

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING OF
THE TOWN BOARD OF THE TOWN OF NEW LEBANON
HELD ON FEBRUARY 10, 2026**

Present: Tistrya Houghtling, Supervisor
Joanne Amlaw, Councilmember
Chris Patterson, Councilmember
Steve Powers, Councilmember
Susan Tipograph, Councilmember

Recording Secretary: Marsha (Marcie) Robertson, Town Clerk

Others Present: Beth LaGrange, Playground Design Committee Member
Stacey Breads, Playground Design Committee Member
Peg Munves, CAC Co-Chair
Sharon Powers, IT Website Support, Shaker Preservation & ZBA Member
Pat Metzler, Recreation Commission Member
Mary Young, NL Rep to CC Office for the Aging & Traffic Safety
Elizabeth "Bitsy" Sheffer-Winig, Past Town Historian
Members of the Public

CALL TO ORDER:

The regular monthly meeting was called to order at 6:34pm 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

A moment of silence was held, followed by the flag salute. The emergency exits were pointed out. She reminded attendees not to block the aisles with chairs or other items.

MINUTES:

The minutes of the **December 9, 2025 Public Hearing (CRS), December 9, 2025 Regular Monthly Meeting, January 2, 2026 Organizational Meeting, January 13, 2026 Special Meeting (Interviews), January 13, 2026 Public Hearing (Intro. LL#6 of 2025), January 13, 2026 Regular Monthly Meeting, January 20, 2026 Annual Audit of the 2025 Books, and February 4, 2026 Special meeting (Highway Garaged Fire)** of the Town Board were reviewed.

A motion was made by Councilmember Tipograph, seconded by Councilmember Powers, and approved unanimously to approve the eight sets of minutes as typed.

FINANCIAL:

Supervisor's Report:

The Supervisor's Report as of January 31, 2026 was available to the public via the Town Clerk's email and the Town website and the Town Board was emailed the Supervisor's Report by Supervisor Houghtling.

Councilmember Amlaw questioned why the general fund showed a negative balance of approximately \$265,000 at the end of January, and how this related to funds previously discussed for the landfill closure.

Supervisor Houghtling explained that the negative balance was temporary and reflected timing differences between when expenditures were made and when reimbursement revenues were received. She clarified that approximately \$1 million in landfill revenue and \$200,000-\$300,000 in sales tax revenue were still pending at that time, but that the town had already paid out the related expenses. About \$500,000 of this revenue had been received in January, reducing the negative balance from earlier amounts.

The supervisor noted that the landfill closure reserve funds had not been touched budgetarily and remained intact in their reserve accounts. The current negative general fund balance was expected to resolve once the remaining reimbursements were received, with sales tax revenue expected by the end of February and the remainder of landfill revenue (approximately \$500,000) expected to be received by mid-February.

Supervisor Houghtling also mentioned that the town was awaiting guidance from the Comptroller's Office on whether the current accounting approach was correct.

A motion was made by Councilmember Tipograph to accept the Supervisor's report for January as typed. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Powers.

Roll Call Vote:

Councilmember Powers -	Aye
Councilmember Amlaw -	Nay
Supervisor Houghtling -	Aye
Councilmember Tipograph -	Aye
Councilmember Patterson -	Aye

CERTIFICATES OF APPRECIATION:

Supervisor Houghtling presented a Certificate of Appreciation to Elizabeth "Bitsy" Sheffer-Winig for her six years of service as Town Historian. Supervisor Houghtling expressed that it had been an honor to appoint her former high school history teacher to the position, noting how Ms. Sheffer-Winig had inspired her to appreciate history by making it engaging and relatable. She thanked Ms. Sheffer-Winig for her dedication to preserving the town's

history and handling historic item donations, research, and other responsibilities.

PROCLAMATION – Black History Month:

Supervisor Houghtling read the Black History Month Proclamation into the record.

Throughout the month of February each year, we recognize and celebrate the contributions of African Americans to this country, and we acknowledge and appreciate their achievements. From February 1 through March 1, 2026, in honor of Black History Month.

African Americans have played a central role in U.S. history. Carter G. Woodson, who in 1915 founded ASNLH (Association for the Study of Negro Life and History), now ASALH (Association for the Study of African American Life and History), sought to preserve such history and to promote Black American achievement. Not until 1976 was Black History Month officially recognized by then President Gerald Ford.

Our collective town history must encompass all citizens, past and present. Remember Harriet Tubman, Martin Luther King, Jr., certainly, but also recognize those who were / are less fortunate, are / were less renown, but nonetheless belonged / belong to this, our collective community. Resist anything that lessens African Americans. We are better than that - we must do better. Let our legacy be one that aligns ourselves with our neighbors – all of our neighbors, and be good stewards of the history of all who inhabit our county.

*Given under my hand at the New Lebanon Town Hall,
New Lebanon, New York this 10th day of February
in the year 2026.*

***Tistrya Houghtling, Supervisor
New Lebanon Town Board***

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR:

In addition to an in-person privilege of the floor, Supervisor Houghtling will read all comments, questions and concerns emailed to supervisor@townofnewlebanon.com during the meeting.

Trina Porte: Trina asked whether it would be possible to convince the Midtown Mall parking lot owner to fix the deteriorating condition of the lot, acknowledging that no immediate answer was expected. She also inquired about the possibility of creating a transportation committee that she could join, noting that as someone who doesn't drive, she was interested in transportation issues in the town.

Supervisor Houghtling: Tistrya indicated she would connect Ms. Porte with people already working on transportation matters.

Margaret Robertson: Meg suggested that the new Town Board members who joined in

January should not vote to approve minutes of meetings they did not attend, such as those from 2025.

Mr. Muadin (Online): Mr. Muadin read from an advisory opinion issued by the Committee on Open Government regarding town clerks' statutory duties to prepare meeting minutes within two weeks.

Supervisor Houghtling: The Supervisor responded for the record by acknowledging that the Town Clerk was aware of being behind on minutes but faced significant time constraints due to the extraordinary workload in the clerk's office. She explained that the special election had created an enormous amount of additional work without extra compensation or staffing. The supervisor noted that the clerk had to prioritize certain statutory requirements and resident services while working on minutes whenever possible, often late into evenings and on weekends. She mentioned that the clerk had been handling an unusually high volume of FOIL requests.

Trina Porte: Trina thanked the Supervisor for her clarification.

Supervisor Houghtling: The Supervisor read the following emails for privilege of the floor:

Tammy Warner: Tammy expressed satisfaction that the town was receiving a long-overdue audit from the Comptroller's Office, noting that such audits typically proceed quickly when there are specific reasons prompting them. She hoped the audit would reveal only issues that could be corrected.

Bonnie Lichak & Amy Brueckmann: Bonnie and Amy requested a timeline detailing the wastewater project progress, including surveys, testing, and next steps. They referenced CAC minutes discussing contaminated wells and expressed concerns about the Tilden project's water and sewer plans.

JoAnna G. Phillips: JoAnna addressed several topics: she suggested that the Town Board should not serve as the HR board of investigations due to potential bias issues; she thanked Bitsy for her service as town historian and hoped a successor with deep local knowledge would be chosen; she encouraged making all committees available to the public through live streaming; she requested an explanation of page 7 of the supervisor's report.

Craig Skerkis: Craig expressed support for the audit, noting it demonstrated how responsible government should work when proper processes are used. He emphasized the importance of the Town Board verifying statements, challenging assumptions, and ensuring decisions are supported by documentation and financial clarity.

BUDGET AMENDMENT #3 OF 2026:

Supervisor Houghtling presented Budget Amendment #3 of 2026, which included funding for landfill and playground projects. She noted that she was only bringing in the amounts needed for current bills rather than the entire project funds, pending clarification from the comptroller.

General Fund:

\$ 3,216.00	from A-1990.4 (Contingent)
\$ 7,825.00	from A-5031 (Interfund Revenue – Landfill Closure)
\$ 8,640.00	from A-5031 (Interfund Revenue – Playground Grant)
\$ 378.00	to A-1010.4 (Town Board – Contractual Expense)
\$ 678.00	to A-1910.4 (Unallocated Insurance)
\$ 10,800.00	to A-7140.45 (Park Plan Project – New Playground)
\$ 7,825.00	to A-8161.4 (Landfill Closure)

Sidewalk Capital Project:

\$ 100,000.00	from H-5031 (Sidewalks Engineer)
\$ 100,000.00	to H-5410.41 (Sidewalks Engineer)

A motion was made by Supervisor Houghtling to approve the above noted budget amendment #3 of 2026 as typed. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Tipograph.

Roll Call Vote:

Councilmember Powers -	Aye
Councilmember Amlaw -	Aye
Supervisor Houghtling -	Aye
Councilmember Tipograph -	Aye
Councilmember Patterson -	Aye

AUDIT OF BILLS:

Supervisor Houghtling presented the bills for payment, noting a slight change from what was in the public abstract due to the discovery of tax on one voucher, which reduced the highway amount.

