

Village of Lansing

MINUTES of the Board of Trustees Meeting held on Monday, September 15, 2025, in person at 2405 N. Triphammer Rd. and via Zoom Videoconferencing/Teleconferencing.

PRESENT: Mayor Ronny Hardaway; Trustees, Susan Ainslie and Kathleen Yen; Attorney Natalie French; Planning Board Member, Lorraine Capogrossi; Public in attendance-none

Zoom: Bernd Blossey and Luke Colavito

Hardaway stated that Dake, Gillespie and Greenwald are all at the NYCOM Conference this week so will not be attending the meeting.

Hardaway called the Board of Trustees meeting to order at 7:30pm.

Hardaway opened the public comment period. Capogrossi stated that she is the liaison for the Planning Board. She had several issues that she wanted to bring up. The first was speeding in the village, specifically Nor Way, Bomax, Janivar and Dart Drive and Graham Road. Capogrossi stated that she walks these neighborhoods on a regular basis, so she feels she knows what is going on. Capogrossi feels that the electronic speed sign on Dart Drive is working. She would like to see another speed sign on Graham Road. She has spoken with the neighbors in the Bomax, Janivar, Nor Way area and they are also concerned. She does not think a lot of the people speeding are from the neighborhood. People are not stopping for the stop signs in that neighborhood, they are just rolling right through. Capogrossi stated that about a month ago at the Thursday meeting the Board and staff discussed putting the battery-operated speed sign that were removed from Dart Drive on Bomax Drive. She pointed out that nothing has happened yet. It is a priority for her and the people in the neighborhood. Hardaway stated that unfortunately there are just some people that do not observe traffic signs. Hardaway has observed the speeding has dropped a little bit with the narrowing of Dart Drive. Hardaway will contact Courtney about getting the signs up.

Capogrossi also wondered why the sticks with caution tape are still along Dart Drive. Hardaway did ask Courtney about this, and they are to prevent people from driving over the new grass. They will probably be there until next spring once the grass is established.

Capogrossi stated that at the end of Northwood Drive right before the trail, there is a cattle gate with weeds growing up around the fence. She requested that this be cleaned up. The concern was whether that is our gate. Ainslie didn't think that it would look like that if it was ours. Hardaway will check on that.

Capogrossi stated that another Planning Board member asked her to report that the new trees on Graham Road West in front of the graffiti covered building look very sickly. Hardaway will have Courtney look at them.

Yen suggested that Capogrossi reply to the Planning Board on the four things that were reported on behalf of the Planning Board. Capogrossi stated that the first three things were only her personal concerns and the last was Schleelein's concern.

Motion - To Close the Public Comment Period

Hardaway made a motion to close the public comment period. Yen seconded the motion. A vote was taken:

Mayor Ronny Hardaway-Aye
Trustee Kathleen Yen-Aye

Trustee Susan Ainslie-Aye

Annual Deer Management Program

Previously, Bernd Blossey sent an email with the following reports:

Village of Lansing Deer Hunting Report

2024-25

Bernd Blossey

Background

2024 was the 18th year that the village has implemented deer reduction efforts using bow hunting, and the 9th where exclusively Deer Depredation Permits (DDP's or nuisance permits) were used. The village also continued use of cross bows. Initially all village permits were DMAP permits (Deer Management Assistant Permits) in addition to permits individual hunters had in their possession. Since 2012/13 the establishment of a Deer Management Focus Area (DMFA) eliminated the need for DMAP tags allowing each hunter to take 2 antlerless deer/day plus adding a 3-week late January season. While landowner participation in the deer management program of VOL continued to rise, deer harvest rates had declined after peaking in 2011 and 2012 despite continued efforts (Table 1). Starting with a pilot program in winter 2014, the Village implemented an exclusive nuisance approach starting with the 2015 season and this approach has continued into the 2023-24 season. While the deer reduction is clear, reductions are, as of yet, insufficient to allow sensitive species to thrive and forest regeneration to become more widespread. Further continuation of this program is essential to prevent the deer population to rebound. In fact, further more aggressive actions, similar to approaches used in the Village of Cayuga Heights, should be considered.

