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 18th day of March 2026 at 7:00 p.m.

Present: Town Supervisor: Michael Volino
Town Council: Daniel Gee, Noel Sylvester, Holly Chase, (Zoom) Jennifer Hargrave
Highway Superintendent: Alan Crooker
Assessor: Gerald Gebhard
Code Enforcement Officer: Nick Nolton

Visitors: Darlene Chase, Jeff Sweeney, Lisa Hargrave, Tim Hargrave, Eva Turner, Rick Loucks Jr., Dolores Crooker, Sam Dick, Richard Stewart, Wilma Stewart.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENT:
There being no public comment related to the Town of Thurston, motion was made by Holly Chase and seconded by Noel Sylvester that it be closed. All those present, aye. Carried.

MINUTES: Motion was made by Noel Sylvester and seconded by Dan Gee that the minutes from the (2) February 18 public hearings and the February 18 regular meeting be approved as presented. All those present, aye. Carried.

BILLS PAYABLE: Michael Volino presented the following bills for payment:
General $31,067.29 Listed on Vouchers A50-A69
Highway $37952.83 Lister on Vouchers D!32 – DA48
Trust and Agency $185.00 Listed on Voucher TA3

Motion was made by Holly Chase and seconded by Dan Gee that the bills for the month of March 2026 be paid as presented above. All those present, aye. Carried.

Town Clerk: The Town Clerk reported collecting a total of $643 dollars in February. $18.00 was sent to Ag and Markets and $625.00 stayed in the Town. $325.00 was collected for building permits, $10.00 for copies, $200 for Town Hall Rentals, and $90.00 for Dog licenses.
The Town Clerk reported on behalf of the **Tax Collector** the following: out of 1002 total bills, 186 remain unpaid as of 3/11/26; $804,310.96 has been paid to the Town Supervisor; late fees collected to date $1173.87; County collected late fees $53.88; balance remaining to be paid to the County $291,513.94 as of 3/1/26.

Historian: Noel Sylvester noted it's time to remove the items remaining at the Community Building in Risingville as the building is deteriorating.

Assessor: Gerry Gebhard said the Assessors are working on end of the year paperwork.

Justice: Nothing to report for February

Dog Control: There will be a **Rabies Clinic** (drive-through) on April 23, 2026 from 6 -8 p.m. at the Highway Shop.
Michael and Randy will be meeting with the State Inspector at the **Shelter** on Country Route 25 on March 27th.
Randy noted that **Mary Marseglia still has not licensed her 13 dogs.** He will be going to that residence with law enforcement to issue tickets for an April 7 court date.

Fire Department: Nothing this month.

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Code Enforcement: Nick Nolton reported 8 permits issued at a value of $410,805 and $1000 in fees. He has been working on addressing safety issues with the CDBG contractor on several properties.

Highway: Alan Crooker reported the following activity for February 16 – March 15:
- All roads have been checked 14 times plowed 6 times and sanded 11 times. Plowed and sanded the Town Hall parking lot 4 times and the Fire Dept parking lot 4 times. Cleared Town Hall sidewalks of ice and snow 3 times. Pushed snowbanks back with the excavator 5 times.
- Attended Highway Superintendent breakfast in Bradford on 02/19/26.
- Put cutting edges on plows and adjusted plow shoes.
- Cleaned up scrap railroad ties and scrap lumber. Took it to the Steuben County landfill.
- Pelham Electric changed the electric panel box at the shop on 02/23/26 and installed a transfer switch on 03/04/26.
-Trevor York has been driving the 10 wheelers around the parking area and driveway at the shop to log hours towards his CDL license.
- Met with Dolomite Construction for an estimate on Forty Dollar Road asphalt paving project.
- Secured the ceiling in the shop. Enclosed the building around the fuel tanks. Purchased a new set of stairs for the fuel delivery person to access the fuel tank inlet.
- Licensed the new Grader. Fixed the fenders and wiring for lights on the Sterling dump truck. Replaced the brake line on the Chevy Topkick.
- Had PERMA inspection on 03/11/26.
- Fixed washouts on Smith and Tucker roads. Replaced a cross pipe on Smith Road. Removed a tree from the ditch on Lewis Road. Removed downed trees from Smith, Hamilton, and Forty Dollar roads. Have been grading dirt roads and fixing pot holes. Cleaned some ditches and trimmed brush along roads.
- Met with Reggie Rice about water run off on Yost Road. Spoke with Peter McIlwaine about pot holes on Forty Dollar Road. Spoke to Melvin Pecor and looked at culvert in his driveway.
- Took 8 building permit required signs to Steuben County. They will install them on the boundary line signs on county roads for the Town of Thurston.
- Mixed salt with sand.

