

TOWN OF WATERTOWN
Regular Meeting
Municipal Building
July 9, 2026

Members Present: James W. Wright, Supervisor
 David Prosser, Councilman
 Joanne McClusky, Councilwoman

Members Absent:

Supervisor Wright 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.

Supervisor Wright advised the Board that since the previous meeting two vacancies had occurred on the Town Board. Councilman Robert Slye resigned June 15, 2026 due to health reasons and Councilman Michael Perkins resigned effective July 8, 2026, due to increased business responsibilities.

Motion #97-2026

Resolution No. 16-2026
Appointment of Town Councilman

WHEREAS, a vacancy exists on the Town Board of the Town of Watertown, New York, due to the resignation of Councilman Robert Slye, effective June 15, 2026; and

WHEREAS, the office of Town Council is now vacant and may be filled by appointment of the Town Board pursuant to New York Town Law § 64 and Public Officers Law § 42; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board desires to appoint a qualified individual to fill the vacant position of Town Council NOW,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Town Board of the Town of Watertown, New York:

1. Michael Colello is at least 18 years of age, a U.S. Citizen, a resident of the Town of Watertown, and is otherwise qualified to serve in the position of Town Councilperson.
2. Michael Colello is appointed to the position of Town Councilperson effective July 9, 2026.
3. The term of that office shall expire on December 31, 2026.
4. The Town Clerk shall file a certificate specifying the name, address, and appointment term of the person filling the vacancy with the County Clerk and the Department of Audit and Control, as per New York Town Law § 30.
5. This Resolution shall take effect immediately.

The foregoing Resolution was offered by Supervisor Wright and seconded by Councilman Prosser and upon roll call vote of the Board was duly adopted as follows.

Supervisor Wright	Yes
Councilman Prosser	Yes
Councilwoman McClusky	Yes

Following adoption of the resolution, Town Clerk Pam Desormo administered the Oath of Office to Councilman Michael Colello, who then joined the Town Board.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
Town of Watertown, New York

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that a potentially unsafe building and/or structure has been identified at 25792/816 Ridge Road and identified as Tax Parcel No.: 83.12-1-15. You may have interest in this property.

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that a public hearing in connection with this building and/or structure to be held at the Municipal Office, 22867 Brookside Drive, Watertown, New York on July 9, 2026 at 7:00 PM to determine whether the building and/or structure is dangerous and/or unsafe, and if so, whether the same must be promptly demolished and/or removed.

An opportunity to be heard in regard thereto will then and there be given to all persons interested in this matter.

Supervisor Wright opened the duly advertised public hearing at 7:04 pm. Concerning the unsafe building located at 25792/25816 Ridge Road, Watertown, New York (Tax Parcel No. 83.12-1-15).

Public Comments

Brad Sholette, neighboring property owner, spoke in favor of the Town proceeding with the removal of the unsafe structures. He stated the building had fallen in and the property had significantly deteriorated over the years, creating safety concerns, attracting vermin, and negatively affecting neighboring property values.

Ellen Majo, the property owners addressed the Board and explained that portions of the structure had been intentionally demolished by them. Mrs. Majo stated she and her husband had been working with the Code Enforcement Officer and were making efforts to clean up the property despite the challenges involved. She expressed a willingness to continue working with the Town to resolve the matter.

There being no additional comments, Supervisor Wright closed the public hearing at 7:08pm.

Supervisor Wright opened the floor for general public comment.

There being no comments from the public, the public comment period was closed.

Supervisor's Report

1. I want to thank the Town employees and officials for their assistance and cooperation this first month. Especially Dave Prosser, Deputy Supervisor and Pam Desormo, Town Clerk, for their knowledge and history which has proven invaluable.
2. I am working with Town Board members with subject matter assignments, Dave Prosser, Financial/Audit, Joanne McClusky, Legal, and Mike Perkins, Highway.
3. The monthly bills had not been paid for May. Acting Supervisor Dave Prosser began the process and continued through the end of June while awaiting Key Bank for approval of adding my signature to the accounts.
4. In an effort to better understand the Town's financial situation; I have taken three initial steps.
 - A. I have asked all departments to restrict spending to essential costs as to review with me as needed.
 - B. I have done an analysis of our expenses for checks paid for May and June by category.
 - C. I have requested the Town's accountants to make a progress report at this evening's Board Meeting.
5. I have conducted a preliminary analysis of the May-June expenditures and broke them into three categories based on available records:

Sewer/Water Expenses	\$218,137
Highway Expenses	\$185,886
General Expenses	\$182,639 (includes utilities/ insurance)

The analysis does not reflect cost allocations for expenses like insurance and utilities. In working with the accountants I want to develop a process for cost allocations.

