

**Village of Walden
Board of Trustees Special Meeting
August 6, 2025**

Mayor Pearson called the regular meeting of the Village of Walden Board of Trustees to order at 6:00pm.

On roll call the following were:	Mayor:	Becky Pearson
Present:	Deputy Mayor	Lynn Thompson
	Trustees	Liz Kyle
		Gerald Mishk
		Cheryl Baker
		Bill Taylor

Absent:	Ralph Garrison, Jr.
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Also Present:	John Revella, Village Manager
	Marisa Kraus, Village Clerk

Payment of Audited Bills

Mayor Pearson: There was a bill. That was duplicate.

Deputy Mayor Thompson: I checked on that. It is 2 different services but combined for 1 payment. So, it was correct.

Mayor Pearson: Coburn, what attorney is that?

Clerk Kraus: Special Prosecutor.

Deputy Mayor Thompson: He comes to court.

Mayor Pearson: He said he was being replaced so his was sending his bill. Anybody know about him being replaced?

Deputy Mayor Thompson: No clue. The PD might be able to give you some info on that or John.

Mayor Pearson: Did you guys see the RBT stuff I sent you? How do you feel about that?

Trustee Taylor: Same old same old.

Deputy Mayor Thompson: I feel like we need to put a deadline as to when ancillary services will no longer be provided, because we can't keep paying numbers like that. I realize, we're in a bind. We have a goal, we have to get somewhere.

Mayor Pearson: Part of those bills we said we needed to get done. That was the AFR. But there were other ones before that, March & April, what was that all about?

Deputy Mayor Thompson: It was all listed. Did you guys all read that? It was line by line, the

service they provided. It's just like dealing with a lawyer. I feel like we're kind of between a rock and a hard spot. The work has to get done. The team we have is incapable of doing it without assistance. We're going to talk about something else this evening, correct? About another hire. I feel like we need to give a deadline that the umbilical cord is cut as of I don't know, January first or something.

Trustee Taylor: It goes back to why is it not getting done? Forget other people. Forget outside help. I'm talking about the process.

Deputy Mayor Thompson: I do believe that a mess was left to be inherited. I asked for a proposal from the Finance Department to just let us know what tools they thought would be needed to get it done. And we don't have it yet.

Mayor Pearson: We can talk about that in exec as well. There was a bill in there from January first to the CSEA Benefits. Marisa, do you know what CSEA Benefits are?

Clerk Kraus: That is either the dental and vision or the union dues.

Mayor Pearson: Do they get paid like quarterly? Is that what why it may have been a January bill?

Clerk Kraus: Should be monthly. Both of those whether it's the union dues or the insurance.

Deputy Mayor Thompson: I think I saw another bill form the life insurance. Was several months late as well.

Mayor Pearson: Do we want to make that motion until John gets here? Or are you fine with making the motion and paying the bills?

Trustee Mishk: I think you have to pay the bills. Have no choice.

Deputy Mayor Thompson made a motion to approve payment of audited bills. Seconded by Trustee Baker. All ayes. Motion carried.

Mayor Pearson: Coburn, he is being replaced?

Manager Revella: The board did, with Rametta Rametta at the reorg meeting.

Mayor Pearson: There was a bill CSEA Benefit Fund since January. What is that for?

Manager Revella: There's a few for CSEA. I don't remember if it's the dues one.

Mayor Pearson: Whichever, they're both back from January.

Manager Revella: I asked Jean why it's since January and she didn't have an answer.

Mayor Pearson: Why didn't you get an answer?

Manager Revella: She doesn't know is what she said. I asked Katie if she remembers, she said she just go it from Jean.

Mayor Pearson: So, it's been on Jean's desk for 7 months?

Manager Revella: Probably.

Trustee Mishk: Shouldn't you check on that before you pay it?

Manager Revella: What are you going to check on?

Mayor Pearson: Are there penalties or things like that?

Manager Revella: I didn't see any penalties on the one that I signed.

Mayor Pearson: RBT bills, why was it so long? Did you ask those questions?

Manager Revella: Why she's late with the bills? Same reason. She just got them.

