

REGULAR BOARD MEETING
@ The Russell Town Hall @ 6:00pm
9/16/2025

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:

Greg Given
Larry Denesha
Robert Knox
Morris Jeffries
Connie Bessette
Arlena Dafoe
Scott Cardinell
Justin Franklin
Mark Willard
Karen LaPoint
Trudy Hendrickson

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

PUBLIC DISCUSSION:

- Councilor Rowe asked about raising fees for dogs running. She said they are still having a dog problem by her house. She said she had contacted the Town Justice and the Dog Warden. She was told they can't make the people pay the fees. Supervisor Matthews said he will get in contact with the Dog Warden.
- Morris Jeffries asked why the Town's roller was on the Web Road. Superintendent Meilleur said they have been doing work on the Web Road as it is a Town road and must be maintained.
- Connie Bessette asked when we start budget talks. The Enrich Group would like to ask for money from the Town for the events and activities that they do for the community. Arlena said they have submitted their nonprofit paperwork but have not received anything back yet. Supervisor Matthews said he will need to contact the Town Lawyer.
- Morris Jeffries said he thought we weren't purchasing flowers for the Town anymore and questioned why we weren't purchasing banners for our Veteran's. We had discussed previously we were downsizing flowers and that other towns require their community to purchase veteran's banners or the AMVET's/VFW's help purchase the banners. The Board said we are a small town and don't have the funds to purchase banners. Connie Bessette asked how much the flowers cost this year. Supervisor Matthews said he would have to check.
- Connie Bessette asked Supervisor Matthews again about the minimum wage. He said he had received an email with information and read what it had said and then Connie had read what she had. Supervisor Matthews will have the Town

**Supervisor's Report
September 16, 2025**

1- Financial Report

- Details of all income and expense transactions have been filed with the town clerk.
- Account balances as of September 16, 2025, for the general fund, highway fund, capital improvement fund, and streetlight fund have been filed with the town clerk.

Transfer \$14,193.30 from general fund account to Capital Improvement fund for CHIPS projects.

We received our CHIPS reimbursement of \$250,473.62 on 9-8-25.

The budget is coming along, I am on track to have preliminary by the end of the month if not before. We will need to schedule a meeting to go over.

Henry and I met with the Teamsters on the 9th to start negotiations.

Dereck C Matthews
Town Supervisor

- Tentative Budget Meeting set for 10/7/2025 5:00pm.

RESOLUTION: # 60 Budget Modification

A motion was made by Councilor Kerr and seconded by Councilor Burnham to authorize Supervisor Matthews to transfer \$14,193.30 from General Fund to Capital Improvement Fund for the CHIPS projects.

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

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

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

LEGISLATURE REPORT: Larry Denesha

- Passed a Resolution for Senior Citizen Exemption on Property Taxes. It is for real property owned by one or more people who must be 65 years of age or

older. They shall be exempt from county taxation to the extent of 50% of the assessed evaluation as long as the income of the owner or combined income of the owner does not exceed \$25,000.00. Current exemption is \$10,000.00.

- Discussed property taxes on delinquent properties that was recently in the news. He clarified that it was for remediate/contaminated/foreclosed properties not all delinquent properties. There are 19 properties, one hasn't been paid since 2003 and the taxes are up to \$85,486.00. The total cost of the 19 properties is over a quarter million dollars and all require remediation. Every county taxpayer ends up having to pay for these properties' delinquent taxes, shown on tax bills as chargebacks. We should show on next year's taxes. Should make sure the assessors are checking on non-recoverable lots.
- Discussed the Emergency Services Director position. They had 12 candidates, 8 were qualified, 4 were interviewed and 1 was chosen but not named yet.

A motion was made by Councilor Beachard 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: Robert Knox

- Election Day Spaghetti Dinner November 4th from 4pm-7pm.
- New roofing will be done this Saturday. They will do inside repairs sometime after.

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

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

Nays - 0

Motion carried.

DeGrasse: NONE

HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT REPORT: Richard Meilleur

Highway Report

9/16/2025

We have completed putting shoulders on our paving projects. We put shoulders back up on spots that needed it on several roads. We have also been screening sand

for winter. We have been cutting brush on Fordham Hill Road, Blanchard Hill Road and Dutton Road.

We are using the Town of Dekalb's bucket truck on shared services and the men are doing an excellent job of cutting back roadsides.

We still have 1 truck at Champlain Peterbilt. All other trucks and equipment are up and running for now.

