

A regular meeting of the Town Board of Thurston, County of Steuben, and the State of New York was held at the Town Hall, 7578 County Route 333 on the 17th day of December 2025.

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

Visitors: Alan Crooker, Dolores Crooker, Tim Hargrave, Lisa Hargrave, Jeff Sweeney, Brandi Smith (Zoom), Ruth Schoonover, Eva Turner

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

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Jeff Sweeney reported a water problem on Knowles Road and asked that the Highway Department fix it.

There being no further public comment, motion was made by Noel Sylvester and seconded by Dan Gee that Public Comment be closed. Put to vote, Daniel Gee, aye; Holly Chase, aye; Jennifer Hargrave, aye; Noel Sylvester, aye; Michael Volino, aye. Carried.

MINUTES: Motion was made by Holly Chase and seconded by Jennifer Hargrave that the minutes from the November 12, 2025 Budget public hearing and the minutes from the November 12, 2025 regular meeting be accepted as presented. Put to vote, Daniel Gee, aye; Holly Chase, aye; Jennifer Hargrave, aye; Noel Sylvester, aye; Michael Volino, aye. Carried.

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

General: \$11,984.79 on vouchers A228-A253

Highway: \$137,212.80 on vouchers DA163-DA174

Trust and Agency: \$165.00 on voucher TA12

Motion was made by Noel Sylvester and seconded by Jennifer Hargrave that the bills be ordered paid and charged to the proper accounts as noted. Put to vote, Daniel Gee, aye; Holly Chase, aye; Jennifer Hargrave, aye; Noel Sylvester, aye; Michael Volino, aye. Carried.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Clerk: Sue Conklin, Town Clerk noted that she took in receipts in the amount of \$275.00 of which \$222.42 stayed with the Town, \$41.58 went to DECALS for hunting licenses, and \$11.00 went to Ag and Markets for Dog licenses. - The Clerk noted the official results of the election have been received and are available for the public to review.

Historian: No report

Assessors: No report

Justice: Darlene Smith submitted a report that noted she received \$20.00 in fines for the month of November 2025. It was also noted that the Justice annual audit needs to be completed by two Board members by the January 2st meeting.

Dog Control: Randy Akins submitted a report that noted he had four dog calls during the month of November 2025.

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He also noted he received payment for two overdue dog licenses which was turned over to the Town Clerk. Michael Volino said we are hoping that a new shelter will be available on County Route 25 next year and the owner of that shelter is working on a contract with the Town.

Fire Department: Desiree Fisk thanked Michael for his assistance in procuring a \$5000 grant from PERMA for a Fire Gear Washer and Dryer. She also noted that Brian Reed was re-elected as a Fire Commissioner at the recent election.

Code Enforcement: Nick submitted his reports that showed the following:

Since January 2025 total project values have been \$882,550 with permit fees of \$2685.00 received by the Town (29 permits)

24 open permits to date

1 permit issued in November value of \$1000

Several complaints are outstanding.

Michael noted that the natural gas ban on new construction proposed by the Governor will NOT be going into effect in January 2026.

Highway Department: Ben Smith submitted the following report for November:

- Removed trees from the edge of the roads
- Put some cold patch in potholes on Smith, Dee, Starr, and Tucker Roads
- Cleaned the shop
- Serviced equipment
- Salted and plowed roads as needed.

Michael thanked Ben for his service over the past year and wished him the best in the future.

Supervisor: Michael reported the following for the month of November and early December:

- Participated in the **County Hazard Mitigation Risk Assessment** Presentation on November 13 and said the County has put out a survey for all Town Residents. The survey is available on our website or on paper copies available in the Town Hall and must be submitted by February 26, 2026.
- Noted Bi-Weekly (**CDBG**) check-ins continue with Labella and STC. Bids on all five projects have been awarded to S & C Waterproofing, Inc. and only one bid was received which is not unusual for these projects according to Labella.
- New town hall meeting room chairs arrived and thanks to Noel and Michael have been put together and are being used
- New LED lights have been installed in the Town Hall and a request for reimbursement has been submitted to NYSEG as of November 30.
- The month end closing has been completed and sent to the Town Board on December 2.
- The **tax levy** has been submitted to the Office of the State Comptroller and we are ~\$13,000 under the cap.
- The second **CHIPS reimbursement** of \$57,914.81 has been received.

Motion was made by Dan Gee and seconded by Noel Sylvester that all reports be accepted as presented. Put to vote, Daniel Gee, aye; Holly Chase, aye; Jennifer Hargrave, aye; Noel Sylvester, aye; Michael Volino, aye. Carried.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

There was no unfinished business. Motion was made by Jennifer Hargrave and seconded by Holly Chase that unfinished business be closed. Put to vote, Daniel Gee, aye; Holly Chase, aye; Jennifer Hargrave, aye; Noel Sylvester, aye; Michael Volino, aye. Carried.

NEW BUSINESS: Michael noted that due to the former tax collector retiring, a resolution is needed to update the names on the Bank account for the new tax collector and her deputy. He also thanked Sandy for her years of service as the Thurston Tax Collector. The following resolution was offered:

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WHEREAS the Town Board of the Town of Thurston has determined it is necessary to update the authorized signatories on the Town's Tax Collector Bank Account, and

WHEREAS the current authorized signatories include Sandra Nowicki who, as of December 31st, 2025 has retired as Tax Collector for the Town of Thurston, and

WHEREAS the Town Board recognizes that Brandi Smith, Tax Collector as of January 1, 2026 and Sue Conklin as Deputy Tax Collector will be the new authorized signatories for the town's accounts.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

1: That Town Board of Thurston hereby authorizes the removal of Sandra Nowicki as authorized signer on the Tax Collector bank account held at Five Star Bank effective December 31, 2025,

2: That the Town Board of Thurston hereby authorizes the addition of Brandi Smith, Tax Collector, and Sue Conklin, Deputy Tax Collector as new authorized signers on the Tax Collector bank account at Five Star Bank,

3. That the Town Clerk shall provide a certified copy of this resolution to Five Star Bank along with the necessary signature cards and documentation to effectuate these changes.

