



March 3rd, 2026

Members Present: Tom Deck (President), Anthony MacLaurin, Scott Swinarton, Jim Lewis, Scott Swinarton, Nina Mooney

Others Present: Donald Brodie (Village Clerk), Sarah McClintock (Treasurer), Curan VanDerWielen (Village Manager), Terry Findeisen (Zoning Administrator), Rich Heilemann (Planning Commission Chair), Mark Anders (BCRC)

Call to Order: 4:28 PM by Deck.

1. Approval of the Agenda

MacLaurin suggested adding an item to discuss the subject of local option taxes, under new business.

Motion: To approve the agenda, with added new business of discussing option taxes.

Motion made by Deck. Motion seconded by MacLaurin.

Motion approved, unanimously.

2. Approval of the Draft Minutes

Motion: To approved of the draft minutes for the regular and special February meetings, as submitted.

Motion made by Deck. Motion seconded by Lewis.

Motion approved, unanimously.

3. Monthly Reports

a. Road Commissioner

Lewis reported that the new skid steer ordered this past month had arrived and was already in use. Brodie commented that he saw Alan Mowrey driving the new machine by Prospect Street that morning. Mooney asked about the nature of the trade-in. Lewis explained the cost-benefit of trading in the skid steer and the added value Mowrey had created in re-painting the old machine. Lewis also commented that through February, Mowrey had been working alone due to Dan Marchegiani being on a medical leave. VanDerWielen noted that he had spoken with Marchegiani that afternoon and confirmed that he would be back at work on March 3rd. MacLaurin suggested offering Mowrey special recognition of his work over the past month. A short discussion ensued regarding the nature of the special recognition. It was resolve to provide Mowrey with a bonus of \$1,000.00, with an additional amount added to offset taxes charged on such a total.

Lewis then provided an update on Mowrey's scoping of projects for the next fiscal year. The largest project for the year being planned was an overhaul of the streetscape



immediately in front of the Equinox Junior Shops, where Mowrey was planning to add several parking spaces and adjust the sidewalk. Lewis noted that he and Mowrey were still working on an estimate.

b. Tree Warden

Lewis stated that in the Spring he would be looking for a permanent replacement for the holiday tree that was taken down earlier in the year, and for replacement trees to be planted after Mowrey had completed the project in front of the Equinox Junior Shops, likely a pair of dogwoods. Mooney commented that she had disapproved of the inclusion of presents under the holiday tree this year, emphasizing that it was an insensitive symbol for people who could not afford to purchase presents in the holiday season. A short discussion ensued. It was resolved not to include present decorations under the tree in following years.

c. Village Manager

VanDerWielen reported on Village administration, noting that much of the month was spent conducting staff conversations about, developing new tools for, and finalizing an early draft of the budget for the next fiscal year. VanDerWielen added that he was working on communications work, as well, including updates to the Village website and finalizing the creation of the Village newsletter. VanDerWielen also reported that he was assisting Findeisen in an advisory role regarding an ongoing Public Utility Commission (PUC) permitting matter, and that he and Findeisen would be looking to become notaries public within the month. Swinarton and Brodie expressed support for the public notary training.

d. Zoning Administrator

Findeisen reported on several zoning permit applications received within the past month, including a pair of sign permits, a demolition permit on West Fields Road, a residential roof replacement, and a new shed for the tennis courts at the Ekwanok Country Club. Findeisen also reported on the PUC matter VanDerWielen had referenced, noting that they and two members of the Planning Commission would be meeting with representatives from AT&T to discuss finding alternative sitings for a proposed telecommunications antenna and utility cabinet, to be attached to an existing utility pole somewhere in vicinity of the Village Core. MacLaurin asked about specific alternatives. Findeisen noted that an exchange of ideas had been ongoing for about a month at that point, and the purpose of meeting with AT&T was to nail down specific alternatives which work within both the parameters they were working within, and which were suitable for Village. A short discussion ensued regarding possible locations already proposed and the nature of the proposed facility, itself.

e. Treasurer & Tax Collector

McClintock reported on the financials, starting with the chart of accounts, which indicated a faster-than-expected draw on the operating accounts due to the weight of Winter maintenance costs in the previous two months. Specifically, most of this



spending came from road salt purchases and overtime pay as a result of persistent Winter storms. The other major contributor was the accelerated purchase of heavy equipment replacements this year. McClintock then presented the balance sheet and revenue report, noting that Village had collected 99% of its projected revenue for the fiscal year. Then, the Board reviewed the expenditures report, where McClintock explained that several categories were likely to be higher than projected by the end of the fiscal year. These categories included highways overtime pay, highways health insurance payables, highways equipment repair payables, and professional accounting fees.

f. Clerk

Brodie noted that the Town needed to fill the role of Trustee of Public Funds, and that he was working with several staff members there to draw attention to it for public action.

