

**TOWN OF WATERTOWN
Regular Meeting
Municipal Building
April 9, 2026**

Members Present: Joel R. Bartlett, Supervisor
David D. Prosser, Councilman
Joanne McClusky, Councilwoman
Robert Slye, Councilman

Members Absent: Michael Perkins, Councilman

Supervisor Bartlett opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a roll call of members present at 7:00 pm. Attorney Harrienger was also present.

MOTION #50-2026

Supervisor Bartlett moved to adopt the minutes from the March 12, 2026 Regular, Councilman Prosser seconded.

Ayes All

Pat Scordo, GYMO updated the Board on Northeast Water District No. 7.

EASEMENT SUMMARY UPDATE

	Total	Signed
Forced Main and Water service	72	46
Force Main Only	4	1
Water Service Only	68	30

- Potentially interested resident to go door-to-door for acquiring signed easements.
- Waiting to hear from City Engineering Department regarding Town connections to City Water Main on Hunt Street.
- Department of Ag & Markets issues still need to be resolved for six parcels in Water District:
 1. Coordinate with Department of Ag & Markets and the Town Attorney regarding lateral restriction proposal.
 2. Smith property owner doesn't want lateral restrictions (Town Attorney communicating with Smith Attorney.)
 3. Town meets with Political Representatives.
- Amendment No. 3 prepared for Additional Engineering Services; (Water Booster Pumping Station, Easement Mapping, two Additional Prime Contracts, and Dept. of Ag and Markets coordination.)

UPDATED PROJECT COST BUDGET

Administrative	\$225,000
Technical Services	\$998,000 (12.5%)
Construction	\$6,145,000
Contingency	\$717,000 (9.0%)
Total	\$8,085,000 (\$5M Grant and 3.085M 30-yr Loan @ 0%)

Discussion continued regarding the status of the water district project and the ongoing effort to obtain the required easements.

John Adams of Rutland Hollow Road expressed interest in volunteering to assist with door-to-door outreach efforts to obtain signed easements.

Mr. Scordo provided the Board an 11-by-17 color-coded map identifying the problem areas where easements are still outstanding. Areas marked in red indicate unsigned easements.

The most significant concern is along the stretch of State Street (Route 126). This area presents a particular challenge because it is a state highway, and they are not permitted to install infrastructure within the right-of-way. As a result, they must obtain easements on private property.

In total, there are approximately 19 critical unsigned easements along this section, from the start of the project up to the point where the route diverges from Route 126. These are considered critical because, without them, the pipeline cannot be installed in this area.

In other parts of the district, there is some flexibility. The pipeline could potentially be relocated from private property into the roadway or right-of-way to avoid the need for easements. However, this approach would likely increase construction costs, as installing pipeline near or within pavement is more complex and was something they aimed to avoid whenever possible.

Another potential course of action involves coordination with the City Engineering Department. A number of residents opposing the project are located along Hunt Street. There is an existing city water main on the west side of Hunt Street, and some town residents are currently connected to it.

Mr. Scordo explained it was his understanding that once a town water district is formally established, it supersedes outside user agreements with a municipality. Properties within the district would then be required to connect to the district system. However, several of these property owners have not signed easements.

To address this, Mr. Scordo has reached out to the City Engineer to review the situation. He is seeking a formal letter clarifying this position, which could then be distributed to affected residents currently receiving city water but located within the town.

The Board inquired whether there would be any costs associated with involving the City Attorney. It was noted that no determination has been made yet regarding potential fees.

Supervisor Bartlett noted that he has an upcoming meeting with City representatives and BCA on April 14th and he will include this area in the discussion regarding this issue. The City Engineer has already been contacted and is aware of the situation, though it is unclear whether the matter has been elevated to the City Manager or City Attorney. It was suggested that the City Attorney may need to provide an interpretation of City policy.

It was suggested that the Town could either mail letters to affected residents or conduct door-to-door visits. It was discussed that a combination of both approaches may be most effective. Door-to-door outreach would primarily target residents within the district, particularly along Route 126 in the identified "red" areas where easements remain unsigned. However, along Hunt Street, coordination with the City is necessary, as that is the only area where City involvement plays a significant role.

