

Village of South Glens Falls
46 Saratoga Avenue, South Glens Falls, NY 12803
February 18, 2026
Regular Village Meeting @ 7:00 PM

Regular Village Board Meeting
MAYOR JOSEPH ORLOW PRESIDING
Minutes

Attendance:

Mayor Orlow	Clerk Treasurer Samantha Berg
Trustee Baxter	DPW Superintendent Alan Dubois
Trustee Carota	Xavier DeRush
Trustee Comstock	Chris Rich
Trustee Middleton	Reed Antis
Attorney Bill Nikas	Cheryl Lawyer
Kevin Gallagher	Bob Ulrich
Tim Pease	Nick Havens
Vinnie Crowley	Louis Thayer
Rich Garnsey	kylee

The Mayor opened the meeting at 7:00 PM.

Pledge of Allegiance

Public Forum

1. Water and Sewer Rates Discussion

- **Bob Ulrich - 3 Wedgewood Dr.:** He wasn't able to attend the last meeting and that the recent Regular Board Meeting Minutes were not on the website. Clerk Treasurer Berg replied that there have been 2 holidays and Deputy Clerk Treasurer Gollhofer was out for Jury Duty last week. He replied there is a NYS rule that meeting minutes must be posted within 2 weeks and if she wasn't in the office, wasn't there someone else who would be responsible for them? Clerk Treasurer Berg reported that the audio recordings for all the Regular Board Meeting Minutes are posted the next day and available on the website which fulfills NYS Open Meetings Law. Mr. Ulrich then asked about how the Water Sewer presentation report got a 70,000 gallon average water usage. Trustee Baxter and Trustee Middleton replied that the Water Sewer presentation report, compiled by the engineering company, used a NY average household usage. Trustee Middleton added that the Village currently loses \$350,000.00 from the Water Sewer funds, which currently comes out of the Village Fund balance to cover. The Village uses the Water Sewer



funds for repair and projects. If the Village doesn't do anything to change the rates, the Village will be out of money in 3 years. Mr. Ulrich asked how long there has been a deficit for the Water Sewer funds. Trustee Baxter replied for Water it's been 3-4 years and for Sewer it's been 12-16 years. The Village could borrow money however the Village is \$4,000,000.00 in debt currently. Trustee Baxter stated that in the draft 20-year capital improvement plan, prepared by the engineers, that the 10 worst streets hydraulically (what you can actually get out of a fire hydrant) has a cost of \$10,000,000.00 and that won't fix all the problems for those 10 streets. Trustee Middleton added that it's about 15-20% of the 60% that will need to be addressed. Mr. Ulrich commented that it's a problem with every municipality and Trustee Baxter replied that some municipalities are paying \$1,400 - \$2,000 a year for water. Trustee Middleton added that even with the rate increases proposed, the Village is still 50% lower than the average village or township in NYS for water and sewer cost. Mr. Ulrich's next question was if the \$30 charge for having a pool or sprinkler would disappear, Trustee Baxter replied yes and that unless you have an irrigation meter, additional water usage for filling a pool or using sprinklers will also be charged the sewer rate. Mr. Ulrich stated that he currently pays \$125.00 for water, \$30.00 for a sprinkler and \$110.00 for sewer totaling \$265.00 twice a year totalling \$530.00 per year. The proposed rates of \$180.00 water and \$215.00 sewer increases his billing to \$790.00 per year and then adding the \$4.00 per 1,000 gallons to his usage, paying an additional \$284.00 will now total around \$1,000.00 for water and sewer which was almost as much as his property taxes and asked if there was another way to deal with this. Trustee Middleton responded if there was a different way to fix this problem that the Board would look at it. Mr. Ulrich said that the Village was expecting the taxpayers to pay the money and Trustee Baxter replied that the taxpayers were the ones using the water and sewer. He then added that residents could try to be approved for their own sewer, however they won't have the setbacks, and drill their own well, which could cost around \$100,000.00 and do it themselves. Trustee Carota added that in NYS you are no longer allowed to do that if utilities are available. Trustee Middleton added that no one is happy about this and everyone's bills will go up, but looking at the map and fund balance, in about 4 years there won't be any money. It's unfortunate this wasn't done gradually before. Due to how the budget and how the Village funds have been allocated in the past, the Village scores very low in NYS for grant applications because of not spending. The Village doesn't charge enough for its water and sewer infrastructure. Therefore, in the grant approval process, other municipalities are more in need. Mr. Ulrich then asked, in regards to the upcoming projects, if the Village could line the pipes. He has spoken to USG and they go in with a camera to determine what's there. They have a thing they drag through and, if needed, cuts it up and vacuums it out. Then they put a liner in. USG did say it can't be used in every instance but other municipalities have and there is a savings of 30 to 50%. Trustee Middleton replied that he and Trustee Baxter have discussed this also. Trustee Middleton spoke to Blake Murphy with a