Trustee Mishk: It's always been my experience here that the previous Treasurers used to appear at the meetings. Why does this Treasurer not appearing at our meetings?

Manager Revella: That's up to you guys to make the request.

Trustee Mishk: It would be easier to get answers to these questions.

Trustee Taylor: If the answer is going to be "I don't know" in a public meeting, what are we going to accomplish with that?

Trustee Mishk: She'll find a way to make sure she knows the answers. I'm not looking to embarrass her, but we are asking questions now that we can't get answers to.

Mayor Pearson: But John is also responsible for not getting answers. Is that okay with you?

Manager Revella: No, my first concern is that we're not getting late fees. Which we weren't. If we're paying extra, that's a problem. Number 2 was why is it happening? Is it going to be prevented from happening in the future? I was assured that it was not going to happen in the future.

Mayor Pearson: How many things have been late?

Manager Revella: There's been a lot.

Trustee Mishk made a motion to have the Village Treasurer appear to all Village Board Meetings with the understanding she is prepared to answer questions. Seconded by Deputy Mayor Thompson. All ayes. Motion carried.

Park Use Request – Alcohol Waiver - Kraus

Trustee Taylor made a motion to approve alcohol waiver – Kraus for August 23, 2025 at Olley Park. Seconded by Deputy Mayor Thompson. All ayes. Motion carried.

Surplus Old Phones

Clerk Kraus: It's from all of our departments from when we switched over to Spectrum.

Trustee Taylor: You can donate them to military and they clean them, revamp them, void everything. Might want to look at that. Reach out to Castle Point.

Mayor Pearson: Old phones, who do you think is going to buy them?

Manager Revella: I don't know, but you have to vote to surplus and even to throw them out.

Mayor Pearson: Bill made a suggestion that maybe the Veterans.

Manger Revella: That would be great. I can reach out.

Deputy Mayor Thompson made a motion to surplus the old Mitel phones. Seconded by Trustee Baker. All ayes. Motion carried.

Finance Department

Mayor Pearson gave background story

Mayor Pearson: I said to John and let's just bring her in, she would like to come in and chat with us. She is working from home for Highland Falls because they're kind of in the same situation.

Deputy Mayor Thompson: She's working as a consultant.

Mayor Pearson: Lynn happened to be around so I had her come in, John & myself to meet this woman. She is very nice, seems capable. Not to manage the department because we talked about managing that department and something else but if we can get somebody in to even finish bank recs and get that done. She'd be happy to do that. She can do it from home. She has Edmunds set up on her computer at home. All she would need is to have a tie in.

Deputy Mayor Thompson: She also said she only wanted 15 hours a week. John told her all the things we needed and she said your municipality sounds like everybody else. Situation is not unusual at all. Which we were shocked and she seemed to think once she got in here, if we hire her and she meets everybody and sees exactly what, if it's the way John described it she thought maybe by the beginning of the year she could have us caught up to 2024.

Mayor Pearson: She's very nice. It's \$75 an hour.

Deputy Mayor Thompson: She knows all about this mapping. She is working on the mapping for Highland Falls. She knew all about how Edmunds should function to be specific to the needs of each individual municipality. She literally was like a dream dropped in front of us. She is incredibly pleasant and professional.

Mayor Pearson: She seemed really smart. She's been doing for 20 some years. The first 10, she was doing something other than that and the last 10 years she was do the comptroller part and budget all of that through Edmunds.

Deputy Mayor Thompson: And she doesn't like being full time retired.

Mayor Pearson: She has time to come in on Friday to meet the group up here. I told John that if she does that, he is to be here. I don't know how you all feel about it. I don't know if we have to go into executive session about it, we can.

Trustee Taylor: Who is she going to work for?

Mayor Pearson: John.

Trustee Taylor: We're talking several thousand dollars by end of year. How we paying that?

Mayor Pearson: Have to talk to John and see what he wants to do about that. I don't have that answer for you.

Trustee Taylor: That answer has to be provided to the public because we're spending public dollars, again, to correct something that we spent money on before and before that.

Trustee Baker: Hopefully, the hiring of her, we reduce having to utilize RBT.

Deputy Mayor Thompson: We shouldn't have to utilize them for much of anything.

