

Town of Fowler April 14th, 2025, Minutes of Regular Scheduled Board Meeting at 6PM.

The Town of Fowler Regular scheduled Town Board meeting was held on the above date with four Board members present, Councilperson Cleveland was not in attendance. Also present were Town Clerk Tami Gale, Town Justice Tim Knowlton, Highway Superintendent Randy Durham, Code Enforcement Officer Glen Besaw, Ethics Committee Member Vivian Goodman, Planning Board members John Walsh & Roger Refici, Maintenance Worker Byron Woodward, Adam Fuller of Fuller Insurance Agency Inc, Lisa Hull, Laurina Greenhill, Deb Walsh, Janice Refici, Mary Benware, and Rachel Hunter, Editor of the Gouverneur Tribune Press.

Supervisor Newvine called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM then proceeded with the pledge of allegiance and led a moment of silence to honor our military men and women, all healthcare workers, and to remember those who have been lost since the last board meeting: Robert Dier, Lyle Fuller, Carlton Forsythe, and Kathy Tracey.

Supervisor Newvine asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the March 10, 2025 regular scheduled board meeting. A motion was made by Councilperson Knight, seconded by Councilperson Simmons . All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

Supervisor Newvine asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the Emergency board meeting held on March 21, 2025 at 3:00 PM. A motion was made by Councilperson Simmons, seconded by Councilperson Bishop . All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

OPEN MUNICIPAL INSURANCE BIDS RECEIVED

Supervisor Newvine reported that there was one (1) bid proposal received for municipal insurance coverage from May 2025 to May 2026. Councilperson Simmons opened and read aloud the sealed bid proposal:

<u>BIDDER</u>	<u>PREMIUM TOTAL</u>
Fuller Insurance Agency, Inc	\$37,583.14

After some discussion, a motion was made by Councilperson Bishop seconded by Councilperson Simmons to accept the bid proposal and award the municipal insurance coverage to Fuller Insurance Agency in the amount of \$37,583.14 for coverage from May 15, 2025 through May 15, 2026. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

AYES: 4 NEWVINE, SIMMONS, BISHOP, KNIGHT

NAYS: 0

ABSENT: 1 CLEVELAND

OPEN SAND/SALT BARN REPAIR BIDS RECEIVED

Supervisor Newvine reported that there was one (1) bid received to re-install and structurally reinforce the sand/salt barn's collapsed end wall. Councilperson Knight opened and read aloud the sealed bid:

<u>BIDDER</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
ENI MECHANICAL, INC	\$67,750.00

After some discussion, a motion was made by Councilperson Knight seconded by Councilperson Bishop to accept the bid proposal and award the sand/salt barn repair to ENI Mechanical Inc, in the amount of \$67,750.00. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

AYES: 4 NEWVINE, SIMMONS, BISHOP, KNIGHT

NAYS: 0

ABSENT: 1 CLEVELAND

Discussion on ZULTYS proposal prepared by Cody Horbacz of Advanced Business Systems

Supervisor Newwine reported he had received a proposal prepared by ABS (Advanced Business Systems), to change the Town's business IP phones migrating away from the Grandstream IP phones that currently are in use, and monitored by ABS, to ZULTYS Unified Communications. It was discussed the current IP phone system in use is being phased out. After some discussion, a motion was made by Councilperson Simmons seconded by Councilperson Bishop to approve the ZULTYS IP phone proposal. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

Set Public Hearing for Spectrum Television Franchise Agreement

Supervisor Newwine asked for a motion to advertise the public hearing for the new Spectrum Franchise Agreement. A motion was made by Councilperson Knight seconded by Councilperson Simmons to set the Public Hearing for May 12, 2025 at 6:00 PM.

Discussion on status of removal of structures at 81 Little York Rd

Supervisor Newwine reported that CEO Besaw continues to oversee the removal process for the structures at 81 Little York Rd. CEO Besaw reported the Town recently had the U.S. Postal Service return the Certified letter from the Town of Fowler to the Owner of 81 Little York Rd, after 3 delivery attempts to obtain a signature were unsuccessful. CEO Besaw reported the correspondence is now considered served, and reported it is up to the board how they would like to proceed. CEO Besaw reported that the danger parts of the structure must be eliminated somehow. It was discussed just knocking the structure down would eliminate the danger, and then the owner would have one year to clean it up. Supervisor Newwine stated that the Town of Fowler had passed a resolution in March concerning the matter, and it is time to move forward.

Town Department Reports

Justice Department

Town Justice Tim Knowlton reported:

- Things are going well.
- In March, there were 24 citations: 1 penal law violation, 21 vehicle and traffic law violations, 1 civic trial, 1 DEC violation, and 2 DWI violations.
- Town Court is expected to be busy tomorrow with 22 people scheduled to appear before him with criminal charges.
- Court Clerk Ashley has been busy sending notices to defendants who have unpaid fines.
- She has prepared multiple judgments that will be sent to the County.

