Zoom ID # 4118425407

VILLAGE OF CAYUGA HEIGHTS
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MONTHLY MEETING

September 16th 2026
7:00 p.m.

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

Absent: Trustee Biloski

1. Call to Order: Mayor Woodard calls the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Approval of July 15, 2026 Board Meeting Minutes

Resolution: 10095

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: the Village of Cayuga Heights Board of Trustees approves the July 15, 2026 Board Meeting Minutes with requested changes.

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

Motion Carried

3. Privilege of the Floor: No members of the public were present to speak.

4. 307 Winthrop Drive Property Violation Hearing:

•Mayor Woodard states that as part of our Village Property Maintenance Law, a resident can present their case to the Village Board of Trustees if they do not agree with the violation.

•Mayor Woodard states that the Village has been citing Mr. Mehta for failing to keep his front lawn mowed and less than ten inches as defined under the "lawn area" of the Village Code.

•Mayor Woodard states that this is his opportunity to convince the Board that you should not be fined for these violations.

•Karan Mehta, owner of 307 Winthrop Drive, introduces himself to the Board and states that he has had good conversations with Assistant Superintendent of Public Works A. Cowder and Superintendent of Public Works C. Southard about this subject.

•K. Mehta states that his property looks a bit unconventional to some, but he is starting to see some plants and insects thriving as he continues to turn his lawns into meadows.

•Mayor Woodard states that she understands why people would want to develop this type of planting. That is

not what is involved here. The Village has a law that says you have to keep your grass cut and it cannot exceed ten inches. She does not disagree, and the end goal is obtainable even with keeping the grass cut.

•K. Mehta states that his lawn actually is obeying the law. There are subtleties of interpretation that he would like to clarify.

•K. Mehta states that he is not aware of any neighbors that are complaining about his lawn, unlike last year, when one neighbor had a concern.

•K. Mehta states that it seems we need to clarify what is defined as a "lawn Area". He believes that the law excludes from the definition areas that are occupied by native species.

•Mayor Woodard states that there are two issues here: the front yard and the back yard. The front yard is much more restrictive on what is allowed. Currently, the front yard looks like a hay field.

•Trustee Conway states that he was a little hesitant about the amount of energy we put forth on policing people's yards. He has seen similar yards, but Mr. Mehta is intentional in what he is doing, and he really doesn't feel we need to make such a big deal about this.

•K. Mehta states that it clearly reads in this law that a law includes all areas at ground level of any property that are not occupied by man-made improvements, shrubs, native plants, and nothing about them having to be below ten inches. He also questions the area that is occupied by trees and shrubs. Does the area under the canopy count?

•Mayor Woodard states that she recognizes that this law needs to be tightened, and having you here to challenge it is helpful.

•K. Mehta states that it is important to him to be compliant with the law. However, he reads it differently.

•Trustee Robinson states Are you interpreting the tree canopy as a non-lawn area? He states that the intent is that a tree or shrub trunk is not part of the lawn area.

•Trustee Salton states that theoretically, when a white pine sheds its needles, it creates a base of needles. Is that a lawn area? No, because it is full of needles.

•K. Mehta states that if he could show the Board what is growing and see the plants he has in the backyard, it is occupied by native plants.

•Mayor Woodard states that the backyard is a lot different. You can experiment more than you can in the front yard.

•Mayor Woodard inquires how Mr. Mehta mowed his lawn last year when the Village confronted you on this violation.

•K. Mehta states that he has an environmentally friendly technique called scything.

•Trustee Salton states that your front lawn is pushing the envelope on height; rules are different for front lawns. He does not like having to be in the business of policing residents. As for this case, he recommends the resident not pay any type of fine.

•K. Mehta states that he wants to work with his neighbors and if someone has a concern, he will respond to it, but just a blanket demand is not really neighborly.

•Trustee Robinson states that we are asking you to move the area that is uncultivated and unbedded. He does not feel it is necessary to ask every neighbor to comment on what you are doing. It is a community. We drafted these guidelines based on a community task force.

•K. Mehta states that this is exactly what needs to be worked on. Defining the lawn area.

•Trustee Conway states that we are saying the backyard is ok, classifying it as a meadow; the front yard needs to be maintained, and there is no need to move forward with fines.

