylor Kerber</u>	<u>240 renwick dr</u>		<u>NO</u>
5. <u>Jennifer Letzin</u>	<u>1021 homestead rd</u>		<u>NO</u>
6. <u>Robert Bronte</u>	<u>317 E. Upland</u>		<u>yes</u>
7. <u>Lois Kravick</u>	<u>1 Pleasant Grove Ln</u>		<u>No</u>
8. <u>Elijah Kelly</u>	<u>7 Redwood Ln</u>		<u>No</u>
9. <u>Louise Holmes</u>	<u>402 E Upland Rd</u>		<u>NO</u>

Village Resident Ilene Lambaise presented her concerns in this letter:

The journey with Mark Mecenias and his plans to develop the land adjacent to East Upland Road began about 13 or 14 years ago when he presented the Board with a proposal to build 11 single family homes on the site. Many of the residents from the impacted neighborhood showed up for the public hearing. Most of our concerns were related to the water issues we experience because much of the proposed area is wetlands and previous development has been shown to exacerbate our water issues.

In May of 2013, Mr. Mecenias abandoned the plan to build homes, and instead, along with the Ciaschi Family, who owns the Community Corners, offered a joint development proposal involving both of their properties. The presentation to the Cayuga Heights community likened the end result to "Nantucket" and consisted of hundreds of new living units, new commercial spaces to include a grocery store, and town square type gathering places with a central gazebo. It was quite lovely but practicality resulted instead in the Cayuga Medical Building's construction.

In January 2014, the Board adopted the Village Comprehensive Plan part of which allowed for Planned Development Zones (PDZs) if a developer had at least 5 acres to develop. Mr. Mecenias took this opportunity to come forward with plans for developing his land along Upland Road which is about 5 acres. His initial plan consisted of a large commercial-residential complex that began at about 5-6 stories high but was eventually fine-tuned down to 35-45'. A public hearing was held on 3/23/21. The room was filled, mostly with residents from the area, all of whom were opposed to such a large-scale development at Community Corners. It was suggested that single family residential homes or perhaps a few duplexes would be more in keeping with the abutting residential neighborhood.

We heard nothing further from the Mecenias camp until March 2025 at which point a new proposal for 37 3BR condominiums, a mix of townhouses and duplexes, was presented to the Board. However, shortly after this proposal was made, the DEC announced new restrictions for developing near wetlands requiring 100' of separation. This has made more than 2/3 of the Mecenias Upland land not viable for development.

Mr. Mecenias has now brought to the Board a proposal for the development of what remains. What remains are 3 single family residential parcels and what he is proposing are ten 3BR townhouse condominiums. Ten 3BR townhouses may sound more doable than 37 or 100. However, he wants to build these units in a space that is zoned to allow for 3 single family homes. His proposal is more than 3x the allowed density. What he is proposing for this small space is the equivalent of a building 160 feet long by 60 feet wide by 30 feet high. That is 150% larger than the Cayuga Medical Building. Its height would tower over the homes on Upland as well as the existing adjacent commercial buildings. Since Mr. Mecenias no longer has 5 acres for a PDZ, what is the justification for his proposal. Cayuga Heights is not NYC; it is not even Collegetown or Downtown Ithaca. The Comprehensive Plan speaks about the importance of maintaining the residential character of the Village. The size and scope of the Mecenias plan would be quite detrimental to the existing residential neighborhood.

Village Resident Robert Boute presents his concerns to the Board:

-Village Resident Robert Boute states that his main concerns with this project are the height of the building and the stormwater management for this project.

•Mayor Woodard states that we will definitely be keeping that in mind on this project.

4. Report of Treasurer Dolch: Submitted Report (Exhibit 2026-060)

•Treasurer Dolch states that the August bank-to-book reconciliations are complete and have been signed off by Trustee Rennekamp.

•Treasurer Dolch states that the Village AUD will be submitted by the deadline later this month.

Approval of Abstract 4:

Resolution: 9884

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: the Village of Cayuga Heights Board of Trustees authorizes and approves Abstract # 3 for FYE 2026, consisting of TA vouchers 24-31 in the amount of \$15,527.36 and Consolidated Fund vouchers 198-276 in the amount of \$1,240,899.71, and the Treasurer is instructed to make payments thereon.

Motion: Trustee Rennekamp

Second: Trustee Conway

Ayes: Mayor Woodard; Trustees: Biloski, Conway, Hubbell, Rennekamp, Robinson, and Salton

Nays: none

Abstentions: none

Motion Carried

5. Report of Mayor Woodard:

•Mayor Woodard states that she received a letter from a Village Resident who could not attend and wanted it entered into the official minutes.

Dear Village Board Members,

I am writing because I am unable to attend the Board meeting tonight. I live on Randolph Road and take the bus to my staff job at Cornell University. I was very annoyed when the Winthrop bus stop was removed, and was informed by a neighbor that he would raise the topic at tonight's meeting. Since I am not able to be there to support him, I wanted to voice my firm support for his request to have the bus stop returned. I understand that there is concern about the number and location of crosswalks, but I would urge you to have a widely discussed conversation about this, rather than submitting to the priorities of the Kendal community. The Winthrop stop is the only one that meets the needs of the large community that lives East of Triphammer. Please consider our needs and restart service to Winthrop Dr.