2026 Bills:

General No. 43, in the amount of \$667.18;
As listed on Abstract No. 1A dated February 10, 2026.

General Nos. 44 through 100, in the amount of \$62,262.68;
Highway Nos. 14 through 32, in the amount of \$50,634.11;
Escrow Nos. 1 through 3, in the amount of \$5,600.29;
SF-1 LVPA No. 1, in the amount of \$40,014.75; and
H-Capital Project No. 1, in the amount of \$12,354.80;
As listed on Abstract No. 2 dated February 10, 2026.

A motion was made by Supervisor Houghtling to pay the bills as amended. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Tipograph.

Supervisor Houghtling explained that the H-Capital Project voucher covered engineering bills for the sidewalk project from November, December, and January in response to Councilmember Amlaw's question.

Roll Call Vote:

Councilmember Powers -	Aye
Councilmember Amlaw -	Aye
Supervisor Houghtling -	Aye
Councilmember Tipograph -	Aye
Councilmember Patterson -	Aye

Supervisor Houghtling also presented a request from Highway Superintendent McCagg regarding payment for garage fire repair invoices. The request was to authorize the supervisor to pay smaller invoices on an interim basis, not to exceed the budgeted amount in account A-5132.4, with the understanding that insurance would reimburse those costs.

A motion was made by Supervisor Houghtling to authorize the supervisor to pay highway garage fire repair invoices on an interim basis, not to exceed the amount in account A-5132.4, with reimbursement expected from insurance. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Tipograph.

Roll Call Vote:

Councilmember Powers -	Aye
Councilmember Amlaw -	Aye
Supervisor Houghtling -	Aye
Councilmember Tipograph -	Aye
Councilmember Patterson -	Aye

COMMITTEE/LIAISON REPORTS:

Supervisor Houghtling stated, committee reports as received to her office by Friday afternoon were sent out to the public and the Town Board. She asked if any board members had any questions or need for clarification on any of the committee reports?

Supervisor Houghtling asked the committee chairs that are present, do any of the committees have any further updates or action that is needed by the Town Board?

Councilmember Tipograph: Susan mentioned that as volunteer coordinator, she was working to update the volunteer list to facilitate outreach for events and work days.

Supervisor Houghtling: Tistrya noted the addition of a Walkable Downtown Committee section to the reports, with minutes to be posted both in the reports and on the website.

Councilmember Powers: Steve as the CSC Committee Chair reported that the EV charging station at the community center was expected to be installed by the end of February, subject to permit approval and weather conditions. He requested board approval for interim payment of the charger.

A motion was made by Councilmember Powers to authorize the supervisor to pay the EV charging station voucher on an interim basis in the amount of \$7,590. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Tipograph.

Roll Call Vote:

Councilmember Powers -	Aye
Councilmember Amlaw -	Aye
Supervisor Houghtling -	Aye
Councilmember Tipograph -	Aye
Councilmember Patterson -	Aye

OLD BUSINESS:

EV Charging Station Agreement:

Supervisor Houghtling reported, this item was kept on the agenda, but the Town Attorney was still working on the agreement with no document ready for review.

Outreach & Marketing & Communications Committee:

Supervisor Houghtling reported they received nine letters of interest for the committee. The board discussed scheduling a special meeting to conduct interviews and determined the size of the committee.

A motion was made by Supervisor Houghtling, seconded by Councilmember Amlaw, and approved unanimously to schedule a special meeting for interviewing Outreach, Marketing and Communications Committee applicants on Wednesday, March 4th, 2024 at 6:00 PM.

After discussing the pros and cons of various committee sizes, the board agreed that seven members would be appropriate, noting that larger committees often struggle to achieve a quorum for meetings. They clarified that this would not prevent others from participating in committee activities as non-voting volunteers.

A motion was made by Supervisor Houghtling, seconded by Councilmember Tipograph, and approved unanimously to set the committee membership number for the Outreach, Marketing and Communications Committee at seven members.

Board of Assessment Review Clerk (BOA), Appoint SYP Director & Health Director, and Recreation Commission Vacancy:

Supervisor Houghtling stated these agenda items were combined into a single resolution.

Supervisor Houghtling noted that they had received two excellent applicants for the Summer Camp Director position and hoped the one not selected might be appointed as assistant director.

TOWN OF NEW LEBANON

RESOLUTION #10, 2026

ANNUAL APPOINTMENTS OF TOWN OFFICERS - CONTINUED

FEBRUARY 10, 2026

At the Regular Monthly Meeting of the New Lebanon Town Board, held at the New Lebanon Town Hall, 14755 NYS Route 22, New Lebanon, New York, duly called and held on the 10th day of February 2026, the following Resolution was proposed and seconded:

Resolution by Supervisor Houghtling

Seconded by Councilmember Powers

Annual Appointments of Town Officers - Continued

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Town Board of the Town of New Lebanon makes the following appointments for a term of one (1) year to run from 1/1/26 to 12/31/26 unless noted otherwise:

SYP Camp Director – Jacqueline Howe

SYP Health Director – Eileen Raab

Recreation Commission Member – remainder of 7 year term to expire 12/31/2030 –
Ayannah Meyson

Board of Assessment Review Clerk – Courtney Potter at a rate of \$18 per hour not to
exceed 20 hours per year

Upon the question of the foregoing Resolution, the following Town Board Members voted “Aye” or “Nay” for said Resolution:

Roll Call Vote:

Councilmember Steve Powers	Aye
Councilmember Joanne Amlaw	Aye
Supervisor Tistrya Houghtling	Aye
Councilmember Susan Tipograph	Aye
Councilmember Chris Patterson	Aye

The Resolution, having been approved by a majority vote of the Town Board, was declared duly adopted by the Supervisor of the Town of New Lebanon.

Dated: January 13, 2026

Marcie Robertson

New Lebanon Town Clerk

CAC Resignation:

Supervisor Houghtling stated, they have received a resignation from the CAC from Robert Gilson.

A motion was made by Supervisor Houghtling, seconded by Councilmember Tipograph, and approved unanimously to accept the resignation from the CAC from Robert Gilson.

The resignation left the CAC with three vacancies, which impacts their ability to achieve a quorum for meetings.

A motion was made by Supervisor Houghtling, seconded by Councilmember Powers, and approved unanimously to go out for letters of interest for the CAC with letters of interest due on or before Friday, March 6th, 2026 at 4:00pm.

HR Proposal – Board of Investigation:

Councilmember Tipograph presented her findings after researching HR processes for the town. She reviewed the advertisement for human resources support staff, the collective bargaining agreement, Civil Service Commission rules, and town personnel policies. She interviewed 13 of the town's 14 non-elected employees and several elected officials, promising confidentiality to encourage honest feedback. The Highway Department has its own HR procedure in line with the Union Contract.

Councilmember Tipograph reported that most employees were satisfied with the current HR system. She noted that according to the Supervisor, there had been only 3-5 HR complaints in the past six years, and in cases where the supervisor might have a conflict of interest, matters were referred to the Deputy Supervisor.

Based on her research, Councilmember Tipograph concluded that hiring external HR services as described in the advertisement was unnecessary given the low volume of complaints, and the fact that most employees are satisfied with the current system. She recommended maintaining the current system where the Supervisor serves as the primary HR contact, with the Town Clerk serving as an alternative when there might be a perception of bias. She suggested distributing a memo to all town employees clarifying the HR procedures.

2025 Required Trainings & Annual Training Policy Creation:

Supervisor Houghtling reported that all employees had now completed their required 2025 training, with a few completing it just after the deadline but before the meeting.

The board reviewed a draft policy for managing mandatory training requirements. Supervisor Houghtling explained that tracking compliance for approximately 85 people (including all appointed committee members) had been extremely time-consuming. The policy would establish that the supervisor would work on compliance for the first half of the year, then pass responsibility to department heads, liaisons, and committee chairs by June 1st.

The policy also clarified that it does not apply to specialized training requirements such as those for judges, planning board members, code enforcement officers, etc., which would continue to be tracked as they have been.

