

Town of Fowler January Organizational Meeting Minutes held on January 13, 2025, at 6:00 PM.

The Regular scheduled January Organizational Meeting was held on the above date, with all board members present. Also present were Town Clerk Tami Gale, Highway Superintendent Randy Durham, Assessor Tim Thomas, Code Enforcement Officer Glen Besaw, Planning Board and Code of Ethics Committee member Vicky Cappellino, Michael Cappellino, Richard Clement, Planning Board member John Walsh, Deb Walsh, 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 those who have recently passed: Max Tessmer, Malcolm Hill, Eric Wood, Cheryl Given, Art Taylor, and Shirley Johnson.

Supervisor Newvine asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the December 9th, 2024, Town board meeting. A motion was made by Councilperson Cleveland, seconded by Councilperson Bishop. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

Supervisor Newvine asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the Special Year-End Transfer Meeting held on December 23rd, 2024. A motion was made by Councilperson Simmons, seconded by Councilperson Knight. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

2025 Gouverneur Rescue Squad Agreement

Supervisor Newvine reported that there was a change in the agenda and Mark Deavers, Director of Gouverneur Rescue Squad, would not be in attendance. Supervisor Newvine asked for a motion to approve the yearly agreement with the Gouverneur Rescue Squad which saw a 3 percent increase. A motion was made by Councilperson Knight seconded by Councilperson Simmons to approve Supervisor Newvine to sign the agreement.

RECOMMENDED APPOINTMENTS FOR 2025

Supervisor Newvine asked the board if they all had the list of Recommended Appointments for 2025. Supervisor Newvine asked the Board if there were any questions or concerns about the appointments. With no questions voiced, Supervisor Newvine asked for a motion to approve the recommended appointments for 2025 as follows: Budget Director - Ricky W. Newvine, Deputy Supervisor - Karen M. Simmons, 1st Deputy- Clerk, Tax Collector - Debra Tupper, 2nd Deputy- Clerk, Tax Collector - Kim Reed, Court Clerk - Irma Ashley, Town Hall Custodian - Rosalee Thornton, Maintenance - Byron Woodward, Official Lawyer - Case & Leader, Code Enforcement Officer - Glen Besaw, Tax Collector - Tami Gale, Registrar of Vital Statistics - Tami Gale, Deputy Registrar of Vital Statistics - Kim Reed, Board of Assessment Review Member - Candy Brown, Official Depositories - Community Bank, Official Newspaper - Tribune Press & Watertown Times, Investment - CLASS - MBIA, Deputy Highway Superintendent - Nelson Bice, Historian - Karen Simmons, Dog Control Officer - Dan Moyer, Bookkeeper - Barbara Finnie, Ethics Board Member - Marcia Cleveland and Alex MacKinnon.

A motion was made by Councilperson Cleveland, seconded by Councilperson Bishop to accept the appointments as listed. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

OATHS OF OFFICE

Town Clerk Tami Gale administered the Oath of Office to those in attendance.

BOARD MEETING DATES & TIME

Supervisor Newwine reported on the 2025 Town Board Meeting Schedule. All Town board meetings in 2025 will be held on the 2nd Monday of each month at 6:00PM except for the month of October & November, which will be determined at a later date.

2025 TOWN BOARD MEETING DATES

Meetings are held on the 2nd Monday of each month at 6PM at the Town Hall

January 13, 2025	July 14, 2025
February 10, 2025	August 11, 2025
March 10, 2025	September 8, 2025
April 14, 2025	October (TBD)
May 12, 2025	November (TBD)
June 9, 2025	December 8, 2025

Supervisor Newwine asked for a motion to approve the meeting dates for 2025. A motion was made by Councilperson Cleveland seconded by Councilperson Bishop. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

2025 SALARY SCHEDULE

Supervisor Newwine read aloud the Town of Fowler Salary Schedule for the year 2025 and asked for a motion to approve the Salary Schedule. A motion was made by Councilperson Simmons seconded by Councilperson Knight to approve the Salary Schedule. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

2025 TOWN BOARD COMMITTEES & DEPARTMENT HEADS

Supervisor Newwine asked for a motion to approve the 2025 Town Board Committees and Department Heads reporting they will remain the same. A motion was made by Councilperson Cleveland seconded by Councilperson Simmons to approve the Committees and Department Heads. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

Supervisor Ricky W. Newwine	- Sylvia Lake Beach, Hailesboro -Ballpark, Solar Projects
Councilperson Leo Knight Jr. Councilperson Karen Simmons	- Highway Department - Animal Control, Cemeteries, Food Programs, Beaver Control
Councilperson Lynn Bishop Councilperson Scott Cleveland	- Mowing - Pavilion & Playground, Use of -Town Hall and Pavilion
Audit Committee	- Supervisor Newwine, Bookkeeper Finnie, Councilperson Simmons
Union Contract Negotiations	- Supervisor Ricky W, Newwine, Councilperson Cleveland, Councilperson Knight