2024-25 Deer harvest statistics:

During the past season, 9 hunters participated and 8 were successful in harvesting 18 deer during the approved shooting period that ended on 31 March 2025. The deer take is greatly reduced but that is more a function of poor winter conditions and hunter effort than reduced deer populations than a third of previous 2 seasons (Table 1). The reasons for this drop are unknown, and participants made only 35 trips, about 20 fewer trips than the previous season and 50 fewer than in 2022.

Age and sex distribution:

The age and sex distribution in 2024-25 was skewed substantially in favor of adults and slightly in favor of does.

Adult does: 7

Does <1 year old: 5

Adult bucks: 3

Bucks <1 year old: 3

Table 1: Properties/groups of properties and deer harvest rates in VOL since 2007. (Only properties with stand use are listed. A – indicates that the property was not part of the portfolio in a particular year or season. The parentheses in the column summarizing deer harvest rates in 2014 represent deer taken during the DDP period over bait. For 2015 and later years numbers represent DDP exclusively.

Property	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14 (DDP)	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Leopold	11	2	5	9	3	2	1	13(13)	0	1	0	0	7	15	8	8	3	1
Lempert/Novarr	-	-	7	7	4	8	4	4	-	0	4	7	1	11	10	6	3	0
Bieri/Adelson	-	-	21	6	22	10	13	17(12)	19	12	14	10	10	10	13	11	5	2
Street/Butler/Dennis	-	-	-	21	14	14	4	9(2)	6	2	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	1
Autumn Ridge	-	-	-	-	13	2	8	4	6	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Park/Cayuga Heights Road	-	-	-	-	4	7	1	4	6	11	9	4	7	7	4	8	4	0
Route 13	-	-	-	-	5	2	5	4	1	3	2	3	3	3	0	0	2	1
Abrams	-	-	-	-	-	1	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bomax	-	-	-	-	-	6	3	2(1)	4	3	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Spanswick/Travis	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	4(2)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Swearingen	-	-	-	-	-	3	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Seacord	-	-	-	-	-	2	0	4(2)	1	-	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cornell Business Park	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1	1	2	3	0	19	10	7	5	5
Dean	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	1	2	0	0	-	-	-	-	-
Craig	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dart Drive	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	7	3	4	1	3	3	2	2	1	-
Bolton Point	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Schleelein	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Baker	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Miller lands									5	1	2	0	2	-	-	-	-	-
Coventry Walk									0	0	0	5	5	10	3	2	2	5
Brentwood Drive									2	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Baldini	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		13	9	3
Unaccounted for in qualtrix											4	0						
Total	11	2	33	43	65	65	49	68	65	43	47	34	38	79	51	57	32	18

We again lost properties in the portfolio of landowners allowing deer management activities, and not all properties were used and deer were not taken off all properties, although (Table 1). A few years ago we added Baldini, but with the sell of the property, the new owner has asked for all deer management activities to be discontinued. We are unable to use certain sites due to the continued DEC issued set-back distances for bait piles from public roads (>150 feet). In other locations, participants were discouraged by infrequent and wary deer (survivors are well educated by know). Particularly those participants relying on daytime activities without use of lights after sunset

continue to fail. Very few participants venture out past midnight, as anticipated and use of infrared powered crossbows by some continues to make a difference.

Large deer groups are now rarely reported, except later in the winter when conditions become harsh. Trail camera's show that in the middle of the night, aggregations can still form around the feeders. Most of the deer taken were in the first 3 months of the season, in part explained by more participant activity early and then reduced numbers.

Time of harvest:

October: 1

November: 7

December: 6

January: 4

February: 0

March: 0

Outlook and recommendation for 2024-25

The deer harvest rate in VOL precipitously declined again last season, mostly due to poor weather and reduced enthusiasm by long-term participants may explain more of it. As in the previous season, success in the Cornell program was equally poor. Despite the fact that many landowners report an improvement in growth of understory plants and flowers, oak recruitment, judged by planting of seedlings at several locations (Rt13 playground site, and Leopold's) in the village is still greatly suppressed and further deer reductions are warranted.