•Trustee Biloski agrees that the area is long and needs attention.

•Trustee Hubbell states that we just came into compliance and got it under ten inches.

•Trustee Fleming states that he is thankful for Mr. Mehta's willingness to come in and discuss this. It is clear that there are some areas of this law that need to be clarified. Policing individual lawns is not really a role Village Trustees should be taking on. However, the lawn does need some attention; the effort to maintain the lawn without using gasoline is appreciated.

•Assistant Superintendent of Public Works A. Cowder states that what he would like to avoid is changing the law that puts this resident back in the same situation.

•Mayor Woodard states that she is not going to promise that. This whole situation has pointed out that our law is not written well enough to enforce what we want. We knew that this would be a work in progress. It is still better than having a violation like this go before the courts.

•K. Mehta states that he appreciates the discussion.

Resolution: 10096

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: the Village of Cayuga Heights Board of Trustees approves and authorizes waiving any property maintenance violations for the property known as 307 Winthrop Drive.

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

Motion Carried

5. Report of Treasurer Dolch:

•Treasurer Dolch states that both June and July bank-to-book reconciliations are complete.

•Approval of Abstract 3:

Resolution: 10097

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: the Village of Cayuga Heights Board of Trustees authorizes and approves Abstract #3 for FYE2027, consisting of: TA vouchers 11-18 in the amount of $18,592.44, Consolidated Fund vouchers 99-178 in the amount of $544,396.06.

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

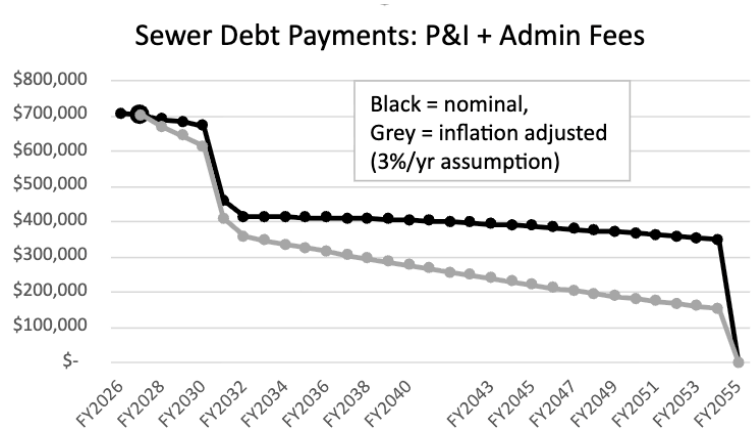
Motion Carried

•Trustee Conway states that you will also find in the agenda some charts that the finance committee reviews each month**.** They are meant to offer another view of the Village finances and long-term obligations.

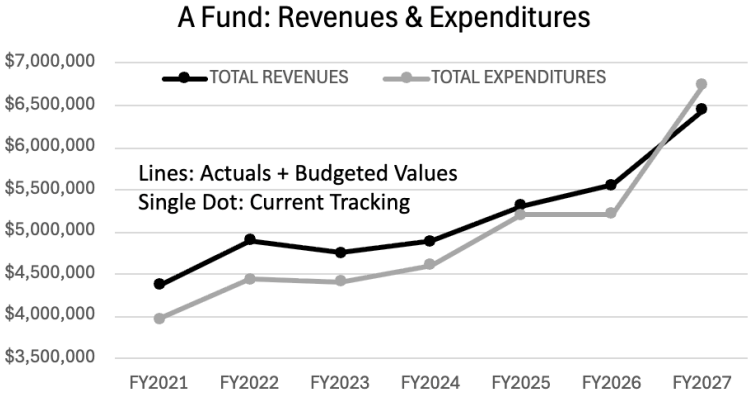
•Trustee Robinson states that we could make it more explicit to distinguish between the actual and the budget line.

This chartbook is meant to be a quick summary of Village finances to aid trustees in their understanding our Village's current fiscal position. These charts are a regular part of our finance committee meetings.