MILEAGE RATE

Supervisor Newwine asked the board for a motion to approve the mileage rate as is set by the State at .70 cents per mile for 2025. A motion was made by Councilperson Simmons seconded by Councilperson Cleveland. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

OPEN & AWARD TRACTOR MOWER BROOM BID 1-2025

<u>BIDDER</u>	<u>BID AMOUNT</u>
Charles Grant S N Partners Bid No. 1	\$133,660.35
Charles Grant S N Partners Bid No. 2	\$121,083.71
Champlain Valley Equipment	\$155,143.72
Whites Farm Supply	\$105,845.00

After some discussion, Supervisor Newvine asked for a motion to accept all of the bids and have Hwy. Superintendent Durham go over the specifications and council will award the Bid at the February 10, 2025 board meeting. A motion was made by Councilperson Cleveland seconded by Councilperson Bishop and carried.

2025 AGREEMENTS

Supervisor Newvine presented three Agreements that are executed yearly to the Town board for their consideration, and asked for a motion giving him permission to sign the following:

1. **CEMETERY AGREEMENT (HAILESBORO CEMETERY ASSOCIATION) IN THE AMOUNT OF \$5,000.**
2. **READING ROOM AGREEMENT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$1,400.**
3. **RECREATION CENTER AGREEMENT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$1,200.**

A motion was made by Councilperson Simmons seconded by Councilperson Knight and carried.

RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION # 1 of 2025

AUTHORIZE PAYMENT IN ADVANCE OF AUDIT

A motion was made by Councilperson Cleveland seconded by Councilperson Knight to adopt Resolution #1 of 2025, a resolution to authorize the payment in advance of audits of claims for public utility services, postage, freight, express charges, and health insurance premiums. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

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

NAYS: 0

RESOLUTION # 2 of 2025

PROCUREMENT POLICY FOR THE TOWN OF FOWLER. NO CHANGES.

Supervisor Newvine discussed resolution #2 of 2025, a resolution to adopt the Town of Fowler Procurement Policy with no changes.

A motion was made by Councilperson Bishop seconded by Councilperson Simmons to adopt Resolution #2 of 2025, a procurement policy for the Town of Fowler, its officers, agents, and employees required by Section 104-b of the New York State General Municipal Law to apply to the purchasing of all goods and services which are not required by law to be publicly bid. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

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

NAYS: 0

RESOLUTION # 3 of 2025

OFFICIAL UNDERTAKING OF OFFICERS OF THE TOWN OF FOWLER

A motion was made by Councilperson Cleveland seconded by Councilperson Knight to adopt Resolution #3 of 2025, a resolution for the respective officers of the Town of Fowler; Supervisor, Bookkeeper to the Supervisor, Town Clerk, 1st Deputy Town Clerk, 2nd Deputy Town Clerk, Tax Receiver, 1st Deputy Tax Receiver, 2nd Deputy Tax Receiver, Registrar of Vital Records, Deputy Registrar of Vital Records, Deputy Supervisor, Highway Superintendent, Town Justice, and Court Clerk to undertake with the Town of Fowler that they will faithfully perform and discharge the duties of their office and will promptly account for and pay over all moneys or property received as a Town Officer, in accordance with the law. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

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

NAYS: 0

RESOLUTION #4 of 2025

HOLDING HARMLESS AGREEMENT WITH ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY

A motion was made by Councilperson Cleveland seconded by Councilperson Knight to adopt Resolution #4 of 2025, a resolution to hold harmless the County of St. Lawrence County for providing service for the year 2025. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

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

NAYS: 0

RESOLUTION # 5 of 2025

ADDITIONAL 2024 BUDGET TRANSFERS FOR 1/13/2025 BOARD MEETING

Supervisor Newvine submitted Resolution #5 of 2025 to the board for adoption. The additional Town of Fowler 2024 Budget Transfers were described by Bookkeeper Barbara Finnie as transfers to get accounts out of the hole and make accounts even. The Budget Transfers from the General Fund totaled \$4,093.03 and went to balance 13 accounts. The Budget Transfers from the Highway Fund totaled \$25,400.00 and went to balance 8 accounts.