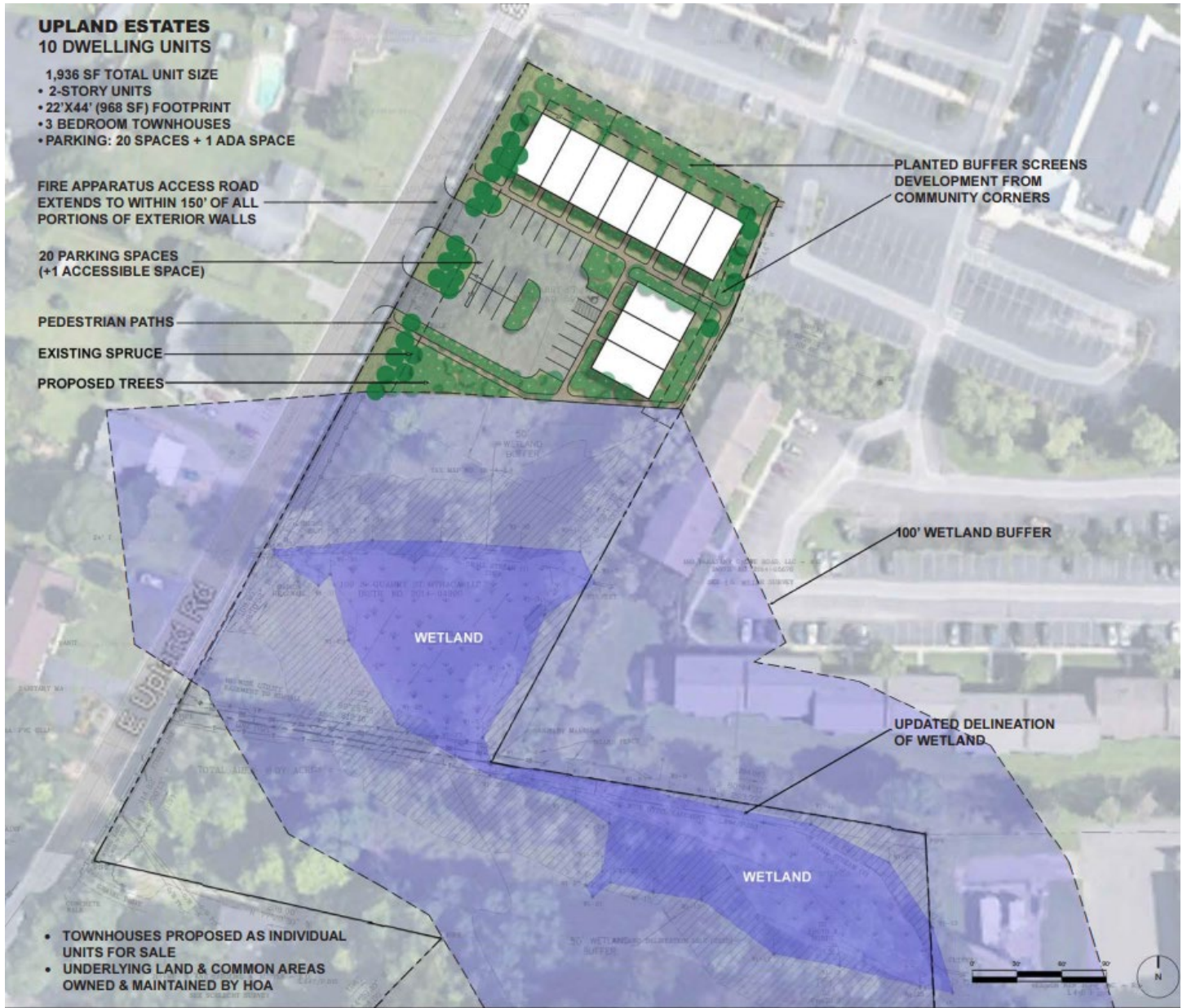
Sincerely,

Jennifer Cisse
116 Randolph Rd
607-882-5626

- Mayor Woodard states that we have had requests for this change for many years. When we took a closer look at the three bus stops on N. Triphammer Rd. It became clear that we only needed two. The Village Public Works Committee then purchased crosswalk signage, which will alert traffic that someone wants to cross.
- Trustee Robinson states that there was a question of pedestrian safety where people were not using the crosswalks to get to a bus stop on the other side of the road.
- Superintendent of Public Works Cross states that the location that residents seem to be upset about is at the bottom of Winthrop Dr., where there was never a crosswalk across the road. There was a TCAT stop across the road from Winthrop Drive as an additional location to stop. TCAT agreed that it wasn't a good idea to have a bus stop without a crosswalk
- Superintendent of Public Works Cross states that the bottom line is we are not going to add another crosswalk when we have two other stops within walking distance.

a. Upland Heights Update:

- Superintendent of Public Works Cross states that Village resident Robert Boute's concerns about this project are unnecessary. The project is not near his property, and there is no potential for water to impact his property.
- Superintendent of Public Works Cross states that the Board fully intends to address stormwater management for all aspects of this project and work with neighboring residents to ensure there is a solution to any water concerns.
- Graham Feltham of Whitham Design presents the document plans for the Board to review and approve, thus accepting the Village Planned Development Zone Application for Upland Heights. [Plans Discussion on Zoom](#)
- Graham Feltham of Whitham Design presents a clear picture of the area that is proposed to be developed.



