SPECIAL MEETING-SALEM TOWN BOARD
1st 2027 BUDGET WORKSHOP MEETING, ETC.
SEPTEMBER 16, 2026

Present: Supervisor Evera Sue Clary; Town Council Members: Tom McMorris; Brenda Levey; Scott Eastman; Howard Law, present through videoconferencing from his residence @ 2277 State Rte. 313; Shushan, NY 12873; Town Clerk-Patricia Gilchrist; Clerk to Supervisor-Kathleen Chambers

Others Present-Travis Keys-Highway Sup't./Water (came late); Kim Erbe-Planning Bd. Clerk/Library

Public Present: Sherri Slater

5:00 pm-Meeting called to order by Supervisor Evera Sue Clary, followed by Pledge of Allegiance

NEW BUSINESS

2027 Budget Review-Supervisor Clary reported that most dep't. heads had sent in their figures for thet2027 budget, but not all. She also reported that Assessor Bobbi Stone had given her the most recent exemption summary. Clerk to Supervisor Chambers reported that nothing had been done on the H'Way figures as pay rates would be needed from the new union contract. Also need the figure for insurance renewal from Melissa Davidson @ Northern Insuring.

2027 Tax Cap-1.02% is the tax cap figure for the 2027 budget w/o over-riding; this will be next to impossible to stay within that range. **Resolution #75-Motion made by** Councilman Thomas McMorris, seconded by Councilman Howard Law, to override the tax cap of 1.02% for the 2027 budget, beginning the process to accomplish the same; passed 5-0. **FYI:** The override does not require the Town to exceed the tax cap but gives the Board the ability to do so when adopting the final budget.

Salem Volunteer Fire Dep't. & Shushan Volunteer Fire Dep't.-Both fire departments are asking for a 5% increase for the 2027 budget. Salem will go from $213,502 in 2026 to $224,739 in 2027. Shushan will go from $64,646 in 2026 to $67,878 in 2027.

Salem Rescue Squad-No increase was requested but this has been based on what the fire dep'ts. have requested in the past & Squad's call numbers are increasing significantly year to year. 5% was added to the 2026 figure of $14,996 to $15,746 for 2027.

Bancroft Public Library figure was left the same as the 2026 budget; this is not yet final as the library's own budget is still being discussed.

CETC-Rec'd. $133,047; this is from the dissolution of the Village

Smart Growth Comprehensive Plan-Rec'd. third disbursement of $26,465

AIM Payment-$23,578 rec'd. in State Aid

CHIPS Money-Clerk to Supervisor Chambers reported that all CHIPS money has come in for salt shed in the am't. of $146,393.64. Other am'ts. rec'd. were POPS-$41,297.46; EWR-$53,111.85; PAVE, NY-$61,946.18

BAN for Salt Shed won't be necessary as money has come in; Attorney Fuller was notified not to prepare the renewal paperwork.

Innovative Surface Solutions-Salt Class/Demonstration@ Town Barn,10/05/2026, @ 10 am. Lunch will be served so if planning on staying for lunch, please notify Travis so he can get a count to Innovative.

Board of Assessment Review Appointment-Letter rec'd. from Wash. Co. Real Property advising that the term of Winona Hathaway would be expiring on09/30/2026; she can be reappointed by the Board if she so chooses or another individual will have to be appointed if Winona chooses not to serve. Winona said she would be glad to serve another term. **Motion made by** Councilwoman Brenda Levey, seconded by Councilman Thomas McMorris, to reappoint Winona Hathaway to the Board of Assessment Review, new term beginning 10/01/2026 & ending 09/30/2031; passed 5-0.

Flood Plain Discussion-Supervisor Clary reported that several homeowners now on the new flood maps will be spending a lot of money to acquire flood insurance if their property cannot come off the new maps through a LOMA or LOMC. Alton Knapp, Certified Floodplain Manager, will help w/the process of removal from the map if he thinks he can help, but there will be a charge for his services. If he cannot remove your property from the new map, you will have to purchase the flood insurance. This cost would be added to the homeowner's escrow, along w/the property taxes & homeowner's insurance (if included). The flood plain designation will affect property values as the ability to sell will be affected. Supervisor Clary reported that she & Mr. Knapp had attended a meeting @ the County on 09/09/2026, requesting that the County hire a Flood Plain Consultant/Engineer to help all towns and/or villages that might need the help. Mr. Knapp did a slide presentation for the County, which Supervisor Clary forwarded to all Board members. For the Town of Salem to hire Mr. Knapp to assist w/floodplain determinations & building applications if building in a flood plain, the cost would be around $5,000; he will come to the 10/14/2026 regular monthly Board meeting for a presentation & to answer any questions anyone might have.

Washington County Hazard Mitigation Plan-Supervisor Clary also spoke on this plan & the information included for the Town of Salem. TechtraTec prepared the plan for the County. She has found several errors The Archibald Street bridge & the Rte. 22 bridge both show they were built for a 500-year flood event, which is already incorrect. Both bridges are underbuilt, but especially the Archibald Street bridge (which is a County bridge--not the Town of Salem's). White Creek, which is the area that floods the most, is not even mentioned in the report. Supervisor Clary has sent the report to all Board members, with her comments on the front, for their review. She is also calling FEMA & Wash. Co. regarding issues w/the document. She will also speak w/ other supervisors from other affected towns to encourage them to check out
their information. No action was taken to approve the plan or no resolution was adopted approving the same.