FEBRUARY 10, 2026

At the regular monthly meeting of the New Lebanon Town Board, held at the New Lebanon Town Hall, 14755 NYS Route 22, New Lebanon, New York, duly called and held on the 10th day of February, 2026, the following Resolution was proposed and seconded:

Resolution by Councilmember Tipograph
Seconded by Councilmember Patterson

Town Training Policy

WHEREAS, there are mandatory trainings required by NYS that must be taken annually by all town employees (paid employees as well as unpaid board and committee members) such as workplace violence and sexual harassment as well as mandatory trainings for certain town employees per various Town laws and policies such as the town purchasing policy and procurement policy; and

WHEREAS, the Town of New Lebanon would like to clearly define the delegation of duties for ensuring compliance with all required trainings; and

WHEREAS, the Town of New Lebanon would like to make the required trainings as accessible as possible to all town employees;

Now, therefore be it resolved by the New Lebanon Town Board that in order to be in compliance with all required trainings and to define the delegation of duties for such required trainings, the following is adopted as the ***Town Training Policy***:

1. The Town Supervisor is responsible for notifying all town employees of what trainings are required of them each year by March 1st.
2. The Town Supervisor will provide at least one in person option for each required training as well as an online option for all required trainings and will send the date of the in person training(s) and the instructions for the online option to all town employees by April 1st.
3. Any town employee who has taken any of the required trainings within the current calendar year through an employer, another town, or any other appropriate venue, can provide proof of that training to the Town Supervisor and will not need to re-take the same training through the Town.
4. For any town employee who has not completed all required trainings by June 1st, the Town Supervisor will notify the chair, TB liaison and/or department head for each town employee who will then be responsible to ensure compliance for those employees before December 31st.
5. Any town employee who has not completed all required trainings by December 31st, will be removed from their position or not re-appointed to their position in the following calendar year.

6. This policy DOES NOT apply to additional training requirements for certain employees, boards and committees such as the Planning Board, CEO, ZEO, Court Staff, etc. These content specific trainings will continue to be offered and tracked as they have been before the adoption of this policy.

Upon the question of the foregoing Resolution, the following Town Board Members voted “Aye” or “Nay” for said Resolution:

Roll Call Vote:

Councilmember Steve Powers	Aye
Councilmember Joanne Amlaw	Aye
Supervisor Tistrya Houghtling	Aye
Councilmember Susan Tipograph	Aye
Councilmember Chris Patterson	Aye

The Resolution, having been approved by a majority vote of the Town Board, was declared duly adopted by the Supervisor of the Town of New Lebanon.

Dated: February 10, 2026
Marcie Robertson
Town Clerk
Town of New Lebanon

New Events Committee:

Supervisor Houghtling reported, they received two letters of interest from Dave McGrath and Beth LaGrange to join the Events Committee. Abbie, the committee chair, recommended appointing both bringing the committee to five members.

A motion was made by Supervisor Houghtling, seconded by Councilmember Patterson, and approved unanimously to appoint Dave McGrath and Beth LaGrange to the Events Committee.

Update on New Playground in Shatford Park:

Supervisor Houghtling reported that the lowest bid for the playground project was not sustainable, and after consultation with the town attorney and engineer, recommended rescinding the contract award.

A motion was made by Supervisor Houghtling to rescind the prior award of the contract to the subject bidder and deem that bid nonresponsive to the bid specifications. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Powers.

Roll Call Vote:

Councilmember Powers -	Aye
Councilmember Amlaw -	Aye

Supervisor Houghtling -	Aye
Councilmember Tipograph -	Aye
Councilmember Patterson -	Aye

Supervisor Houghtling explained that after consulting with New York State Parks and Recreation, the project funder covering 80% of costs, the town could either rebid the project or move to the next lowest responsible bidder. The engineer recommended accepting only the base bid from the next lowest bidder, Grasshopper Gardens in the amount of \$439,050, which would stay within budget while maintaining a 7.6% contingency.

If the town could move forward with Grasshopper Gardens, the project could potentially be completed by summer camp. If the company is deemed unqualified after engineering review, the project would need to be rebid, potentially delaying completion until fall or next spring.

A motion was made by Councilmember Tipograph to award the contract for the Playground Improvements at Shatford Memorial Park to Grasshopper Gardens, Inc. in the amount of \$439,050, contingent on receipt of a satisfactory written recommendation from the Town's Consulting Engineer as to the responsibility and qualifications of Grasshopper Gardens, Inc. to perform the work in accordance with the project manual, and to authorize the Town Supervisor to execute a contract for the work upon receipt of all required submittals in accordance with the project manual. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Powers.

Roll Call Vote:

Councilmember Powers -	Aye
Councilmember Amlaw -	Nay
Supervisor Houghtling -	Aye
Councilmember Tipograph -	Aye
Councilmember Patterson -	Aye

Update on Walkable Downtown Project:

Supervisor Houghtling reported that at the previous month's meeting, the board had authorized a pre-application for a second TAP grant to upgrade the sidewalk material from stone dust to asphalt. However, they subsequently learned that the minimum TAP award was \$500,000, which would require a \$125,000 town match instead of the expected \$60,000.

The Walkable Downtown Committee recommended not proceeding with the second application. Instead, they proposed working with the engineer to find ways to use asphalt while staying within the current budget of \$2 million in grant funding and \$500,000 in town funds already authorized through permissive referendum.

Possible modifications included shortening the sidewalk (ending at the community center rather than extending to the brewery), reducing the number of crosswalks from two to one, or modifying curb cutting requirements.

The engineers would develop written proposals for the committee's next meeting, then

present options to the Town Board in March for a decision.

A motion was made by Supervisor Houghtling to authorize the engineer to withdraw the TAP pre-application. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Tipograph.

Roll Call Vote:

Councilmember Powers -	Aye
Councilmember Amlaw -	Aye
Supervisor Houghtling -	Aye
Councilmember Tipograph -	Aye
Councilmember Patterson -	Aye

Supervisor Houghtling also discussed bond financing for the project, noting that bond counsel recommended considering a Bond Anticipation Note (BAN) for the engineering phase rather than immediately taking out the full bond. This would allow the town to initially borrow only the portion needed in the near term. She committed to consulting with the bank and keeping the board informed of options.

Update on Town Request to OSC for Audit and Investigation:

Supervisor Houghtling confirmed that the town had been notified that the Comptroller's Office would be conducting an audit beginning in February, and that all departments would participate fully.

Historian Appointment (By Supervisor):

Supervisor Houghtling reported that she had received interest from four qualified candidates for the town historian position. She appointed Theodore "Ted" Timreck to the position for the remainder of 2026, citing his experience with the Shaker Swamp project, the Smithsonian, and the Lebanon Valley Historical Society.

Supervisor Houghtling appointed Theodore Timreck as the Town Historian through the end of 2026.

NEW BUSINESS:

Policy Review – Data Breach Notification Policy & Pavilion Fee Waiver Policy:

There were no questions or suggested changes by anyone on the Town Board.

A motion was made by Supervisor Houghtling, seconded by Councilmember Tipograph, and approved unanimously to mark the Data Breach Notification Policy and the Pavilion Fee Waiver Policy as reviewed with no changes.

Personnel Policy:

Supervisor Houghtling presented two requested changes to the personnel policy:

Adding a sentence stating "the court staff is exempt from the employee parking policy only on Thursdays for court".

Adding "highway superintendent and highway staff" to the list of positions with blanket prior approval for mileage expenses.

The supervisor explained that highway staff increasingly use personal vehicles for errands rather than town trucks when more economical, and court staff had safety concerns about walking across the parking lot after court.

**TOWN OF NEW LEBANON
RESOLUTION # 12, 2026
PERSONNEL POLICIES
FEBRUARY 10, 2026**

At the regular monthly meeting of the New Lebanon Town Board, held at the New Lebanon Town Hall, 14755 NYS Route 22, New Lebanon, New York, duly called and held on the 10th day of February 2026, the following Resolution was proposed and seconded:

Resolution by Supervisor Houghtling
Seconded by Councilmember Tipograph

PERSONNEL POLICIES

[HISTORY: Adopted 12-13-2004; amended 2-14-2011, 9-13-2016, 11-13-2018, 1-1-2021, 2-9-2021, 10-12-2021, 5-10-2022, 6-14-2022, 12-28-2023, 5-14-2024, 4-1-2025 & 2-10-2026]

Purpose; applicability. [Amended 12-28-2023]

This description of employee benefits is presented to all Town employees of the Town of New Lebanon (the "Town") for informational purposes only. This description is not intended to be comprehensive or to address all the possible applications of, or exceptions to, the Town's general policies and procedures governing employee benefits. The Town reserves the right to modify, revoke, suspend, or discontinue any of the procedures, practices, policies, and benefits described herein. Moreover, the language used in this description of employee benefits does not confer any contractual right, either expressed or implied, to remain in the Town's employ or guarantee any fixed terms and conditions of employment. Finally, some of the benefits described herein are covered in more detail in Town policies and procedures or written insurance policies and/or plan documents. This description of employee benefits is only designed as a brief guide and summary of policies and benefits. To the extent that any policy herein is in conflict with any applicable Collective Bargaining Agreement ("CBA"), the CBA will control as it is related to the bargaining unit.

