

At the Work Session of the
Malone Village Board, held on
June 22, 2022, at 9:00AM at
343 West Main St. the following
were present:

Andrea Dumas	Mayor
Norman Bonner	Trustee
Matthew Boyea	Trustee
Brian Langdon (9:30)	Trustee
Archie McKee	Trustee

Also in Attendance:

Christopher Premo, Chief of Police
Rebahka Scaccia, Village Clerk
Alex Violo, Telegram
45+ Residents

Michelle LeBeau, President AHMC
Rebecca Shutts, VP Chief of Nursing
Matt Jones, Chief Operating Officer

Mayor Dumas opened the work session at 9:00AM.

Michelle LeBeau began comments from the Alice Hyde Hospital with a statement that there will be a community meeting on July 26, 2022 at 6:00pm, with the location of the meeting to be determined. UVM Health leadership will be present at that meeting. She stated that the Hospital is not going to close and that the Emergency Department would be staying open. Alice Hyde may not go back to its pre-UVM look but it would move forward offering services to the public.

Mary Scharf and Kelly Lamay of the Malone Chamber of Commerce noted that they field a lot of calls from residents letting out their frustrations and asking what is to become of the hospital. One of their most fielded questions has been if the Emergency Room Department would remain open for emergency services? Seniors are worried about having an Emergency Room that can assist them if they should get hurt.

Rebecca Shutts, Vice President and Chief of Nursing with Alice Hyde stated that the Emergency Department is currently operating at normal capacity, servicing about forty patients per day. The hospital has made some changes in the ER, beginning this past April, to assist in reducing wait times, which has significantly decreased the arrival to triage time by fifty percent, the length of time waiting in the ER and the overall number of complaints the Hospital receives concerning the Emergency Room have decreased. They are seeking certification to be able to provide geriatric care in the emergency room through the American College of Emergency Physicians, as a means of providing the best care of the aging population.

Kelly Lamay asked if there would ever be a maternity ward again at the hospital.

Rebecca Shutts commented that if there is a boom in births in the area, hospital leadership will revisit the need for a maternity ward. The decision to close the Maternity Ward last October was

due to the significant decline in births. This is not unique to Malone; this trend is across the nation. Chief nurses agree younger people aren't staying in Rural areas. If there is an influx of young adults into the area and births begin to rise, the hospital will revisit the issue.

Kelly Lamay asked about the status of emergency surgeries and concern over the need to travel during the night to another facility.

Rebecca Shutts noted that thought there is currently no surgeon on at night. Alice Hyde is part of a network which enables them to transfer emergency surgeries to nearby affiliate hospitals where they can obtain the care they need.

Louise Akin of Dickenson center expressed her frustration over the fact that because there is no surgeon, help is more than an hour and a half away from locations like St. Regis Falls, Dickenson and Nicholville. Where are those people supposed to go?

Rebecca Shutts noted that when these emergencies arise the hospital will arrange transfers to CVPH in Plattsburgh.

Dorothy Shey Reynolds commented that she is extremely concerned over the amount of time that is wasted when surgical emergencies present and have to be transferred to where there is a surgeon. The chance of death due to internal injury is greatly increased. The hospital has gone far backwards from where it was.

Dave Brown noted that he had an issue on a Friday and there was no surgeon available, so Alice Hyde ran a CAT scan and transferred him to CVPH in Plattsburgh. It never used to be this way. Why is Alice Hyde losing so many of its doctors? What is going to happen?

Rebecca Shutts replied that there is a new Physician and Physician's Assistant coming to Alice Hyde in September to replace some of the doctors that have left. Recruitment in rural areas is extremely difficult. Shutts stated that Canton-Potsdam have a different payer mix and serve a different population that Malone serves. She noted that St. Lawrence County has more revenue with which to recruit. That is not the case in Malone.

Matt Jones noted that there has been a significant shift in doctors moving from a private practice model to joining with a hospital administrated model.

Dave Brown further expressed that this loss of doctors began when UVM took over Alice Hyde.

