

State of New York
County of Lewis
Town of Watson

February 11, 2026

Town Officials present:
Supervisor: Jeffrey Hoch
Councilpersons present: Jeff Lyng, James Blackwell, Steve Stogsdill
Absent: Shawn Freeman
Town Clerk: Michelle Ward
HWY Superintendent: Steve Skiff
Legislator: Mike Hanno
CPA: Scott Lawrence
Citizens present: Bill and Judi Houppert, Mikey Dietrich

The regular meeting was called to order on February 12, 2026 at 6:30pm by Supervisor Jeff Hoch.

Meeting was started by the Pledge of Allegiance which was led by Supervisor Jeff Hoch.

Minutes

Meeting minutes for January 14, 2026 were submitted by Michelle Ward, Town Clerk for approval.
Motion made by Jeff Lyng and seconded by James Freeman to accept the minutes.
Ayes: Jeffrey Hoch, Jeffrey Lyng, James Blackwell, Steve Stogsdill
Nyes: None
Motion carried.

Privilege of the floor

No comments from the floor.

Town Assessor

Assessor, Allan Mace, submitted a report for February 2026. He reviewed the report with the board and answered any questions. He stated that he will be sitting with the roll on May 19, 2026 – 9:00AM-1:00PM & May 20, 2026 – 4:00PM-8:00PM here at the Town of Watson. Allan discussed with the board the option/possibility of changing the exemption rate to match the County's.

Data Collector, Alex Dunn, also submitted a report for review.

County Legislator

Mike Hanno was present and spoke to the board about the County Boards that he is a part of. He also stated that the County is discussing setting up a Land Bank within the County.

Explanation of Land Bank: A land bank is a public or nonprofit entity created to acquire, hold, manage, and redevelop vacant, abandoned, or tax-foreclosed properties. By clearing titles, eliminating liens, and managing distressed assets, land banks return properties to productive use, often for affordable housing, community gardens, or economic redevelopment.

Further discussion to come.

There will be a Public Hearing on Tuesday, March 3, 2026 at 5:00PM in the Courthouse 2nd Floor Legislative Room to consider the request of the Lewis County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board for Parcel #214.00-01-11.210 owned by John Young (approximately 8.6 acres) to be changed from residential to agricultural.

Town Accountant

January financials were reviewed/discussed with the CPA, Scott Lawrence and the Town Board.

Resolution #5 of 2026 - Budget Transfer/Adjustment of Funds for 2025

Motion made by Councilman Steve Stogsdill and seconded by Councilman Jeff Lyng for transferring funds from: A 1010.4 – Town Legislative Board Contractual to A 1620.4 – Town Office Building Contractual in the amount of \$39.58 was proposed.

Ayes: Jeffrey Hoch, Jeffrey Lyng, James Blackwell, Steve Stogsdill

Nyes: None

Motion carried.

Resolution #6 of 2026 - Budget Transfer/Adjustment of Funds for 2025

Motion made by Councilman Steve Stogsdill and seconded by Councilman Jeff Lyng for transferring funds from: A 1420.4 – Attorney Contractual to A 9010.8 – State Retirements – Employee Benefits in the amount of \$5,371.00 was proposed.

Ayes: Jeffrey Hoch, Jeffrey Lyng, James Blackwell, Steve Stogsdill

Nyes: None

Motion carried.

Resolution #7 of 2026 - Budget Transfer/Adjustment of Funds for 2025

Motion made by Councilman Steve Stogsdill and seconded by Councilman Jeff Lyng for transferring funds from: A 9055.8 – Disability Insurance – Employee Benefits to A 9030.8 Social Security & Medicare – Employee Benefits in the amount of \$421.35 was proposed.

Ayes: Jeffrey Hoch, Jeffrey Lyng, James Blackwell, Steve Stogsdill

Nyes: None

Motion carried.

Resolution #8 of 2026 - Budget Transfer/Adjustment of Funds for 2025

Motion made by Councilman Steve Stogsdill and seconded by Councilman Jeff Lyng for transferring funds from: DA 5142.4 – Snow Removal Contractual to DA 5142.1 – Payroll – Snow Removal in the amount of \$13,097.04 was proposed.

Ayes: Jeffrey Hoch, Jeffrey Lyng, James Blackwell, Steve Stogsdill

Nyes: None

Motion carried.