Equal employment opportunity policy. [Amended 12-28-2023]

The Town is committed to equal employment opportunities for all. Employment and promotion are based upon personal capabilities and qualifications without regard to race, color, creed, religion, sex, age, national origin, citizenship or immigration status, disability, military status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, genetic predisposition or carrier status, marital status, status as a victim of domestic violence, or any other protected characteristic as established by law. This equal opportunity policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment.

Americans with Disabilities policy statement.

The Town is committed to complying with all applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act ("ADA"). It is the Town's policy not to discriminate against any qualified employee or applicant with regard to any terms and conditions of employment because of such individual's disability or perceived disability so long as the individual can perform the essential functions of the job. The Town will provide reasonable accommodations to a qualified individual with a disability, as defined by the ADA, who has made the Town aware of his or her disability, provided the accommodation does not constitute an undue hardship to the Town.

Civil service; part-time employment.

Pursuant to the Columbia County Civil Service Commission's Rules, positions within the Town are classified as exempt, noncompetitive, competitive, labor, or unclassified. For purposes of applying civil service rules only, part-time employment is considered employment where an individual works less than 20 hours per week.

Work schedule. [Amended 6-14-2022 & Amended 12-28-2023]

The standard workweek for the Town is 40 hours per week (not including unpaid lunch breaks). Employees will be informed of their work schedule at the time of hire. Every effort will be made to maintain this schedule. However, it is sometimes necessary to adjust schedules to cover vacation periods, weather conditions and/or unscheduled absences.

Lunches & Break times

- By law Town employees working more than 6 hours are required to take a minimum of an unpaid 30-minute and may take up to a one hour unpaid lunch. Employees working less than 6 hours a day are not required to take lunch.
- **EXCEPTIONS:** If there is only one person in an office and said office is open to the public, you may be required to be available during your lunch break, if so, you will be paid for the 30-minute lunch. In such instances, the Town will work with the employee to provide a minimum break of at least 20 minutes uninterrupted.
- Lunch break **MUST** be taken between the hours of 11am-2pm by law. Employees should work with their direct supervisor to establish a regular lunch schedule that addresses the operational needs of the department. Lunch breaks may not be taken at the start or the end of an employee shift.
- The Town also provides Employees with a 15-minute paid break for each 4-hour worked. This 15-minute break can be broken up into three 5 minutes breaks (i.e. personal phone calls, smoke breaks, etc.). Personal business should **NOT** exceed the 15-minute break throughout the 4-hour period, nor should the two 15-minute breaks for 8 hours of work be combined into a single 30-minute break.
- As the 15-minute break is paid, employees are expected to remain on town property during their breaks. If you are leaving Town property for non-work-related business, you must clock out and will **NOT** be paid for that break.

Description of employment. [Amended 11-13-2018]

The Town will classify employees as full-time, part-time eligible (20-34 hrs/wk), part-time ineligible (less than 20 hrs/wk), or temporary employees.

- A. Full-time: Employees who are not assigned temporary employment and who are regularly scheduled to work a minimum of 35 hours per week or more on an indefinite, continuing basis. Employees who

hold multiple positions within the Town and work a total of more than 35 hours per week among the multiple positions will be considered full-time employees. Full-time employees are eligible for all benefits described herein, unless provided otherwise.

- B. Part-time eligible: Employees who are not assigned temporary employment and who are regularly scheduled to work at least 20 hours per week and less than 35 hours per week on an indefinite, continuing basis. A part-time employee is eligible for limited benefits as described herein, or to the extent required by provision of state and federal laws.
- C. Part-time ineligible: Employees who are not assigned temporary employment and who are regularly scheduled to work less than 20 hours per week on an indefinite, continuing basis. A part-time ineligible employee is not eligible for benefits described herein, unless stated otherwise, or to the extent required by provision of state and federal laws.
- D. Temporary: Employees who are hired for a specific period of time or for the completion of a specific project. The job assignment, work schedule and duration of the position will be determined on an individual basis. Employment beyond any initially stated period does not in any way imply a change in employment status. Temporary employees are not eligible for benefits described herein, unless stated otherwise, or to the extent required by provision of state and federal laws. Examples of a temporary employee include, but are not limited to, a camp counselor hire for the summer or a snowplow operator hired for the winter season.

Probationary period. [Amended 12-28-2023]

Generally, pursuant to the Columbia County Civil Service Commission's Rules, every permanent appointment from an open competitive list and every original appointment to a position in the noncompetitive, exempt, or labor class shall be for a probationary term of 26 weeks; the Department may extend the probationary period to a maximum of 52 weeks upon written notice to the employee prior to the expiration of the 26 weeks. However, an employee returning to the Town in the same position within 1 year, who has already successfully completed the probationary period is not required to serve another probationary term. The probationary term for promotion shall be 26 weeks. During the probationary period, the employee will have the opportunity to evaluate his or her new position and the employee's supervisor will evaluate the employee's performance and suitability for the position.

Definitions.

As used in this chapter, the following terms shall have the meanings indicated:

ANNIVERSARY YEAR

The one-year period beginning on the date an employee commences employment.

CALENDAR YEAR

The period beginning January 1 of any year through December 31 of the same year.

***Overtime Pay for Nonexempt Employees and Non-Standard Hours Pay for Highway Employees
[Amended 9-13-2016, 2-9-2021, 5-10-2022 & Amended 12-28-2023]***

Overtime: The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) provide that nonexempt employees under FLSA who work more than forty hours in a workweek receive overtime pay of one and a half times an employee's regular rate. Only hours actually worked count in the overtime calculation, unless an employee is required to work on a holiday. In that event, the employee will get credit for those hours.

Therefore, holidays not worked, vacation days and sick days are not counted even though the employee may have received holiday, vacation, or sick day pay. The Town reserves the right to require employees to work overtime and will make every effort to provide employees with adequate notice. Any overtime hours worked, however, must first be approved by the employee's supervisor.

Ethics and conflicts of interest.

The Town expects its employees to conduct business according to the highest ethical standards of conduct. Employees are expected to devote their best efforts to the interests of the Town and avoid appearances of impropriety. The Town recognizes the right of employees to engage in activities outside of their employment which are of a private nature and unrelated to Town business; however, the employee must first disclose possible conflicts so that the Town may assess and prevent potential conflicts of interest. Conflicts of interest occur when employees engage in a business or transaction or professional activity, or incur an obligation of any nature, which is in substantial conflict with the proper discharge of their duties in the public interest. For more information, the ***Town's Code of Ethics*** sets forth standards of conduct for Town employees and provides for penalties for employees who knowingly and intentionally violate such standards of conduct. If an employee has any question whether an action or proposed course of conduct would create a conflict of interest, he or she should immediately contact the Board of Ethics for an advisory opinion.

Employee conduct; discipline and discharge.

Employees are expected to report to work as scheduled and to perform their job responsibilities to the best of their abilities and in a professional manner at all times. Civil Service Law § 75 governs the procedures the Town will follow in disciplinary actions involving employees covered by § 75. Civil Service Law § 75 provides that a covered employee may not be removed or otherwise subjected to disciplinary penalty except for incompetency or misconduct shown after a hearing on stated charges. Such employee is entitled to representation and to summon witnesses to testify on her or his behalf at the hearing. If the employee is found guilty of any charges, the Town may take disciplinary action ranging from a formal letter of reprimand to a fine, a temporary suspension, demotion, or dismissal from service. The disciplinary action taken against an employee shall be based on the nature of the disciplinary violation and/or the employee's employment record with the Town.

Leave policies. [Amended 5-10-2022 & Amended 12-28-2023]

A. Bereavement leave:

1) Employees shall be entitled to the following paid time off in the event of a death in the Employee's family:

(a) 5 days for the death of a spouse or child;

(b) 4 days for the death of a sibling or parent;

(c) 3 days for the death of a grandparent, grandchild, father-in-law, mother-in-law, stepparent, stepchild, spouse's grandparent or any other relative residing in the employee's household;

(d) 1 day for the death of an aunt, uncle, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, spouse's aunt or uncle, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, niece, nephew, or former spouse with children under the age of 19.

2) All Employees shall be entitled to a maximum of 10 days leave for bereavement purposes (if the Employee has unused sick or vacation time, it can be used to extend the aforementioned days of paid leave set forth in sub-paragraph 1).

3) Bereavement leave is to be taken immediately following the death. However, there may be circumstances when the employee's direct supervisor will recognize the need for flexibility, for example, if a memorial service is scheduled at a time in the future, complications due to travel and

other extraordinary events.

4) The Town understands the deep impact that death can have on an individual or a family. Therefore, vacation, personal, sick and leave without pay are also options that may be used to extend bereavement leave, with the prior approval of the employee's direct supervisor for the utilization of additional time.

5) The Employer may request the Employee to submit proof of death for the purpose of payment under this provision.