Jayson Scaccia noted that areas like Warrensburg and Lake George have Hudson Headwaters and their rural hospitals are doing well. He expressed his belief that this is more than a rural problem and more of an administrative issue. Billing appears to be a big issue. An appointment in December was not billed to us until April and then a final notice received after the bill had already been paid. Mr. Scaccia presented several invoices where the same double billing had occurred. He noted concern over the potential number of seniors that may be receiving similar double bills and paying them. Where is the financial integrity?

Mr. Scaccia also noted concern over the fact that there has been a mass exodus of physicians, including the loss of maternity, surgery, orthopedics, and the hospital lab. He cited his concerned

over the state of the emergency department and the lack of emergency care. Having three rambunctious, tree climbing children, like he was, what is he to do should an emergency occur? Plattsburgh and Burlington are far away in an emergency. Should he bypass Alice Hyde altogether? A young individual in an accident was brought to the ER needing a chest tube and the ER could not get one in. That individual died while being transferred.

All these things are symptoms of a greater problem. This coupled with the mass exodus of physicians and the loss of key services points to something more than just a rural issue. It is an administrative issue.

Merrill McKee voiced concerns over the lack of a Maternity Ward. All his children and a grandchild have been born at Alice Hyde. That hospital is a cornerstone of the community. He voiced concern over the apparent deterioration of the hospital. The community has no answers; they are in the dark. He inquired of the leadership what the plan is for the hospital. Is Alice Hyde looking to attract and retain physicians and is there any coordination with NY State of Health to get needed services back in Malone, more so because the lead agency for the hospital is out of Vermont?

Mr. McKee spoke of an issue relating to an inmate with one of the prisons, who had acute appendicitis and when brought to Alice Hyde, waited, and was eventually transferred to CVPH, 50 miles from Malone. It cost the State of New York thousands of dollars in overtime to have this inmate treated, when there should have been a surgeon with the necessary capabilities right here in Malone.

Mr. McKee noted his understanding of attracting and retaining physicians, but this is a quality-of-life issue for those who choose to live in Malone. The hospital is a benefit to attracting residents to this community. What can the community do to assist in pushing the hospital forward into the future?

Dr. Benson Kelly, who resides in Fort Covington noted that the hospital isn't the concern of just Malone, but to many local communities in Northern Franklin County. He noted being on the Hospital Board when they chose to come under the umbrella of UVM and he doesn't see any of the promises they made then being fulfilled by UVM. He asked the Leadership to have a plan ready to share at the meeting scheduled in July. Not just answers to the smaller questions of billing, ER issues and the cost of ambulance transfers. UVM turns out 150 trained Residents every year. Why aren't any of them coming here to do their residency? We want the hospital to be successful and not to fail, but a plan is needed.

Mary Scharf brought up the issue of competence. She noted the day she had a surgery and the anesthesiologist had quit. When she awoke from her surgery she was in tremendous pain and heard the staff noting that the substitute anesthesiologist didn't know how to do the procedure. Where is the competence?

Amanda Kench stated her understanding that recruitment is difficult but not impossible. What recruiting efforts are being made by Alice Hyde? She also commented on the lack of early

intervention services offered by Alice Hyde and her desire to see the hospital partner in this need. Her child was nine months on a waiting list for services with no update from the hospital.

Matt Jones noted that the hospital had a few speech therapists four or five years ago that have left and gone to other providers. There are a limited number of therapists. The hospital is willing to partner with the County, but the lack of therapists continues to cause great difficulty.

A member of the gallery voiced his belief that doctors aren't staying at Alice Hyde because the hospital is not fulfilling what they promised to them. This gentleman spoke of his experience at the ER when he was admitted with a heart issue and four of the heart monitors didn't work and the staff couldn't determine why. Another lack of competence.