Mayor Pearson: She does audits before. She's done everything. But the goal is to catch up with bank recs. You can't do anything without the bank recs. Can't really do the AFR without bank recs. Where do you think this money for RBT is going to come from?

Trustee Mishk: Weren't some of those bills already budgeted in last year?

Mayor Pearson: Yes and a lot of that was from before. That was the last years budget. There's only 1 bill there from this years budget.

Deputy Mayor Thompson: I will tell you, I inquired about overtime. We're now incurring overtime in the Finance Office as well. The total overtime for the 3rd floor, 2020 was \$77.20. 2021 and 2022 was \$0, those were our COVID years. 2023 was \$215.05. 2024 was \$96.03. 2025 (year we just finished), \$2,286.82. And so far, the fiscal year that just started in June is \$656.24.

Trustee Taylor: First question, I always ask is what are we getting for that buck?

Mayor Pearson: Who is approving it? That's what we need to find out. I don't know who approves that. If put something in writing, that gets approved. Does Jean just approve it?

Clerk Kraus: It should be approved by Department Head or Manager.

Deputy Mayor Thompson: Doesn't the Department Head sign it, even if the manager approves it? If the Department Head approved it, the Village Manager still has to sign all the time sheets.

Clerk Kraus: He ultimately signs off on everything. But there's no OT slips that are filled out. There used to be back in the day, filling out OT slips to get signed officially and I haven't seen that in years.

Trustee Taylor: No policy.

Deputy Mayor Thompson: The other thing, the budget for OT is \$1200. So, we're more than halfway through that, 2 months into this current fiscal year. And we're still not caught up. I agree with Bill. We're financing what?

Trustee Taylor: Can't talk about people, but we can talk about the process. The process is not getting accomplished.

Discussion

Trustee Mishk: The situation which I believe we're all aware of, West Main Street, where the right of way has been blocked off. I had conversation with Dickie Baxter who owns 1 of those properties. He is offering up access through his property for a ramp to come off of the ramp for Oak St parking

lot. The follow up conversation I had with him last night, he advised me last night that the owner of the building at the other end of the situation would absorb all the cost of doing that and would even do the work. Lulash. Dickie wants to, if I understand correctly, he wants to pay for a sidewalk coming down from Main Street through his property. To give access to the tenants and to give access to people on Main Street to the Oak Street lot.

Mayor Pearson: I have a different opinion and I don't know if I'm going to speak about it.

Trustee Mishk: 1 thing that I did tell him is that if this is done, it has to be added to everybody's deed.

Manager Revella: Unrestricted access for the neighbors.

Mayor Pearson: There's already an alleyway there that says for the Village of Walden. It says it right on the deeds. Unless it's left off of somebody's deed from before. I just a little more research on it today and that alley way has been there for 200 years and you get somebody in there and they can't decide to let people go through. I don't understand people that just want to control everything. Live by your neighbors, you should be conscience of your neighbor. Where's the handicap parking? Where's the green space? And right now all the garbage cans are in the parking lot. You don't want people walking down that hill that's village property into the parking lot to put their garbage in. If they fall and break something, then what? Sue the village.

Trustee Baker: *inaudible* he wanted to charge the tenants, the other building owners maintenance fees. Was he still planning that? I have a serious problem with that because you remove their access and you want to charge them a fee.

Trustee Mishk: I'm just offering up an alternative. I understand there was someone trying to cut the lock on the gate recently. That's another situation. Why is that gate even there? The fence isn't even permitted to be there in the first place. I don't know why the Building Inspector hasn't ordered that to be removed.

Manager Revella: He may have. I know there's a standing violation. I don't know if it's remedied yet.

Mayor Pearson: Well, bring him to the board. Don't take him to the judge. Bring him before the board.

Manager Revella: That's what I told him.

Trustee Baker: In the meantime he needs to have that gate removed until a satisfactory option is found.

Mayor Pearson: Is it a village issue?

Manager Revella: If he did work without a permit, it's a village issue. That's the only thing that we can discuss.

Trustee Mishk: So then a court order that orders the Village Employees to tear down the gate. The judge can do that.

Mayor Pearson: Why hasn't he gone before the judge already?

