

Village of South Glens Falls
46 Saratoga Avenue, South Glens Falls, NY 12803
April 1, 2026
Budget Public Hearing @ 6:30 PM
Regular Village Board Meeting @ 7:00 PM

Budget Public Hearing and Regular Village Board Meeting
MAYOR JOSEPH ORLOW PRESIDING
Minutes

Attendance:

Mayor Orlow
Trustee Baxter
Trustee Carota
Trustee Comstock
Trustee Middleton
Attorney Bill Nikas
Harry Gutheil
Tyler Corlew
Phil Lindsay
Dan Collins
Tim Pease
JM

Clerk Treasurer Samantha Berg
DPW Superintendent Alan Dubois
Xavier DeRush
Chris Rich
Mike Gailor
Reed Antis
John Cox
Lou Thayer
Kevin Gallagher
Bob Ulrich
Berry Blot

The Mayor opened the meeting at 6:30 PM.

Pledge of Allegiance

Public Hearing for the Budget

Harry Gutheil, 21 Spring St: had the following questions regarding the Budget:

1. Mr. Gutheil asked the Board to extend the public hearing to allow him time to meet with the Board and go over the budget.
2. 67% increase for monthly legal fees for Village Attorney to \$5,000/month, was told it was due to additional attendance four court matters.
3. \$80,000 in additional monies was budgeted for HRA reserves that are at \$273,493.64, Trustee Baxter answered there could be an unexpected expense due to the wording in the current CSEA contract. Trustee Middleton added there was an 18% increase in health insurance cost.
4. Large increases in overtime and salaries. He also wanted to know if the Village was to raise taxes over the 2% tax cap. Mayor Orlow answered that he received a bankrupt Village. The recent audit showed accumulated excess funds - essentially a "war chest" - from services the residents paid for but didn't receive. Now this Board can reinvest money into the community. Trustee Baxter added that by looking at the sewer fund, the Village has reduced reliance on the sewer fund balance from over \$300,000 to \$55,000, and next year, address water, then general. Not everything can be fixed at once. The Village already had nearly \$1 million in unexpected sewer costs and had to borrow money. The Village is trying to plan better moving forward and stabilize funds, so they're self-supporting. Trustee Middleton commented



as a taxpayer that he didn't want the village holding money without using it. We need to invest back into the community while stabilizing finances. We need to plan for the future based on these numbers.

5. No money was spent on carbon media this year. Trustee Baxter explained there's \$85,000 just for the carbon, plus additional operational costs - power, heating, and humidifiers in reserve. There are a lot of added expenses beyond just the material.
6. Electric costs. Trustee Middleton shared the Village upgraded municipal buildings with LED lighting through a grant and has already seen reductions - about \$2,000 less on the National Grid bill this month just from pole lighting. The Village expects further savings.
7. 400% increase in records maintenance line items. There are grants to help. Trustee Middleton explained the Village is moving toward a digital platform and working on hiring a grant writer. Final interviews are happening, and we expect to move forward soon.
8. Parks equipment increased from \$2,000 to \$12,500. Trustee Middleton shared that DPW is purchasing safer, more efficient equipment. Right now, workers ride on the back of a truck holding a leaf blower. The new equipment improves safety and reduces labor time.
9. \$8,000 for judgments and claims. Clerk Treasurer Berg clarified that it typically covers retroactive pay, based on prior administration practice.
10. Snow removal overtime increased by another \$10,000. Trustee Middleton stated the Board is planning conservatively based on potential conditions.
11. Interest earnings for water is budgeting \$50,000 when over \$100,000 came in this past year.
12. Clarification from audio minutes regarding adding \$250,000 to contingency "to make it look good". Trustee Baxter clarified that contingency is for unexpected expenses. It allows flexibility without reallocating funds mid-year. The state audit will likely highlight past budgeting issues. The Village is making changes based on that feedback.
13. Engineering changed from \$1,000 to \$10,000, and wanted clarification on how that change was made without a meeting. Mayor Orlow stated that this has been a collaborative process. Board members and staff have all contributed.
14. Street cleaning overtime increased 40%, due to parade activity and scheduling cleaning during early hours. Trustee Middleton explained that by budgeting higher and not using it, the funds remain available. The Village is trying to correct years of underspending and improve infrastructure, staffing, and services. Mr. Gutheil disagreed with the claim that the Village hasn't spent money in the past. Many past projects were funded by grants rather than with village monies.
15. Sewer revenues are \$851,447.48, and projected revenues are \$906,825.90. Trustee Baxter stated that it's not flush or turning a profit and does not include debt service for the bridge. 2 million dollars with a 12-month 0% interest has been formally borrowed from NYS from an emergency meeting. Repayment terms will be determined once final costs are known.



