

**REGULAR BOARD MEETING
@ The Russell Town Hall @ 6:00pm
5/20/2025**

BOARD:

Supervisor Matthews - Present
Councilor Burnham - Present
Councilor Kerr - Absent
Councilor Beachard – Present
Councilor Rowe – Present
Highway Superintendent Meilleur - Present
Town Clerk Darcie Cross – Present
CEO Russell Lawrence – Present

GUESTS:

Trudy Hendrickson
Larry Denesha
Robert Knox
Deb Christy
Connie Bessette
Sid Bristol
Arlena Dafoe
Darren Kerr
Anthony Cross

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm by Supervisor Matthews.

PUBLIC DISCUSSION:

- Deb Christy discussed opening two additional segments of road as part of the multi-use trail. We are going to check last year's local law to see if one has already been added. Supervisor Matthews asked if there would be anymore additions as the Town has to pay the lawyer to keep making changes. She said this would be it.

RESOLUTION: # 36 Amendment to Local Law #2 of 2018 to open two additional segments of road as part of the multi-use trail system.

A motion was made by Councilor Burnham and Seconded by Councilor Beachard.

Therefore, the Town Board will instruct the town lawyer to write up an amendment to Local Law #2 of 2018 for opening two additional segments of road as part of the multi-use trails in Russell. A Public Hearing will be held on 6/17/25 at 5:30pm, before our regular meeting, if the paperwork from the lawyer is received in time for an advertisement.

Segments of roads to be opened:

- Dana Hill Road – Ct Rt 17 to A and B Hunting Club: 2.5 miles
- Given Road – Bullock Property to Edwards Line: .8 miles

Ayes - 4 Matthews, Beachard, Burnham, Rowe

Nays - 0

Motion carried.

- Discussed a problem by Sid Bristol's property. There are rats coming from a neighboring property due to garbage. He would like something to be done about it. The Code Enforcement Officer, Russell Lawrence, was present and said that he had spoken to the people about the garbage and the metal, they were taking care of it. The CEO is giving them a couple of weeks to clean it up, he has been in touch with the Town Attorney.
- Discussed the upper ballfield by the old school, Darrin Kerr had questions about maintenance. He wanted to know if the Town takes care of lining the bases and pitcher's mound, Supervisor Matthews believed it is the coaches or the Pee Wee Association. The Town mows, provides porta-pots, takes care of the garbage and will provide clay and sand when needed, but this is the first that we have been made aware of any issues. There may be equipment in the building at the lower ballfields to use for lining. They suggested using the lower fields for now until the issues have been fixed as Supervisor Matthews said the upper field is usually used as an overflow field. There is no Ballfield Committee right now due to not having volunteers. They said to get in touch with Amber Mackin, she may have more information.
- Discussed the pavilion. Connie said her brother said there was a pile of waferboard that the kids were playing on. The Town will take care of it.
- Discussed the minimum wage for hourly Town employees brought up by Connie as she had noticed it in the budget. She has contacted the State and Federal departments to inquire about it. Supervisor Matthews said he believes there is a stipulation explained to him by the previous Supervisor that he had questioned also. He will look into it.
- The Enrichment Group would like to have their parade again this year during the Russell fest. Supervisor Matthews will send a letter to Don Chambers. It will be the same route as last year on July 20th, 2025 from 12:00-12:30.

ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES:

A motion was made by Councilor Beachard Seconded by Councilor Burnham to accept the minutes from 4/15/25 as presented by the Town Clerk.

Ayes - 4 Matthews, Burnham, Beachard, Rowe
 Nays - 0
 Motion carried.

TOWN CLERK REPORT: 5-20-2025

April 2025 Report:

17 dog licenses	104.00
Hunting license commission	14.64
0 Marriage License Comm	.00

0 One Day Marriage Officiant	.00
16 Certified copies	160.00
6 Building Permits	325.00
0 Impoundment fees	.00
1 Community room fee	25.00
Fax and copy money	<u>.00</u>
Total Revenue to Supervisor	\$628.64
<u>Disbursed amounts:</u>	
Ag & Market (spay, neuter program)	29.00
NYS Department of Health	.00
DECALS (Sweep)	<u>250.36</u>
	\$279.36
 Total Disbursed	 \$908.00

I have collected 90.04% of taxes as of 5/20/25.