OLD BUSINESS

Fuel Oil & Propane Bids-Highway Sup't. Keys advised those present that he had contacted Dead River Company for clarification on two points. 1.) On the bid for on-road low sulfur diesel, the bid letter indicated 'Please keep in mind that fix contracts once sent out are good for 24 hours.' Travis reported that the bid had already expired when they were opened. 2.) If total gallons stated was not all used, the Town would still be charged for those gallons stated. Dead River offered to re-bid but since both bids were opened on the date published in the legal notice, board members questioned whether this would even be legal & decides to accept the other bid from G.A. Bove Fuels. **Resolution #76-Motion made by** Councilman Howard Law, seconded by Councilman Thomas McMorris, to axe the bid from Dead River Company & go with the bid from G.A. Bove Fuels for the prices stated in the bid letter; passed 5-0.

Bond Resolution Authorizing Issuance of Serial Bonds for 2027 International Truck-Att'y. Matt Fuller needs a Bond Resolution approved by the Board for the purchase of the 2027 International Truck.

Resolution #77-Motion made by Councilman Howard Law, seconded by Councilman Scott Eastman, 'Authorizing the Issuance of $191,109.56 Aggregate Principal Amount of Serial Bonds or a Statutory Installment Bond of the Town of Salem to Pay the Costs for the Purchase of a 2027 International Truck, Model HX260, and Related Equipment for the Highway Department of the Town of Salem and Authorizing the Issu ance of Bond Anticipation Notes of the Town of Salem for the Aforesaid Purposes and in Connection Therewith'. **Roll Call Vote:** Councilman Howard Law-Yes; Councilman Scott Eastman-Yes; Councilman Thomas McMorris-Yes; Councilwoman Brenda Levey-Yes; Supervisor Evera Sue Clary-Yes; passed 5-0

Motion made by Councilman Scott Eastman, seconded by Councilman Howard Law, granting approval for Town Clerk Patricia Gilchrist to publish the Estoppel Notice in the Eagle newspaper, the official newspaper of the Town of Salem, which must be done after the adoption of the Bond Resolution by the Town Board; passed 5-0.

Town Office Update-The Town of Salem, as well as the hospital, must both notify the Department of Health that the medical office is vacating the space currently occupied by them & owned by the Town. Att'y. Fuller is working on that notification for the Town. The hospital's lease with the T/O/S runs through December 31, 2026, as does the lease the Town has w/the current owner of the 214 Main Street location. A letter is being drafted to the current owners of the Town Office space, notifying them of the Town's intention not to renew that lease beyond December 31, 2026. Councilman Law would like to be able to go on a month-to-month rental after the 12/31/2026 deadline, giving time to move all equipment to the new space & in the interest of tax collection beginning the first week in January, 2027. This possibility should be mentioned to the current owners, also. Councilman McMorris said he had called SLIC & it would cost approximately $500 +/- to move the phone system to the new location. Supervisor Clary is trying to find out what the current cost is to heat the bldg. & what the electricity costs might be. Need to go through equipment in the current town office space to see what is absolutely needed & to declare whatever isn't necessary as surplus.
Sherri Slater asked why not a move to the Courthouse since the Town also owns that building. Supervisor Clary responded by saying that the Town probably could not afford the operating expenses & the Courthouse currently has many programs that benefit the community. Space would probably also be an issue. Al Cormier does have his office in the biggest space for the Historian & management of records & the Town is responsible for the generator @ the Courthouse.

Request for starting Highway Wages-rec'd. from the Town of Easton regarding beginning wages & subsequent increases. Clerk Gilchrist forwarded the email she rec'd. on to Clerk to Supervisor Kathy Chambers, as she is the person who does the payroll. She felt that a broader comparison would be useful to all towns rather than collecting information for only one town. Supervisor Clary said she would ask the question of other super Visors to explore whether wage & benefit information could be compiled to share w/all towns. This would also help Salem determine how its wages for highway employees compare w/other towns as it prepares the 2027 budget.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion made by Councilwoman Brenda Levey, seconded by Councilman Thomas McMorris to go into Executive Session @ 6:20 pm to discuss union contract matters; passed 5-0. Discussion took place regarding changes to contract negotiation proposal(s).

Motion made by Councilwoman Scott Eastman, seconded by Councilwoman Brenda Levey, to come out of Executive Session @ 7:20 pm; passed 5-0. No vote was taken in Executive Session.

Motion made by Councilwoman Brenda Levey, seconded by Councilman Thomas McMorris, agreeing to the changes made to Union Contract negotiation proposal(s); passed 5-0.

Motion to Adjourn-Motion made by Councilman Howard Law, seconded by Councilman Scott Eastman to adjourn the 1st 2027 Budget Workshop meeting of the Salem Town Board; passed 5-0. Meeting was adjourned @ 7:35 pm.

2nd 2027 Budget Workshop Meeting-will be held on 10/30/2026, @ 5 pm @ Proudfit Hall; 181 Main Street; Salem, NY. Any & all other business that may come before the Board at this meeting may also be discussed and/or acted upon.

Regular Monthly Meeting of the Salem Town Board-will be held on Wednesday, 10/14/2026, @ Proudfit Hall; 181 Main Street; Salem, NY. Review of Warrants #10 & Highway Abstract #10 for payment will begin by the Board @ 5 pm; regular monthly meeting will be called to order @ 6 pm.

Respectfully Submitted:

Patricia A. Gilchrist-Town Clerk
Town of Salem