

April 07, 2026
6:30 p.m.
2354 State Route 434
Apalachin, New York

Regular Meeting of the Owego Town Board

A. Call to order, roll call and the Pledge of Allegiance

Council:

Present Supervisor Gary Hellmers, Dean Morgan, Craig Jochum,
Emily Rush McClintock, Jonathan Marks

Absent: none

Department Heads:

Present: Irene Graven, Town Attorney
Pam Brown, Town Clerk & Tax Receiver
Peter Gordon, Town Historian
Rick Pedro, Sole Assessor
Bill Carrigg, Planning & Zoning Administrator
Phil Baker, Parks Maintenance Supervisor
Tyson Stiles, Director of Utilities

Absent: Mark Clark, Highway Supervisor

Supervisor Hellmers called the meeting to order, the clerk called the roll, and all led the Pledge of Allegiance.

B. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the March 17, 2026 meeting will stand as presented.

C. Consideration of bids-

1. 1984 Ford Dump Truck- A bid of \$800.00 was received for the 1984 Ford Dump.

At this time, a motion was made by Councilmember Morgan to award the 1984 Ford Dump Truck to Fritz Rudin with a bid of \$800.00. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Jochum and unanimously carried.

2. 2013 Ford F-150 pick up truck-A bid of \$1,500 was received for the Ford F-150 Pick up truck. **At this time, a motion was made by Councilmember Morgan to award the 2013 Ford F-150 pick up truck to Michael Fuller with a bid of \$1,500. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Jochum and unanimously carried.**

D. Public Hearings- Amend Chapter 98 of the code of the Town Owego

Councilmember Morgan gave an overview of Local Law B Chapter 98 Code of the Town of Owego. After the overview, Supervisor Hellmers opened the hearing for public comment.

Rose Howard, Apalachin, A lot of my question's have been answered by the overview. Are you seeking to restrict the size of Solar Farms? Are you saying that you are not opposed to solar farms? I don't have a problem with farmers trying to make land productive that was once unproductive. Rose would encourage more community solar farms rather than a company coming in and making money from the community. Less than one percent of solar farms worldwide has problems. China gets seventy-seven percent of its power from solar farms. I know that solar farms do not look good but neither do gravel pits and we certainly do have enough of those around.

David Smith- Montrose Tpke. Owego, looking over the document, I think it is a pre-existing document and these changes from the original are late in coming. I think that the statement of purpose is not correct and misleading. I am not sure if this document covers private vs. commercial. The wording does not seem to apply. Solar is the most expensive energy to go on the grid. There is a huge capital cost with solar. If there were some corrections made, this document would perform better. Dave would welcome a discussion in more detail.

Beth Pero, Apalachin, does a document exist that covers other types of energy? I would like to make sure that we are regulating all types of energy equally.

Barb Craig, Southside Owego, I agree that solar is not the whole answer to our energy problems. We need a variety of energy types to go forward.

At this time a motion was made by Councilmember Morgan to close the public hearing on Chapter 98 of the Code of the Town of Owego. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Jochum and unanimously carried.

For the record Councilmember Morgan stated this is SEQR-Type II action. No further SEQR review is required. **At this time Councilmember Morgan made a motion to adopt Local Law #1, 2026. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Jochum and unanimously carried.**

E. Reports of Department Heads-

Tyson Stiles, Director of Utilities-Moody Water Supply Service LLC came today and cleaned sand and gravel out of the bottom of the water well in Crestview. They also installed a new screen. They will start the actual cleaning and rehab of the well tomorrow. This will take about a week to finish. Request attorney/client.

Phil Baker, Parks Maintenance Supervisor- With the help of Utilities, we ran conduit to the park on Tioga Blvd. The next step is concrete. The basketball court was destroyed. The nets were completely torn off and the backboards broke. The replacement cost will be about \$3,500 to replace them with the same ones that are at Hickories Park, which are indestructible.

Mark Clark, Highway Supervisor-Report on file in the Clerk's office.

