

Town of Fowler February 10th, 2025, Justice Audit & Town Clerk Audit and Regular Scheduled Board Meeting at 6PM.

The Town of Fowler Justice Audit & Town Clerk Audit and Regular scheduled Town Board meeting was held on the above date with all Board members present. Also present were Town Clerk Tami Gale, Bookkeeper Barbara Finnie, Town Justice Tim Knowlton, Code Enforcement Officer Glen Besaw, Assessor Chair Kathleen Besaw, Highway Superintendent Randy Durham, Planning Board Member John Walsh, Board of Ethics Committee member & Planning Board member Vicky Cappellino, Maintenance Worker Byron Woodward, Michael Cappellino, Laurina Greenhill, Julie Wood, and Deb Walsh.

Supervisor Newwine 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 for the family of those who have recently passed, Howard Haskins.

Supervisor Newwine asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the January 13th, 2025 Organizational Town board meeting. A motion was made by Councilperson Simmons seconded by Councilperson Bishop. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION #9 of 2025

Justice Audit & Town Clerk Audit of the 2024 Books

A motion was made by Councilperson Simmons seconded by Councilperson Knight to adopt a resolution to allow the Town Board to audit the Justice Department 2024 books & the Town Clerk 2024 books. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

AYES: 5 NEWWINE, SIMMONS, BISHOP, CLEVELAND, KNIGHT

NAYS: 0

ABSENT: 0

JUSTICE COURT AUDIT & TOWN CLERK AUDIT OF 2024 BOOKS

Supervisor Newwine noted the 2024 books and records of Town Justice Timothy Knowlton, and Town Clerk Tami Gale were presented to the board for review this evening and remained open for public inspection during the regular board meeting. The audit conducted by the town board members was completed at the end of the board meeting.

The 2024 books and records of Town Justice Timothy Knowlton and Town Clerk Tami Gale were presented for review. The board examined the records and dockets and verified that the records of criminal actions stated the names of the sworn witnesses as well as residence information. The records were duly examined, and it was determined that the fines therein collected have been turned over to the proper officials of the Town of Fowler as required by law. The Town Clerk's records, including the deposits of all funds, were determined to be in order.

RESOLUTION #10 of 2025

Payoff of the USDA bond and interest for the 2024 MACK Plow Truck

Bookkeeper Finnie reported that the highway department is starting the year with a fund balance of \$972,341.73 and there are enough funds to pay the truck off in its entirety. It was discussed that the pay-off would be in the amount of \$238,681.73.

After some discussion, a motion was made by Councilperson Cleveland seconded by Councilperson Knight to adopt a resolution to authorize the loan pay-off in its entirety in the amount of \$238,681.73 on serial bond-2024 to the United States of America acting through the USDA, dated as of the 13th day of December, 2024 . All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

AYES: 5 NEWVINE, SIMMONS, BISHOP, CLEVELAND, KNIGHT

NAYS: 0

ABSENT: 0

DISCUSSION ON THE 2026 MACK PLOW TRUCK USDA LOAN

Hwy. Superintendent Durham reported he was notified earlier today that there would be no grant received with the USDA bond for the newly ordered 2026 Mack Plow Truck, with a loan in the amount of \$288,000.00. Bookkeeper Finnie discussed there is enough money to pay for the 2026 Mack Plow Truck as it comes in, instead of incurring the cost of having a bond for the new truck. Supervisor Newvine stated that the board can discuss how to proceed with the financing of the 2026 Mack Plow Truck loan at a future board meeting.

DISCUSS AND AWARD TRACTOR MOWER BROOM BID 1-2025

Highway Superintendent Durham reported that he had the chance to look over and discuss the bids that were received at the January 10, 2025 board meeting with the bidders and was recommending awarding S N Partners the bid.

After some discussion, Supervisor Newvine asked for a motion to award the bid to S N Partners. A motion was made by Councilperson Knight seconded by Councilperson Cleveland and carried.

BEAVER CONTRACT

Supervisor Newvine discussed the Town of Fowler Beaver Contract is in effect from March 1st to December 31st and reported that Dan Moyer of Moyer's Wildlife Control will provide the service at the same rate that was paid in the year of 2025. Supervisor Newvine asked for a motion to award the beaver contract to Moyer's Wildlife Control for the year 2025 with the amount of \$300.00 paid per site. After some discussion, a motion was made by Councilperson Bishop seconded by Councilperson Simmons to award the beaver control contract to Moyer's Wildlife Control for the year 2025. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

Town Department Reports

Justice Department

Town Justice Timothy Knowlton reported:

- Court Clerk Irma Ashley had prepared the documents for the justice audit of the 2024 books.
- Everything is caught up and running smoothly.
- He and court clerk Ashley are providing services to the Town of Edwards, and the Town of Clare, along with the Town of Fowler. Court Clerk Ashley is also assisting as court clerk in the Town of Macomb.

