

November 7, 2025
Public Hearing
Town Board Meeting

In Attendance: Kevin Bean – Supervisor Jim Williams – Councilman
Paul Heid – Councilman Anna Bowers – Councilwoman
Arnold Stevens – Councilman Jean Comstock – Town Clerk

1. Public Hearing called to order at 6:41PM

- John Donohue – no one from Town Hall has come to me or any other chiefs; not just this Board, every Board previous; I've been doing this for over 20 years; we're at November 7, 2024 and ready to sign a contract and we don't even have a contract; we get up at 2:00AM to help our neighbors; it's hard to come here in November to finally get an answer; we can't give an answer tonight. This all needs to be addressed, public needs to know what's going on. Thank you.
- Kelly Nettle – 1st page – Supervisor – what is contractual personnel – Supervisor Bean – mileage; 2nd page bottom – Division under Law – personnel – who does that cover? Supervisor Bean– explained; Admin Clerk/Bookkeeper; 3rd page – Special items – purchase of land \$9,000 – what are we budgeting for – Supervisor Bean – Johnsbury Garage Property; waiting for clearance letter re: cleanup; page 6, culture & recreation – Parks - \$10,000 to do improvements; UTAH bike maintenance; Anna – we talked about that at the last workshop; Warren County Planning helping with trails in Riparius – Dunkley Falls/Black Hole – if the County approves it, the Town would have to come up with a match for next year; is that in the budget? Supervisor Bean – we'll take it into consideration; Kelly – put a little aside each year; page 7 – Museum/Historical Society - \$5,000 is a good thing; what about the Depot Museum? Page 8 – Environmental Control; Ms. Bowers – recycling; page 9 Community Beautification – nothing set aside for that – it's a shame, the Board should think about it; under revenues – Ski Bowl Park – outside uses? \$4,000 – where does it come from? Pete Olesheski– programs that we do has to come in as revenue; Pete Olesheski - \$1,000 annually in my budget for flowers, other beautification projects; Kelly – thanks for your patience.
- Bob Nettle – I'm not going to complain it doesn't do any good? What is going to change on this Budget; Supervisor – we'll do that at the next budget workshop; Medical Center – HHHN - \$25,000 to HHHN, unfortunately you don't know what happened 20-30 years ago; land chopped off from park for the nursing home; then it was decided that HHHN, founded by John Rugge in Chestertown; then it was time to expand and the TOJ coughed up thousands of dollars; it's back up to \$25,000; it's a multi-million dollar operation today; they get millions of dollars from Federal funds and I assume NYS; it's an outstanding organization; however, they don't need \$25,000 from the TOJ every year; especially when there's no money going into to the park and Ski Bowl, like the Highway Garage, sand mine, etc.; what do you say guys? Supervisor – I meet with the CFO on Wednesday; what does the \$25,000 go for – Supervisor Bean – I believe to help run the facility; I agree with Mr. Nettle, I'm not convinced that they need the money from the Town; Mr. Williams – in 2024 – no money to HHHN from the Town.
- Peter Horvath – EMS staff, we need them – I would not be standing here tonight without EMS taking care of me; I've had two strokes.
- Mary Goddard from North River – 1st page – General Fund – appropriated reserves – where are these reserves coming from? I'm concerned that the highway department would not have the monies they need to take care of our roads; previous boards set

it aside for trucks – saving up to buy a truck; Ms. Goddard – did they not just purchase a truck; Mr. Comstock – if I buy a truck now it will be at least a year before we will receive it; fixing what we have to replace the fleet; State/County gets new trucks every 7 years – we can't do that; we save in reserve, set aside a long time; there are other places where you save money; thank you so much; just want to make sure roads are kept in good condition; County Engineer contacted the Town of Johnsbury Highway, fixed the road that had been very dangerous; it's nice that you are close to your constituents, having safe roads, is the factor that I'd like to address; the other is the EMS – they need to remain well funded and appreciated in the Town; I recently fell and EMS was called and showed up quickly; fire departments are important as well; thank you.