Manager Revella: You have to give the person a certain number of days to remedy once they issue a violation and then you can take them to court. You can't do that right away. He did, I think it was July 16th or 17th. Not sure which day exactly. It was the day after he put the fence up.

Trustee Taylor: Was there a title search done on this property when it was purchased? Did that bear out what his property lines are?

Manager Revella: Absolutely. And that the other people have rights over the property.

Trustee Mishk: John should you even be involved in discussing this?

Manager Revella: I don't represent him. He's represented by Jerry Jacobowitz.

Deputy Mayor Thompson: Despite all this. What is an alternative to the trash cans?

Manager Revella: The trash cans are supposed to be up where they were, up on the top where the alleyway is. The garbage company is supposed to have access through this gate or whatever access is there to empty those toters. We did discuss at the time, putting a dumpster somewhere by the lot maybe, but we want to take away parking or take away the access through the parking lot so we said no.

Deputy Mayor Thompson: I feel like we need to come up with another plan.

Manager Revella: It looks terrible.

Mayor Pearson: So, what's the solution, John?

Manager Revella: I have to follow with Rob about the gate and making sure that he's on the agenda for the court or yourselves.

Mayor Pearson: What is he saying? Have you talked to him?

Manager Revella: I have talked to him to let him know what the neighbors are saying. We had a meeting down there with some of the neighbors. I let him know that it's a problem and that Rob's just doing his job. The meeting was called for the garbage company to try and find a resolution for the dumpsters. The other neighbors happen to be there.

Trustee Taylor: Are the vehicle still in there?

Manager Revella: I haven't checked on the vehicles but when we met down there, they said they didn't feel like moving them. I asked them if they wanted to move their cars and they said no.

Trustee Mishk: John, if you would, tomorrow, check with the Building Department and see if they cited them for that fence. What day they gave them to clean it up and take it down. And then if it's not down by that date, have the Building Department take it to court.

Manager Revella: That's the preference of the board, court or the board?

Trustee Mishk: I think he should go to the court.

Trustee Taylor: I agree. It's a civil matter.

Trustee Mishk: All we can do is give him an order. Doesn't mean he's going to do it. The court, if it's not done by a certain time, the judge can order the village to take it down.

Manager Revella: And can fine him per day.

Trustee Mishk made a motion to have the matter of 74 West Main Street in regards to the 2nd fence be brought in front of the court. Seconded by Trustee Baker. All ayes. Motion carried.

Mayor Pearson: And what are going to do about the toters?

Manager Revella: That we can take care of internally. I have a note to talk to IWS about getting them out of there.

Mayor Pearson: And how are they going to get through there?

Manager Revella: They have access through the gate. They're supposed to have access.

Mayor Pearson: Lulash is going to let them go through there?

Manager Revella: That's what I was told. IWS, not the other owners.

Mayor Pearson: I don't have a problem with that. Who told you that?

Manager Revella: It's still a violation.

Mayor Pearson: I think you need to talk to Lulash. Do you want me to come with you?

Manager Revella: Yes.

Deputy Mayor made a motion to authorize Village Manger to speak to the property owner. Seconded by Trustee Baker.

Trustee Taylor: What are we doing with that meeting?

Mayor Pearson: Maybe we can accomplish what he's going to do what he should have done in the first place.

Deputy Mayor Thompson: Perhaps they can get a peaceful resolution without having to take court action.

Trustee Mishk: I think we need to resolve the issue with the gate needs to be taken down because it was not permitted and he needs to file the proper paperwork. If he wants to get it back up, that would need to go before the Planning Board.

Trustee Taylor: I agree with Jerry. It's a civil issue.

Motion rescinded.

Deputy Mayor Thompson: Is there been any more research being done on that? That it was the way it was for such a very time?

Manager Revella: It's undisputed that it's been that way for a long time. It's undisputed that the neighbors have an absolute right to use it. They need to sue for the court to confirm that right and hold the other property under contempt.

Mayor Pearson: Do you want to give the board an update on Sullivan?