Town Supervisor: Michael Volino reported the following activity since the last Board meeting.
- completed and mailed the letter of interest for Cornell Local Roads Summer Intern Program,
- competed the February month end closing and sent it on to the Town Board
- the 2025 Perma Payroll Audit has been completed
- Met with Labella and STC and four projects are underway with a 4th disbursement request of $47,952.48
- Met with PERMA representatives relating to possible slip and fall hazards in the buildings and were awarded $3259.77 in various products. New mats for the Town Hall entrance were provided with a 2-year warranty on them.

Motion was made by Noel Sylvester and seconded by Holly Chase that all reports be accepted and approved as presented. Put to vote, all those present aye. Carried.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Perma – changing providers: Michael noted that we had received a quote from Comp Appliance which was substantially lower than what we are paying PERMA. However, it was later noticed that the Fire Dept

is under the Town's Comp program which made the savings smaller. After discussing this with PERMA, they agreed to do a deep audit of the Town of Thurston charges so at this time no action will be taken on switching providers. Michael said we have had a good working relationship with PERMA so we will table this until next year to see if they can reduce our premium.

Equipment – Excess equipment belonging to the Town was put on Auctions International and bids have been received as follows: 2009 Grader was a bid at $50,700 which was higher that what John Deere was willing to give for a trade-in; 2007 Triaxle was bid at $10,700, and the epoxy floor paint was bid at $840.00. Motion was made by Holly Chase and seconded by Daniel Gee that the Highway Superintendent be authorized to accept these bids and proceed with the necessary paperwork to sell them. Put to vote, all those present, aye. Carried.

Used Pick-Up - Michael said we would like to purchase a used pick-up truck using funds from the sale of excess equipment. Alan Crooker said he feels he can find a good one for $20,000 or under on Auctions International. Holly Chase said anything higher than that would have to go to bid. It was noted we will be saving on insurance as well since we disposed of some equipment. This pickup could also be used for the Assessors to do their drive around assessments as our insurance does not cover personal vehicles used for town business. The Board agreed that Alan should start looking for a used pickup.

284 Agreement - Michael said the 284 agreement is ready to be signed with the focus on Forty Dollar Road at a cost of $310,000.00. This will pave 2.2 miles from the Campbell Line past Tanglewood. This will leave money for other projects with plans to repair Eddy and Tucker Roads. Alan said he does not plan on using cold patch this year as it does not hold but hopes to fix the worst spots where there are potholes so they do not keep coming back. Bonny Hill, Strait, and Dee Road all have bad spots to be repaired as well as a lot of ditching to be done across the Town. There are no plans to use salt brine this year as the public has made it clear they do not like the damage it causes to vehicles. We will try other products for dust control. Following this discussion, Alan and the Supervisor will sign the 284-agreement as noted above.

Comprehensive Plan Michael Volino noted that we were not awarded the Comp Smart Growth Grant last year but will try again this year with help from STC. The application is due the end of May. Holly Chase will develop a survey which will be posted on our web pages and on Facebook in the hopes that Thurston Town Residents will respond and tell us what they would like to see in the future for Thurston.

There being no further unfinished business, motion was made by Holly Chase and seconded by Dan Gee that this discussion be closed. Put to vote, all those present, aye. Carried.

