

VILLAGE OF FREEVILLE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MEETING MINUTES
February 3, 2026

A regular meeting of the Village of Freeville Board of Trustees was held on February 3, 2026, at the Village Hall.

Call to Order: Mayor McCarty called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm

Present: Mayor Miles McCarty; Trustees: David Fogel, William Olson, Stephanie Ortolano; Clerk Julia Wallace; Planning Board members Juan Vazquez-Leddon and Diane Eaton; FCC Member Hugh McElyea; Residents Patricia Speno and Brandon James

Privilege of the Floor: Patricia Speno from The Freeville Farmer's Market came to give her thanks to the board for their continued support and internal handling of the Farmer's Market's grant funding and expansion. She shared information about previous grant awards and her intentions to apply to another NYSCA grant to fund performances by local musicians and artists at 2026 community events including Fiber Fest, the Artisan Fair, and more. Patricia invites members of the community to get involved or to sign up as a vendor for next season's markets.

FCC member Hugh McElyea came to discuss his intentions to expand collaborations between the FCC, local government, and community groups such as the Farmer's Market and Community Garden. He hopes to eventually transfer the retired court space into a cafe-style meeting place for the FCC and interested community members. He will continue to work with Clerk Wallace to discuss plans to renovate and clean the space and will also continue to update the board of the FCC's activities.

Planning Board Members Diane Eaton and Juan Vazquez-Leddon shared updates regarding their previous meeting. They discussed their continued revisions to Article 3 of the Land Use and Development Code and let the board know that they are almost ready to begin revising Article 4. They also shared that their members have been given a deadline to complete at least half of their required training hours by their next meeting.

Resident Brandon James came to the meeting to collect additional signatures for his Independent Nomination Petition. He ensured that he had the correct deadline dates with Clerk Wallace and shared his intentions to run for Mayor at the upcoming 2026 election.

Minutes: Trustee Ortolano motioned to approve the January 6, 2026 Board of Trustees Meeting and Public Hearing Minutes along with the January 16, 2026 Special Meeting Minutes. Trustee Fogel seconded the motion. All members present voted aye. Motion passed.

Planning Board: Trustee Ortolano motioned to approve the January 27, 2026 Planning Board Meeting Minutes. Trustee Olson seconded. All members present voted aye. Motion passed.

Public Works: Trustee Ortolano motioned to approve the Public Works Report. Trustee Olson seconded the motion. All members present voted aye. Motion passed.

Treasurer: Trustee Fogel motioned to approve the Treasurer Report. Trustee Ortolano seconded the motion. All members present voted aye. Motion passed.

Code Enforcement: Trustee Olson motioned to approve the Code Enforcement Report. Trustee Ortolano seconded the motion. All members present voted aye. Motion passed.

Clerk: Trustee Ortolano motioned to approve the Clerk Report. Trustee Fogel seconded the motion. All members present voted aye. Motion passed.

Vouchers: Trustee Olson motioned to approve abstract #0226. Trustee Ortolano seconded the motion. All members present voted aye. Motion passed.

Old Business:

DEC / WWTP: Mayor McCarthy gave updates regarding his previous meeting with DEC representative Matt Russo and the Village's engineer Jeff Tubolino. The DEC has published a new standard for nitrate levels which Matt outlined for them. Jeff Tubolino is beginning to research the quickest and most cost-effective means of complying to this new standard.

Local Laws 6-10 of 2026: Trustee Ortolano made a motion to adopt local laws 6-10 of 2026. Trustee Olson seconded. All members voted in favor. Laws adopted.

Bank Signature Cards: Clerk Wallace distributed the new bank signature cards and paperwork for Mayor Miles McCarty and Trustee Stephanie Ortolano to fill out. Clerk Wallace will fill out her required fields and bring completed documentation to the bank once Accountant Heather Murray is able to fill out her fields.

New Business:

Budget Work Session: The Board discussed the date and time to be set for the annual budget work session. The board decided to meet for this event on Saturday, March 21, 2026 at 12:30PM.

Insurance Renewal: The Board had a brief discussion regarding our intentions to renew our umbrella coverage with The Bailey Place. Members agreed that they felt no pressing need to increase this coverage at this time but will consider doing some in the next fiscal year. Insurance coverage will renew on February 10, 2026.

Clerk Cell Phone: Clerk Wallace presented a report of multiple cell phone companies outlining device costs, network costs/coverage, and data usage plans. The board gives Clerk Wallace permission to work with Tello mobile to acquire a new clerk cell phone and a cheap data/usage plan.

2019 Chevy Dump Truck: The Board discussed their future plans of selling the 2019 Chevy Dump Truck in the springtime. At this time, Fire Chief Mike Parker has been using the truck to assist the Public Works department with daily plowing. Trustee Ortolano suggests we consider hiring out a plowing team to use as needed come next winter with the funds we will acquire from the eventual sale of the truck. Clerk Wallace agrees to make a note to discuss this at an upcoming meeting in the springtime.