RESOLUTION #9 OF 2026 - Budget Transfer for the year 2025

WHEREAS, the Highway Department of the Town of Watson has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) dated 02/11/2025 attachment to the Union Contract dated 02/11/2025 effective 01/01/2025 – 12/31/2027; and **WHEREAS**, the aforementioned Union Contract was only settled after two years of discussion and debate resulting in the expense of two years of retro-pay to the employees of the Highway Department; and

WHEREAS, the aforementioned MOU agreement addressed issues regarding the accumulation of unused vacation time and the possibility of the Town monetizing accruals of such time and paying the same to employees of the Highway Department as per the MOU agreement; and

WHEREAS, the cost of the aforementioned expenses exceeds the budgeted amount in the Highway – Snow Removal account (DA 5142.1) in the amount of \$25,777.14;

NOW THEREFORE; be it

RESOLVED that the Budget of the Town of Watson for the year 2025 is amended so that the sum of \$25,777.14 shall be transferred from that account designated as Highway-Assigned/Unappropriated Fund Balance (DA 915) and placed in such account as the Town Supervisor and Town’s Accountant shall deem appropriate Highway Payroll – Snow Removal (DA 5142.1) for purposes of payment; and be it further

RESOLVED that the Town Supervisor and Highway Superintendent are authorized to take such steps and execute such documents and records necessary to accomplish the above -mentioned expenses.

A motion to adopt the above resolution was made at a regular meeting of the Town of Watson held at the Town Offices on February 11, 2026 by Steve Stogsdill and seconded by Jeff Lyng.

Ayes: Jeffrey Hoch, Jeffrey Lyng, James Blackwell, Steve Stogsdill

Nyes: None

Motion carried

RESOLUTION #10 OF 2026 - Budget Transfer for the year 2025

WHEREAS, the Highway Department of the Town of Watson has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) dated 02/11/2025 attachment to the Union Contract dated 02/11/2025 effective 01/01/2025 – 12/31/2027; and

WHEREAS, the aforementioned Union Contract was only settled after two years of discussion and debate resulting in the expense of two years of retro-pay to the employees of the Highway Department; and

WHEREAS, the aforementioned MOU agreement addressed issues regarding the accumulation of unused vacation time and the possibility of the Town monetizing accruals of such time and paying the same to employees of the Highway Department as per the MOU agreement; and

WHEREAS, the cost of the aforementioned expenses exceeds the budgeted amount in the Highway – State Retirement account (DA 9010.8) in the amount of \$13,527.00;

NOW THEREFORE; be it

RESOLVED that the Budget of the Town of Watson for the year 2025 is amended so that the sum of \$13,527.00 shall be transferred from that account designated as Highway-Assigned/Unappropriated Fund Balance (DA 915) and placed in such account as the Town Supervisor and Town’s Accountant shall deem appropriate Highway – State Retirement (DA 9010.8) for purposes of payment; and be it further

RESOLVED that the Town Supervisor and Highway Superintendent are authorized to take such steps and execute such documents and records necessary to accomplish the above -mentioned expenses.

A motion to adopt the above resolution was made at a regular meeting of the Town of Watson held at the Town Offices on February 11, 2026 by Steve Stogsdill and seconded by Jeff Lyng.

Ayes: Jeffrey Hoch, Jeffrey Lyng, James Blackwell, Steve Stogsdill

Nyes: None

Motion carried

Resolution #11 of 2026 - Budget Transfer/Adjustment of Funds for 2025

Motion made by Councilman Steve Stogsdill and seconded by Councilman Jeff Lyng for transferring funds from: DA 9060.8 – Health Insurance – Employee Benefits to DA 9030.8 Social Security & Medicare – Employee Benefits in the amount of \$1,064.75 was proposed.

Ayes: Jeffrey Hoch, Jeffrey Lyng, James Blackwell, Steve Stogsdill

Nyes: None
Motion carried

Resolution #12 of 2026 - Budget Transfer/Adjustment of Funds for 2025

Motion made by Councilman Steve Stogsdill and seconded by Councilman Jeff Lyng for transferring funds from: SW 8340.4 – Water Transmission – Contractual to SW 9010.8 – State Retirement – Employee Benefits in the amount of \$75.00 was proposed.

Ayes: Jeffrey Hoch, Jeffrey Lyng, James Blackwell, Steve Stogsdill

Nyes: None

Motion carried

Resolution #13 of 2026 - Budget Transfer/Adjustment of Funds for 2025

Motion made by Councilman Steve Stogsdill and seconded by Councilman Jeff Lyng for transferring funds from: SW2 9030.8 Social Security & Medicare – Employee Benefits to SW2 9010.8 – State Retirement – Employee Benefits in the amount of \$75.00 was proposed.