4. That Brandi Smith and Sue Conklin are authorized to perform all necessary banking transactions, including but not limited to, signing checks, making withdrawals, and using online banking services, as per the limits established by the Town Board.

Motion was made by Noel Sylvester and seconded by Jennifer Hargrave that this resolution be adopted effective December 31, 2025. Put to roll call vote: Michael Volino, Town Supervisor, aye; Holly Chase Councilperson, aye; Jennifer Hargrave, Councilperson, aye; Daniel Gee, Councilperson, aye; Noel Sylvester, Councilperson, aye. Unanimously Carried.

Gutters on Highway Shop: Michael asked the Board to consider hiring someone to install gutters on the Highway Shop. Motion was made by Holly Chase and seconded by Noel Sylvester that Mike Hargrave be hired to install gutters and snow guards on the Highway Shop building at a cost of \$3120.00. Put to vote: Michael Volino, aye; Jennifer Hargrave, abstain; Dan Gee, aye; Holly Chase, aye; Noel Sylvester aye. Carried. Michael said we have a PERMA Grand of \$5000.00 that we can possibly use to help pay for this.

Spectrum/Charter Communications Renewal of Franchise Agreement: Michael said that the Franchise Agreement with Spectrum has expired and needs to be renewed for service to continue to the residents. Motion was made by Holly Chase and seconded by Dan Gee that a Public Hearing be held on January 21, 2026 at 6:45 to get public comment on this as well as accept written statements. Put to vote: Michael Volino, aye; Jennifer Hargrave, aye; Dan Gee, aye; Holly Chase, aye; Noel Sylvester aye. Carried. This will be a 15-year agreement. It was noted the agreement is available in the Town Clerks Office and on the Town Website.

End of the Year Budget Modifications: Michael noted there are several modifications to be done to balance the budget for the end of the year.

Motion was made by Dan Gee and seconded by Jennifer Hargrave that the following budget modifications be done as noted by Michael Volino:

General Fund:

- i. Debit A232 General Tax Stability Reserve Fund & Credit A511 Appropriated Reserves \$6,500 (for 2026 Budget)

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- ii. Debit A2770 Refunds & Credit A1010.1 Town Board Contractual \$250.00 (for Newly Elected Officials School Registration)
- iii. Debit A1420.4 Attorney Contractual & Credit A1410.4 Town Clerk Contractual \$515.61 (for new printer & Newly Elected Officials School Registration)
- iv. Debit A1120 County Sales Tax Distribution & Credit A1620.2 Town Hall Equipment \$8,211.39 (for meeting room chairs & LED lights)
- v. Debit A3005 Mortgage Tax & Credit A1620.4 Town Hall Contractual \$5,307.64
- vi. Debit A2410 Town Hall Rental & Credit A1989.4 Legal Advertising \$427.08 (various ads)
- vii. Debit A2770 Refunds & Credit A5010.4 Superintendent of Highways Contractual \$99.63 (for Newly Elected Officials School Registration)
- viii. Debit A231 Building Repair Reserve Fund & Credit A5132.2 Highway Shop Equipment \$3,525 (downpayment on new garage door)
- ix. Debit A2770 Refunds & Credit 5132.4 Highway Shop Contractual \$1,259.82 (for December's monthly bills)
- x. Debit A1120 County Sales Tax Distribution & Credit A9030.8 Social Security / Medicare \$500.00

Highway Fund:

- i. Debit DA232 Highway Tax Stability Reserve Fund & Credit DA511 Appropriated Reserves \$11,000 (for 2026 Budget)
- ii. Debit DA5130.2 Machinery Equipment & Credit DA9050.8 Unemployment Insurance \$1,100 (for NY45 Q4 Payment)
- iii. Debit A917 Unassigned Unrestricted Fund Balance & Credit DA9730.6 &.7 Debit Service Principal & Interest \$78,701.62 (2025 Peterbilt payment)
- iv. Debit DA5130.2 Machinery Equipment & DA2665 Sales of Equipment & Credit DA9730.6 and DA9730.7 Debt Service Principal & Interest \$39,350.61 (2025 Peterbilt Payment)

Put to vote: Michael Volino, aye; Jennifer Hargrave, aye; Dan Gee, aye; Holly Chase, aye; Noel Sylvester aye. Carried.

There being no further new business, Holly Chase made a motion that was seconded by Dan Gee that new business be closed. Put to vote: Michael Volino, aye; Jennifer Hargrave, aye; Dan Gee, aye; Holly Chase, aye; Noel Sylvester aye. Carried.

Michael noted that our new grader should be here by the second week in February.

It was noted there will be an Organizational Meeting on January 7 at 7:00 p.m. The next regular meeting will be January 21, 2026 at 7:00 p.m. preceded by a public hearing at 6:45 (Spectrum/Charter Franchise Agreement).

Motion was made by Dan Gee and seconded by Noel Sylvester that the meeting be adjourned at 7:30 p.m. Put to vote: Michael Volino, aye; Jennifer Hargrave, aye; Dan Gee, aye; Holly Chase, aye; Noel Sylvester aye. Carried.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Sue Conklin, Town Clerk