Clarification was provided regarding the map legend: red areas represent critical unsigned easements, primarily associated with the force main. Other colored areas indicate "sub-critical" easements. If sub-critical easements are not obtained, those property owners would not receive service connections; however, the main line could still be installed.

A question was raised about whether development could proceed if properties do not receive service. It was explained that the project would still move forward, and those properties would continue to be included in the capital cost calculations, as they may connect in the future.

Discussion then shifted to other project updates. A response letter to the Department of Agriculture and Markets has been drafted by the Town Attorney addressing outstanding concerns with the Smith farm and six related parcels.

Finally, the Board reviewed proposed Amendment No. 3 to the contract. The amendment includes four items related to additional engineering services, including easement mapping, coordination involving the Williams property, work associated with Ag and Markets, and the preparation of multiple construction contracts. While the project was initially expected to be bid as a single contract, funding agency requirements now necessitate three separate contracts: one for the booster pump station, one for the general pipeline, and one for electrical work.

The total project funding includes a \$5 million grant and a \$3.085 million loan at 0% interest over 30 years. It was noted that this financing package is highly favorable, and based on expert recommendation, no additional funding is being pursued. The EDU (Equivalent Dwelling Unit) costs remain below both the 2025 and projected 2026 Comptroller thresholds, indicating the project remains financially reasonable.

Mike Altieri, BCA updated the Board on town projects.

PROJECTS IN CONSTRUCTION

Water District No. 4 Extension (Northland Estates/Pine Meadows)

Construction Budget:	\$6,400,790.00 (Orig. 7,250,000.00)
Administrative and Technical Costs:	\$1,709,500.00
Contingency:	\$1,889,710.00
Total Project Cost:	\$10,000,000.00
Total Grant Funding (WIIA and CDBG):	\$ 6,250,000.00

Project Bid Results:

Contract No. 1 - Pipeline Construction	\$ 5,790,920.00 - JL Excavation
Contract No. 2 - Tank Aeration System	\$565,000.00 - Powis Contracting Inc.
Contract No. 3 - Electrical Construction	\$ 44,870.00 - Blackstone Electric

Projected Construction Substantial Completion Date: December 2026

Most of the pipe has been delivered to the site, along with fittings and required permits. At this point, it is fair to say that construction has commenced. The plan is to begin the majority of the work within the park areas and then work outward from there.

Mr. Altieri has had productive efforts securing several outstanding easements. After providing additional clarification to property owners, many were signed. These appeared to be easements that may have previously been overlooked or delayed. At this point, they have less than a handful remaining.

A pre-construction meeting with NYSDOT is expected to take place soon, and DOT permit-related items are underway. The primary piece of equipment still pending is the aeration system, which is anticipated for delivery and installation around September or October 2026 at the water storage tank.

Town wide Sewer (Districts 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6) I&I and Pipeline Improvements

This project effort will be combined with the new sewer alignment from SD No. 2 into the City of Watertown WWTP and the new sewer alignment of the Town’s sewer on the Circle K property. Lawman has indicated that construction on this project could progress this April once all project documentation has been agreed to and executed. NYS DEC will be issuing separate approvals for the Circle K, I&I repairs and realigned pipeline at the WWTP respectively.

Project Bid Results:

Contract No. 1 – Pipeline Construction	\$ 376,818.00 – Lawman Heating and Cooling
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SPECIAL NOTE ON OUTSTANDING TOWN AFRs:

For all projects funded in the Town by EFC, including WD #4 Extension and SD #1 Improvements, EFC is requiring that the Town complete and file its outstanding AFRs for the

last two years (2023 and 2024) in order to close on financing with their agency.

Supervisor Bartlett noted that 2023 & 2024 AFRs have been completed and submitted and they have applied for an extension for 2025.

Councilwoman McClusky stated that after reviewing last month's minutes, she was concerned about the Town's budget situation. As a result of those concerns, she requested to the State Comptroller Office to conduct an audit of the Town's financial records.

Supervisor Bartlett responded that the budget situation is not as severe as has been suggested and advised the Town hire Mr. Fox from Local Government Support Services to assist in addressing the town financial issues.