•Clerk Walker states that the next step is for the Board to decide whether or not to accept the PDZ application and move forward with the discussion.

•Superintendent of Public Works Cross states that we will need to designate who will be the lead agency for SEQR. We will then need to move to site plan review by the Village Planning Board at some point.

•Village Attorney O. Shah states that yes, at some time this needs to be determined.

•Village Planning Board Chair F. Cowett states that a PDZ is a zoning change and, therefore, SEQR would have to come from the Village Board of Trustees.

•Trustee Salton states that he thought the Trustees were the lead agency for a PDZ, and then once the Board

approves the application, works through all the specifics of the project, then it would move on to site plan review by the Village Planning Board.

- Mayor Woodard states that we will need to evaluate this project to decide whether or not we think this is a benefit to the Village and the community.
- Village Attorney O. Shah reads the PDZ section of the Village Code, confirming the next steps.
- Trustee Salton states that several procedural things will be paid attention to as we work through this project.
- Clerk Walker states that he can pull the previous PDZ notes from former Village Attorney R. Marcus for references.
- Superintendent of Public Works Cross states that the Village Board of Trustees has to evaluate the “weight test” of ten questions required under the rules establishing a PDZ.
- Mayor Woodard states that we will bring this back to the Board at the October meeting.
- Trustee Salton states that he really wants to make sure this Board figures out a way to eliminate the water situation.
- Superintendent of Public Works Cross states that we would love to fix this, but the issue is on private property, where there is an undersized pipe that is causing the backup. He will reach out to this owner and see what options are available.

b. Love Living at Home, Marcham Hall Request:

- Mayor Woodard states that the Love Living at Home Cayuga Heights Group has requested use of Marcham Hall on October 11, 2025, at 1:00 p.m. to host a dis to pass open house. The total number of attendees is twenty-nine.

Resolution: 9885

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: the Village of Cayuga Heights Board of Trustees authorizes and approves the use of Marcham Hall on October 11, 2025, at 1:00 p.m. for a meet and greet open house for Love Living at Home Cayuga Heights.

Motion: Trustee Biloski

Second: Trustee Rennekamp

Ayes: Mayor Woodard; Trustees: Biloski, Conway, Hubbell, Rennekamp, Robinson, and Salton

Nays: none

Abstentions: none

Motion Carried

c. Updated Village Job Descriptions and Village Handbook:

•Trustee Biloski states that the Village HR Committee has been working on updating language for the Village Employee Handbook and several of the department's job descriptions. The main focus has been on updating the number of hours the position requires as well as the required responsibilities.

•Trustee Biloski states that the Village Superintendent of Public Works job description was our main focus since B. Cross will be retiring at the end of the year.

•Superintendent of Public Works **Cross** states that he has been appointed each year for responsibilities that fall under his original job descriptions. He states that this is unnecessary, but did not want to cause any confusion.

•Clerk Walker states that we should start with the changes to the Village Employee Handbook and then move through the exhibits in order.

Resolution: 9886

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: the Village of Cayuga Heights Board of Trustees authorizes and approves the updated Village of Cayuga Heights Employee Handbook as presented in Exhibit 2026-063.

Motion: Trustee Robinson

Second: Trustee Hubbell

Ayes: Mayor Woodard; Trustees: Biloski, Conway, Hubbell, Rennekamp, Robinson, and Salton

Nays: none

Abstentions: none

Motion Carried

Resolution: 9887

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: the Village of Cayuga Heights Board of Trustees authorizes and approves the updated Village of Cayuga Heights job description for Village Treasurer as presented.

Motion: Trustee Robinson

Second: Trustee Rennekamp

Ayes: Mayor Woodard; Trustees: Biloski, Conway, Hubbell, Rennekamp, Robinson, and Salton

Nays: none

Abstentions: none

Motion Carried

Resolution: 9888

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: the Village of Cayuga Heights Board of Trustees authorizes and approves the updated Village of Cayuga Heights job description for Village Police Chief as presented.

Motion: Trustee Biloski
Second: Trustee Rennekamp
Ayes: Mayor Woodard; Trustees: Biloski, Conway, Hubbell, Rennekamp, Robinson, and Salton
Nays: none
Abstentions: none

Motion Carried

Resolution: 9889

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: the Village of Cayuga Heights Board of Trustees authorizes and approves the updated Village of Cayuga Heights job description for Village Superintendent of Public Works as presented.

