

VOTE: AYES(3): Holdridge, Becker, Courtenay, ABSENT(1): Ardisana

ADOPTED

SUMMARY OF BILLS

Supervisor Holdridge reported that the Town would be paying bills in the amount of \$299,076.92 for the last abstract.

PROCLAMATION AND TREE DEDICATION FOR LESLIE SMITH

Supervisor Holdridge presented a proclamation honoring Leslie Smith, partner of Town Historian Cliff Patrick, for her long-standing service to the Chester community. The proclamation highlighted her service on the Chester Historical Society and the Chester Conservation Advisory Council, and her dedication, advice, information, activism, and volunteerism that have directly benefited Chester residents.

Leslie Smith's sons were present to receive the proclamation. The proclamation included the dedication of a tree at Knapp's View in her honor.

TOWN OF CHESTER

A PROCLAMATION HONORING LESLIE SMITH

December 10th, 2025

WHEREAS, Leslie Smith has been a long-standing and honorable member of the Chester community;
and

WHEREAS, Leslie Smith has served on organizations such as the Chester Historical Society and the Chester Conservation Advisory Council; and

WHEREAS, Leslie Smith's dedication, advice, information, activism, and volunteerism have directly benefited and enriched the lives of Chester's residents; and

WHEREAS, Leslie Smith is a model representation of what it means to be a part of a community.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Board of Chester formally recognizes Leslie Smith's service to Chester with this official proclamation and a dedication of a tree at Knapp's View.

***TOWN OF CHESTER,
ORANGE COUNTY, NEW YORK***

MOTION TO accept the proclamation and tree dedication was made by Council Member Courtenay, seconded by Council Member Becker, and approved unanimously.

VOTE: AYES(3): Holdridge, Becker, Courtenay, ABSENT(1): Ardisana

ADOPTED

TREE DEDICATION FOR EJ SZULWACH

Supervisor Holdridge spoke about EJ Szulwach's significant contributions to the Town, particularly his role in establishing the Climate Change Advisory Committee which later became the Conservation Advisory Council. He described EJ as someone who has and will continue to leave a lasting mark on Chester.

MOTION TO dedicate a tree at Knapp's View to EJ Szulwach was made by Council Member Courtenay, seconded by Council Member Becker, and approved unanimously.

VOTE: AYES(3): Holdridge, Becker, Courtenay, ABSENT(1): Ardisana

ADOPTED

EJ expressed appreciation for the honor and, humorously, asked if the tree was one he would be able to hug. Supervisor Holdridge confirmed it was and mentioned that formal ceremonies with plaques for all tree dedications would take place in the spring when weather conditions are better.

TREE DEDICATION FOR TRACY SCHUH

Supervisor Holdridge recognized Tracy Schuh for her extensive contributions to Chester, including starting the Preservation Collective, helping secure Knapp's View as Town property, and her activism with the Planning Board, Town Board, and two Comprehensive Plan Committees. He emphasized how Tracy's activism has positively shaped the Town.

MOTION TO dedicate a tree at Knapp's View to Tracy Schuh was made by Council Member Courtenay, seconded by Council Member Becker, and approved unanimously.

VOTE: AYES(3): Holdridge, Becker, Courtenay, ABSENT(1): Ardisana

ADOPTED

Council Members Becker and Courtenay added their appreciation for both honorees' commitment to the community, with Council Member Courtenay specifically mentioning Tracy's persistence with the preservation bill that is now coming to fruition after six years.

PROCLAMATION FOR ERIKA ALBAN

Supervisor Holdridge presented a proclamation honoring Erika Alban for her dedication to preserving Chester's history. The proclamation recognized her work with the Chester Historical Society on an exhibit honoring George Seely and the Seely family, one of Chester's prominent historical families. It highlighted how her efforts have brought greater recognition to the Seely family's role in shaping the community and ensured future generations will have access to the Town's history.

TOWN OF CHESTER

A PROCLAMATION HONORING ERIKA ALBAN

December 10th, 2025

WHEREAS, Erika Alban has been a dedicated contributor to the preservation and celebration of Chester's rich history; and

WHEREAS, Erika Alban recently collaborated with the Chester Historical Society to create an exhibit honoring George Seely and the Seely Family, one of Chester's prominent historical families; and

WHEREAS, the Seely Family has long been connected to Chester's heritage, including the naming of Seely Brook, and Erika Alban's efforts have brought greater recognition to their role in shaping our community; and

WHEREAS, Erika Alban has worked to ensure that future generations of Chester residents have access to stories, artifacts, and exhibits that deepen their understanding of our town's history; and

WHEREAS, Erika Alban's contributions exemplify the value of community service, historical preservation, and education in strengthening civic pride; and

WHEREAS, Erika Alban stands as an example of how individual dedication can enhance the collective memory and cultural fabric of the Town of Chester.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Board of Chester formally recognizes and thanks Erika Alban for her commitment to preserving and promoting Chester’s history through her work with the Chester Historical Society and the Seely Family exhibit.

***TOWN OF CHESTER,
ORANGE COUNTY, NEW YORK***

MOTION TO accept the proclamation was made by Council Member Becker, seconded by Council Member Courtenay, and approved unanimously.

VOTE: AYES(3): Holdridge, Becker, Courtenay, ABSENT(1): Ardisana **ADOPTED**

PUBLIC HEARING ON LOCAL LAW TO RESCIND TAX CAP OVERRIDE

MOTION TO open the public hearing at 7:45pm on Introductory Local Law #12 of 2025, A Local Law to Rescind Local Law 12 of 2025, a Local Law to Override the Tax Levy Limit Established in General Municipal Law § 3-C was made by Council Member Becker, seconded by Council Member Courtenay, and approved unanimously.

VOTE: AYES(3): Holdridge, Becker, Courtenay, ABSENT(1): Ardisana **ADOPTED**

Supervisor Holdridge explained that many Towns pass a local law allowing for a tax cap override as a precautionary measure, but since the Town Board was able to keep the tax increase below the tax cap, there was no need for the override. He noted that taxes went slightly up for Town residents and slightly down for Village residents with the current budget.

