

**TOWN BOARD MEETING
TOWN OF NEW HARTFORD, NEW YORK
HELD AT TOWN HALL, 8635 CLINTON STREET, NEW HARTFORD, NY
ON WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2026 at 6:00 P.M.**

Supervisor Messa called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M. Prior to commencing business, The Supervisor then led those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The roll was taken with the following Town Officials and Department Heads present:

TOWN BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Councilman Vincent Pristera

Councilman John Latini

Councilman David M. Reynolds

Deputy Supervisor/Councilman David Tehan

Supervisor James Messa

OTHER TOWN OFFICIALS/EMPLOYEES PRESENT:

Personnel Director/Finance, Christina Lacy

Police Chief, Ronald Fontaine

Highway Superintendent, Richard Sherman

Town Attorney, Herb Cully

Town Clerk, Michele Moran

Deputy Town Clerk, Susan Keller

Codes Officer, Mike Mulligan

Library Director, Anne DuRoss

Assessor, DarlenE Abbatecola

Highway Secretary, Shannon Guernsey

Members of the Media:

None

A quorum was declared present for the transaction of business.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Councilman Latini introduced the following Resolution for adoption; seconded by Councilman Reynolds:

RESOLUTION NO. 327 OF 2026

APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 23, 2026 MINUTES

RESOLVED, that the Town Board approves and waives the reading of the September 23, 2026 Town Board Meeting Minutes with clarification that the amendment to the Order of Business regarding public comment was intended to remain in effect until changed by a future organizational action of the Town Board.

Upon Roll Call: Supervisor Messa - AYE, Councilman Tehan - AYE, Councilman Reynolds - AYE, Councilman Latini - AYE, Councilman Pristera - AYE. The Resolution was carried and adopted.

Councilman Latini introduced the following Resolution for adoption; seconded by Councilman Reynolds:

RESOLUTION NO. 328 OF 2026

APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 10, 2025 MINUTES

RESOLVED, that the Town Board approves the December 10, 2025 Town Board Meeting Minutes prepared by the new administration and waives their reading.

Upon Roll Call: Supervisor Messa - AYE, Councilman Tehan - AYE, Councilman Reynolds - AYE, Councilman Latini - AYE, Councilman Pristera - AYE. The Resolution was carried and adopted.

Councilman Latini introduced the following Resolution for adoption; seconded by Councilman Tehan:

RESOLUTION NO. 329 OF 2026

APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 5, 2026 BUDGET WORKSHOP MINUTES

RESOLVED, that the Town Board approves the October 5, 2026 Budget Workshop Minutes and waives their reading.

Upon Roll Call: Supervisor Messa - AYE, Councilman Tehan - AYE, Councilman Reynolds - AYE, Councilman Latini - AYE, Councilman Pristera - AYE. The Resolution was carried and adopted.

Public Hearing - Volunteer Firefighter Real Property Tax Exemption

Town Attorney Cully reviewed the proposed Local Law providing a real property tax exemption of up to 10% for qualified volunteer firefighters pursuant to Section 466-a of the New York State Real Property Tax Law. The proposed exemption would apply to qualifying volunteer firefighters who are certified members of an incorporated volunteer fire department within the Town of New Hartford, have at least two years of continuous service, and meet residency and property ownership requirements. The proposed Local Law also provides a lifetime exemption for qualifying members meeting the statutory requirements.

Councilman Reynolds provided an overview of the legislation and eligibility requirements, including certification procedures, application requirements, and provisions relating to long-term volunteer service. Discussion followed regarding the definition of active membership, certification by the fire department, administration of the program, and guidance available from New York State.

Councilman Latini introduced the following Resolution for adoption; seconded by Councilman Reynolds:

RESOLUTION NO. 330 OF 2026

OPEN PUBLIC HEARING - VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER REAL PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION LOCAL LAW

RESOLVED, that at 6:06 pm, the Town Board hereby opens the Public Hearing regarding the proposed Local Law providing a Volunteer Firefighter Real Property Tax Exemption pursuant to Section 466-a of the New York State Real Property Tax Law.

