

**REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
@ The Russell Town Hall @ 6:00pm  
8/19/2025**

**BOARD:**

Supervisor Matthews - Present  
Councilor Burnham - Present  
Councilor Kerr - Present  
Councilor Beachard – Present  
Councilor Rowe – Present  
Highway Superintendent Meilleur - Present  
Town Clerk Darcie Cross – Present

**GUESTS:**

Anthony Cross  
Larry Denesha  
Robert Knox  
Morris Jeffries  
Connie Bessette  
Arlena Dafoe

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm by Supervisor Matthews.

**PUBLIC DISCUSSION:**

- Morris Jeffries inquired about finishing the ballfield bathrooms, a couple flags around town and the audit. Supervisor Matthews explained he had applied for a grant to finish the bathrooms and is waiting to see if we will receive it. All other supplies that have already been purchased are in storage until they can be worked on. Highway Superintendent Meilleur hasn't had any extra time to work on digging for the septic as they have been paving roads. Engineered plans for the septic will be needed before it can be worked on. As for the weathered & worn flags that are around town, one is someone's privately owned flag; another will be looked at. We will be placing an order in the future for more flags. As for the audit, the auditor will be working on the past audits in the next few weeks to get them finalized.
- Connie inquired about minimum wage that she had questioned a few months back. Supervisor Matthews will ask the Town Attorney again.

**ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES:**

A motion was made by Councilor Burnham Seconded by Councilor Rowe to accept the minutes from 7/15/25 as presented by the Town Clerk.

Ayes - 5            Matthews, Burnham, Beachard, Rowe, Kerr  
Nays - 0  
Motion carried.

**TOWN CLERK REPORT: 8-19-2025**

July 2025 Report:

Hunting license commission	3.32
2 Marriage License Comm	7.50
16 Certified copies	160.00
0 One Day Marriage Officiant	.00
14 dog licenses	71.00
5 Building Permits	125.00
0 Impoundment fees	.00
0 Community room fee	.00
Fax and copy money	<u>.00</u>
<b>Total Revenue to Supervisor</b>	<b>\$366.82</b>

Disbursed amounts:

DECALS (Sweep)	56.68
NYS Department of Health	22.50
Ag & Market (spay, neuter program)	<u>20.00</u>
<b>Total To State</b>	<b>\$99.18</b>

**Total Disbursed** **\$466.00**

A motion was made by Councilor Beachard and seconded by Councilor Kerr to accept the Clerk Report as presented.

Ayes - 5            Matthews, Burnham, Beachard, Rowe, Kerr  
 Nays - 0  
 Motion carried.

**BALL FIELD COMMITTEE:** None

**SUPERVISORS REPORT:**

**Supervisor's Report  
 August 19, 2025**

1- Financial Report

-Details of all income and expense transactions have been filed with the town clerk.

-Account balances as of August 19, 2025, for the general fund, highway fund, capital improvement fund, and streetlight fund have been filed with the town clerk.

Transfer \$75,000 from general fund account to Capital Improvement fund for CHIPS projects.

I spoke with Jon Tyson, he is with permission going to start court years 23 & 24 together, and do the town after, same 23 & 24.

I inadvertently deposited Ins. Check for the 550 repairs, I will need to cut one back out of A600 for \$2,545.98, actual check was \$2,764.25, body shop had to remove taxes.

Two checks for Suite Cote have not cleared, \$12,400.00 & \$103,749.95. They informed us they do not have; the bank has been notified and stop payment has been set. We will set up a new payment with them upon receiving information.

Dereck C Matthews  
Town Supervisor

- Discussed the project for the upper ballfield for the baselines so it would be ready for next year.
- Discussed the tax cap.

A motion was made by Councilor Rowe and seconded by Councilor Burnham accepting the supervisor's report.

Ayes - 5            Matthews, Burnham, Beachard, Rowe, Kerr

Nays - 0

Motion carried.

**LEGISLATURE REPORT:** Larry Denesha

- Discussed the Governor wanting a Nuclear Reactor in the north country. Larry had gone to a meeting in Alexandria Bay. He encourages everyone to do a little research. He believes we will end up having one probably in Fort Drum. They have passed a Resolution in support of the Nuclear Reactor.
- 2024 Audit was completed and there were no findings.
- Discussed St. Lawrence County facing a \$2.6 million shortfall for childcare in 2026. New York State Governor Kathy Hocu has allocated \$500 million additional for childcare assistance, and \$450 million of the \$500 million is going to New York City leaving \$50 million to be split between 57 counties. St. Lawrence County will be given about \$250,000.00.
- Discussed Workers Comp for 2026 is going to go down \$1,867.00.
- Discussed Bruce Green of St. Lawrence County Real Property, he will not seek reappointment. A search committee has been appointed to look for a replacement.
- Hazel Matthews will celebrate her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday on Friday August 29<sup>th</sup>. On Saturday August 30<sup>th</sup> they will be having a party for her at the DeGrasse Firehall with a parade at 2:00pm.
- Discussed the County Resolution for the Firefighters Exemption which property owned by an enrolled member shall be exempt 10% of assessed value on their county tax.
- The burn ban has been extended to August 22<sup>nd</sup>.