No comments were received from the public or online.

MOTION TO close the public hearing at 7:46pm was made by Council Member Courtenay, seconded by Council Member Becker, and approved unanimously.

VOTE: AYES(3): Holdridge, Becker, Courtenay, ABSENT(1): Ardisana **ADOPTED**

Town Attorney Cassidy read the resolution to rescind Local Law 11 of 2025, which had authorized an override of the tax levy limit. The resolution stated that the Town Board had adopted a budget that did not exceed the tax levy limit and declared the action a Type 2 action under SEQRA requiring no environmental review.

**TOWN OF CHESTER
TOWN BOARD**

**RESOLUTION TO ADOPT LOCAL LAW 13 OF 2025,
A LOCAL LAW TO RESCIND LOCAL LAW 12 OF 2025, A LOCAL LAW TO OVERRIDE THE TAX LEVY
LIMIT ESTABLISHED
IN GENERAL MUNICIPAL LAW § 3-C**

WHEREAS, the Town Board previously adopted Local Law 12 of 2025 to authorize an override to the Tax Levy Limit established in General Municipal Law § 3-C on October 22, 2025; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board has adopted a budget that does not exceed the Tax Levy Limit and wishes to rescind Local Law 12 of 2025.

WHEREAS, the Town Board of the Town of Chester introduced Introductory Local Law 12 of 2025, entitled A Local Law to Rescind Local Law 12 of 2025, a Local Law to Override the Tax Levy Limit Established in General Municipal Law §3-C on November 12, 2025.

WHEREAS, the Town Board hereby declared lead agency and further declare that this action is a “Type II” action under the State Environmental Quality Review Act and no further environmental review was required.

WHEREAS that a duly noticed public hearing was held on December 10, 2025; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Board of the Town of Chester hereby adopts Introductory Local Law 12 of 2025, entitled A Local Law to Rescind Local Law 12 of 2025, a Local Law to Override the Tax Levy Limit Established in General Municipal Law §3-C as Local Law 13 of 2025; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Town Clerk shall cause said local law to be filed with the New York Secretary of State.

MOTION TO adopt Local Law 13 of 2025, A Local Law to Rescind Local Law 12 Of 2025, A Local Law To Override The Tax Levy Limit Established In General Municipal Law § 3-C was made by Council Member Becker, seconded by Council Member Courtenay, and passed unanimously.

VOTE: AYES(3): Holdridge, Becker, Courtenay, ABSENT(1): Ardisana **ADOPTED**

LOCAL LAW #13 OF 2025 , A LOCAL LAW TO RESCIND LOCAL LAW 12 OF 2025, A LOCAL LAW TO OVERRIDE THE TAX LEVY LIMIT ESTABLISHED IN GENERAL MUNICIPAL LAW § 3-C

BE IT ENACTED, by the Town of Chester, Town Board as follows: Section 1.

Legislative Intent.

It is the intent of this local law to rescind Local Law 12 of 2025, which overrode the limit on the amount of real property taxes that may be levied by the Town of Chester pursuant to General Municipal Law § 3-c, and allowed the Town of Chester Town Board to adopt a budget for the fiscal year 2026 that requires a real property tax levy in excess of the “tax levy limit” as defined by General Municipal Law §3-c, as such override is unnecessary because the Town has adopted a budget which does not exceed the Tax Cap.

Section 2. Rescind Tax Levy Limit Override – Budget Authorization.

The Town Board of the Town of Chester hereby rescinds Local Law 12 of 2025. Section 4.

Severability.

If any clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision, or part of this Local Law or the application thereof to any person, firm or corporation, or circumstance, shall be adjudged by any court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid or unconstitutional, such order or judgment shall not affect, impair, or invalidate the remainder thereof , but shall be confined in its operation to the clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision, or part of this Local Law or in its application to the person, individual, firm or corporation or circumstance, directly involved in the controversy in which such judgment or order shall be rendered.

Section 5. Effective Date.

This local law shall take effect immediately upon filing with the Secretary of State.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Supervisor Holdridge read the following written comment from Merryl Newler regarding cellular endpoints for water meters.

“Good evening, members of the Chester Town Board.

My name is Merryl Newler and I live on Lincoln Road in the Lake Hill Farms section of Chester.

I urge you in the strongest possible terms to reject any opt-out fee for residents who choose to keep their existing analog water meters instead of accepting the new cellular endpoints.

These devices use the cellular network to send water-usage data. Because they are communicating with distant cell towers, they introduce two legitimate concerns that many of us simply do not want in or on our homes:

- **Health:** The radiofrequency radiation emitted by cellular endpoints has been classified by the World Health Organization as a Class 2B possible carcinogen. Thousands of peer-reviewed studies document biological effects at levels far below current FCC guidelines, effects that include oxidative stress, DNA damage, and neurological symptoms. No resident should be forced to host a chronic RF source, or be punished financially for refusing one.
- **Privacy:** Cellular endpoints create a real-time profile of household water use that can reveal when we wake up, when we leave for work, when children are home alone, and even medical conditions that require frequent water use. Once this data leaves the meter on the cellular network, we have no control over who sees it or how long it is retained.

The town has argued that manual reading is costly. That claim does not hold up. A meter reader can accurately read an analog dial in roughly one minute. (I actually saw him do it in about 5 seconds last week when he was reading the meters on my street.) In a town the size of Chester, the added labor is negligible compared to the burden of charging residents hundreds of dollars a year indefinitely for exercising a basic right to say no.

This fee is also strikingly unfair in its timing. Residents in the Lake Hill Farms area are receiving cellular endpoints years ahead of the Sugar Loaf area. That means Lake Hill Farms families would be forced to start paying the opt-out penalty immediately, while Sugar Loaf residents enjoy four or five more years of no fee and no cellular transmitter. It is simply wrong to make one neighborhood subsidize the town's rollout schedule.