Motion: Trustee Salton
Second: Trustee Hubbell
Ayes: Mayor Woodard; Trustees: Biloski, Conway, Hubbell, Rennekamp, Robinson, and Salton
Nays: none
Abstentions: none

Motion Carried

Resolution: 9890

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: the Village of Cayuga Heights Board of Trustees authorizes and approves the updated Village of Cayuga Heights job description for Village Assistant Superintendent of Public Works as presented.

Motion: Trustee Biloski
Second: Trustee Conway
Ayes: Mayor Woodard; Trustees: Biloski, Conway, Hubbell, Rennekamp, Robinson, and Salton
Nays: none
Abstentions: none

Motion Carried

Resolution: 9891

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: the Village of Cayuga Heights Board of Trustees authorizes and approves the updated Village of Cayuga Heights job description for Village Deputy Clerk as presented.

Motion: Trustee Biloski
Second: Trustee Hubbell

Ayes: Mayor Woodard; Trustees: Biloski, Conway, Hubbell, Rennekamp, Robinson, and Salton
Nays: none
Abstentions: none

Motion Carried

Resolution: 9892

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: the Village of Cayuga Heights Board of Trustees authorizes and approves the updated Village of Cayuga Heights job description for Village Clerk as presented.

Motion: Trustee Biloski
Second: Trustee Rennekamp
Ayes: Mayor Woodard; Trustees: Biloski, Conway, Hubbell, Rennekamp, Robinson, and Salton
Nays: none
Abstentions: none

Motion Carried

d. Loss of Former Village Clerk Norma Manning:

- Mayor Woodard states that over the last month, we have lost two people who served in a public role for the Village of Cayuga Heights. The first was long-time Village Clerk Norma Manning, and the second was Board serving Trustee Jim Bisogni Jr.
- Mayor Woodard states that we have drafted two resolutions honoring their service to the Village of Cayuga Heights.

**RECOGNITION OF THE PAST OUTSTANDING
PUBLIC SERVICE OF THE LATE NORMA MANNING**

Resolution: 9893

WHEREAS, Norma Manning started her public service with the Village of Cayuga Heights on July 7th, 2000; and
WHEREAS, Norma had brought respect, honor, and integrity to her role as the Village Clerk; and
WHEREAS, Norma was part of an important team that managed all Village services.
WHEREAS, Norma has consistently applied her skills until her retirement from the Village in 2010;
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Cayuga Heights Board of Trustees does hereby honor the memory of former Village Clerk Norma Manning for her dedication, commitment, and outstanding public service to the Village of Cayuga Heights.

Motion: Trustee Salton
Second: Trustee Hubbell
Ayes: Mayor Woodard; Trustees: Biloski, Conway, Hubbell, Rennekamp, Robinson, and Salton
Nays: none
Abstentions: none

Motion Carried

e. Loss of Former Board Member James (Jim) Bisogni Jr.:

**RECOGNITION OF THE PAST OUTSTANDING
PUBLIC SERVICE OF THE LATE JOHN (JIM) BISOGNI JR.**

Resolution: 9894

WHEREAS, Jim started his public service with the Village of Cayuga Heights in 2005; and

WHEREAS, Jim joined the Village Zoning Board of Appeals, where he exemplified a strong work ethic and a compassionate spirit; and

WHEREAS, Jim continued in his commitment to public service, where he joined the Village Board of Trustees in 2008; and

WHEREAS, Jim had consistently remained a positive influence on those who served with him until he departed from this Board;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Cayuga Heights Board of Trustees does hereby honor the memory of former Village Trustee Jim Bisogni for his dedication, commitment, and outstanding public service to the Village of Cayuga Heights.

Motion: Trustee Salton
Second: Trustee Biloski
Ayes: Mayor Woodard; Trustees: Biloski, Conway, Hubbell, Rennekamp, Robinson, and Salton
Nays: none
Abstentions: none

Motion Carried

f. Regular Board Meeting Time Change:

•Mayor Woodard states that the Village Administrative Committee discussed moving the Board Meeting time to 6:00 p.m. since most department heads were attending via Zoom, and if the meeting went long, then it would not be a ten-hour or longer workday for the Village staff.

- Trustee Salton states that some of us work so six would be too early.
- The Board agreed that there are too many variables to make this change and therefore tabled the idea of changing the time from seven for the Village Board of Trustees meeting.

g. IAWWTF Revised Letter:

- Mayor Woodard states that this letter was presented to the Board at the August meeting. The Board agreed that the tone did not reflect the right objective for the Board to sign off on. Since then, Board members have revised the letter.
- Mayor Woodard reads the following letter to the Board.