Upon Roll Call: Supervisor Messa - AYE, Councilman Tehan - AYE, Councilman Reynolds - AYE, Councilman Latini - AYE, Councilman Pristera - AYE.
The Resolution was carried and adopted.

Resident Tom Smith, Willowvale Fire Co., addressed the Board regarding eligibility requirements, active membership status, certification procedures, and application of the exemption. Additional discussion followed between the Board, Fire Department representatives, and residents regarding administration of the exemption and future State guidance.

No further comments were offered.

Councilman Latini introduced the following Resolution for adoption; seconded by Councilman Pristera:

RESOLUTION NO. 331 OF 2026
CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING - VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER REAL PROPERTY TAX
EXEMPTION LOCAL LAW

RESOLVED, that at 6:15 pm, the Town Board hereby closes the Public Hearing regarding the proposed Local Law providing a Volunteer Firefighter Real Property Tax Exemption pursuant to Section 466-a of the New York State Real Property Tax Law.

Upon Roll Call: Supervisor Messa - AYE, Councilman Tehan - AYE, Councilman Reynolds - ABSTAIN, Councilman Latini - AYE, Councilman Pristera - AYE. The Resolution was carried and adopted.

Councilman Latini introduced the following Resolution for adoption; seconded by Councilman Pristera:

RESOLUTION NO. 332 OF 2026
ADOPT LOCAL LAW - VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER REAL PROPERTY TAX
EXEMPTION

RESOLVED, that the Town Board hereby adopts a Local Law providing a Volunteer Firefighter Real Property Tax Exemption pursuant to Section 466-a of the New York State Real Property Tax Law.

Discussion was held regarding the continuation of the exemption for qualifying surviving spouses as provided under State law.

Upon Roll Call: Supervisor Messa - AYE, Councilman Tehan - AYE, Councilman Reynolds - ABSTAIN, Councilman Latini - AYE, Councilman Pristera - AYE.
The Resolution was carried and adopted.

LOCAL LAW INTRODUCTORY 7 OF 2026
Town of New Hartford, County of Oneida
Volunteer Firefighter Real Property Tax Exemption

BE IT ENACTED BY THE TOWN BOARD OF THE TOWN OF NEW HARTFORD:

SECTION ONE - Legislative Intent

It is the intent of the Town Board of the Town of New Hartford to provide a real property tax exemption to qualifying volunteer firefighters as set forth in Real Property Tax Law § 466-a.

SECTION TWO - Authority

Real Property Tax Law § 466-a authorizes a town board to adopt a local law providing a real property tax exemption of up to ten percent (10%) of the assessed value of real property owned by qualifying volunteer firefighters, as follows:

- (a) The individual is an enrolled and certified member of an incorporated volunteer fire department in the Town of New Hartford and has at least two years of continuous service.
- (b) The individual resides in the Town of New Hartford and the property receiving the benefit is the individual's primary residence and is used exclusively for residential purposes.

SECTION THREE - Grant of Lifetime Tax Exemption

The Town Board of the Town of New Hartford hereby provides a lifetime real property tax exemption of ten percent (10%) of the assessed value of real property for any individuals who qualify pursuant to Real Property Tax Law § 466-a and this Local Law.

SECTION FOUR - Effective Date

This Local Law shall be effective immediately upon filing with the Secretary of State.

Matters Submitted by the Town Supervisor

Councilman Pristera introduced the following Resolution for adoption; seconded by Councilman Reynolds:

RESOLUTION NO. 333 OF 2026 APPROVAL OF VOUCHERS

RESOLVED, that the Town Board approves the vouchers as submitted.