The largest remaining expense is to the City of Watertown for sewer and water services. This combined with maintenance and repairs, constitute a substantial component of Town activities and expense.

6. The State Audit has commenced and is approaching two weeks. I appreciate their willingness to advance the schedule at our request.
7. I have been in contact with M.A. Gray, Empire State Development, OCS and Corrections to determine ownership of the infrastructure the Town utilizes for supply water to Water District 5. This infrastructure includes a water tower, pump station and transmission lines. Maintenance is required and has been deferred based on title issues. I appreciate Ted Clement's efforts on this problem.
8. We are moving ahead with the removal of Clutter, Litter and Debris authorized at the last Board meeting regarding the Route 11 parcel. The Highway Department will conduct the cleanup, with the attendance of the Sheriff's Department upon the issuance of a court order as questioned. The actions are being coordinated by the Town Enforcement Officer, David Ross.
I have also been addressing constituent questions as they arise and of course continue to address record keeping within the office.

Should you have any questions please feel free to ask. I appreciate your cooperation and support.

Financial Report -- Crowley & Halloran, CPAs

Representatives of Crowley & Halloran provided the Board with an overview of the Town's accounting records and financial reporting process.

The accountants explained that they perform bookkeeping and financial reporting services rather than independent auditing. They advised that timely monthly accounting requires complete financial records from the Town each month, including bank statements, supporting documentation, and other financial information. The problem has been getting the information needed in a timely fashion to complete the financial reports.

The accountants reported that:

- Financial records have now been completed through December 31, 2025.
- Significant progress has been made during the past several weeks due to improved cooperation and timely submission of records.
- Monthly financial reports include budget-to-actual comparisons for the General Fund, Highway Fund, Water Districts, and Sewer Districts, together with cash balances and revenue reports.
- Additional reporting formats may be developed to provide the Town Board with more useful and timely financial information.

Supervisor Wright thanked the Town's accounting firm for its cooperation with the New York State Comptroller's auditors, noting that the auditors had been very complimentary of the firm's responsiveness and assistance throughout the audit process.

He stated that the Town shares the auditors' goal of identifying what has occurred, understanding the current financial situation, and stabilizing the Town's finances, particularly with respect to interfund transfers and loans.

He explained that the Town's General Fund accounts for general government and highway expenditures, while the Town also maintains separate funds for each water and sewer district, all of which must be accounted for independently. He noted that, in many cases, expenditures for the water and sewer districts have been financed through the General Fund, and that the extent of those interfund obligations must be identified and quantified.

The Town intends to receive monthly financial reports on a regular basis and implement improved accounting procedures, including updated accounting software and the retention of an independent auditor to perform annual audits.

Town Clerk's Correspondence

The Clerk advised the Board that two 30-Day Advance Notices of Application for Liquor Licenses had been received:

- Cross Hair Airsoft, located at 21182 Salmon Run Mall, submitted notice of its intent to apply for a liquor license.
- Watertown Garden Center& Landscape Supply, Inc. located at 17940 U.S. Route 11,

A representative of the Watertown Garden Center stated they are requesting a temporary permit to cover the fall event season until the permanent license is issued.

Motion#98-2026

Motion by Supervisor Wright, seconded by Councilman Prosser, to accept the Town Clerk's Report.

Supervisor Wright	Yes
Councilman Prosser	Yes
Councilwoman McClusky	Yes
Councilman Colello	Yes

Highway Superintendent's Report

Highway Superintendent Ted Clement presented his monthly report.

During this reporting period, the highway department continued maintenance and completed several projects to maintain safe roads for the residents.

Road Maintenance:

1. Washing bridge decks.
2. Performed ditching on Overlook Drive.
3. Patched potholes and repaired broken pavement.

Equipment

1. The 2024freightliner plow/dump truck was delivered and is now in service
2. The garbage truck was completed by Terry Groff and is now back at the transfer station.
3. The Gradall was delivered and is in service.
4. Would like to do a public auction to get rid of some of the equipment we don't use anymore.

Water

1. On June 10, 2026 NCC completed repairs to the 2" bypass waterline and 4" waterline in the concrete vault where the city and town connect water districts #3&4. They had to replace two 4"turn valves and had to dismantle the concrete cover due to being full of holes. The cost of a new cover is \$4,643.01 am waiting on board approval before purchasing.
2. P&T completed the replacement of Pump#1 at the Washington St. pump house (Water Dist #3&4). The work took about a week due to the pumps being underground and configured differently than the newer one. It was recommended that Pump #2 should be replaced because of its age and. Ron Elmer from P&T also recommended reconstruction of the Washington St. pump house due to the ongoing issues with overheating in the summer and freezing in the winter. Mr. Elmer also recommended moving the pumps above ground to make it better for repairs.
3. Need to figure a better way to get water to Boulder Ridge due to the ongoing constant water test failure. Many gallons of water have to be flushed through fire hydrants to get the proper test results.