Debbie Merrik stated she had worked at the hospital for 27 years as a nurse and the hospital was a wonderful place to work. UVM has caused drastic changes that have greatly affected the hospital and caused its significant decline. UVM has fellowships and residencies in Ortho, General, Anesthesiology, and Cardio, why are they not coming to Malone? Why isn't UVM stationing 24/7 physicians here in the ER for emergencies and to care for our elderly and young people?

Michell LeBeau noted that Alice Hyde is working on a Strategic Plan in which they are looking at incentivizing positions to draw providers to the area. The leadership does care about the hospital and the community. We are working with the State Department of Labor and Health to ensure stable primary care, emergency care and outpatient services. We offer residents the choice to come to Malone, but they choose not to. The hospital leadership is working to move forward.

Mary Merrik asked what was the point of coming under the umbrella of UVM? What has gotten the hospital to this state?

Michelle LeBeau noted that UVM is doing a good job in assisting Alice Hyde. They are now handling all the hospitals sourcing for physicians. They are working with UVM to get more Nurse Practitioners and Physician Assistants in to assist Malone with care. The hospital is also looking into obtaining training for nurses to be able to perform special procedures. There is no more outsourcing. Practitioners and staff are tired. We need to find a way of getting more young people to go into medicine. There are many things in the works that aren't being talked about.

Carla Cahill said all excuses aside, this hospital serves much of Franklin County, and we need to reach out to determine what all areas need. How long does a strategic plan take?

Michelle LeBeau noted that the hospital began working on a strategic plan pre-COVID but not much work has been done since.

Mrs. Cahill stated her belief that providers, Stephanie and Derrick did not leave the hospital because they were tired. They left because of the problems in the administration. We need resources to help community residents, or they are going to leave.

Dave Brown asked why the hospital can't go back to the pre-takeover of UVM?

Mrs. Cahill noted the lack of a real 5- or 10-year plan. Other hospitals have plans and Alice Hyde has none.

Lori Tulip spoke of her emergency appendectomy situation and the lack of a surgeon at Alice Hyde and the time to wait for a transfer, so they went to Saranac Lake and had a great experience. Why can Saranac Lake retain physicians and staff and Alice Hyde cannot? They are a rural hospital too.

It was noted by a gallery member that no one from the leadership of Alice Hyde was taking any notes on the questions and concerns being raised in this meeting.

Tina Daniels stated that she had been told by a physician's assistant that the surgeons and physicians are being asked to continue working for much less money than they were getting before. Is this true?

Nate Beachy asked the leadership if they knew from a billing perspective the number of payments the hospital is writing off due improper bill submissions to the insurance companies? Finances appear to be a large issue.

Matt Jones stated they will have to speak with the Finance Officer to obtain an answer to that question.

Michelle LeBeau stated that the hospital has Rural reimbursement plans but it's not all about the money, but about the plan and the future.

Mr. Scaccia stated that this community is one incident from a public health situation and the hospital is not prepared. We are one natural disaster away from serious emergency health issues. The Hospital needs something for the now, not just a 5-year plan.

Carla Cahill asserted that there are many sports that our community supports, and sports injuries require immediate attention; there is a golden hour and here our community sits with no surgeons.

Rev. Howard Cain noted that there is no constitutional right to good health care but that there is an obligation to provide accessible health care. Alice Hyde used to fulfill that role. It is necessary for the local government to reach out to resolve the issues because it is a public health issue. Transparency is necessary in this discussion; Alice Hyde needs a restoration of the Public's trust. There needs to be a plan.

Mary Moore, a former nurse with Alice Hyde, began with a statement that early intervention is a county issue until a child becomes three and then it becomes a school district issue. She also noted that Saranac Lake has been a thorn to North Franklin County since their declaration of a Certificate of Need. We haven't found the right people to fix this hospital's problem like Saranac Lake and Canton-Potsdam have. Insurance providers negotiate with the health providers; why would Potsdam get \$150, and Malone only get \$50 for the same service. That's odd. Has the ER at Alice Hyde ever been closed? And is there no on-call surgeon?

Michelle LeBeau noted the ER has not ever been closed. There is a surgeon three days per week and in July there will be one four days per week.

