



TOWN OF ARKWRIGHT

September 2026 REGULAR BOARD MEETING & Public Hearing

Arkwright Town Hall

9543 Center Rd, Fredonia, NY 14063

6:30 PM September 14th, 2026

In Attendance: Supervisor Brian McAvoy

Board Members Polly Gambino, Bruce Gustafson, Larry Ball, Chris Jackson

Town Clerk Jane Lindquist

Public: James Ziemba, Stephen & Laurie Mead, Roger Newell, Eric Mitchell, Carrie Babcock, Dan Elliott, Doug Fairbanks, Brian Beckwith & David Szydlo

The Meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM by Brian McAvoy.

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call and Establishment of a Quorum

Public Comment- Roger Newell- Is exemption for all veterans? Brian McAvoy- yes, it has been made clear to us that every veteran, even one leaving the service today, would still be eligible for the Cold War Exemption as a minimum. There is some activity towards a 100% exemption for a completely militarily disabled veteran, but it is still in the works. If that becomes a reality at the State level, the Town will, of course, consider it. It does not change what we are doing today.

Eric Mitchell- New resident to Balls Gulf stated that he was in attendance to understand what the Town is doing regarding the Minimum Maintenance designation. McAvoy explained that all stakeholders had received certified letters and reminded the audience that the public hearing on the law will be during the board's October meeting. Minimum Maintenance does not mean no maintenance. It means reasonable three season maintenance but absolves the Town from winter plowing. Also, the designation change commits the Town to not abandon the road for a minimum of six years. Finally, the designation can be reversed if the situation changes. McAvoy believes the designation is a workable, fair solution for all interested parties.

Review and Approval August 2026 Regular Board Meeting Minutes- Motion by Larry Ball & Chris Jackson 2nd. All in favor.

Supervisor Report-

Time Capsule Volunteers – Brian McAvoy will reach out to Town Historian Ruth Nichols for ideas and asked the board and audience for their input if they so choose.

Cemetery Mowing Complaints & Compliment- It was not a great year mowing. McAvoy knows of three complaints and acknowledged they were legitimate complaints. The Town will go out for bids again next year. One visitor to Cowdens did mention it looked better than sometimes it does.

NYMIR Recommendations- Working on the list of recommendations. Will budget to upgrade remaining garage doors with electric controls with safety trips.

Compliment of Shoulder Mowing- McAvoy commented that a Straight Road resident did give the Town a compliment about our shoulder mowing. McAvoy commented that the new tractor has made a huge impact on the Town's ability to keep up with shoulder mowing.

Ag District Update- McAvoy reported that the Town has completed the requirements to have Town owned properties removed from the Ag District.

Financial Report- See attached appendix. Bank accounts back up a bit from Q3 Sales Tax but, of course, reserves will be drawn down considerably as we pay for construction.

Motion to Adjourn Regular Meeting & Open Public Hearing- Motion by Chris Jackson & Larry Ball 2nd. All in favor.

Public Hearing Law 3, 2026 Veterans Tax Exemption- Tax law caps the exemptions and they are then equalized so, admittedly, the impact isn't huge. McAvoy reviewed the caps, based on the individual's designation. Based on residents receiving the County exemption, there would be 59 veterans eligible in Arkwright. The Assessor will contact Arkwright veterans to apply for the Town exemption. The Assessor's view is that veterans should apply in order to ensure they are properly categorized and receiving all that they are entitled to. Applications will need to be in by March 1, 2027 for the exemption to be reflected in their 2028 tax bill. The Alternative Veterans Exemption has been available to Townships in New York State since 1984. It is unclear why the Town didn't do something sooner. McAvoy mentioned that Roger Newell and Jeanne Ebersole helped move this along, particularly explaining that the Cold War exemption applies to modern day veterans. McAvoy apologized for not doing something sooner in his time as Supervisor but is happy the Town can do it now. See attached Law 3 of 2026.

Councilman Ball commented that 1% of the country has served in the armed forces yet Arkwright has 59 veterans. So about 5% of Arkwright's residents are veterans and that is something we should be proud of. McAvoy again thanked all veterans, whether volunteer or otherwise, for their service.

Read Resolution & voted on Law 3 of 2026 – See attached appendix.

Motion to Adjourn Public Hearing & Reopen Regular Meeting- Motion by Chris Jackson & Larry Ball 2nd. All in favor.

