

A Regular Meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Thurston, County of Steuben, and the State of New York was held at the Town Hall, 7578 County Route 333 on the 21st day of January 2026 at 7:00 p.m.

Present: Town Supervisor: Michael Volino
Town Council: Daniel Gee, Holly Chase, Noel Sylvester, Jennifer Hargrave
Highway Superintendent: Alan Crooker
Assessor: Diana Dixon
Code Enforcement Officer: Nick Nolton
Fire Department Secretary: Desiree Fisk
Tax Collector: Brandi Smith (Zoom)

Visitors: Dolores Crooker, Tim Hargrave, Lisa Hargrave, Jeff Sweeney, Eva Turner, Jim Feldman, Caleb Cook, Margie Taft, Sam Dick

The meeting opened at 7:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Caleb Cook thanked Alan Crooker for closing the seasonal road going to South Hill. Michael said the recent accident there, one of several, where a bulldozer was brought in showed it was necessary.

Michael said the Town received a letter from **Dan Wilhelm** that Dan requested be read at the meeting and attached to the minutes. Michael read the letter and said there were many discrepancies in the letter since it indicated that the Town was the entity that recovered the stuck vehicle on South Hill Road and that was not true. Dan Wilhelm also said that the accident recovery effort put town employees at risk, again, this was not the case as none of the highway crew assisted in the recovery, nor were they at the scene. Alan Crooker, who did go to the scene to observe, will monitor the South Hill seasonal road as time goes on. Alan also added that the town would be plowing the lower area with a smaller truck since there is a bridge there that may not handle the weight of a larger truck, and it is easier to turn around at the foot of the hill with the smaller plow truck.

Sam Dick talked to Nick Nolton about the property adjacent to his. The neighbor says he will clean up the property and pay the taxes, but they are already two years overdue, and no effort has been made to clean up the property. The Deputy County Manager told Michael this is not something the Town should get involved with.

Tim Hargrave said the SCOPE Steuben County Chapter is concerned about the lack of voter turnout for elections. The committee will be holding a meeting on February 7 to brainstorm ideas on how to get people out to vote, and how to motivate them. He said this is open to the public for input.

There being no further comment, motion was made by Noel Sylvester and seconded by Dan Gee that public comment be closed. The motion was passed unanimously by all members present.

MINUTES: Motion was made by Jennifer Hargrave and seconded by Holly Chase that the minutes from the December 17, 2025, meeting and the Organizational meeting from January 7, 2026, be approved as presented. The motion was passed unanimously by all members present.

BILLS PAYABLE: Michael Volino presented the following bills for payment:

General \$50685.13 listed on Vouchers A1-A26
Community Development \$129,216.08 listed on Vouchers A16-18
Highway \$78,223.29 listed on Vouchers DA1 – DA12
Fire District \$67539.00 listed on Voucher 24
Trust and Agency \$165.00 Listed on Voucher TA1

Motion was made by Noel Sylvester and seconded by Holly Chase that the bills for the month of January 2026 be paid as presented above. Put to vote: Holly Chase, aye; Dan Gee, aye; Noel Sylvester, aye; Jennifer Hargrave, aye; Michael Volino, aye. Unanimously passed by all members present.

A Regular Meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Thurston, County of Steuben, and the State of New York was held at the Town Hall, 7578 County Route 333 on the 21st day of January 2026 at 7:00 p.m.

TOWN CLERK:

Sue Conklin noted that The Steuben County Board of Elections noted the following dates:

June 23, 2026, is the Primary **Election** and November 3rd 2026, is the General Election.

She read a report from Brandi Smith, **Tax Collector**, which shows out of 1002 total bills, she has processed 258 payments as of Tuesday the 20th. The total collected as of that date is \$295,130.63 with \$260,00 being already paid out to the Town Supervisor. Sue said a letter has been received from NYAOT regarding the postmark rules for receipt of taxes. Residents should be sure to have any last-minute payments left at the post office taken to the window and hand stamped to ensure payment without penalty. This is not a new rule but a reminder. Instructions are on the town website.