company in PA and there are a couple of different ways: "Pigging" - using a bullet and drill pad (which Mr. Ulrich described) and Water System - which wouldn't be good because it can cut through the line and the Village lines are pre WWII. The Village did 'camera a line' and sent it to a company in Canada but they don't have enough work to justify bringing their equipment to NY. Mr. Ulrich stated that the Village pipe example may not be the whole line and Trustee Baxter replied that this example came off a "hydraulically good" street - Baker Avenue has a 4" main and maybe 1 1/2" for water flow, which is on the high side. Trustee Middleton reiterated that a process like this could still be an option for the long-term project and the Board will explore every option in the best interest of the taxpayers. The Village has a lot of 4" pipes that were put in over 100 years ago and run into a 8" or 6" pipe which is causing water flow issues. The 4" pipes can't be cleaned and they don't support water flow. Supervisor Dubois stated they also no longer conform to the minimum fireflow code which is a 6" minimum. Tim Pease of the Fire Department, added that the hydrants on Baker Avenue cannot be used due to this. The Village has engaged an engineering firm for a long-term plan to work on and update the water and sewer infrastructure. Mr. Ulrich asked if there were copies of the Water Sewer Workshop presentation and Clerk Treasurer Berg stated they are available through the Clerk's Office. Mayor Orlow brought up that Mr. Ulrich lives in a new neighborhood and there are others who live in older sections. The Village was incorporated in 1895 for the purpose of being self-sufficient and having its own water. Trustee Baxter and Trustee Middleton have spent a lot of time on this project and this situation is reaching a point where the Village won't have any water. He stated that it may be easy for Mr. Ulrich to have an issue with the cost but he has a beautiful development with brand new pipes. He then asked how Mr. Ulrich would like it if he lived in an area where he couldn't drink the water or let alone do laundry? The Village is a community and shouldn't everyone have the same quality water? "The Village will be seeing a 7-month audit and, due to past administrations, the Village has accumulated a war chest at the expense of its residents." Mr. Ulrich lives in an affluent community but there are people who live in old homes on social security. He stated that according to the audit, we are supposed to be taxing the community fairly and have everyone pay their fair share and not live off a savings account. Mayor Orlow commented that Mr. Ulrich probably spends that much on dinner in a year but there's people barely able to pay their utility bills, let alone their water bills. Mr. Ulrich stated he took offense to these comments and that whatever he spent on dinner is none of the Mayor's business. Mayor Orlow agreed and said that he should be. Mr. Ulrich began to speak and Mayor Orlow said "Hey, hold on a minute sir." Mr. Ulrich said he didn't mean to interrupt and thought the Mayor was done talking. Mayor Orlow said, "No, I'm done when I say I'm done and if you're unhappy with that, you can leave the meeting. We need to be fair to the rest of the community. I appreciate what you're saying and your opinion, as everyone else's, is very important. But do we deplete our balance? Do I want to pay more? I own quite a bit of property in this



