

**TOWN OF HOWARD
TOWN BOARD MEETING
JANUARY 14, 2026**

The regular meeting of the Howard Board was called to order by Supervisor Donald Evia at 7:00pm.

Present: Supervisor Donald Evia, Councilman Andrew Burdin, Councilman Ed Obrochta, Councilman Ron Dyer, Councilman Gary Rice and Highway Superintendent Lee Pyer.

Absent: No one

Also Present: Barry Kidder (Planning Board Chairman), William Thew (former Planning Board Chairman), Richard Stewart.

The pledge to the flag was led by Supervisor Donald Evia.

Previous Minutes: The regular meeting minutes from the previous month were reviewed by the Board.

A Motion was made by Councilman Dyer and seconded by Councilman Rice to approve the December 2025 minutes.

Carried: Councilman Burdin, Aye; Councilman Obrochta, Aye; Councilman Dyer, Aye; Councilman Rice, Aye and Supervisor Evia, Aye.

Public Comment: Richard Stewart commented about the Blades Gravel pit belt supports on the conveyor being removed. The Board members commented that most of the pit has been reclaimed but not seeded yet. Councilman Burdin questioned if Blade's was going to be out this year. Highway Superintendent Pyer said he had not heard anything. Mr. Stewart suggested there may be some useable pockets that the town could use. Supervisor Evia commented that he would discuss it with Highway Superintendent Lee Pyer.

William Thew (County Legislator) comments that the County approved an expenditure of 1.25 million dollars over the next 5 years for 68 cameras in total on the entrance and exit ramps in the state and that amount is only for the installation. He comments that he was the only one that voted against it. He did not believe it was necessary and there was no grant money involved to help with the expense.

Supervisor Evia asked why they felt the need to put up these cameras and Mr. Thew explained that the reason was if a criminal were to get on the highway, they would be able to track them better. Mr. Thew also mentioned that the County Legislature had to hire on an additional Clerk just to process the F.O.I.L. reports that were flooding in due the Sheriff's department was getting overwhelmed.

He tells the Board to give him a call if they ever need anything that he can help with. The Board Members thanked him for his service as Planning Board Chairman.

Department Reports:

- A. **Monthly Highway Report-** Highway Superintendent Lee Pyer reports that the department has been plowing and sanding, working on the dump trucks and the small sanders. Also, took care of some fallen trees on the roads and cutting brush. He also reports that the CHIP's reimbursement was sent to the town on 12/12/2025 and that NYS's share of 12.5% was paid on the townwide damages on the FEMA projects. However, they have not been paid in West Buena Vista project. Supervisor Evia talks about 2 highway trucks and the 580 Case Backhoe. He asks Lee to talk about the Red 2021 Dodge 5500 1 Ton Dump truck.

Highway Superintendent Lee Pyer explains that the Red 2021 Dodge 5500; he claims it has been having transmission issues, and it is a little over 25,000 miles. He directs the Board Members to quotes he provided for their review. He explains the quotes are from: 1). Ferrario Ford, for a 2026 F-600 Chassis 4x4 regular cab 145" WB DRW XL (F6L) – Final purchase price of \$69,105.00 with a trade in allowance of \$0.00. 2). Valley Fab and Equipment, Inc., for a Gallon 133USD 9' Stainless Steel Dump Box with a 9' Western Pro Plus Plow – Final purchase price of \$29,670.00 with a trade in allowance of \$0.00. 3). Five Star Equipment, Inc. for a 2026 320 P-Tire John Deere Backhoe Loader with 8' Broom – Final purchase price of \$87,142.00 with a trade in value of \$75,000.00 for a 2023 Case 580 Super N WT Backhoe. He explained the reason for the \$0.00 trade in with the truck is because the Dealer said the town would get more from selling on an Auction. He comments that he is considering selling his 2022 Dodge Ram pickup which has 51,000 miles on Auction and he believes the truck would bring approx. \$25,000 - \$30,000. The Board and the Highway Superintendent have further discussion regarding these quotes with the pluses and minuses. They also discuss what needs to be done on some of the town roads. Lee asked the Board what they wanted to do about the trucks. Councilman Rice commented that they had budgeted \$250,000.00 for machinery/equipment this year (2026) and his opinion is that the 1-ton (red) Dodge should be sold because of the transmission issues and they should purchase the 2026 F-600 1 ton dump truck. Supervisor Evia comments that the 2022 (Gray) Dodge Ram (Superintendent's truck) can be discussed later in the year. Councilman Burdin questioned where the money would come from for this purchase and Councilman Rice and Supervisor Evia said it would be coming out of the machinery/equipment budget. Councilman Burdin suggested that one of the trucks should come out of CHIP's. Supervisor Evia explains that it can also be decided later.

