

Town of Fowler August 11, 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 all board members present. Also present were Town Clerk Tami Gale, Town Justice Tim Knowlton, Highway Superintendent Randy Durham, Planning Board members Stephen Gale and John Walsh, Assessor Chair Kathy Besaw, Code Enforcement Officer Glen Besaw, Maintenance Worker Byron Woodward, Ethics Committee Member Vivian Goodman, Debbie Walsh, Lisa Durham, Thomas C. Haynes Chief Engineer of Gouverneur Fire Department, Shelley Clancy Exalted Ruler of Gouverneur Elk's Lodge #2035, and Rachel Hunter, Editor of the Gouverneur Tribune Press.

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 those who have passed since our last meeting: Mr. Terry Richards.

Supervisor Newwine asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the July 14, 2025, regular scheduled board meeting. A motion was made by Councilperson Cleveland, seconded by Councilperson Bishop . All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

Presentation of proposed 3-Year Fire Protection Contract by Thomas C. Haynes, Chief Engineer, Gouverneur Fire Department

Supervisor Newwine introduced Thomas C. Haynes to meeting attendees with a presentation of a proposed 3-year fire protection contract for the Town of Fowler. Mr. Haynes reported that there were 40 calls for fire service in the Town of Fowler in 2024, and as of July, 2025 there have been 30 calls in the Town of Fowler.

Mr. Haynes reported that the current contract for fire protection services ends on December 31st of this year and provided the proposed contract yearly amounts over the next 3 years as follows:

- **January 1, 2026 to December 31, 2026 - \$50,595.00**
- **January 1, 2027 to December 31, 2027 - \$53,125.00**
- **January 1, 2028 to December 31, 2028 - \$55,780.00**

Chief Engineer Haynes discussed the fire department is seeking a 5% increase in the contract over the next 3 years and provided board members with copies of the proposed contract. Chief Engineer Haynes thanked the board for their consideration as they begin the budgeting process.

Supervisor Newwine thanked Chief Engineer Haynes for the presentation and the valuable service that is provided to the Town of Fowler.

Exalted Ruler Shelley Clancy of Gouverneur Elks Lodge #2035

Supervisor Newwine introduced Shelley Clancy, Exalted Ruler of Gouverneur Elks Lodge #2035 to meeting attendees for a presentation of checks to the Town of Fowler.

Exalted Ruler Clancy reported she had two donations from the Elks Lodge to present this evening. The first was a \$100.00 check to benefit the food pantry and the second was a \$100.00 check to benefit the playground.

Supervisor Newwine thanked the Gouverneur Elks Lodge for their donations.

Advanced Business Systems Quote

Supervisor Newwine discussed the need to purchase new computers for the offices of bookkeeper, highway superintendent, and code enforcement, to prepare for the official end of Windows 10 support, which will occur on October 14, 2025. A quote in the amount of \$5,370.12 was received from Advanced Business Systems to replace the three computers. After some discussion, a motion was made by Councilperson Knight seconded by Councilperson Cleveland to approve the quote. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

Resignation

Supervisor Newwine read aloud a letter of resignation from Councilperson Scott Cleveland informing the board that he will be vacating his position as Councilman for the Town of Fowler effective August 25, 2025, as he will be retired from the New York State & Local Retirement System effective August 26, 2025. Councilperson Cleveland stated he looks forward to volunteering for the Town of Fowler in the future and thanked the board for their support and encouragement over the last five years.

Supervisor Newwine and board members thanked Councilperson Cleveland for his service to the Town of Fowler.

Town Department Reports

Justice Department

Town Justice Tim Knowlton reported:

- He completed his yearly mandated training at SUNY Potsdam in July.
- There was a glitch in the court system software that had affected over 150 courts, including the Town of Fowler, which has now been fixed.
- The August 19th court date is going to be busy.