- Joe Connelly – thank you for the kind words; 2% we're asking for is a .25 raise for our EMT's; it was pulled back to 1%; the process of this budget, we got a really big increase last year and we were able to get health insurance to our staff; in March of this year I came to you again and explain how important it was and to stay competitive; we asked for a 2% increase, a small bridge against inflation; health insurance just jumped 25% from last year; I've never dealt with unelected officials before; I dealt with Patrick Hughes who was very loud; we're going to open our books, so all will understand; we're a non-profit 501c3; I sent multiple e-mails with a lot of information, no reply; I set up the meetings as best we could; all our Board members were there; there were a lot of numbers; at least we demonstrated competence; spoke with Supervisor Bean – great meeting, you should get the 2% was what I heard; nothing from anyone else; came to the workshop, I was called out to a serious car accident; Mr. Hughes indicated that there was money missing from our budget; we have a CPA, a bookkeeper, I talk to the Town Bookkeeper; I wrote a couple of e-mails, no reply; the next Board meeting Ms. Nessle and Mr. Webb spoke out about this; I then spoke with Mr. Hughes – he indicated he couldn't send me his spreadsheet, I asked him if he spoke with the Town Bookkeeper – he stated no; the Supervisor stated it got to emotional and it triggered the Audit clause, we got two quotes, the lowest quote was \$17,000, we have to do it as part of our contract and our reputation; I still don't know what Mr. Hughes is talking about and it hasn't been explained to me; I sent another e-mail on Monday – worksheets, 4 years of billing company invoices – it all matches with what the Town Bookkeeper has, I still have not heard back from anyone, very disappointed in the process, hope we get our 2%.
- Kelly Nessle – the process is not helpful, it was an attack on the agency, Joe's and my integrity, it makes us pretty damn mad; TOJ Board questioning the 2% and what our needs are; since 2016 the EMS has asked for the cost of living, would eventually be underfunded; average inflation rate has been 3.3%; NYS caps it as 2%; 2023 we made a big request to maintain our medical providers and very competitive, our area is difficult to attract workers; we are somewhat competitive with other agencies with last year's increase; we seem to be holding our own for a short while; \$28.16 per hour for a single person to survive; our EMT's make \$20.00 per hour; .25 cents is not enough to bring the wage to a livable wage; small increases don't cure the problem; our providers will go elsewhere, we will suffer the consequences; pay for the supervisor – requires skill and a lot of time; for years it's been ridiculously low wage; need to increase over the years – should be \$70,000 - \$80,000 per year.
- Mr. Donohue – Supervisor Bean – we should have met, it's my fault; set up the meeting and we'll meet; Ms. Bowers – I came to one meeting, we didn't talk about the budget, but I understood what the concerns are; I think the 2% is important; Mr. Donohue – that's the first time anyone has mentioned money here; I can't accept it right now, but we can all meet; it looks like it's being reduced; this is the proposed

budget with the 2% taken out that had initially been put in; it will be discussed at the next workshop.

- Mr. Williams – EMS budget – Joe explained the process, there are committees that work for the Supervisor – when we came to the budget committee – I had no documentation from JEMS, no budget for 2025 or expenditures for 2024 – I had no information from JEMS, I then suggested that there be no increase; as far as fire companies go – we’ve asked for insurance certificates, 2 of the 5 have not provided this information; let’s hold off on the budget, it’s not to punish those that are doing the right thing; Mr. Donohue – exactly; we used to sit down with the fire committee, early in the year, tonight is the first I’ve heard some department’s haven’t turned them in, let’s have meetings so we know what we need to do and so you all understand what we need; Josh Virgil – it’s Johnsbury Fire in question, why do you need to be listed as an additional insured? Mr. Williams – it protects the town if the Town is sued; all contractors with the Town have to do this; Mr. Donohue – this is why we should have more communication; when will we know what the Town will give us? Supervisor Bean – it’s not all companies; thank you for your time.
- Ms. Bowers – clarifying – budget committee does not work for the supervisor, it’s advisory only for all of the Board; the budget committee was supposed to come back to us with recommendations; the budget committee did not do their duty to provide us with recommendations for us for the budget; I went to each department to learn more; it was up to us to educate ourselves and did some of these services a dis-service.
- Kevin Fusco – I’m horrified to have to be here tonight to have this conversation; all has been provided in a timely manner; what is the 2% actually worth - \$8,000+, the stink that has been made over this isn’t worth the money; I’m sorry Supervisor Bean this is on you, Mr. Hughes was a dog you let off the leash and this is not looking good for you; it’s slanderous and hurtful the words Mr. Hughes stated; it’s hard to get people and harder to retain them; I’m not taking Mr. Hughes’ comments lightly – I’m putting up a \$10,000 check and Mr. Hughes can come up with that when all is said and done; our budget has been out for a long time; previous supervisors (good or not) met with us and discussed it line by line; we have a CPA and a Bookkeeper; thank you for your time.
- Lily Gaechter – thank you first responders; let’s not debate over \$8,000+ when they save our lives.
- Toni Cripin – I’ve only been here a few years; was a RN in an ER; time is of the essence when someone is in medical need; when you wake up with chest pains and you call 911, where is your help going to come from; we’re an hour away from a hospital; am I going to die if we don’t have EMS services close by; when you wake up and feel well, think about if you didn’t wake up feeling well; we were able to go on vacation because EMS got to my partner.
- Kelly Nettle - Can you do a summary of the changes that are made because of tonight’s conversation.
- Patrick Hughes – I have never accused anyone of anything; I’ve come to help make the numbers more transparent; Joe educated me; it’s a simple reconciliation, just asking questions. I’m just a volunteer on the committee and give information to the Supervisor.