Report: Highway Superintendent

Seasonal Roads Designation. The Highway Superintendent holds sole authority to designate seasonal roads, with the deadline being November 1st. McAvoy reminded the audience about the seasonal portion of Putnam being plowed at the Town's convenience. Based on a few years of history with that situation, McAvoy reminded the audience that the Town definitely can plow a seasonal road if it chooses but cannot set that expectation and then change course. He asked Superintendent Waldron to come back in October with a plan for seasonal roads, including Putnam.

Spending v. Budget Update (Monthly)- Staying on budget. With the help of the County, the washout on Miller Road has been fixed and will be good for the winter. We will install a new pipe in 2027. McAvoy complimented Waldron on how well that major project was coordinated. See attached appendix.

CHIPS 2025 Update – Waldron is still following up on the reimbursement funds. McAvoy said he would contact Senator Borrello’s office for help if the Town doesn’t receive a response.

Update on Highway Plans Summer 2026- Ditching Meadows & Weaver.

Lifecycle Road Cost Per Mile- still work to be done but it seems that about six years of gravel equals the initial cost of paving on a per mile basis. The ongoing cost of hard top maintenance needs to be considered.

Report: Town Clerk/Tax Collector

Jane Lindquist read the Town Clerk report. See attached appendix.

Dog Control-

Report: Town Justice

Jane Lindquist reported. See attached appendix.

Report: Assessor – Brian McAvoy Reported – Disabled Veterans Exemption Law Update- See appendix.

Report: Zoning –

Update on Derelict Properties- no update

Update of TV Tower Activities & Tax-Exempt Status-McAvoy has asked Ed Pagano to make this a priority.

Plan for 2027 Zoning Law Rewrite- McAvoy is requesting that Ed Pagano take the lead in updating the Town’s zoning laws. Ideally the laws should be representative of the Town’s desires and enforceable. He believes the Zoning Officer is in a position currently where some aspects of the law are no longer applicable. This will be a 2027 priority.

Report: Code Enforcement –Brian McAvoy reported. One demolition permit and two pole barns. McAvoy commented that the demolition permit was the result of a total loss fire. He reminded the audience that it may not be intuitive to obtain a demolition permit after a fire but that is how the structure gets removed from the tax roll. He also commented on how quickly the debris was cleaned up. That prompted a resident to inquire as to how the fire started. McAvoy responded that he didn’t know but it would not be appropriate for him to say even if he did.

Discussion on Town Decisions in Order to Adopt 2025 NYS Building Code- McAvoy asked the board to review the new draft law and please come to the next meeting ready to discuss the items on which the Town needs to decide.

Report: Board Members

Councilman Gambino - is working with Lacy Gross and Jane Lindquist to select pieces for the offices from the Metro Line of Uline furniture. The courtroom table might be from Uline or perhaps custom made. The team is considering options. There will be an electrical outlet in the floor under the courtroom table. McAvoy requested that the table have power for laptops, etc. Councilman Jackson commented that some of the derelict farm buildings in Town look pretty bad. He would like to see these addressed.

Councilman Ball followed up with the Landbank regarding progress on the old Grange Hall. He is also working with the Highway Superintendent on how to provide backup generator power to the Town Barns. This is a topic for future discussion but there is a general consensus that we should have this capability. Ball and Waldron will arrange for an electrician to review our needs. The water pump will likely be powered from the new Town Hall and backed up by that building’s generator.

Councilman Gustafson none

Acceptance of Reports

Motion to Accept Supervisor, Departments and Councilperson reports- Motion by Chris Jackson & Larry Ball 2nd. All in favor.

Motion to accept September 2026 Abstract and Pay bills- Motion by Chris Jackson & Polly Gambino 2nd. All in Favor.

Old Business

Town Hall/Court/Community Center Update- The under-slab plumbing passed the required leak test. The septic leach field will be in the direction of Center Road, to the South of the current Town Hall.

Town Barns Siding Project Update- Ready for walk around & sign off. The walk around is scheduled for Monday, September 21st at 1 PM. McAvoy requested any interested Board members to attend.

Reminder of Public Hearing on Ball Road Section as Minimum Maintenance for October- Dan Elliott raised concerns because people park at the bottom & walk up the road. He wants to be able to drive his Prius up the road. McAvoy acknowledged that the three season maintenance on the road hasn't been ideal but the Highway Department has plans to improve on that. The Minimum Maintenance designation sounds as if the Town will do less than we already do but the name is misleading. It really only means we won't plow to the bottom of the gulf.