B. Holidays:

- (1) The Town recognizes 13 holidays for which most of the Town's business operations will be closed:

New Year's Day	Martin Luther King Day	Presidents Day
Memorial Day	Juneteenth	Independence Day
Labor Day	Columbus Day/ Indigenous Peoples' Day	Veterans Day
Election Day	Thanksgiving & Day After	Christmas

- (2) In the event that a recognized holiday falls on a Saturday, it will be observed on the preceding Friday, and a recognized holiday that falls on a Sunday will be observed on the following Monday. Part-time eligible employees do not receive paid holidays. Part-time eligible employees may use sick/personal or vacation time for pay for holidays that fall on a normal work day or they may make up the hours on another day within the pay period upon notification and scheduling approval of the employee's direct supervisor.

- C. Military Leave: Employees are entitled to a leave of absence to perform ordered military duty as set forth in New York Military Law. Town employees are entitled to receive their regular pay for a period of such service not exceeding a total of 30 days or 22 working days, whichever is greater, in any calendar year and in any continuous period of absence. Employees who are members of the organized militia or of the U.S. reserves are entitled to a leave of absence for initial full-time training duty or initial active duty for training with the U.S. armed forces. To be reinstated, employees must apply within the first 90 days after discharge. Time spent performing military duty will not be considered an interruption of continuous service.

D. Sick and personal time: **[Amended 9-13-2016, 11-13-2018, 10-12-2021 & 5-14-2024]**

- (1) Full-time employees: After completing the probationary period, full-time employees will receive 8 hours of sick and personal leave for every one month of full-time employment. Thereafter, at the conclusion of the organizational meeting of the Town Board each year, full-time employees will be credited with 96 hours of sick and personal leave. Unused sick and personal time will accrue to a maximum limit of 288 hours and will be carried over from one calendar year to the next.

- (2) Part-time eligible employees: After completing the probationary period or upon becoming eligible for part-time benefits, part-time eligible employees will receive 4 hours of sick and personal leave for every one month of part-time eligible employment. Thereafter, at the conclusion of the organizational meeting of the Town Board each year, part-time eligible employees will be credited with 48 hours of sick and personal leave. Unused sick and personal time will accrue to a maximum limit of 144 hours and will be carried over from one calendar year to the next.
- (3) Upon termination of employment, employees will not receive any compensation for unused sick and personal time.
- (4) Employees may determine to surrender available sick and personal leave hours in favor of another employee for their utilization. For an employee to be eligible to utilize donated sick leave from the sick bank, they must have exhausted all of their available accruals to date and the need for continued leave must be for a medical emergency for themselves or for an immediate family member defined as parent, child, spouse or domestic partner. Nothing contained in this policy requires any employee to donate to the sick bank. Donations shall be voluntary to be determined on a global basis or in response to a specific request of a co-worker. Donated sick and personal time shall be paid out at the lower rate.

E. Vacation leave: **[Amended 9-13-2016, 11-13-2018, 1-1-2021 & 5-10-2022]**

- (1) Upon successful completion of the probationary period, full-time employees will become eligible for paid vacation. Full-time employees will receive 40 hours of paid vacation after one year of service. After two years of service, full-time employees will be eligible for 80 hours of paid vacation. Thereafter, full-time employees will receive 8 additional hours per year of service up to a maximum of 160 paid vacation hours per year. Up to 40 paid vacation hours may be rolled over into the next anniversary year upon request from the employee and approval by the Town Board, but those vacation hours must be utilized within 6 months of the employee's anniversary date.
- (2) Upon successful completion of the probationary period or upon becoming eligible for part-time benefits, part-time eligible employees will become eligible for paid vacation. Part-time eligible employees will receive 20 hours of paid vacation after one full year of service or upon obtaining part-time eligible status if they have already fulfilled one full year of service. After two years of service as a part-time eligible employee, they will be eligible for 40 hours of paid vacation. Thereafter, part-time eligible employees will receive 4 additional hours per year of service up to a maximum of 80 paid vacation hours per year. Vacation time for part-time eligible employees may not be rolled over into the next anniversary year.
- (3) Upon leaving Town service, an employee will be compensated for unused vacation time. Employees leaving employment with the Town up to 6 months after their anniversary date will be eligible for 50% of their earned but unused vacation time. If the departure occurs between 6 months and 12 months of their anniversary date, the employee will be entitled to 100% of their earned but unused vacation time; however, any employee terminated for cause will be automatically disqualified from receiving any payment for accrued vacation time.

Employee benefits.

A. Health insurance: [Amended 2-14-2011, 11-14-2017, 11-13-2018, 5-10-2022 & 12-28-2023]

- (1) Full-time employees who have worked 90 days are eligible to elect coverage for themselves and their dependents in the Town's group medical plan. Full-time employees hired prior to January 1, 2011, are eligible for 100% paid health insurance by the Town; full-time employees hired on or after January 1, 2011, are eligible for health insurance with 80% paid by the Town and 20% paid by the employee.

Effective January 1, 2019, only full-time employees currently enrolled in the CDPHP plan with the Town paying the premium or a portion thereof will be eligible to continue with this plan. An alternative plan will be available as an option for these current full-time employees and all other eligible employees.

- (2) Part-time eligible employees who have worked at least 20 hours per week for the probationary period of 26 weeks or who successfully completed the probationary period prior to becoming eligible are eligible to elect coverage for themselves in the Town's group medical plan with 40% of the employee only premium paid by the Town and 60% paid by the employee on a bi-weekly basis as a payroll deduction. Part-time eligible employees may elect coverage for spouses, children or family but part-time eligible employees will pay 100% of the insurances premium(s) over the 40% of employee only premium on a bi-weekly basis as a payroll deduction.
- (3) Paid part-time ineligible employees who have completed the probationary period of 26 weeks are eligible to elect coverage for themselves and dependents in the Town's group medical plan. Part-time ineligible employees will pay 100% of the insurances premium(s) on a bi-weekly basis as a payroll deduction.
- (4) Buy-out option: Full-time employees eligible for health insurance can choose a buy-out option in lieu of medical health insurance at the rates set forth below. In order to qualify for such buyout, the employee must provide proof of insurance and execution of the buy-out participation agreement. The buyout is paid in equal monthly installments included in part of the employee's regular paycheck and subject to all applicable taxes. The buyout will be reduced by 20% for employees required to pay 20% of the insurance premiums. The buyout option is not available for part-time eligible employees.

Buy-Out Option	Annual Rate
Individual	\$2,500*
Employee plus child(ren)	\$4,100*
Employee plus spouse	\$4,800*
Family	\$7,000*

Buy-Out Option

Annual Rate

NOTES:

*Dental benefits are still available for full-time eligible employees at the cost set forth in Section 1 even for employees that exercised their right for the health insurance buyout as set forth in section 4.

- B. Health insurance benefits continuation (COBRA): The federal Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) gives employees and their qualified beneficiaries the opportunity to continue health insurance coverage under the Town's health plan when a "qualifying event" would normally result in the loss of eligibility. Some common qualifying events are resignation, termination of employment, or death of an employee; a reduction in an employee's hours or a leave of absence; an employee's divorce or legal separation; and a dependent child no longer meeting eligibility requirements. Under COBRA, the employee or beneficiary pays the full cost of coverage of the Town's group rates plus an administration fee.
- C. New York State Retirement: All employees may join the New York State Retirement System and will be offered information about joining when they are hired. Some employees may be required to join the Retirement System. The standardized workday, for retirement purposes only, is a six-hour workday.
- D. Workers' compensation benefits. The Town complies with the provisions of the New York State Workers' Compensation Law and provides benefits to any employee who is injured while working. Any employee who sustains an on-the-job related injury or illness must immediately report the injury or illness to his or her supervisor. Workers' compensation benefits cover replacement income and medical expenses.
- E. Employees covered hereunder who are injured while on duty in the course of their employment and thus entitled to Workers' Compensation payment shall be compensated in the following manner: Any payment received as Workers' Compensation benefits for absence for which the Employee also received full sick leave will be returned to the Town as long as the Employee receives full salary. The Employee shall be entitled to retain any Workers' Compensation benefits for any period for which sick leave pay is not paid or payable.

Firearms and Dangerous Weapons Policy. [Amended 12-28-2023 & 5-14-2024]

The possession of firearms or dangerous weapons (as defined below) while on Town property, or in a Town facility or vehicle, is strictly prohibited. Employees violating this policy may be terminated. The weapons portion of this policy does not apply to law enforcement personnel.

In order for any official or employee of The Town of New Lebanon to carry a firearm or dangerous weapon when on Town property, in Town vehicles, or while conducting Town business, they must be authorized under New York law under one of the various exceptions to the New York Concealed Carry Improvement Act as well as having prior specific written approval of the Town of New Lebanon Board. Such approval shall be granted at the discretion of the Town Board only after

receiving proof that the individual has a proper New York State license or permit, if applicable, to carry the weapon in question and qualified as one of the limited exceptions in New York law to possess the firearm while on Town property.