Councilwoman McClusky expressed concerns regarding the lack of recent revenue and expenditure reports, noting that they had not received financial reporting in several months. It was also noted that there have been ongoing difficulties with payroll and other financial processes.

Supervisor Bartlett explained that significant time has recently been devoted to securing financing and completing bond-related transactions, including coordination with financial institutions. It was noted that all required funds have been secured and that outstanding obligations, including a \$16 million bond have been closed.

Councilman Prosser questioned the handling and tracking of Town checks and financial records. Supervisor Bartlett explained that payroll is processed and recorded through standard procedures, and that vendor payments are issued through multiple Town accounts, including separate capital project accounts as required by law. It was further explained that monthly bank statements and cancelled check images are received and retained for auditing and reporting purposes, including compliance with New York State requirements for documentation of expenditures.

PROJECTS IN DESIGN

Sewer District No. 1

Total Project Cost:	\$ 2,643,000.00 (WWTF Replacement)
	\$ 4,491,000.00 (Stormwater Improvements)
Project Funding Awarded: NYS EFC WIIA - \$ 444,500.00, NYS DEC WQIP - \$ 1,000,000.00 (WWTF) NYS EFC GIGP - \$945,000 Grant (Stormwater)	

Project Update – The Town has received and executed an amended Consent Order has been sent to the Town from NYS DEC. The Town continues to roll forward with the grant closings for both the WQIP and GIGP grants received. An amendment for engineering services related to the GIGP grant has been submitted to the Town Board for review. Comments have been received on the UV Design from NYS DEC and are being addressed.

The Town has formally withdrawn from the piloting effort due to industry shifts. 'Plan B' treatment technologies will be examined as identified in the Preliminary Engineering Report.

Discussion was held regarding Sewer District No. 1. It was noted that the project is currently in the design phase and that comments have been received from the Environmental Conservation (EC) review regarding the UV system. It was further stated that the Town has officially withdrawn from the pilot program due to the selected technology vendor discontinuing support for its North American product line in favor of its European line.

In response, it was noted that procurement requirements, including "Buy American" provisions related to iron and steel, must be considered moving forward. Mr. Altieri indicated that alternative treatment technologies are being evaluated, including membrane bioreactor (MBR) and moving bed bioreactor (MBBR) systems. These options were described as being considered based on cost, operational simplicity, smaller footprint, and reduced capital requirements.

The discussion also addressed the emergency generator and automatic transfer switch at the wastewater treatment plant. It was reported that a recent operational issue occurred during a transfer attempt to backup power, revealing potential deficiencies in an antiquated electrical system and timing-related switching issues. It was noted that while the system functioned during a subsequent test, concerns remain regarding reliability.

It was further discussed that, due to long lead times for replacement generators (approximately nine to ten months), the Town may need to consider interim solutions such as a temporary portable generator option. Funding availability was noted through a \$1 million WQIP grant, which may also support related electrical upgrades associated with the UV system improvements.

An additional suggestion was made that the Town electricians meet with plant operator Angel French to review operational procedures and system conditions.

Sewer District No. 1 Revised Schedule per NYS DEC Amended Consent Order:

NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION
Respondent: Town of Watertown
No. R6-20190315-07A
SCHEDULE A

The above-referenced Respondent shall, on or before the dates indicated:

REQUIRED ACTION

1. Submit approvable Final Basis of Design, Plans, Specifications, and a Construction Schedule for the implementation of the recommended disinfection system, wastewater treatment system, and storm water collection system improvements. The design documents shall clearly include Respondent's preferred alternatives and include a schedule for implementation of the corrective actions, which shall become an enforceable part of this First Amended Order. The schedule shall incorporate, at a minimum, the due dates in this First Amended Order.
Due Date: On or before October 1, 2026
2. Submit a written P.E. Certificate of Construction Completion for the disinfection system.
Due Date: On or before April 15, 2027
3. Submit a written P.E. Certificate of Construction Completion for the wastewater treatment system and storm water collection system improvements.
Due Date: On or before December 30, 2027.

