**MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC HEARING OF
THE TOWN BOARD OF THE TOWN OF NEW LEBANON
ON THE PRELIMINARY TOWN BUDGET FOR 2027
HELD ON NOVEMBER 4, 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:	**Jim Carroll, Planning Board, ZRC & Comp Plan Member** **Pat Metzler, Recreation Commission Member** **Steve Houghtling, LVPA** **Melba Kurman, Shaker Preservation Committee Member** **Christine Dreyfus, Meals On Wheels** **Members of the Public**

CALL TO ORDER:
Supervisor Houghtling called the Public Hearing to order at 6:30pm.

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE:
The reading of the Public Hearing notice was waived but to be entered into the minutes.

**TOWN OF NEW LEBANON
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
THE TOWN OF NEW LEBANON
2027 PRELIMINARY BUDGET**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the PRELIMINARY BUDGET of the TOWN OF NEW LEBANON for the fiscal year beginning January 1, 2027, including general town funds, highway funds, and fire protection district funds, has been completed and filed in the office of the Town Clerk at the New Lebanon Town Hall, 14755 NYS Route 22, New Lebanon, New York, where it is available for inspection by any interested persons during regular Town Clerk office hours. The Preliminary Budget for 2027 has also been posted on the town website (www.townofnewlebanon.com) and can be viewed or downloaded from the website.

FURTHER NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Town Board of the Town of New Lebanon shall hold a Public Hearing on the Town of New Lebanon's 2027 Preliminary Budget on Wednesday, November 4th, 2026 at 6:30 p.m. at the New Lebanon Town Hall, 14755 NYS Route 22 for the purpose of receiving public input on said budget.

The following are the proposed 2027 salaries of the Elected Town Officers of the Town of New Lebanon:

Supervisor	$44,221
Councilmembers (4)	$4,120 each
Town Clerk	$46,378
Highway Superintendent	$79,638
Town Justices (2)	$11,259 each
Tax Collector	$10,812

The following is the proposed amount for 2027 for the Lebanon Valley Fire Protective Association:

SF-1	$154,024

Participation by the public will be in person at the New Lebanon Town Hall, 14755 NYS Route 22, New Lebanon, New York with members of the public also being able to view the meeting at the following link: https://townhallstreams.com/towns/new_lebanon_ny

You may also still submit comments regarding the LVPA 2027 Preliminary Budget and the Town of New Lebanon 2027 Preliminary Budget to: supervisor@townofnewlebanon.com and they will be included in the record.

By order of the Town Board of the Town of New Lebanon
Marcie Robertson
Town Clerk
10/26/2026

Supervisor Houghtling gave an overview of the preliminary budget and went over a slide that she presented. Town taxes are a small portion of the property taxes that you pay, about $.10 on the dollar. If the preliminary budget presented for tonight's public hearing were to be adopted as the final budget and no changes were to be made, in 2027 if your house is currently assessed at $200,000 your annual town tax would be $420, just to give an example. Comparing to a $200,000 assessment in 2026, town taxes would have been $390, it ends up being a $30 annual increase. She gave other examples and continued presenting her slide.

In 2026 the amount per $1,000 assessed was $1.95, the 2027 tentative budget she presented went to $2.00 per $1,000 assessed, and in the preliminary budget it has increase to $2.10 per $1,000 assessed. It is a $.15 increase from the 2026 budget to the 2027 preliminary.

The percentage increase from the 2026 budget to the 2027 tentative budget amount to be raised by taxes was a 14.86% increase. The preliminary budget with the overall $52,254 increase comes out to a 20.82% increase from the 2026 amount to be raised by taxes.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Supervisor Houghtling opened the floor to public comment on the 2027 Preliminary Budget as presented.

Kevin Smith: Kevin expressed his dissatisfaction with the Chief Fiscal Officer, the board

and the budget situation. He wants to see less grants applied for, do away with projects like the sidewalks, less mismanagement of money, and to see a budget reduction for a change.