Rick Pedro, Sole Assessor-no report

Peter Gordon, Town Historian-no report

Bill Carrigg, Planning & Zoning Administrator- P&Z office is working on packets for building permits. We are continuing to update the new website. Tire event, brush pick up, and yard waste drop off on Kuenzli Rd. are all on the website and Press Releases have been sent out. Also, there is an updated storm water plan, as mandated by the DEC, on the website.

Pam Brown, Town Clerk & Tax Receiver-Approximately 80% of the tax warrant has been collected and balances. Second notices go out on April 15th for residents that have not paid their taxes yet. My deputy, Sarah, has scheduled her notary test for this month.

Gary Hellmers, Supervisor- Requests attorney/client after the meeting.

F. Privilege of the floor –

Rose Howard, Tioga Terrace, thank you to the parks department for the work done in the park. Pictures were taken and posted on the TTCA website. A business close to the park has a camera facing the park and may have pictures or footage of the damage.

G. Presentation of Petitions, Communications, Notices and Transfers-none

H. Abstracts-

After a lengthy discussion **A motion was made by Councilmember Morgan to approve the following abstract. The motion was seconded by Councilmember McClintock and carried on a four yes votes and one abstain vote (Councilmember Marks).**

AO-General Fund	\$48,246.77
BO-General Fund-Town Outside	\$12,099.89
DB-Highway-Town Outside	\$214,410.37
FO-Water Districts	\$52,688.88
FA-Route 38 Water	\$1.75
GO-Sewer Districts	\$173,855.31
GA-Route 38 Sewer	<u>\$231.82</u>
	\$501,564.79

I. Unfinished Business-

1. Hire Highway-Campoli

A motion was made by Councilmember Morgan to adopt the following resolution hiring James Campoli on a part-time basis. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Hellmers and unanimously carried.

WHEREAS, the approved 2026 budget for the Town of Owego Highway Department has budgeted for and includes a full-time MEO II position, which we are unable to fill with qualified candidates at this time; and

WHEREAS, a candidate has applied for this position, but is only available on a part-time basis; and

WHEREAS, James Campoli is duly qualified to fill this MEO II position; and

WHEREAS, James Campoli has been offered and has accepted such position beginning March 10, 2026, at an hourly rate of \$20.59 per hour, for up to and including 29 hours per week.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, such MEO II position shall be filled by James Campoli at an hourly rate of \$20.59 per hour, for up to and including 29 hours per week, beginning March 10, 2026 with a probationary period of 52 weeks from date of hire and subject to mandatory drug testing and satisfactory license background check.

2. Hire Highway-Harders-

A motion was made by Councilmember Morgan to adopt the following resolution Hiring Brian Harders on a part-time basis. There was no second motion so the motion is dead. No action.

J. Reports of Standing Committees-

Councilmember Morgan-None

Councilmember Jochum-I spent a few days on Cafferty Ln. with the Soil & Water District technician. He explained the process and did a great job getting the temporary permit.

Councilmember Marks- None

Councilmember McClintock- None

K. Presentation of Resolutions, Motions and New Business-

1. Local Law No. C Schedule Public Hearing- **A motion was made by Councilmember Morgan to schedule a Public Hearing on May 19, 2026, at 6:30 for Local Law No. C of 2026. Property at 1789 Main St. Tax Map No. 153.07-1-58 previously zoned Highway Interchange "HIC" and Residential B "RB" shall be changed to Residential C "RC". The motion was seconded by Councilmember Jochum and unanimously carried.**

2. Adopting Substance Abuse Policy-A motion was made by Councilmember Jochum to adopt the Town of Owego Substance Abuse Policy for 2026 on April 7, 2026. The motion was seconded by Councilmember McClintock and unanimously carried.

3. Evolution Consulting, LLC Services Agreement-A motion was made by Councilmember Jochum allowing Supervisor Hellmers to sign the Evolution Consulting, LLC Services Agreement, this contract refers to drug and alcohol testing. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Marks and unanimously carried.

4. New Hire Highway- Chris Stocks-A motion was made by Councilmember Jochum to approve the following resolution hiring Chris Stocks in a full-time MEO III position. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Marks and unanimously carried.