Close the Public Hearing – at 7:48PM.

2. Town Board Called to Order at 7:53

3. Pledge of Allegiance led by John Donohue.
4. Resolution to Approve the Meeting Minutes from October 15, 2024.

RESOLUTION # 197 – 24

Ms. Bowers made a Motion to approve the Meeting Minutes from November 7, 2024 and moved its passage with a Second Motion from Mr. Williams. With the following Members voting in favor of the Resolution, it is carried. Ayes – 5 (Bean, Bowers, Heid, Stevens, Williams). Nays – 0.

5. Resolution for WWIDA Application – we have someone to take over the Copperfield; my conversation with Kir and Chuck Barton is that we keep the name the Copperfield in place. Keir Weimer– thank you for letting me speak and explain our plans, the support we’re seeking from the Town, County. Purchased the Alpine in 2022, been a great project for us; it’s given us confidence in the community to provide rooms, jobs; we’re excited about what we can do; we’re investing a significant amount of money, looking for some assistance; a lot of work to be done with damage from last winter; cost of loan gone up significantly; cost of construction is up as well; packages will be available; creating new jobs, construction jobs for 4-6 months as well; opening a restaurant, spa, pickle ball, pool, etc. for our guests and community as well; will try to keep the Copperfield in the name.

Chuck Barton – WWIDA – work with hotels in resorts; incentives are investments, waive a certain percentage of taxes and other abatements; \$3.5 million for this property; \$21,000 for 10 years tax abatement, 1:70 ratio compared to the economic benefit; Ms. Bowers – happy you’re partnering with WWIDA; with tax abatement happening over the 10 years, return on investment is good for us; what if it doesn’t happen for 10 years; Chuck Barton – it is non-transferable; Ms. Bowers – 25% of construction materials in Johnsbury – do you have to do a reasonable percentage back to the WWIDA? Chuck Barton – there is annual reporting to the WWIDA; Ms. Bowers – looking at the plan – open 365 days, bars/restaurants also? Keir – not sure what we’re opening during construction; we’re still working through a lot with F&B Director; bar and restaurant open by June 2025 with other options being worked on; Ms. Bowers – full time/part time- 4 full time/12 part-time? Property wide, more in the summer; Keir – there will be 8-12 full time equivalent; Ms. Bowers – thank you.

Geoff Konis – we’re talking a reduction in taxes of \$21,000? Chuck Barton – relief for the first 10 years; Geoff – 10 year program; can we anticipate a payback? Chuck Barton – he’s still accountable for base taxes; Mr. Williams – not a true PILOT; if the town tax rate goes up, his taxes go up; Chuck Barton– all the special district taxes will continue; EDU’s for sewer will help as well; Geoff Konis – arrears taxes; Chuck Barton – that’s on the lawyers; Lily Gaechter – local membership rates? Keir – we’re hoping to get a package together for locals; discounts for retail, restaurant, bar, gym. Lily Gaechter– event staff? Keir – weddings and business retreats, luncheons, family gatherings. Geoff Konis – will you be open on Tuesdays? Keir – yes we will be.

RESOLUTION # 198 – 24

Mr. Heid made a Motion to approve the Weekender application and moved its passage with a Second Motion from Mr. Stevens. With the following Members voting in favor of the Resolution, it is carried. Ayes – 5 (Bean, Bowers, Heid, Stevens, Williams). Nays – 0.