Most importantly, New York State is on the verge of settling this issue for us. Assembly Bill A3978 and its Senate companion explicitly prohibit utilities, including municipal water systems, from imposing opt-out fees or ongoing charges for customers who decline wireless transmitting devices. The legislature has recognized that choice should be free, not taxed. Chester has the opportunity tonight to get ahead of the law and do the right thing voluntarily.

Please do not turn a simple, safe analog meter into a revenue stream. Reject any opt-out fee for cellular endpoints. Respect our health, protect our privacy, ensure fairness across all neighborhoods, and honor the direction Albany is already taking.

Supervisor Holdridge clarified that the installation of all endpoints should be completed within the next two years, and that while a bill has been proposed in Albany prohibiting opt-out fees, it has not yet been voted on.

REPORTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Council Member Reports:

Council Member Courtenay stated he had no report due to the volume of agenda items.

Council Member Becker reported on a recent meeting with the Village of Chester about shared services and congratulated Tom Bell on his election to the mayor's position. He also expressed concern about an 8.9% increase in health insurance costs for Town employees in 2026, noting the significant impact on the Town's budget.

Council Member Becker also thanked Chris Cox from the water department for helping a resident with a water line issue, as mentioned in a letter from Police Officer Chambers. Supervisor Holdridge added that Officer Chambers described Chris as going "above and beyond" in assisting the resident.

Supervisor Holdridge acknowledged the challenge of rising personnel costs, especially benefits, while trying to keep taxes low. He thanked his office staff for helping prepare a budget that anticipates such increases.

Supervisor Holdridge then provided brief summaries of various department reports:

- Historian's Report: Town Historian Cliff Patrick reported reduced activity due to family health issues.
- EMS Report: There were 84 total dispatches, 83 total responses, 63 transports, and one instance where no unit was available. Average response time for the dedicated Chester unit was 8 minutes and 35 seconds. Full report available on chester-ny.gov
- Water Department: Routine maintenance was performed throughout the Town. Full report available on chester-ny.gov
- Building Department: There were 25 new building permits, 23 closed permits, and 46 inspections.
- Senior Independence Program: Two neighbors were assisted by two volunteers, with a total of five services and about 2.5 hours in November. Full report available on chester-ny.gov
- Police Department: There were 246 calls for service, just under 16,000 miles of road patrolled, 6 arrests, and numerous security checks and other activities. Full report available on chester-ny.gov
- Animal Control: Three calls were for loose, lost, or found dogs; two calls were for injured or deceased deer; and one call was for a barking dog. Full report available on chester-ny.gov

Supervisor Holdridge also reported:

- Congregate dining for seniors has been successful, and he thanked those involved.
- Two new historical markers were installed in Sugar Loaf. He thanked Lydia Cuadros for her great work.
- Productive conversations were ongoing with the Village.
- A meeting was held with a union representative involved with the future I-86 project.
- Along with Council Member Courtenay, PBA negotiations were continuing.
- The tree lighting in the Village was a success. He thanked the Fire Department, Bellvale Community and Song of the Valley for their contributions.

Town Clerk Zappala announced several upcoming events:

- Trout Brook is selling Christmas trees.
- Trout Brook is doing a candy cane run for Operation Toy Train on December 13.
- Breakfast with Santa events at Sugar Loaf on December 14 and Walton Engine and Hose on December 21.

Supervisor Holdridge added additional announcements:

- Voices of Sugar Loaf – An Evening of Storytelling, December 12, 2025, 7:00pm at Sugar Loaf Methodist Church.
- A vote on the new sports complex proposed by the Chester school district on December 16.
- Annual menorah lighting at the Chester Town Hall on December 16 at 6 PM.
- Sugar Loaf menorah lighting on December 20 at 5:45 PM.
- Sugar Loaf holiday festival tree lighting on December 13 at 4:30 PM.
- Bellvale community tree lighting on December 13 at 7 PM.

He concluded by thanking all the professional services, elected officials, and employees who make the Town run effectively.

RESOLUTION TO ACCEPT THE 2025-26 STOP-DWI IMA WITH ORANGE COUNTY

MOTION TO accept the STOP-DWI IMA with Orange County was made by Council Member Courtenay, seconded by Council Member Becker, and approved unanimously.

VOTE: AYES(3): Holdridge, Becker, Courtenay, ABSENT(1): Ardisana

ADOPTED

RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE THE TOWN SUPERVISOR TO SIGN THE 2026 EMPLOYEE SELF SERVICE CONTRACT

Neil Meyer explained that the Employee Self-Service system would replace PayClock and allow employees to check their available time, enter their work hours, and make time-off requests that managers could approve, streamlining the process and saving administrative time.

MOTION TO authorize the Town Supervisor to sign the 2026 Employee Self-Service contract for \$4,000 was made by Council Member Becker, seconded by Council Member Courtenay, and approved unanimously.

VOTE: AYES(3): Holdridge, Becker, Courtenay, ABSENT(1): Ardisana **ADOPTED**

RESOLUTION TO ACCEPT THE RESIGNATION OF OFFICER NIGEL BALGOBIN

MOTION TO accept the resignation of Officer Nigel Balgobin, effective November 1, 2025, was made by Council Member Courtenay, seconded by Council Member Becker, and approved unanimously.

VOTE: AYES(3): Holdridge, Becker, Courtenay, ABSENT(1): Ardisana **ADOPTED**

Supervisor Holdridge thanked the officer for his service to the Town.

RESOLUTION TO ALLOCATE \$1,633.01 TO RESIDENT VEHICLE DAMAGE

Supervisor Holdridge explained that a loose water valve shutoff cap damaged a resident's vehicle on November 6, and an estimate was submitted for repairs. Town Attorney Cassidy noted that this would be subject to a signed release that she would draft.

MOTION TO allocate \$1,633.01 to repair the resident's vehicle damage, subject to a signed release, was made by Council Member Courtenay, seconded by Council Member Becker, and approved unanimously.