Discussion was held regarding SEQR documentation updates. It was noted that the Town is being asked to update and confirm all SEQR-related documentation and ensure that the revised materials are consistent with prior determinations.

It was stated that the appropriate notices were previously completed, and that Part 1, Part 2, and Part 3 of the SEQR forms had been reviewed. A Negative Declaration was also previously issued following the public hearing.

MOTION #51-2026

Supervisor Bartlett offered a motion to authorize the Supervisor to sign the required SEQR documents for Sewer District 1. The motion was seconded by Councilman Prosser.

Ayes All

PROJECTS IN DEVELOPMENT

Sewer District 4, 5 and 6 Engineering Planning Grant Study - The EPG is in the stages of grant closure with NYS EFC. This study will examine additional upgrades that may need to be

undertaken related to these districts. The Town has received RFQ responses for the engineering services for this study.

Water Districts 3, 4 and 5 - A combination of aging infrastructure and issues on the horizon will necessitate upgrades and potential consolidation of these districts, particularly for the ground tank serving WD 5. There may be an opportunity to consolidate these districts with WD Nos. 1 and 2.

Stormwater WQIP Grant - As an MS4, the Town will likely be eligible to apply for a vacuum truck to assist the Highway Department in maintaining the storm water system. The application period will likely open in May.

MOTION #52-2026

WHEREAS, the Town published a request for qualifications for engineering services to be considered by the Town for Sewer Districts #4, #5 and #6; and

WHEREAS, the Town is charged with appointing a firm who has submitted their qualifications to perform such work related to all phases of construction of Sewer District #4, #5 & #6.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED; BCA Architect Engineering of Watertown, NY meets all standards for appointment as engineers for Sewer Districts #4, #5 & #6.

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Supervisor is authorized to execute the required contractual agreement between BCA Architect Engineers and the Town of Watertown.

A motion to adopt the foregoing resolution was made by Supervisor Bartlett and seconded by Councilmember Prosser and upon a roll call vote of the Board was duly adopted as follows:

Supervisor Bartlett	yes
Councilman Prosser	yes
Councilwoman McClusky	yes
Councilman Perkins	absent
Councilman Slye	yes

The floor was opened the floor for public comment:

Joe Meyer, Co. Rte.60 questioned the approval of the prior month's minutes, stating concern that the minutes were adopted without some Board members fully reviewing them. He expressed that it was difficult to understand how minutes could be approved without prior reading and review by the Board.

He commented further on potential cost savings related to loss of CHIPS funding, suggesting that elimination of a proposed NYS Rte 3 connection road project could offset approximately \$400,000 in CHIPS funds, which could then be reallocated elsewhere within the Town.

Mr. Meyer further raised concerns regarding financial transparency, questioning how the Board can make informed spending decisions without clear knowledge of available fund balances across multiple Town accounts.

Supervisor Bartlett explained that the Town operates with a fund balance that fluctuates based on revenues and expenditures throughout the fiscal year and those final balances are determined after year-end adjustments and final draw downs. It was noted that budget decisions are based on projected year-end fund balances.

Mr. Meyer questioned whether the Town currently has a zero balance in the General Fund and asked whether contingency or "rainy day" funds are available for unforeseen expenses.

The Supervisor further explained that historically the Town has maintained an end-of-year fund balance of approximately \$400,000 and referenced prior guidance from the State Comptroller's Office regarding the appropriate level of fund balance.

Mr. Meyer expressed concern regarding interfund transfers, stating that prior comments suggested funds may be used between different accounts (including water and sewer districts) to cover expenses. It was suggested that this may indicate insufficient revenues within certain funds.

Supervisor Bartlett responded that such issues had been addressed through prior water rate adjustments and other financial management actions intended to align revenues with expenses.

Mr. Meyer reiterated concerns regarding the appearance of "interfund borrowing" or shifting of funds between accounts to meet obligations.

Dave Soderquist, Holcomb Street, addressed the Board. He expressed concerns with recent reporting of the Town's financial situation.