The **Clerk's Report** was read showing receipt of \$228 for the month of December 2025 with \$224 of that being paid out to the Town. The remaining \$4.00 went to Ag and Markets.

Historian: Nothing this month

Assessor: Diana noted a ruling for a 100% Veterans Disability benefit is being reviewed and still under discussion and we are waiting to see what the qualifications are. She said the Assessors are still doing some drive by assessing but they do not go on personal property as aerial information is available from the County. A discussion was held regarding assessments of seasonal cabins and campers.

Justice: Nothing to report this month.

Dog Control: Randy reported four complaints this month that he followed up on. Michael noted that he and Randy met at the proposed new dog shelter at the Taryn Roloson residence on County Route 25. She still must meet a few more requirements and will provide a contract for us to review once that has been done. They felt it would be a good location for our dogs.

Fire Department: Nothing this month.

Code Enforcement: Nick Nolton said he issued 29 permits for 2025 with a value of \$882,550. We collected \$2685 in fees with 13 open permits at this time. 27 Certificates of Occupancy were issued and there are several open complaints with 4 new complaints this year. He said his required training is up to date and information has been given to the Town Clerk.

Highway: Alan Crooker reported the following activity for January 1st through the 18th:

- All roads have been checked 17 times plowed 5 and sanded 14 times. Plowed and sanded the Town Hall parking lot 5 times and the Fire Dept parking lot 5 times. Cleared Town Hall sidewalks of ice and snow 5 times. Checked culverts on Foster, Hanrahan, and Knowles roads. Checked roads for down trees after the windstorm. Fixed potholes on several roads in several areas.

- Morning meeting discussed the need for pre-trip inspections and fuel usage documentation. Pre-trip, Diesel fuel, and gasoline log sheets are now available.

- Ordered hood latch for 2025 Peterbilt. Fabricated a pin for the bucket on the loader. Put plow from Sterling dump truck on Volvo dump truck because of an antifreeze leak on the Sterling dump truck. Replaced fuses on Volvo dump truck fixed wiring and lights. Ordered O-rings, gaskets, and hoses from Cook Brothers for the Sterling dump truck. Put Sterling dump truck back together.

- Greased the excavator and installed the brush trimmer. Trimmed brush on Foster, Hanrahan, Smith, and Yost roads with two flaggers on site. All employees are trained to run this equipment.

A Regular Meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Thurston, County of Steuben, and the State of New York was held at the Town Hall, 7578 County Route 333 on the 21st day of January 2026 at 7:00 p.m.

- Ordered replacement window for the JD grader, inflated tires, and prepped window area for new glass. There is a \$500.00 deductible. We will install the window. Put the grader in the shop to get warm for window installation.
- Ordered two plow cutting edges 1 for each plow on the Peterbilt dump trucks.
- Went to Wilbri's to get the GMC single axel and 6 tires. The truck would not run. Wilbri's will get it running at no charge to the Town. Picked up GMC on 1/13/26 it had fuel log low pressure sensor light on. Erased the code now it runs fine. Took GMC to Scott's to get tires mounted. Took GMC to Sonny's to get inspected.
- Met with Thurston Fire Chief. He put me on the emergency alert notification system.
- Received a call from Leo Eldridge Addison Central School transportation manager for contact information in case of emergencies.
- Met with insurance adjuster on the 2022 Chevy pickup truck. The tailgate, right side taillight, right side inside and outside of box along with the windshield will be replaced. Goodrich will call with available date to do repairs.
- Greased the loader and spent 3 days mixing salt with sand. All employees are trained to do this. Put large rip rap along steep ledge near fuel tanks.
- NOCO installed electronic sensors on the Diesel, gasoline, and both propane tanks.
- Eavestroughs were put on the front and back of the shop, downspouts will be added soon.
- Lewis Overhead Doors replaced the small overhead door and will return to install safety switches on the other overhead doors.
- An Amazon delivery person following his GPS got off the road on the top of the seasonal end of South Hill Rd. Steuben County dispatch called and I went to the scene. New York State Troopers were there. B&W Towing showed up with a dozer and pulled out the vehicle. There were no injuries and no damage to the vehicle. New Seasonal Use signs have been placed on South Hill Rd, both ends of Wood Rd, and both ends of Green Hill Rd.

