

DRAFT MINUTES: AUGUST 25, 2025



Village of Bellport

General Meeting
Monday, August 25, 2025 at 7:00PM
This meeting will be held in the Community Center

A G E N D A

This meeting is open to the public in the Community Center, located at 4 Bell Street. It is an in-person meeting and will be streamed on Zoom.

Pledge of Allegiance & Roll Call

Village Clerk Pontieri called the roll:

Mayor Maureen Veitch, Trustee Steve Mackin, Trustee Lorraine Kuehn, and Deputy Mayor Nathan Rohrmeier. Trustee Michael Young was absent.

Opening remarks by Mayor Maureen Veitch

Before we begin the meeting, I would like to bring some attention to a young woman in the audience. Her name is Lena Tanaka. She came to see me in Village Hall about 2 months ago and had written a letter to the Village to ask us to be more responsible about recycling over at Ho Hum Beach. She told me that she'd been collecting trash over at Ho Hum for a long time and thought we could do a better job. We agreed with her. So, we did some investigating and what we found was that there was a recycling bin over at Ho Hum. Because it had an open top, people were throwing all kinds of food and so forth in with the recycling, making it difficult to recycle.

So, we're in the process of obtaining a garbage bin that has a nice little hole in it and hopefully village residents or any guests over at Ho Hum will really start to take seriously Lena's concerns.

Mayor Veitch asked her to come up to the dais and congratulated and thanked her for bringing this issue to the Board and residents.

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Swear-In Deputy Mayor Nathan Rohrmeier

Deputy Mayor Nathan Rohrmeier was appointed at the Reorganization Meeting on July 28, 2025 and he was not present to be sworn in at that time. Village Clerk Pontieri swore Deputy Mayor Nathan Rohrmeier in.

Approve the Village Attorney Retainer Agreement for Larry Davis as presented.

On a motion by Deputy Mayor Nathan Rohrmeier seconded by Trustee Steve Mackin, and unanimously carried the Board approved the Village Attorney Retainer Agreement for Larry Davis.

Swear-in Village Attorney Larry Davis

Village Clerk Pontieri swore Village Attorney Larry Davis in. Village Attorney Larry Davis moved to the dais and Mayor Veitch made the following comments.

Attorney Davis is new to the village in this role, but he definitely is not new to the village, and not new to the operations of municipalities. My first observation of Larry Davis was over Zoom calls during COVID, when I was an alternate on the Zoning Board. He is one of the most respected attorneys and we're very lucky to have him here.

Mayor Updates Capital Projects, Grants

- a. Lena Tanaka – Recycling
- b. Bellport Village Program Fund

Everyone I'm sure knows about the Bellport Village Program Fund. They are a group of village residents who care very much about the village and have raised funds to do projects within the village in cooperation with the Village Board. This year, the BVPF celebrated their 15th anniversary so, congratulations to all of the members of that organization. Speaking of projects, the BVPF has paid to have the swing set at the marina replaced. The old one was worn and not safe to keep up. The new one is scheduled to be installed on Thursday August 28th. The installation will take 2 days, one for the frame and the next day for the chain and swings. Many thanks to the Bellport Village Program Fund.

- c. Code Enforcement

The SCPD was formed in the 1960's. Up until that point, many villages in Suffolk County had their own police or constables. Bellport shortly after that made a decision, "irrevocably" to go with Suffolk County but also maintain our own Code Enforcement Department. The role of the department was to enforce the Village Codes and prepare summons and tickets and help with general safety particularly during events and coordinate with officers from the 5th Precinct.

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Last year, while forming the Village Budget we noticed that the insurance for the department was extremely low at \$3,100 per year. Upon further investigation we learned that the village was not covered for officers carrying firearms – which ours were. An estimate for such might cost as much as \$100 - \$200k. So, we have made some changes.

