

# Village of Schuylerville – Village of Victory

## Joint Water Board Budget Meeting Minutes

**Date:** March 16, 2026

**Location:** Joint Meeting

**Type:** Budget Workshop / Discussion

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### 1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Members present included:

Chairman Drew

Commissioner Campbell

Commissioner Dennison

Commissioner Healy

Secretary Jamie Porter

Village of Schuylerville Mayor Carpenter

Schuylerville trustees:

Colvin

Campbell

Baker

Village of Victory Mayor Helwig

Trustee Mitchell

Victory Clerk treasurer Gabby Hershey

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## 2. Purpose of Meeting

The joint meeting was convened to:

- Review and discuss the proposed water budget
- Evaluate potential rate adjustments
- Discuss infrastructure priorities and funding strategies

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## 3. Budget Overview & Financial Position

- A **projected surplus of approximately \$167,000** was identified for the current fiscal year.
- The surplus is **not fully guaranteed**, as outstanding expenses (including emergency repairs and pending invoices) may reduce available funds.
- Members acknowledged that prior assumptions of “no available funds” were inaccurate based on updated projections.

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## 4. Water Rate Discussion

### 2% Increase Proposal:

- A 2% increase would generate **approximately \$14,000 in additional revenue**, which was deemed insufficient.

### Broader Discussion:

- Significant infrastructure needs may require:
    - **15–20% increases over time**, potentially phased over multiple years
  - Concerns raised:
    - Public resistance to rate increases
    - Burden on taxpayers
    - Need for gradual vs. immediate increases
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## 5. Infrastructure & Capital Planning

### Identified Issues:

- Aging infrastructure (system-wide)
  - Victory Water Plant beyond useful life
  - Pressure deficiencies (below Department of Health standards in some areas)
  - Known problem areas:
    - Hessian Drive / Ranger Road loop (failing galvanized line)
    - Morgan's Run
    - Cemetery Road
  - Fire flow deficiencies in parts of the system
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## 6. Capital Strategy Debate

### Two Competing Approaches:

#### A. Incremental / Conservative Approach

- Maintain current rates or small increases
- Build reserves slowly
- Continue phased infrastructure work
- Rely heavily on grants

#### B. Aggressive / Strategic Investment Approach

- Pursue **large-scale funding (grants + borrowing)**
  - Target **significant portions of the master plan**
  - Improve competitiveness for major funding (e.g., EFC grants)
  - Avoid piecemeal upgrades
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## 7. Grant Funding & Opportunities

- Members emphasized the importance of:
  - Actively pursuing **state and federal funding opportunities**
  - Engaging representatives and grant programs
- Noted:
  - Potential funding sources exist despite prior assumptions
- General agreement:
  - The Board should **“go after any available funding”**

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## 8. Planning & Engineering Needs

- Strong consensus that:
  - **Engineering studies are required before major decisions**
  - Specific projects (e.g., Hessian Drive line) lack:
    - Accurate mapping
    - Cost estimates
    - Defined scope
- Recommendation:
  - Begin with **engineering and system assessment work**

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## 9. Equipment & Operational Needs

Potential purchases discussed:

- Water line locator (~\$15,000)
- Trailer (~\$20,000 estimated with outfitting)
- Pumps, generators, and related equipment

Challenges identified:

- Procurement limitations (lack of credit purchasing mechanism)
- Need for improved purchasing process ie Credit card

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## 10. Administrative Capacity Concerns

- Questions raised regarding:
  - Who will manage:
    - Grant writing
    - Project administration
    - Oversight of multiple simultaneous projects
- No formal structure currently identified

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## 11. Key Themes / Board Sentiment

- Strong agreement that:

- The system has been **underfunded for decades**
    - Continued delay will lead to:
      - Larger costs
      - Loss of local control
  - Shared concern about:
    - Balancing taxpayer impact vs. infrastructure necessity
  - Recognition that:
    - **Difficult decisions can no longer be deferred**
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## 12. Decisions & Direction

- No formal votes taken on:
    - Rate increases
    - Specific projects
  - Informal direction:
    - Continue budget evaluation
    - Further analyze rate strategies
    - Explore engineering studies
    - Continue pursuing grant funding
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## 13. Adjournment

Meeting concluded following extended discussion.

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