Town Supervisor: Michael Volino reported the following activity since the last Board meeting.

- 4th Quarter and Federal 941 are completed and filed
- The motor has been replaced in the town hall furnace
- W2's, W3, and 1099 have been completed and mailed as appropriate
- He received the 12-month completion notice for the CDBG project from NYS – this project terminates January 26, 2027, and has \$379,038.44 remaining in funds
- CDBG Biweekly check-ins with Labella and STC continue and the 2025 APR has been filed
- has been working with Dolores Crooker on the Highway Program
- The month end closing for December has been completed and sent to the Town Board
- Met with Alan Crooker and the Fire Department to discuss 2026 priorities and goals
- The year end AFR has been completed and submitted
- Michael has been sworn in as District 9 County Legislator
- We have received the NYSEG rebate of \$2685 for the Town Hall LED light upgrade
- SAM has been renewed for 2026
- Attended the NYAOT Virtual Supervisor's Roundtable
- Signed the 2026 lawn mowing contract with Alan Crooker for \$6200 annually
- Attended the County Mitigation Strategy Virtual Workshop and are working on the project list. The County Hazard Mitigation and Town Capital Planning Surveys remain open until February 26 and residents

A Regular Meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Thurston, County of Steuben, and the State of New York was held at the Town Hall, 7578 County Route 333 on the 21st day of January 2026 at 7:00 p.m.

of the County are asked to complete this. He said we are updating our list of culverts to be upgraded and are asking for a generator to run the entire highway shop in emergencies

- Also still asking residents of the Town of Thurston to give their thoughts on the Capital Plan for the Town of Thurston.

Motion was made by Dan Gee and seconded by Holly Chase that the reports be accepted as they were presented. Put to vote: Holly Chase, aye; Dan Gee, aye; Noel Sylvester, aye; Jennifer Hargrave, aye; Michael Volino, aye. Unanimously passed by all members present.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Spectrum/Charter Communications Franchise Agreement action required:

Motion was made by Dan Gee and seconded by Holly Chase that the following resolution 3 of 2026 be offered for approval:

Be it resolved that a public hearing was held in the Town of Thurston, New York, on January 21, 2026, at 6:45 p.m. and notice of the hearing was duly published in the Addison Post and the Shopper on the week of January 12, 2026,

Be it further resolved that the Board of the Town of Thurston finds that Spectrum Northeast LLC has substantially complied with the material terms and conditions of its existing franchise and with applicable law, that is has the financial, legal and technical ability to provide these services, facilities, and equipment as set forth in its proposal attached to these minutes hereto, and that Spectrum Northeast LLC can reasonably meet the future cable-related community needs and interests, taking into account the cost of meeting such needs and interests;

Be it further resolved that the Board of the Town of Thurston hereby grants the cable television franchise of Spectrum Northeast LLC and the Town of Thurston for fifteen (15) years commencing with the date of approval by the Public Service Commission and expiring fifteen (15) years hence.

Be it finally resolved that the Board of the Town of Thurston hereby confirms acceptance of this franchise renewal agreement.

Put to roll call vote: Holly Chase, aye; Daniel Gee, aye; Noel Sylvester, aye; Jennifer Hargrave, aye; Michael Volino, aye. The foregoing resolution was passed on January 21, 2026, by a unanimous vote and was duly adopted.

Parks and Recreation Grant request for approval to reapply by the deadline of February 9, 2026.

Motion was made by Jennifer Hargrave and seconded by Holly Chase that the following resolution #4 of 2026 be offered for approval:

A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN OF THURSTON OF STEUBEN COUNTY NEW YORK AUTHORIZING THE SUBMISSION OF NEW YORK STATE MUNICIPAL PARKS AND RECREATION GRANT; AND EXPRESSING THE SUPPORT OF THE TOWN BOARD FOR THE MUNICIPAL PARKS AND RECREATION GRANT PROJECT.