Village and I have tenants that aren't paying what they should be and that's my personal thing. But this is an open forum where you've expressed your income balance. You live in a nice house. You brought it up yourself. So I guess I'm having a problem understanding why you feel that what you're being charged is an insult to you but people living in an older house who don't have proper water that they're paying for shouldn't be offended. So, if I've offended anyone in this room, I apologize for that . But I think we're here looking out for the rest of the people. And you treat people the way you want to be treated. And I personally have had this conversation for years. And during my administration, we did go after grants. That's all I have to say and please feel free to express your opinion. If you're entitled to an opinion and so am I and so is anyone in this room and in this community. And if you take offense with that I feel bad for that. But that's up to you." Mr. Ulrich asked the Mayor if he was done and Mayor Orlow said, " I'm done. Now you can talk." Mr. Ulrich said that he did not take offense to the billing but he did not like the Mayor's statement about how much he spent for dinner. Mayor Orlow responded it was rhetorical. Mr. Ulrich continued that the reason a group of residents got together at one time was because of a \$1,000.00 bill for sprinklers. Mayor Orlow responded he did not give him that bill. Mr. Ulrich stated that someone did. Mayor Orlow said that when he inherited the Village at that time when it was almost bankrupt and had proposed to raise taxes to balance it out that this should have been taken care of years ago. Mr Ulrich said he did not mind paying for the water he uses, but why the cost was going up and that's what he came to find out. Mayor Orlow said that it is to have these funds be a self sufficient part of the Village.

- **Kevin Gallagher, 9 Larchwood Ln** - The PFAs money that we received as a Village, that the interest is taking care of the upkeep: the carbon regeneration and the building. Trustee Middleton commented that the Village owes \$1,000,000.00 for it. Trustee Baxter then said some of it can be paid down but not to deplete all the money which is why the rates have to be raised. Mr. Ulrich then addressed Mayor Orlow about the over \$1,000.00 sprinkler bill and how he was ok with paying for what he's using but at that time, those houses were the only ones being billed for watering differently than anyone else. That was unjust and had to be reversed. Mayor Orlow agreed and asked to comment but Kevin was "not done yet. Same thing to you that you did to Bob." He stated that the Village residents are all being metered for water in, sewer out. Now that the Village is going to be billed based on usage, he assumes the Village will be doing something about the elicited discharges. Trustee Middleton explained that this is a Code Enforcement issue and the Board is working with Code Enforcement Officer Paglino to track and determine which homes are indeed connected to the sewer system. Trustee Baxter explained that when the Board began looking into the Water Sewer issue, there were many items to address. It was decided to begin with those rates and make sure the Village would have the money that would be needed for engineers, grants and proper maintenance of the system. Trustee Middleton added that the Ferry Boulevard project begins on April



1st and the engineering needs to begin on Baker Avenue, which are coming out of Village funds. The Village needs to hire a grant writer to engage continuously and offset our portion of grants (which are not guaranteed and in demand), which will be paid by the interest rate from the fund balance. Superintendent Dubois commented that one of the biggest reasons the Village has this problem is from losing the Essity plant, which lowered the water flow by around 300,000 gallons per day which Clerk Treasurer Berg added the Village revenue lost about \$24,000.00 a year. If a company, like Essity, were to come back to the Village, that income would be directed to any adjustments. Attorney Nikas stated it was another reason why the Village has issues on Hudson Street because the flow is not there anymore. Mayor Orlow interjected that he was appalled by and opposed the \$1,000.00 and its recorded in the paper. He lobbied to have 2 separate meters put in - one that would be equitable and fair for your usage and an agricultural meter that measured strictly for sewer (about 80% of usage). He stated that not everyone will be happy but the Village has to satisfy issues that would exist from lack of water.

- **Cheryl Lawyer - Moreau Community Center:** Cheryl thanked the Board for all their hard work on the Water Sewer issue and that she learned quite a lot from the public forum.

Trustee Baxter then referred to the Water Sewer presentation handout from last week's meeting - 02/11/26. There have been more conversations since, the Board is leaning toward not doing the three-step process with sewer rates but doing it all in one and holding off at least one billing cycle on water. Glens Falls is planning an over \$10,000,000.00 infrastructure project and since the Village sends water there, will be paying into that debt service as the Village is billed by a percentage that goes into their Capital Fund and also into their debt service based on total gallons.