Upon Roll Call: Supervisor Messa - AYE, Councilman Tehan - AYE, Councilman Reynolds - AYE, Councilman Latini - AYE, Councilman Pristera – AYE. The Resolution was carried and adopted.

Supervisor Messa advised that inquiries had been received regarding property tax exemptions available to 100% disabled veterans. He requested that the Town Attorney and Assessor review the matter further and provide additional information to the Board.

Supervisor Messa reported that the Town Board held a productive budget work session on October 5, 2026, during which the tentative budget was reviewed in detail. The proposed budget reflects a five-year historical review of revenues and expenditures and maintains an overall reduction of approximately two percent while addressing departmental needs. Town Clerk Moran received and stamped the 2027 Preliminary Budget and distributed same to the Town Board.

Councilman Tehan introduced the following Resolution for adoption; seconded by Councilman Latini:

RESOLUTION NO. 334 OF 2026
APPROVAL OF 2027 PRELIMINARY BUDGET

RESOLVED, that the Town Board approves the 2027 Preliminary Budget as presented.

Upon Roll Call: Supervisor Messa - AYE, Councilman Tehan - AYE, Councilman Reynolds - AYE, Councilman Latini - AYE, Councilman Pristera - AYE. The Resolution was carried and adopted.

Councilman Latini introduced the following Resolution for adoption; seconded by Councilman Reynolds:

RESOLUTION NO. 335 OF 2026
SCHEDULE PUBLIC HEARING FOR 2027 PRELIMINARY BUDGET

RESOLVED, that the Town Board schedules a Public Hearing on the 2027 Preliminary Budget for October 21, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. at the Town Municipal Building.

Upon Roll Call: Supervisor Messa - AYE, Councilman Tehan - AYE, Councilman Reynolds - AYE, Councilman Latini - AYE, Councilman Pristera - AYE. The Resolution was carried and adopted.

Reports of Town Officials

Town Clerk

Town Clerk Moran reported that the Town Clerk's Office collected a total of \$23,528.25 during the month. Of that amount, \$23,315.75 was remitted to the Town Finance Department, with the remaining funds distributed to New York State agencies for dog licensing and marriage license fees.

Town Clerk Moran requested authorization for herself to attend a one-day Local Government Conference in Potsdam, NY on October 13th, covering municipal clerk topics including tax collection, records management, and FOIL administration. The request included registration, lodging, and travel expenses.

Councilman Reynolds introduced the following Resolution for adoption; seconded by Councilman Latini:

RESOLUTION NO. 336 OF 2026
AUTHORIZING TOWN CLERK TO ATTEND LOCAL GOVERNMENT
CONFERENCE

RESOLVED, that Town Clerk Michele Moran is authorized to attend the Local Government Conference in Potsdam, New York, and that the Town shall pay registration, lodging, and related travel expenses associated with attendance.

Upon Roll Call: Supervisor Messa - AYE, Councilman Tehan - AYE, Councilman Reynolds - AYE, Councilman Latini - AYE, Councilman Pristera - AYE. The Resolution was carried and adopted.

Town Clerk Moran also requested authorization for Deputy Town Clerk Sue Keller to attend the conference under the same terms.

Councilman Latini introduced the following Resolution for adoption; seconded by Councilman Pristera:

**RESOLUTION NO. 337 OF 2026
AUTHORIZING DEPUTY TOWN CLERK TO ATTEND LOCAL GOVERNMENT
CONFERENCE**

RESOLVED, that Deputy Town Clerk Sue Keller is authorized to attend the Local Government Conference in Potsdam, New York, and that the Town shall pay registration, lodging, and related travel expenses associated with attendance.

Upon Roll Call: Supervisor Messa - AYE, Councilman Tehan - AYE, Councilman Reynolds – AYE, Councilman Latini - AYE, Councilman Pristera - AYE. The Resolution was carried and adopted.

Town Clerk Moran reminded Board members and residents that early voting will begin on October 24, 2026, and noted that voting information has been posted at the entrances of the municipal building.