Whereas, the need exists within the Town of Thurston to improve parks and recreation within the Town, and the Town of Thurston desires to apply to the Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation Environmental Bond Act Municipal Parks and Recreation Grant Program; and

Whereas the Town Board finds that there is a significant need to undertake this project to provide health, safety, and welfare to the community; and

Whereas the Town Board formally expresses its support for the Municipal Parks and Recreation Grant Program project.

A Regular Meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Thurston, County of Steuben, and the State of New York was held at the Town Hall, 7578 County Route 333 on the 21st day of January 2026 at 7:00 p.m.

Now, therefore be it resolved, by the governing body of the Town of Thurston, New York, that

1. The Town of Thurston is hereby authorized to prepare and submit a Municipal Parks and Recreation Grant Program application to the New York Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation.
2. That the Town Board of Thurston directs and designates the Town Supervisor as the Town's Chief Executive Officer and Authorized Representative to act in all matters in connection with this application and the Town of Thurston's participation in the Municipal Parks and Recreation Grant Program.
3. That Town of Thurston officials and staff are directed to do any and all acts necessary to carry out the intent of this Resolution.
4. That the full application of match be for 10% of the grant funds to carry out the Municipal Parks and Recreation Grant Program project.
5. That it further be stated that the Town of Thurston is committing 10% of the required project funds from its General Fund as a cash contribution toward the Municipal Parks and Recreation Grant Program project.

Put to roll call vote: Holly Chase, aye; Daniel Gee, aye; Noel Sylvester, aye; Jennifer Hargrave, aye; Michael Volino, aye. The foregoing resolution was passed on January 21, 2026, by a unanimous vote and was duly adopted.

Solid Waste Management Moratorium Renewal: Michael said it is time to renew the yearly moratorium that was passed in 2023. Motion was made by Noel Sylvester and seconded by Daniel Gee that resolution # 5 of 2026 be offered to accept the draft of Local Law # 1 A Solid Waste Moratorium for the year 2026 as follows:

Be It Resolved that the Town of Thurston finds it in the best interests of the residents of the Town of Thurston to protect air quality, drinking water sources, watersheds, and aquifers in the Town from contamination from Solid Waste Management Facilities,

Now Therefore Be It Resolved that the Town accepts the draft of Local Law # 1 known as the Solid Waste Moratorium Law of 2026, and

Be It Finally Resolved that a public hearing will be held to finalize this proposed Local Law.

Put to roll call vote: Holly Chase, aye; Daniel Gee, aye; Noel Sylvester, aye; Jennifer Hargrave, aye; Michael Volino, aye. The foregoing resolution was passed on January 21, 2026, by a unanimous vote and was duly adopted.

Motion was made by Noel Sylvester and seconded by Holly Chase that a special meeting be held on February 4, 2026, at 7:00 p.m. for the public to speak their views on this proposed Local Law. The motion was passed unanimously by all members present.

Local Law # 2 and Local Law # 3: Two Local Laws have been drafted regarding exemptions for Senior Citizens and Persons with Disabilities. Motion was made by Jennifer Hargrave and seconded by Noel Sylvester that Resolution # 6 be offered to accept the drafts of Local Law # 2 and Local Law # 3 as follows:

Be It Resolved that the Town of Thurston wishes to stay in line with the exemptions offered by Steuben County, New York, and

Be It Further Resolved that Drafts of Local Law # 2 Providing for Partial Exemption from Taxation of Real Property Owned by Senior Citizens with Limited Incomes, and Local Law # 3 Providing for Partial Exemption from Taxation of Real Property Owned by Persons with Disabilities and Limited Incomes have been drawn up,

A Regular Meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Thurston, County of Steuben, and the State of New York was held at the Town Hall, 7578 County Route 333 on the 21st day of January 2026 at 7:00 p.m.

Now Therefore Be It Resolved that the Board accepts these drafts and two public hearings will be held to finalize these Local Laws.

Put to roll call vote: Holly Chase, aye; Daniel Gee, aye; Noel Sylvester, aye; Jennifer Hargrave, aye; Michael Volino, aye. The foregoing resolution was passed on January 21, 2026, by a unanimous vote and was duly adopted.