Motion 040126-1 to extend the Public Hearing for the Budget and schedule another meeting for April 8 at 6:30 pm: Trustee Baxter motioned, Trustee Middleton seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

Public Forum

Kevin Gallagher, 9 Larchwood Ln: addressed the Board regarding recently issued water and sewer bills. Mr. Gallagher believed there was a problem with sprinkler meter readings because sprinkler meters were allegedly not read in September, as previously discussed with the Board. His sprinkler system remained active through approximately mid-October, but the meter readings on his bill appeared unchanged from earlier readings. He believed sewer charges improperly included irrigation water that should not have been billed as sewer usage. He requested that the Board address the issue village-wide, stating that other residents may have experienced the same problem. Trustee Baxter responded that the matter would need to be reviewed by staff and the Water Committee, and they would investigate the billing calculations and meter readings. The Board acknowledged that the issue may affect multiple residents. Mr. Gallagher stated that if the matter was not corrected, he would consider legal action. The Board said the issue could likely be resolved administratively without litigation. The Board discussed several possible causes, including software calculation errors; a failure to subtract prior meter readings from current readings; complications related to sprinkler meter readings; and data import or automated billing issues. Superintendent Dubois stated all meters had reportedly been physically read; no estimates were intentionally used except for properties without installed meters. The Village would investigate the issue immediately and may require rebilling or correction of accounts. Discussion occurred regarding whether billing due dates should be extended; whether residents should delay payment pending corrections; the administrative burden of issuing credits versus corrected bills; the need to provide public communication once the issue is identified. The Board stated staff would begin reviewing the matter the following day. Discussion continued regarding availability of historical meter data; ability to retrieve prior usage information electronically; use of historical consumption averages to assist with corrections; the transition to full meter-based billing village-wide. Superintendent Dubois stated that new meter systems can retrieve detailed historical consumption data; daily and monthly usage information may be available for comparison and troubleshooting purposes.

Attorney Nikas: asked whether code enforcement had acted regarding illicit discharges into the sanitary sewer system, specifically sump pumps connected to sanitary lines. Trustee Middleton responded that the Village has identified properties with them and then asked how to fairly bill properties contributing additional flow; whether flat-rate charges should apply; whether property owners can be required to redesign drainage systems; enforcement authority; and practical implementation. Attorney Nikas stated that an equitable solution may involve estimating nominal flow rates associated with sump pump operation.



Kevin Gallagher asked about current PFAS levels following the installation of the Village filtration system. Trustee Middleton explained that the carbon filtration system is currently maintaining non-detect PFAS levels, and the system uses a dual-vessel lead/lag configuration. Sampling occurs at multiple points within the filtration vessels to monitor carbon effectiveness. Carbon replacement scheduling is based on testing results and breakthrough detection thresholds. Superintendent Dubois stated the system is designed to maintain continuous treatment capacity while replacement carbon is ordered and installed.

Harry Gutheil, 21 Spring St: asked about funds received from lease buyouts associated with the South High development project. Trustee Middleton stated that the funds were placed in the General Fund balance and that revenue from those payments had already been received. Additional discussion regarding future revenue replacement and budget allocation was deferred to the upcoming budget workshop/public hearing. Mr. Gutheil also asked whether future revenue would be received from SLIC or excise taxes associated with the project. Mayor Orlow responded the Village would.

Trustee Middleton: requested to move Agenda Item No. 12, regarding a proposed nuisance law, ahead of other agenda items to allow police personnel to return to duty responsibilities more quickly. Phil Lindsey, SGF Police Dept, discussed the development of a proposed nuisance property law, which included the review of nuisance laws adopted by other municipalities (e.g. Hudson Falls, Glens Falls, and Fort Edward), repeated police calls and complaints associated with certain properties; concerns from neighboring residents regarding disruptive or recurring activity; potential procedures involving warning notices, landlord notification, and escalating enforcement measures, and the possibility of charging property owners administrative fees after repeated police responses within a specified timeframe. Some nuisance activity may involve criminal behavior while other conduct may not. The goal is to reduce repeated police responses and improve the Village's quality of life. Trustee Baxter brought up applying nuisance law provisions to both behavioral issues and chronic property maintenance violations; expanding enforcement beyond criminal conduct to include recurring disturbances, repeated police calls, overgrown properties, brush, weeds, dilapidated structures and existing public nuisance provisions already contained within Village Code. Discussion included escalating enforcement procedures based on repeated incident reports; notification procedures to tenants, landlords, and property managers; potential administrative penalties and recovery of police response costs; possible suspension or revocation of certificates of occupancy for chronic offenders. Trustee Middleton reemphasized that the proposal is intended to be a tool to address recurring "chronic nuisance" community problems and improve neighborhood quality of life; the law would apply broadly and not target only one property; residents have repeatedly expressed concerns regarding recurring disturbances at several locations within the Village. Additional discussion will be at a future meeting following review by the Board, police department, and legal counsel.