- Discussed the St. Lawrence County State Ready Inmates. As of Monday, the St. Lawrence Correctional Facility is at full capacity with 186 inmates. Out of those 186 inmates 18 are state ready. We now must board out inmates to other counties due to the state not taking theirs. The 18 state ready inmates cost \$300.00 a day, the state only reimburses \$100.00 a day in which St. Lawrence County taxpayers must cover the remaining \$200.00.
- Discussed the Emergency Services Director position which has been advertised, 12 people sent applications, out of the 12 people 8 were qualified and 4 were picked to interview on Friday August 29<sup>th</sup>.
- Arlena had a question about 911 addresses. On a recent fire call the address that was given led first responders to her address, the maps showed address given as hers. She was inquiring about who to contact to fix the problem.

A motion was made by Councilor Burnham and seconded by Councilor Kerr to accept the Legislature Report as presented.

Ayes - 5            Matthews, Burnham, Beachard, Rowe, Kerr  
Nays - 0  
Motion carried.

**FIRE DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

**Russell:** NONE  
**DeGrasse:** NONE

**HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT REPORT:** Richard Meilleur

**Highway Report**

**8/19/2025**

We have completed our paving projects on Lazy River Road, Dutton Road and Hill Road. We still need to put shoulder back up on Hill Road within the next couple of weeks. We paved a total of 4.3 miles.

We still have about \$158,000.00 remaining on our CHIPS allotment.

I submitted our CHIPS reimbursement to the State for Lazy River Road and Dutton Road. We should get a check for \$250,473.62 on or about September 16<sup>th</sup>.

I am hoping the County paving crew can get back to us to do Backus Road and Forbes Road. That is 1 more mile of paving, if not we will have to do it next year. That would still leave us about \$68,000.00 in CHIPS to roll over.

I would like to use that money to purchase a new pick up and plow as ours is 10 years old and is getting pretty worn out.

We have had a couple of major breakdowns. The 2020 Peterbilt Truck is at Champlain for clutch, rear main seal and a couple of minor leaks. It's been out of service for 2 weeks but should be back this week. The 2009 Pay Star has been out of service for 3 weeks. The emissions filter was bad, \$10,000.00 to replace. Parts should be here this week. We also changed 2 galvanized culverts on West Road and Pyrites Road as the bottoms were rotted out.

I would like to thank the men for another safe and productive month.

Thank you,

Richard Meilleur  
Highway Superintendent

- Connie wanted to thank Richard and his men for the work they have done on the Veteran's Wall site.
- Discussed getting quotes for truck & plow.

A motion was made by Councilor Beachard and seconded by Councilor Rowe to accept the Highway Superintendent Report as presented.

Ayes - 5            Matthews, Burnham, Beachard, Rowe, Kerr

Nays - 0

Motion carried.

**HIGHWAY COMMITTEE REPORT: NONE**

**AUDIT REPORT:**

Town of Russell  
P.O. Box 628 \* Russell N.Y. 13684  
Phone# (315) 347-2358 \* Fax # (315) 347-4244



Audit Committee Report  
August 19, 2025  
Audit

Dereck C Matthews  
Sandra Burnham

	Vouchers	Total
General	193-213	\$11,042.19
Highway	117-131	\$38,111.02
Street Lights	08	\$928.66
Capital Improvement	09	\$131,363.69

**RESOLUTION: # 58      **Audit Report- Dereck Matthews & Sandra Burnham****

A motion was made by Councilor Burnham and seconded by Councilor Kerr to authorize paying the bills.

Ayes - 5            Matthews, Burnham, Beachard, Rowe, Kerr  
 Nays - 0  
 Motion carried.

- Discussed contacting National Grid on using LED streetlights to bring costs down.
- Discussed TDS & Spectrum.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

- Arlena & Connie gave an update on the Veteran's Wall Brick applications & orders. They said there are over 100 names for bricks so far and more coming in daily. A Veterans Representative for St. Lawrence County that they have been working with has been very helpful and would like to come to the dedication ceremony. There are some veterans that do not have any family to purchase bricks for them and there are also some that cannot afford them. Arlena's church pastor offered to cover them as they have extra donations just for this purpose.
- Discussed the exemption for firefighters and emergency workers, 10% exemption for members that have been active for 2 years. Supervisor Matthews will contact the town attorney. He will see if the Fire Chief and Fire Dept. members will be available to attend our next board meeting to go over the details.

**NEW BUSINESS: NONE**

A motion was made by Councilor Beachard and seconded by Councilor Burnham to adjourn the meeting @ 7:00 pm

All were in favor.  
 Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by  
 Darcie Cross - Russell Town Clerk