Motion was made by Holly Chsae and seconded by Dan Gee that public hearings be held on February 18th, 2026, as follows; 6:45 p.m. to review Local Law # 2 and 6:50 p.m. for Local Law # 3. The motion was passed unanimously by all members present.

Consideration of accepting and authorizing final payment of the new grader:

Motion was made by Holly Chase and seconded by Noel Sylvester that the following resolution # 5 of 2026 be voted upon accepting the 2026 John Deere Motor Grader:

Whereas the United States Rural Development (USDA) rates the life span of a motor grader at 15 years and;

Whereas the Town's 2009 John Deere Motor Grader has cost the town ~\$75,000 in repairs since 2023 and;

Whereas the Thurston Town Board, at the request of the Highway Department, began researching purchasing a new road grader in October 2024 and;

Whereas the price for a new motor grader has doubled since the Town's last purchase of a motor grader in 2009, therefore resulting in the Town needing to finance a new grader to stay below the 2% tax cap and,

Whereas after researching various financing options the Town Board determined the best option was to apply for a USDA Loan, which locks in a 4.25% interest rate over 15 years (the life of the grader) and;

Whereas USDA Rural Development funds are federal loans, grants, and guarantees from the [USDA](#) to improve the quality of life in rural America by supporting local governments, including direct loans with zero down payment.

Now therefore be it resolved that the Thurston Town Board accepts the 2026 John Deere 772G Motor Grader and authorizes final payment of \$414,077.03 prior to or at the loan closing set for January 27, 2026.

Put to roll call vote: Holly Chase, aye; Daniel Gee, aye; Noel Sylvester, aye; Jennifer Hargrave, aye; Michael Volino, aye. The foregoing resolution was passed on January 21, 2026, by a unanimous vote and was duly adopted.

Sale of 2007 Western Star triaxle:

Motion was made by Jennifer Hargrave and seconded by Noel Sylvester that Alan Crooker be authorized to sell the 2007 Western Star Triaxle as it is not worth repairing. The motion was passed unanimously by all members present.

Motion was made by Dan Gee and seconded by Holly Chase that Unfinished Business be closed at this time. The motion was passed unanimously by all members present.

A Regular Meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Thurston, County of Steuben, and the State of New York was held at the Town Hall, 7578 County Route 333 on the 21st day of January 2026 at 7:00 p.m.

NEW BUSINESS: Michael Volino noted that the Highway Department would like to hire a **Temporary MEO**. The position would start March 1, 2026, and end October 31, 2026. It would pay \$22.00 per hour. Per the union this person could work for 8 months. The position would pay no benefits, but the person would be eligible to join the NYS Retirement System and be a part of the Village Deferred Comp Plan. The position would also pay holidays. Motion was made by Dan Gee and seconded by Noel Sylvester that the Highway Superintendent be authorized to advertise for an MEO as requested. The motion was passed unanimously by all members present.

Thurston Entrance Signs Stating Building Permit Required: Michael Volino said the Town will be purchasing new signs which will be installed by Steuben County noting that building permits are required in the Town of Thurston. An estimate from JC Smith, Inc. located in Ithaca, NY was presented and shows the total cost of 24 signs will be \$408.00.

Kennel Contract: Michael asked the Board to consider signing a contract with Taryn Roloson for use of her kennel for dogs confiscated by the Dog Control Officer. Motion was made by Holly Chase and seconded by Jennifer Hargrave that the Town Supervisor be authorized to sign this contract which has a \$500 annual fee and when a dog is housed there, a \$15.00 per day cost. The motion was passed unanimously by all members present.

Motion was made by Holly Chase and seconded by Noel Sylvester that New Business be closed. The motion was passed unanimously by all members present.

The next meeting will be February 18 at 7:00 p.m. preceded by two public hearings which are at 6:45pm and 6:50 pm. Also, a reminder that a special public hearing will be held on February 4th at 7 pm.

Motion was made by Holly Chase and seconded by Noel Sylvester that the meeting be closed at 8:15 p.m. The motion was passed unanimously by all members present.

Minutes Respectfully submitted by Sue Conklin, Town Clerk