# Village of New Milford – Special Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, September 1st, 2026

1. Call to Order – Roll Call

   Meeting called to order at 6:30 p.m. by President Timothy H. Owens

   IN ATTENDANCE: Timothy H. Owens, Wendy Roop, Deanna Rodgers, Eileen Owens, Ron Colvin, Jim Stevens, Loraine Humphries, and Jessica Lang.

2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Adoption of Agenda

   Wendy Roop initiated the motion to accept the evening's agenda, seconded by Deanna Rodgers. Motion passed unanimously.

A. Special Presentation by ESA Solar Energy

   Ernest Calverone, an employee of ESA Solar Energy based in Maitland, Florida, presented plans to construct a two-megawatt solar facility with a four-megawatt battery storage system. The facility would occupy 15 acres of Village-owned land between Ryberg Road and 11th Street and supply solar energy to the local grid.

   Project Manager Luis Gonzalez provided additional details. The facility will connect to the local Blackhawk substation under an interconnection agreement with ComEd that covers energy, upgrades, and maintenance. The project is divided into two operational areas to preserve the existing drainage ditch and allow wildlife passage. The plans meet or exceed state codes and ordinances for solar development, including setbacks of 50 feet from property lines and 150 feet from adjoining properties; the nearest occupied dwelling is more than 150 feet away. Existing vegetation provides a buffer around the facility, and ESA plans to add more. The existing stormwater pond will be used to manage runoff.

   Ernest Calverone told the board that notices had been sent to neighboring property owners and that he had met with some of them to address questions and concerns. Responses were generally neutral to positive, with most expressing curiosity rather than significant concerns. He explained that ESA identified the Village site by comparing GIS and parcel data with existing infrastructure. ESA considers the site well suited to the project because of its size and existing vegetation. The company is considering neighbors' concerns, including past flooding and wildlife pathways. Construction is at least a year away, and the plans may be adjusted during the site-review phase. Mr.

Calverone also noted that construction could temporarily increase noise from pile-driving fence posts and traffic from construction and delivery vehicles.

President Owens asked whether the site could be expanded in the future, as the Village is considering other projects in that area, including a potential tree farm and grow house. Mr. Gonzalez explained that Illinois community solar program requirements limit projects connected to local distribution networks to five megawatts. A second project was proposed to ComEd, but safety requirements would have required a $90 million investment to upgrade the substation transformers. A meeting with ComEd's electrical engineers is scheduled for Friday to discuss other technical solutions for maximizing use of the land while keeping the solar development at 15 acres.

Safety concerns regarding hail damage to panels or battery fires were discussed. Mr. Gonzalez and Mr. Calverone explained that Emergency Response Plans are in place for all ESA sights and they work with local fire departments to provide training for responding to emergencies at the sight.

## B. Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the board, Wendy Roop initiated the motion for adjournment, seconded by Loraine Humphries. All present voted unanimously; motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Transcribed 09/03/2026 by Jessica Lang, Clerk.