Bookkeeper

Bookkeeper Barbara Finnie:

- Provided Cash Balance Reports for Month ending December 31, 2024 and Budget Balances for Month ending December 31, 2024 to the board for their review.
- Reported the general fund was 99.96% spent and had received 131.10% in revenue and the highway fund was 86.88% spent and had received 140.37% in revenue, stating both funds had done well for the end of the year.

Assessors

Assessor Chair Kathleen Besaw reported:

- The end of the assessment year is approaching, and the assessors have completed all of the valuations.
- She had learned the level of assessment for the Town of Fowler next year will be 7.7%.

Historian

Historian Karen Simmons:

- Everything is quiet in the historian office.
- She continues to wait for the Korean Conflict plaque to be made.

Animal Control

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

- There have been no complaints concerning dog control.

Beaver Control

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

- Beaver Control is done until the new contract begins on March 1st.
- It has been quiet with no concerns.

Code Enforcement

Code Enforcement Officer Glen Besaw reported:

- There is now an engineer residing in the Town of Fowler, who can provide engineering services for the Town when necessary.
- There is a resident in the Town of Fowler who can provide blower door tests for new construction, or multi resident dwellings.
- He has a couple of building permits to close and then he will be able to submit his yearly report to the State.
- He had provided a building inspection report to Supervisor Newvine on the property at 81 Little York Rd, which was damaged by fire on January 3, 2025.
- He had provided a copy of his building inspection report as well as the certified engineers report to Town Attorney Henry Leader's Office earlier in the day.

Supervisor Newvine read aloud the building inspection report provided by CEO Besaw. The inspection deems the property to be in a compromised state, posing a significant hazard to buildings on adjacent properties, pedestrians, and road traffic. The report also states the property to be a hazardous public nuisance and recommends the structure be demolished immediately for public safety concerns.

Supervisor Newvine asked Julie Wood, owner of the property at 81 Little York Rd, who was in attendance, where the process stood for the cleanup of property at this time. Julie Wood asked Supervisor Newvine for a copy of the certified engineer report, and stated it is her understanding that the building is still under

investigation, and no one can touch it to clear it. Ms. Wood expressed that she was displeased with the “order to remedy” letter she was issued by CEO Besaw. Ms. Wood reported that her lawyer has a copy of the “order to remedy” letter, the State Police are aware of the “order to remedy” letter, and we will have to go from there. Supervisor Newvine told Ms. Wood that a copy of the certified engineer report would be made available to her.

Town Clerk

Town Clerk Tami Gale reported:

- There were no DEC sales in the month of January.
- She had licensed 30 dogs, issued 8 death certificates, handled three building permits, and had collected \$3.25 in copies.
- January was a very busy month of collecting taxes. Taxes are 74.41% collected.
- The 34th Annual Local Government Conference is being held on Tuesday, April 1. She has packets for anyone who would like to be registered to attend, with reservations needing to be made by February 28th.
- The DEC is allowing an optional \$1.00 fee to be collected for the printing of hunting and fishing licenses, reporting she doesn’t know of any other clerks who are charging this fee, and asked the board their wishes. It was the consensus of the board not to charge the license printing fee.

Highway Department

Highway Superintendent Randy Durham reported:

- The new safety position compensation needed to be added to the Teamsters Union contract, reflecting that the union employee filling the position will receive an additional 20 hours of vacation.
- Asked the board to amend the Teamsters Union contract to change the language of the yearly boot allowance to include either clothing or boot allowance up to \$200.00 yearly. It was the consensus of the board to approve the change, with Supervisor Newvine preparing the necessary amendments to submit to the union representative.
- He has ordered 700 tons of salt for next year, which is the same amount he orders every year.
- Discussed the paving projects and repairs he intended to complete this year and asked for the board’s approval of the following agreement:

2025 AGREEMENT TO SPEND TOWN HIGHWAY FUNDS

Supervisor Newvine asked for a motion allowing the majority of the Town board members and Hwy. Superintendent Durham to sign the agreement to spend Town highway funds. The sum of \$55,000 for general repairs on 56.37 miles of highways. \$105,000 will be spent commencing at (the mines) Sylvia Lake Rd and leading to California Rd, a distance of 1.65miles, \$306,000 will be spent commencing at State Highway 58 (Country Club Rd) and leading to the double culverts, a distance of 2.1 miles.