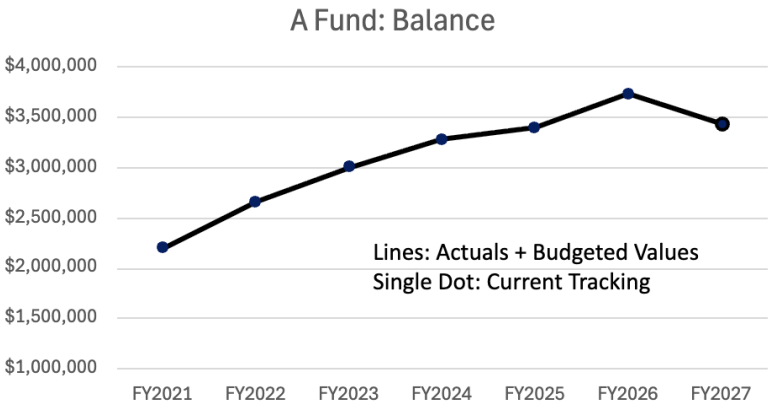
The Village has debt related to our Sewer G Fund. This chart displays our projected debt payments, assuming that we pay the minimal payment each year over the term of existing debt/bonds.



The Village has now closed the books on FY2026. This chart includes historical data FY2021-2026 + our current budget for FY2027. Once we have a couple more months of data, this chart will be updated with our current tracking of FY2027 revenues and expenditures.



The A Fund closed FY2026 at ~$3.7MM. The balance has gone up each of the past 5 years. The FY2027 budget anticipates the use of ~$297K to meet our budgeted expenditures. This chart will be updated with our current tracking of FY2027 revenues and expenditures throughout the year.



6. Report of Superintendent of Public Works Southard:

•Superintendent of Public Works Southard states that he has a couple of action items for tonight. The first one is

an address change for 719 Hanshaw Rd. Basically, the homeowner is officially classifying this property into two units and needs Board approval to set the new addresses.

Resolution: 10098

WHEREAS, the Tompkins County Department of Emergency Response (DoER) oversees emergency dispatch and communications systems that allow residents to dial 911; and

WHEREAS, 911 is the number to report a police, fire, or medical emergency that requires the immediate presence of police officers, firefighters, or emergency medical personnel; and

WHEREAS, new address designations are approved by a municipality's governing body.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT: the Village of Cayuga Heights Board of Trustees authorizes and approves 719 Hanshaw Road, Unit 1 – East dwelling, 719 Hanshaw Road, Unit 2 – West dwelling address for this property.

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

Motion Carried

•Superintendent of Public Works Southard states that the second action item is for the consulting work that T.G. Miller is performing for the Renwick Culvert Project as presented in Exhibit 2027-045.

•Superintendent of Public Works Southard states that he was going through some paperwork and realized that we had not yet signed the construction administration service work for this project. There was a resolution in April authorizing them to proceed, but not an actual contract.

Resolution: 10099

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: the Village of Cayuga Heights Board of Trustees approves and authorizes Mayor Woodard to sign the T. G. Miller P.C. Amendment (1) for Construction Administration Services for the Renwick Brook Culvert Improvements as presented in Exhibit 2027-045.
Motion: Trustee Robinson
Second: Trustee Conway
Ayes: Mayor Woodard; Trustees: Biloski, Conway, Fleming, Hubbell, Robinson, and Salton
Nays: none
Abstentions: none

•Trustee Conway states that the math does not add up in the presented Renwick Culvert budget update exhibit.

•Superintendent of Public Works Southard states that these numbers represent what we had available to spend before we receive any bids.

•Assistant Superintendent of Public Works Cowder states that T. G. Miller originally recommended a contingency amount of $100,000; that is where the difference is.

Motion Carried

•Superintendent of Public Works Southard states that there is a kickoff meeting tomorrow with iWorQ where they will start implementing the fire component of this software. We will be meeting every week for the next two months.

•Superintendent of Public Works Southard states that he has completed five out of six courses for his code certification.

7. Report of the Assistant Superintendent of Public Works Cowder:

•Assistant Superintendent of Public Works Cowder states that he has submitted his report.

•Assistant Superintendent of Public Works Cowder states that we have been working on sidewalks throughout the summer, repairing roads that have had water breaks, and rehabbing manholes.

•Assistant Superintendent of Public Works Cowder states that he has been working with the Village Forrester on clearing the trees that have been marked for removal.