4. Presentation on Bike-Ped Study from BCRC

Deck introduced the topic of discussion and opened the floor to Anders to present. Anders opened by introducing himself and providing background as to the joint Village-Town scoping study, which focused on designing improvements to local bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. When surveying 83 Village residents, it was found that only 15% of residents felt safe biking on public roads and 77% of respondents felt improvements to cyclist safety on Main Street should be made. In light of this surveying, the team between BCRC and Stantec -the engineering firm which drafted the study- focused on scoping improvements to the connection between Village and Town along Main Street, from the Union Street intersection northwards to the downtown traffic circles. Such a scoping study was a prerequisite to pursuing actual designs, grants, and eventual implementation.

MacLaurin asked whether the Town had already approved the study and particular options found within. Anders confirmed that they had and that the purpose of his presentation tonight was to inform the Trustees ahead of any decisions they wished to make regarding their approval or disapproval of the study and its contents. Anders added that such a decision was necessary so that the project partners could move forward with further steps, even if the Village ultimately decided not to implement anything as detailed. Moreover, Village would be making no legal or financial commitments of any nature but a final administrative statement to close out the study.

Anders then presented the alternatives for infrastructure as detailed in the scoping study, noting that the Planning Commission had already reviewed and selected specific alternatives it favored, specifically the creation of a cycling lane on the West side of Main Street through the first segment (Union Street to Ways Lane), as opposed to on the East side. The Commission expressly supported this alternative as it would not impact the existing pedestrian infrastructure on the East side. This Western alternative would allow for a 10-foot shared-use path with minimal adjustments to the curb and green space. Anders then walked through the Town's preferred alternatives, noting that there would likely be a crossing at some juncture due to a preference for an East side path after Ways Lane. Eventually the path would connect to the Marble Valley path, behind MEMS. Heilemann added that it was the Commission's hope to



move most of the utility lines along Main Street underground as part of the project implementation, although it could add significant cost.

Swinarton asked about the right-of-way along the studied area and if additional negotiations with individual property owners would be necessary. Anders noted that the Village maintained a 4-rod (or 66 feet) right-of-way in that area, which while wide, may necessitate the narrowing of the margin of the designed path in certain areas. Swinarton also asked about the material likely to be used. Anders responded that it would likely be a paved path, although an exact specification had not been designed yet. Lewis asked about the fate of the marble sidewalk in front of the Taconic Hotel. Anders noted that the sidewalk from the Silver Fork to the Taconic Hotel on the West side would need to either be modified or removed as part of the project. MacLaurin asked whether the removed marble could be used in the path itself, to which Anders responded that it likely couldn't as its surface was unsafe for cycling.

Heilemann added context to the process of how the study was developed, noting that several members of the Commission had worked directly with other project partners for well over a year in developing the final product, and that while solutions had been devised, all parties still had open questions and issues with possible designs in the end. Heilemann noted that because of this, there was still much further work needed to refine the ideas presented, but believed it was important to keep exploring the matter by moving forward the Trustees' recommendations. Anders agreed with Heilemann and added that several layers of future review would likely impact design even more greatly, including limitations imposed by VTRANS grants and unknown issues which could arise closer to construction.

Swinarton asked about projected costs. Anders responded that the estimate currently would be around \$1m per segment, but that he believed this was likely an underestimation and several projects he had worked on recently had experienced significant overruns due to the volatility of construction prices. Mooney asked whether a study of what a cycling path would look like along West Road or snaked behind the buildings along Main Street had been created. Anders noted that both possibilities had been explored, however, it would add significant cost and legal uncertainty due to the smaller right-of-way, and the need to negotiate with individual property owners along each part of the pathway. Moreover, the study itself was restricted in exploring projects which could sit neatly within the street right-of-way.

Motion: To approve the scoping study, as presented, and to authorize the Village Manager to issue a letter accepting Segment 1, Alternative 2 as the preferred siting of the future path along the West side of Main Street.

Motion made by Deck. Motion seconded by Mooney.

Motion approved, unanimously.