Safety

1. On June 18, 2026 Highway employee Matt Eves was injured when his foot went into a floor drain when the cover flopped off. Mr. Eves went to the emergency room and the Doctor said he hyper extended his leg and bruised his ribs. Mr. Eves was off from work for a week and now is back to work. The floor drains in the Highway garage are in poor condition and need to be repaired.

Planned Activities for the next reporting period include:

1. Continued tree and brush removal on town roads.
2. Paving Sandy Creek Valley and East Gotham Street.
3. Ongoing equipment maintenance.
4. Preparation for upcoming seasonal operations.

The Board accepted the Highway Superintendent's report.

Engineer's Report – BCA Architects & Engineers

Mr. Altieri, BCA Engineers presented their monthly project update.

Water District No. 4 Extension (Drinking Water 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

Project Update - Construction is well underway, approximately 8,000 LF of piping has been installed in the mobile home parks and adjacent areas. Work within the DOT ROW has also commenced. BCA has finalized a plan for extension of service to several adjacent users within the Town and has submitted this to NYS DOH. BCA is coordinating with the meter manufacturer to discuss updates to software and equipment to make the meter reading and billing process more expedient and efficient.

The Board was advised that NYS DOH had approved the revised plans for Water District 4 Extension. Revisions include an expanded scope of water main installation, including further main extensions additional service lines, and appurtenances to include the Gogoe and Berthet properties.

Supervisor Wright inquired whether Water District No. 4 would require a formal district extension. The BCA representative advised that the additional properties would initially be treated as outside users, with the possibility of formally extending and consolidating the water Districts in the future as part of a comprehensive review of the Town's water system.

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

This project effort is 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 completed the Circle K portion of the work onsite. The exploration of the utilities for the realigned pipeline at the City's WWTP is planned to commence in July. The City is reviewing a plan for this exploration within the WWTP. Work on the inflow and infiltration issues in Sewer Districts 4, 5 and 6 will also commence in July. A payment application is under review for work completed to date.

Project Bid Results:

Contract No. 1 - Pipeline Construction	\$ 376,818.00 - Lawman Heating and Cooling
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PROJECTS IN DESIGN

Sewer District No. 1

Total Construction Cost:	\$2,643,000.00 (WWTF Replacement - This budget is in the process of being updated)
	\$1,129,000.00 (UV Disinfection)

\$ 4,491,00.00 (Stormwater improvements)

Project Funding Awarded: NYS EFC WIHA - \$ 444,500.00, NYS DEC WQIP –
\$ 1,000,000.00 (WWTF), \$388,875 *FAP Grant (WWTF)*
NYS EFC GIGP - \$945,000 Grant (Stormwater)

Project Update - The Town is in the final stages of entering into a grant agreement for both the WIP and GIGP grants received. BCA has responded to NYS DEC comments on the UV disinfection portion of the project. The replacement of the RCs is being evaluated, with Moving Bed Bioreactor and Membrane Bioreactor technology as options for the likely best values for the Town. Additional updates on these alternatives will be forthcoming next month.

The Board was also advised that the project appears eligible for an additional grant of approximately \$400,000 through the Environmental Facilities Corporation (EFC), which would further reduce project costs.

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 and has executed the required AE procurement documentation. Numerous users in and around the area of Water District No. 4 extension have expressed interest in sewer service. *In recent discussions with EFC the Town may be able to convert its EPG grant to a PII grant. This allows for the study of multiple areas of the system to allow for the identification of specific problem areas to be addressed with a specific EPG study and associated capital improvements.*

The Board was informed that the Town has received an engineering planning grant to further evaluate improvements within Sewer Districts No. 4, 5, and 6. EFC has also expressed interest in augmenting that planning grant and will schedule a meeting with Town officials to discuss additional funding opportunities for future infrastructure improvements.

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 for operational efficiencies, particularly for the ground storage tank serving WD 5. There may be an opportunity to consolidate these districts with WD Nos. 1 and 2 with the potential of also extending water service down Floral Drive, Spring Valley Drive and other areas of the Town.