In the process of this, a few of our code officers have resigned and we are in the process of recruiting new professionals.

d. Code Progress

The Code Book for Bellport is very outdated. It was written in the 70's and we hired a company called General Code to redo the code and make sure it matches with Federal and State regulations and laws. The first draft is due October 1st. We will likely appoint a committee to help us with the Code Book.

e. Naming of Marina Parking Lot

The marina parking lot used to be, (where all the boats are) called Bellport Avenue. It was abandoned as a road sometime in the 70's which we learned recently. So now it has its own tax map. We are going to do something fun, which is having a naming contest which we did for the Whale House Point Ferry and Ho Hum Beach. You'll be hearing more about that soon.

f. HUD 2024 Grant- Howells Creek

This HUD 2024 grant has four pieces to it. Howells Creek has flooding and is causing erosion at the golf course. We are working very hard to make sure that the environmental review is completed before the window of October 1st to December 31st for dredging. I believe we will get there. HUD is allowing us to separate the environmental review into two pieces, because the project and the grant has two very distinct pieces. One is the creek and the second is the three road endings that have flooding, Otis, South Howells and Thornhedge. We are in the process of getting a proposal from VHB to do the work on the three road endings.

g. Public Forum for Country Club

We had a report that was done by Purple Horse, an outside consultant, to analyze upgrades for the golf course and tennis court. Purple Horse made a lot of suggestions and then we got feedback from the public. We are going to have a public forum to discuss the Country Club (probably the third week of September.) We hope that everyone will pay attention and participate with feedback.

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h. Roads

If we had \$5 million, we could do every road in this village and every sidewalk, but we do not. The roads in the village, need work. Jason Crane, our head of the highway department, came in and spoke to the public about this at the June 23, 2025 Board meeting and I think there may have been some misunderstanding. There are probably 6 roads in dire need of repair. We've selected two this year, Colonial Lane and South Brewster. South Brewster is nearly done and Colonial is taking a little longer because of the drain work that has to be done. It should be done over the next two weeks. So those are the two roads that we're doing this year.

We continue to work to get additional funding for roads, but the grant that was written and looked like it was going to be accepted for half a million dollars was cut from the budget at a federal level.

i. Bike Safety

There's concern about kids and bike safety. Children under 14 are supposed to wear helmets, with parents or guardians being responsible for ensuring compliance. Beyond this, all cyclists must obey traffic laws, signal turns, yield to pedestrians and ride with traffic. While adults are not mandated to wear helmets, it's strongly recommended. Children from 1 to 4 years must ride in safety seats, and carrying infants under 1 is prohibited.

j. Community Center Renovations

The Community Center has a grant for \$187,000 which was supported by Monica Martinez in 2018. Through diligent work and serendipity, we managed to get that money. The work in this building will begin on September 8th and it will be out of service for approximately a month or two.

Senior classes are happening at the firehouse. Thank you, Trustee Steve Mackin and the Fire Department, for that. We'll make do with meetings, having them downstairs in the bowling alley or at Village Hall.

I want to thank a number of people on the staff and in particular Phillip Thomas, who is an interior designer and is helping us select floor color. There is a battle over material whether we go with red or white oak, and he says he will win (light-hearted).

k. Support Local Shops

I want to remind people at every meeting, please support local shops and restaurants. We love Bellport in part because we have downtown, and if we don't support them, we won't have a downtown.

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I. Taxes

As of Friday \$4,212,496, 98% of property taxes have been collected.

m. Suffolk County Public Works Meeting

Jason Crane, the head of the Department and I had a terrific meeting with the Commissioner of Public Works at Suffolk County. It was a good meeting. It included their transportation people, chief engineer, and deputy commissioner. We went there because we wanted to talk about a few different things. One was, a drain that long ago was put into South Country Road near the Howell's Creek, near the golf course. We believe it is draining into the creek. The county will go to that drain and change it and make sure that it doesn't flow into the water.

The second thing was, a bus route that has county buses sitting in Bellport along the streets for long periods of time. The ridership of these big buses is not very heavy. We asked them if they would not park in dangerous places in the village.

Next item for the buses is do not idle. It is village code and state law that you cannot idle past 3 minutes. They said that they would keep the bus parked at the train station and consider moving to a smaller bus. Or on-demand rides.

Lastly, there had been conversation about redoing South Country Road. The road is managed and owned by the county. We were told that everything from Academy Lane east is going to be repaved and the sidewalks will be redone. They're in great need of repair and we've been assured that any work that would happen in the village with the sidewalks would, incorporate the views of the village residents and the Board.

