

DECEMBER 30, 2024

REGULAR BOARD MEETING

The Town Board of the Town of Newfane, Niagara County, New York, met at the Town Hall, 2737 Main Street, Newfane, New York, on December 30, 2024.

The following Board Members were present:

Supervisor:	John Syracuse
Councilwoman:	Susan Neidlinger
Councilman:	Peter Robinson
Councilman:	Robert Horanburg
Councilman:	Richard Coleman

Others present: James Sansone, Town Attorney, Jon Miller, Highway Superintendent/Water Superintendent, David Schmidt, Building Inspector/Code Enforcement Officer, Nick Irr, Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator, JoAnn Harig, Real Property Appraisal Technician, Mary L. Zeller, Confidential Secretary, and 3 residents.

PRAYER & PLEDGE

Supervisor called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. A prayer was read by the Town Clerk and the Pledge to the flag was given.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

The Supervisor offered a moment of silence for former President James Earl Carter Jr. (Jimmy Carter) to honor him upon his passing.

MINUTES FILED WITH THE TOWN CLERK

Town Board Work Session Minutes October 10, 2024

Town Board Work Session Minutes November 14, 2024

APPROVE PREVIOUS MINUTES

Town Board Regular Meeting Minutes November 20, 2024

Supervisor Syracuse asked for a MOTION to approve the Town Board Regular Meeting Minutes held on November 20, 2024. Moved by Councilwoman Neidlinger, second by Councilman Horanburg, on the question. Hearing no questions, all were in favor, no one was opposed.
All present voted Aye. Motion Carried

Town Board Work Session Meeting Minutes December 11, 2024

Supervisor Syracuse asked for a MOTION to approve the Town Board Regular Meeting Minutes held on December 11, 2024. Moved by Councilman Robinson, second by Councilman Coleman, on the question. Hearing no questions, all were in favor, no one was opposed.
All present voted Aye. Motion Carried

MISCELLANEOUS FILED WITH THE TOWN CLERK

None

COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS

TOWN/MILLER HOSE/ADD PENNY LYMAN TO ROSTER

The Town Clerk read a request from Alexis Marvin, Secretary for Miller Hose Fire Company as follows: Please add Penny Lyman of 6116 Tachi Drive, to the Miller Hose Co. Inc., active roster, effective immediately. The Supervisor entertained a MOTION to accept the recommendation. Moved by Councilman Coleman, second by Councilman Horanburg on the question. Hearing no questions, all were in favor, no one was opposed.
All present voted Aye. Motion Carried

TOWN/CLERK/MOBILE HOME PARK LICENSES/RIDGEVIEW COOK MHP

The Town Clerk requested approval from the Board to issue a Mobile Home Park License for the 2025 Calendar Year to the following establishments: Ridgeview Cook, 3880 Lockport Olcott Road, Ridgeview Cook, 3902 Lockport Olcott Road, Ridgeview Cook, 3926 Lockport Olcott Road. The Supervisor entertained a MOTION to approve the 2025 Mobile Home Park Licenses for those properties. Moved by Councilwoman Neidlinger, second by Councilman Robinson on the question. The Supervisor asked if the documents that he and the Board are looking at are all complete and in order. The Town Clerk answered that they were. The Building Inspector answered that it appeared

they are continuing to try and clean up the areas. Hearing no further questions, all were in favor, no one was opposed.

All present voted Aye.

Motion Carried

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES AND DEPARTMENT HEADS

The following department heads were in attendance and gave a report on their department. Jon Miller, Highway Superintendent as well as the Water/Sewer Superintendent, reported that on the Highway side they were working on drainage and put in over 1,000 feet of tile this month and changed out a bunch of old driveways. We are continuing to do tree trimming and whatever else we can do as long as the weather holds up. On the water side, we've finished some water taps, catching up on work orders and the lead survey.

Nick Irr, Chief Operator of the WWTP advised the plant is running good with no functional issues. The construction is ongoing. We are working on installing all the equipment, most of the main components are there just not yet hooked up or plumbed in yet, they have been working on that for the last month or so and compost is still available.

David Schmidt, Building Inspector/Code Enforcement Officer, advised the Board that he has been working on entering all the building permits, planning and zoning board variances, etc, into the new program that has been installed to help accurately keep track of his records. He is also working on some new office procedures for permits, complaints, constables, planning/zoning board matters, etc., to increase the efficiency of the Building Inspector/Code Enforcement Department.