Bookkeeper

Bookkeeper Barbara Finnie was not in attendance.

Supervisor Newwine reported:

- She had provided Town of Fowler Cash Balance Reports and Budget Balances for Month Ending March 31, 2025 to the board members for their review.
- Reports show the general fund was 20.33% spent, with 42.93% of revenue received and the highway fund was 27.93% spent with 59.97% of revenue received.

Assessors

Assessor Chair Kathleen Besaw was not in attendance.

Historian

Historian Karen Simmons reported:

- She worked on a few genealogies last week for individuals trying to join the D A R (Daughters of the American Revolution). She was unable to locate the documents that were requested, as they were prior to the fire of 1896.
- The plaque to honor Sherrie Williams was ordered and received.
- Thanked Steve Gale for hanging the plaque prior to this evening's board meeting.

Animal Control

Councilperson Simmons reported for Dan Moyer who was not in attendance:

- Complaints have been received concerning dogs on Triangle Pond Rd and Doane Rd.
- No tickets were issued as the animals were not able to be located by the time animal control arrived at the locations.

Beaver Control

Councilperson Simmons reported for Moyer's Wildlife Control who was not in attendance:

- The water on Little York Rd and County Route 22 has been high but has begun to go down.
- He reports he is going to put his canoe in at the problem area on County Route 22 in the upcoming week.
- Maintenance worker Byron Woodward offered his assistance to Moyer's Wildlife Control if he is notified when he will be partaking in beaver control on County Route 22 in the future.

Code Enforcement

Code Enforcement Officer Besaw reported:

- He had attended Code Enforcement Officer training in Syracuse.
- Some of the laws have changed, and new codes will be going into effect on January 1st 2026.
- He received his bullet proof vest this week.

Town Clerk

Town Clerk Tami Gale reported:

- DEC Gross sales for the month were \$55.00 with the Town of Fowler's Commission being \$3.04. She licensed 17 dogs, issued 1 Marriage Transcript, issued 10 Death Certificates, handled 5 building permit applications, and had collected \$4.50 in photo copies.
- Her 2025 Tax-Collectors Warrant had been renewed by the County, as is done yearly.
- Taxes are now 85.24% collected, last year at the same time they were 83.81% collected.
- 2nd Notices will be mailed this week to taxpayers who haven't paid anything at all. There are 143 2nd notices that will be mailed.
- She had received a scrap Metal check in the amount of \$497.50 for 3.38 tons of scrap.
- She had received Pepsi machine money to include \$137.00 in dollar bills and \$238.68 in coins.
- Beach paperwork is being worked on. Past lifeguards are being contacted to inquire on their desire to return for the upcoming beach season.

Maintenance

Maintenance Worker Byron Woodward reported:

- He will need to purchase a box of siding and rent a lift to replace the missing siding from the town hall.
- Summer maintenance jobs he will be working on include: painting the dog kennel floor, replacing the washed out supports to the beach building, staining the welcome to Fowler signs, replacing the 2 x 6 boards on the bottom of the storage building, installing a hose at the hwy. department, installing a mop-sink at the hwy. department, and installing a new sidewalk at the pavilion.

Supervisor Newwine asked maintenance worker Woodward to paint the step outside of the front entrance to the town hall as another person has fallen as they were leaving the building.

Councilperson Simmons reported she needs to have maintenance worker Woodward hang up the 3 new Family Day signs.

Highway Department

Highway Superintendent Randy Durham reported:

- He would like permission to send some surplus items to Pecks Farm Auction next month. Some of the items were declared excess last year: the blue broom, 3 culvert pipes (he replaced on Sylvia Lake Rd), a loader tire, and a plastic jug that have value to the right person but don't have any value to us. It was the consensus of the board to approve the request.
- He will be closing the Country Club Rd on Monday, April 23rd, from the Jones Rd to the Smith Rd for a culvert replacement.
- He has been working on the Country Club Rd near Mary Benware's home. He will be adding a 36" pipe, making 80' of pipe across the area. They will be expanding the shoulders and making it look good there.
- Guardrails will be replacing the posts near the creek on Little York Rd.
- They are all done sweeping the roads for the year, except for the parking lot.

Supervisor Newwine asked Hwy. Superintendent Durham about a new hire in the highway department he had heard about through the grapevine. Hwy. Superintendent Durham reported it was the same person who was hired for flagging last year. It was discussed that the board would prefer to be notified of anyone returning for seasonal work, prior to their start date.

