

Village of Cherry Valley Board Meeting Minutes

Tuesday August 19, 2025

The Village of Cherry Valley Board of Trustees meeting opened at 6:32 PM by Mayor Stiles with the Pledge to the Flag. In attendance were Mayor Jeffrey S. Stiles, Trustees Ian M. Feulner and K. Don Brigham, DPW Superintendent Wayne B. Valentine, Clerk-Treasurer Melissa F. Gregory, and Attorney Jill A. Poulson, Esq. Also in attendance was business owner Mr. Dustin Lewandowski, of Dustin's Automotive.

Approval of the July 15, 2025 minutes was made, as members received in final written form. It was upon motion of Trustee Brigham, seconded by Trustee Feulner, unanimously carried, to accept the minutes as written.

Treasurer's Report

Checking Account	7/31/25 Balance
General	\$ 347,660.84
Water	\$ 52,545.00
Total Fund	\$ 400,205.84
Trust & Agency	\$ 6.26
Village of Cherry Valley Baseball League	\$ 1,378.05
Savings Accounts	7/31/25 Balance
Water System Repair Reserve	\$ 3,016.63
Cemetery Capital Reserve	\$ 11,268.25
Unemployment Insurance Reserve	\$ 2,727.39
Water Debt Service Reserve	\$ 21,789.06
Parks & Recreation Reserve	\$ 3,702.98

General Fund Savings		\$ 26,119.99
	Water	Taxes
Taxes and Water Unpaid 7/1/2025	\$ 57,762.65	\$ 228,638.58
Paid in July	\$ 40,979.13	\$ 120,279.43
Adjusted in July	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
Billed in July	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
Unpaid 8/1/2025	\$ 16,783.52	\$ 108,359.15

It was upon motion of Trustee Feulner, seconded by Trustee Brigham, unanimously carried, to accept the Treasurer's Report as given.

Guests

Business owner, Mr. Dustin Lewandowski, of Dustin's Automotive, attended this evening's meeting per an invite from Mayor Stiles. Many details were discussed and are provided via the summary below:

- There are greater than/equal to fifteen "inoperable" vehicles between both of his business locations in the Village, with the majority being at the Main Street location.
 - Mr. Lewandowski asked to have the term "inoperable" defined. Attorney Poulson noted that there's a difference between the Village and State definitions, and if the Village has an ordinance/law then it overrides the State's (within certain parameters).
 - Mr. Lewandowski asked if the tractors at his business' were an issue. The Board stated that they are not and Attorney Poulson noted that tractors are exempt from the ordinance in question (Junk Motor Vehicle Law).
- A letter received from the Village was the first that Mr. Lewandowski had heard of complaints regarding his business and the amount and quality of vehicles at them. He followed up by noting that he did receive a copy of the ordinance in question, at the same time he received the letter from the Village.
 - Trustee Brigham noted that the first he personally heard of the noted complaints was approximately a year and a half ago.

- Mayor Stiles followed this by noting that this current week (of the board meeting) he had received texts of complaints.
- Mr. Lewandowski noted that, according to the June 17, 2025 Village Board meeting minutes, “Mayor Stiles will follow-up with Mr. Lewandowski”, but he had not stopped at the shop. He also noted that he feels as though he’s being targeted, but more so from the prior Village Board, and he is concerned that this current Village Board is doing the same.
 - Both Trustee Brigham and Feulner, as well as Mayor Stiles, reassured Mr. Lewandowski that they are not targeting him and they are hoping to get these issues resolved. Trustee Brigham added that it is the Board’s duty to follow-up when there is a complaint.
 - Mr. Lewandowski continued to add that he feels as though he’s been making progress but is still being targeted. For example, he stated that he’s addressed the tires issue and some cars on the Village property, noting he did this upon receiving an old property survey. Even though he feels he is making progress, he stated that a prior board member approved the bulldozing of some of his property.
 - He also noted that he has received a “two-year pass” from the NYSDEC at both his Village locations, due to such frequent testing in recent times, to ensure the safety of the drinking water in the area. He noted that he has always tested “clean” from NYSDEC and that is a positive note.
 - Mr. Lewandowski went on to state that, regarding the complaints of smells from the Main Street property, he has an EPA certified filtration system that he is utilizing.
- Mr. Lewandowski stated he has one deed and two mortgages for the property on Main Street, and that both Village locations are considered “licensed dealerships”. In regards to the business on 25 Alden Street, he stated they are redoing the driveway so movement of vehicles and other items will be *temporarily* located at the Main Street address until the driveway is complete. A timeline for this project was requested yet none was provided.
 - Mr. Lewandowski did report that by the Spring of 2026 there will be at least 6 cars that he will legally be allowed to gain ownership of (unless the owners come forward/pay before then) and he intendeds to bring to the scrap yard.
- The Board reiterated to Mr. Lewandowski that their main goal is to “reign in” the amount and quality. To this, Mr. Lewandowski responded that a large majority of the vehicles on his properties are from customers who won’t pay/haven’t paid in years.
 - Trustee Brigham and the Board asked Mr. Lewandowski how they could help him. Mr. Lewandowski responded by first thanking the Board for a fresh start. For example, he noted that when Mayor Stiles took office he came to the shop on Alden Street to talk and shake hands. Trustee Feulner also noted the positive nature being utilized for this conversation and how we’re all working together.
 - Discussion of the Board turned to ideas in which Mr. Lewandowski could utilize in the short term, while he finds alternative/more permanent locations for his vehicles, such as:

