

**Village of Tupper Lake
Board of Trustees**
Minutes

Date:

Monday, September 15, 2025

Location:

Board Room

Meeting:

Regular Meeting

6:00 – 7:23 PM

At the Regular Monthly Meeting of the Board of Trustees held this date, the following were present: Mayor Mary Fontana, Trustees Eric Shaheen, Rick Pickering, David Maroun and Village Clerk, Kathy Savage.

Also present were Police Chief Eric Proulx, Electric Superintendent Mike Dominie, DPW Superintendent Bob DeGrace, and news reporters Dan McClelland and Chris Gaige.

Guests: Seth McGowan & Marc Staves from Adk Sky Center & Observatory. Ian Coryea from Burnham Benefit Advisors.

Absent from meeting: Trustee Leon LeBlanc

Pledge & Moment
Of Silence

Pledge of allegiance & moment of silence for the safe return of missing teen Colin Gillis.

Guest Speakers
Seth McGowan
& Marc Staves

Seth McGowan and Marc Staves, from Adk Sky Center & Observatory advised that Tupper Lake has an opportunity through the International Dark Sky Association to be designated as a “Dark Sky Community”. Seth McGowan stated there is a movement around the world known as “Astro Tourism”, which the Adk Sky Center has a vested interest in. Seth also mentioned that normally, one would have to go to Mexico or Colorado to get the quality skies that we have here in the Adirondacks, so people come from all over to the Observatory. Seth went on to say that they have submitted an application to the International Dark Sky Association, asking that Tupper Lake be designated as a “Dark Sky Community”, and even though this is a 2–3-year process, Seth believes that Tupper Lake is well suited to receive the designation without much hassle. Once Tupper Lake is designated as a Dark Sky Community, Seth McGowan and Marc Staves will reach out to surrounding areas such as Saranac Lake and Long Lake to see if they would be interested in applying for this designation. If awarded, the Adirondacks would be known as a “Dark Sky Reserve”, which would be the only place east of the Mississippi with this designation. With full support from the Mayor and Board of Trustees, Mayor Fontana offered to be the point of contact for the Village, to be kept in the loop regarding progress then inform the Board of Trustees.

Guest Speaker
Ian Coryea

Ian Coryea, from Burnham Benefit Advisors, presented an opportunity for Medicare-eligible retirees of the Village to switch from the current Excellus Medicare Advantage Plan to another Excellus Plan offered through NY Shared Services Initiative, put together by Broome County Retiree Health Insurance Consortium. This would result in reduced cost and enhanced benefits. Burnham Benefit Advisors currently writes health insurance for over 50 municipalities, making sure that each client gets the best plan for

the best rate. Ian Coryea went on to compare the benefits between the current health care plan to the proposed plan through Broome County. Moving retirees from one Excellus Plan to another would be a smooth transition, which Burnham Benefit Advisors would take care of, but if the Board wishes to move forward with this transition, a letter of intent would have to be submitted to the company prior to October 1, 2025. Ian pointed out that the rates for 2026 are guaranteed, and although the rates for 2027 are not yet known, there is a 7.5% rate cap for 2027. Due to changes, current and future, at the federal level involving Medicare, the benefits and rates beyond 2027 is not known. Worst case scenario, if rates for 2028 under the new plan take a major increase, the Village has the option to go back directly to Excellus for a different plan. Mayor Fontana then asked Ian Coryea if retirees have any questions, can Ian's contact information be given out, to which he replied "absolutely". Marc Staves then asked Ian Coryea what kind of "muscle" does the consortium have? Ian Coryea replied the consortium is approximately 4000 members strong, with many more groups looking at Broome County plan for 2026.

Motion by Trustee Shaheen, seconded by Trustee Maroun to authorize Mayor Fontana to sign letter of intent, authorizing Burnham Benefit Advisors to move all Excellus Medicare Advantage Plan accounts to Broome County's Excellus Plan 8, effective 1/1/2026. (Carried 4-0)

Approve Minutes

Motion by Trustee Shaheen, seconded by Trustee Maroun to approve the board meeting minutes from August 18, 2025. (Carried 4-0)

Treasurer:

Approve Warrant

Motion by Trustee Maroun, seconded by Trustee Pickering to approve the September 15, 2025, warrant in the amount of \$511,812.21 for payment of the bills, and abstracts for the month of August 2025. (Carried 4-0)

Review Cash Position

Review cash position for August 31, 2025.