New Business

Motion to Renew with Sheridan HR, \$240 Per Month- McAvoy reminded the audience of the importance of mandatory training and asked the Board to renew the contract with a \$15 per month increase. Motion to Approve Sheridan HR Proposal for Training and Compliance Support 2026/2027 @ \$240 per Month. Motion by Polly Gambino & Larry Ball 2nd. All in favor.

Introduce 2027 Budget Process, Motion to Set Workshop September 28th, 6pm. McAvoy suggested that since there are already two public hearings scheduled for October, the budget public hearing could be pushed to November. He is waiting on some numbers but will have the preliminary Supervisor's budget done in the current week. A budget workshop is being arranged with Doeren Mayhew for Monday, September 28 @ 6pm. Motion by Larry Ball & Bruce Gustafson 2nd. All in favor.

Review Cassadaga Fire Protection Contract Extension & Set Public Hearing Date for October- McAvoy complimented Cassadaga Mayor Rudy Abersold for his quick response and agreement to basically extend the current contract with only tax cap increases. McAvoy expressed Arkwright's appreciation for the fire protection received from both Cassadaga and Forestville. Resolution passed to hold public hearing in October.

Introducing Shared Highway Services Agreement Town of Dunkirk. McAvoy explained to the audience that there is a County wide *expectation* for municipalities to find savings. Mergers, dissolutions, shared services and local efficiencies are all in play. He discussed how he had been contacted initially by Cassadaga but they chose a different direction. Later, the Town of Dunkirk reached out to Arkwright after the well-publicized attempt to change our Highway Superintendent to an appointed position failed. Dunkirk has approximately six miles of hard

topped roads and only one full time employee. McAvoy, Waldron and Councilman Gambino have all met with Dunkirk and discussed the opportunity. McAvoy explained that his preference would have been for Dunkirk to simply hire Waldron on a part time basis. That proved to be legally challenging so, instead, Dunkirk will pay Arkwright and Arkwright will increase Waldron's salary, contingent on the agreement being in place. The challenge will be to ensure that, over the course of the year, the manhours shared back and forth balance out. McAvoy and Waldron have committed to a monthly report of that progress. Equipment will normally stay in the Town that owns it and budgets will remain entirely separate. Employees remain employed in their respective Towns and the Teamster Representative has no issue with the agreement. Dunkirk will pay Arkwright \$25,000 annually for the agreement and Waldron's salary will be increased by \$10,000. Dunkirk currently has a similar agreement with Sheridan that they want to end. Their attorney won't let them do that until Arkwright agrees and then they have a 45 day cancellation notification period. The Arkwright agreement only calls for a 30 day notification. McAvoy explained that the discussions had to be confidential until now and he did not want to force a vote on the same night that it could first be openly discussed. To move the process along, a ***Special Meeting Date*** was set for September 22nd to vote on the contract. Motion by Larry Ball & Chris Jackson 2nd. All in favor.

Public Comment-

Steve Mead- Asked Lisa Waldron if she was OK with the Dunkirk agreement. Waldron confirmed she is.

Steve Mead- Concerned that Arkwright Tax Payers will be paying for plowing in Dunkirk.

McAvoy responded that we absolutely need to watch the hours to ensure they balance out. It is a fair concern but not worth scrapping the idea.

Chris Jackson- Let's give it a try, do a monthly report and get it started before winter.

Steve Mead- Craziest thing ever. McAvoy – we are trying to do the right thing. It is only a one year agreement and only a 30 day notification period.

Doug Fairbanks- thanks for the gravel on Putnam Road but with the new ditches, I can't get into my fields.

Lisa Waldron- If you buy the pipes. We can put in a driveway.

Steve Mead- Someone told me they put new tin over the old on the Highway barns.

Brian McAvoy- absolutely not true. The old steel was removed and purlins inspected per the specifications.

Carrie Babcock - We have lived in Arkwright for over eight years and are running a business. Trying to be good Townspeople but has anybody else noticed that the windmills are getting louder? Chips in the blades make them louder.

Brian Beckwith – What about the one that was struck by lightning on Straight Road? What are they doing with that and should we be concerned as the windmills age?

Brian McAvoy- agreed to reach out to EDP with the concerns and report back.

Motion to Adjourn Regular Meeting- Motion by Chris Jackson & Larry Ball 2nd. All in favor.