Supervisor Newwine asked Hwy. Superintendent Durham if the road sides were ready to be mowed, and if they have been cleared of any debris that could cause the new tractor mower to be damaged. Hwy. Superintendent Durham reported there are always rocks, but the new tractor mower is only going to be used in certain places, and the boom mower will be used in other places. Hwy. Superintendent Durham reported the garbage alongside the roads had already been picked up.

- Supervisor Newwine asked Hwy. Superintendent Durham who is going to be completing the paving projects this year. Hwy. Superintendent Durham reported he is using the County to do the paving projects this year, and it would not need to be put out for bid.

Councilmembers

Councilperson Cleveland:

- Was not in attendance.

Councilperson Karen Simmons:

- Reported that the HAP Program had 53 visits in the month of March.
- Thanked Stepping Stone Ministries for donating a bunch of pork, (which was donated to Stepping Stone Ministries), to the HAP Program.
- Thanked Stepping Stone Ministries and Robert & Diane Jennings for their monetary donations.
- The next SOS care package delivery will be made in June. There are 112 people receiving the delivery.
- Fowler Family Day meetings are being held every 2 weeks, and the next meeting is scheduled to be held on Thursday, April 24th at 3:00 PM.

Maintenance worker Byron Woodward asked if she was any closer to getting the new plaque made.

Councilperson Leo Knight Jr.:

- Thanked maintenance worker Byron Woodward for installing a new lock on the door for the back building at the hwy. department.

Councilperson Lynn Bishop:

- Asked for a second time to have an orange plastic fence installed around the sand that is left outside due to the collapse of the sand barn end wall, as a deterrent to keep kids from trying to play in that area. Supervisor Newvine asked Hwy. Superintendent to get this done.
- Asked Supervisor Newvine if he has been in contact with the Fifield's concerning the mowing contract, and if they were ready to start. Supervisor Newvine reported that he had received his insurance and that they are ready to go.
- Stated Hwy. Superintendent Durham has done a good job finding grants to purchase the plow trucks and asked him if he could find any grants to assist with the purchase of road signs. Councilperson Bishop stated the condition of many of the Town's road signs are horrible.

Supervisor Ricky W. Newvine:

- Read aloud a thank you letter received from the Hailesboro Cemetery Association for the Town of Fowler's annual contribution this year.
- Reported he had received correspondence from both Senator Stec and Senator Walczyk confirming their receipt of the Town of Fowler's resolution supporting the American Rock Salt Act.
- Reported Empire State Mines have a big upgrade going on and they are going to give the Town of Fowler and its citizens a business update, which is tentatively set for April 30, 2025, at 6:00 PM at BOCES Southwest Tech. The public is welcome to attend.

Public Comment**Lisa Hull**

- Raised concerns about the demolished structure at 1530 County Route 22 and asked when it is going to be taken care of. She reported she had heard the structure likely contains asbestos, making it dangerous for neighboring children. She would like to see posted and no trespassing signs affixed at the site and would like to see Code Enforcement look further into a remedy for its clean up. She reported there are cats and rats living in the structure and would like to see something done.
- Raised concerns about taxes being raised and property conditions in the Town of Fowler are not being kept up to standard.

- Reported there have been dead animals lying in the middle of the road for days, with highway workers driving right by them, causing dangerous driving conditions as motoring vehicles are being swarmed by birds.
- She reported the black top pieces and pot holes on County Route 22 are all over the place and she would like to have her concerns addressed. Supervisor Newvine reported CR 22 is not a Town road, it is a County road and asked Lisa Hull for her phone number and stated he would call the County with her concerns.
- Thanked the board members for listening to and addressing her concerns.

Debra Walsh

- Asked to have the pot holes on Office Rd fixed.

Roger & Janice Refici

- Roger asked if the ditch running parallel to their home was going to be dug out again. Janice reported the reason they are asking is because the Town has had to dig this ditch before, and they are having plumbing issues, with roots growing into their pipes.

Mary Benware

- Thanked the highway department for working on her road. She reported that everyone that was on the work crew today worked very hard and she was very appreciative of the improvements.

Vivian Goodman

- Reported the County had been sweeping on her end of County Route 24 today, and it was good to see work beginning on the road.

Glen Besaw

- Asked if our County legislature could find out why there is no grant money being made available to our counties.

Supervisor Newvine asked for a motion to audit the bills. A motion was made by Councilperson Bishop seconded by Councilperson Simmons to audit the bills. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

The bills audited for the General and Highway Fund were # 93 to # 143, with a total of \$100,559.38.

The next regular scheduled board meeting will be held on May 12th, 2025, at 6:00PM.

With no further business, on a motion of Councilperson Bishop, seconded by Councilperson Knight, the April 14, 2025, Regular Town Board meeting was adjourned at 6:52 PM. CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Tami Gale; Town Clerk