VOTE: AYES(3): Holdridge, Becker, Courtenay, ABSENT(1): Ardisana **ADOPTED**

INTRODUCTION OF LOCAL LAW - WATER METER CELLULAR ENDPOINT OPT-OUT

Town Attorney Cassidy read the resolution introducing Local Law 13 of 2025 regarding opting out of the installation of cellular endpoints for water meters. The resolution declared the Town Board as lead agency for SEQRA review and scheduled a public hearing for January 14, 2026, at 6:45 PM.

TOWN OF CHESTER
TOWN BOARD

RESOLUTION TO INTRODUCE INTRODUCTORY LOCAL LAW 13 OF 2025, A LOCAL LAW TO OPT OUT OF
INSTALLATION OF CELLULAR ENDPOINTS FOR WATER METERS

WHEREAS, The Town of Chester utilizes cellular endpoint technology to collect water meter reading data to reduce required manpower and for the immediate detection of water leaks. The Town Board recognizes that there are some who are concerned as to potential ill effects of such technology. While the Town Board has not seen such ill effects, the Town Board desires to provide property owners with the option of not using cellular end point technology for collecting water meter data.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that INTRODUCTORY LOCAL LAW 13 OF 2025, A LOCAL LAW TO OPT OUT OF INSTALLATION OF CELLULAR ENDPOINTS FOR WATER METERS is hereby introduced before the Town Board of the Town of Chester;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of the aforesaid introductory local law be laid upon the desk of each member of the Board, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Town Board of the Town of Chester declares itself to be Lead Agency for purposes of review under the NYS Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQR) and further declares that the proposed local law is an unlisted action.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a public hearing shall be held on January 14, 2026 at 6:45 P.M. or as soon thereafter as may be heard at Town of Chester Town Hall, 1786 Kings Highway, Chester, NY 10918. The Town Clerk shall cause to be published public notice in the official newspaper as is required by law.

MOTION TO introduce Introductory Local Law 13 Of 2025, A Local Law To Opt Out Of Installation Of Cellular Endpoints For Water Meters and set the public hearing was made by Council Member Courtenay, seconded by Council Member Becker, and approved unanimously.

VOTE: AYES(3): Holdridge, Becker, Courtenay, ABSENT(1): Ardisana

ADOPTED

TOWN OF CHESTER
TOWN BOARD

INTRODUCTORY LOCAL LAW 13 OF 2025, A LOCAL LAW TO OPT OUT OF INSTALLATION OF CELLULAR
ENDPOINTS FOR WATER METERS

BE IT ENACTED, by the Town Board of the Town of Chester as follows:

Section 1. Legislative Intent.

The Town of Chester utilizes cellular endpoint technology to collect water meter reading data to reduce required manpower and for the immediate detection of water leaks. The Town Board recognizes that there are some who are concerned as to potential ill effects of such technology. While the Town Board has not seen such ill effects, the Town Board desires to provide property owners with the option of not using cellular end point technology for collecting water meter data.

Section 2. Chapter 95 of the Town of Chester Town Code, entitled “Water”, section 3, entitled “Meters” is hereby amended to read as follows:

A. All water supplied to residential users in districts shall be through water meters approved by the Town Board. There shall be no tampering with water meters or breaking of meter seals with the intent to slow, stop or alter the readings of the meter. All water meters shall be the property of the Town of Chester, and any damage to a meter shall be reported to the Town Clerk within five days of such damage. The owner of the premises in which a water meter is installed shall be liable for any and all damage to said meter when such damage is either intentionally caused or caused by the negligence of the owner, occupant, agent or employee.

B. Property owners elect to have meters read manually by providing written notice to the Town Clerk. Property owners who elect to have their water meter read manually shall be charged an opt out fee on each water bill. Such opt out fee shall be established by resolution of the Town Board from time to time and shall be subject to § 95-8, “Water rates; nonpayment of bills”.

Section 3. Chapter 95 of the Town of Chester Town Code, entitled “Water”, section 7, entitled “Promulgation of rules and regulations authorized” is hereby amended to read as follows:

The Town Board shall have the right to promulgate rules, regulations or restrictions by resolution relating to the operation of the water district, including restrictions on the use of water and the prohibition of water for certain purposes if the Town Board finds that circumstances exist which necessitate the imposition of such regulations and/or prohibitions. The Town Board may further promulgate rules, regulations or restrictions by resolution concerning the implementation of advancing technology and the means of property owners opting out of the use of such technology. The Town Board shall publish such rules, regulations or restrictions in the official Town newspaper as soon as possible after their adoption and in no event more than five days after their effective date. The rules, regulations or restrictions shall have the same force and effect as if they were a part of this article.

Section 4. Authority.

This local law is adopted pursuant to section 10 of the Statute of Local Governments which provides local governments the power “to adopt, amend and repeal ordinances, resolutions and rules and regulations in the exercise of its functions, powers and duties”.

Section 5. Severability.

If any clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision, or part of this Local Law or the application thereof to any person, firm or corporation, or circumstance, shall be adjusted by any court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid or unconstitutional, such order or judgment shall not affect, impair, or invalidate the remainder thereof, but shall be confined in its operation to the clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision, or part of this Local Law or in its application to the person, individual, firm or corporation or circumstance, directly involved in the controversy in which such judgment or order shall be rendered.

Section 6. Effective Date.

This local law shall take effect upon filing with the Secretary of State.

INTRODUCTION OF LOCAL LAW AMENDING ARTICLE 81 "STREET EXCAVATIONS; DRIVEWAYS" TO PROVIDE FOR THE REGULATION AND MAINTENANCE OF SIDEWALKS

Town Attorney Cassidy read the resolution introducing Local Law 14 of 2025 to amend Chapter 81 to provide for the regulation and maintenance of sidewalks by adjoining property owners. The resolution declared the Town Board as lead agency for SEQRA review and scheduled a public hearing for January 14, 2026, at 6:45pm.