NEW BUSINESS

TOWN/SUPERVISOR/RESOLUTION #36--ESTABLISH RULES PUBLIC ACCESS RECORDS

The Supervisor brought forth RESOLUTION #36 -2024 RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING RULES PERTAINING TO PUBLIC ACCESS TO RECORDS OF THE TOWN OF NEWFANE.

WHEREAS, Public Officers Law Section 87 requires all Towns in the State of New York to promulgate uniform rules and regulations pertaining to public access to records in said Towns, and

WHEREAS, the Town of Newfane therefore, is required to promulgate uniform rules and regulations pertaining to public access to its records in order to be in compliance with this Statute,

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town of Newfane does hereby adopt the

following Rules pertaining to public access to records the Town of Newfane, SEE ATTACHED

RULES MADE PART OF THIS RESOLUTION AS EXHIBIT "A" BE IT FURTHER

RESOLVED THAT it is in the best interests of the Town of Newfane to adopt said Rules.

"EXHIBIT A" TOWN OF NEWFANE RULES PERTAINING TO PUBLIC ACCESS TO RECORDS OF THE TOWN OF NEWFANE

1. Purpose and scope
2. Designation of records access officer
3. Location
4. Hours for public inspection
5. Requests for public access to records
6. Subject matter list
7. Denial of access to records
8. Fees
9. Policy on the Release of Employee-Related Information Under FOIL
10. Severability
11. Modification

1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

(a) The State Legislature finds that a free society is maintained when government is responsive and responsible to the public. The people's right to know the process of government decision-making and the documents and statistics leading to determinations is basic to our society. The more open a government is with its residents, the greater the understanding and participation of the public in government. All Town records belong to our citizens, and it is our duty to care for them properly and make them available. This policy serves as a detailed element of the FOIL Law; see Public Officers Law, Article 6, §84-90 [Freedom of Information Law].

(b) Any New York State or municipal department or government entity performing a governmental or proprietary function is subject to the Freedom of Information Law, most commonly referred to as "F.O.I.L." or "FOIL". Each governmental entity is an "agency." Set forth herein are the procedures to be followed when individuals seek access, pursuant to the Freedom of Information Law, to records in the custody of and maintained by the Town of Newfane.

- (c) The Town Clerk, as Records Management Officer, shall furnish to the public the information and records required by the Freedom of Information Law, as well as records otherwise available by law. In this regard the term "records" is defined to include any information kept, held, filed, produced or reproduced by, with or for the Town, in any physical form whatsoever including, but not limited to, reports, statements, examinations, memoranda, opinions, folders, files, books, manuals, pamphlets, forms, papers, designs, drawings, maps, photos, letters, microfilms, computer tapes or discs, rules, regulations or codes.
- 2. DESIGNATION OF RECORDS ACCESS OFFICER**
 - (a) The Newfane Town Clerk is responsible for insuring compliance with FOIL and with the policies and procedures established by the Town of Newfane for responding to release of information requests. The Town Clerk, by Town Board Resolution, is designated as Records Access Officer.
- 3. LOCATION**
 - (a) Records shall be available for public inspection and copying at Newfane Town Hall, 2737 Main Street, Newfane, NY 14108, unless otherwise specified.
- 4. HOURS FOR PUBLIC INSPECTION**
 - (a) Requests for public access to records may be made by appointment with the Town Clerk.
- 5. REQUEST FOR PUBLIC ACCESS TO RECORDS**

A written request shall be required via the Town's standard request form or via email to donna@townofnewfane.com and will be generally used, although it will not be an absolute requirement to use the form when filing a Freedom of Information Law request. All FOIL requests should be directed and/or submitted to the Town Clerk. It shall be the responsibility of the Town Clerk and/or the Deputy Town Clerk to make the decision as to how each FOIL request should be handled.