6. Occupancy Tax Award – Mr. Bowers – there are other applications, this is just one of many; thank you to the committee for all the hard work; \$2,500 less any ticket sales - \$3,785 total costs for event.

Cheryl Gillespie – opposing the revenue from ticket sales; we’re only requesting \$2,500 to cover the artists fees; should be at full capacity; we’ve already sold 50 tickets with 4-1/2 weeks until the event; requesting revenue of ticket sales is setting a very scary precedent; the group has a very strong following from Albany to here; I am strongly asking to vote no on this Resolution; Ms. Bowers – I understand where you’re coming from; I would vote the full \$2,500; application well done; TPC making an effort to bring in high caliber acts.

Don Preuninger – what was the reasoning for this type of Resolution? And has this been done before? Lily Gaechter – general consensus of committee; it’s a brand new committee; Ms. Bowers – I don’t think their intention is to work to be a negative implication; Judy – the money is limited and they were afraid to ask; Ms. Zimmerman – huge supporter of TPC, dangerous to start this; encourage to maintain incentives and address the tight budget in a different way; Deana wood – this would set a precedent for any non-profit asking for funds; Mr. Williams – what were the price of tickets at the Egg - \$50/\$60; Jim – set a different price; Cheryl Gillespie – we have a set price; Mr. Williams – occ tax helped Lake George; not to be a continual source of income for projects/events; Cheryl Gillespie– it would be a precedent for non-profits in the Town; it offsets the admin costs and advertising; we look at occ tax as a grant; Mr. Heid – giving from one hand and giving to another; I don’t think this is a good thing to set a precedent; Cheryl Gillespie – we went through the lease and financial support steps down each year; we lease the building and running the building & maintenance; TPC uses the building 20% of the time; the Town uses the building, the community uses the building; occ tax generated to help non-profit; the building and occ tax is two separate things; Ms. Bowers – the amount of work going into reading the applications, scoring them; not written with any bad intentions; educational good conversation to have; I would vote for the full \$2,500; Ms. Zimmerman – offset idea is not a good idea. Mr. Williams – cut to \$2,000 give occ tax more leeway; splitting the difference.

RESOLUTION #199 – 24

ROLL CALL: Councilperson Heid – Nay, Councilperson Bowers – Nay; Councilperson Stevens – Nay; Councilperson Williams – Aye; Supervisor Bean – Aye. With the Roll Call done this Resolution does not pass.

7. Resolution to Approve TPC for Occ Tax Award for \$2,000 for the McKrells Christmas Concert. Mr. Heid – will there be any issue with funds if we do the \$2,000? Lily Gaechter – close, but should be alright.

RESOLUTION # 200 – 94

ROLL CALL: Supervisor Bean – Aye, Councilperson Bowers – Aye, Councilperson Heid – Aye, Councilperson Stevens – Aye, Councilperson – Williams – Aye. With all Member voting in favor of this Resolution, it is carried.

8. Resolution to Approve the New Occ Tax Award Letter

RESOLUTION # 201 – 24

Ms. Bowers made a Motion to approve the New Occ Tax Award Letter and moved its passage with a Second Motion from Mr. Heid. Will all Members voting in favor of the Resolution, it is carried. Ayes – 5 (Bean, Bowers, Heid, Stevens, Williams); Nays – 0.

9. Resolution for an RFP for Fuel for Town; the Town has been piggybacking off the Town of Argyle and would like to advertise to get quotes.

RESOLUTION # 202 – 24

Mr. Stevens made a Motion to approve the RFP for Fuel and moved its passage with a Second Motion from Mr. Heid. With all Members voting in favor of the Resolution, it is carried. Ayes – 5 (Bean, Bowers, Heid, Stevens, Williams); Nays -0.

10. Resolution to approve the Highway Department to hire two (2) full-time temporary wingmen/laborers for the winter (December 2, 2024 – March 31, 2025). It is a budget neutral request.

RESOLUTION # 203 – 24

Mr. Heid made a Motion to approve the Highway Department to hire two (2) full-time temporary laborers/wingmen for the winter season and moved its passage with a Second Motion from Ms. Bowers. With all Members voting in favor of the Resolution, it is carried. Ayes – 5 (Bean,, Bowers, Heid, Stevens, Williams); Nay – 0.