TOWN OF CHESTER
TOWN BOARD

RESOLUTION TO INTRODUCE INTRODUCTORY LOCAL LAW 14 OF 2025, A LOCAL LAW TO AMEND CHAPTER 81, "STREET EXCAVATIONS; DRIVEWAYS" TO PROVIDE FOR THE REGULATION AND MAINTENANCE OF SIDEWALKS

WHEREAS, The Town Board of the Town of Chester desires to provide a regulatory framework for the maintenance of sidewalks by adjoining property owners and for a mechanism should such maintenance not occur in a timely manner for the health, safety and welfare of the public.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that INTRODUCTORY LOCAL LAW 14 OF 2025, A LOCAL LAW TO AMEND CHAPTER 81, "STREET EXCAVATIONS; DRIVEWAYS" TO PROVIDE FOR THE REGULATION AND MAINTENANCE OF SIDEWALKS is hereby introduced before the Town Board of the Town of Chester;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of the aforesaid introductory local law be laid upon the desk of each member of the Board, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Town Board of the Town of Chester declares itself to be Lead Agency for purposes of review under the NYS Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQR) and further declares that the proposed local law is an unlisted action.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a public hearing shall be held on January 14, 2026 at 6:45 P.M. or as soon thereafter as may be heard at Town of Chester Town Hall, 1786 Kings Highway, Chester, NY 10918. The Town Clerk shall cause to be published public notice in the official newspaper as is required by law.

MOTION TO introduce Introductory Local Law 14 Of 2025, A Local Law To Amend Chapter 81, "Street Excavations; Driveways" To Provide For The Regulation And Maintenance Of Sidewalks and set the public hearing was made by Council Member Becker, seconded by Council Member Courtenay, and approved unanimously.

VOTE: AYES(3): Holdridge, Becker, Courtenay, ABSENT(1): Ardisana

ADOPTED

TOWN OF CHESTER
TOWN BOARD

INTRODUCTORY LOCAL LAW 14 OF 2025,
A LOCAL LAW TO AMEND CHAPTER 81, "STREET EXCAVATIONS; DRIVEWAYS" TO PROVIDE FOR THE
REGULATION AND MAINTENANCE OF SIDEWALKS

BE IT ENACTED by the Town Board of the Town of Chester as follows:

Section 1. Legislative Intent

The Town Board of the Town of Chester desires to provide a regulatory framework for the maintenance of sidewalks by adjoining property owners and for a mechanism should such maintenance not occur in a timely manner for the health, safety and welfare of the public.

Section 2. Article 81, entitled "Street Excavations, Driveways" is hereby amended as follows:

Chapter 81 shall be renamed "Streets and Sidewalks"

A new Article IV, entitled "Maintenance of Sidewalks" shall be inserted to read as follows:

§ 81-19 – Responsibility for clearing and maintenance of sidewalks.

The owner or occupant of a property, whether occupied or not, in the Town shall keep any sidewalk adjoining such property free from the obstruction of snow and ice and free from dirt, filth and weeds or other obstructions including personal property and shall keep and maintain such sidewalk in safe and proper condition. No owner or occupant of a house or building adjacent to a street or sidewalk of the Town shall allow snow, ice or water to accumulate on such house or building, nor shall the owner or occupant of a house or building allow snow, ice or water to fall from such building upon a street or sidewalk of the Town. Leaders or drains erected to the side of a house or building shall be so placed that a flow of water therefrom shall not run over a street or sidewalk of the Town.

A. It shall be the duty of the owner or occupant of a property to cause the sidewalk adjacent thereto to be cleared of snow and ice within 24 hours after snow shall cease falling.

B. In case any sidewalk shall have ice thereon and the severity of weather shall be such that the same cannot be removed, it shall be the duty of such owner or occupant of a house or building adjacent to said sidewalk to deposit sufficient quantities of salt, sand or some equally good substance as will render the passage of pedestrians thereon free from danger of slipping and falling.

C. In the event an obstruction is due to weeds, dirt, debris or other items unrelated to snow, the Property Owner or Occupant shall remove such items within 5 calendar days of receiving a written notice by the Highway Department, Chester Police Department or Code Enforcement Officer.

§ 81-20 Removal by the Town

In the event snow or ice is not cleared from a sidewalk within 24 hours of the conclusion of a weather event, the Highway Department shall remove such snow and ice and shall apply sand or salt to the sidewalk. In the event weeds, dirt, debris or other items unrelated to snow are not removed within 5 days as per § 81-19(C), the Highway Department shall remove such matter. Removal by the Town of Chester shall not operate to excuse the property owner from maintaining sidewalks as per § 81-19.

§ 81-21 Cost of Removal by the Town

The Highway Superintendent shall notify the Town Clerk of any expense incurred by the quantity and rate of labor, equipment and materials used for any such removal. The Town Clerk shall promptly present to the owner and the cost of such removal shall be billed to the property owner as set forth on the last assessment roll of the Town of Chester. If not paid within 30 days, the cost thereof shall be assessed against the property and become a lien thereon, collectible in the same manner as delinquent Town taxes.

§ 81-22 Hearing as to Costs

A property owner may request a hearing before the Town Board to determine the justness of the actual expense of removal within 30 days of receiving notice of the charge.

The existing Article IV, entitled "Penalties" shall be renumbered as Article V.

§ 81-19, entitled “Penalties for offenses” shall be renumbered to § 81-23.

In all other respects, Chapter 81 shall remain unchanged.

Section 3. Authority.

This local law is adopted pursuant to the authority set forth in Town Law §§ 130(4) and 130(7).

Section 5. Severability.

If any clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision, or part of this Local Law or the application thereof to any person, firm or corporation, or circumstance, shall be adjusted by any court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid or unconstitutional, such order or judgment shall not affect, impair, or invalidate the remainder thereof, but shall be confined in its operation to the clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision, or part of this Local Law or in its application to the person, individual, firm or corporation or circumstance, directly involved in the controversy in which such judgment or order shall be rendered.