Jim Carroll: Jim expressed his opinions on the Summer Camp and it being fully funded by the attendees, the LV Seniors being a private group should also fund themselves, not the town, brought up revenues for the Community Center, and he inquired about the fund balance and what is the balance for the various funds. He asked if the money is still there for the closure and monitoring of the landfill.

Supervisor Houghtling: Tistrya responded, most of the landfill reserve has been used to close the landfill and then the state is giving the town 100% reimbursement on that landfill closure. It does not legally have to go back to the reserve account, this board is waiting until the beginning months of 2027 to see where the end of year fund balance ends up and then by way of resolution bring money back into that reserve account at a set amount for the 30 year monitoring. They are waiting on estimates from the engineer for those costs. Councilmember Powers is looking into investment opportunities for that money.

Jim Carroll: Jim added, the town is leaving cash on the table and needs to go get it by some of his suggestions and eliminate discretionary spending.

Amy Brueckmann: Amy commented, she is confused about what makes up her tax bill.

Supervisor Houghtling: Tistrya responded and explained how tax bills are broken down.

Jim Carroll: Jim suggested showing how the asset value has changed.

Melba Kurman: Melba commented and mentioned push back on the county.

Supervisor Houghtling: Tistrya commented, the entire amount to be raised by taxes increase is $182,322. The town had to eliminate fund balance from the operating budget which was $182,605. If the town did not have to make that change per the recommendation of the Comptroller's office, which automatically put the town negative $-182,605. If the budget is adopted as it is right now, the 20% increase we are seeing this year is fully accounted for by not bringing in a revenue of $182,605 in fund balance. She further explained the history of the town and previous Town Boards allocating fund balance into the budget.

Open discussion took place with all in attendance, Supervisor Houghtling, and the Town Board on budgeting topics such as: fund balance, landfill monitoring, the possibility of increased revenues, long term financial planning, pausing the sidewalk project, smaller tax increases in the years to come, use of the community center, and budget related topics.

PUBLIC COMMENT EMAILS:

Supervisor Houghtling read the following emails received for privilege of the floor on the proposed 2027 Preliminary Budget:

Scout Metzler: Scout emailed two separate emails with comments relating to the tax cap and why it does not go to a vote like the school district, a board member salary and suggesting they take a cut in pay, and sidewalks not being accounted for in this budget causing tax increases, and water/wastewater in the future adding to the towns budget deficit.

CLOSING OF PUBLIC COMMENT:
Supervisor Houghtling closed the public comment and input section of the Public Hearing. She stated there are some adjustments that need to be made. The Building Dept. did request that the $5,000 allocated for code enforcement legal services that are currently in the Planning Board attorney line be in the Code Enforcement attorney line. There is a price increase from the lab that does the water testing for the landfill monitoring, this is a revenue and an expenditure line. The change in accounting requires the town going through a payroll company, we used best guess estimates and we have now received exact quotes. The Library vote for additional funding passed.

A motion was made by Supervisor Houghtling, to make the following changes to the 2027 preliminary budget:

General Appropriations Page 14. –**Planning** (Contractual Exp -Attorney) **A-8020.41,** $10,000 - **decrease** by - $5,000 to change to $5,000.

General Appropriations Page 15. – **Code/Zoning Enforcement – ADD (**Contractual Exp –Building Dept. Attorney) **A-8664.43, with** $5,000.

General Appropriations Page 15. – **Landfill Closure** (Monitoring) **A-8161.42,** $25,000 - **increase** by - $500 to change to $25,500.

General Appropriations Page 2. – **Accountant, A-1220.41,** $26,200 - **increase** by - $3,800 to change to $30,000.

General Appropriations Page 13. – **Library** (Contractual Exp) **A-7410.4,** $170,000 - **increase** by - $7,500 to change to $177,500.

General Est. Revenue Page 4. – **Landfill Reserve A-5031,** $25,000 - **increase** by - $500 to change to $25,500.

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

CLOSING OF PUBLIC HEARING & ADJOURNMENT:

All persons desiring to be heard, emails received and read, a motion was made by Supervisor Houghtling to close the Public Hearing and input, and adjourn the meeting at 7:42pm. 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