A motion was made by Councilor Burnham and seconded by Councilor Rowe to accept the Clerk Report as presented.

Ayes - 4 Matthews, Burnham, Beachard, Rowe
 Nays - 0
 Motion carried.

BALL FIELD COMMITTEE: None

SUPERVISORS REPORT:

**Supervisor's Report
 May 20, 2025**

1- Financial Report

-Details of all income and expense transactions have been filed with the town clerk.

-Account balances as of May 20, 2025, for the general fund, highway fund, capital improvement fund, and streetlight fund have been filed with the town clerk.

Colleen Friot has turned in her resignation letter, effective April 30,2025, she will be missed, we appreciate all she has contributed to the town.

With the much-appreciated help of Linda Albrecht, we submitted an application for the 2025 Kubota Hometown Grant for \$50,000, \$25,000 cash, and \$25,000 towards equipment. Winner will be notified in September.

Amy Hunt is up for a Reappointment for a 6-year term, we will need to vote before October. She also would like a vote on the upcoming new Firefighter's exemption. We will need to adopt a local law for fire-fighters, deadline is December 9, 2025.

Dereck C Matthews
Town Supervisor

RESOLUTION: # 37 Appointing Karen LaPoint as Town Co-Historian

A motion was made by Councilor Burnham and Seconded by Councilor Rowe to appoint Karen LaPoint Town Co-Historian from 5/20/2025 to 12/31/2025.

Ayes - 4 Matthews, Beachard, Burnham, Rowe
Nays - 0
Motion carried.

RESOLUTION: # 38 Reappointing Amy Hunt as Sole Assessor for a 6-year term.

A motion was made by Councilor Beachard and Seconded by Councilor Burnham.

Therefore, The Town Board agrees to approve reappointing Amy Hunt as The Town of Russell Sole Assessor for a 6-year term October 1, 2025 to September 30, 2031.

Ayes - 4 Matthews, Beachard, Burnham, Rowe
Nays - 0
Motion carried.

- The Volunteer Firefighter Exemption is tabled until it's looked at further.

A motion was made by Councilor Beachard and seconded by Councilor Rowe accepting the supervisor's report.

Ayes - 4 Matthews, Beachard, Burnham, Rowe
Nays - 0
Motion carried.

LEGISLATURE REPORT: Larry Denesha

- Discussed the Tooley Pond Road Bridge. Work on the bridge will be pushed off until 2026.
- Discussed the Public Safety Building. They have the certificate of occupancy and people are starting to move back in. The open house will be May 22nd. He urges people to go down and take a tour.
- A Resolution has been passed authorizing a creation of 4 part time patrol officers for the DSS building. These officers will be retired law enforcement. It will be additional security for employees and clients.
- A Resolution was passed adopting a Local Law for Empire State Mines. It is for exploration and development of mineral rights.
- A Resolution was passed authorizing the Sherrif to sign a contract for window replacement capital project for the 1993 section of the courthouse, which was where the old Motor Vehicle used to be. They were single pane windows with wooden frames that are rotten. Northern Tier, who is a local contractor, had won the contract.
- The Gouverneur Transfer Station opened a couple days late but is now open.
- Discussed the sales tax revenue for the first quarter of this year being up 8.5% over 2024.

A motion was made by Councilor Burnham and seconded by Councilor Beachard to accept the Legislature Report as presented.

Ayes - 4 Matthews, Beachard, Burnham, Rowe
 Nays - 0
 Motion carried.