Section 6. Effective Date.

This local law shall take effect upon filing with the Secretary of State.

RESOLUTION TO ACCEPT RESIGNATION OF GIUSEPPE CASSARA FROM THE PARKS ADVISORY BOARD AND PLANNING BOARD

MOTION TO accept the resignation of Giuseppe Cassara from the Parks Advisory Board and Planning Board was made by Council Member Courtenay, seconded by Council Member Becker, and approved unanimously.

VOTE: AYES(3): Holdridge, Becker, Courtenay, ABSENT(1): Ardisana ADOPTED

Supervisor Holdridge thanked Giuseppe for his work on these Boards and looked forward to working with him in the new year.

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE ORANGE COUNTY BIKEWAY VISION

Supervisor Holdridge read the resolution supporting the Orange County Bikeway Vision Plan, which seeks to establish a non-motorized transportation system throughout Orange County. The resolution stated that the bikeway supports Orange County's goals of safe, convenient, affordable, and comfortable transportation options while honoring key priorities of safety, mobility, economic competitiveness, and equity and access.

TOWN OF CHESTER

A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE ORANGE COUNTY BIKEWAY VISION

WHEREAS, the County of Orange is seeking to promote and encourage a “Bikeway Vision” throughout the County, and

WHEREAS, this vision is outlined in a publication entitled “Orange County Bikeway Vision Plan” prepared by the Orange County Department of Planning, dated July 25, 2023; and

WHEREAS, this Bikeway Vision seeks to establish a non-motorized transportation system throughout Orange County, NY, that provides a mode for the most vulnerable users of our roadways to travel and recreate safely and stress-free both within communities and over long distances; and

WHEREAS, the development of this Bikeway supports Orange County’s overall goals of safe, convenient, affordable, and comfortable transportation options for all residents and encourages economic development throughout the County while honoring four key priorities for non- motorized development: (a) Safety, (b) Mobility, (c) Economic Competitiveness, and (d) Equity & Access; and

WHEREAS, interconnectivity within Orange County and with adjoining municipalities is a desirable outcome to ensure these key priorities are achieved; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board of the Town of Chester wishes to go on record expressing their support for the Bikeway Vision as outlined by the County of Orange in the aforementioned publication.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town board of the Town of Chester expresses their unanimous and complete support for the implementation of the Bikeway Vision described hereinabove.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this Resolution shall be forwarded to Orange County so that the support of the Town of Chester for the establishment of the Bikeway may be made known to all interested parties.

MOTION TO approve the resolution was made by Supervisor Holdridge, seconded by Council Member Courtenay, and approved unanimously.

VOTE: AYES(3): Holdridge, Becker, Courtenay, ABSENT(1): Ardisana

ADOPTED

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF RENAMING "CAMP LAGUARDIA" TO "GENERAL SETH MARVIN MEMORIAL PARK"

Supervisor Holdridge read a detailed resolution supporting the renaming of Camp LaGuardia to General Seth Marvin Memorial Park. The resolution described the historical significance of the property, which was originally part of a 258-acre tract gifted in 1765 by Elihu Marvin to his son, Seth Marvin. It highlighted General Marvin's service as an officer in the Continental Army during the American Revolution, his later role as a brigadier general, his terms in the New York State Assembly, and his contributions to public education and civic life in Orange County. The property includes the Marvin family cemetery, where several veterans are interred.

TOWN OF CHESTER

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF RENAMING "CAMP LAGUARDIA" TO "GENERAL SETH MARVIN MEMORIAL PARK"

WHEREAS, the County of Orange is the owner of the property commonly known as "Camp LaGuardia," a site with deep historical roots located in the Town of Blooming Grove and the Town of Chester; and

WHEREAS, this parcel of land was originally part of a 258-acre tract gifted in 1765 by Elihu Marvin to his son, Seth Marvin, a prominent patriot and public servant of the Town of Blooming Grove and the County of Orange; and

WHEREAS, General Seth Marvin and members of his family played a critical role in the founding and defense of both the Town of Blooming Grove and the United States of America, with General Marvin serving as an officer in the Continental Army during the American Revolution, later as a Brigadier General, a member of the New York State Assembly for ten terms, a commissioner on the New York- Pennsylvania boundary line, and an early supporter of public education and civic life in County of Orange; and

WHEREAS, the property includes the Marvin Family Cemetery, the final resting place of at least four United States veterans, including:

- **General Seth Marvin, American Revolution**
- **Captain Archibald Little, American Revolution**
- **Ensign Seth Marvin Jr., War of 1812**
- **Private Nathan Helme, United States Army**

and numerous other family members whose contributions shaped Orange County's early history; and

WHEREAS, since 2021, local volunteers, descendants, and historians have worked to restore and maintain this cemetery, educating the public and honoring these patriots through annual Wreaths Across America ceremonies attended by community members, local historians, Town Supervisors, and members of the Masonic Lodge founded by General Marvin; and

WHEREAS, Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia, for whom the property was named in 1944, is already honored by numerous public landmarks in New York City, including LaGuardia Airport, LaGuardia Community College, and LaGuardia High School, thereby ensuring that his significant contributions to New York City are well memorialized; and

WHEREAS, naming this park after General Seth Marvin would recognize and preserve the local history of the County of Orange, honor the sacrifices of the patriots interred there, and serve as a lasting educational reminder of the values of dedication, patriotism, and public service.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, Town of Chester hereby requests and supports renaming the County-owned property currently known as "Camp LaGuardia" to "General Seth Marvin Memorial Park" in recognition of the historic significance of the site and the service of General Marvin and his family to the County, the State, and the Nation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution shall be forwarded to the Orange County Executive, the Orange County Legislature, the Orange County Historian, the Town of Blooming Grove, the Chester Historian, and any other appropriate parties for their consideration and action.

MOTION TO approve the resolution was made by Council Member Becker, seconded by Council Member Courtenay, and approved unanimously.