A motion was made by Councilperson Knight seconded by Councilperson Bishop. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

RESIGNATION

Supervisor Newvine read aloud a letter of resignation submitted by Karen Simmons, resigning from the Ethics Committee effective January 14, 2025. Supervisor Newvine asked for a motion to accept the resignation. A motion was made by Councilperson Cleveland seconded by Councilperson Bishop and carried. Supervisor Newvine thanked Karen for her years of service on the ethics committee.

APPOINTMENT

Supervisor Newvine asked the board for a motion to appoint Leo Knight Jr. to the ethics committee. A motion was made by Councilperson Simmons seconded by Councilperson Cleveland and carried.

Maintenance Department

Maintenance Worker Byron Woodward:

- Thanked the highway department workers for their assistance in putting together the new wall lockers.
- He has completed painting the whole section in the highway department as well as the bathroom floor.
- He has installed a section of a counter top for the new microwave at the highway department.
- He is going to install a new hose on the last bay of the garage so two trucks can be washed at the same time.
- Discussed the work that would need to be done to prepare the pavilion for the possibility to house the food pantry in the future to accommodate refrigerators and freezers. After some discussion, it was the consensus of the board to put the idea on hold and further discuss the idea at a later time.

Councilmembers

Councilperson Karen Simmons:

- Reported the Chicken BBQ was well attended, taking in a total of \$2,650.00 with \$1,200.00 coming from donations.
- Thanked all who helped with, attended, or donated to the chicken BBQ's success.
- Reported in the month of January, the HAP food pantry had a total of 55 visits.
- Thanked Kenny Smith for the food items he donated to the cause.
- Reported the next delivery for the SOS Program will be in March, with 107 packages to be delivered.

Councilperson Cleveland:

- Discussed he is waiting for spring to complete the basketball court and will be ordering a new basketball hoop assembly for the court.

Councilperson Lynn Bishop:

- Asked Hwy. Superintendent Durham if he had the situation handled with the person pushing snow into the road. It was discussed that he had spoken to the offender.
- Reported the sight distance at the intersections look good.

Councilperson Leo Knight Jr:

- Thanked maintenance worker Byron Woodward for all of his work improving the highway department building, reporting that the newly installed wall lockers look great.

Supervisor Ricky W. Newvine:

- Read aloud thank you cards that were received from the Knight family, the family of Robert Paro Jr, and Friends 4 Pound Paws.
- Asked the board their thoughts about sponsoring a bench at the St. Lawrence County Fair for \$100.00. It was the consensus of the board to approve the request.
- Discussed, the bridge project meeting that was held at the town hall was very successful.

- He continues to work on obtaining a warranty for the Generac generator at the town hall.
- FEMA recovery paperwork is progressing well, and we are in good shape.
- Reported the town has received renewal paperwork from Fuller Insurance Company, with the municipal insurance policy set to renew on May 15th and asked the board their thoughts on putting the municipal insurance out to bid. After some discussion, it was the consensus of the board to obtain quotes from other insurance companies to come in at the April board meeting.
- Reported we received notification of a class action lawsuit being brought against a vendor used by the Town of Fowler which he will discuss the matter with the town attorney.
- Discussed, we received a public service announcement notifying the town that Liberty Utilities is announcing an increase.
- Reported he had received the 2025 Pilot Apportionment for Fowler Housing.

Public Comment

- Michael Cappellino asked if the board would consider having a plaque made in memory of and to honor past town clerk Sherrie Williams, that could be installed alongside the plaque honoring Thelma “Peg” Kendrew which is hung above the town clerk’s office window. It was the consensus of the board to have a plaque made to honor Sherrie Williams, as she was a great town clerk, and thanked Mike for his suggestion.
- Julie Wood wanted to let the board know that the highway department workers do an amazing job on the roads and are hard workers. She hopes in the future that she will still be a Town of Fowler resident.

Supervisor Newwine and Councilperson Simmons discussed family day and invited anyone who wanted to help this year to come to the first family day meeting being held on Thursday, February 20th at 3:00 PM.

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

The bills audited for the General and Highway Fund were #11 to #52 with a total of \$52,356.51.

The next regular scheduled board meeting will be held on March 10, 2025, at 6:00PM.

With no further business, on a motion of Councilperson Cleveland, seconded by Councilperson Knight, the February Audit & Regular Town Board meeting was adjourned at 6:50PM. CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Tami Gale; Town Clerk