NEW BUSINESS

Michael said that at a recent training it was brought up that it is recommended by the State Comptroller that the Town Supervisor should not have or be in control of the Town Credit Card. Therefore, the following Resolution #12 of 2026 was brought before the Board:

WHEREAS the Town of Thurston is responsible for setting fiscal management policies that govern the financial practices and procedures followed by town officials and employees and,

WHEREAS the Town Board wishes to ensure proper internal control over the use of such cards to protect public assets,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Town Board of Thurston hereby adopts the "Town Credit Card Use Policy",

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Town Clerk is authorized to apply for and maintain a credit card account on behalf of the Town with Five Star Bank with a maximum credit limit of $5,000.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the use of this card is strictly limited to authorized Town Business, no personal charges are permitted, and the Town Clerk must sign a copy of the Town Credit Card Policy.
BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED THAT the card must be surrendered immediately upon leaving office, in the event of wrongdoing, or upon demand by the Town Board.
Motion was made by Noel Sylvester and seconded by Holly Chase that Resolution #12 of 2026 be passed effective immediately. Put to vote, Holly Chase, aye; Dan Gee, aye; Michael Volino, aye; Noel Sylvester, aye; Jennifer Hargrave, absent. Carried.
It was further noted that anyone who uses the credit card will have to sign it out with the Town Clerk and submit receipts immediately upon return of the card. Michael also noted that only the Highway Superintendent and Deputy Superintendent, Town Supervisor and Deputy Town Supervisor, and Clerk are authorized to use this card.
Tire Day – Thurston Residents Only: Alan Crooker noted that five tons of tires have been cleaned up at the Highway Shop and that we still are allowed to take five more tons of tires to the County Landfill at no cost to us. He suggested that Thurston Residents, showing proof of residency, be allowed to take advantage of this offer. Motion was made by Noel Sylvester and seconded by Holly Chase that the Town of Thurston hold a "free tire disposal" day on May 9th from 9am until noon at the highway shop, that residents, upon showing proof of residency, be allowed one pickup load of tires to be disposed of. Put to vote, all those present, aye. Carried.
Inter-Municipal Hauling Agreement - Michael noted that the Steuben County Legislators have approved Shared Services for the hauling and transporting of equipment. The County has provided an agreement which the Town Supervisor must sign if approved. Motion was made by Dan Gee and seconded by Holly Chase that the Town Supervisor sign the Inter-Municipal Agreement for Hauling and Transporting of Equipment as provided by the County. Put to vote, all those present aye. Carried.
Buildings: Michael asked the Board to consider authorizing Alan Crooker to have his crew remove the **rubber parking bumpers** from the Town Hall Parking lot as they make it difficult to plow snow and are often displaced. Motion was made by Daniel Gee and seconded by Holly Chase that the rubber bumpers be removed. Put to vote, all those present, aye. Carried.
Michael asked the Board to consider a request from Alan Crooker to rent a manlift and sprayer from Wade's Rental to **fix and paint the Salt Building** Exterior at a cost of about $1000 and use the same color as the Highway Shop. Motion was made by Noel Sylvester and seconded by Dan Gee that the Highway Supervisor be authorized to rent a manlift and sprayer as requested and paint and repair the Salt Barn. Put to vote, all those present, aye. Carried.
Electric Upgrade at the Highway Shop: Michael asked the Board to consider having Pelham Electric upgrade the Salt Barn lights to LED lights. Motion was made by Dan Gee and seconded by Holly Chase that the Highway Superintendent be authorized to have Pelham Electric upgrade the Salt Barn lights to LED light as requested. Put to vote, all those present, aye. Carried. Michael said that the sale of scrap metal from the highway shop will help pay for the lights and, we will be eligible for a $5000 rebate through Steuben Rural Electric.
Floor Jack Michael noted we need a new floor jack for the Highway Shop. Motion was made by Dan Gee and seconded by Noel Sylvester that the Highway Superintendent be authorized to purchase a new floor jack at a cost of $2000 for the Highway Shop. Put to vote, all those present, aye. Carried. There is money available in the Equipment Fund.
LL#5 of 2026 Michael said that we should start thinking about passing a Local Law with a moratorium on commercial cryptocurrency mining operations and data processing centers. These businesses look at rural

areas and when they move in, they require upgrades on water and electric which would great affect local rates. The Town of Dryden has already passed a Local Law and we can use theirs as a sample. Michael will look at drafting something for a future meeting. The Board agreed.