VOTE: AYES(3): Holdridge, Becker, Courtenay, ABSENT(1): Ardisana

ADOPTED

RESOLUTION REQUESTING ORANGE COUNTY TO REDUCE THE SPEED LIMIT OF LAROE RD

Supervisor Holdridge presented a resolution requesting that Orange County reduce the speed limit on Laroe Road from 45 mph to 40 mph due to safety concerns raised by residents. He expressed that even if drivers continued to exceed the speed limit, a reduction might still improve safety for pedestrians, other vehicles, and animals.

Council Members Courtenay and Becker expressed reservations about the resolution, stating that enforcement was the real issue rather than changing the speed limit. They suggested using radar signs and increased police presence instead.

MOTION TO approve the resolution was made by Supervisor Holdridge, but received no second and therefore failed.

RESOLUTION APPROVING 2026 FLEX SPENDING PLAN

Supervisor Holdridge explained that this resolution would continue the existing flex spending plan for Town employees through Marshall & Sterling.

MOTION TO approve the 2026 flex spending plan was made by Council Member Becker, seconded by Council Member Courtenay, and approved unanimously.

VOTE: AYES(3): Holdridge, Becker, Courtenay, ABSENT(1): Ardisana

ADOPTED

BUDGET MODIFICATIONS

Supervisor Holdridge presented budget modifications of \$3,600 for SLPAC cleaning, \$50,000 for police retirement, and \$28,000 for hospital and medical.

DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT	Account	Account
<u>General</u>			
SLPAC Cleaning	3,600.00	A1622.443	A1622.461
<u>Part-Town</u>			
Police Retirement	50,000.00	B9015.800	B9060.800
<u>Highway-Townwide</u>			
Hospital & Medical	28,000.00	DA9060.800	DA0599

MOTION TO accept the budget modifications was made by Council Member Becker, seconded by Council Member Courtenay, and approved unanimously.

VOTE: AYES(3): Holdridge, Becker, Courtenay, ABSENT(1): Ardisana **ADOPTED**

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH THE CHESTER UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Town Attorney Cassidy explained that the MOU addressed issues with a land transfer that occurred in December 2023. The agreement would correct the lot line change and ensure that the Town retains access to three wells on the property. She noted that the school district's budget vote was scheduled for December 16, and the MOU outlined the process to follow after that vote.

MOTION TO accept the Memorandum of Understanding and authorize the supervisor's signature was made by Council Member Courtenay, seconded by Council Member Becker, and approved unanimously.

VOTE: AYES(3): Holdridge, Becker, Courtenay, ABSENT(1): Ardisana **ADOPTED**

RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE SUPERVISOR HOLDRIDGE TO SIGN THE HIGHLANDS WEST TRAIL CONNECTIVITY PLAN UPDATE LETTER OF SUPPORT

Supervisor Holdridge explained that the plan proposes increased connectivity between state parks and trails, which aligns with recent land preservation efforts between Harriman and Goosepond.

MOTION TO authorize Supervisor Holdridge to sign the letter of support was made by Council Member Courtenay, seconded by Council Member Becker, and approved unanimously.

VOTE: AYES(3): Holdridge, Becker, Courtenay, ABSENT(1): Ardisana **ADOPTED**

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF ENGINEERING STUDIES TO BE CONDUCTED BY MSP ON VARIOUS TOWN PROPERTIES

Supervisor Holdridge explained that Municipal Solar Projects (MSP) had offered to conduct free engineering studies for possible solar array projects on Town buildings and parking lots. He mentioned that Bill Green from the Conservation Advisory Council had introduced the company. The study would examine the Town hall, Highway Department, Police Department, and Senior Center for potential solar panel installations, with a particular interest in solar canopies for parking lots.

Council Member Courtenay noted that similar projects at schools in New Jersey had provided benefits including less ice clearing in winter. Council Member Becker raised concerns about future roof repairs and the costs of removing panels, emphasizing the need for due diligence.

MOTION TO approve the resolution was made by Council Member Courtenay, seconded by Council Member Becker, and approved unanimously.

VOTE: AYES(3): Holdridge, Becker, Courtenay, ABSENT(1): Ardisana **ADOPTED**

RESOLUTION TO ALLOCATE \$14,475 TOWARDS AND APPROVE PURCHASE OF A NEW PLOW

Council Member Becker asked about the procurement process for the plow, noting he had only seen one quote. Supervisor Holdridge suggested approving the purchase subject to confirmation that it was either a sole-source item or purchased through state bid.

MOTION TO approve the resolution to allocate \$14,475 towards and approve the purchase of a new plow, subject to confirmation of proper procurement, was made by Council Member Becker, seconded by Council Member Courtenay, and approved unanimously.

VOTE: AYES(3): Holdridge, Becker, Courtenay, ABSENT(1): Ardisana

ADOPTED

DISCUSSION ON PROPOSED COMMUNITY TRAIL IN RECENTLY PRESERVED LAND NEAR CAMP MONROE RD & LAKES RD

Supervisor Holdridge discussed information received from the Preservation Collective and Tracy Schuh regarding a proposed community trail on recently preserved land. Both council members expressed support for the concept. Supervisor Holdridge said he would forward the information to the Town engineer and coordinate with the water department and highway department to ensure the trail would be compatible with the Town's needs for the property.

Town Attorney Cassidy emphasized the importance of verifying the recording status of the map and deed before proceeding and ensuring proper access considerations.

New Business

RESOLUTION TO CANCEL THE DECEMBER 24TH TOWN BOARD MEETING

MOTION TO cancel the December 24th Town Board meeting was made by Council Member Courtenay, seconded by Council Member Becker, and approved unanimously.

VOTE: AYES(3): Holdridge, Becker, Courtenay, ABSENT(1): Ardisana

ADOPTED

Supervisor Holdridge also proposed canceling the scheduled work session for December 17th.

MOTION TO cancel the December 17th work session was made by Council Member Courtenay, seconded by Council Member Becker, and approved unanimously.