•Assistant Superintendent of Public Works Cowder states that we have thirteen remaining lines that are designated as lead for the Village side. The residents' side is either lead or galvanized.

•Mayor Woodard states that she has not heard of any residents who are interested in changing their side. We are obligated to inform them three different times; after that, the EPA states we can continue to move forward on our side.

•Trustee Robinson states that maybe we just wait since we have until 2037 to complete all lead lines.

•Trustee Salton states that we could pass a local law that requires a resident to disclose that they have a lead line.

•Trustee Robinson states that he agrees, and Village Attorney will draft a proposed local law.

•Assistant Superintendent of Public Works Cowder states that Bolton Point is already in its third year of notice to residents. So if that residence is sold, does the notice start over or would that be compliant?

•Village Attorney Middleton states that she would like the list of properties that have lead and the notice they would have received so that she can add this to the appendix for this proposed local law.

•Superintendent of Public Works Southard states that yes, it will import all our code, and when there is a violation, he can pull that wording directly from the program into the violation letter.

•Village Attorney G. Middleton states that as it currently reads, it will be a three-year contract. This is a standard form contract; they might be willing to change the length of the terms.

•In closing, Assistant Superintendent Cowder states that the Renwick Culvert Project is coming along, and the contractor has backfilled to the road.

8. Report of Police Chief Wright:

•Chief Wright states that this is just an update on our new part-time officers: one has almost completed his field training, and the other is awaiting completion of his psychological examination as required.

•Chief Wright states that he is still working on the law enforcement tech grant. Which, if awarded, would give the department $125,000.

•Chief Wright states that the number of calls for service was down a little. Mainly due to staff training that kept them away from patrol.

•Chief Wright states that he is looking into a different type of camera system that is through the same company (Axon) as the tasers and body-worn camera.

•Mayor Woodard asks how the four ten-hour day work schedule is working out.

•Chief Wright states that it has worked out so far. It certainly adds to the quality of life for the department with longer time off and allows for extra coverage.

•Trustee Hubbell states that the Public Safety Committee met and discussed the speed limit reduction like the City of Ithaca was doing. We as a committee decided to collect more information and discuss it again in September.

•Trustee Salton states that our enforcement efforts are consistent, whereas in the city they might be less.

•Chief Wright states that we do a lot of education with each stop; it might impact some increase in tickets, but overall the presence and education will reduce speeding no matter what the posted speed is. The City of Ithaca just doesn't have the time based on the staffing levels.

9. Report of Fire Superintendent Tamborelle:

•Fire Superintendent Tamborelle had to leave to respond to a call.

•Mayor Woodard states that we need to discuss the fee schedule for fire inspections. The recommendation from Craig and the Public Safety Committee came up with this fee schedule.

• Superintendent of Public Works Southard states that they looked at twenty other municipalities and compared their fee structure and came up with ours.

•Trustee Fleming states that we also talked about whether the re-inspection fees are all a flat rate, or should larger structures have a larger re-inspection fee.

•Trustee Conway states that it is a little confusing on the prorated hourly rate.

•Superintendent of Public Works Southard states that he agrees, and we will modify that rate and make it clearer.

•Village Attorney Middleton asks if the Village has established code that allows us to charge fire inspection fees?

•Trustee Conway asks if the fees that we have established have to be reflective of the actual time we spend on this task.

•Village Attorney Middleton states that any fee charged by a municipality has to be based on some sort of reasonable amount based on time. We can note that these fees will change by Board approval from time to time to reflect actual costs.

•Trustee Conway inquires about the amount of money these inspections will generate.

•Trustee Hubbell states that he recalls around $2200 for the year.

•Trustee Conway states that this seems reasonable and shows that the fees are offsetting the cost of the software and labor.

•Village Attorney Middleton confirms that the Village already has codified Village Code to set fees, so a resolution will cover all bases.

Resolution: 10100

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: the Village of Cayuga Heights Board of Trustees authorizes and approves establishing the Village of Cayuga Heights Fire Inspection Fee Schedule as modified in Exhibit 2027-048 allowed in the Village Code under Chapter 126 and further in Chapter 108.

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

Motion Carried

•Fire Superintendent Tamborelle returns to the meeting.