Discussion followed regarding security measures during the early voting period, including the presence of Sheriff's personnel and installation of barrier chains in designated areas of the building.

Police Department

Chief Fontaine reported on two recent traffic complaints previously brought before the Town Board. The first involved speeding concerns on Chapman Road. Traffic enforcement details were conducted on September 27 and October 3, resulting in several speeding tickets being issued. Chief Fontaine noted that the area will continue to be monitored as needed.

The second complaint involved traffic conditions on Oneida Street. Due to ongoing paving operations at the time of the investigation, normal traffic conditions could not be evaluated. The Police Department will revisit the matter once construction activities have concluded. Discussion followed regarding communication with residents who submit traffic complaints and providing feedback regarding enforcement actions taken.

Chief Fontaine also discussed proposed adjustments to the Police Department's 2027 budget. The requested changes were largely administrative in nature and intended to improve budget predictability throughout the upcoming fiscal year. The Board expressed no concerns with the proposed adjustments.

Personnel & Finance

Christina Lacy, Finance Dept. presented several budget transfer requests for Board consideration.

Councilman Latini introduced the following Resolution for adoption; seconded by Councilman Pristera:

RESOLUTION NO. 338 OF 2026
BUDGET TRANSFER - HIGHWAY SALT ACCOUNT

RESOLVED, that the Town Board approves a budget transfer in the amount of \$40,000.00 from Account DB9120.00 Highway Fund Balance to Account DB51420.402, Snow Removal - Salt, to provide sufficient funding for winter salt purchases through the remainder of 2026.

Upon Roll Call: Supervisor Messa - AYE, Councilman Tehan - AYE, Councilman Reynolds - AYE, Councilman Latini - AYE, Councilman Pristera - AYE. The Resolution was carried and adopted.

Councilman Latini introduced the following Resolution for adoption; seconded by Councilman Reynolds:

RESOLUTION NO. 339 OF 2026
BUDGET TRANSFER - PARKS CONTRACTUAL ACCOUNT

RESOLVED, that the Town Board approves a budget transfer in the amount of \$23,132.50 from Account A7110.14, Parks Seasonal Employees, to Account A7110.40, Parks Contractual, utilizing available surplus funds within the Parks Department budget.

Upon Roll Call: Supervisor Messa - AYE, Councilman Tehan - AYE, Councilman Reynolds - AYE, Councilman Latini - AYE, Councilman Pristera - AYE. The Resolution was carried and adopted.

Christina Lacy, Finance Dept. next presented a budget transfer discussed during the October 5 budget workshop to fund the purchase of two highway trucks.

Councilman Latini introduced the following Resolution for adoption; seconded by Councilman Reynolds:

RESOLUTION NO. 340 OF 2026
BUDGET TRANSFER - HIGHWAY TRUCK PURCHASES

RESOLVED, that the Town Board approves a budget transfer in the amount of \$100,000.00 from Account DB91200.00 to Account DB51300.20, Highway Machinery, for the purchase of two highway pickup trucks.

Upon Roll Call: Supervisor Messa - AYE, Councilman Tehan - AYE, Councilman Reynolds - AYE, Councilman Latini - AYE, Councilman Pristera - AYE. The Resolution was carried and adopted.

Councilman Latini introduced the following Resolution for adoption; seconded by Councilman Pristera:

RESOLUTION NO. 341 OF 2026
BUDGET TRANSFER - CODES DEPARTMENT VEHICLE

RESOLVED, that the Town Board approves a budget transfer in the amount of \$40,000.00 from Account B91200.00 to Account B80100.20 for the purchase of a Codes Department vehicle. Discussion was held regarding updated vehicle pricing and the adequacy of the requested transfer amount.

Upon Roll Call: Supervisor Messa - AYE, Councilman Tehan - AYE, Councilman Reynolds - AYE, Councilman Latini - AYE, Councilman Pristera - AYE. The Resolution was carried and adopted.