Resolution: 9895

**Intermunicipal Wastewater Agreement Partners
c/o Rod Howe, Supervisor
Town of Ithaca
215 North Tioga Street
Ithaca, NY 14850**

Via US Mail, and Email as available

Carol Lamb-Lafay
Acting Deputy Commissioner
Water Resources
NYSDEC
625 Broadway, 4th Floor
Albany, NY 12233

Dear Acting Deputy Commissioner Lamb-Lafay,

We write collectively as the elected leadership of the six municipal signatories to the 2003 Intermunicipal Wastewater Agreement, who are either owners of, or wastewater contributors to, the Ithaca Area Wastewater Treatment Facility (IAWWTF). Having been authorized by our respective legislative bodies to do so, we hereunder state our strong opposition to the SPDES permit modifications proposed by NYSDEC on the grounds that the assumed violations they are designed to mitigate have not been proven to exist, as required by the TMDL process outlined in NYSDEC technical guidance, and that the unprecedented costs associated with compliance would be financially burdensome to our ratepayers while yielding little to no environmental benefit. We encourage the Department to focus the State's limited resources on mitigating the proven phosphorus and sediment-related impairments that have been apparent for decades but that continue to persist.

Background

The Ithaca Area Wastewater Treatment Facility (IAWWTF) located at the south end of Cayuga Lake is a 13.1 million gallons-per-day (MGD) capacity treatment plant owned and operated by the City of Ithaca, the Town of Ithaca and the Town of Dryden. The facility also receives sewer flow indirectly from the Village of Cayuga Heights, the Village of Lansing, and the Town of Lansing.

IAWWTF owners are currently developing a long-term capital improvement project (CIP). As originally envisioned, owners expected to retain conventional biological treatment, while focusing on modernization and replacement of aged and failing infrastructure. The preliminary estimate of costs related to capital improvements ranged from 60 and 100 million dollars, depending on the chosen design. Costs will be divided among owners, based on predetermined share, with a portion offset by anticipated water quality improvement grants. Some of the costs will eventually be proportionally passed through to non-owner users via independently negotiated agreements.

Proposed Permit Modifications and Costs

Without any corroborative ambient water quality sampling, biological sampling, evaluation of point and non-point sources, or scientific analysis of the assimilative capacity of the receiving water, NYSDEC is now proposing to add SPDES permit limitations for ammonia and nitrite, based on limited effluent data and devised using numerical standards that are designed to ensure the “protection of aquatic life.” However, the membrane bioreactor technology required to meet the proposed permit limits would add 100 million dollars to the project cost, which would have an enormous, unsustainable, and unjustifiable impact on ratepayers in the stakeholder municipalities for decades to come.

NYSDEC Technical Guidance Requires a Wholistic Pollution Control Approach

The technical guidance document cited by permit writers to underpin the Water Quality Based Effluent Limitations (WQBEL) for nitrite and ammonia (“TOGS 1.3.1”) specifies that WQBEL permit limits must be devised in conjunction with a TMDL process similar to the one that was recently completed for phosphorous. By any plain reading, that process must quantify the sources of ammonia and nitrite in the south segment of the lake (an approximately 1.4 square-mile area south of McKinney’s Point) and determine the segment’s ability to assimilate the substances proposed for limitation. Only then could an alleged violation be confirmed or disproven, sources identified, and mitigation strategies appropriately weighted.

The aforementioned TMDL for ammonia and nitrite has not been undertaken, nor contemplated, by NYSDEC, and any analysis that relies on additional segmentation of the lake runs counter to the Department’s own guidance for waterbody segmentation. The “Consolidated Assessment and Listing Methodology,” published in 2023, provides a regulatory framework for waterbody segmentation. It specifically states that *“Some very large lakes, like Lake Champlain and the Finger Lakes are segmented in multiple assessment units based on classification.”*

NYSDEC does not propose a change in “classification” in the waters surrounding the mixing zone. Instead it proposes a tiny new waterbody segment immediately surrounding

the zone, and appears to be contending that the TMDL process was followed for the newly created zone. Similarly, the “reasonable potential analysis” relied upon by NYSDEC in its SPDES Permit Fact Sheet to indicate that statistical modeling is potentially *predictive* of a violation, is itself part of the TMDL process, not a substitute for one. TOGS 1.3.1 plainly states that “*The TMDL process... provides the basis for a “reasonable potential” analysis; that is, does the proposed discharge of a pollutant have the reasonable potential to cause or contribute to an excursion of water quality standards. If the answer is “yes”, the TMDL process is then used to determine the WQBELs for all sources of that pollutant to assure compliance with water quality standards.*”

On a macro level, NYSDEC specifically dismissed nitrogen (nitrate) as a primary cause of impairment in Cayuga Lake as recently as 2024 in its TMDL for phosphorus, and did not make any recommendations regarding ammonia or nitrite. Coming to a statistically-based conclusion that anything short of complete nitrification at a wastewater treatment plant equals a water quality standards violation does not demonstrate that an applicable narrative best-use-based standards violation exists.