A Motion was made by Councilman Rice and seconded by Councilman Obrochta to pursue the purchase of the 2026 F-600 Diesel 1 ton dump truck and the stainless-steel box with the 9' Western Plow with a total of \$105,610.00.

Carried: Councilman Burdin, Aye; Councilman Obrochta, Aye; Councilman Dyer, Aye; Councilman Rice, Aye and Supervisor Evia, Aye.

Supervisor Evia asked the Board about purchasing a new backhoe because they would not be purchasing a 10-wheeler this year. The Board agrees to move forward with purchasing a new Backhoe. Councilman Obrochta suggests selling the current 2023 580 Case Backhoe. The Board and the Highway Superintendent discuss the pros and cons and the price differences between John Deere and a Case Backhoe. Supervisor Evia commented that they do not need to decide right now as to what will be going on CHIP's. Highway Superintendent Pyer says it needs to be decided by June 2026. The Board decides to pursue the purchase of the 2026 John Deere Backhoe.

A Motion was made by Councilman Rice and seconded by Councilman Burdin to pursue the purchase of the 2026 320 John Deere Backhoe with the trade in of the 2023 Case 580 Backhoe (\$75,000.00), with a final cost of \$87,142.00.

Carried: Councilman Burdin, Aye; Councilman Obrochta, Aye; Councilman Dyer, Aye; Councilman Rice, Aye and Supervisor Evia, Aye.

B. Monthly Planning Board- The new Planning Board Chairman Barry Kidders reports that they are looking for people interested in serving on the board. He says they are in need of

an alternate. Councilman Rice comments regarding the suggestion of a Comprehensive Plan by Hunt Engineering, he says that the town does have a Comprehensive Plan that the Planning Board put together several years ago. He is not sure if there is anything commenting about the park but worth looking into. Barry asked if there were any drawings on the park project and the board commented that Hunt Engineering has a diagram of the park project.

- C. **Monthly Fire Department**- No report. Councilman Obrochta asked how the new truck was working out. Councilman Rice said that it was just sitting for now waiting for the training for the Fire Department personnel. Councilman Rice also commented that they will not have their annual meeting until the first Tuesday of February.
- D. **Monthly Assessor's Report**- No report
- E. **Monthly Building Inspector's Report**- No report
- F. **Monthly Town Justice Report**- A written report was submitted consisting of cases and fines for the month of December 2025. A check was written to the town in the amount of \$243.00.
- G. **Monthly Animal Control Report**- A written report was submitted reporting that 3 dogs were at large on Lake Demon Rd. She left a notice on the door. She also included an annual report of 2025
- H. **Monthly Library Report**- A written report was submitted consisting of a letter addressed to the Town Board Members, Expense Sheets, Miscellaneous attendance sheet. The letter asked the Town Board if they were going to have contract a plow service because the plowing was only getting done on half the driveway and not plowing the right side of the driveway and the is the side that gets frequent use. The Board discusses the plowing situation. Supervisor Evia says the town does not do the plowing. Councilman Burdin questioned if they already have someone plowing, they should talk to them. Councilman Rice claims that Trey Kidder is doing the plowing for the Church not sure about the library. Councilman Obrochta asked what they were budgeted for and Supervisor Evia said it was \$39,500.00. Councilman comments that from their year to end total came to \$37,805.17. Town Clerk, Fran Sharp reports that the library had recently requested a change in the wording regarding the "10 year plus" statement in the Lease Agreement with the Town for a grant they were applying for. With the Supervisor's approval the wording was changed to give a more favorable chance for the grant. It was reworded to say, "The library will have use of the building for at least ten years from the anticipated date of completion of the construction project".
- I. **Monthly Town Clerk's Report**- A written report was given for the month of December 2025 consisting of revenue brought in from 1 Building Permit (\$50.00), 1 Dog License (\$12.00) totally \$62.00.
Disbursements: Paid out to Town Supervisor (\$62.00), NYS Animal Population Control Program (\$3.00) totally \$65.00.
The Clerk's also reports that there are detailed reports included as well as a Town Clerk's Annual 2025 report.