Definitions:

- Dangerous Weapons: includes, but not limited to, any firearms, rifles, shotguns, explosive devices or materials, and knives having a blade exceeding five (5) inches in length.
- Work Site: Includes all property owned or occupied by the Town of New Lebanon, as well as Town vehicles.
- Possession: Includes, but not limited to, the presence of a weapon on the employee, lunch box, tool kit, bag, purse, cabinets, office, etc. Weapons transported in vehicles must be legally stored in compliance with the laws of the State of New York.

Family and Medical Leave Act. [Amended 12-28-2023]

The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) provides all town employees with up to 12 (twelve) work weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave per year, if they are eligible.

LEAVE ENTITLEMENT

An eligible employee shall be entitled to:

- 12 (twelve) workweeks of leave in a 12-month period for:
 - the birth of a child and to care for the newborn child within one year of birth;
 - the placement with the employee of a child for adoption or foster care and to care for the newly placed child within one year of placement;
 - to care for the employee’s spouse, child, or parent who has a serious health condition;
 - a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the essential functions of his or her job;
 - any qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that the employee’s spouse, son, daughter, or parent is a covered military member on “covered active duty;” **or**
- 26 (twenty-six) workweeks of leave during a single 12-month period to care for a covered service member with a serious injury or illness if the eligible employee is the service member’s spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin (military caregiver leave).

ELIGIBILITY

Employees are eligible for leave if they have worked for the Town at least 12 months and at least 1,250 hours over the past 12 months. Whether an employee has worked the minimum 1,250 hours of service is determined according to FLSA principles for determining compensable hours or work.

UTILIZATION OF TIME

Time taken off work due to pregnancy complications can be counted against the 12 weeks of Family and Medical Leave.

Employees that are on FMLA leave for the birth, placement or adoption of child, leave time must be taken within 12 months of the birth, placement or adoption of child and in increments of no less than one week

at a time. Such requested time shall be on 30 days' written notice to their direct supervisor and the Town Supervisor.

Employees that are eligible for leave may be entitled to utilize leave intermittently and all questions regarding same, as well as obtaining any necessary paperwork should be directed to the Town Supervisor's office. Employees are expected to provide a minimum of 30 days' written notice of anticipated leave except in emergent circumstances.

CALCULATION OF TIME

The Town of New Lebanon utilizes a 12 (twelve) month period forward from the date of an employee's first FMLA leave in order to calculate the utilization of the 12 (twelve) weeks leave.

USE OF ACCRUALS & BENEFITS

The Town of New Lebanon requires all eligible employees to exhaust all available accruals while on FMLA. Employees must identify the leave they intend to use prior to the conclusion of the payroll period.

If an employee shall be on a continuous FMLA leave and has insufficient accruals for the entire leave, employee may be allowed to spread the leave time throughout the various pay periods to assist the employee in their weekly deduction (i.e., union dues, health insurance, etc.). Notwithstanding the aforementioned, if an employee is on a continuous leave for their own health condition and/or otherwise qualifies for short-term or long-term disability through the Town's disability benefits, employees will only be required to utilize those accruals necessary to receive a complete paycheck between leave time and disability benefits.

When all leave accruals and/or disability benefits (if applicable) are exhausted, the employee will be placed on unpaid leave. Employees absent from work on FMLA shall continue be entitled to health insurance benefits under the same terms and conditions offered while employed. Employees shall remain responsible for their proportionate share of their health insurance, to the extent applicable.

Employees on FMLA do not accrue any leave accrual benefits.

Key Policy. [Amended 12-28-2023]

Signing of Form Required

- Each Town official and employee will sign a form acknowledging the receipt of any and all Town keys assigned to him or her.
- This form will indicate the key issued, the date issued and serial number, if any.

Failure to Return Keys

Any Town official or employee who fails to return Town keys within 15 days of his or her last day of service will be billed the expense of replacement key(s) and re-keying of lock(s). If a lock must be re-keyed for any reason, all keys will be turned in to the Town Clerk within 48 hours of the locks being re-keyed. The Town Clerk will then sign out the new keys to all town officials and employees who are eligible to have keys to the new lock.

Town Clerk's Responsibilities

The Town Clerk is hereby designated as the "keeper of the keys." As keeper of the keys, the Town Clerk's role is limited to providing for the efficient management and recordkeeping relating to the Town's keys, including securing all keys, issuing keys to appropriate persons, and maintaining records relating to the keys. Nothing herein shall be deemed to authorize the Town Clerk to use any keys to access buildings, rooms, or areas to which the Town Clerk does not otherwise have authority to access. In this capacity, he or she will:

- Sign out and collect keys.
- Maintain a written and/or electronic log of key assignments.
- Communicate to the Supervisor any reports of lost or stolen keys.
- Have and maintain a key to every town building and to every lock that exists on any town property or in any town building. All department heads are responsible to ensure that the Town Clerk has a copy of every key for all town buildings as well as every lock that exists for their department.

Policy for Purchasing & Vouchering Items. [Amended 12-28-2023, 5-14-2024 & 4-1-2025]

PURCHASING

All department heads who submit a budget request to the Town Board whose requests are approved by the Town Board via adoption of the budget are authorized to make purchases on behalf of their department, in full accordance with the Town's Procurement Policy. Any item listed on a department's itemized budget request and approved in the budget does not need authorization prior to purchase, with the exception of highway equipment purchases exceeding \$10,000. All equipment purchases exceeding \$10,000 for the highway department, even those listed on an itemized budget request and approved in the budget, MUST be approved by the Town Board in accordance with Highway Law, section 142(1)(a).

Department heads, with the exception of the Highway Superintendent, are authorized to make purchases, other than those specifically described in the department's itemized budget as follows:

- Purchases under \$500.00 do not require authorization from the Town Supervisor or Town Board.
- Purchases of \$500.00 to under \$2,500.00 require prior authorization from the Town Supervisor.
- Purchases exceeding \$2,500.00 require prior authorization from the Town Board.
- All purchases, even those that do not require authorization from the Town Supervisor or Town Board, must be made in full accordance with the Town's Procurement Policy.

The Highway Superintendent is authorized to make purchases, other than those

specifically described in the highway department's itemized budget as follows:

- Purchases under \$10,000.00 do not require authorization from the Town Supervisor or Town Board.
- Purchases of \$10,000.00 or more require authorization from the Town Board.
- Purchases exceeding \$20,000.00 are required to comply with NYS competitive bidding laws.
- All purchases, even those that do not require authorization from the Town Supervisor or Town Board, must be made in full accordance with the Town's Procurement Policy.

Before any purchase is made, the department head is responsible for knowing the balance in the budget line they wish to charge the purchase to. Except in emergency situations, the budget line must have an adequate balance for the purchase BEFORE the purchase is made. If more money is needed in a budget line before making a purchase, please submit a budget amendment request (see appendix A) to the Town Supervisor for approval at the next Town Board meeting. The order cannot be placed until after the budget amendment request is approved by the Town Board. The Town purchases from some vendors such as Staples and W.B. Mason where the Town Clerk's office acts as the purchasing agent for all items, regardless of what department the purchases are for. If a department needs to purchase an item from one of these vendors, they may request the purchase via a purchase order (see appendix B) through the Town Clerk's office. All the same rules apply as if the department head were making the purchase directly from a vendor.

Where the Town of New Lebanon is procuring a commodity or service, whether by competitive bid or other type of procurement, that is the subject of a Green NY procurement specification that has received final approval of the NYS Green NY Council pursuant to Executive Order No. 22 (2022), the department head or Town Clerk's office shall follow the Green NY procurement specification to the maximum extent practicable and where cost is reasonably competitive as defined below. Green NY approved procurement specifications can be found online at: <https://ogs.ny.gov/greenny/approved-green-ny-specifications>. Based on the recommendation of NYS Green Purchasing Communities program, "reasonably competitive" is defined as maximum 10% above the cost of non-green products. If green products are 10% or more above the cost of non-green products, the Green NY procurement specifications do not have to be followed.

Vouchering

Vouchers should be submitted and signed by the vendor whenever possible. The person who ordered the item is responsible for asking the vendor to submit a voucher signed as "claimant" at the bottom as well as an invoice. To be considered for approval of payment by the Town Board, all bills must include town voucher (see appendix C) and an itemized invoice describing the product or service provided, the date it was provided and the cost. If an invoice is not available, the voucher must describe the product or service provided, the date it was provided and the cost. Tax may not be included on the invoice or the voucher. If the vendor cannot provide a voucher, the person who ordered the item may prepare the voucher based on the invoice and sign as "preparer" at the bottom as well as departmental

approval if appropriate.