NYSEG RESOLUTION Michael noted that with the extreme hikes in electric service charges, the Board feels we should pass a resolution demanding more accountability regarding rate increases. The following Resolution #13 was presented to the Board for consideration:

RESOLUTION # 13 OF 2026 MEMORIALIZING THE NEW YORK STATE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION TO IMMEDIATELY REVIEW ELECTRIC DELIVERY CHARGES, DEMANDING IMPROVED COST CONTROLS AND TRANSPARENCY REGARDING THE ESCALATING COST OF ELECTRICITY

WHEREAS, residents, seniors, and small businesses in Thurston are experiencing unsustainable, repeated, and compounding increases in electric bills that are placing a growing financial strain on households and the local economy; and

WHEREAS, a substantial portion of these increases is attributable not to increased energy consumption, but to escalating delivery charges, fees, and approved rate adjustments imposed by NYSEG; and

WHEREAS, electric delivery charges and rate structures are regulated and approved by the New York State Public Service Commission, which is statutorily charged with ensuring that utility rates are just, reasonable, and affordable for ratepayers; and

WHEREAS, rural and low-density communities are disproportionately impacted by delivery charge increases and cost-recovery mechanisms that fail to adequately account for affordability, equity, and the cumulative burden placed on ratepayers; and

WHEREAS, the continued approval of rate increases without stronger cost controls, greater transparency, and meaningful affordability protections is unacceptable and contrary to the public interest.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that the Thurston Town Board formally and strongly urges the New York State Public Service Commission to conduct a thorough and immediate review of electric delivery charges, rate increases, and cost-recovery practices applicable to NYSEG customers; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Thurston Town Board calls upon the Public Service Commission to prioritize ratepayer affordability, demand greater transparency from NYSEG, and require demonstrable cost-containment and operational efficiency measures before approving any future rate increases; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Thurston Town Board expressly opposes continued or automatic rate increases that shift rising operational, infrastructure, and administrative costs onto ratepayers without clear justification or adequate protection for rural communities; and be it further

RESOLVED, that certified copies of this resolution shall be sent to the New York State Public Service Commission, NYSEG, the Governor of the State of New York, and members of the New York State Legislature.

Motion was made by Dan Gee and seconded by Holly Chase that this resolution be passed effective immediately. Put to vote, Holly Chase, aye; Dan Gee, aye; Michael Volino, aye; Noel Sylvester, aye; Jennifer Hargrave, absent. Unanimously Carried.

BUDGET MODIFICATIONS: Michael said there are some budget modifications for the Board to consider to balance some accounts. Resolution # 14 was presented for consideration as follows:

BE IT RESOLVED that the following transfers are required to keep accounts balanced:

Debit A1990.4 Contingencies Fund and Credit A8160.4 Garbage Contractual $764.40

Debit A9060.8 Health Insurance and credit A5132.2 Highway Shop Equipment $15,000 (since the Highway Superintendent is not taking health insurance)

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Debit A9060.8 Health Insurance and Credit A5132.4 Highway Shop Contractual $3500.00,
Money to be credited to 8160.4 Garbage Contractual to cover the disposal of old railroad ties that were at the Highway Shop, and,
Money to be credited to Highway Shop Equipment and Contractual to cover the costs of needed repairs to that facility.
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Town Supervisor be authorized to make these transfers.
Motion was made by Holly Chase and seconded by Noel Sylvester that Resolution # 14 be passed as requested. Put to roll call vote, Holly Chase, aye; Dan Gee, aye; Michael Volino, aye; Noel Sylvester, aye; Jennifer Hargrave, aye. Unanimously Carried.

There being no further new business, motion was made by Holly Chase and seconded by Dan Gee that new business be closed. Put to vote, all those present, aye. Carried.

Michael noted the next regular meeting will be April 15 at 7:00 p.m. There will be a Safety Committee meeting prior to that, starting at 6:30 p.m.

Motion was made by Holly Chase and seconded by Dan Gee that the regular meeting be adjourned at 8:00 p.m. Put to vote, all those present, aye. Carried.

Minutes Respectfully submitted by Sue E. Conklin, Town Clerk