- The total cost was \$20,000.00 but we will only have to pay \$4,000.00, the rest was covered by the extended warranty.

We should be receiving payments for the Pit Bridge project. One from FEMA anytime now for \$770,000.00 and in 3-4 weeks we should receive about \$130,000.00 from NYS. The money must stay in a separate account and can only be used on the Pit Bridge project.

- We will have to file an extension due to the job needing to be put out to bid, materials that will need to be ordered and delivery of materials.

I would like to retain Barton & Loguidice as our engineering firm for the remainder of the bridge project since they did the original design.

- He will get the contract with them and bring it to the next board meeting that will give us a price and breakdown per hour.

I received a quote on a new 2025 F-350 pickup truck with a plow and all safety lights. The price with everything included after \$3,300.00 off sticker price is \$65,237.50. I would like to get a Resolution to use that amount off our remaining CHIP balance of \$132,000.00.

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

Thank you,

Richard Meilleur
Highway Superintendent

**RESOLUTION: # 61 Purchase of a new 2025 F-350 Pickup Truck for
\$65,237.50**

A motion was made by Councilor Beachard and seconded by Councilor Kerr to authorize the purchase of a new 2025 F-350 pickup truck for \$65,237.50.

Therefore, the board has authorized the purchase of the new 2025 F-350 pickup truck.

Ayes - 5 Matthews, Burnham, Beachard, Rowe, Kerr
Nays - 0

Motion carried.

- Spoke to Richard Anson and he plans on starting the Veteran’s Wall work this weekend.

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

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

Nays - 0

Motion carried.

HIGHWAY COMMITTEE REPORT: Doug Beachard

- Discussed equipment, Peterbilt, the warranty, cutting brush, projects being done, they are pleased on what they have accomplished.

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

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

Nays - 0

Motion carried.

AUDIT REPORT:

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



Audit Committee Report
September 16, 2025
Audit

Dereck C Matthews
Sandra Burnham

	Vouchers	Total
General	214-236	\$19,300.66

Highway	132-145	\$34,512.85
Street Lights	09	\$932.89
Capital Improvement	10-11	\$14,193.30

RESOLUTION: # 62 **Audit Report- Dereck Matthews & Sandra Burnham**

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

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

- He is still trying to get in touch with the right people for National Grid on LED streetlights.

OLD BUSINESS:

- Councilor Burnham asked if the Supervisor had checked Spectrum. He is still waiting on a number back for Spectrum on internet.
- Discussed Firemen & Ambulance Tax Exemption with members of the Russell Vol. Fire Department. Only active members that have 5 years' probation making 60% active roll calls to receive exemption and they will need to have 25 years for lifetime exemption. The Fire Chief will provide the information needed every December to qualify. Supervisor Matthews will get it back to the attorney to get it drawn up, finalized, go over again to make sure everything is correct and hopefully have everything in place for the beginning of the year.
- Arlena asked about sending payment for a flag & flagpole they have found for the Veteran's Wall. They will be providing an invoice for payment.
- Supervisor Matthews will store the bricks that have come in at his office.

NEW BUSINESS:

- On Tuesday October 7th at 5:00pm the Board will have a Tentative Budget Workshop.
- Discussed facility use for the Community Room due to it not being cleaned after an event. Supervisor Matthews would like to purchase a keypad for the room instead of a key lock. It would eliminate keys being given out and codes can be changed for different events. There is a \$25.00 deposit if the applicant is within the Town of Russell and there is a \$25.00 non-refundable fee for applicants that are not within the Town of Russell. If the facility is left a mess, the deposit will be

kept if local, and applicant will be warned. If it happens a second time the applicant will be banned for future use of the facility.

Executive Session to discuss labor:

A motion was made by Councilor Burnham and seconded by Councilor Kerr to go into executive session @7:30pm.

A motion was made by Councilor Burnham and seconded by Councilor Kerr to come out of executive session @7:48pm.

RESOLUTION: # 63 **Purchase of New Flags with hardware & Replacement Bulbs for Christmas Decorations**

A motion was made by Councilor Burnham and seconded by Councilor Kerr to authorize the purchase of new Flags with hardware and replacement bulbs for Christmas in the amount of \$1,261.00.

Therefore, the board has authorized the purchase of the new flags, hardware and replacement Christmas bulbs.

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

Nays - 0

Motion carried.

A motion was made by Councilor Beachard and seconded by Councilor Burnham to adjourn the meeting @7:48pm

All were in favor.

Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by
Darcie Cross - Russell Town Clerk