All vouchers, once prepared, are to be submitted to the Town Supervisor's office. To be included in the Town Board meeting for the month, vouchers must be received by the Town Supervisor's office by the first Tuesday of the month. The Town Supervisor will return any incomplete or incorrectly prepared vouchers to the person who submitted it with an explanation of what needs to be corrected on the incomplete voucher form (see appendix D). If a corrected version of the voucher is not received by the first Tuesday of the month, the voucher will not be considered by the Town Board at that month's meeting.

Training

Annual training will be provided to all department heads and anyone who places orders for the town by the Town Supervisor no later than 8 weeks into each calendar year to ensure that all are properly trained in the policies laid out above. The training will include a full review of this policy as well as the Town's Procurement Policy.

Penalties

If a purchase is made not in accordance with this policy, the person placing the order could be held personally financially liable for the payment of the invoice.

Review

This policy will be reviewed by the Town Board on an annual basis and updated as needed.

Approved Travel Policy. [Amended 12-28-2023]

General Policy [Amended 2-10-2026]

- A. No travel expenses of any kind shall be reimbursed without prior approval of the Town Board. The department head shall submit the request to the Town Board and shall include in the request whether the training is required or recommended. The Board gives blanket prior approval for mileage expenses incurred in the performance of duties by the following positions; Court Clerk, Deputy Court Clerk, CEO/ZEO/Deputy CEO, Assessor, Town Clerk, Deputy Town Clerk, Tax Collector, Town Supervisor, Highway Superintendent, and Highway Staff.
- B. No travel which includes overnight stays shall be committed to without prior approval of the appropriate department head. Timely submission shall be made to the Town Clerk for such approval to be transmitted to the Town Board member responsible for liaison with that department; in the event of an emergency requirement, the Board member may approve by telephone or e-mail.

- C. A copy of the itemized hotel/motel bill must be submitted along with either a paid receipt or a credit card charge form.
- D. Employees will not be reimbursed for travel time to and from seminars or in-service training. Employees paid on an hourly basis will be paid for the hours that they attend seminars or in-service training (not to exceed eight hours per day). Salaried employees that attend seminars or in-service training on weekends may take compensation time equivalent to the hours in seminars or in-service training (not to exceed eight hours per day) with the approval of their supervisor.

Education or In-Service Training Events

For travel to job-related educational events (such as seminars or in-service training), the Board may approve a travel advance only in those cases where the sponsoring organization provides the written evidence of certification or completion which can be presented to the Board upon the employee's return. (In cases where such evidence is delayed, the Board will rely upon the employee's written assurance that the documentation is forthcoming.) Employees are expected to attend all seminars, classes or meetings included in the event agenda appropriate to their duties and responsibilities and to submit an annotated copy of the event agenda with those attendances noted thereon.

Other Overnight Travel

In any other travel requiring overnight stays, and approved by the Board, the employee will lay out the necessary expenditures and submit an expense report, in a form to be determined by the Town Clerk, to the Clerk upon completion of the trip, for reimbursement. The employee will attach a brief statement summarizing:

- A. Reason for the travel.
- B. Meetings attended and list of participants with organizational affiliations.
- C. Accomplishments of the trip.
- D. Any follow-up activities engendered by the trip.

Reimbursement Limitations

No reimbursement shall be made for:

- A. The purchase or consumption of alcoholic beverages.
- B. Personal purchases (including, but not limited to, medicines, personal care items, gifts, movies or entertainment, exercise or other recreational activities, etc.).
- C. Expenses incurred by a person other than the employee.
- D. Upgrades in seating or other accommodations.
- E. Meals in excess of \$55 per day, using the guideline of \$15 each for breakfast and lunch and \$25 for dinner. Employees are expected to

participate in meals which are included in program fees without further reimbursement.

- F. Automobile rentals, except if approved in advance. Employees should use their own vehicles in most cases. When necessary, airport or hotel shuttles, Uber and Lyft should be utilized in preference to taxis.

Violations

- A. Employees who violate these rules are required to reimburse the Town for any advances received, or expenses reimbursed (or portions thereof found to be inappropriate) upon written notice from the Town Clerk of such violation.
- B. Employees found to have knowingly, or fraudulently, supplied inaccurate travel documentation to the Town for which they received reimbursement may be subject to discipline, including, but not limited to, fines, loss of pay, and/or dismissal. The Town may, at its discretion, refer such employees to the judicial system.

Town of New Lebanon Computer, Internet, & Email Usage Policy [Amended 12-28-23]

The computer and email systems are owned by Town of New Lebanon and are provided and intended for business use. All messages and other information communicated through these systems are the property of Town of New Lebanon. With this in mind, incidental and occasional personal use is allowed; however, this privilege should not be abused and must not affect a user's performance of employment related activities. Non-business internet activity will be restricted to break times and/or meal periods only.

Visiting web sites or opening an email that may contain inappropriate material is grounds for disciplinary action. Any spam email that is received must be immediately deleted. The downloading of information should be kept to a minimum. It is extremely important that you are aware of the dangers of opening attachments that may contain a virus. A virus could contaminate Town of New Lebanon's entire computer system. Internet and email usage may be monitored. Misuse of these systems may result in disciplinary actions, up to and including termination.

Examples of misuse of the systems include, but are not limited to:

- offensive or harassing statements based on race, color, religion, creed, sex, disability, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, genetic predisposition, sexual and reproductive health decisions, national origin, criminal history, citizenship status or because he/she is a veteran, disabled or otherwise;
- statements that could be construed as defamatory;
- profane or obscene material;
- violations of copyright or trade secrets;
- sending chain letters;
- soliciting money for religious or political causes; or

- participation in chat rooms or bulletin boards.

Employees encountering or receiving this kind of material should immediately report the incident to the management.

Employees should always conduct themselves in a professional manner. Email messages are sometimes misdirected and often forwarded and may be seen by persons other than the intended recipient. Users should create messages with the same care, judgment and responsibility they would use for letters and memoranda written on Town of New Lebanon letterhead. Email passwords must be made available to the Town at all times. Please notify management if you need to change your password.

Employees cannot use employer-owned equipment, including computers, phones, town-licensed software or other electronic equipment on work time to conduct personal blogging, social networking activities and/or political activities. Use of personal devices while on work time is not allowed and may be addressed as a performance issue.

Consistent with applicable federal and state law, Town of New Lebanon reserves the right to monitor usage of the computer and email systems for any reason. With this in mind, the privacy of email, and similar data should not be presumed. Employees shall not use unauthorized codes or passwords to gain access to others' files. The unauthorized access of another employee's email or files may result in disciplinary action. Town of New Lebanon reserves the right to terminate any user's access to the mail system and to take other appropriate disciplinary action in the event of misuse or abuse of the mail system.

Questions regarding this policy should be addressed to the management.

Town of New Lebanon Drug Free Workplace Policy [Amended 12-28-2023]

The use of illegal drugs, marijuana, alcohol and prescription drug misuse by employees are inconsistent with Town of New Lebanon's long-standing commitment to a safe and productive work environment. Illegal drugs are controlled substances which are not being used or possessed under the supervision of a licensed health care professional.

Whenever employees are working, operating town vehicles or equipment, present on Town of New Lebanon premises, or present in any other location performing services for the Town, they are prohibited from:

- using, buying, selling, manufacturing, distributing, dispensing, consuming or transferring illegal drugs or marijuana;
- being under the influence of illegal drugs, marijuana or alcohol;
- misuse of prescription drugs; and
- consuming marijuana and/or alcohol.

Employees should report to work fit for duty and free of any adverse effects of illegal drugs, marijuana or alcohol. This policy does not prohibit employees from the lawful use and possession of prescribed medications. Employees must, however, consult with their doctors or other licensed medical practitioners about the effect of prescribed medications on their ability to work safely, and promptly disclose any restrictions to their managers.

In accordance with all applicable federal and state laws, it is a condition of employment that any employee who is convicted of a criminal drug offense notify the town within 5 days of the conviction.

Employees who violate any aspect of this substance abuse policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. Depending on the circumstances, an employee's continued employment, reinstatement, or return to work, may be conditioned on the employee's successful participation in and/or completion of any and all evaluations, counseling, treatments, and rehabilitation programs, and other appropriate conditions as determined by Town of New Lebanon.

Town of New Lebanon Cell Phone Policy [Amended 12-28-2023]

It is the policy of The Town of New Lebanon that personal phones, and portable entertainment devices are not to be utilized for personal business during work hours, with the exception of breaks, lunch, or with the express authorization of your immediate supervisor. The use of social media platforms including but not limited to Snapchat, Instagram, TikTok and Facebook are strictly prohibited during work hours with the exception as above.

In the event an employee receives a personal phone call of an **emergency nature** during work hours, the employee must ensure that they are in compliance with all New York State Motor Vehicle laws, as well as ensuring the safety of themselves and their co-workers.