Fran also mentioned that in their packets was an information sheet from Steuben County Finance Department explaining the difference between Assessments vs taxes.

J. **Monthly Supervisor's Report-** Supervisor Evia reports that as the Bookkeeper is preparing to do the Annual Financial Report for 2025, it was discovered that there were errors in placement of the amounts in the departments. He asked for a motion to move the amounts to the correct departments to correct the problem.

A Motion was made by Councilman Obrochta and seconded by Councilman Burdin to move \$100,500.00 from the Fire Department fund to the Highway Department fund.

Carried: Councilman Burdin, Aye; Councilman Obrochta, Aye; Councilman Dyer, Aye; Councilman Rice, Aye and Supervisor Evia, Aye.

A Motion was made by Councilman Rice and seconded by Councilman Obrochta to move \$300,000.00 from the General fund and moved to the Highway fund.

Carried: Councilman Burdin, Aye; Councilman Obrochta, Aye; Councilman Dyer, Aye; Councilman Rice, Aye and Supervisor Evia, Aye.

Supervisor Evia answers a question that Mr. Stewart has had regarding how much was put towards the tax levy and it was \$330,000.00 and in December 2025 the town had \$1,100,000.00 keeping in mind that the money to be put towards the tax levy comes out of that and the money from the CD leaving about \$600,000.00 left at the end of the year.

Old Business:

A. Desiree Cady and Tammy Knudson from Hunt Engineering are present at the meeting via Teams. Desiree Cady explains to the Board that the Town was not awarded either grant that was put in for the town last year however, there are 2 grant opportunities open right now for the park. She says that they will re-submit it at no cost to the town as a courtesy. She comments that they can revamp the application to make it better and as competitive as possible. She explains that one of the downfalls for the Town was that it is not an underserved community and that it is highly competitive. And the "NPR" grant (90% match) is due by February 9, 2026. The plan is to not replace the playground equipment but to turn one of the swings into adapted swings and make a smaller all-inclusive playground. She goes on to talk about another brand-new grant which is called "New York Plays" grant (80% match) which is specific to all new playground equipment which is due in June 2026. She believes they can do both verses just the "NPR".
She also suggests putting the playground equipment, pavilion and walking path together and applying that way for a bigger project, giving it a little more traction. Tammy explains all the other different options they could go with. She also mentions a third grant "Consolidated Funding Applications" (50% match) and explains what that one is. They suggest that the Board discuss and decide which route they would like to go and let them know. They also commented that none of these grants are quick. Councilman Obrochta reiterates that they don't want to demolition the existing playground equipment but to add ADA compliant because there are children in the area that require special needs equipment and the closest one is 45 minutes away in Elmira area. They also suggested getting our park projects listed with the County Comp. Plan or if the Town has a Comp. plan, that can be helpful in getting extra points. Supervisor Evia asked them to send us the criteria regarding the re-submitting of the park grant. Supervisor Evia commented they will discuss it on their end. The Board thanks them both for their time. Discussion followed.