•Fire Superintendent Tamborelle states that the only large institutional centers we have are Kendal, The Child Care Center at Cornell, and CMC. They are inspected so often that there is really no extra time spent doing their inspection.

•Fire Superintendent Tamborelle states that we have received no interest in Engine 202. Originally, we thought we could sell it for $250,000. Now we are faced with one offer. Command Fire has offered $140,000.

•Trustee Salton states that maybe we wait a year and work through this cycle.

•Fire Superintendent Tamborelle states that we have no space to store another truck and it would just sit. He feels a year from now would only bring the Village less money.

•Trustee Salton states that maybe then we could lease it to another agency; there must be some other way to get back more money for this truck.

•Fire Superintendent Tamborelle states that he has never heard of a department leasing out a vehicle.

Resolution: 10101

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: the Village of Cayuga Heights Board of Trustees authorizes and approves selling the Village of Cayuga Heights Fire Engine 202 to Command Fire Apparatus of Lancaster, PA for $140,000 and allows Mayor Woodard to sign the sales agreement.

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

Motion Carried

10. Report of Clerk Walker:

•Clerk Walker states that tax collection was slow for this month. Another reminder will be sent at the beginning of August. He cannot figure out why things are slower this year.

•Mayor Woodard asks if there are any vacant properties that we are concerned about.

•Clerk Walker states that there are not. Both houses have been sold on the private market.

•Clerk Walker states that the Village has experienced many calls over the last several months about recycling missed. Clerk Walker found out that the county contracts with Casella, and Casella has had staffing issues. By contract, Casella is obligated to come back the next business day, which would be Mondays.

•Clerk Walker states that no issues or concerns with the water billing cycle. We will have to report any feedback at the September meeting with regard to the increase in penalties.
•Clerk Walker states that we will set up work calendars for staff. This should help others see when department heads are in meetings, at lunch, or have time off.

11. Report of Mayor Woodard:

a. Personal Protective Equipment Language:

•Mayor Woodard states that we wanted to clarify the language to cover the non-bargaining group and incorporate this language into the Village Employee Handbook.

•Assistant Superintendent of Public Works Cowder states that he realized it was a law, and we should formalize it.

•Trustee Biloski states that we will approve the language tonight, and at the next administrative committee meeting we will take a closer look at where to fit this in and re-evaluate other areas of the Village Employee

Handbook.

•Trustee Conway asks what type of equipment this might include.

•Trustee Biloski states that an example would be steel-toed boots and winter gloves for different job sites.

•Assistant Superintendent of Public Works Cowder states that really anything related to OSHA safety.

Resolution: 10102

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: the Village of Cayuga Heights Board of Trustees authorizes and approves adding the language to the Village of Cayuga Heights Employee Handbook: The health and safety of our staff is the Village's foremost concern. The Village provides personal protective equipment/wear to collective bargaining unit employees as outlined under current contracts and to non-bargaining unit employees with a supervisor's approval.

Motion: Trustee Biloski as Chair of the Administrative Committee
Second: N/A
Ayes: Mayor Woodard; Trustees: Biloski, Conway, Fleming, Hubbell, Robinson, and Salton
Nays: none
Abstentions: none

Motion Carried

b. Establishing the 2027 Water Rates:

•Mayor Woodard states that Bolton Point has approved a 5% increase in the water rate. She is recommending that we do the same, which is traditionally what we pass on.

Resolution: 10103

WHEREAS, the Village of Cayuga Heights is served by the Southern Cayuga Lake Intermunicipal Water Commission; and

WHEREAS, the Village of Cayuga Heights has entered into an amended, supplemental, restated, and consolidated agreement of municipal cooperation for construction, financing and operation of an intermunicipal water supply and transmission system dated as of June 5, 1979 as the same has been amended from time to time (the "Agreement"); and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the Agreement, the Village of Cayuga Heights agreed to pay to the Southern Cayuga Lake Intermunicipal Water Commission (hereinafter referred to as "Commission"), water revenues based upon, in part, a water rate billing structure based on a quarterly 5,000 gallon minimum; and Bolton Point rate is $7.49 per 1000 gallons, and the Village of Cayuga Heights surcharge is $7.49 for a total of $14.98

WHEREAS, in consideration of the premises and the mutual undertakings of the parties pursuant to the Agreement, the parties agreed to amend the Agreement effective January 1, 2027.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the Village of Cayuga Heights Board of Trustees authorizes and approves the new Village of Cayuga Heights water rate of $14.98 per 1000 gallons consumed,

resulting in a minimum quarterly bill of $74.90 effective January 1, 2027.