Mary Moore continued by stating that an emergency C-Section would have to be completed in nor more than 30 minutes to an hour and this hospital currently cannot handle this. Helicopter services are fine normally but less reliable in the winter. The hospital's urologist is no longer accepting patients. We need transparency and we don't want people to die.

Another member of the gallery noted that thirty years ago he bought vacant hospitals and occupied hospitals. The Vacant hospitals were good experiences and the occupied hospitals proved to be bad experiences. Alice Hyde is a feeder organization. We feed CVPH who feeds UVM Burlington. This is a financial issue. There is a radical problem with the management at UVM. They just settled a strike with their nursing staff. The problems at Alice Hye will get worse until we pull out of the UVM System.

Michelle LeBeau noted for everyone's understanding that Alice Hyde is legally attached to UVM, and the hospital cannot pull away from them.

Jennette Bassette spoke on how she spent five hours at the ER for bleeding. She received two units of Blood in the ER before being transferred to CVPH where she received an additional unit of blood. She was told to get some primary follow-up on her issue but there is currently no access to primary care. She noted she doesn't want to see the hospital close and would like to know how the community can help keep it open.

Michell LeBeau noted that the hospital is not going to close, and the Emergency Department will remain open.

Connie Geror noted that for 110 years we have had this hospital. She has worked with the Hospital Auxiliary to support the hospital with hundreds of thousands of dollars in purchases of equipment, supplies and scholarships. She has had many surgeries at Alice Hyde and now she has to go elsewhere for the treatment she needs.

Cindy Louie, a retired RN, stated that no one is satisfied with what UVM is providing to Alice Hyde. We need the plan but also need something now. We need our hospital and to have more meetings like this.

Tina Daniels stated that she too had to go to Saranac Lake hospital because she could not get an appointment here through Alice Hyde until October. If everyone is having to go to Saranac Lake and Canton-Potsdam, then how is Alice Hyde going to stay open?

Mayor Dumas brought the discussion to a close and reminded all visitors to be sure they had signed in. There is a letter of opinion that was submitted and will accompany the meeting minutes (See Attachment A). She reminded all in attendance that there is a meeting set for July 26, 2022 at 6:00pm, venue to be determined, with Alice Hyde leadership, COO and some Physicians.

The Village of Malone will post the Meeting Date and venue on the Village Website once we receive the information.

Wastewater Treatment Plant

➤ Resolution – WWTP Pre-Leachate Study Grant Application

VILLAGE OF MALONE RESOLUTION NO. 88-2022

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE ACCEPTANCE OF ENGINEERING PLANNING GRANT APPLICATION NUMBER 111347 FOR WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT LEACHATE PRETREATMENT STUDY

WHEREAS, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) alerted the Village of Malone of a pending State Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) Permit Modification for pre-treatment of landfill leachate discharged to the Village wastewater treatment plant (WWTP); and

WHEREAS, the New York State DEC and Environmental Facilities Corporation (EFC) Wastewater Infrastructure Engineering Planning Grant (i.e. EPG) program is as an eligible funding source for this project; and

WHEREAS, the Village of Malone submitted a 2021 New York State Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) to perform an engineering study of the required pre-treatment and disinfection processes; and

WHEREAS, the Village has been selected to receive up to \$30,000 from the EPG to fund the study of Village's wastewater treatment plant disinfection system.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Village authorizes and appropriates a minimum 20% local match as required by the Engineering Planning Grant Program for the Village's wastewater treatment plant disinfection system study. Under the EPG program, this local match must be at least \$ 6,000. The source of the local match, and any amount in excess of the required match, shall be provided by the Village with either in kind services or Village sewer funds. The maximum local match shall not exceed \$6,000 based upon a total estimated maximum project cost of \$30,000. The Mayor may increase this local match through the use of in kind services without prior approval from the Village.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Mayor or his assigned designee, is hereby authorized to act as the projects "Authorized Representative", and to enter into any necessary contracts to administer said grants.