As mentioned, the proposed permit limits are being devised with the objective of “the protection of aquatic life.” However, there has been no corroborative biological monitoring nor anecdotal evidence to suggest that organisms are under stress outside the mixing zone (which, itself, has not been delineated). To the contrary, available data indicates that annual inventories at the Cayuga Inlet fish ladder have not decreased in population or size, and angler surveys show extremely high satisfaction with fishing in the lake. In addition, synoptic dissolved oxygen sampling at four south-segment locations analyzed over the past 15 years by Community Science Institute reveals that levels in the south lake are quite high (approaching 9 mg/l) and consistent throughout the segment, displaying no localized variation or decline at the point-source discharge monitoring locations, generally indicating an overall healthy environment for aquatic life.

The assumptions underpinning the Department’s proposed modifications are particularly concerning because they are purely theoretical and based on hypothetical variables such as a dilution ratio and mixing zone dimensions that not only cannot be traced to their mathematical origins, but have likely not been revisited since IAWWTF was rerated from 10 MGD to 13.1 MGD. It is not clear how NYSDEC would spatialize a new waterbody segment surrounding a mixing zone without first delineating the shape or boundaries of the zone through any quantifiable scientific processes.

Past Research Supports Retaining Conventional Treatment Technology

IAWWTF owners commissioned a comprehensive study in the mid-80’s to determine whether its then-redesigned discharge would result in harmful levels of ammonia outside

the mixing zone. The study, conducted by Environmental Scientist, Liz Moran, concluded that, *"The analysis demonstrates that even under 'worst case' conditions, the concentrations of un-ionized ammonia in the south end of the lake will not create toxic conditions for fish outside of an acceptable mixing zone. Therefore, the new lake outfall of the upgraded and rebuilt Ithaca Area Wastewater Treatment Facility is not creating unacceptable water quality conditions."*

Subsequent to the study, the plant was rerated from 10 MGD to 13.1 MGD. It is likely that current mixing zone and dilution assumptions have not been adjusted to account for the increase in maximum allowable flow. However, with the exception of phosphorus (which has been greatly reduced), IAWWTF effluent parameters are similar to those that existed during Ms. Moran's study period. Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that her general findings are worth investigating today.

Conclusion

IAWWTF owners and users wholly support efforts to maintain and improve water quality in Cayuga Lake. To that end, IAWWTF owners voluntarily invested in tertiary phosphorus treatment in 2003, long before the TMDL for phosphorus was developed, and area municipalities continue to collaborate to utilize vital wastewater infrastructure in an efficient, regional approach. We urge the Department to avoid high cost-benefit-ratio regulatory practices that would inadvertently disincentivize regional wastewater management and encourage the proliferation of septic systems and sprawl development.

Municipalities and ratepayers encourage the efficient use of resources to advance the goals of the TMDL for Phosphorus in Cayuga Lake, including the establishment of riparian buffers, streambank stabilization, and greater investment in agricultural best management practices. Given the enormous cost and questionable environmental benefit of the potential permit modification, stakeholders will continue to advocate for the prioritization of solving the problems that were quantified and published by NYSDEC following decades of research, and oppose the diversion of finite assets to address issues that have either not been identified, not been confirmed, or were dismissed outright as non-problematic during the development of the phosphorus TMDL. We urge NYSDEC to abide by its most comprehensive regulatory procedures, which were created to ensure implementation of, and compliance with, state and federal environmental law.

NYSDEC must determine whether the IAWWTF discharge is causing or contributing to water-quality standards violations related to ammonia and nitrite by following its own TMDL process. A permit modification with a price tag of 100 million dollars, based solely on theoretical modeling in the absence of field corroboration, mandated while known impairments continue to go unaddressed, is environmentally questionable and financially

prejudicial, particularly to the many disadvantaged and underserved communities reliant on IAWWTF.

We look forward to collaborating on thorough, sensible solutions that balance evidence-based regulatory practices with real-world financial realities and implementation constraints.

Respectfully,

Date: _____
Robert Cantelmo, Mayor
City of Ithaca

Date: _____
Linda Woodard, Mayor
Village of Cayuga Heights

Date: _____
Rod Howe, Supervisor
Town of Ithaca

Date: _____
Ronny Hardaway, Mayor
Village of Lansing

Date: _____
Jason Leifer, Supervisor
Town of Dryden

Date: _____
Ruth Groff, Supervisor
Town of Lansing

Cc;

- Amanda Lefton, Commissioner, NYSDEC
- Anthony Luisi, Deputy Commissioner and General Counsel, NYSDEC
- Dereth Glance, Director, NYSDEC Region 7
- Monica Moss, Section Chief, North Section, NYSDEC
- Thomas Vigneault, Water Resources Specialist, NYSDEC Region 7
- The Honorable Anna Kelles, Assemblymember, 125th Assembly District
- The Honorable Lea Web, New York State Senator, 52nd Senate District
- The Honorable Kathy Hochul, Governor of New York State

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Cayuga Heights Board of Trustees authorizes and approves Mayor Woodard to sign the IAWWTF Letter to NYSDEC as presented.