Approve Budget Transfers

Motion by Trustee Maroun, seconded by Trustee Shaheen to approve budget transfers in the amount of \$221,943.93 for the General Fund for Fiscal Year ending 5/31/2025. (Carried 4-0)

Fire:

Approve August Monthly Report

Motion by Trustee Shaheen, seconded by Trustee Pickering to approve the August 2025 Monthly Fire Report. (Carried 4-0)

Police:

Approve August Monthly Report

Motion by Trustee Maroun, seconded by Trustee Shaheen to approve the August 2025 Monthly Police Report. (Carried 4-0)

DPW: Renew Shared Services Agreement DOT

Motion by Trustee Pickering, seconded by Trustee Shaheen to renew Shared Services Agreement with NYS DOT. (Carried 4-0)

Misc. Updates

DPW Superintendent Bob DeGrace advised that his crew is done with sidewalk replacement for this year. They are now preparing to blacktop Cedar St., the end of Washington St., and Eighth Ave. One set of docks @ municipal park are out with the remainder to be pulled out soon.

Approve DPW Report

Motion by Trustee Pickering, seconded by Trustee Shaheen to approve August 2025 Monthly DPW report.

Water/WW:

Motion by Trustee Maroun, seconded by Trustee Pickering to formally award the Miscellaneous Pipes, Vales and Fittings bid to Blair Supply Corp for the Sewer Materials in the amount of \$2,780.60 and Ferguson Waterworks for Water Materials in the amount of \$16,638.62 respectively. (Carried 4-0)

Electric: Approve Write-off

Motion by Trustee Shaheen, seconded by Trustee Maroun to approve electric write-off for deceased customer in the amount of \$329.55. (Carried 4-0)

Miscellaneous Updates

Electric Superintendent Mike Dominic advised that additional testing recently performed on transformer 3, which was having issues this past spring, proved the condition to be worse. Superintendent Dominic is pursuing updated proposals for replacement of transformer 3, one of which he should have by the end of the week. Superintendent Dominic estimated the cost of a new transformer to be around \$1,240,000. Even though the tap changer on this 50-year-old transformer was recently rebuilt, the tap changer is now testing bad. He went on to say that plans are to purchase parts at a minimal cost, have them installed, then re-energize the transformer with hopes that it will make it through the winter. Superintendent Dominic advised that it takes about 60 weeks to get a new transformer. Marc Staves asked if a portable transformer should be brought in as a substitute until a new transformer arrives. Superintendent Dominic replied “no”, stating transformers 1 & 2 are able to carry the load for the entire village as they did through this past winter while transformer 3 was down for most of the season waiting for repairs.

Approve Report

Motion by Trustee Shaheen, seconded by Trustee Maroun to approve August monthly Electric report. (Carried 4-0)

Enter Executive Session:

Motion made by Trustee Maroun, seconded by Trustee Shaheen to enter Executive Session @ 6:48 PM for the purpose of discussing the medical, financial, credit or employment history of a particular person or corporation, or matters leading to the appointment, employment, promotion, demotion, discipline, suspension, dismissal, resignation, or removal of a particular person or corporation. (Carried 4-0)

Exit Executive Session

Motion by Trustee Shaheen, seconded by Trustee Pickering to exit Executive Session at 7:22 PM. (Carried 4-0)

Accept Dylan Miller Resignation

Motion by Trustee Shaheen, seconded by Trustee Maroun to accept Dylan Miller’s resignation from Water/Wastewater Department with his last day of employment being October 1, 2025. (Carried 4-0)

Adjourn:

Motion made by Trustee Shaheen, seconded by Trustee Maroun to adjourn meeting @ 7:23 PM. (Carried 4-0)


Kathy Savage, Village Clerk