Mr. Soderquist stated that he appreciated a Councilwoman McClusky request for an audit by the State Comptroller's Office, describing it as a responsible step in light of ongoing financial concerns. He referenced his background in banking and finance, noting the importance of internal controls, oversight, and dual control procedures. He also expressed concern regarding interest costs and interfund financial arrangements.

Supervisor Bartlett responded that annual audits have been requested and that efforts have been made to secure independent auditing services. It was stated that it has been difficult to obtain an independent accounting firm willing or available to perform municipal audits in the region. The Supervisor further noted that the State Comptroller's Office has not conducted an audit locally in many years due to staffing constraints and workload.

Additional discussion followed regarding the distinction between an investigation and an audit, and whether the request implied wrong doing. It was clarified that the intent was to ensure proper financial oversight and accountability.

Mr. Soderquist stated that he believed the request for a State audit was appropriate and reiterated his support for improved financial review.

John Adams, Rutland Hollow Road, stated his support for Water District No. 7 and is willing to help with door-to-door outreach as needed. He requested coordination with the Town Engineer, attorneys, and/or the Board to determine next steps in organizing a group and obtaining the necessary information to conduct outreach effectively.

James Lettiere addressed the Board regarding prior discussions and resolutions related to the Town's decision not to proceed with involvement in his water system acquisition. He referenced the resolution adopted by the Board and expressed concern regarding its content and wording, stating that he believed certain language within the resolution was misleading or unfavorable.

Mr. Lettiere stated that, in connection with earlier proceedings in 2023, he had agreed to share the cost of an appraisal with the expectation that the process would move forward in a constructive manner. He requested reimbursement for his portion of the appraisal cost, stating that the process did not proceed as anticipated.

He further questioned references contained within the resolution, including mention of mapping and planning materials, and expressed his opinion that the resolution was unfavorable or predetermined in outcome. He also disputed characterizations made regarding system value, condition of infrastructure, and related engineering conclusions, asserting that portions of the system infrastructure remain in acceptable condition based on his understanding and appraisal documentation.

Mr. Lettiere further stated that he believed the appraisal supported a higher system value than initially anticipated and indicated he did not adjust his position on price. He also expressed disagreement with statements made regarding the condition of infrastructure materials and referenced comparisons to other municipal systems.

Mr. Lettiere raised additional concerns regarding the petition process, stating that he felt there were misunderstandings regarding his efforts to collect signatures and that he acted in accordance with direction he believed he had received. He disputed any suggestion that he improperly influenced individuals during that process.

He also described prior communications and meetings with Board members regarding the matter and expressed frustration that, in his view, certain discussions or negotiations did not proceed further. He asked to get input from Mr. Scordo from GYMO but to his knowledge he has not been contacted.

Councilman Prosser responded that he was willing to meet with Mr. Lettiere but could not make any decisions without the input of the entire Board.

Julie Gayne, Swan Road, addressed the Board in support of Councilwoman McClusky's request for a State Comptroller audit. She stated that such audits are routine oversight tools used to evaluate municipal policies, procedures, internal controls, and compliance with applicable municipal law. She further noted that audits typically identify deficiencies and recommend corrective actions to improve financial management and transparency, and should not be construed as an allegation of wrongdoing.

Mrs. Gayne also inquired whether the Town had issued requests for proposals or otherwise solicited auditing services from external accounting firms.

Supervisor Bartlett responded that efforts have been made to contact auditing and accounting firms capable of performing municipal audits; however, it was stated that many firms are no longer providing such services in the region. The Supervisor further noted challenges in identifying available firms to perform independent audits.

Discussion continued regarding differences between municipal budgets and those of other governmental entities, including school districts and federal agencies, with differing accounting structures and reporting requirements noted.

Mrs. Gayne stated that, in her view, review of expenditure and revenue reports would allow for a clear understanding of the Town's financial position, and reiterated concern that such reports had not been adequately presented to the Board. She also requested that the Town's CPA firm attend a future Board meeting to present and explain financial reports, including prior fiscal year results.

Further discussion occurred regarding the need for financial professionals to present and explain audit and financial statements directly to the Town Board to ensure understanding of fiscal position, prior year results, and areas requiring attention. It was stated that prior requests for such presentations had not yet been fulfilled, and that the Board should receive a formal presentation moving forward.