§ Putting car covers on to make them more palatable to the eyes;

§ Moving “unsightly” cars out of residents’ view

- Mr. Lewandowski mentioned also that another resident did offer to sell him the old bus garage location, but nothing more had been discussed about it.
- Mr. Lewandowski stated that “Short-term, I’ll re-arrange” adding that he suggested providing the name of the unpaid car-owners to the Village and the Village could contact them and get them to sign a release. The Board however, did not agree to this. He continued to add that he has personally spoken with Senator Oberacker about these issues from his viewpoint, but did not expand on the conversation that was had.
- The plan moving forward is as follows:
 - Mr. Lewandowski is to provide the Village (on 8/20/2025) with an inventory of cars with owners’ information AND continue to notify the Village if a car is coming in to his lots because of something out of his control.
 - The Board will informally meet with Mr. Lewandowski in approximately two weeks to do a check-in and see how things are shaping up per this meetings’ conversations.

OLD BUSINESS:

Department of Public Works (DPW)

DPW Superintendent Valentine reported that the repairs for Well #1 will be contracted by Layne Christensen, as it was for the first time in early summer. He spoke with the field manager at Layne Christensen and it was confirmed that the parts were ordered today (8/19/25) and there is a four-to-five-week lead time. He also noted that he and DPW Maintenance Worker Van Buren handed out conserve water flyers last week. Clerk-Treasurer Gregory noted an email from resident, Amy Bressett, regarding the well issues and questions and concerns she had.

Mayor Stiles stated that he wants all updated notifications about Well #1 to be completed by the end of the business day on Friday 8/22/2025. Part of the updates include four 4 ft by 4 ft signs with red letter posted around the Village, new informational brochures/leaflets to be handed out that include information on a Q&A Session the Village will hold next Tuesday 8/26/2025. He also wants the Daily Star and News Channel to be notified. He stated he would speak with the Fire Department about placing limits on their usage.

In regards to funding for the repairs to Well #1, Mayor Stiles and Trustee Brigham will be meeting with Ms. Julie Barown, President and Owner of JA Lange, Inc. (this Thursday (8/21/2025) to discuss resources and plans to apply for funding. Both Mayor Stiles and Trustee Brigham noted that they would work to call Senator Oberacker’s office to ask for assistance as well.

Attorney

Attorney Poulson noted she would email the Kraham, AA Property Care, and American Legion files, to Clerk-Treasurer Gregory. For the American Legion lease, she noted she would bring that to them this Thursday (8/21/2025).

Attorney Poulson noted that Cherry Valley Artworks has requested a remote garage opener. DPW Superintendent Valentine noted he would pursue this and that the Village would have copies of the keys/codes.

Clerk-Treasurer

Clerk-Treasurer Gregory noted updates about Casella and the issues with the toters that residents are experiencing. Destiny Felter, head of Oneonta's dispatch, has now stated that they are out of the 32 and 64 gallon toters for both garbage and recycling. Ms. Felter noted to Clerk-Treasurer Gregory that Casella has been utilizing their new trucks here in the Village for about one month at this time. She's received reports back from drivers that there are still people who are not placing their toters correctly for this new truck's pick up. Clerk-Treasurer Gregory advised that a meeting with the Village and Casella be set up, especially as we approach winter, so residents can hear from them directly as to what they're in need of from them. A discussion of a meeting is to be tabled to next month's meeting. Mayor Stiles asked it to be relayed to Casella that our residents will be receiving the toters they're expecting as it was promised to them that they could get the size that worked for them.