Assistant Personnel Director Lacy reported that health insurance renewal rates had been received. MVP rates increased approximately 4%, while Excellus rates increased approximately 12%, both below the anticipated 15% increase included in budget projections. Dental and vision insurance rates remained unchanged.

Assistant Personnel Director Lacy also advised the Board that two part-time Fire Inspector positions were no longer active and requested their removal in order to proceed with recruiting additional assistance for the Codes Department.

Councilman Reynolds introduced the following Resolution for adoption; seconded by Councilman Latini:

**RESOLUTION NO. 342 OF 2026
REMOVAL OF STEVE KARRAT AS FIRE INSPECTOR**

RESOLVED, that Steve Karrat is hereby removed from the position of Fire Inspector effective October 7, 2026.

Upon Roll Call: Supervisor Messa - AYE, Councilman Tehan - AYE, Councilman Reynolds - AYE, Councilman Latini - AYE, Councilman Pristera - AYE. The Resolution was carried and adopted.

Councilman Tehan introduced the following Resolution for adoption; seconded by Councilman Latini:

**RESOLUTION NO. 343 OF 2026
REMOVAL OF DANIEL TREVASANI AS FIRE INSPECTOR**

RESOLVED, that Daniel Trevasani is hereby removed from the position of Fire Inspector effective October 7, 2026.

Upon Roll Call: Supervisor Messa - AYE, Councilman Tehan - AYE, Councilman Reynolds - AYE, Councilman Latini - AYE, Councilman Pristera - AYE. The Resolution was carried and adopted.

Assessor

Assessor Abbatecola requested the reappointment of Duane Farr to the Board of Assessment Review, noting his experience and continued service to the Town.

Councilman Latini introduced the following Resolution for adoption; seconded by Councilman Reynolds:

**RESOLUTION NO. 344 OF 2026
REAPPOINTMENT OF DWAYNE FARR TO THE BOARD OF ASSESSMENT REVIEW**

RESOLVED, that Duane Farr is hereby reappointed to the Board of Assessment Review for a five-year term commencing October 7, 2026 and expiring September 30, 2031.

Upon Roll Call: Supervisor Messa - AYE, Councilman Tehan - AYE, Councilman Reynolds - AYE, Councilman Latini - AYE, Councilman Pristera - AYE. The Resolution was carried and adopted.

Highway Department

Highway Superintendent Sherman presented several items for surplus declaration and disposal through auction.

Councilman Reynolds introduced the following Resolution for adoption; seconded by Councilman Latini:

RESOLUTION NO. 345 OF 2026

DECLARING 2008 FORD F-350 SUPER DUTY DUMP TRUCK SURPLUS

RESOLVED, that a 2008 Ford F-350 Super Duty dump truck bearing VIN number 1FDWF33R08EE12417 is hereby declared surplus and authorized for disposal through public auction.

Upon Roll Call: Supervisor Messa - AYE, Councilman Tehan - AYE, Councilman Reynolds - AYE, Councilman Latini - AYE, Councilman Pristera - AYE. The Resolution was carried and adopted.

Councilman Pristera introduced the following Resolution for adoption; seconded by Councilman Latini:

RESOLUTION NO. 346 OF 2026

DECLARING 2013 FORD F-250 PICKUP TRUCK SURPLUS

RESOLVED, that a 2013 Ford F-250 pickup truck equipped with a plow and bearing VIN number 1FTBF2B62DEB42279 is hereby declared surplus and authorized for disposal through public auction.

Upon Roll Call: Supervisor Messa - AYE, Councilman Tehan - AYE, Councilman Reynolds - AYE, Councilman Latini - AYE, Councilman Pristera - AYE. The Resolution was carried and adopted.