- **Kevin Gallagher - 9 Larchwood Ln:** asked about his email and Trustee Baxter replied it would cost about \$2,000,000.00 - \$2,500,000.00 to run a force main from the pump station to where the Town of Moreau was proposing to tie in and the Village would be beholden to Saratoga County's sewer district whose rates are not any better than Glens Falls. Mr. Gallagher wanted to debate that as his mother, who lives in Wilton, has a sewer tax bill of \$150.00 per year. Trustee Baxter replied that he wasn't sure how that would work as there was no information on their website. Attorney Nikas stated there is a larger pool and more sales tax revenue than our Village and the Town has other factors unknown to the Village. Mr. Gallagher stated it would be something to look into and working long-term with the County would be better than Glens Falls. Trustee Baxter reported that the Village is locked under contract currently and the Village would be looking at over a 10-year outlook for a different option. Trustee Middleton said the Village has looked at additional options like selling water to the Town, piping sewer through and has been in



contact with Supervisor Fish. However, these options are in the infancy stages and the Village will be exploring every option that is in the best interest of the taxpayer.

Motion 021826-1 to raise/change the Sewer Rate to a flat rate of \$215.00 for the first 20,000 gallons per billing period with a standard usage rate of \$3.00 per thousand over 20,000 gallons and an industrial rate of \$4.00 per thousand over 20,000 gallons: Trustee Baxter motioned, Trustee Carota seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

Discussion: Trustee Baxter and Trustee Middleton clarified that apartments and multi-unit homes will be charged the flat rate up to 20,000 use per unit and not billed the \$3.00 per thousand until that threshold is met. There will be no change in the Water Rate for this coming billing cycle.

2. Grant Projects Update

Discussion: A Pre-Construction Meeting was held on 02/10/26. Construction is anticipated to start the first week of April.

3. Motion 021826-2 to approve Transfers: Trustee Carota motioned, Trustee Baxter seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

	A 1990.0400	A 1430.403	\$495.00	CSEA Attorney
a.	A 1990.0400	A 1430.404	\$1,485.00	PBA Attorney

Discussion: Trustee Baxter asked Mayor Orlow the status of approving the CSEA grievance. Mayor Orlow reported he is waiting on the CSEA Attorney, who is working with the Union, before moving forward.

4. Motion 021826-3 to approve the Bills and Payroll as Audited: Trustee Middleton motioned, Trustee Comstock seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

- a. General - \$25,577.07
- b. Water - \$8,777.04
- c. Sewer - \$3,479.81
- d. Payroll:
 - i. 02/04/26 - \$31,234.49
 - ii. 02/11/26 - \$27,009.60

Discussion: None

5. Grant Writer

Discussion: RFQ is currently open. Proposals are due 02/26/26.



6. South High Marathon Dance Proclamation

PROCLAMATION

South High Marathon Dance March 6th & March 7th, 2026

WHEREAS, The South High Marathon Dance began in 1978 and raised \$1,500 to donate to the local community; and

WHEREAS, Since that time, spanning the last forty-nine years, SHMD has worked tirelessly, raising more than \$12 million dollars supporting over 700 beneficiaries, local families at a time of great need as well as numerous community organizations; and

WHEREAS, SHMD continues its time-honored tradition once again, the 49th Annual South High Marathon Dance celebration takes place at the South Glens Falls High School including more than 600 student raising money which supports a total of 36 beneficiaries this year; and

WHEREAS, The ongoing success of SHMD is due to the dedication of the students, parents, alumni, volunteers, local businesses, the greater capital region residents, and many others, that choose to support the hundreds of recipients through their contributions; and

WHEREAS, The Village of South Glens Falls proudly celebrates this one-of-a-kind, inspiring, and engaging community event that truly defines who we are. After 48 years of SHMD, the world and our community are better places, thanks to you and the thousands who have come before you. You will forever be part of this time honored and cherished celebration of community, serving as an example for generations to follow.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, The Board of Trustees of the Village of South Glens Falls, wishes you the greatest success this year and hereby proclaims