Employees are expected to complete assigned work; thus, excessive personal phone use may result in disciplinary action.

This policy does not preclude the carrying of personal cellular phones or utilizing personal cellular phones to communicate with Town personnel; however, it does ban their use during the workday as set forth above.

All full-time highway employees, the highway superintendent, the town supervisor, the CEO/ZEO, the Deputy CEO/ZEO and the Animal Control Officer are all eligible for a town issued cell phone or to utilize their personal phone for work purposes and receive a reimbursement of \$25 per month paid via monthly voucher or via one annual voucher for \$300 in December (or upon leaving service for the town at a rate of \$25 per month for each month of service). If an eligible employee has a town issued cell phone it may only be used for town work related business, it may not be used to discuss politics or any other non-work-related matters and it must be used in a way that is consistent with all town policies.

Town of New Lebanon Social Media Use Policy (only section C) [Amended 12-28-2023]

Personal Use of Social Media – Precautions and Prohibitions:

1. All Town personnel shall abide by the following when using social media for their own personal use:
 - a. Town personnel are free to express themselves as private citizens on social media sites to the degree that their speech does not impair working relationships of this Town for which loyalty and confidentiality are important, impede the performance of duties, impair harmony among co-workers, or negatively affect the public perception of the Town.
 - b. Town personnel shall not post, transmit, or otherwise disseminate any information to which they have access as a result of their employment without the expressed authorization of the Town Supervisor or his/her designee. Municipal policies such as work place violence and harassment apply to all postings in addition to any HIPPA regulations, collective bargaining and confidentiality requirements.
 - c. Use speech involving themselves or other Town personnel reflecting behavior that would reasonably be considered reckless or irresponsible.
 - d. Engaging in prohibited speech noted herein, may provide grounds for undermining or impeaching an officer's testimony in criminal proceedings.
 - e. Town personnel shall not post, transmit, or otherwise disseminate any information to their personal social media accounts while on duty regardless if from a Town computer or other personally owned device without the expressed authorization of the Town Supervisor or his/her designee.
 - f. Personnel will not divulge information gained by reason of their authority; make any statements, speeches, appearances, and endorsements; or publish materials that could reasonably be considered to represent the views or positions of the Town without expressed authorization of the Town Supervisor or his/her designee.
 - g. Town personnel that violate this policy may be subject to discipline up to and including termination.
 - h. Reporting Violations – Any employee becoming aware of or having knowledge of a social media posting or of any website or web page in violation of the provision of this policy has an obligation to notify his or her supervisor immediately for follow-up action.

Employee Parking Policy [Amended 12-28-2023 & 2-10-2026]

Town employees are to park in the parking spots in the side parking lot by the basketball courts between the hours of 9:00am and 5:00pm, Monday through Friday when they are at town hall

working for official town business, unless they need ADA compliance. The court staff is exempt from the employee parking policy only on Thursdays for court.

Smoking Policy [Amended 12-28-2023]

There is no smoking within 50 feet of the town hall. There is a designated employee smoking area near the employee parking area at the picnic table near the mailboxes. All cigarette butts must be disposed of in the provided receptacle at the designated employee smoking area.

Additional Resolutions and Laws related to Personnel Policies

- Code of Ethics
- Procurement Policy
- Fund Balance Policy
- Bank Reconciliation Policy
- Electronic Records Policy
- Petty Cash Policy
- Social Media Use Policy
- Public Employer Health Emergency Plan
- CDL & Drug and Alcohol Testing Plan & Policy
- Investment Policy
- Performance Management Policy (Old Compensation Policy)
- Data Breach Notification Policy
- Policy & Complaint Procedure Regarding Discrimination & Harassment
- Workplace Violence Prevention Policy

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the New Lebanon Town Board that the above amended personnel policies is adopted by the Town and shall take effect on **February 10, 2026**.

Upon the question of the foregoing Resolution, the following Town Board Members voted “Aye” or “Nay” for said Resolution:

Roll Call Vote:

Councilmember Steve Powers	Aye
Councilmember Joanne Amlaw	Aye
Supervisor Tistrya Houghtling	Aye
Councilmember Susan Tipograph	Aye
Councilmember Chris Patterson	Aye

The Resolution, having been approved by a majority vote of the Town Board, was declared duly adopted by the Supervisor of the Town of New Lebanon.

Dated: February 10, 2026
Marcie Robertson
Town Clerk
Town of New Lebanon

Cloudpermit Renewal:

Supervisor Houghtling reported, the town's contract with Cloudpermit, an online portal for

building department applications, was expiring on February 16. The Building Department requested a one-year extension at the current rate of \$5,000, rather than accepting Cloudpermit's initial proposal for a two-year extension at \$6,500 per year.

A motion was made by Councilmember Tipograph to authorize the supervisor to enter into an agreement with Cloudpermit for one year in the amount of \$5,000 for online services for the building and planning department. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Amlaw.

Roll Call Vote:

Councilmember Powers -	Aye
Councilmember Amlaw -	Aye
Supervisor Houghtling -	Aye
Councilmember Tipograph -	Aye
Councilmember Patterson -	Aye

2026 Little League Contract:

The board reviewed the 2026 contract with the Nassau Shatford Youth Baseball Association, which had no substantive changes from the previous year apart from updated dates.

A motion was made by Councilmember Tipograph, seconded by Councilmember Amlaw, and approved unanimously to authorize the Supervisor to sign the 2026 Little League contract for the Nassau Shatford Youth Baseball Association from April 1, 2026 through the end of the calendar year.

2026 Contract with CCSO for Court Security:

The board reviewed the 2026 contract with the Columbia County Sheriff's Office for court security.

A motion was made by Councilmember Tipograph to authorize the Supervisor to enter into the agreement for enhanced police services for the Court for the period March 1, 2026, through February 28, 2027. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Amlaw.

Roll Call Vote:

Councilmember Powers -	Aye
Councilmember Amlaw -	Aye
Supervisor Houghtling -	Aye
Councilmember Tipograph -	Aye
Councilmember Patterson -	Aye

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

MARCH:

Wednesday, March 4th, 2026 at 6:00pm – Special Meeting – Outreach, Marketing & Communications Interviews

Tuesday, March 10th, 2026 at 6:30pm – Regular Monthly Meeting

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR:

In addition to an in-person privilege of the floor, Supervisor Houghtling will read all comments, questions and concerns emailed to supervisor@townofnewlebanon.com during the meeting.

Trina Porte: Trina inquired about approving overtime for the Town Clerk, but was informed that as an elected official with a fixed salary, overtime is not permitted.

Margaret Robertson: Meg mentioned airport mix as a possible material for the sidewalk project. She also expressed support for the Town Clerk, describing the position as demanding and suggesting the board consider adding a second deputy clerk position.

Supervisor Houghtling read the following emails submitted for privilege of the floor:

Craig Skerkis: Craig expressed his disapproval of the response from the Supervisor to a previous privilege of the floor regarding the minute's submissions.

Councilmember Powers: Steve expressed his support of the Supervisor's defense of the Town Clerk and felt it would have been inappropriate not to defend her. He acknowledged that deadlines exist but that New Lebanon has an extraordinary number of FOIL requests and the notion of penalizing her is absurd.

Scout Metzler: Scout inquired about the validity of data acquired through the survey for the Comprehensive Plan discussed by the board. He also asked about a paved sidewalk in comparison to the existing paved road with shoulders.

Mr. Muadin: (Online) Mr. Muadin acknowledged the humanity of the Town Clerk and the hard work she does, as well as the empathy shown by the Supervisor. He expressed feeling ignored when someone responds to his privilege of the floor remarks, and suggested the town should have the town attorney present at meetings. He recommended exploring software solutions used by other municipalities to process FOIL requests and generate minutes from recordings.

Town Clerk Robertson: Marcie addressed the board and public regarding her minutes being behind schedule. She acknowledged her awareness of the two-week requirement and explained the challenges she faced, including the time demands of the special election and other responsibilities. She stated she was working hard to catch up, having produced all of the 2026 minutes and several from December, with three more sets ready to go.

Trina Porte: Trina commented that running a town and being a town clerk involves juggling multiple legal requirements simultaneously, and that meeting all deadlines may be impossible given time constraints.

Pat Metzler: Pat commented that the Town Clerk should feel free to close her door when

not serving residents directly, and mentioned that adding ten extra hours for a deputy clerk position, even temporarily, might help reduce pressure.

ADJOURNMENT:

A motion was made by Councilmember Tipograph, to adjourn the meeting at 8:24pm. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Powers.

Roll Call Vote:

- Councilmember Powers - Aye
- Councilmember Amlaw - Aye
- Supervisor Houghtling - Aye
- Councilmember Tipograph - Aye
- Councilmember Patterson - Aye

Respectfully submitted,

Marcie Robertson
New Lebanon Town Clerk