FIRE DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Russell: None

DeGrasse: None

HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT REPORT: Richard Meilleur**Highway Report**

5/20/2025

We have spent most of our time getting ready for our paving projects. We have cleaned ditches, cut brush and large hazard trees on most of the roads we are going to pave. We still have some work to do on Dutton Rd to get it ready, but we are in pretty

good shape and almost ready for paving. We are going to start reprofiling Hill Rd on Thursday, grinding and adding crushed stone. We should be done with the first phase of that project by next week.

We have got another 20 cords of firewood cut and split from the roadside trees that we had to take down. We have one truck at Cash Monroy's for transmission repair work, and we are waiting on a seal to fix our rollers; it should be in next week. All other equipment is up and running as of today.

I have received our CHIPS allotment; it is \$28,000.00 more than last year. CHIPS projects are listed #1-9 which is the worst road being #1 and #9 the best shape. We will do the projects that are in the worse shape first as to get them done for the September CHIPS reimbursement. So, projects 1-5 first then we will try to finish projects 6-9 this fall. That is 5.29 miles of paved, 3.34 miles CHIP sealed and .8 miles of crushed stone for a total of 9.43 miles of roads completed with CHIPS funding. That is over 12% of our total mileage of roads which will keep us on track to resurface all our roads including dirt roads with crusher run I the next 8-10 years.

I would like to thank the men for another safe and productive month.

Thank you,
Richard Meilleur

- Discussed CHIPS sealant and projects that will have to be done by August 19, 2025, reimbursement will be September 15, 2025.

A motion was made by Councilor Rowe and seconded by Councilor Beachard to accept the Highway Superintendent Report as presented.

Ayes - 4 Matthews, Beachard, Burnham, Rowe
Nays - 0
Motion carried.

RESOLUTION: # 39 Asking for The Town Board to Approve the 2025 CHIPS Paving Projects in the amount of \$691,706.29.

A motion was made by Councilor Burnham and Seconded by Councilor Rowe to approve 2025 CHIPS Paving Projects 1-9 as presented by the Highway Superintendent at the cost of \$691,706.29 with confirmed CHIPS amount from State.

Therefore, the Town Board agrees to approve the 2025 Projects with what the Highway Superintendent presented.

Ayes - 4 Matthews, Beachard, Burnham, Rowe

Nays - 0
Motion carried.

HIGHWAY COMMITTEE REPORT: Doug Beachard

- Discussed checking out a couple of the roads for the difference of black top.

A motion was made by Councilor Rowe and seconded by Councilor Burnham to accept the Highway Committee Report as presented.

Ayes - 4 Matthews, Beachard, Burnham, Rowe
Nays - 0
Motion carried.

AUDIT REPORT:

Town of Russell
P.O. Box 628 * Russell N.Y. 13684
Phone# (315) 347-2358 * Fax # (315) 347-4244



Audit Committee Report
May 20, 2025
Audit

Dereck C Matthews
Sandra Burnham

	Vouchers	Total
General	110-140	\$30,750.52
A600	136	(\$9,799)
Highway	81-92	\$22,528.00
Street Lights	05	\$915.13
Capital Improvement	02	\$17,266.36

RESOLUTION: # 40

Audit Report- Dereck Matthews & Sandra Burnham

A motion was made by Councilor Beachard and seconded by Councilor Rowe to authorize paying the bills.

Ayes - 4 Matthews, Beachard, Burnham, Rowe

Nays - 0

Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS:

RESOLUTION: #41 Resolution to approve Greg Given, for maintenance pay, to replace Peter Burnham on Peter's days off.

A motion was made by Councilor Beachard and seconded by Councilor Rowe to authorize Greg Given, for maintenance pay, to replace Peter Burnham for Peter's days off.

Ayes - 4 Matthews, Beachard, Burnham, Rowe

Nays - 0

Motion carried.

- Update on the fraud on the Town Account. Supervisor Matthews has not been updated on the investigation, does not have any new information.

Budget Modification to Move Funds of \$1,000.00 from Contractual Expense Account A1620.4 to Veteran's Contractual Service Account A6510.4 to start the Veteran's Wall Project has been tabled until our next meeting.