VOTE: AYES(3): Holdridge, Becker, Courtenay, ABSENT(1): Ardisana

ADOPTED

RESOLUTION TO SCHEDULE THE 2026 REORGANIZATION MEETING ON JANUARY 2ND

After some discussion about possible dates, the Board settled on January 2nd at 6:30 PM.

MOTION TO schedule the 2026 reorganization meeting on January 2nd at 6:30 PM was made by Council Member Becker, seconded by Council Member Courtenay, and approved unanimously.

VOTE: AYES(3): Holdridge, Becker, Courtenay, ABSENT(1): Ardisana

ADOPTED

WATER DEPARTMENT REQUEST TO ATTEND EDUCATIONAL CLASSES

Supervisor Holdridge presented the Water Department's request to attend educational classes on April 9th, June 18th, September 10th, and November 12th at a cost of \$150 per class, which was already budgeted.

MOTION TO approve the water department's request was made by Council Member Becker, seconded by Council Member Courtenay, and approved unanimously.

VOTE: AYES(3): Holdridge, Becker, Courtenay, ABSENT(1): Ardisana

ADOPTED

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE GASB 75 CONTRACT WITH JEFFERSON SOLUTIONS

Supervisor Holdridge explained that the Town had been working with Jefferson Solutions for the past three audits, and as a result, the price would decrease from \$3,250 to \$1,850 for the same service.

MOTION TO approve the GASB 75 contract with Jefferson Solutions was made by Council Member Courtenay, seconded by Council Member Becker, and approved unanimously.

VOTE: AYES(3): Holdridge, Becker, Courtenay, ABSENT(1): Ardisana

ADOPTED

RESOLUTION TO RELEASE REQUEST FOR LEGAL SERVICES ON PROPOSED ZONING AMENDMENTS

Supervisor Holdridge explained that the Board had previously discussed hiring an outside land use attorney to review proposed zoning amendments. The goal was to get proposals by the end of the year, accept one at the beginning of 2026, and have an answer by the end of January to proceed with the process.

Council Member Becker emphasized the need to move forward to lift the building moratorium and provide transparency to residents.

MOTION TO approve the resolution was made by Council Member Courtenay, seconded by Council Member Becker, and approved unanimously.

VOTE: AYES(3): Holdridge, Becker, Courtenay, ABSENT(1): Ardisana

ADOPTED

RESOLUTION TO APPOINT SIMON ZIEGLER TO THE CONSERVATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

Supervisor Holdridge proposed appointing Simon Ziegler, the co-chair of the Planning Board for the Village of Chester, to the Conservation Advisory Council. He noted that Mr. Ziegler had the blessing of EJ Szulwach, whom he would be replacing, and the rest of the council.

MOTION TO appoint Simon Ziegler to the Conservation Advisory Council was made by Council Member Becker, seconded by Council Member Courtenay, and approved unanimously.

VOTE: AYES(3): Holdridge, Becker, Courtenay, ABSENT(1): Ardisana

ADOPTED

RESOLUTION TO DIRECT TOWN CLERK ZAPPALA TO ADVERTISE FOR OPEN ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS POSITIONS

Supervisor Holdridge noted that there were openings on both the Zoning Board of Appeals and Planning Board that needed to be advertised.

MOTION TO direct Town Clerk Zappala to advertise for the open positions was made by Council Member Courtenay, seconded by Council Member Becker, and approved unanimously.

VOTE: AYES(3): Holdridge, Becker, Courtenay, ABSENT(1): Ardisana

ADOPTED

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE 2026 CONTRACT WITH MILLENNIUM STRATEGIES FOR GRANT WRITING SERVICES

Supervisor Holdridge reported that Millennium Strategies had proposed the same contract with a 2% cost-of-living increase, amounting to an additional \$60 per month. He highlighted the grants received in 2025 with Millennium's help,

totaling \$205,000, including \$20,000 from Peckham Industries, \$175,000 from Orange County for ADA bathrooms and lighting, and two \$5,000 grants.

MOTION TO approve the 2026 contract with Millennium Strategies was made by Council Member Courtenay, seconded by Council Member Becker, in the amount of \$3,060 monthly and approved unanimously.

VOTE: AYES(3): Holdridge, Becker, Courtenay, ABSENT(1): Ardisana **ADOPTED**

Supervisor Holdridge also presented a resolution regarding the Police Chief's contract, stating that the terms and conditions of the existing employment agreement would continue until a new agreement is executed and approved.

MOTION TO approve the resolution was made by Council Member Courtenay, seconded by Council Member Becker, to approve the existing employment agreement in full force and approved unanimously.

VOTE: AYES(3): Holdridge, Becker, Courtenay, ABSENT(1): Ardisana **ADOPTED**

Town Attorney Cassidy requested the Board to consider an appropriation of \$750 for the holiday festival at the senior center, which would cover Santa and children's gift bags. She noted that she was working on an MOU with the County regarding use of the Sugarloaf Performing Arts Center for the event.

MOTION TO approve the \$750 appropriation was made by Council Member Courtenay, seconded by Council Member Becker, and approved unanimously.

VOTE: AYES(3): Holdridge, Becker, Courtenay, ABSENT(1): Ardisana **ADOPTED**

PUBLIC COMMENT

Council Member Becker asked about whether there would be an opt-out fee for the cellular endpoints. Town Attorney Cassidy clarified that no fee had been agreed upon yet, and if the local law were adopted, a fee would be established by resolution and added to the Town's fee schedule.

ADJOURNMENT

Supervisor Holdridge wished everyone a Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah, Happy New Year, and happy holidays.

MOTION TO adjourn the meeting at 9:00 PM was made by Council Member Courtenay, seconded by Council Member Becker, and approved unanimously.

VOTE: AYES(3): Holdridge, Becker, Courtenay, ABSENT(1): Ardisana **ADOPTED**

Respectfully submitted,

Linda A. Zappala, RMC

Town Clerk

2025-12-10