Harry Gutheil, 21 Spring St: asked for an update regarding a burned structure located on Harrison Avenue. Attorney Nikas reported that final demolition estimates had

been received. The mortgage holder cancelled its mortgage rather than assume responsibility for remediation. The property owner is currently in jail. The structure has already been declared unsafe and condemnable. Public safety concerns associated with the structure have been documented. Discussion included possible demolition by the Village; placement of liens against the property to recover demolition costs; potential future reimbursement through tax foreclosure procedures; existing Village experience using similar lien procedures on prior demolition projects.

The Mayor closed the Public Forum.

1. Grant Projects Update

- a. **Motion 040126-2 to amend Authorized Signers to Trustee Carota, Trustee Baxter, and Trustee Middleton for OCR requests as it cannot be the Mayor:** Trustee Middleton motioned, Trustee Baxter seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

Discussion: Clerk Treasurer Berg clarified the Village had to update the authorized signers for Office of Community Renewal (OCR) requests.

- b. **Motion 040126-3 to amend the CDBG Budget:** Trustee Middleton motioned, Trustee Baxter seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

Discussion: None

- c. **Motion 040126-4 to approve the addition of Ferry Boulevard Gate Valves:** Trustee Middleton motioned, Trustee Comstock seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

Discussion: The Board stated that additional gate valves were required for the project. Estimated costs were approximately \$10,000 per valve (5), and the work remained within overall project contingency allowances.

- d. **Motion 040126-5 to approve the Park Sprinkler Repairs (Parks Repairs Reserve - \$3,600.00):** Trustee Middleton motioned, Trustee Baxter seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

Discussion: Trustee Middleton stated that the irrigation system was not identified on the project plans. Sidewalk removal work damaged portions of the system, and responsibility was unclear because the irrigation lines were not shown on engineering documents. Two repair quotes received were approximately \$8,000, and \$3,852. Trustee Baxter recommended using the Parks and Recreation reserve fund for repairs to complete work before Memorial Day. Discussion also occurred regarding potential future reimbursement through grant modification requests and the desire to avoid delaying park restoration.

2. **Motion 040126-6 to approve Transfers:** Trustee Baxter motioned, Trustee Carota seconded. All in favor, motion passed.



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| A-1990-0400-0000 | A-1430-0403-0000 | \$495.00 | CSEA ATTORNEY |
| A-1990-0400-0000 | A-1430-0404-0000 | \$275.00 | PBA ATTORNEY |
| A-1641-0406-0000 | A-1640-0410-0000 | \$2,820.00 | DPW CONFERENCES/TRAINING |
| FX-8340-0403-0000 | FX-9060-0811-0000 | \$2,800.00 | HRA EMPLOYEE BENEFITS |
| G-1990-0400-0000 | G-9060-0811-0000 | \$1,500.00 | HRA - EMPLOYEES |

Discussion: None

3. **Motion 040126-7 to approve the Bills and Payroll as Audited:** Trustee Carota motioned, Trustee Middleton seconded. All in favor, motion passed.
- a. General - \$78,531.29
 - b. Water - \$11,527.63
 - c. Sewer - \$3,971.86
 - d. Special - \$493,374.13
 - e. Payroll -
 - i. 03/04/26 - \$26,685.60
 - ii. 03/11/26 - \$28,032.06
 - iii. 03/18/26 - \$25,657.76
 - iv. 03/25/26 - \$31,153.39

Discussion: None

4. **Motion 040126-8 to approve Meeting Minutes 02/04/26, 02/11/26, 02/18/26, 03/04/26 and 03/19/26:** Trustee Baxter motioned, Trustee Middleton seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

Discussion: None

5. **Motion 040126-9 to approve the March 2026 Animal Control Report:** Trustee Middleton motioned, Trustee Baxter seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

Discussion: None

6. **Motion 040126-10 to approve annual purchase of Memorial Day Flags for the Memorial Day Parade to include Bridge Flags, Main Street Flags and Flags for Veterans' Park from East Coast Flag and Banner for \$3,751.00:** Trustee Baxter motioned, Trustee Comstock seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

Discussion: None

7. **Motion 040126-11 to approve the Dehumidifiers Electric Install (FX 8340.403 - \$3,500.00):** Trustee Middleton motioned, Trustee Baxter seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

Discussion: None

8. **Motion 040126-12 for the Village to deny the payment of 5 Clark Street Sewer Repair:** Trustee Middleton motioned, Trustee Baxter seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

Discussion: Trustee Middleton reported Village historically paid for repairs (contrary to code). Code states that the homeowner is responsible for lateral line repairs. The Board discussed that the Village should follow the current code, and future policy discussion would be required.