- Arlena was going to present a check to the board from the Enrichment Group towards the Veteran's Wall, but we held off on that until we talk to the Town lawyer to see if we could accept the donation.
- Connie questioned how the money was going to be shown in the budget. There will be 2 different accounts, Enrichment fundraising and Town contributions. They then discussed starting to price the flagpole, benches, and the foundation. Rich Anson has volunteered to lay all the block per Arlena.
- Arlena questioned if our auditor had ever finished our audit. No, they have not. We may have to look for another auditor.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Councilor Beachard said we should see if anyone would like to start the ballfield committee.

RESOLUTION: # 42 Send Payment to Renew The Hanover Insurance Group for Annual Policy #9153906

A motion was made by Councilor Beachard and Seconded by Councilor Burnham.

Therefore, the Town Board agrees to pay The Hanover Insurance Group \$7,925.00 for our annual renewal for insurance policy #9153906 5/27/25-5/27/26.

Ayes - 4 Matthews, Beachard, Burnham, Rowe
Nays - 0
Motion carried.

RESOLUTION: # 43 To Purchase Replacement Parts for the Airplane Teeter Totter at the Playground that was damaged.

A motion was made by Councilor Beachard and Seconded by Councilor Burnham.

Therefore, the Town Board agrees to pay to purchase replacement parts for the Airplane Teeter Totter at the playground that was damaged.

Ayes - 4 Matthews, Beachard, Burnham, Rowe
Nays - 0
Motion carried.

RESOLUTION: #44 Holding Harmless The Town of Hermon for Providing Service for 2025

By Russell Town Board, Town of Russell

WHEREAS, the Town of Russell is desirous of the Town of Hermon

Department of Highways providing shared services such as paving, signage, road stripping, blasting, and other routine maintenance activities to the Town, and

WHEREAS, both the Town of Russell and the Town of Hermon are desirous of promoting partnering efforts for the safety of the traveling public in St. Lawrence County, and

WHEREAS, in this joint cooperative endeavor the Town of Russell and the

Town of Hermon desires to be reimbursed for their expenditures, and

WHEREAS, the Town of Russell is aware that the Town of Hermon may incur liability in the providing of the services and wishes to indemnify the Town of Hermon in this regard,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that to the fullest extent permitted by law, the Town of Russell will indemnify and hold harmless the Town of Hermon, their officers, directors, partners, representatives, agents and employees from and against any and all claims, suits, liens, judgments, damages, losses and expenses, including legal fees and all court costs and liability (including statutory liability) arising in whole or in part and in any manner from injury and/or death of person or damage to or loss of any property relating to or arising out of any negligent or intentional acts and/or omissions of the Town of Russell or any of its directors, officers, employees, contractors, representatives, or agents.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the following request for General Liability (GL) coverage is as follows:

General Liability Insurance (On an "Occurrence") basis, with the following limits:

\$1,000,000	Each Occurrence
\$3,000,000	General Aggregate
\$1,000,000	Products Aggregate
\$1,000,000	Personal Injury
\$ 50,000	Fire Damage Legal Liability
\$ 5,000	Medical Payment Expense

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town of Hermon shall be an additional insured on the GL Policy.

A motion was made by Councilor Beachard and seconded by Councilor Burnham to accept the agreement.

Therefore, the Town Board authorizes the Town Supervisor to sign the Hold Harmless Agreement with the Town of Hermon.

Ayes - 4 Matthews, Beachard, Burnham, Rowe
 Nays - 0
 Motion carried.

- The Board would like to write up a Hold Harmless Agreement to send to Hermon.

INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION 7:30pm: For Discussion of a Property

A motion was made by Councilor Beachard and seconded by Councilor Burnham to go into executive session @ 7:30pm

OUT OF EXECUTIVE SESSION 7:55pm

A motion was made by Councilor Beachard and seconded by Councilor Burnham to come out of executive session @ 7:55pm

A motion was made by Councilor Beachard and seconded by Councilor Burnham to adjourn the meeting @ 7:56pm

All were in favor.

Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by
Darcie Cross - Russell Town Clerk