

Town of Olean
Minutes of the Regular Monthly Board Meeting
Held at the Olean Town Hall, 2634 Route 16N, Olean NY
On December 16, 2025

Present: Annette Parker Supervisor
 John Artlip Councilman
 Donna Howard Councilwoman
 Scott Zink Councilman
 Pat Zink Highway Superintendent
 Jerry Dzuroff Code Enforcement Officer;
 Sherry Lemon Town Clerk
 Pam Dominsky Planning and Zoning Board

Absent: Robin Pearl, Court Clerk

Supervisor Parker opened the Board Meeting at 6:30pm with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Guests: None.

Resolution 1 (R:01122025) APPROVAL OF BOARD MEETING MINUTES

On a motion from Councilman Artlip, and seconded by Councilwoman Howard, the Resolution was Adopted, with 4 Ayes, and 0 nays it is

Resolved, that the meeting minutes of November 18, 2025, are approved as presented.

Resolution 2 (R:02122025) APPROVAL OF ABSTRACTS

On a motion from Councilman Artlip, and seconded by Councilwoman Howard, the Resolution was Adopted, with 4 Ayes, and 0 nays it is

Resolved, that the bills received in November and paid in December 2025 have been reviewed by the Town Board and are authorized for payment in the following amounts:

Highway Fund: for the sum of \$10,564.00 for vouchers #164-174.

General Fund: for the sum of \$11,496.50 for vouchers #191-203.

REPORTS OF TOWN OFFICIALS

Supervisor: The monthly bank statements were presented for review by the Board.

Code Enforcement: Written report reviewed from November 16, 2025, to December 16, 2025, has 8 permits issued; 3 pending permits; and 1 for court summons, and 1 court appointment.

Cemetery: burials continue with the weather.

Superintendent of Highways: No written report submitted. With the weather changes, the primary focus continues to be on road maintenance with plowing and sanding. A few trees that were damaged by the weather were cut and removed per resident reports. One highway employee is near completing of the required training for CDL licensure; and if residents have a complaint about the snow plow damaging their mail box, they are to be referred to the Highway Superintendent.

Clerk: The Clerk's office collected a total of \$670.00 in December 2025, for dog license fees and building permit applications. \$9.00 was paid to NYS Dept. of Ag & Markets for Animal Population Control Program, and \$661.00 was paid to the Supervisor.

Town Justice/Court: No report given. A check for \$8,110.00 was presented for fines and fees collected by the court in November.

Assessor: Cattaraugus County Real Property Services sent a report dated December 3, 2025, stating Senior Citizen Exemption (STAR) renewals were mailed in the first week in December, with applications due by March 1, with in office hours increased through February; 48% of agricultural renewal applications have been returned; the assessor's office has worked with property owners regarding their assessments, tax bills and exemptions; there were 10 property transfers in October. Property owners seem to be understanding of the change to the County for Assessor services. An **audit** of the Assessor's supplies and equipment should be made and a request for missing items to be returned to the Town.

OLD BUSINESS

Supervisor: The Town is still working to receive the awarded funding and contract to begin the process of building a new dog kennel.

A Highway Workers Union **Grievance** has been brought, and the Board met with the Union representative ahead of the November Board Meeting. A decision should be made within 5 days of that meeting. The Board spent significant time discussing this grievance and concluded that the **grievance was unfounded** and no action is to be taken at this time.

Resolution 3 (R:03122025) APPROVAL OF UNION CONTRACT

Whereas the vote via email is not valid, and with further discussion of the process, and this written statement from Councilman Torrey: I move that the Town Board formally consider and vote on the collective bargaining agreement with Teamsters Local 264 at this duly convened meeting, and that any approval taken tonight shall be deemed a prospective ratification only, based solely on the vote taken at this meeting, without recognizing or validating any prior purported approval conducted via email.

I further move that the minutes reflect that prior email communications did not constitute lawful Town Board action, and that this vote is taken to ensure compliance with Town Law and the Open Meetings Law.

On a motion from Councilman Artlip, and seconded by Councilman Zink, the Resolution was Adopted, with 3 Ayes, and 2 nays it is

Resolved that the Highway Workers Union Contract be provisionally approved as negotiated, with this statement from Councilman Torrey: I want to clearly state my position regarding the January 2025 off-schedule wage increase for the highway unit and the subsequent labor contract negotiations, so that the public record reflects both my concerns and the reasoning behind them.

First, I voted against the January off-schedule wage increase not because I oppose fair compensation, but because I believed it was unwise from a labor-negotiation and fiscal-planning standpoint, particularly given that the existing contract does not expire until December 31, 2025.

In my experience negotiating labor contracts for the Town over the past two decades, maintaining bargaining integrity going into a contract year has been essential to controlling long-term costs while still reaching fair agreements.

My concern at the time was that granting a significant increase outside the contract cycle—approximately 7.5 percent—would substantially limit the Town’s ability to negotiate responsibly in the upcoming contract. That concern has since been realized.

Second, I want to note that established best practices for labor negotiations were not followed during this process. Historically, the full board has been kept informed of negotiation strategy, progress, and potential terms prior to positions being finalized. This allows the board to provide input and ensures that negotiations proceed with a unified and informed direction. This year, the board was not meaningfully updated as negotiations progressed, and we were presented with a final proposal after negotiations had effectively concluded. At that point, the board’s ability to influence outcomes was extremely limited.

As a result, the Town is now facing a contract that includes an additional wage increase of approximately 4 percent in the first year of the new agreement, along with an already significant off-schedule raise of 7.5% earlier this year, as well as expanded benefits. In my opinion, this represents an imbalance that places unnecessary financial pressure on the Town and its taxpayers.

I also want to address the justification that was provided for the off-schedule raise, which included staffing and retention concerns. While I acknowledge that workforce stability is important, I believe it is critical that wage decisions be based on complete and accurate information. I requested an executive session at the time in order to share information I had received regarding the circumstances of an employee’s departure, but that request was denied, and therefore that information was not part of the board’s discussion.

Additionally, the board was informed that cost impacts from the off-schedule raise would be offset through the use of seasonal part-time employees. Subsequent staffing actions, including the duration and scope of part-time work and the response to the resulting grievance, appear inconsistent with what was originally presented to the board. This has further contributed to my concerns regarding transparency and fiscal oversight.

Finally, I want to emphasize that my position is not personal. Good faith negotiations are based on process, consistency, and stewardship of taxpayer funds. I believe the Town would have been better served by a more deliberate, communicative, and strategic approach to both the off-schedule raise and the subsequent contract negotiations.

For these reasons, I want the record to reflect that I do not support the outcome of this contract, and that I believe improvements are needed in how labor negotiations

are conducted going forward, including clearer communication with the full board and adherence to established best practices.

The Board is waiting for communication from the Zoning Board of Appeals and their attorney with respect to a decision and to schedule another public hearing regarding the local law interpretations and variance actions brought on behalf of the Dugan Road Solar, LLC proposed solar energy installation.

NEW BUSINESS

The Board requests additional financial reports each month regarding expenditures to date, funds remaining, and budget adjustments to be sent ahead of next board meeting when the agenda is sent via email for board members to review prior to meeting.

There being no other Old Business or further New Business to be presented, Councilwoman Howard moved for adjournment, with Councilman Zink seconding the motion, and all agreed. The meeting was adjourned at 7:10pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sherry Lemon, Town of Olean Clerk