In fact we compared browse rates in VOL over a 3-month period (June to September) in 2025 with previous browse rates recorded a decade ago. We also compared this to browse rates in the Village of Cayuga Heights, which now uses a dart-and-dispose approach with sharpshooter darting deer from vehicles, then euthanizing them with saline solution. Browse rates in the Village of Cayuga Heights now hover around 20% from a previous high of >80% before lethal management as implemented. Browse rates in the Village of Lansing still exceed 50% (70% at Leopold). Forest regeneration will not be achieved until browse rates drop below 20%. Cayuga Heights with the most aggressive approach is nearly there and we can find oaks we planted 5 years ago thriving for example in Palmer Woods or Renwick Slope, both of them Cornell Natural Areas.

The VOL deer program appears to hold deer populations at reduced levels, but accurate counts are impossible – and not needed. Surrounding towns and the City of Ithaca “donate” large numbers of deer to VOL as the large number of immigrant young bucks can attest. Efforts in Cayuga Heights affect the areas surrounding the village as browse rates increase with increasing distance to Cayuga Heights. The aggressive efforts by Cayuga Heights, removing deer through darting followed by euthanasia may assist in herd reductions in VOL through prevention of immigration.

The challenges that remain are to increase or maintain participation by shooters, potentially increase the number of shooting locations in different areas of the village. We did not make efforts to include the DPW site - but keep considering it again this year. But the most important aspect the trustees should consider is joining the Village of Cayuga Heights in their dart-and-dispose

approach. I do not recommend to disband the current program entirely, but have the participants use the usual methods in the fall and early winter months, followed by hired sharpshooters to further drop the population. The more deer our participants remove, the fewer deer are available for darting, reducing the overall expenses. I can explain these procedures I more detail as there are increased costs involved. For now, a new application with the DEC is recommended and further discussion about expanding the program can be held over the winter.

Village of Lansing Deer Management Program

Justification for use of Deer Depredation Permits in 2025-26

For the past 18 years the Village of Lansing (VOL) Board of Trustees has annually approved a coordinated bow hunting program to reduce the size of the deer herd in the Village. Concerns by residents about Lyme disease, deer vehicle collisions, ecological damage (no forest regeneration) and damage to ornamental plantings prompted the initiation of this program in 2007. The number of properties we hunted steadily increased and well over 30 landowners potentially participate in the program. Deer take increased initially but then tapered off (Table 1) despite the ability to target deer in more locations. Trail camera surveillance and general observations in the village suggest a reduced deer population, but not sufficiently so to help address ornamental damage, damage to forest regeneration, or Lyme disease concerns. Oak sentinel plantings continue to suffer extremely high mortality unless fenced.

The establishment of the DMFA, special regulations, and an additional hunting season in late January have greatly aided to enable individuals who are proficient and skilled to take additional deer. However, the early success of the DMFA season was eliminated by 2015 (Table 1) and trail cameras show that deer have adjusted behaviorally to the hunting pressure by becoming nearly entirely nocturnal, an observation also made in the Cornell program. This leads some to conclude that there are few deer left, when instead their activity pattern has shifted. While the hunting program had made some contributions, most importantly to the acceptance of deer reduction programs in the village, it was recognized that hunting in the village alone was not likely to succeed in reducing the deer damage to acceptable levels. In 2015, the Board of Trustees approved a switch to apply for use of DDP's throughout the entire village and permits were ultimately granted annually by the DEC.

Table 1: *Deer take in VOL since 2007 in the regular hunting season, during the DMFA seasons (2014 was both regular and then DDP in early 2015) and using DDP's (since 2015).*

Deer take	'07	'08	'09	'10	'11	'12	'13	'14	'15	'16	'17	'18	'19	20	21	22	23	24
Regular season	11	2	33	43	65	47	47	40										
DMFA January season	-	-	-	-	-	18	2	0										
Total	11	2	33	43	65	65	49	68	65	43	47	34	38	79	51	57	32	17

This approach appeared to have worked well, at least in greatly reducing deer damage and somewhat stabilizing the population. Nocturnal deer are nearly impossible to take in the regular

hunting season – and participants in the DDP program in the past years who do not use artificial lights are very rarely successful. Number of tags made available by DEC are not limiting, but enthusiasm to continue to spend the needed hours by our long-term participants are waning. Furthermore, in part, access to deer on locations we are not currently allowed to hunt due to DEC set-back regulations has eliminated some productive sites, but mostly the changed activity patterns. But continued vigilance is important otherwise the progress will be eliminated. While we have no data to assess the total deer population in the Village, some recovery of typically browsed plants occurs according to landowners. But not sufficient to allow continued forest regeneration. We actually evaluated browse rates on young oaks using our sentinel protocol in 2025 and browse rates exceed 50% in VOL (>70% and Leopold) with forest regeneration of oak only successful if browse rates drop below 20%.

