

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING  
THE TOWN BOARD OF THE TOWN OF NEW LEBANON  
HELD ON JULY 21, 2025**

**Present:** Tistrya Houghtling, Supervisor  
Joanne Amlaw, Councilmember  
Steve Powers, Councilmember  
Craig Skerkis, Councilmember

**Recording Secretary:** Marsha “Marcie” Robertson, Town Clerk

**Others Present:** Peg Munves, CAC Co-Chair  
Mary Young, NL Rep to CC Office For the Aging & Traffic Safety  
Tony Murad, ZBA Chair & ZRC Member (5:50pm)  
Brendon Becker, Lamont Engineers (Online)  
Members of the Public

**CALL TO ORDER:**

The meeting was called to order at 5:01pm by Supervisor Houghtling. The meeting was held in person at the New Lebanon Town Hall, 14755 State Route 22 North, New Lebanon, NY 12125 with members of the public also being able to view the meeting at the following link: [https://townhallstreams.com/towns/new\\_lebanon\\_ny](https://townhallstreams.com/towns/new_lebanon_ny)

**SYP REFUND REQUEST:**

Supervisor Houghtling stated, they received a request for a refund for Summer Camp, the town does have a no refund policy. However, the Town Board is authorized to give requests consideration. She stated, this parent is reliant on camp for child care and there were two days last week camp had to close early. Even with the new information that Summer Camp can use the Community Center, this parent already signed their child up for a different summer camp and is still requesting the refund. The child attended three weeks of camp, if the board were to authorize the refund it would be for five weeks prorated.

A motion was made by Councilmember Skerkis, to refund for five weeks of Summer Camp tuition to Stacey Healey. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Houghtling.

The Town Board members had discussion regarding the reasons for the few refunds from the past. Supervisor Houghtling stated for the public, part of the Community Center purchase was so that Summer Camp could be held there on bad weather days without having to cancel camp. She stated there was a miscommunication with NYS Department of

Health and they took it to mean the Community Center was an emergency evacuation site, the Town intended it to be a secondary location for camp. In order for it to comply as a secondary site, the town needs to install a UV filter for water like the pavilion has, comply with water testing requirements, and undergo the whole inspection from NYS DOH. Once the misunderstanding was cleared up, it was too late in the season for this year’s summer camp to utilize the Community Center as a secondary site. If camp starts at the pavilion, bad weather comes in, the school is willing to transport the kids from the park to the Community Center.

Roll Call Vote:

Councilmember Powers -	Aye
Councilmember Metzler -	Aye
Supervisor Houghtling -	Aye
Councilmember Amlaw -	Aye
Councilmember Skerkis -	Aye

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

A motion was made by Supervisor Houghtling to enter an Executive Session at 5:05pm to discuss the medical, financial, credit or employment history of a particular person/corp., or matters leading to said dismissal, removal, promotion, appointment, employment, discipline, demotion, or suspension, and invite Karl Galusha into the Executive Session. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Skerkis.

Roll Call Vote:

Councilmember Powers -	Aye
Councilmember Metzler -	Aye
Supervisor Houghtling -	Aye
Councilmember Amlaw -	Aye
Councilmember Skerkis -	Aye

A motion was made by Supervisor Houghtling to exit the Executive Session at 5:42pm. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Powers.

Roll Call Vote:

Councilmember Powers -	Aye
Councilmember Metzler -	Aye
Supervisor Houghtling -	Aye
Councilmember Amlaw -	Aye
Councilmember Skerkis -	Aye

A motion was made by Councilmember Amlaw, seconded by Councilmember Skerkis, and approved unanimously to authorize the Supervisor to execute an Agreement with Galusha General Contracting to terminate the contract for the Town Office Doors at Town Hall.

A motion was made by Councilmember Amlaw, seconded by Councilmember Skerkis, and approved unanimously to authorize the Supervisor to execute a written agreement with

Galusha General Contracting relating to the Walking Bridge pursuant to the bid accepted and awarded by the Town Board on October 8, 2024.

