

Village of Athens Board Meeting
May 28, 2025

Present: Mayor Serrago, Trustee Eastwick, Trustee Dillberg, and Trustee Lasher Absent: Trustee Phoenix

The meeting began with the pledge.

Information session on the upcoming water rate structure and fee schedule:

Mayor Serrago began the meeting by letting the residents know that there would be a rate change in July. She said that the same rate has been in effect for the last 12-13 years. She said that the water system runs at a deficit every year, so we take from the General Fund, and this is not the way to run the Village. She said she worked with the former clerk on the water rates and then the engineer the village uses introduced her to RCAP Solutions, a federally funded program.

Becky from RCAP said she gave a presentation in March and now is back. She told everyone about RCAP Solutions and how it is funded. She said we give technical assistance, and the Village rates needed an overhaul for the Village to run sustainably. She said they did a rate analysis, looked at where the money has been going, and looked at who uses the water. She said the amount of water given isn't utilized by most. She said she went back 3 years and 60% of the residents use less than 10,000 gallons. She said right now the people that use less than 10,000 gallons subsidize those that do.

The new rates would be:

Inside (village customers) \$107.00

Outside (town customers) \$172.50

Mayor Serrago said they looked at a lot of different ways and did a little bit of everything to come up with figures.

Several residents asked questions about the new rates and how it will be structured.

Including how multiple dwellings would be affected. One resident asked about paying by the gallon. Becky said it's not fair that everyone pays the same.

Mayor Serrago said that the structure will continue to be looked at.

Chris from the DPW said that every apartment in a building should get a meter.

PUBLIC HEARING:

A Public Hearing for proposed Local Law#4 Authorizing the making of a purchase Money Market Mortgage for the sale and financing of the Cultural Center.

The hearing opened at 6:30pm with several people in the community expressing their support of the sale of the building to the Cultural Center.

Mayor Serrago said she received letters of support from residents that could not make the meeting.

There were a few residents that felt the sale was underpriced as the building was assessed at a higher amount and should be sold at fair market value.

It was asked if the building would ever come back to the Village if the Cultural Center couldn't pay. The Village Attorney said there is a reverter clause attached to the agreement. The building would need to be used as a Cultural Center and if not, it would go back to the Village.

The public hearing closed at 7:11pm

A **MOTION** was made by Trustee Dillberg, seconded by Trustee Lasher to authorize the making of a purchase money market mortgage for sale and financing of the Cultural Center, all were in favor.

PUBLIC:

Kathy Jackson- Summer Recreation Concerns- Kathy Jackson asked for better support of the recreation program, including financial support. She said that the Village waited too long to file paperwork with the DOH. She said we are another year past at this time. She said she has tried to speak with the liaison for summer recreation several times.

Mayor Serrago said she assigned someone to work on this. She said she worked hard trying not to raise taxes.

Trustee Lasher said the state put restrictions on the program and the first year a bunch of volunteers came to a meeting, now no one.

Kathy asked if the program could still go for grants.

Mayor Serrago said to send Alison the grants and to cc the clerk's office and see if they can get it to grow for next year. She also said that Cossackie has more revenue, people, more of a tax base, and people from the school.

Chris asked where the director was and said she should be here for the meeting.

Kathy said the director and Alison have been communicating.

Mayor Serrago said the director needs to work within a budget.

Floyd Miller- Boat Launch- Floyd asked who put the docks in this year. Chris said he did around May 8th. Floyd asked if they could be put in the middle of March for those that fish. He said the floating dock at the launch is a hazard. It has no ladder, no hand hold. It is a safety concern.

Mayor Serrago told Chris to put on his calendar for next year to get the dock in earlier and she said she will reach out to the State about the dock.

APPLICATIONS:

1. Facility Use Application Park-Cultural Center- (Re visit from last meeting) Letter attached about the concern the village has with using the bandstand) The Cultural Center will not be using the bandstand, just the park. A **MOTION** was made by Trustee Lasher, seconded by Trustee Dillberg to allow the Cultural Center to use the park, all were in favor.
2. Facility Use Application-Park-Daniel Mefford-Wedding 10/4/2025
There was a discussion about the tent and where to put it. He was told to go ahead and figure out exactly what and how he wanted to do things and share with the board. A **MOTION** was made by Trustee Lasher, seconded by Trustee Eastwick to allow use of the park, all were in favor.
3. Facility Use Application-Rainey Field-Daniel Mefford- Family kickball 10/5/2025 A **MOTION** was made by Trustee Dillberg, seconded by Trustee Lasher to allow the use of Rainey Field, all were in favor.
4. Outdoor permit-Park-Daniel Mefford- Wedding reception-10/4/2025
Daniel attended the meeting to discuss music in the park for a wedding reception. The board said just keep the volume reasonable and end at 10pm. A **MOTION** was made by Trustee Lasher, seconded by Trustee Dillberg to allow music in the park for a wedding reception, all were in favor.
5. Facility Use Application-Street Closure-D.R. Ewart Library 6/29/2025-
Kathy Jackson asked to close the street for an opening reception for the library. A **MOTION** was made by Trustee Lasher, seconded by Trustee Eastwick to allow the street to be closed for the reception, all were in favor.

RESOLUTIONS:

1. Proposed Resolution Approving Minutes from Village Board Meeting 5/14/2025
Offered by: Trustee Dillberg
Seconded by: Trustee Lasher
Record of Vote: All were in favor
2. Proposed Resolution Approving payment of Vouchers as Presented on Abstracts
Offered by: Trustee Dillberg
Seconded by: Trustee Lasher
Record of Vote: All were in favor

CORRESPONDENCE:

1. DEC-Dam Inspection- Chris will speak with ENCON as there is a beaver dam and Trustee Dillberg will speak with Joe Myers about the dam.
2. NYMIR Inspection- The board went over the list of things NYMIR would like taken care of.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Support for NYS Assembly and Senate to pass the Strong Packaging and Recycling Infrastructure Act (Senate Bill 1464/Assembly Bill 1479) Tabled from last meeting. Will be tabled until the 6/11/2025 meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS:

1. Appointment of Registrars Vital Statistics for 2025-Add Gail Stacey
A **MOTION** was made by Trustee Lasher, seconded by Trustee Eastwick to appoint Gail Stacey and the Deputy registrar for 2025, all were in favor.

Trustee Eastwick had nothing tonight

Trustee Dillberg had nothing tonight

Trustee Lasher had nothing tonight

Mayor Serrago said she would like to sign a retainer to keep Elaine on as a labor specialist consultant. She said we used her a few years ago and she would like to consult with her.

The clerk let the board know that NYMIR has training available for staff on Harassment/Violence training, they would just need to go online and sign up. Bill Mirando also does the training, and she was told to contact him

Mayor Serrago appointed Dawn as the Community Day Chairperson.

A **MOTION** was made by Trustee lasher, seconded by Trustee Dillberg to adjourn the meeting, all were in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 7:56pm

Respectfully submitted,



Dawn M. Palmateer