A motion was made by Councilperson Simmons seconded by Councilperson Knight to adopt Resolution 5 of 2025, additional Town of Fowler 2024 Budget Transfers. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

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

NAYS: 0

RESOLUTION # 6 of 2025

GENERAL FUND BUDGET AMENDMENT

A motion was made by Councilperson Cleveland seconded by Councilperson Bishop to adopt Resolution #6 of 2025, a resolution to amend the 2024 General Fund Budget to reflect an increase in the Estimated Revenues and Appropriations due to ARPA Revenue - Estimated Revenues A510 and Appropriations A960 would be increased by \$3,082.00. The subsidiary revenue account A4089 Federal Aid would increase by \$3,082.00. Appropriation accounts A7180.2 Sylvia Lake – Equipment would increase by \$1,760.68. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

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

NAYS: 0

ABSENT: 0

RESOLUTION # 7 of 2025

GENERAL FUND BUDGET AMENDMENT

A motion was made by Councilperson Knight seconded by Councilperson Bishop to adopt Resolution #7 of 2025, a resolution to reflect an increase in the Estimated Revenues and Appropriations due to Pavilion and Playground donations. Estimated Revenues A510 and Appropriations A960 would be increased by \$7,127.17. The subsidiary revenue account A2771 Miscellaneous Revenues would increase by \$7,127.17. Appropriation accounts A7140.420 Pavilion – Contractual would increase by \$6,348.17 and A7140.410 Playground – Contractual would increase by \$779.00. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

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

NAYS: 0

ABSENT: 0

RESOLUTION # 8 of 2025

GENERAL FUND BUDGET AMENDMENT

A motion was made by Councilperson Simmons seconded by Councilperson Cleveland to adopt Resolution #8 of 2025 to amend the 2024 General Fund Budget to reflect an increase in the Estimated Revenues and Appropriations due to Senior Packages donations (SOS Program) and Hometown Assistance Program (HAP Program) donations. Estimated Revenues A510 and Appropriations A960 would be increased by \$9,388.59. The

Subsidiary revenue account A2774 Miscellaneous Revenues would increase by \$9,388.59. Appropriation accounts A3030.400 Senior Donations – Contractual increased by \$9,388.59. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

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

NAYS: 0

ABSENT: 0

Town Department Reports

Justice Department

Justice Tim Knowlton was not in attendance.

Bookkeeper

Bookkeeper Barbara Finnie reported:

- She will have the final numbers for December, 2024 at the next board meeting.

Assessors

Assessor Tim Thomas reported:

- The assessors will be holding a meeting tomorrow to discuss assessments to be added on work completed from building permits.

Historian

Historian Karen Simmons reported:

- She is waiting for a plaque to be made for the Korean Conflict.

Dog Control

Dog Control Officer Dan Moyer was not in attendance.

Councilperson Karen Simmons reported for Dan Moyer:

- There were no complaints received.

Beaver Control

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

- He has completed beaver control on Fullerville Rd.
- He will be performing beaver control on Little York Rd.

Code Enforcement

Code Enforcement Officer Glen Besaw reported:

- There are safety issues concerning the remnants of the house fire at 81 Little York Rd.
- The building has been posted and needs to be torn down.
- Asked the board for permission to have a local, licensed engineer evaluate and provide a report to his office concerning the condition of the building for liability purposes, and any possible future litigation.
- It was discussed that the licensed engineer will be paid at a rate of \$175.00 an hour for this service, and that it is estimated to take 1 hour to complete.

After some discussion, it was the consensus of the board to approve CEO Besaw to have the evaluation completed by the licensed engineer.

- Reported he will be working with the Town Attorney, the owner of the property, and the insurance company regarding the matter.

Town Clerk

Town Clerk Tami Gale reported:

- DEC Gross sales for the month were \$380.00 with the Town of Fowler Commission being \$4.18.
- She had licensed 12 dogs, issued 2 marriage licenses, issued 1 building permit and had collected \$6.25 in photo copies.
- Bottle & Can money was received in the amount of \$236.82.
- Pepsi Machine money was received in the amount of \$215.00.

- She began collecting taxes on January 2nd and as of meeting time 9.64% of the tax warrant has been collected.

Maintenance

Maintenance Worker Byron Woodward reported:

- He is working on blocking in a 4' by 4' hole in the town barn in advance of installing the new lockers for the highway department workers.
- Made a suggestion for the entrance to the town hall bathroom to be relocated to the wall by the Town Clerk Office window, and to close off the existing entrance located in the hallway, to avoid any court disruptions when the Town Hall is being rented for use by residents. It was discussed the court entrance had to be handicap accessible, and the handicap ramp is located at the rear entrance to the town hall.
- Reported that he had noticed that someone had backed in to the yellow building at the town barn causing damage that will need repair.

Supervisor Newwine stated the carpet is in need of replacement at the town hall.