No one else wished to speak; the floor was closed.

Supervisor Bartlett accepted the Town Clerk Report.

Supervisor Bartlett stated that an agreement had been reached earlier today regarding the installation of the connector road off of NYS Rte. 3. With this agreement the Town would not be responsible for direct construction costs. He reported that the developer (Stewart's) would construct the road and dedicate it to the Town upon completion. The Town's role would include coordination with Cor Development and execution of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) related to use of lighting infrastructure at an estimated annual cost of approximately \$1,300. He further stated that permit applications would be submitted by the Town to the New York State

Department of Transportation, and that existing engineering data could be utilized in the application process. The land owner/developer Mr. Simao also indicated a proposed \$25,000 contribution toward related coordination and infrastructure costs.

Board members raised questions regarding property ownership, eminent domain, and whether the proposed road connection would constitute a full access roadway or a limited access driveway configuration. It was noted that clarification was needed regarding the scope of the connection and its relation to NYS Rte. 3 access. This agreement would be for the strip of approximately 250'. It would not include the connection to Co. Rte. 202.

Additional discussion occurred regarding whether the Town would incur any costs related to traffic signal modification, curb work, or roadway improvements. The Supervisor stated that the intent of the agreement was to avoid Town construction costs and that the completed roadway would be inspected by the Town, County, and State to ensure compliance with applicable standards.

The Town Attorney stated that she could not fully comment on the proposed agreement without reviewing the draft documents. She suggested moving into executive session to discuss the agreement with the town engineer and Highway Superintendent.

Supervisor Bartlett expressed he preferred to discuss this in the public setting.

Concerns were raised by Board members regarding the lack of written documentation available at the time of discussion. It was stated that the Board had not received the full agreement or supporting materials necessary to make a formal decision.

The Supervisor acknowledged that copies of the written agreement were not available at the meeting and indicated that the intent was to present the information for discussion rather than immediate formal approval.

No action was taken on the proposed road agreement during this discussion.

Supervisor Bartlett will forward the information regarding the road agreement to the board members, clerk and legal.

Supervisor Bartlett presented a zoning change request submitted by Michael Lundy concerning property located on Spring Valley Drive.

Mr. Lundy submitted a request to the Planning Board to rezone the property from Residential to a Business District designation, which was noted as being consistent with adjacent land uses. The Planning Board Chair, Tom Boxberger, stated that the proposed zoning change would allow more uses of the property, any development would continue to require Planning Board review, including site plan review addressing traffic, density, and related considerations. It was further noted that no significant objections were raised by Planning Board members during preliminary review.

The Supervisor requested that legal counsel prepare the necessary documentation for Town Board consideration of the proposed zoning change for next month's meeting.

MOTION #53-2026

TOWN OF WATERTOWN NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING LOCAL LAW #2 OF 2026

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that Local Law No. 2 of 2026 has been introduced before the Town Board of the Town of Watertown, Jefferson County, New York. This Local Law proposes a zone change from Residential 2 (R-2) to Business (B) on the property on Spring Valley Drive, Watertown. The zone change affects parcels: Tax map #91.05-1-15 & #91.05-1-16.1 owned by the Spink Family.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Supervisor Bartlett moved to hold a public hearing regarding this proposed zoning change. The hearing is scheduled for Thursday, May 14, 2026 at 7:00 PM at the Town of Watertown Municipal Building, 22867 Brookside Drive, Watertown, NY 13601. All persons interested in the proposed legislation will be given an opportunity to be heard at that time. Motion seconded by Councilman Prosser.

Ayes All

Discussion followed regarding notification procedures for the public hearing, including whether to notify adjacent property owners in addition to standard newspaper and website postings. It was noted that a mailing list of affected or adjacent property owners could be prepared, similar to prior zoning actions.

Further discussion occurred regarding property boundaries and the extent of the parcel under consideration.

MOTION #54-2026

Supervisor Bartlett offered a motion to adjourn to executive session at 8:25 pm to discuss employee work history, seconded by Councilman Prosser.

Ayes All

The meeting reconvened at 9:05 pm.