They are going to look at the corner of North and South Howells and South Country Road, where it is viewed as a rather dangerous corner for kids and adults to be crossing. So, what the county is proposing is that there would be a button that you would push which causes the light to light up along the walkway.

In conclusion, they could not have been more cooperative and we will all follow up with them. It is important for the village to be cooperative with town and county officials because they are there to help us.

n. Leaf Blowers

We are seriously thinking about changing rules about leaf blowing because we've had a lot of input from residents trying to get us to put in stricter rules about them. The Board is seriously thinking about all of that, but in the meantime, I would like to bring something to the public's attention. If you do

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have a landscaper, speak to them and tell them that the road does not need to be blown dry. The idea that a landscaper is blowing dirt from one property to the next, is really unpleasant to ride your bike through. It's just unnecessary, so please encourage them not to do this. In the meantime, we, again looking at shifting to electric equipment but that is a request for participation.

Trustee Updates

- a. Trustee Steve Mackin – DPW, Bellport Fire Department, South Country Ambulance, Suffolk County Police Department – Road Safety
 - Suffolk County Police Department
Progress on all three of the emergency services. Nothing new to report from the fire department, ambulance, or police department.
We have another week left of summer, unofficially and I want to wish everybody a happy summer, what's left of it.
 - Emergency Preparedness Plan Progress
The Emergency Preparedness is a work in progress. We're plugging in the final details so we should have that done by the end of the year.
- b. Deputy Mayor Nathan Rohrmeier – Code Enforcement, Waterfront Management Board, Golf Commission, Tennis Commission, and Vouchers
 - Recap of HUD 2022
 - Golf Update
The golf course greens were aerated last week, so they're back to playing conditions now.
 - Beach is looking good, no swimming. Over the weekend the hurricane avoided us so we're in good shape going forward.
- c. Trustee Lorraine Kuehn – Communication/Website, Business District, Senior Program, Vouchers, Kids Camp, and Building Department
 - Employee Handbook
The Bellport Village Employee Handbook is still progressing. We hope to get that done in another month or two.
 - Town of Brookhaven Senior Programs
The Senior Program continues to be relocated at the Bellport Firehouse in the community room upstairs. There is an elevator and the program will be continued until the community center has been refurbished.
In the summertime, we are quite busy with all our different events held in the village and will reinstate more workshops in the future.

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- d. Trustee Michael Young – Zoning Board of Appeals, Architectural Review Board, Planning Board, Historical Preservation, Yacht Club/Sailing Foundation

Open to the Public

Loretta Drew started by saying that she is not a proponent of guns, but to say that a Suffolk County Police Officer (can't) carry a gun while he's working is an insult to the profession.

I'm very sad that the code enforcers are leaving the village, because I think that nobody knows this village like they do. I don't think you can put a price tag on that. If money is the issue you have to come up with it.

Another point is that, for all we know, there could be somebody in this room that's carrying a gun. But if you have a permit to carry a concealed weapon, that's not against the law. I think you should try to do something about it, because I don't think you're going to get men in this village to replace the ones that we have.

Mayor Veitch stated that this is not a Q & A, but what I will say to the public is that we have to follow the law, and the law says that we cannot have a police department in the Village of Bellport. We opted irrevocably to go with Suffolk County, and anybody with a permit is permitted to carry a gun, but not while on duty, performing the duties of Code Officer, as described in the Civil Service book for Bellport Village.

Christine Bodnarchuk wanted to say that her husband, who was a code officer, was forced out. He was attacked by the village after 25 years of loyalty. They brought up bogus misconduct charges on him because he refused to agree with the opinions of the mayor. The opinions of the mayor, which are not the opinions of the residents of the village. I think he was singled out. I really wish the village people of Bellport knew the truth, and that my husband really did not resign.

Stefano Basilico is heartened that the Board is considering a leaf blower, seasonal ban that is under discussion. I would highly encourage you to do so. I think it will be an enormous benefit to the village as a whole. The seasonal ban that I would propose and encourage you to consider is simply from Memorial Day to Labor Day, when gas-powered blowers are needed for actual leaf blowing. There are not a lot of leaves falling during the summer and therefore electric blowers are more than capable of cleaning the people's properties.