Stormwater WQIP Grant - The CFA is now open. The Town will be eligible to apply for a vacuum truck to assist the Highway Department in maintaining the storm water system. This grant is funded through the MS4 subsection of the NYS DEC WQIP grant. This is a sister program to the grant the Town received for the UV disinfection portion of the WWTF improvements proposed at SD1. BCA is in the process of preparing that application for submission at the end of July.

The engineer also reported that grant opportunities will be pursued this fall to study improvements and possible consolidation of the Town's western water districts, including Water Districts No. 1, No. 3, No. 4, and No. 5. The Local Government Efficiency Grant program was identified as a potential funding source for these efforts.

Finally, the Board was advised that an application has been submitted for grant funding to purchase a replacement vacuum truck. The engineer noted that several required state compliance forms will be provided to the Supervisor for execution before the application deadline.

The Board received and filed the Engineer's Report.

GYMO Northeast Water District #7 Report

Supervisor Wright reported that the monthly GYMO report had been submitted to the Board. He noted there were no significant changes from the previous month's report and, therefore, no formal presentation was made.

- Resident, Jon Adams, agreed to go door-to-door for acquiring signed easements. Has been to 19 of the critical easements on NYS 126, majority not in favor of signing or not willing to put the effort to go get them notarized and bring them to the Town.
- Waiting to hear from City Engineering Department regarding Town connections to City Water Main on Hunt Street.
- Received DOH Comments, GYMO revising plans to address comments.

The Board received and filed the report.

Old Business

Supervisor Wright advised the Board that a motion for the Joint Construction Agreement carried over from a previous meeting would be withdrawn and left on the table.

New Business

Motion #99-2026

RESOLUTION No. 17-2026 of and ORDER
Removal of Unsafe Building/Structure
Located at: 25792/816 Ridge Road, Watertown, NY 13601
Tax Parcel No.: 83.12-1-15

WHEREAS, the Town Board of Watertown has familiarized itself with buildings and/or structures located at 25972/816 Ridge Road, Watertown, NY 13601; Tax Parcel No.: 83.12-1-15 (the "Subject Property") and has considered an investigation report conducted by the Town's Enforcement Officer, with exhibits, pertaining to the same pursuant to Local Law No.: 1 of 2023 (Unsafe Building and Structures); and

WHEREAS, the Town Board has conducted a Public hearing to determine whether the building and/or structure located at the Subject Property is in violation of the Unsafe Building and Structures Law and is so dangerous and/or unsafe that it should be demolished and removed to protect the health, safety and welfare of the public in accordance with the Unsafe Building and Structures Law; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board has considered comments provided at the Public Hearing, together with the Official Record and determines as follows:

1. The building/structure has been found to be dangerous and/or unsafe in that:
 - a. It is so dilapidated, decayed, unsafe, unsanitary, and so utterly fails to provide the amenities essential to decent living that it is unfit for human habitation or is likely to cause sickness or disease, so as to possibly result in injury to the health, safety, or general welfare of those owning the same;
 - b. Has parts thereof which are so poorly attached that they may fall and injure persons or property;
 - c. Because of its condition, it is unsafe, unsanitary, or dangerous to the health, safety, or general welfare of people; and
 - d. Is open at the doorways or windows or walls, making it accessible to and an object of attraction to minors and other trespassers as provided by the Unsafe Building and Structures Law Section 4.
2. The Town Board adopts the Inspection Report of the Enforcement Officer and the Enforcement Officer's recommendation regarding the same.
3. The building and/or structure shall be demolished and removed by persons having interests in the property and/or their designated agents, starting within seven (7) calendar days from date of the close of the Public Hearing and shall be completed within thirty (30) days of the close of the Public Hearing, unless extended in writing by the Enforcement Officer.

4. The Town's Enforcement Officer shall monitor all progress and shall report his findings to the Town Supervisor and Town Clerk.
5. In the event that the Enforcement Officer shall determine that persons having interests in the subject property have neglected and/or refused to comply with this Resolution and Order, then the Enforcement Officer shall inform the Town Supervisor, and the Town shall take all steps necessary to demolish and remove the building, including the completion of the SEQR process.
6. In the event the Town must take the steps necessary to demolish and remove the building, the Town Enforcement Officer shall document all costs and expenses incurred in connection with this matter and coordinate efforts with the Town Clerk to assess all costs and expenses thereof against the owners, and to require repayment/reimbursement of all costs and expenses of demolition and removal, including administrative, engineering, and legal costs and expenses from persons having interests in the subject property.
7. In the event that repayment/reimbursement of costs and expenses of demolition and removal including administrative, engineering and legal costs and expenses are not paid to the Town Clerk within thirty (30) days from billing, then Town Officers and/or agents and/or employees shall take all steps reasonably necessary to assess all costs and expenses and levy the same upon the real property from which such dangerous/unsafe building/condition has been removed/abated.
8. This Resolution and Order shall take effect immediately.