Councilman Latini introduced the following Resolution for adoption; seconded by Councilman Pristera:

RESOLUTION NO. 347 OF 2026

DECLARING 2013 GALVANIZED TRAILER SURPLUS

RESOLVED, that a 2013 sixteen-foot galvanized trailer bearing VIN number 5FTEE2225D1043160 is hereby declared surplus and authorized for disposal through public auction.

Upon Roll Call: Supervisor Messa - AYE, Councilman Tehan - AYE, Councilman Reynolds - AYE, Councilman Latini - AYE, Councilman Pristera - AYE. The Resolution was carried and adopted.

Highway Superintendent Sherman noted that the previously approved surplus 2014 Mack GU713 dump truck bearing VIN number 1M2AX08C1EM001880, equipped with a wing (Serial No. CE07171), plow (Serial No. CEO0717), and hopper, will be included with the other surplus equipment offered through auction.

Highway Superintendent Sherman then presented the Department's monthly project update highlighting work completed throughout September, including roadway paving, stormwater improvements, drainage projects, sidewalk construction, bridge installation, and maintenance activities throughout the Town.

Codes Department

Codes Enforcement Officer Mulligan provided his first monthly report since assuming the position. He reported that approximately 77 permits have been entered into the system, with 44 permits issued and approximately 20 permits currently under review.

Mr. Mulligan advised that discussions have begun regarding a more structured inspection schedule and acknowledged the need for additional assistance to address the volume of inspections and permit activity. He noted that efforts continue to improve office operations and permit processing.

Supervisor Messa thanked Mr. Mulligan for his efforts and requested that future monthly reports include permit activity and inspection statistics.

New Hartford Public Library

Library Director DuRoss reminded the Board of the upcoming Legislative Breakfast scheduled for October 21, 2026. Mrs. DuRoss reported that library staff recently hosted tours and library card registration activities for Bradley Elementary School fifth-grade students. The library has also resumed preschool outreach programming with local preschool and district pre-kindergarten classes. In addition, the Library will host a pumpkin painting activity on October 10, 2026. Mrs. DuRoss reported that the Library roof project is substantially complete, with only minor interior work remaining.

Matters Submitted by the Town Board

- Councilman Tehan reported no additional matters.
- Councilman Reynolds reported no additional matters.
- Councilman Pristera reported no additional matters.

Councilman Latini expressed his appreciation for Planning Board Chair Heather Mowett's service and dedication to the Town and recommended her reappointment to the Planning Board.

Councilman Latini introduced the following Resolution for adoption; seconded by Councilman Reynolds:

RESOLUTION NO. 348 OF 2026 REAPPOINTMENT OF HEATHER MOWAT TO THE PLANNING BOARD

RESOLVED, that Heather Mowat is hereby reappointed as a member of the Town of New Hartford Planning Board for a term commencing January 1, 2027 and expiring December 31, 2033.

Upon Roll Call: Supervisor Messa - AYE, Councilman Tehan - AYE, Councilman Reynolds - AYE, Councilman Latini - AYE, Councilman Pristera - AYE. The Resolution was carried and adopted.

Supervisor Messa thanked Ms. Mowat for her patience throughout the appointment process and for her continued service to the Town.

Public Comment

Brandy Rogowski, Medford Place, addressed the Board regarding a September 14, 2026 Codes Department inspection of a pool barrier located on her property.

No additional public comments were offered.

Adjournment

Councilman Latini introduced the following Resolution for adoption; seconded by Councilman Pristera:

RESOLUTION NO. 349 OF 2026

ADJOURNMENT

RESOLVED, that the Town Board Meeting be adjourned.

Upon Roll Call: Supervisor Messa - AYE, Councilman Tehan - AYE, Councilman Reynolds - AYE, Councilman Latini - AYE, Councilman Pristera - AYE. The Resolution was carried and adopted.

There being no further business to come before the Town Board, the meeting was adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

Next Meeting: October 21, 2026

Respectfully submitted,



Michele Moran
Town Clerk
10/9/26