MOTION #55-2026

WHEREAS, the Town of Watertown is in receipt of a request of occupancy tax (bed tax) revenues. Money to assist the DPAO with promotional expenses associated with the 2026 summer concert series. A series of concerts the organization produces that attracts thousands of travelers and tourists to the area generating much needed revenues to the area businesses; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Watertown has for many years contributed grant funds to support the DPAO. Promotional expenses for the summer concert series in funds are included with the Fiscal Year 2026 for said purposes.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Town of Watertown Council hereby authorizes a grant of bed tax revenue in community development revenues in the amount of \$15,000.

A motion to adopt the foregoing resolution was offered by Councilmember Prosser seconded by Supervisor Bartlett.

Discussion took place. It was determined the funds have been allocated in the 2026 budget to cover the grant.

Upon a roll call vote of the Board as follows:

Supervisor Joel Bartlett	yes
Councilman Prosser	yes
Councilwoman McClusky	yes
Councilman Perkins	absent
Councilman Slye	yes

MOTION #56-2026

WHEREAS, to assist with economic development along the N.Y.S. Rte. 3 corridor, and in particular, the Jefferson County Agricultural Park located within the Town of Watertown, it has been recommended by a number of economic development planners, that a Tax Increment Financing District be created to assist developers with financing projects within the Jefferson County Ag Park; and

WHEREAS the new TIF district as proposed would establish boundaries for the TIF district and include the attached list of parcels and properties to be considered by the Jefferson County Board of Legislators for the TIF incentives Jefferson County can provide through terms of agreement with future developers within the proposed TIF Boundary; and

WHEREAS it is within the authority granted to the Jefferson County Board of legislators to award TIF funding agreements and establish all terms and conditions contained within individual property tax incentive agreements for all enumerated parcels within the district; and

WHEREAS, TIF district formation must follow a public hearing to be held within the Town of Watertown at a time designated by the Town Council on the question of adopting and establishing and dedicating the proposed TIF District boundary area under consideration

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED a public hearing is to be held at 7:00 PM, May 14, 2026 at the Town offices 22867 Brookside Drive, Watertown NY 13601 to hear all persons interested in the creation of a TIF district to include 22867 Brookside Drive, Watertown NY 13601 to hear all persons interested in the creation of a TIF district to include the parcel properties listed: Tax map #82.00-1-1.2, #82.00-2-1.3, #82.00-2-1.12, #82.00-2-1.11, #82.00-2-21.4, #82.11-2-21.3, #82.00-2-7.

Discussion was held regarding the proposed creation of a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district to support economic development along the New York State Route 3 corridor, particularly within the Jefferson County Agricultural Park.

It was noted that economic development planners have recommended establishing a TIF district to assist developers with financing projects in the area. The proposed district would include a defined set of parcels, to be considered by the Jefferson County Board of Legislators for potential tax incentive agreements.

The Supervisor explained that a TIF district functions by establishing a baseline property value and allowing future tax revenue generated from development (the increment) to be used to support project financing. It was emphasized that the district would function as a “paper district” and would serve as a tool to encourage development in underutilized areas.

Attorney Harrienger asked if the town engineer has performed blighted area study on this area. She advised of the legal and procedural requirements for the establishment of a TIF district. This would include a blighted area study and redevelopment plan that should be completed prior to formation. It was noted that under New York State General Municipal Law, such steps are typically part of the process, particularly in areas designated as blighted.

Further discussion addressed whether the Town would forego tax revenue under such a structure and how the County would administer agreements with developers. It was clarified that the County would ultimately establish and manage individual TIF agreements, including terms and duration.

Attorney Harrienger advised if the Board moves forward with the public hearing to leave the hearing open until the blighted area study and redevelopment plan are completed.

Discussion continued, with recommendations that additional information, including legal and financial guidance, be obtained prior to final action. Supervisor Bartlett will coordinate with a financial consultant with experience in TIF implementation participate by phone in the public hearing to provide further explanation.