Bookkeeper

Bookkeeper Barbara Finnie:

- She had provided Cash Balance Reports for Month ending June, 2025 and Cash Balance Reports for Month ending June, 2025 to the board for their review.
- 47.89% of the General Fund has been spent with 75.82% of revenues received.
- 64.60% of the Highway Fund has been spent with 91.48% of revenues received.
- Discussed that being half way through the year we are doing very well, stating even though the highway fund is over in its expenditure, we are going to be receiving a lot more in revenue.
- Reported the 3rd quarter sales tax was received in the amount of \$187,421.87.
- Reported she would be sending out budget requests to all of the department heads by September 1st.
- Reported at the September board meeting we will need to schedule a budget workshop for revenue and then schedule a second budget workshop for expenditures.

Assessors

Assessor Chair Kathy Besaw reported:

- The Town of Fowler needed to re- pass a local law to continue to provide a volunteer firefighters and volunteer ambulance workers exemption due to legislation that had passed, which will end the previous exemption on December 31, 2025.
- This exemption is 10% off property taxes, and she doesn't think too many eligible volunteers are aware of the exemption.

- The Town of Fowler was served again this year by Fowler Hydro who are again attesting their assessment.
- She continues to wait for the State assessment of properties that were previously done in the Town of Fowler.

Historian

Historian Karen Simmons reported:

- It has been quiet in the historian's office.

Animal Control

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

- The Town of Fowler is sponsoring a rabies clinic from 6:00 PM to 8:00PM this Thursday at the town barn.
- Attendees must make an appointment by calling the town clerk's office or can do so online. Walk-ins cannot be accepted according to mandates by the Department of Health.
- One dog complaint was received by a resident of the River Rd, which seems to be resolved.

Beaver Control

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

- Beavers have been active at the culvert located on River Rd, near the Prashaw residence.
- No other beaver activity has been reported.

Code Enforcement

Code Enforcement Officer Glen Besaw reported:

- The County is not going to be demolishing the structure at 81 Little York Rd as was previously reported. There was a misunderstanding and the property that the County is cleaning up is the structure on County Route 22.
- He will have a meeting with the Town Attorney tomorrow to determine how to proceed with the removal of the structure at 81 Little York Rd.

Town Clerk

Town Clerk Tami Gale reported:

- DEC Gross sales for the month were \$228.00 with the Town of Fowler's Commission being \$12.58. She had licensed 34 dogs, issued 1 Marriage License, handled 7 building permit applications, issued 1 Certified Marriage Transcript, collected \$3.00 in miscellaneous dog fees, sold 2 bicentennial books, and had collected \$2.00 for photo copies.
- She received a check for scrap metal in the amount of \$134.60 for 2.41 tons of scrap.
- Reminded everyone that the Local Government Conference at SUNY Potsdam is being held on October 14th from 8:00 AM to 3:30 PM, which is returning to a full day with lunch provided and to contact her if you would like to be signed up for the training.
- Thanked Deputy Town Clerk Kim Reed for preparing the billing for the multiple other towns and villages who share dignitaries with the Town of Fowler. Billing has been submitted to 3 towns who share our court clerk, 2 towns who share our assessor chair, and 2 towns and 2 villages who share our code enforcement officer, to recoup departmental expenditures paid by the Town of Fowler.
- The new Zulty's phone system was installed. Anyone who hasn't done so will need to set up their own personal pin number to receive their voicemail.

- As of meeting time 103 appointments have been scheduled to attend the rabies clinic on Thursday.

Maintenance

Maintenance Worker Byron Woodward reported:

- Suggested the lifeguard chair should be replaced next season and should be made from composite material instead of wood material.

