

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING FOR THE TOWN OF THURSTON, HELD JANUARY 2, 2025
AT 6:00 PM AT 7578 COUNTY ROUTE 333, THURSTON, NEW YORK.**

Present: Michael Volino, Town Supervisor
Town Council: Holly Chase, Daniel Gee, Jennifer Hargrave, Noel Sylvester
Highway Superintendent: Ben Smith
Code Enforcement Officer: Nick Nolton
Assessor: Diana Dixon

VISITORS: Jeff Sweeney, Dolores Crooker, Alan Crooker, Reginald Rice

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

SUPERVISOR APPOINTMENTS:

Michael Volino appointed Holly Chase as Deputy Town Supervisor and noted he would be the Town Budget Officer, both for a one-year term to expire December 31, 2025. Michael also noted that Sue Conklin appointed Dolores Crooker as her Deputy Town Clerk and Deputy Registrar of Vital Statistics. Ben Smith noted that he appointed Randy Akins, Sr. as his Deputy Highway Superintendent. Both are for one-year terms to expire December 31, 2025.

BOARD APPOINTMENTS:

Motion was made by Holly Chase and seconded by Jennifer Hargrave that the following appointments be made, each for a term of one year to expire December 31, 2025 unless otherwise noted:

- Nick Nolton was appointed as Code Enforcement Officer,
- Randy Akins, Sr was appointed as Dog Control Officer,
- Rachel Treichler was appointed as Town Attorney,
- Mary Akins was appointed as Deputy Dog Control Officer,
- Trisha Brown was appointed as Health Officer for a period of four years, term expiring 12/31/2028,
- Board of Ethics Committee members were appointed: Gerald Gebhard, Mark Taft, Caleb Cook,
- Safety Committee members were appointed: Michael Volino, Safety Coordinator, Ben Smith, Randy Akins, Sr., Noel Sylvester, Diana Dixon
- Noel Sylvester and Roselyn Renner were appointed as Co-Historians for the Town,
- Alan Crooker was appointed Caretaker of the Town Hall, Fire Department, and Thurston Village, Risingville, Aldrich, Bonny Hill, Beaton Family Cemeteries at a rate of \$5500.

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

PAY SCHEDULE:

Motion was made by Holly Chase and seconded by Daniel Gee that the following pay schedules salaries be approved as noted:

- Highway Superintendent paid bi-weekly at an annual rate of \$45,000 and 0% contribution for Teamsters Health Insurance. It was agreed that a performance review would be done in six months and his rate should be higher since he has a CDL. Health insurance contributions will be discussed in July when union negotiations for the crew begin.
- The following will be paid monthly at the noted annual rate: Supervisor/Budget Officer \$17,000; Justice \$5,000; Town Clerk/Registrar of Vital Statistics/Records Management \$7,000; and Code Enforcement Officer \$5,000.
- The following will be paid Bi-Annually at the noted annual rate: Council Members \$1500 each; Assessors, \$2800 each; and Tax Collector \$2000.00

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

RULES OF PROCEDURE:

Motion was made by Noel Sylvester and seconded by Holly Chase that the following Rules of Procedure be approved as noted:

- Designate the third Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. as the regular meeting date, excluding January (4th Wednesday) and November (2nd Wednesday);
- Designate March 19, June 18, September 17, and December 17 at 6:30 p.m. as Safety Committee meeting dates for 2025;
- Set the Town Clerk's office hours on Wednesday from 4pm to 7pm and Thursday from 9am to Noon excluding legal holidays;
- Set Town Court on the first and third Tuesday of every month at 4:30 p.m. excluding legal holidays;
- Note all vouchers for payment from the General and Highway Funds are due to the Town Supervisor the Monday before regular board meetings;
- Direct the Town Supervisor to pay approved bills within two business days following the regular Board meetings;
- Direct the Town Supervisor to pay all monthly utility bills and approved vendors in such a way as to not accrue late fees;
- Approve holding two rabies clinics, one in the spring and one in the fall;
- Direct all Department heads, elected and appointed, to present monthly reports to the Board by the Tuesday prior to regular meetings;
- Direct two Town Board Members to conduct and present results of the 2024 annual audit of the Town Clerk and Town Justice no later than the January (22) regular meeting. Holly and Noel will audit these books;
- Direct two Town Board Members to conduct and present results of the 2024 annual audit of the Town Tax Collector and Town Supervisor no later than the April (16) regular meeting. Dan and Jennifer will audit these books;
- Direct the Highway Superintendent to submit the 284 Agreement by the March (19) regular meeting;
- Direct the Highway Superintendent to submit, prior to cut-off dates set by NYSDOT, all requests for reimbursement through the CHIPS program;
- Set dog license fee schedule as follows; \$7.00 for spayed or neutered dogs, \$15.00 for unspayed or unneutered dogs, and \$6.00 for replacement tags;
- Approved the use of town credit cards by the Town Supervisor and Highway Superintendent.