Relating to the on-going search for appropriate and cost-effective software for the Village office, Trustee Brigham has noted that he's still working to touch base with a potential contact to help and will touch back on this at the next meeting if not before then.

Resident Ms. Martha Sherwood brought her high water bill to the attention of the Board at the prior meeting in July, inquiring about the possibility of a reduction in price. Answers to Mayor Stiles' questions at the July meeting are that both the DPW as well as Martha are unaware of the exact timing of the start of the leak, and that the DPW notified Ms. Sherwood of their knowledge of a leak when the July bills were being prepared in June. Ms. Sherwood's bill for the last six months of service totaled \$321.05 (paid 7/30/2025) and she went from 7,174 gallons of usage (a typical amount for her) to 32,928 gallons of usage. The Board acknowledged Ms. Sherwood's request for a reduction in price and agreed to return \$100.00 to her. DPW Superintendent Valentine noted that her water leak has been fixed as of 8/15/2025.

It was upon motion of Trustee Brigham, seconded by Trustee Feulner, unanimously carried,

RESOLVED to accept that the Village of Cherry Valley will return \$100.00 to Ms. Martha Sherwood for her high water bill due to a leak.

NEW BUSINESS:

Department of Public Works (DPW)

There was nothing new to discuss, as all was related to Well #1's repairs (in old business).

Attorney

There was nothing new to discuss here.

Clerk-Treasurer

Resident Dorothy Jica reached out to the Village office this week and inquired about having a sign added to Lancaster Street where she and her family live. The sign would be one noting that there is a child that lives on that road who is deaf/hard of hearing. The board noted that this is fine for us to do. Clerk-Treasurer Gregory will reach out to the County Sign Shop about this and take the necessary steps to move this forward.

The Village office is requesting Attorney Poulson to set up monthly standing appointments with them, so they can have a set day/time when they can discuss anything necessary. Attorney Poulson liked this idea and agreed, stating she'd reach out to the office and set up these appointments.

The Village/Town website is in poor condition and very cumbersome to work with. Trustee Feulner stated he would contact Carl Waldman (Cherry Valley Community Foundation Corp) regarding who they utilized to create their new website. Updates to be provided at the next meeting.

Resident, April Armini, reached out to the Village office to inquire about permission to utilize Alden Field for the Fall 2025 Youth Soccer season. The Board noted that this has been allowed in the past and will continue to as of now.

Clerk-Treasurer Gregory noted to the Board that the Village office had received an extension for the AFR (Annual Financial Report) and it will now be due September 28, 2025. As it stood before when the AFR was due in July, Clerk-Treasurer Gregory received the Board's permission to grant Deputy Clerk-Treasurer Bouboulis extra hours as needed to complete the work for the AFR.

Other

Trustee Brigham discussed the "Hometown Heroes" banners and noted that he spoke with Ms. Deb Whiteman regarding the rules and regulations surrounding the application for said banners. In their discussion, Ms. Whiteman relayed information that more small surrounding Towns/Villages will be starting to think about participating in this "project". Just a few mentioned were that of South Valley, Roseboom, and Middlefield. Though many inquire to the Board about these banners, the Board would like to reiterate that the banners are not a Village-run program.

Finances:

Audit of Claims:

After review by the board, it was upon motion of Trustee Brigham, seconded by Trustee Feulner, unanimously carried, to make payment on paid bills and budget modifications as follows:

General Fund	Ch. #s 16642-16685 (ck 16664 voided for clerical mistake)	\$ 27,336.98
Water Fund	Ch. #s 16642-16685 (ck 16664 voided for clerical mistake)	\$ 7,379.73
Total Fund	Ch. #s 16642-16685 (ck 16664 voided for clerical mistake)	\$ 34,716.71
Trust and Agency	Ch. #s 2075 & Auto-Deductions	\$ 5,076.89

Agency Fund (Youth Baseball)		\$ 575.55
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Budget Modifications 2024-2025			
To	Amount	From	Amount
A1490.4	\$ 1,000.00	A1990	\$ 1,000.00

Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at 8:48 p.m. upon motion of Trustee Brigham, seconded by Trustee Feulner, unanimously carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Melissa Gregory, Clerk-Treasurer

September 15, 2025