The cacophony that the gas-powered leaf blowers cause is simply unbearable to me and I think it's a quality-of-life issue for the Village of Bellport. If you live in the center of Bellport, or next to a lot of other people who have properties, it's really something that happens Monday through Saturday, and it makes life here unpleasant. I look forward to moving back to Brooklyn in September where it's quieter, but that's a funny thing to have to say and so do we.

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Giulio Basilico wanted to second what my father said about leaf blowers. I understand that commercial landscapers have to do what they do to clean up people's properties, but not many leaves fall during the summer.

Gas-powered leaf blowers are not only harmful in terms of their emissions to everyone around them, but they're also harmful because of the vibrations that they cause to the workers who are wearing them. There can be hearing loss and back pain from using these devices. I just like the village to consider this as well when talking to landscaping company owners.

Additionally with the repaving projects going on especially on Colonial. Are there going to be any new markings of crosswalks where there are legal crossing points for residents and any planned work to reduce speeding on certain relatively wide stretches of village streets, especially Bieselín, County Club and Bellport Lane.

Mike Foster had questions on the Rental Registration Law. Later in the meeting, a Public Hearing for the Rental Registration will be discussed and is the law drawn up that will be available at Village Hall.

Next item is repaving. I would suggest that you could actually publish a schedule from the most critical street down to the less critical so the public could know. It would be nice to know that my street eventually, or whatever street is scheduled for 8 years from now. But a schedule of some sort would be actually pretty helpful for the residents.

I would like the schedule to make sure that the streets are appropriate for oil and stone when they get repaved. Some streets are not appropriate; others are traditional and we all know what they are.

Michael Hertz spoke in support of Stefano's efforts on leaf blowers and anything else we can do just to bring down the noise in the village.

He continued that there is a particular place at Gerard and Academy which has a blind spot because of the high hedges. If possible, anything that would just slow cars down on Academy would be appreciated.

The last item pertained to the floating dock. Because of the weather and the hurricane, the floating dock was taken out. It's there mostly for the sailing program, but many of us use it to get people with mobility issues onto our boats so we can take them out sailing.

Janet Kranek had concerns about the dock master responsibilities. First, a lot of non-sticker cars are constantly in the marina parking lot, and it's supposed to be for residents. I really don't see enforcement of that.

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Because many of us like to sit on those benches and parents like to watch their kids in the sailing program. Secondly, I just don't understand why we can't have a sign that says, no idling. People sit in their car with the air conditioning on, the windows up and car idling.

Ms. Kranek requested that a sign be made that states no idling.

Mayor Veitch responded to the comments on idling. It was this Board that actually put an Idling Law in the books this past year. We can do a better job of enforcing that. I think as many people who like signs, hate signs, so that's going to be an interesting debate.

As far as speeding, our Code Officers are not permitted to give any moving violations whatsoever. Sometimes a frustration of a Code Officer in Bellport is when someone speeds by and a resident looks at them and says, why aren't you doing anything? It's because we're not permitted to, we have to leave that to the Suffolk County Police.

In terms of stickered cars and so forth, we were not permitted in the village to give tickets on the dock because it was a road and not village property Per Se, so you couldn't make the distinction. Now that it is, in fact, a separate tax map owned by the village, making a distinction between stickered and non-stickered parking will actually be legal.

Regarding the repairing of roads, oil and stone is lovely and extremely expensive and would be tough to do financially for the village.

Open Discussion:

Motion: Deputy Mayor Nathan Rohrmeier Second: Trustee Lorraine Kuehn and unanimously carried. Resolution: 200

Approved the setting of a Public Hearing to review a Rental Registration Local Law as presented.

Motion: Trustee Steve Mackin Second: Deputy Mayor Nathan Rohrmeier and unanimously carried. Resolution: 201

Approved the draft of the Reorganizational Meeting Minutes of July 28, 2025 as presented.

Motion: Trustee Lorraine Kuehn Second: Deputy Mayor Nathan Rohrmeier and unanimously carried. Resolution: 202

Approved the draft of General Board Meeting Minutes of July 28, 2025 as presented.