A motion was made by Councilmember Amlaw, seconded by Councilmember Skerkis, and approved unanimously to authorize the Supervisor to execute a written agreement with Galusha General Contracting relating to the BBQ Pit Roof pursuant to the bid accepted and awarded by the Town Board on November 12, 2024.

A motion was made by Councilmember Amlaw, seconded by Councilmember Skerkis, and approved unanimously to authorize the Supervisor to execute a written agreement with Galusha General Contracting relating to the Electrical Upgrade at the pavilion pursuant to the bid accepted and awarded by the Town Board on February 11, 2025.

A motion was made by Councilmember Skerkis, seconded by Councilmember Amlaw, and approved unanimously to authorize the Supervisor to amend the contract with Galusha General Contracting for the Tennis Court Bathrooms with a new completion date of September 30, 2025.

**BOUNCE HOUSE AT THE COMMUNITY PICNIC:**

Supervisor Houghtling stated, our insurance does not cover the town purchasing a bounce house, if the town rents a bounce house that company has to have their own insurance that lists the Town as an additional insured. The company that the town issued a check to last time, does not have this insurance. The Recreation Commission found a new company to rent a bounce house from that does have their own insurance as required. At the August meeting, there will be an abstract amendment taking this voucher away, but for now the Supervisor needs authorization to pay the new company on an interim voucher.

A motion was made by Councilmember Skerkis, to authorize the Supervisor to pay on an interim voucher for the rental of the bounce house with a new company. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Powers.

Roll Call Vote:

Councilmember Powers -	Aye
Councilmember Metzler -	Aye
Supervisor Houghtling -	Aye
Councilmember Amlaw -	Aye
Councilmember Skerkis -	Aye

**BRENDON BECKER – LAMONT ENGINEERS:**

Supervisor Houghtling announced that both she and Councilmember Skerkis need to leave the meeting at 6:00pm. She notified Brendon Becker from Lamont Engineers who is online to give a presentation that if his presentation goes past 6:00pm, he will lose her and Councilmember Skerkis. Councilmember Powers requested Brendon to come to answer some questions he had.

Councilmember Powers continued with his questions regarding the Feasibility Study and the SEQRA. Brendon responded to Councilmember Powers questions. They did the declaration of the Type 1 and the declaration of the town as lead agency back in February. They sent the letters out in March, giving 30 days to respond, and no one objected to the Town acting as lead agency. The Town is now at the point to

review parts 2 and 3 and issue a negative declaration. No Public Hearing is needed for SEQRA. A Public Hearing is only necessary if the Town is going to proceed with creating a water or sewer district.

Councilmember Powers asked if the Town needs to see design specification in order to determine the environmental impact. Brendon responded, no, not typically. Usually SEQRA is done before the design process. SEQRA is a broad review of the project in general. Lamont has to do about 95% of their full design, ready to bid before they submit it to DEC and EFC, the funding agency for the review and approval.

Councilmember Powers asked how the Town will approve something while not knowing where the actual district is. Brendon responded, the SEQRA was broad in that it included the entire project area. Brendon gave further details and explanation.

Supervisor Houghtling gave a brief summary and explanation as she understands it, and Brendon agreed.

Councilmember Powers commented that they are basically looking at the brown field property as where the treatment plant would go. Brendon responded, that is what their report will recommend. Councilmember Powers asked where the fluid from that will go. Brendon responded, the proposed design for a conceptual waste water system to serve the downtown district would include everyone maintaining a septic tank on their property to remove the solids from the waste water and the affluent from that would then flow by gravity to the western part of the hamlet where Rte. 20 & Rte. 22 converge, there would be a pump station there. That pump station would pump the affluent to the Coons property which would become a giant leach field for the affluent to filter down into the ground. That would be the secondary treatment for the system. Brendon stated, Lamont had conversations with DEC to make sure that this was not any kind of a concern with the history of that property. DEC communicated that there is nothing in the deed covenant that would limit using the property for this purpose. Coons is in agreement to selling the property to the Town if it goes this way.