Manager Revella: The DOT is supposed to check their maps and find out when work was done there on Lustig Court to know who's responsible for the drainage and when it was put in. From my understanding of the meeting, it doesn't look like the village or the state is responsible, from what they were telling us. We'll see what they find on their map notes and any other documents that they are going to search through. They said it might take up to 2 weeks to get through their notes.

Trustee Taylor: Who are they saying is responsible?

Manager Revella: They're not. Land owners, themselves. It doesn't serve the state purpose, is what they're trying to say or a village purpose since it's just the natural flow of the water. That's what they're saying.

Deputy Mayor Thompson: They brought up, the issue with the railroad, might have some culpability.

Manager Revella: Correct. The railroad may be blocking the eventual flow of the water.

Mayor Pearson: If it is that and they looked at that and maybe we can contact the railroad and DOT can contact them at the same time.

Manager Revella: Yes.

Mayor Pearson: SROs.

Manager Revella: You saw the email from Dominic?

Mayor Pearson: I saw one of them but not the other *read email into minutes*

Manager Revella: Do we want to bill them our actual cost per month or just have this flat rate per year that's marked out by every month. I thought we were going to bill our actual cost.

Trustee Taylor: That's what was discussed because you have different people that may be providing the service and the rate is going to fluctuate constantly.

Mayor Pearson: Yes, we want to go back to having it billed out monthly.

Trustee Mishk: I think the biggest thing that we have to worry about, right now, is the cost because we're probably going to be paying a lot of overtime. So, it's going to cost a lot more than they wanted originally and we wanted to get actually get paid for what it actually cost. I don't see the school paying overtime rate.

Mayor Pearson: They're gonna pay what we pay them. If they agree to it. They still have to agree to it before the school starts.

Manager Revella: The School Board is meeting Monday.

Trustee Mishk: They haven't seen this as of yet.

Manager Revella: We did send this to Brad Conklin before he went on vacation. We had the suggestions about changes and discussed the change and how we would bill. Dominic wanted confirmation from the board of those changes before confirming with Brad.

Mayor Pearson: He was waiting to hear back from the School Board.

Manager Revella: And he hasn't.

Mayor Pearson: We are just going to move forward and if they approve it, they do and if they don't, they don't. You're okay with the changes? Just change how to pay.

Manager Revella: Bill actual cost.

Deputy Mayor Thompson made a motion to accept changes for the School Resource Officer contract as discussed. Seconded by Trustee Mishk. All ayes. Motion carried.

Mayor Pearson: PD contract. Where are we with that?

Manager Revella: I asked the PBA for a date, the last thing I got was end of August.

Mayor Pearson: Did you see my email to the engineer today about the survey on Maple Street?

Manager Revella: Yes, you saw his response?

Mayor Pearson: Yes and that should be done by Friday. Then we can deal with that.

Executive Session – Personal History of Particular Person

Trustee Taylor made a motion to enter into executive session to discuss personal history of particular person. Seconded by Deputy Mayor Thompson. All ayes. Motion carried.

Reconvene

Trustee Kyle made a motion to reconvene the regular meeting of the Board of Trustees. Seconded by Deputy Mayor Thompson. All ayes. Motion carried.

Deputy Mayor Thompson made a motion to approve \$75 an hour for consultant and will work under the Village Manager and report progress every 2 weeks. Seconded by Trustee Kyle. All ayes. Motion carried.

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Special Meeting
August 6, 2025
Motions & Resolutions**

Payment of Audited Bills

Deputy Mayor Thompson made a motion to approve payment of audited bills. Seconded by Trustee Baker. All ayes. Motion carried.

Park Use Request – Alcohol Waiver - Kraus

Trustee Taylor made a motion to approve alcohol waiver – Kraus for August 23, 2025 at Olley Park. Seconded by Deputy Mayor Thompson. All ayes. Motion carried.

Village Treasurer

Trustee Mishk made a motion to have the Village Treasurer appear to all Village Board Meetings with the understanding she is prepared to answer questions. Seconded by Deputy Mayor Thompson. All ayes. Motion carried.

Surplus Old Phones

Deputy Mayor Thompson made a motion to surplus the old Mitel phones. Seconded by Trustee Baker. All ayes. Motion carried.

West Main Street

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School Resource Officer Contract

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