 - (a) An acknowledgment letter will be sent to the requestor within five (5) business days of receipt of a request by the Town Clerk or the Deputy Town Clerk. Upon receipt of same, said request shall be time stamped by the Town Clerk or Deputy Town Clerk, which will commence the running of the five-business day period to acknowledge said receipt.
 - (b) A decision and response will be made by the Town Clerk and/or Deputy Town Clerk, which shall be reasonable under the circumstances of the request, as to whether the request will be granted, denied or that circumstances prevent disclosure.
 - (c) The records will be provided on the medium requested by the requestor if the Town can reasonably make such a copy or have such copy made by engaging an outside professional service for a fee determined by the Town Clerk.
 - (d) If records are maintained on the internet, the requestor shall be informed that the records are accessible via the internet.
 - (e) The Town Clerk, or Deputy Town Clerk may require a person requesting lists of names and addresses to provide a written certification that such person will not use such lists of names and addresses for solicitation or fund-raising purposes and will not sell, give or otherwise make available such lists of names and addresses to any other person for the purpose of allowing that person to use such lists of names and addresses for solicitation or fund-raising purposes.
 - (f) Once the Town Clerk or Deputy Town Clerk has obtained the records that have been requested, the requestor will be contacted to either review the records, or pick up the copies of the records. The Town Clerk or Deputy Town Clerk will inform the requestor of the times and the places the records are available, from whom the records may be obtained, and the fees for the copies of the records requested. While in most cases, the records will be forwarded to the Town Clerk's Office, in some cases, the requester will be asked to view or pick up the records at the respective department.
 - (g) The Town Clerk or Deputy Town Clerk will close the FOIL request once it is satisfied and paid, or it is denied.
 - (h) A failure to comply with the time limitations described herein may result in the request being deemed denied and subject to appeal.
- 6. SUBJECT MATTER LIST**
 - (a) The Town Clerk's Office shall maintain a reasonably detailed current list by subject matter of all records maintained by the Town of Newfane, whether or not records are available pursuant to subdivision two of Section eighty-seven of the Public Officers Law.
 - (b) The NYS LGS-1 Schedule will serve as the Town's subject matter list.
- 7. DENIAL OF ACCESS TO RECORDS AND APPEAL OF DENIAL**
 - (a) Denial of access to records shall be from the Town Clerk and shall be in writing stating the reason therefore and advising the requester of the right to appeal in writing, within thirty (30) days of the denial, to: Supervisor, Town of Newfane, 2737 Main Street, Newfane, NY 14108, Phone: 716-778-8531.
 - (b) The time for deciding an appeal by the Newfane Town Supervisor shall commence upon receipt of the written appeal that identifies the following:
 - (1) The date and location of requests for records;

- (2) A description, to the extent possible, of the records that were denied; and
- (3) The name and return address of the person denied access.
- (4) Said appeal shall include copies of the original request and the Town's response thereto.
- (5) A failure to determine an appeal within ten (10) business days of its receipt by granting access to the records sought or fully explaining the reasons for further denial in writing shall constitute a denial of the appeal.
- (6) The Newfane Town Clerk or the Town Supervisor shall inform the appellant and the Committee on Open Government of its determination in writing within ten (10) business days of receipt of an appeal.
- (7) The determination shall be transmitted to the Committee on Open Government at the following address:

Committee on Open Government
Department of State
41 State Street
Albany, NY 12231

8. FEES

- (a) There shall be no fee charged for:
 - (1) Inspection of records
 - (2) A Reasonable Search for records; or
 - (3) Any certification pursuant to this part.
- (b) Copies may be provided without charging a fee, at the sole discretion of the Town.
- (c) Fees for copies may be charged, provided that:
 - (1) The fee for copying records is 25 cents per page for photocopies not exceeding 9 by 14 inches, and/or the actual cost of reproduction.
 - (2) In addition to the fee for copies of records covered by paragraph (1) of this subdivision, fees for the actual cost of reproducing any other records in varying forms of media such as a computer disk, may also be charged; the cost of reproducing a record may include the hourly salary paid to the lowest paid agency employee able to reproduce the record if at least two hours of agency employee time is needed to prepare a copy of the record requested, the cost of the storage device or media provided to the person making the request and the cost of engaging an outside organization to produce a copy of the record.
- (d) The requestor will be instructed to pay the Town Clerk the fees incurred.
- (e) The requestor, if required by the Town, will pay a monetary deposit prior to the photocopying of documents. Said deposit will be based upon the estimated cost, as determined by the Town, of the fees required in Paragraph 8 (c) above. This will ensure that the requestor is serious in the request to receive information and avoid the risk of time being wasted by employees making photocopies of records which are never claimed.
- (f) The fee for reproducing an electronic record on computer disk shall not exceed \$5.00 for the media.