9. **Motion 040126-13 to approve the purchase of new Police Dept. Radios (A 3120.404 - not to exceed \$17,500.00):** Trustee Middleton motioned, Trustee



Baxter seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

Discussion: Officer Gailor explained that the current PD radios go to two separate destinations - State and County. The purchase of new radios would consolidate them into a single system.

- 10. Motion 040126-14 to transfer HRA Reserve (A 878.500) to HRA Employees (A 9060.811) - \$15,000.00 and Auditor Reserve (A 878.220) to Contract Expense Auditor (A 1320.400) - \$12,000.00 (\$27,000.00):** Trustee Carota motioned, Trustee Middleton seconded. All in favor, motion passed.
Discussion: None

- 11. Motion 040126-15 to establish a new HH Capital Fund with an initial allocation of \$2,000,000 (EFC funding) and amend the Budget for the Sewer Main Repair:** Trustee Baxter motioned, Trustee Middleton seconded. All in favor, motion passed.
Discussion: The emergency loan from EFC has to be allocated to a capital fund.

12. Nuisance Law – discussed in Public Forum

- 13. Motion 040126-16 to allow the Mayor to sign the Stop DWI and High Visibility Enforcement contracts with Saratoga County:** Trustee Carota motioned, Trustee Middleton seconded. All in favor, motion passed.
Discussion: None

14. Old Business

- a. **Grant Writer Selection:** Final interview pending. Decision scheduled before or during the next public hearing. Timeline critical due to the May 1 grant deadline. Meeting scheduled for 4/08/26 at 6:15 pm.

15. New Business

- a. **Motion 040126-17 to approve Unnamed Employee Unused Vacation Time Request:** Trustee Middleton motioned, Trustee Baxter seconded. All in favor, motion passed.
Discussion: Employee requests payment for 40 hours of vacation time.
- b. **Motion 040126-18 to approve the increase of the cost of the Irrigation Meters to the Debt Cost of the Village:** Trustee Middleton motioned, Trustee Baxter seconded. All in favor, motion passed.
Discussion: Clerk Treasurer Berg informed the Board that the irrigation meter cost has increased and has asked the Board to consider charging the residents the actual cost of the irrigation meter, which is currently \$388.91.

16. Trustee Reports

- a. **Motion 040126-19 to approve submission of National Fitness Campaign Grant Application:** Trustee Carota motioned, Trustee Baxter seconded. All in favor, motion passed.
Discussion: Trustee Middleton presented information regarding a grant application through the National Fitness Campaign for an ADA-compliant



outdoor fitness court proposed near Sandbar Beach and the Betar Byway. He had information regarding the estimated project value of approximately \$275,000 and potential grant funding opportunities. Clerk Treasurer Berg included information about community engagement opportunities involving local artists, future plans to improve riverfront recreational amenities, and walkability connections.

b. NY Play Grant: Trustee Middleton informed the Board about potential NY Play grant opportunities for Sandbar Beach improvements.

c. National Grid PTR application: Trustee Middleton has had discussions with National Grid regarding possible future recreational use of the Riverview Street property and regional trail and walkability coordination discussions with neighboring municipalities and planning organizations. Trustee Baxter added that this allows the Village the opportunity to join other walkability projects promoted in the area.

17. Mayor's Report: Commended DPW and staff for their handling of the recent sewer incident - acknowledging teamwork, rapid response, and appreciation to staff, police, and public.

18. Motion 040126-20 to adjourn the Regular Village Board Meeting at 8:27 pm and enter into Executive Session for PBA Negotiations and Police Department New Hire: Trustee Baxter motioned, Trustee Middleton seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

19. Motion 040126-21 to adjourn the Executive Session at 8:40 pm and enter the regular session with no action taken: Trustee Middleton motioned, Trustee Carota seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

20. Motion 040126-23 to approve an undisclosed New Hire for the Police Department, pending all the preliminary paperwork, background check process acceptable per the Union Contract: Trustee Middleton motioned, Trustee Baxter seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

21. Motion 040126-24 to adjourn the Regular Village Board Meeting at 8:41 pm: Trustee Middleton motioned, Trustee Baxter seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