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

CONTRACTS AND AGREEMENTS:

Motion was made by Jennifer Hargrave and seconded by Noel Sylvester that the following contracts and agreements be approved as presented:

- Designate Five Star Bank as the official depository;
- Designate Sprague Insurance (NYMIR) as the municipal insurance provider;
- Designate the Addison Post and the Southern Tier Shopper as the official newspapers;
- Approve AMR (American Medical Response) as the ambulance service;
- Set the 2025 mileage rate for Town Business as \$.66 per mile;
- Approve the kennel contract with Jerry Aldrich. It was noted this will be the last year he participates.
- Approve an annual contract with Isaac Heating and Cooling for the Town Hall and Highway Shop. The Town Supervisor said we need to add servicing the heating systems on an annual basis to the existing contract;
- The Highway Superintendent will check for the best rate for our supplier of diesel fuel, gasoline, kerosene, oil, and grease and will report back to the Board on the results before a decision is made.

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

ANNUAL REVIEW OF POLICIES:

Michael Volino said that we have required policies in place for Procurement, Investment, Fund Balance, Breach Notification, Sexual Harassment, Workplace Violence Prevention, and Non-Retaliation. Suggested Policies for the Town are Code of Ethics, Weapons in the Workplace, Smoking, Equipment and Vehicle Usage, Equal Employment Opportunity, Grievances, a Fair Housing Plan and a Town Hall Usage Agreement.

*Reginald Rice was present and said he lives adjacent to the Town Barns and was concerned the Weapons in the Workplace Policy would also affect his ability to carry a firearm and asked if a specific incident caused us to adopt this policy. He was assured there was no event but this is a state suggested policy which the insurance company prefers us to have and would not affect his ability to have weapons on his property.

*Motion was made by Holly Chase and seconded by Noel Sylvester that an amendment be made to the Town Hall Usage Agreement changing the length of time for rental from four hours to six hours. Holly Chase, aye; Daniel Gee, aye; Michael Volino, aye; Noel Sylvester, aye; Jennifer Hargrave, aye. Carried. A brief discussion was held where everyone agreed there would be no multiple day use and if extra time is requested, extra payment may be required.

Motion was made by Noel Sylvester and seconded by Jennifer Hargrave that the policy for Release of Employee-Related Information (FOIL) as required in 2024 by the State Comptroller be approved as presented. Put to roll call vote: Holly Chase, aye; Daniel Gee, aye; Michael Volino, aye; Noel Sylvester, aye; Jennifer Hargrave, aye. Carried.

Motion was made by Jennifer Hargrave and seconded by Noel Sylvester that the Bloodborne Pathogen Plan, as required by PERMA be approved as presented. Put to roll call vote: Holly Chase, aye; Daniel Gee, aye; Michael Volino, aye; Noel Sylvester, aye; Jennifer Hargrave, aye. Carried.

Motion was made by Holly Chase and seconded by Noel Sylvester that the Public Health Emergency Plan, as required by PERMA, be approved as presented. Put to roll call vote: Holly Chase, aye; Daniel Gee, aye; Michael Volino, aye; Noel Sylvester, aye; Jennifer Hargrave, aye. Carried.

ANNUAL REVIEW OF JOB DUTIES FOR ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICIALS

The Town Supervisor noted the review of job duties for the following staff was done last year and all are still appropriate: Town Supervisor, Town Budget Officer, Highway Superintendent, Board Members, Town Clerk and Records Management Officer, and Historian. The following are still being reviewed as time permits; Assessor, Code Enforcement Officer, Dog Control Officer, Justice, and Tax Collector.

GARAGE DOOR ESTIMATES: The Town Supervisor noted that Nick Nolton gave him two estimates to replace the garage doors and motion sensors at the Highway Garage. Nick also noted that he can replace these doors at a much lower cost than the estimates he received. Motion was made by Holly Chase and seconded by Noel Sylvester that Nick Nolton purchase the needed garage doors from Overhead Door in Elmira and install them. Holly Chase, aye; Daniel Gee, aye; Michael Volino, aye; Noel Sylvester, aye; Jennifer Hargrave, aye. Carried.

TEMPORARY MEO FOR HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

Michael Volino said we need to consider hiring a temporary MEO for summer work at the Highway Department. He also noted that Randy Akins has mentioned he will be retiring this year and we need to think about filling his position. Motion was made by Holly Chase and seconded by Noel Sylvester that we advertise for a temporary MEO with a start date of May 1, 2025. Holly Chase, aye; Daniel Gee, aye; Michael Volino, aye; Noel Sylvester, aye; Jennifer Hargrave, aye. Carried.

REVISED SOLAR LAW – Michael Volino said we need to vote on the revised solar law at the January 22 meeting. It was suggested that on page 13, section 14 be removed regarding storage of batteries. It was

also suggested that on page 13, section 15, the applicant/owner/operator NOT be required to pay for on-going fire training.

SOLID WASTE MORATORIUM - Motion was made by Jennifer Hargrave and seconded by Noel Sylvester that the draft of Local Law # 2 of 2025 Establishing a "Solid Waste Management Facilities One (1) Year Moratorium:" be accepted as presented. Put to vote, Holly Chase, aye; Daniel Gee, aye; Michael Volino, aye; Noel Sylvester, aye; Jennifer Hargrave, aye. Carried.

Motion was then made by Jennifer Hargrave and seconded by Noel Sylvester that a public hearing be held January 22, 2025 at 6:45 pm to discuss Local Law # 2. Put to vote, Holly Chase, aye; Daniel Gee, aye; Michael Volino, aye; Noel Sylvester, aye; Jennifer Hargrave, aye. Carried.

CLOSE MEETING There being no further business, motion was made by Holly Chase and seconded by Dan Gee that the meeting be adjourned.

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

Minutes Respectfully Submitted by
Sue Conklin, Town Clerk