Motion: Deputy Mayor Nathan Rohrmeier Second: Trustee Steve Mackin and unanimously carried. Resolution: 203

Approved the draft of Special Meeting Minutes of August 9, 2025 as presented.

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Motion: Trustee Steve Mackin Second: Deputy Mayor Nathan Rohrmeier and unanimously carried. Resolution: 204

Approved the Work-For-Hire Software License and Services Agreement with Michael Chiaramonte as presented.

Motion: Deputy Mayor Nathan Rohrmeier Second: Trustee Lorraine Kuehn and unanimously carried. Resolution: 205

Approved the contract with Michael Curtin for the appointment as Village Electrician as presented.

Motion: Deputy Mayor Nathan Rohrmeier Second: Trustee Steve Mackin and unanimously carried. Resolution: 206

Approved Fire Place Initiative Inc. to hold the Blue Water Vagabond Surf Festival on September 14, 2025 (rain date September 21, 2025) at Ho Hum beach ocean side from 8:00 am – 5:00 pm as presented.

Motion: Trustee Steve Mackin Second: Deputy Mayor Nathan Rohrmeier and unanimously carried. Resolution: 207

Approved the ferry hours to run after Labor Day as presented.

Motion: Trustee Steve Mackin Second: Deputy Mayor Nathan Rohrmeier and unanimously carried. Resolution: 208

Approved the Fire Inspection Summary as presented.

Motion: Trustee Lorraine Kuehn Second: Deputy Mayor Nathan Rohrmeier and unanimously carried. Resolution: 209

Approved the Building Department Activities as presented.

Motion: Deputy Mayor Nathan Rohrmeier Second: Trustee Steve Mackin and unanimously carried. Resolution: 210

Approved the Open Permit Project as presented.

Motion: Deputy Mayor Nathan Rohrmeier Second: Trustee Steve Mackin and unanimously carried. Resolution: 211

Approved the Notice of Violations (warning), Citation Report from July 1st – August 21st (tickets) and Incident Report as presented.

Motion: Trustee Lorraine Kuehn Second: Deputy Mayor Nathan Rohrmeier and unanimously carried. Resolution: 212

Approved the General Fund Checking Abstract Report consisting of 95 vendors totaling \$668,277.62 as presented.

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Motion: Trustee Lorraine Kuehn Second: Trustee Steve Mackin and unanimously carried. Resolution: 213

Approved the Enterprise Fund Checking Abstract Report of 23 vendors totaling \$133,860.76 as presented.

Motion: Deputy Mayor Nathan Rohrmeier Second: Trustee Steve Mackin and unanimously carried. Resolution: 214

Approved the Capital General Fund Checking Report consisting of 1 vendor totaling \$2,486.54 as presented.

Motion: Deputy Mayor Nathan Rohrmeier Second: Trustee Steve Mackin and unanimously carried. Resolution: 215

Approved the request from DPW to have Staff Development Day on October 3rd with the closing of Village Hall at noon as presented.

Motion: Trustee Steve Mackin Second: Deputy Mayor Nathan Rohrmeier and unanimously carried. Resolution: 216

Approved the request for a maximum expenditure of \$300 to be paid to presenters for the dissemination of relevant educational information for the benefit of the residents as presented.

Motion: Trustee Steve Mackin Second: Deputy Mayor Nathan Rohrmeier and unanimously carried. Resolution: 217

Approved the speaker's fee of \$75 for Greg Lowenthal as guest speaker on September 6th "Long Island Native Plants: Everything You Need to Know" as presented.

Motion: Deputy Mayor Nathan Rohrmeier Second: Trustee Steve Mackin and unanimously carried. Resolution: 218

Approved the donation from Bellport Garden Club of ten trees to be planted this fall by the Highway Department as presented.

Motion: Trustee Steve Mackin Second: Deputy Mayor Nathan Rohrmeier and unanimously carried. Resolution: 219

Approved the Bellport Country Club Campus Public Engagement Facilitation from Christianna Kastalek in the amount of \$10,450.00 as presented.

Executive Session (If needed)

On a motion by Deputy Mayor Nathan Rohrmeier seconded by Trustee Steve Mackin and unanimously carried, the meeting adjourned at 7:47 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Pontieri
Village Clerk