March 6th & March 7th, 2026

SOUTH HIGH MARATHON DANCE WEEKEND

Motion 021826-4 to approve the South High Marathon Dance Proclamation for March 6th & March 7th, 2026: Trustee Baxter motioned, Trustee Carota seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

Discussion: None

7. Motion 021826-5 to approve the January 2026 Financial Reports: Trustee Middleton motioned, Trustee Baxter seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

Discussion: None

8. Motion 021826-6 to set the Budget Workshop for March 25th at 6:00 pm: Trustee Baxter motioned, Trustee Middleton seconded. All in favor, motion passed.



Discussion: Clerk Treasurer Berg stated the tentative budget is due March 20th. The Board uses this meeting to set up their Budget Workshop dates that are historically set up the last week of March and then have to set their Public Hearing for the Budget before April 15th. She also brought to the Board's attention the many meetings and elections scheduled for every Wednesday in March so the Board agreed to have just one Board Meeting.

Motion 021826-7 to set the Public Hearing for the Budget for April 1st at 6:30 pm: Trustee Baxter motioned, Trustee Middleton seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

9. **Motion 021826-8 to approve and establish a Sewer Jet Reserve Fund for \$136,000.00 subject to permissive referendum:** Trustee Middleton motioned, Trustee Carota seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

Discussion: None

10. **Motion 021826-9 to approve and establish a Sewer Infrastructure Reserve Fund for \$239,894.60, not subject to permissive referendum:** Trustee Middleton motioned, Trustee Carota seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

Discussion: None

11. **Motion 021826-10 to approve and establish a Water Infrastructure Reserve Fund for \$776,566.57, not subject to permissive referendum:** Trustee Middleton motioned, Trustee Carota seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

Discussion: Trustee Middleton stated that, per OSC, these funds are being created to correctly appropriate Village monies.

12. **Motion 021826-11 for the Mayor to sign the Election Machines Liability Agreement:** Trustee Middleton motioned, Trustee Carota seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

Motion 021826-12 to approve Debbie Fitzgibbon, Donna Patricke, Vicky Sesselman and Lynne Loga as the Election Inspectors for the March 18, 2026 Election: Trustee Middleton motioned, Trustee Carota seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

13. Old Business

- a. **Motion 021826-13 to rescind previous Motion 041625-9 approving the purchase of 3 Trucks from Tracey Road Equipment from Major Equipment reserve with balance paid by CHIPS:** Trustee Baxter motioned, Trustee Middleton seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

Motion 021826-14 to allocate \$493,875.00 from A 0915.0000 to pay for the Cabin Chassis of Three Trucks to A 878.0101 - DPW Major Equipment Reserve Account: Trustee Middleton motioned, Trustee Carota seconded. All in favor, motion passed.



Discussion: The Village's Chips Fund is used for paving roads. Chips money is best used for infrastructure projects, not for purchasing equipment due to its 10-year ownership clause.

b. DPW New Hire - Tabled

Discussion: Per OSC, the Village cannot move the monies from the Water Fund to the General Fund. Superintendent Dubois requested the position to be put on hold until the next budget year.

14. New Business

- a. Motion 021826-15 to approve the \$2,200.00 Quote for a Garage Door Opener Replacement from A 878.0201 - Major Renovations:** Trustee Baxter motioned, Trustee Middleton seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

Discussion: The DPW door openers, which date from when the DPW garage was on the old Essity property from the 1980s, are failing. As they fail, they are replaced with newer ones and this is number 5. The Village can continue to replace the doors one at a time or all at once. Trustee Middleton shared he is negotiating the scope of a grant received previously for the salt project to assist with this and should have it in the next 6 months.

15. Trustee Reports: None

16. Mayor's Report: None

- 17. Motion 021826-16 to adjourn the Regular Village Board Meeting at 7:36 pm with no Executive Session:** Trustee Middleton motioned, Trustee Baxter seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