Discussion: Supervisor Wright stated that the Town remains committed to working with the property owner and her husband to resolve the matter. He noted that the Town and the Code Enforcement Officer have been working with them throughout the process in an effort to reach a mutually satisfactory resolution. He added that the matter is approaching its conclusion and expressed hope that it can be resolved cooperatively.

The foregoing Resolution was offered by Supervisor Wright and seconded by Councilman Prosser and upon roll call vote of the Board was duly adopted as follows:

Supervisor Wright	Yes
Councilman Prosser	Yes
Councilwoman McClusky	Yes
Councilman Colello	Yes

Supervisor Wright explained that the federal funds must be expended by the end of the fiscal year in December 2026 or they will expire. He noted that some of the funds had been allocated to road projects that are not expected to proceed before the deadline and were not included in the Highway Superintendent's approved project plan. He further noted that the Town Board had previously approved an agreement establishing that plan.

He explained that the proposed resolution would reallocate funding from the Town Center/State Route 3 intersection road construction project to Sewer Districts 4, 5, and 6 to support work associated with the DEC Inflow and Infiltration (I&I) Study and Consent Order. He stated that these activities are being coordinated with the City of Watertown, as the Town's sewer system connects to the City's system, and that both City approval and DEC authorization are required before construction can proceed.

Supervisor Wright added that the resolution would also reallocate funding previously designated for the proposed Summit Village to US Route 11 connector road project to the same sewer district activities. He noted that Sewer Districts 4, 5, and 6 are the Town's current priority and expressed confidence that reallocating the funds would allow the Town to complete eligible work before the federal funding deadline and obtain reimbursement for those expenses, maximizing the benefit to the Town.

Motion #100-2026

**RESOLUTION 18-2026
ESTABLISHING ARA GRANT FUNDING**

WHEREAS, The Town of Watertown received \$458,768.00 in total ARA Grant Funding from the federal government, and

WHEREAS, by prior Board motions #135-2024 and #47-2025 the Town appropriated these funds, to designated capital projects and

WHEREAS, in reviewing said projects it is herewith recommended the appropriation be modified to reflect the Town's current fiscal conditions and maximize the benefit of the federal funds.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Supervisor is hereby authorized to transfer SLRAF (Recovery Act) received funds; from the general fund and appropriate as follows:

Delete \$25,000 Road construction Town Center intersection NYS Rte. 3
Add - \$25,000 to Sewer Districts 4, 5 and 6, DEC I&I, Consent Order
Delete - \$23,000 to Road construction Summit Village to Rte. 11 new connector
Add - \$23,000 to Sewer Districts 4, 5 and 6, DEC I&I, Consent Order

The foregoing Resolution was offered by Supervisor Wright and seconded by Councilman Prosser and upon roll call vote of the Board was duly adopted as follows:

Supervisor Wright	Yes
Councilman Prosser	Yes
Councilwoman McClusky	Yes
Councilman Colello	Yes

Motion #101-2026

**Resolution No. 19-2026
Approval of Temporary Alcohol Event Permit**

WHEREAS, the NYS Liquor Authority requires approval by the Town Board for issuance of a One Day Alcohol Event Permit, and

WHEREAS, the Watertown Garden Center and Landscape Supply inc. located at 17940 US Rte 11, Watertown has submitted a permit application to the State Liquor Authority attached here to as incorporated in the resolution.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Watertown Town Board approves the required local permission for issuance of said permit, as same filed in the Town Clerk's Office.

The foregoing Resolution was offered by Supervisor Wright and seconded by Councilman Prosser and upon roll call vote of the Board was duly adopted as follows:

Supervisor Wright	Yes
Councilman Prosser	Yes
Councilwoman McClusky	Yes
Councilman Colello	Yes

Motion #102-2026

**Resolution No. 20-2026
Abstracts and Audited Bills**

Supervisor Wright moved to pay the following abstracts as audited.

General Vouchers	#	127	to	151	Total	\$ 66,047.69
Highway Vouchers	#	104	to	116	Total	\$ 102,738.59
Spec. Dist. Vchrs.	#	71	to	82	Total	\$ 488,975.91

Councilmember Prosser seconded the motion.

Supervisor Wright	Yes
Councilman Prosser	Yes
Councilwoman McClusky	Yes
Councilman Colello	Yes

MOTION #103-2026

Councilman Prosser seconded by Supervisor Wright moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:48 pm.

Ayes All

Pamela D. Desormo, Town Clerk