9. POLICY ON THE RELEASE OF EMPLOYEE-RELATED INFORMATION UNDER FOIL

- (a) **Notification Requirement:**
The Town of Newfane will provide notice to current and former public employees if their employment records are subject to a FOIL request. Notification shall occur after the records are released, in line with the legislative intent to ensure minimal notice.
- (b) **Content of the Notification:**
The notification will include a statement informing the employee that their employment records have been released. While there is no requirement to provide a copy of the FOIL request or the released records, the Town will provide any records released to the employee.
- (c) **Delivery of Notification:**
The notice should be delivered in writing, either via regular mail or email, depending on the availability of the employee's contact information. In the event that a former employee is unable to be contacted, all reasonable efforts will be made and these attempts documented. Such notification efforts shall be the responsibility of the Town Clerk.
- (d) **Disciplinary Records:**
The Town will use the definition of "disciplinary records" under Public Officers Law (POL) §86(6) for law enforcement, applying it to non-law enforcement employees. Counseling memos may also be classified as disciplinary records if they relate to employment discipline.

10. SEVERABILITY

If any provision of these rules or the application thereof to any person or circumstances is adjudged invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, such judgment shall not affect or impair the validity of the other provisions of these rules or the application thereof to other persons and circumstances.

11. MODIFICATIONS

These Regulations may be modified or revised from time to time by resolution of the Town Board. The Supervisor entertained a MOTION to accept the Resolution. Motion made by Councilman

Horanburg, second by Councilman Coleman on the question. Hearing no questions, the Supervisor called for a roll call vote.

Councilwoman Neidlinger: AYE
Councilman Robinson: AYE
Councilman Horanburg: AYE
Councilman Coleman: AYE
Supervisor Syracuse: AYE

5 AYE 0 NAY

Motion Carried

TOWN/SUPERVISOR/MOTION/FISH CLEANING STATION

The Supervisor requested a MOTION for permission to have the Town Supervisor seek a public bid for a replacement fish cleaning station at the Town of Newfane Marina and to have our Town Attorney and Town Engineer prepare the bid documents. The Supervisor entertained a MOTION to accept the Resolution. Motion made by Councilman Coleman, second by Councilman Robinson on the question. The Supervisor explained to the Board that we continue to have issues with the Fish Cleaning Station that we now have in place and it certainly has bypassed it’s life expectancy. I briefed the council on a potential SAM Grant Application, and we were awarded \$50,000.00 for a Fish Cleaning Station through the help and hard work of Assemblyman Michael Norris and Assemblyman Elect Paul Bologna to achieve that grant. Working through the project scope we have estimates of approximately \$116,000.00, those are rough estimates and I have prepared the paperwork to submit to the State this morning. Those documents are due by January 10th, 2025. This will allow us to once again be a premier spot along Lake Ontario as one of the few ports in our area that will have a Fish Cleaning Station, which is essential as being known as one of the top fishing destinations in the world. The Supervisor asked if any of the Board Members had any questions. Hearing no questions, all were in favor, no one was opposed.

Motion Carried

PAY BILLS

The Supervisor entertained a MOTION to approve the payment of claims totaling \$1,689,337.90, bills paid in December, 2024, Vouchers #37219-37390, as audited by the Supervisor and Department Heads and as per Abstract Sheets dated 11/20/2024 to 12/30/2024 which will be filed with the official record.

General Fund	\$ 304,531.33
Highway Fund	\$ 190,519.19
Water Fund	\$ 82,127.63
Sewer Fund	\$ 155,375.70
Lighting District	\$ 13,993.52
Refuse District	\$ 141,291.91
Fire Prevention District	\$ 2,986.00
Trust & Agency	\$ 2,782.98
Capital Projects	\$ <u>795,729.64</u>
TOTAL APPROVED	\$1,689,337.90

Motion made by Councilwoman Neidlinger, second by Councilman Horanburg on the question. There were no questions, all were in favor, no one was opposed.

Motion Carried

DECEMBER 30, 2024

REGULAR BOARD MEETING cont.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE BOARD

Reorganizational Meeting Thursday, January 2, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.

Town Board Work Session Thursday, January 9, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.

Town Board Regular Town Meeting Wednesday, January 22, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.

ADJOURN

The Supervisor entertained a MOTION to adjourn. Motion made by Councilwoman Neidlinger, second by Councilman Horanburg on the question. Hearing no questions, all were in favor, no one was opposed.

Motion Carried

Meeting adjourned at 7:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Donna M. Lakes".

Donna M. Lakes

Town Clerk

Next Regular Town Board Meeting Wednesday, January 22, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.