A motion to adopt the forgoing resolution was made by Supervisor Bartlett and seconded by Councilmember Prosser and upon a roll call vote of the Board was duly adopted as follows:

Supervisor Bartlett	yes
Councilman Prosser	yes

Councilwoman McClusky	yes
Councilman Perkins	absent
Councilman Slye	yes

MOTION #57-2026

Supervisor Bartlett moved to pay the following abstracts as audited.

Utilities paid prior to the meeting

General Vouchers	#	63	to	65	Total	\$	6,537.77
Highway Vouchers	#	55	to	55	Total	\$	21,905.56
Spec. Dist. Vchrs.	#	35	to	35	Total	\$	8,292.96

Vouchers approved for monthly meeting

General Vouchers	#	66	to	81	Total	\$	65,821.01
Highway Vouchers	#	56	to	73	Total	\$	18,046.91
Spec. Dist. Vchrs.	#	36	to	44	Total	\$	189,637.72

Councilmember Prosser seconded the motion.

Ayes All

Highway Superintendent Clement gave report to the Board:

It was previously approved to rehire Mike McDonald for a mechanic position in the highway department at \$31 per hour. Wage discussions were reviewed, with Mr. McDonald indicating a requested rate of approximately \$33 per hour. It was noted that he would bring significant personal tools and equipment necessary for maintaining modern vehicles and trucks.

An update was provided on new truck purchases. One Freightliner plow truck is expected to be completed within approximately two weeks, with the chassis already paid for and additional equipment (box and plow) estimated at approximately \$106,000. A second truck (International) is also in production, with a total estimated cost of approximately \$261,000, and an expected completion timeline of approximately three months. It was also noted that no update has been received regarding a previously ordered Dodge one-ton pickup truck from Bob Johnsons.

Discussion also included the potential acquisition or trade of a gradall, with the current unit being heavily utilized on a daily basis. The cost is \$73,000 with a \$6,000 trade-in.

Concerns were raised regarding a projected shortfall in CHIPS (Consolidated Highway Improvement Program) funding, estimated at approximately \$400,000, due to missed submission deadlines and incomplete documentation. It was stated that reimbursement requests require timely submission of supporting documentation, including check records, and that delays have impacted the Town's ability to recover eligible funds.

Further discussion addressed discrepancies in roadway ownership records, specifically regarding portions of Mall Road. It was noted that while certain sections may have been transferred to the Town, documentation may not have been properly recorded with the County, impacting eligibility for reimbursement and maintenance responsibility.

The Board discussed the need to coordinate with departments to resolve documentation issues and improve processes for tracking expenditures and submitting reimbursement requests.

Discussion was held regarding recurring maintenance costs associated with sewer system blockages and service calls.

There were concerns about expenses incurred for services performed by P&T, particularly in cases where blockages are caused by improper use of the sewer system by certain commercial

users. Examples discussed included disposal of shop towels by automotive businesses and grease-related issues from restaurants with improperly maintained grease traps.

It was suggested that such misuse may be contributing to increased costs for the Town and that consideration should be given to holding responsible parties accountable.

The Board discussed whether existing sewer use laws and ordinances address improper discharge and whether enforcement mechanisms are available. It was noted that property owners are subject to these regulations, though compliance and enforcement may be challenging.

Potential actions discussed included issuing warnings or notices to offending properties and exploring enforcement options under the Town's sewer use ordinance. Concerns were also raised regarding the practicality of enforcement, including the potential for disputes or legal challenges.

It was acknowledged that addressing these issues could help reduce operational costs; however, no formal action was taken at this time.

Supervisor Bartlett announced that he will be retiring from his position and will officially conclude his service as Town of Watertown Supervisor effective May 31, 2026.

He stated that he has made efforts to fulfill the responsibilities of the position and acknowledged challenges encountered during his tenure.

He further stated that he intends to work toward ensuring that outstanding matters are addressed prior to his departure. He indicated that he does not plan to remain involved in Town financial matters or participate in future audits following his retirement.

The Supervisor noted that the Town has options moving forward, including appointing or electing a successor to fill the position.

MOTION #58-2026

Councilman Prosser moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:41pm, seconded by Supervisor Bartlett.

Ayes All

Pamela D. Desormo, Town Clerk