Ayes: Jeffrey Hoch, Jeffrey Lyng, James Blackwell, Steve Stogsdill

Nyes: None

Motion carried

Supervisor Report

January 2026

Total in Community Bank - \$106,513.54

Total in NYCLASS - \$3,468,180.12

Petty Cash - \$144.50

Total Amount - \$3,574,838.16

Supervisor report for January 2026 submitted by the CPA office.

Motion made by James Blackwell and seconded by Steve Stogsdill to accept Supervisor Report for January 2026.

Ayes: Jeffrey Lyng, James Blackwell, Steve Stogsdill

Nyes: None

Abstain: Jeffrey Hoch

RACOG

Mickey Dietrich was present to give a report. He stated there has been a change in board seats. RACOG has had interest from another municipality to join, so this will be discussed at the next meeting. Suggestion from RACOG is that the Town's Comprehensive Plan be reviewed every 5 years. The Town of Watson's was completed in 2020, however Jeff suggested that the Town wait until after the new/revised Zoning Laws are completed. RACOG agreed.

NEW BUSINESS

Jeff Lyng stated that at a meeting he attended that a Town Supervisor stated that they were being charged tax for their National Grid bill and should not have been. Michelle and Jeff Hoch will look into this.

Correspondence

Town Park

Northern NY Community Foundation has issued a \$5,000.00 grant for improvements for the Town of Watson Town Park.

Emergency Medical Service – The County has received the survey that they had completed to evaluate the response/need for emergency services throughout Lewis County. There will be a public meeting on Wednesday February 25, 2026 at the Lowville Fire Hall for discussion of this survey and how it will/may effect towns.

Highway Department

Steve has submitting projects through FEMA for approval.
Kotel Road project is likely to get pushed back to 2027.
Bailey Road project is going slow, nothing scheduled at this time.

There will be a bid for a new/replacement heating system for the highway garage coming soon.

Overhead doors have been ordered.

Town Justice

Resolution # 14 of 2026 - JUSTICES MONTHLY REPORTS & 2025 ANNUAL REPORT

On a motion made by Councilman Jeff Lyng and seconded by Councilman James Blackwell the following resolution was ADOPTED.

Ayes: 4 - Jeffrey Hoch, Jeffrey Lyng, James Blackwell, Steve Stogsdill

Nays: 0 - None

RESOLVED, the Justices 2025 Monthly Reports and 2025 Annual Report have been duly examined, and that the fines therein have been turned over to the proper officials of the Town as required by law.

Motion carried.

Town Historian

The Town of Watson will be getting a new Town Historian and a possible historical committee. The Town of Watson is looking for any history that any residents would have that they would want to donate to the Town to be put on display. This could be old pictures or newspaper articles or anything that pertains to the history of the Town of Watson. If you have anything you would like to contribute, may drop it off at the Town Office building or call 315-376-3866 Ext 3 and arrangements can be made.

Planning Board

No meeting for January 2026

Zoning Board

No meeting for January 2026

Monthly Bills

February Abstracts 2026

General Fund - #3, #21-46 - \$116,318.61

Highway Fund - #6-14 - \$67,820.53

Water District - #3-4 - \$352.50

Watson Water O & M - #5-15 - \$4,419.91

Motion made by Steve Stogsdill and seconded by James Blackwell to pay the February 2026 abstracts.

Ayes: Jeffrey Hoch, Jeffrey Lyng, James Blackwell, Steve Stogsdill

Nyes: None

Motion carried

Monthly Reports

Tax Collection Report for January 2026 was submitted by Michelle Ward, Tax Collector.
Town Clerk and Dog Reports for January 2026 were submitted by Michelle Ward, Town Clerk.
Justice Report for January 2026 was submitted by Don Regetz, Town Justice.

Motion made by Jeff Lyng and seconded by James Blackwell to accept all reports.
Ayes: Jeffrey Hoch, Jeffrey Lyng, James Blackwell, Steve Stogsdill
Nyes: None
Motion carried

Adjournment

As there was no further business per Town Supervisor, Jeff Hoch, a motion was made by Steve Stogsdill and seconded by Jeff Lyng to adjourn the meeting at 8:21 PM.
Ayes: Jeffrey Hoch, Jeffrey Lyng, James Blackwell, Steve Stogsdill
Nyes: None
Motion carried



Michelle Ward, Town Clerk

February 11, 2026

Next Meeting

March 10, 2026

*To see the full resolution go to townofwatsonny.com, Quick Links, Departments, Town Board, scroll down below Town Meeting Minutes and see Resolutions.

* Local Law will be posted to website after acceptance from the State.