Highway Department

Highway Superintendent Randy Durham:

- Reported Country Club Rd is open and is almost finished.
- Support of other towns continues with paying them back for their help with our paving.
- Doane Rd is scheduled to be paved on Thursday at a cost of just under \$70,000. It will be paid for using some CHIPS funds awarded this year, leaving about \$170,000 in CHIPS funds to roll over into next year's projects and by using Extreme Weather funds in the amount of \$39,125 which must be used this year.
- Next year he plans to pave 2.1 miles of outer Country Club Rd.
- They have replaced 16 culverts in preparation.
- He is expecting to go into next year's projects with a revenue of almost \$600,000 including monies received from FEMA funds.
- He plans to pave 2.69 miles of Chub Lake Rd next year.
- He reported that outer Country Club Rd is the last road that needs to be rebuilt.
- Reported that every road has been worked on in the last 10 years, and future town boards and highway superintendents will see the benefits.

Supervisor Newvine stated he has heard from taxpayers complimenting the work completed on Country Club Rd.

Councilmembers

Councilperson Cleveland:

- Asked maintenance worker Byron Woodward to build boxes to enable him to install the benches at the playground that have been stored in the pavilion.
- He continues to wait for a date for the basketball court repairs.
- He repaired the spring ride on toy at the playground again. Once the repairs to the basketball court are completed, he would like to replace the spring ride on toys with new ones.
- He would still like to have a 4 ft fence installed along the property line at the playground to keep balls from the neighboring property.
- Thanked everyone again for the last five years serving on the town board, saying he is looking forward to volunteering and maybe in the future he can return to being a board member.

Councilperson Lynn Bishop:

- Had no further questions or commentary.

Councilperson Leo Knight Jr.:

- Asked Hwy. Superintendent Durham if he was going to install new guardrails on Country Club Rd, or if he had plans to paint the existing guardrails. Hwy. Superintendent Durham stated he would look at seeing if he could make improvements to the existing guardrails.

- Asked Hwy. Superintendent Durham if he was going to use the sand in the parking lot. Hwy. Superintendent Durham reported he was going to put the sand in the barn, but currently the BOCES bull dozer is broken , so he will have to rent a dozer in a few weeks as time allows him to put the sand in the barn.

Councilperson Karen Simmons:

- Reported in the month of July, the HAP Program was open 1 week and was visited 12 times.
- Reported there will not be a SOS Program delivery in September due to her broken wrist. The next SOS Program delivery will be made in December.
- Family Day was a success and raised \$8,137.51 after expenses for the playground.
- Thanked everyone for the card and gift card she received after her recent accident.
- Reported that maintenance worker Byron Woodward had done a great job applying epoxy on the floor of the dog kennel.

Supervisor Ricky W. Newvine:

- Asked Hwy. Superintendent Durham to sweep the bridge at the bottom of the hill on Island Branch Rd.
- Reported the insurance company had covered the entire bill for the salt/sand barn repairs with a check in the amount of \$67,500.
- Reported he had received a letter from the Association of Towns with the amount of the town's dues for 2026 at a cost of \$900.00.
- Reported he is attending a seminar in Warrensburg.
- Reported he had received a thank you letter from the Hailesboro Cemetery Association for the donation in memory of Lillith Griffith.
- Reported he had received a thank you letter from the Gouverneur and St. Lawrence County Fair Board with a photo of the Town of Fowler bench purchased for the fairgrounds.
- Reported he had received a request from the Natural Bridge Volunteer Ambulance Company asking for a letter of support.
- Reported he had received a new worker compensation form from the County.

Planning Board

Planning Board Chair Stephen Gale reported:

- There will be a land division meeting held in August.

Public Comment

- Glen Besaw complimented the flagging procedures of the highway department in Fowler as compared to other towns he has driven through.

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

The bills audited for the General and Highway Fund were #289 to #325 with a total of \$168,073.16.

The Town Hall will be closed on Labor Day, Monday, September 1ST.

The next regularly scheduled board meeting will be held on September 8th, 2025, at 6:00PM.

With no further business, on a motion of Councilperson Knight , seconded by Councilperson Simmons, the August 11th, 2025, Regular Town Board meeting was adjourned at 6:58PM. CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Tami Gale; Town Clerk