**Outline for Consolidating Town Courts under Uniform Justice Court Act Section 106-b**

1. **Joint Study**

The town boards of the adjacent towns must adopt a joint resolution providing for a joint study to be undertaken relating to the election of a single town justice. The joint resolution or a certified copy of the joint resolution must be filed in the office of the town clerk of each adjacent town which adopts the resolution.

1. **Public Hearing**

Once the study is completed, each town involved must hold a public hearing, within 20 to 30 days after the notice is published. The notice of hearing must be published:

* By each town involved;
* Within 30 days after the conclusion of the joint study; and
* In the official newspaper of each town or, in the absence of an official newspaper, in a newspaper that is published within the county and has a general circulation within the area of the town.

For the public hearing, the town board of each town that was a party to the study must:

* Meet at the time and place specified in the notice of hearing; and
* Hear testimony and receive evidence and information relating to the election of a single town justice to preside over the town courts involved.
1. **Joint Plan**

Within 60 days of the last public hearing, the town boards of each town that participated in the study must determine whether the town will participate in a joint plan providing for the election of a single town justice to preside in the town courts of two or more adjacent towns. In order for a town to approve the joint plan, its town board must adopt a resolution providing for the adoption of a joint plan. In the event two or more adjacent towns fail to adopt a joint plan, all proceedings under this section shall terminate and the town courts of such towns shall continue to operate in accordance with the existing provisions of law.

1. **Joint Resolution**

Upon the adoption of a joint plan by two or more adjacent towns, the boards of each of the towns must adopt a joint resolution that:

* Provides for the election of a single town justice at large to preside in the town courts of the each of the towns;
* Abolishes the office of town justice in each of the towns; and
* Provides that the election of the single town justice shall occur at the next general election and every fourth year thereafter.
1. **Special Legislation**

Upon the adoption of a joint resolution, the resolution must be forwarded to the New York State Legislature and constitutes a home rule message pursuant to the New York State Constitution and Municipal Home Rule Law, Article 9. The joint resolution shall take effect after state legislation enacting the joint resolution becomes a law.