We therefore request approval of the renewal of the attached DDP application for the 2025-26 season with a start date of October 1st, and continuing to March 31st, 2026. As in previous seasons, we request the ability to take antlered deer, with antlers delivered to the DEC every 10 days, and the ability to discharge bows and crossbows during a 24-hour period. This enables participants to be active in the early morning before daybreak as trail camera surveys have consistently shown that this would be a prime activity pattern at our bait sites. The backbone of the operations are strategically placed nuisance baiting locations throughout the village (Fig. 1). We will monitor deer travel and feeding patterns using trail cameras and will use archery equipment only.

Bernd Blossey (through independent sources of funding) is continuing to assess oak seedling survival using several locations in VOL.

Table 2. Shooting location information

Site #	Name	Lat	Long	Remarks
1	Baldini	42.50549	76.51198	Not to be used in '25
2	Park	42.48593	76.49594	
3	Park	42.48757	76.51006	
4	Leopold	42.48266	76.51006	
5	Novarr	42.48364	76.50294	
6	Dennis	42.4887	76.50102	
7	Adelson/Bieri	42.48888	76.49594	
8	Village of Lansing	42.48728	76.4795	
9	recent sale			
10	Cornell University	42.48118	76.47019	
11	Cornell University	42.47846	76.45742	
12	Cornell University	42.48408	76.45746	

END OF REPORTS

The Village must renew their New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) Deer Damage Permit Application annually. Blossey stated that every year the Board asks if we are overshooting and the answer is absolutely not. He feels we are under shooting and not achieving the goals that are necessary to protect trees. An assessment was carried out on oak seedlings, and the brows is at 80% on Leopolds property. (15% would be acceptable) We are losing

properties and participants. We have been doing this for 17 years. We have lost the Baldini property, and we need more properties. His proposal is to renew the application with NYSDEC. Blossy stated that another discussion that the Board should have is whether or not to utilize sharp shooters as the Village of Cayuga Heights (VCH) is doing. Hardaway would like to have a discussion with VCH on this. One issue is if you do it that way you cannot eat the meat. Hardaway would like to have this discussion with a full board since it would be a major step and change in direction. A majority of the deer are taken in October, November and December.

Yen clarified with Blossy that the deer meat donation would continue as in the past. Two main concerns are deer/vehicle accidents and forest regeneration. Since the VCH borders the Village of Lansing we see a benefit of their program.

Resolution #7210-To Authorize the Mayor to Sign the NYSDEC Deer Damage Application for 2025-26

Hardaway moved this resolution. Ainslie seconded the resolution. A vote was taken:

Mayor Ronny Hardaway-Aye
Trustee Kathleen Yen-Aye

Trustee Susan Ainslie-Aye

Ronnie signed the NYSDEC application and will give it to Dake to forward to Courtney at NYSDEC.

Blossy left the meeting.

General Comments

Ainslie and Yen had nothing to report.

French stated that she watched the Thursday noon video and she understands that there are some questions. At the noon meeting Planning Board Member McCauley made a comment about the renumbering of a section in lieu of adding “intentionally omitted”. French explained that the reasoning for the renumbering was because there were no other internal references to that section that would cause confusion. Hardaway asked her to repeat this during the public hearing on October 6th. French will also explain this to the Planning Board at their next meeting.

Hardaway had nothing to report.

Adjournment

Motion – To Adjourn

Hardaway motioned to adjourn. Yen seconded the motion. A vote was taken:

Mayor Ronny Hardaway-Aye
Trustee Kathleen Yen-Aye

Trustee Susan Ainslie-Aye

The meeting was adjourned at 7:55pm.

Jodi Dake, Clerk/Treasurer