Motion: Trustee Hubbell

Second: Trustee Conway

Ayes: Mayor Woodard; Trustees: Biloski, Conway, Hubbell, Rennekamp, Robinson, and Salton

Nays: none

Abstentions: none

- Superintendent of Public Works, Cross states that he received new information, Yaws Manager, M. Albro, who reached out to our regional NYSDEC engineer and was informed that the Village of Cayuga Heights Wastewater Treatment Plant does not have anything to worry about. We do not have the same or potential problem as does the IAWWTF.

- Trustee Salton states that any permit is going to have an ammonia regulation in it; whether or not we have an issue treating it or not is a separate issue.

Motion Carried

g. 2026 Water Rate:

- Mayor Woodard states that we have received Bolton Points Rate changes for 2026. They are increasing the water rate by six (6%) percent.

- Mayor Woodard states that the Village Finance Committee met and decided we need more time to determine whether or not we match the Bolton Point rate or increase it.

- Assistant Superintendent of Public Works Cowder states that we have received the proposed T.G. Miller report on water infrastructure projects.

- Trustee Robinson stated that we are waiting for them to prioritize the projects.

- Superintendent of Public Works, Cross states that the preliminary report is ten million dollars.

- Trustee Rennekamp states that she would like to know the patterns of cash flow needed for these projects. When will we learn about that?

- Superintendent of Public Works, Cross states that he received a proposal from T.G. Miller to engage with developing the plans on costs. This will be on the agenda for the October Board Meeting.

- Superintendent of Public Works, Cross states that he just found out that T.G. Miller's lead water engineer for the Village is retiring. They have brought someone new on board to fill that position.

6. Report of the Trustees:

a. Greater Tompkins County Municipal Health Insurance Consortium:

- Trustee Salton states that there will be an eighteen (18%) percent increase in premiums for 2026. Reserves are very low, and a five-year plan to fix this shortage, but this still might not protect us enough.
- Trustee Salton states that last year we had one hundred sixteen high-cost claimants, which took two thousand five hundred premium payments to fund.
- Trustee Salton states that we are projecting to come in with a two-million-nine-hundred-dollar deficit. That is 4.63% below the annual budget.

b. Ammonia discharge:

- Trustee Salton states that there is a whole list of new standards for the new SPEDES Permits.
- Trustee Robinson states that our ammonia is within the range permitted by NYSDEC.
- Mayor Woodard states that gravity is a huge factor in ammonia concentrations. Our plant has no issue with the flows to the plant.
- Trustee Salton states that Cornell has developed a Mixing Zone Expert System. This is a computer modeling system for analyzing how wastewater and other effluents discharge mixes and disperse once they enter a body of water.
- Trustee Salton states that the City of Ithaca would be smart to use this type of service going forward.
- Trustee Hubbell states that he thought it worthwhile to show support for this letter.

c. Village Finance Committee:

- Trustee Rennekamp states that we talked about the upcoming water rate changes.
- Trustee Rennekamp states that we are also working on improving our processes to monitor how the budget is going during the year, versus waiting until the end. Every quarter, we are going to compare YTD on budgeted amounts, and if there is anything out of the norm, we will ask the different committees to talk with their department heads to get an update on why.
- Trustee Rennekamp states that we will be providing updates on a few revenue accounts, like sales tax.

d. Village ITCTC Committee:

- Trustee Biloski states that they have a new executive director named Tom Knight. He will be reaching out to all the members of the committee.
- Trustee Biloski states that the policy committee agreed to support the updated N.Y.S. highway safety goals for

2026.

e. Village Human Resources Committee:

- Trustee Biloski states that in October, she will be sending out the timeline for annual performance reviews.

f. Village Public Works Committee:

- Trustee Robinson states that B. Cross now has a map of the properties for the Cayuga Heights Road Sidewalk Project, so he may begin the easement process.
- Trustee Robinson states that the Renwick Brook Culvert Pipe project is still in flux. We are now looking at lining the culvert, but that is still undetermined.
- Trustee Robinson states that we now have a crosswalk at Texas and Spruce Lane. The crosswalk lights have been installed.
- Trustee Robinson states that as the sidewalks are almost done on The Parkway and E. Upland Rd.
- Trustee Robinson states that an asphalt skim coat is scheduled for next week on Devon Rd.

g. Village Wastewater Committee:

- Trustee Robinson states that two out of the five rail systems are complete.
- Trustee Robinson states that YAWS management is looking to replace the control panel for the pumps.
- Assistant Superintendent of Public Works Cowder states that the solar panels are connected and sending power back to the grid.
- Clerk Walker states that he expects to see something from NYSERDA on the projected savings.
- Trustee Robinson states that the last major thing to install is a new control panel, but other than that, we are ready to have an open house.

h. Cayuga Lanke Watershed Intermunicipal Organization Committee:

- Trustee Hubbell states that there were two interesting presentations, one on the surface soil on the smaller finger lake. The other one was on the back flows between the two lakes (Cayuga and Seneca) from the Erie Canal.
- Trustee Hubbell states that there is data that shows a direct correlation in the levels of salinity in the Cayuga and Seneca Lakes since they both have salt mines.