A short discussion then ensued regarding next steps and how to keep local momentum up to bring forward future action. Anders noted that while direct VTRANS implementation was likely off the table due to a 12-year backlog in projects, other grants through the Agency would likely be available to fund phases of it. The Trustees resolved to continue encouraging the project as it



moved into its next steps and to emphasize the moving of utility lines along Main Street underground as a component of infrastructure along that corridor.

5. Review of Early Draft Budget FY26

Deck introduced the topic of discussion and opened the floor to VanDerWielen to present. VanDerWielen noted that the early draft presented here was meant not for a granular review of the budget, but to show how large priorities identified to him by the Board and through staff discussions would translate to a certain tax rate outcome, should costs and revenues anticipated hold steady. VanDerWielen then presented the draft in more detail, explaining the target tax rate for the next fiscal year, the large projects and costs identified to him, and the open questions that would need to be resolved before finishing the draft.

MacLaurin asked about the projected growth in grand list value, asking if it was a real number provided by the Town. VanDerWielen noted that grand list value numbers were provided by the Town Assessor to the Village annually, but that such a number typically wasn't provided to us until well after the budget had been voted on. The projected number in the draft budget was a conservative estimate; in this case a 0.60 projected change as opposed to the 0.64 actual change experienced the previous year.

VanDerWielen then encouraged those present to review the draft, identify alternative priorities or changes they were looking to make, and build out recommendations ahead of the formal draft sectional reviews set for April. A short discussion on formatting and itemizations then ensued. VanDerWielen also noted that the early version of the budget only partially accounted for inflation, although it did already incorporate the likely cost of living adjustment which would be made for the next year.

VanDerWielen then presented a draft 5-year capital improvement plan, explaining the projects listed and the formatting used. Swinarton asked about the nature of the roundabout project included in the capital improvement plan. A short discussion then ensued regarding recent conversations between staff, BCRC, and several Trustees exploring the possibility of creating a roundabout at the three-way intersection of Main Street, West Road, and Seminary Avenue. VanDerWielen noted that the project was included as an example -not a prescription- of what a long-term infrastructure project would look like from a funding perspective over the next five years.

A short discussion then ensued regarding the history of the reserve accounts.

6. Presentation on Village Newsletter

Deck introduced the topic of discussion and opened the floor to VanDerWielen to present. VanDerWielen presented the newsletter template to the Board, noting that he was hoping to send out the first version of it this month, once he had finished all the form submission landings for residents to submit pictures and events for future additions. MacLaurin asked about the



frequency of the newsletter emails to be send. VanDerWielen noted that he intended to send out emails seasonally with various emails in between announcing certain events. The purpose of this was to ensure that the newsletter did not take up a great amount of staff resourcing and to only send out newsletters when enough content was available to be sent out, otherwise emails would only detail meetings. A short discussion on the newsletter and its formatting ensued. Mooney asked how residents might be able to opt out of emails, should they want to. VanDerWielen responded that the recipients of the newsletter will only be those that signed up for it on the Village website, and even then, if they wished to opt out, it was available on each email at the bottom so they could cancel their subscription. MacLaurin asked about whether events being held by private institutions would be included on the newsletter. VanDerWielen noted that while they could if approached, he believed that announcing such events without being approached could be problematic.

7. Public Comments

No public comments were raised.

Old Business:

Mooney noted that she would be reaching out to a stone carver regarding the lettering on the marble rock at the corner of Union Street and would have pricing information soon.

New Business:

MacLaurin raised the subject of local option taxes, noting that a recent public meeting in Manchester Center had yielded interest in raising additional option tax to offset property taxes. MacLaurin believed Village should receive a portion of this Town option tax considering it came, in part, out of Village businesses for which Village was spending significant monies on maintaining the surrounding infrastructure and beauty for. MacLaurin proposed discussing the matter with the Town Manager to receive as much as a 10% cut of the proposed option tax, which if not possible, might be arranged as a contribution to Village highways funds. A short discussion ensued on the matter. The possibility of raising a separate Village option tax was raised, although several legal questions on the matter were left outstanding. Lewis acknowledged that he had raised the issue in the past with the State.

Lewis asked about the status of a pending legal matter. VanDerWielen reported that he had touched base with Village counsel on the matter recently and had no updates at this time.

Adjournment: 5:42 PM.

Motion: To adjourn.

Motion made by Deck. Motion seconded by Lewis.

Motion approved, unanimously.

The next regular meeting of the Board of Trustees will be held at 4:30 PM on Monday, April 6th, 2026.

Respectfully submitted,



Curan VanDerWielen, Village Manager