Seasonal Employee: Clerk Wallace explained that Tompkins County has had PW employee Dylan Schlee registered as a seasonal employee. The Board agreed to appoint Dylan Schlee as Laborer. Clerk Wallace will file this paperwork with Erin Bar-Healy upon her return from vacation.

Resolution- Dryden Rail Trail Support Letter: Trustee Ortolanno made a motion to accept the following resolution and share it with the Town of Dryden:

**A Resolution by the Village of Freeville Board of Trustees in Support of the Continued Efforts of the
Dryden Rail Trail Task Force**

WHEREAS the transformation of unused rail corridors into multiuse trails continue to be encouraged at the national, state, and local levels as a means of expanding safe, accessible recreational opportunities for providing alternate transportation routes for residents; and

WHEREAS Tompkins County has long supported the development of interconnected multiuse trails that strengthen links among its municipalities and contribute to regional trail networks, consistent with the goals outlined in its adopted planning documents; and

WHEREAS the Town of Dryden, through the work of the Dryden Rail Trail Task Force, is actively attending the creation and improvement of a continuous trail system connecting Dryden, Freeville, Etna, Ithaca, and other neighboring communities; and

WHEREAS the Task Force is preparing an application for a Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) grant to support further trail construction, enhancements, and accessibility improvements, including the addition of stone dust surfacing in areas that are currently grassy, overgrown, or otherwise difficult for some users to navigate; and

WHEREAS the Village of Freeville recognizes the significant community value of the Dryden Rail Trail, including its benefits for recreation, transportation, public health, and intermunicipal connectivity; and

WHEREAS the Village acknowledges the dedicated leadership of the late Bob Beck, whose efforts were instrumental in advancing the trail's development, and express appreciation for the continued leadership of Alice Green and the Task Force as they carry this work forward;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Village of Freeville Board of Trustees hereby expresses its full support for the Dryden Rail Trail Task Force and its forthcoming TAP grant application.

Trustee Olson seconded. All members present voted aye.

2026 WB Strong Fire Contract: Board members briefly reviewed the fire contract with the WB Strong Fire Department. Mayor McCarty agreed that he would sign the contract once he determines if this is the contract that will bind us to a payment. The board prefers to see a breakdown of what such payment would be used for ahead of committing to making a payment.

NYSEG Natural Gas Quote: Board members reviewed the quote for a natural gas hookup to the generator at the Johnson Road Pump Station. This project will be paid with grant funding, so quotes were distributed as a way to keep members in the loop as opposed to voting to pay for it.

Election Inspectors: Trustee Olson made a motion to accept the following resolution:

A Resolution Appointing Election Inspectors for the Village of Freeville Election

WHEREAS, the Village of Freeville will hold its Village Elections on Wednesday, March 18 2026; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to New York State Election Law §15-116(1), the Board of Trustees is authorized to appoint election inspectors to oversee and administer the conduct of Village Elections; and

WHEREAS, the Village requires qualified individuals to serve in this capacity to ensure that the election is conducted fairly, accurately, and in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Trustees of the Village of Freeville as follows:

- Diane Eaton and Jean Simmons are hereby appointed to serve as elections inspectors for the Village Election to be held on March 18, 2026.
- Each Election Inspector shall receive \$150 in compensation for their service.
- Dinner shall be provided to the Election Inspectors during their shift.
- The Election Inspectors shall convene and carry out their duties at the Village of Freeville Village Hall, 5 Factory Street, Freeville, New York, from 12:00 noon until 9:00PM on Election Day.
- This resolution shall take effect immediately.

PASSED AND ADOPTED on this 3rd day of February, 2026 by the Village of Freeville Board of Trustees. Trustee Ortolano seconded. All members present voted aye.

Ithaca Voice Article: The board reviewed an article published in the Ithaca Voice that was discussed at the previous planning board meeting. The article states that there have been the beginning chats of a new residential development in Dryden. Some of this proposed development would fall within Village limits. Nothing is officially set in stone, the board just reviewed the information to stay aware.

NYPA: Trustee Fogel made a motion to sign the 2026 NYPA Contract. Trustee Ortolano seconded. All members voted in favor. Motion passed.

Hancock Estabrook Contract: Board members reviewed the 2026 Hancock Estabrook Contract for legal guidance on the long-term WWTP project. Members noticed that the first page of the contract was addressed to Wattertown, NY and that the second page made references to Onondaga county. Clerk Wallace agreed to secure an updated contract from Hancock Estabrook for the board's review.

Municipal Solutions Contract: Board members reviewed the 2026 Municipal Solutions contract for fiscal services for the long-term WWTP project. Members felt that they would be more comfortable signing the contract with a clearer breakdown of costs, services, and expectations for securing services. Clerk Wallace agreed to reach out to Municipal Solutions for an updated contract with more clear breakouts of this information.

Adjournment: Trustee Ortolano motioned to adjourn the meeting. Trustee Olson seconded the motion. All members present voted aye. Motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 8:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Julia Wallace
Village Clerk