New Business:

A. Supervisor Evia asked the Town Clerk, Fran Sharp, to read off the 2026 Appointments.

A Blanket Resolution (#1-2026) was made upon a motion by Councilman Rice and seconded by Councilman OBrochta to approve and accept these appointments.

Adopted: Councilman Burdin, Aye; Councilman OBrochta, Aye; Councilman Dyer, Aye; Councilman Rice, Aye and Supervisor Evia, Aye.

B. Supervisor Evia asked the Board for a motion on the Dates and Times for the Town of Howard Board meeting for 2026. The Board decides to keep it the same as the prior years

A Resolution (#2-2026) was made upon a motion by Councilman Rice and seconded by Councilman Burdin to keep the Town Board meetings as follows: The second Wednesday of every month at 7:00pm.

Adopted: Councilman Burdin, Aye; Councilman OBrochta, Aye; Councilman Dyer, Aye; Councilman Rice, Aye and Supervisor Evia, Aye.

Regular Business:

The regular bills were presented to the Board for Audit.

Highway	(Abstract #1-18)	\$33,240.24
General	(Abstract #1-24)	\$9,190.73
Lighting District	(Abstract #10)	\$217.12

A Motion was made by Councilman OBrochta and seconded by Councilman Burdin to approve and pay these bills.

Carried: Councilman Burdin, Aye; Councilman OBrochta, Aye; Councilman Dyer, Aye; Councilman Rice, Aye and Supervisor Evia, Aye.

Executive Session: None

Town Board Discussion: None

Adjournment:

A Motion was made by Councilman Dyer and seconded by Councilman OBrochta to adjourn the meeting at 8:50pm.

Carried: Councilman Burdin, Aye; Councilman OBrochta, Aye; Councilman Dyer, Aye; Councilman Rice, Aye and Supervisor Evia, Aye.

Frances Sharp
Frances Sharp
Howard Town Clerk

**TOWN OF HOWARD
3725 MILL ROAD
AVOCA, NY. 14809
607-566-2010
607-566-3871 (FAX)**

**A BLANKET RESOLUTION FOR THE 2026
TOWN OF HOWARD APPOINTMENTS**

(RESOLUTION #1-2026)

At a regular meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Howard, Steuben County, New York, held on the 14th day of January 2026.

A Resolution was made upon a motion by Councilman Rice and seconded by Councilman OBrochta to approve and accept these appointments.

Adopted: Councilman Burdin, Aye; Councilman OBrochta, Aye; Councilman Dyer, Aye; Councilman Rice, Aye and Supervisor Don Evia, Aye.

Frances Sharp
Frances Sharp
Howard Town Clerk
Town of Howard

Dated: January 14, 2026

TOWN OF HOWARD
3725 MILL ROAD
AVOCA, NEW YORK 14809
(607)566-2010
FAX (607)566-3871

2026 TOWN APPOINTMENTS

DEPUTY TOWN SUPERVISOR.....GARY RICE
DEPUTY TOWN CLERK.....LOREEN KARR
HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT.....LEE PYER
DEPUTY HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT.....THOMAS DUBOIS
BUILDING INSPECTOR.....BRAD LAVERTY
CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER.....BRAD LAVERTY
DOG CONTROL OFFICE.....,DEBRA MATTHEWS
TOWN ATTORNEY.....BRIAN SCHU
HEALTH OFFICER.....DR. RICHARD PARKER
HISTORIANS.....ROBERT & MARSHA PATRICK
REGISTRAR OF VITAL STATISTICS.....FRAN SHARP
DEPUTY REGISTRAR OF VITAL STATISTICS.....LOREEN KARR
FLOOD PLAIN REG. OFFICER.....DON EVIA
BOOKKEEPER / PAYROLL.....JEANETTE UNDERHILL
TOWN BANKS.....C&N CORP. AND FIVE STAR
OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER.....HORNELL TRIBUNE/THE SHOPPER
MILEAGE RATE.....50 CENTS PER MILE