7. Report of Superintendent of Public Works Cross:

- Superintendent of Public Works Cross states that he just spent the last two days engaging with supporting the International Codes Council, which authors N.Y.S. Codes, through a mentorship for the Town of Ithaca, M.

Mosely.

- Superintendent of Public Works Cross states that he is proud to be a mentor to Marty, and he is not surprised at his success, and hopes that one day he will become a council member for the International Codes Council.

- The Village Board congratulates B. Cross for his role as the Town of Ithaca's Code Enforcement Officer.

8. Report of Police Chief Wright: Submitted Report (Exhibit 2026-067)

- Chief Wright states that the 2019 Dodge Durango sold at auction for \$18,900. So over the five years he drove it, it cost the Village only \$4,600 a year.

- Chief Wright states that the only other topic to discuss tonight would be fulfilling the vacant full-time patrol officer position.

- Chief Wright states this individual is currently employed by us in a part-time capacity. He works full-time for the Village of Trumansburg, but his chief is willing to release him come November.

- Chief Wright states that he is looking for Board approval to hire Officer Trimm, but he does not know the starting hourly rate for the resolution.

a. FLOCK Cameras:

- Trustee Salton states that he is not against the program or saying that the Village is doing anything wrong. He believed the benefit outweighs the potential for misuse.

- Trustee Salton states that he is concerned about information from those cameras getting into the hands of an agency that is working on immigration issues.

- Chief Wright states that there is always a potential situation where, as technology continues to push forward, sharing information is used.

- Chief Wright states that our four cameras are owned by us and only our officers can access them. There is only a 30-day retention on data that is collected. There is no way anyone can get into our system.

- Chief Wright states that we get requests for information all the time. We can either accept or deny that request. When accepted, the only thing an agency can get is notification that a particular car or plate has a “hit” on our cameras.

- Chief Wright states that none of the cameras in Tompkins County are “live”; they are all still shots.

- Chief Wright states that this tool has proved itself time and time again to be vital in the timing for prioritizing public safety.

- Trustee Salton states that he thinks it is just a poor understanding of how these tools are used.

9. Report of Assistant Superintendent of Public Works Cowder: Submitted Report (Exhibit 2026-068)

- Assistant Superintendent of Public Works Cowder states that they did complete the lining of eight manholes last week.
- Assistant Superintendent of Public Works Cowder states that T.G. Miller is going to move the sewer meters to concentrate on the Northeast section of the Village.
- Assistant Superintendent of Public Works Cowder states that, as a result of the drought, we are seeing more water line breaks because they are now showing up more dry, and also because of the drying of the ground, which moves the pipes as well.
- Assistant Superintendent of Public Works Cowder states the new leaf vacuum has arrived, and our auction items resulted in a revenue of just over nine thousand dollars.

10. Report of Clerk Walker:

- Clerk Walker states that he has no action items for the Board tonight.
- Clerk Walker states that he has an exhibit in tonight's agenda that shows the YTD property tax collection for this year as well as last year. The difference is around twelve thousand dollars.
- Clerk Walker states that as a reminder, once we finish collecting property taxes in October, then the Board will pass a resolution to relevy them onto the Town and County tax bills. We are then made whole sometime in the spring of 2026.
- Clerk Walker states that Deputy Clerk Perkins is waiting on the department heads' article for the Village Annual Newsletter. We hope to have that out in the mail by Thanksgiving.

11. Report of Attorney O. Shah:

- Village Attorney Shah states that he did find an email from former Village Attorney R. Marcus regarding PDZs and procedures.
- Village Attorney Shah states that there should be preliminary approval before a proposed site plan is reviewed by the Village Planning Board.
- Superintendent of Public Works Cross states that there is a lot of effort put in by the office staff, so if these meetings can be combined, that would help.

12. Executive Session:

Resolution: 9896

WHEREAS: The NYS Open Meeting Law §105 prescribes matters for which a public body may conduct an executive session; and,

WHEREAS: Upon a majority vote of its total membership, taken in an open meeting under a motion identifying the general area or areas of the subject or subjects to be considered; and,

WHEREAS: The conduct of an executive session for these enumerated purposes only, provided, however, that no action by formal vote shall be taken to appropriate public money:

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT An Executive Session of the Village of Cayuga Heights Board of Trustees is conducted for subsection (F) the medical, financial, credit, or employment history of a particular person or corporation, or matters leading to the appointment, employment, promotion, demotion, discipline, suspension, dismissal, or removal of a particular person or corporation.

Motion: Trustee Robinson

Second: Trustee Biloski

Ayes: Mayor Woodard; Trustees: Conway, Hubbell, Rennekamp, Robinson, and Salton

Nays: none

Abstentions: none

Motion Carried

Resolution: 9897

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Village Board of Trustees exit an Executive Session and return to an open meeting.

Motion: Trustee Robinson

Second: Trustee Salton

Ayes: Mayor Woodard; Trustees: Conway, Hubbell, Rennekamp, Robinson, and Salton

Nays: none

Abstentions: none

Motion Carried

14. Adjournment: Mayor Woodard adjourns the meeting at 10:26 p.m.