Motion Made By: Trustee Boyea

Seconded By: Trustee McKee
Approved By Board of Trustees on: June 22, 2022

Next Era Contracting, LLC.

- **Resolution 89-2022 – Estimate to Hook Electric to Streetlight #10**

**VILLAGE OF MALONE
RESOLUTION NO. 89-2022**

APPROVAL OF NEXT ERA CONTRACTING ESTIMATE TO WIRE STREETLIGHT #10

WHEREAS, streetlight number 10 was struck and knocked over by a pedestrian vehicle; and

WHEREAS, the Village of Malone has received the insurance money to purchase a new streetlight; and

WHEREAS, the Village of Malone has received Estimate #2022-29-E-2 from Next Era Contracting in the amount of \$860.37 to wire streetlight number 10 after the Village DPW raise the pole;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Village Board of Trustees does hereby approve the estimate from Next Era Contracting in the amount of \$860.37 to wire streetlight number 10 after the Village DPW raise the pole.

Motion Made By: Trustee Boyea
Seconded By: Trustee McKee
Approved by Board of Trustees on: June 22, 2022

- **Resolution 90-2022 – Estimate to Replace Underground Conduit in Mill Park**

**VILLAGE OF MALONE
RESOLUTION NO. 90-2022**

APPROVAL OF NEXT ERA CONTRACTING ESTIMATE TO REPLACE UNDERGROUND CONDUIT AT MILL PARK

WHEREAS, the underground conduit was mistakenly cut during the demolition of 14 Harison Place; and

WHEREAS, none of the lights are currently operation in Mill Park because of the damaged conduit; and

WHEREAS, the Village of Malone has received Estimate #2022-29-E-1 from Next Era Contracting in the amount of \$2,231.21 to replace the underground conduit in Mill Park;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Village Board of Trustees does hereby approve the estimate from Next Era Contracting in the amount of \$2,231.21 to replace the underground conduit in Mill Park.

Motion Made By: Trustee Bonner

Seconded By: Trustee Langdon

Approved by Board of Trustees on: June 22, 2022

Mayor Dumas noted that the Village is continuing to work to replace the Main Street lights.

Malone Central School District

➤ Superintendent Jerry Griffin – Special Patrol Officer Discussion

Jerry Griffen began by thanking the Village and the Police Department for their support. The School System would like to ask the Village to support the hiring of three additional Special Patrol Officers in the next Contract. Superintendent Griffin provided the Board with some proposed language to the coming Contract. The Board of Education will make the final decision at their July meeting. Superintendent Griffin would like to get the Village's support prior to that meeting.

Chief Premo mentioned that in the coming future the district might consider employing two part-time SPO's at each school. Most retiring individuals are not looking for full time and finding these additional three SPO's might prove difficult. Possibly look to set a program for part-timers and recruitment.

Superintendent Griffin also requested that the Village of Malone include a 20% administrative fee in the coming Contract to cover the personnel expense incurred by the Village.

Upon the motion of Trustee McKee with a second by Trustee Bonner and unanimously carried to support the district's advertisement for three additional Special Patrol Officers.

CDBG

➤ Approval of Anticipated Applicant for Grant

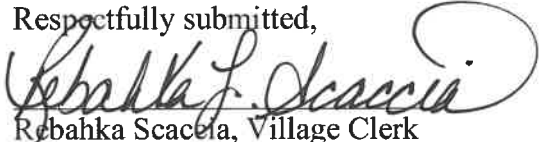
Friends of the North Country has asked the Board for permission to accept an application for a CDBG Grant from an applicant that has a home with less equity than the current mortgage. This is just an approval for the individual to complete the application process, it does not automatically award the grant.

Upon the motion of Trustee Bonner with a second by Trustee Langdon and unanimously carried to approve the submission of an application by Fort Covington Street resident.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon the motion of Trustee Bonner with a second by Trustee Langdon and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 10:45AM.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Rebahka Scacela". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Rebahka Scacela, Village Clerk