WHEREAS, the approved 2026 budget for the Town of Owego Highway Department has budgeted for and includes a full time MEO III position; and

WHEREAS, this full time position is vacant and it is necessary to fill this position; and

WHEREAS, Christopher Stocks has been offered and has accepted such position as of April 13, 2026, at an hourly rate of \$21.12 per hour, 40 hours per week, as a permanent appointment with up to 52 weeks probationary period;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, such full time position shall be filled by Christopher Stocks at an hourly rate of \$21.12 per hour, 40 hours per week, with full time benefits, effective April 13, 2026 with a probationary period of up to 52 weeks from date of hire, subject to satisfactory license/background check and meeting all requirements of pre-employment drug testing.

5. New Hire Highway-Nicholes Clark-A motion was made by Councilmember Jochum to approve the following resolution hiring Nicholes J. Clark in a full-time MEO III position. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Marks and unanimously carried.

WHEREAS, the approved 2026 budget for the Town of Owego Highway Department has budgeted for and includes a full time MEO III position; and

WHEREAS, this full time position is vacant and it is necessary to fill this position; and

WHEREAS, Nicholes J. Clark has been offered and has accepted such position as of April 13, 2026, at an hourly rate of \$21.12 per hour, 40 hours per week, as a permanent appointment with up to 52 weeks probationary period;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, such full time position shall be filled by Nicholes J. Clark at an hourly rate of \$21.12 per hour, 40 hours per week, with full time benefits, effective April 13, 2026 with a probationary period of up to 52 weeks from date of hire, subject to satisfactory license/background check and meeting all requirements of pre-employment drug testing.

6. Promotion Highway- Nate Sober-A motion was made by Councilmember Jochum to approve the following resolution promoting Nathan Sorber from his position to the new position of mechanic working supervisor. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Marks and unanimously carried.

WHEREAS, Nathan Sorber was promoted from his mechanic position to the new position of mechanic working supervisor; and

WHEREAS, his hourly rate of pay was not properly calculated at that time;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it

RESOLVED, that the Town of Owego Board agrees to adjust the 2025 base rate for mechanic working supervisor to \$31.52 per hour, effective January 1, 2026.

7. Cafferty Lane-Emergency Repair-A motion was made by Councilmember Morgan to authorize Supervisor Hellmers to make the necessary culvert pipe replacement on Cafferty Lane on an emergency basis. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Jochum and unanimously carried.

WHEREAS, the condition of a culvert pipe on Cafferty Lane was assessed by

CPL; and

WHEREAS, due to the specific conditions described in the CPL assessment and the current existing deficiencies in the structural integrity of the culvert, it has been determined that there is an emergent need to replace the culvert pipe;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that circumstances exist which could effect public property and the life, health and safety of the property and inhabitants of the Town of Owego requiring immediate action that cannot await competitive bidding, contracts for public work, or purchase of supplies and material equipment pursuant to the Town of Owego's Procurement Policy; and it is further

RESOLVED that the Town of Owego Highway Superintendent is hereby authorized to make the necessary culvert pipe replacement on an emergency basis without the necessity of complying with the Town of Owego's Procurement Policy or General Municipal Law §103; and it is further

RESOLVED, that the Town Board of the Town of Owego does hereby declare that this resolution is adopted in the best interests of the Town of Owego.

8. JB's Excavation Services-A motion was made by Councilmember Morgan to authorize Supervisor Hellmers to sign the contract with JB's Excavation Services to do the emergency culvert repair on Cafferty Ln. in the Town of Owego, not to exceed the amount of \$92,000. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Jochum and unanimously carried.

9. Mobil Column Lift-A motion was made by Councilmember Morgan to table the purchase of a Mobil Column Lift for the Highway Department. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Marks and unanimously carried.

****At this time a Councilmember Jochum requested a workshop to be schedule concerning the purchase of the Mobil Column Lift for the Highway Department. The workshop is scheduled for Wednesday, April 14, 2026 at 8:00am.****

L. Privilege of the floor – No one wished to speak at this time.

M. Executive Session if needed-none

N. Adjournment-**Motion to adjourn by Councilmember Morgan at 7:25 pm.**

Respectfully submitted,

Pam Brown, Town Clerk