11. Resolution to purchase laptops and associated budget line transfer. The Supervisor, Bookkeeper and Water Clerk need new laptops as current equipment is not working adequately or will no longer be eligible for security updates; a laptop for the Transfer Station as well. There are existing funds on Budget Line SW8320.2 to cover the cost of the Water Clerk laptop.

RESOLUTION 204 – 24

Mr. Stevens made a Motion to approve the purchase of the laptops as noted and moved its passage with a Second Motion from Mr. Williams. With all Members voting in favor of the Resolution, it is carried. Ayes – 5 (Bean, Bowers, Heid, Stevens, Williams); Nays – 0.

12. In Appreciation - tabled as Mr. Wilson is not in attendance.

13. Committee Reports:

Mr. Heid – talking with Fred re: Highway Committee meeting soon.

Ms. Bowers

Childcare - met with Kate Ryan, Rockefeller Family Foundation – pilot program started on micro-centers – if we found the right space, set up as a child care center, would need certification, falls within the ARPA funds we have; have spoken to people in the community; could potentially work for our community.

Mr. Williams

- Parks – shout out to Pete Olesheski– Halloween event, lots of work, kids enjoyed it; Garden Club – Judy Brown & Pete Olesheski – 6’ chain link fence has no purpose, challenging to landscape, start process of removing fence; planning birch and fir trees along there;.
- Johnsbury 4-6r – 8/16/25 bike race; endurance race; estimating 150 racers will partake, starting work and planning and promoting this.
- Discussions re: sign at entrance at Ski Bowl Park; reached out to Parks Committee for feedback; several options being recommended; will get some mock-ups.
- Sewer – extended bid to 11/14/24; addendum was added.
- Solid waste – scales are getting the finishing touches; board discussion at next meeting.

Mr. Stevens – working to establish a committee to look into the issues confronting our senior citizens; met with Ms. Abrahms to get the basics in motion; Mr. Heid – residents in early mid-70’s asking about services for the elderly; express the need re: demographics in our town.

14. Warrants

RESOLUTION # 205 – 24

Ms. Bowers made a Motion to approve the Warrants and moved its passage with a Second Motion from Mr. Heid. With all Members voting in favor of the Resolution, it is carried. Ayes 5 (Bean, Bowers, Heid, Stevens, Williams); Nays – 0.

GENERAL FUND	\$ 68,840.05
HIGHWAY FUND	\$ 39,439.58
WATER IMP. PROJECT	\$ 1,440.00
SEWER DISTRICT PROJECT	\$ 725.94
SKI BOWL MIT. PROJECT	\$ 25,612.67
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN	\$ 8,138.27
RECREATIONAL TRAILS GRANT	\$ 200.00
LIBRARY FUND	\$ 2,397.98
WATER DISTRICT	\$ 8,782.76
TRUST & AGENCY	\$ 2,027.40
TOTAL	\$157,604.40

15. Privilege of the Floor –

- Liz Cleveland – ORDA completing the Lodge, can Minder be given back to the Town? What are the future plans for the little league field and tennis courts and Dick Armstrong memorial wall.
- Kelly Nessle – have you heard things about the wall being removed? Liz – just my feeling; ORDA fox is in the Town henhouse; Jim is working his butt off and these are my feelings; Kelly – the masterplan developed by the LA Group would do nothing but improve it; it is parkland, even though we’ve been using it as winter sand area, we will expand; the Town needs to move on it; ORDA is on the land that the Town agreed they can use; Liz Cleveland– we should never have entered that contract; Liz Cleveland– not a lot of public input in 2004 re: this contract; Kelly Nessle – I think that you should recognize the value that ORDA is putting in that park; the opportunity to talk about it has been there for years, the Town hasn’t done anything; we’re butting our heads against money.

16. Adjourn:

RESOLUTION # 206 – 24

Mr. Heid made a Motion to Adjourn the Town Board Meeting at 9:06PM and moved its passage with a Second Motion from Ms. Bowers. With all Members voting in favor of the Resolution, it is carried. Ayes – 5 (Bean, Bowers, Heid, Stevens, Williams)

Prepared by:

Jean M. Comstock

Jean M. Comstock
Town Clerk

**NEXT TOWN BOARD MEETING WILL BE NOVEMBER 19, 2024
AT 7:00PM AT TANNERY POND CENTER AND LIVESTREAM**