Highway Department

Highway Superintendent Randy Durham reported:

- He would like approval to purchase new wall lockers for the highway department workers.

After some discussion, a motion was made by Councilperson Cleveland seconded by Councilperson Bishop to approve the purchase. It was discussed that the purchase would be made from general funds.

- Discussed the Country Club Rd and where it stands in the FEMA process for funding.
- He reported it is the only road that is not yet situated, or rated as completed, as they are trying to get it topped.
- It will be an estimated \$350,000 job to complete, and it is expected to be only partially covered by FEMA funding.
- He reported that he can't use CHIP funds and FEMA funds for the expense of the road, reporting any cost not covered would have to be taken from the highway reserve fund, and there is going to be a 2026 Mack Plow Truck already coming from the reserve fund this year.

Supervisor Newwine asked how much money was available in the Highway reserve fund. Bookkeeper Finnie reported that the highway budget is under in expenditure vs. revenue, so there will be money added to the highway reserve fund. After some discussion, it was decided that they would have a better idea of where this stands in a month and would re-address the topic at a future board meeting.

- The USDA paperwork for the 2026 Mack Plow Truck has all been turned in and it is expected to be sent to funding to determine what kind of grant that will be offered.

COUNCILPERSONS

Councilperson Cleveland:

- Had no further commentary.

Councilperson Bishop:

- Had no further commentary.

Councilperson Knight:

- Asked Hwy. Superintendent Durham if the tardiness problem had been resolved with a member of the hwy. department. It was discussed that it had been resolved.

Councilperson Simmons:

- Reported in the month of December, the HAP food pantry had a total of 25 visits.
- 105 care packages were delivered on December 18th to senior citizens through the SOS Program. The next delivery for the SOS Program will be in March.
- Thanked Rahel Hunter, editor of the Gouverneur Tribune Press for the article she had published on the food programs in the Town of Fowler.

- Thanked Empire State Mines for hosting a food drive that was held in December and for their huge donation of items to the Hap Program.
- Thanked Scott and Marcia Cleveland, Dave and Shelley Fackler, Mike Tersmette, Stepping Stone Ministries, Tim Knowlton, and Bob & Diane Jennings for their donations to the Food Programs.
- Announced the Town of Fowler will be folding a chicken BBQ on February 1st at the town barn to benefit the food programs.

Supervisor Newvine:

- Reported he had received a letter from the DOT announcing they have a new boss, Ken Bivens.
- Thanked everyone who had assisted during the fire at 81 Little York Rd on January 3rd to include: Tami Gale, Tim Knowlton, Rosa Thornton, Irma Ashley, New York State Troopers, Gouverneur Fire Department, Gouverneur Rescue Squad, and the fire investigators, all of which did a great job during the incident.
- Read aloud cards that were received after the December SOS care package deliveries from several residents to include: Judy Hitchman, Marie Sampson, Karen Beck, Merton and Donna Parks, Diana Link, Dee and Ron Hartle, and Betty Brunson. Supervisor Newvine stated it is nice to know that people enjoy that program and thanked Councilperson Simmons for the great work she does with the program.
- Thanked Rachel Hunter for the hand-crafted Christmas and New Year card that she had sent to the Town of Fowler.
- Reported a Public Hearing will be held on January 23, 2025 at 6:00pm at the Fowler Town Hall for Information on the bridge replacement on the Farm to Market Rd.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- Michael Cappellino asked Hwy. Superintendent Durham about the transfer of roadways between St. Lawrence County and the Town of Fowler involving segments of Balmat-Fowler Rd, State Highway 58 to Little York Rd, Pumthouse Rd to State Highway 812, and a segment of Emeryville Rd from CR 22 to Emeryville Rd bridge.
- Michael Cappellino asked Hwy. Superintendent Durham if there had been a road count done on the Country Club Rd. It was discussed that the road count was over 400 on the Country Club Rd.
- Michael Cappellino asked how much of the \$98,000 received in ARPA funds are left to be used. It was discussed the ARPA funds have been spent or ear marked for projects to be spent on.
- Michael Cappellino thanked the SOS program and Dorothy Vorce for the beautiful afghan that was included in his mother's December SOS care package.

The next regular scheduled board meeting will be on Monday, February 10, 2025, at 6:00PM at the Fowler Town Hall.

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 for the remaining December 2024 bills were # 540 to # 555, with a total of \$26,451.05 and January 2025 bills #1 to #10 with a total of \$20,624.35.

With no further business, on a motion of Councilperson Knight, seconded by Councilperson Cleveland, the Organizational meeting was adjourned at 7:00PM. CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Tami Gale; Town Clerk