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

Motion Carried

c. Village Sewer Rates:

•Mayor Woodard states that traditionally we have raised our rates in June. This year we talked about this at the budget workshop and budgeted for a 15% increase but failed to schedule a Public Hearing and pass our local law to raise the rates.

•Mayor Woodard states that she has informed the other municipalities that there is no rate increase coming for 2026. Instead, we will raise the rate 25% come January 1, 2027.

•Trustee Salton states that he does not see how we will make up the difference.

•Trustee Robinson states that we will have seven months of no increase and then five months of a 25% increase. You will make up for the shortfall in coming years.

•Trustee Salton states that he is against that if we are going to keep increasing rates to catch up.

•Trustee Robinson states that we might not even have to raise the rate because the base is higher than the original 15% increase.

•Trustee Conway states that his proposal was a 50% increase, and that is questionable if we have anything left in fund balance at the end of the year. We have $200,000 less in revenue than expected for the last fiscal year. We did not raise the rate, and to make up for that would require a 50% or more rate increase just to get to the budgeted revenue for this current fiscal year.

•Trustee Conway states that if we do not get the grant this fall, our numbers will be even worse.

•Trustee Robinson states that we should go with the 25% and see how the rest of our fiscal year goes.

•B. Cross inquiries to the source or reason for the lost revenue.

•Trustee Conway states that we only received three of four payments from the Town of Ithaca and Village of Lansing in the last fiscal year. We also anticipated much larger revenue for this fiscal year based on last year's numbers, which were inflated because there were extra payments there as well.

•Trustee Conway also states that water use was down and that has a direct impact on sewer.

•Trustee Conway states that he is still concerned with a 25% increase but understands this is not the last opportunity to address it. Trustee Salton agrees.

•Trustee Conway states that if we went to a 35% increase, it would only add three dollars to the base quarterly amount; $38.94 to $42.

•Mayor Woodard states that she has already informed the other municipalities that the increase would be 25%.

Resolution: 10104

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: the Village of Cayuga Heights Board of Trustees approves and authorizes scheduling a Public Hearing on September 16, 2026 at 7:05 p.m. to take comments on Proposed Local Law C of the year 2026 – Sewer Rates

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

Motion Carried

d. Gang of Six Update:

•Mayor Woodard states that all members agree that the plants all have enough capacity for growth, but without addressing the I & I, we go over our limits.

•Mayor Woodard states that we discussed capacity as a result of the proposed plans for the RANIC Golf Club, which centered on the size of the sewer lines more than the topic of who has capacity to take the proposed project's sewage.

•Mayor Woodard states that she finally suggested to the other municipalities that they buy the land next to the plant and have the others pay for the expansion.

•Trustee Robinson states that his fear is that NYSDEC is going to require us to become a regional group and share with the IAWWTF even though we are very different plants.

•Fire Superintendent Tamborelle states that there is talk about taking the Hasbrook Apartments down, and the RANIC project all of a sudden becomes Cornell Graduate housing and non-taxable.

•Trustee Robinson states that if there is anything we know now, it is that most of that project is in the Town of Ithaca, so we wouldn't be getting property tax money anyway.

12. Report of the Trustees:

•Trustee Hubbell states that he attended the Cayuga Lake Watershed Network annual meeting in King Ferry on August 6, 2026. The main topic was all about the right to farm.

•Trustee Robinson states that next month the door tags will be presented.

•Trustee Biloski states that the Administrative Committee is working on the final draft of the Special Events and Parade application.

•Trustee Hubbell states that he has noticed how different the landscape of the Village is, and if we take a deeper look into the property maintenance law, we really need to look at the whole Village.

13. Report of Village Attorney:

•Village Attorney Middleton states that she has nothing to add.

14. Adjournment: Mayor Woodard adjourns the meeting at 9:33 p.m.