Councilmember Powers asked questions regarding the water project, if it happens. Brendon gave answers an explanation on this matter.

Councilmember Amlaw asked for a rough idea of an estimated cost that the town would be looking at. Brendon responded, the estimated cost for the waste water system is around \$7 million off the top of his head.

Supervisor Houghtling stated, the only people who will pay for this system are the people who want to be in the district. If you do not want water or waste water you will not pay anything towards the installation or the ongoing maintenance.

Peg Munves, CAC Co-Chair stated, that is not entirely true and suggested clarifying with Brendon.

Councilmember Skerkis left the meeting at 6:00pm.

Brendon responded, this is one of the things that has delayed the report, because they have been trying to discuss the options of this with the town's bond counsel. There is something in the Article 12 law that says properties that benefit from having this district created, if a pipe runs across properties, you cannot cut them out even if they do not want to connect, they still have to pay something because they benefit because that pipe is in front of their property. He stated, they are exploring the options because this is a decentralized system, not a conventional sewer system. There is also the option for these possible septic maintenance districts. Brendon gave a more detailed explanation of this specific topic.

Supervisor Houghtling asked, what if they get it all in the DOT right of way. Brendon replied, they consider that still benefitting them because it is within 100 feet of the dwelling, you have the ability to connect into it and therefore you are benefitting by it. Brendon gave more explanation and discussed the water system as well. With a hydrant in front of the property, they are gaining the benefit of the hydrant being there with improved fire protection. That would qualify for a reduction in homeowners insurance having a hydrant that close to your dwelling.

Brendon went back to Councilmember Amlaw’s question regarding cost. He stated \$7 million is the estimate to serve areas 1A and 1B with waste water. It is roughly \$6 million to serve just area 1A. The water system is roughly about the same. He gave more detailed information on the water system.

Supervisor Houghtling stated, that number seems like a big number but she knows there are potential grants. She asked for a ballpark per user, annual cost for both the installation and the maintenance costs. Brendon replied, the number of EDU’s as far as the different service districts play a factor into the costs. They are targeting to be in the \$700 to \$800 range for a single family household, which is under the state average right now. Brendon gave further explanation regarding the grants and programs that are available.

Supervisor Houghtling stated Councilmember Skerkis already left and she has to go, she suggested emailing Brendon any other questions and he will be getting the board the Feasibility study. Should they hold another Special Meeting before August to do the SEQRA? He hopes to have the study to the board this week. Brendon went over the upcoming timelines.

Supervisor Houghtling feels they should hold a Special Meeting before the August regular meeting, all agreed.

A motion was made by Supervisor Houghtling, seconded by Councilmember Powers, and approved unanimously with the exception of Councilmember Skerkis who had to leave the meeting to schedule a Special Meeting of the Town Board on Tuesday, August 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025 at 5:30pm and ask the Town Clerk to notice the paper.

**NYSERDA GRANT POSSIBILITY:**

Councilmember Powers reported, he was approached about another potential NYSERDA Grant that is time sensitive. It is very specific and has the potential to get the rest of the heat pumps in the Town Hall and could include battery backups for the Town Hall as well, and maybe additional solar panels. He is asking the board for their approval for him to get the quotes and apply for the grant by the end of the month. This is a zero match grant.

A motion was made by Supervisor Houghtling, seconded by Councilmember Amlaw, and approved unanimously with the exception of Councilmember Skerkis who had to leave the meeting to authorize Steve Powers to apply for NYSERDA funding for heat pumps and possibly battery backups at Town Hall with zero cost to the Town with a letter from the Supervisor stating so.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

A motion was made by Supervisor Houghtling, to adjourn the meeting at 6:10pm. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Powers.

Roll Call Vote:

Councilmember Powers -	Aye
Councilmember Metzler -	Aye
Supervisor Houghtling -	Aye
Councilmember Amlaw -	Aye
Councilmember Skerkis -	Absent

***Respectfully submitted,***

Marcie Robertson  
New Lebanon Town Clerk