

**TOWN OF CATHARINE
TOWN BOARD MEETING
February 17, 2026**

Members Present: Supervisor – Richard Lewis; Councilmembers – Ronald Hoffman, C. Michael Learn, Brett Reynolds.

Absent: Councilmember – Glenn Bleiler, Code Enforcement / Building Inspector – Anthony Nevone; Highway Superintendent – Martin Vondracek.

Public in attendance: Chris Conolly, Bill Fearn.

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 pm by Supervisor Lewis.

Public Heard: None.

Minutes: Minutes were approved as read.

RESOLUTION 8-2026

RESOLVE that the minutes of the January board meeting be accepted with one correction.

RESOLUTION by Ronald Hoffman, seconded by C. Michael Learn.

VOTE 4 ayes, 0 noes

RESOLUTION 9-2026

RESOLVE that the January Clerk's Report be accepted as submitted to the Supervisor.

RESOLUTION by C. Michael Learn, seconded by Brett Reynolds.

VOTE 4 ayes, 0 noes

RESOLUTION 10-2026

RESOLVE that the January Justice Report be accepted as submitted to the State Comptroller and the Supervisor.

RESOLUTION by Ronald Hoffman, seconded by Brett Reynolds.

VOTE 4 ayes, 0 noes

Zoning Report: Supervisor Lewis read the report provided by Tony Nevone. Tony reported he conducted 14 inspections and identified and acted upon 1 violation on County Road 14 in Alpine. He also attended two formal meetings with homeowners/contractors.

RESOLUTION 11-2026

RESOLVE that the January Supervisor's Report be accepted as submitted to the Supervisor.

RESOLUTION by Ronald Hoffman, seconded by Brett Reynolds.

VOTE 4 ayes, 0 noes

Highway Superintendent's Report: Marty stated they have done a dozen plow and sand runs. They did six salt runs on the blacktops. There have been no issues with equipment. The salt Marty ordered was delivered; he ordered 150 tons and they delivered 164. They have been doing shop work.

RESOLUTION 12-2026

RESOLVE that the following bills be paid: G 23 – G 45 in the total sum of \$119,324.01 and H 10 – H 17 in the total sum of \$19,358.92.

RESOLUTION by Brett Reynolds, seconded by C. Michael Learn.

VOTE 4 ayes, 0 noes

Unfinished Business: Short-Term Rentals – Supervisor Lewis stated that this subject was not discussed at the last Council of Governments meeting; he will bring it up for discussion at the next meeting to see what the county decides.

New Business: Proposed NYSEG resolution – The board members discussed the proposed resolution regarding NYSEG's continued rate increases.

RESOLUTION 13-2026

A RESOLUTION STRONGLY URGING IMMEDIATE REVIEW OF ELECTRIC DELIVERY CHARGES, DEMANDING IMPROVED COST CONTROLS AND TRANSPARENCY, AND AUTHORIZING FORMAL COMPLAINTS TO THE NEW YORK STATE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION REGARDING THE ESCALATING COST OF ELECTRICITY

WHEREAS, residents, seniors, and small businesses in the Town of Catharine are experiencing unsustainable, repeated, and compounding increases in electric bills that are placing a growing financial strain on households and the local economy; and

WHEREAS, a substantial portion of these increases is attributable not to increased energy consumption, but to escalating delivery charges, fees, and approved rate adjustments imposed by NYSEG; and

WHEREAS, electric delivery charges and rate structures are regulated and approved by the New York State

Public Service Commission, which is statutorily charged with ensuring that utility rates are just, reasonable, and affordable for ratepayers; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board has received numerous complaints from residents who are struggling to afford basic electric service and who have expressed serious concern regarding the frequency, magnitude, and lack of transparency surrounding recent and ongoing rate increases; and

WHEREAS, rural and low-density communities such as the Town of Catharine are disproportionately impacted by delivery charge increases and cost-recovery mechanisms that fail to adequately account for affordability, equity, and the cumulative burden placed on ratepayers; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board finds that continued approval of rate increases without stronger cost controls, greater transparency, and meaningful affordability protections is unacceptable and contrary to the public interest;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Board of the Town of Catharine formally and strongly urges the New York State Public Service Commission to conduct a thorough and immediate review of electric delivery charges, rate increases, and cost-recovery practices applicable to NYSEG customers; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town Board calls upon the Public Service Commission to prioritize ratepayer affordability, demand greater transparency from NYSEG, and require demonstrable cost-containment and operational efficiency measures before approving any future rate increases; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town Board expressly opposes continued or automatic rate increases that shift rising operational, infrastructure, and administrative costs onto ratepayers without clear justification or adequate protection for rural communities; and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town Supervisor is hereby authorized and directed to submit formal complaints, written comments, and supporting documentation to the New York State Public Service Commission on behalf of the Town and its residents, objecting to excessive electric costs and requesting regulatory intervention; and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town Clerk is directed to transmit copies of this resolution to the New York State Public Service Commission, NYSEG, the Governor of the State of New York, members of the New York State Legislature, and neighboring municipalities served by NYSEG, and to encourage coordinated action among affected towns; and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution shall take effect immediately upon adoption. Adopted this 17TH day of February 2026, by the Town Board of the Town of Catharine.
RESOLUTION by Ronald Hoffman, seconded by Brett Reynolds.

VOTE 4 ayes, 0 noes

VOTE: Supervisor Lewis - Aye

Councilperson Ronald Hoffman - Aye

Councilperson C. Michael Learn - Aye

Councilperson Brett Reynolds - Aye

Councilperson Glenn Bleiler - Absent

CERTIFICATION OF THE TOWN CLERK

I, Kellie A. Kretchmer, Town Clerk of the Town of Catharine, do hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was duly adopted by the Town Board at a regular meeting held on February 17, 2026.

Town Clerk Date: February 17, 2026

Motion to Adjourn by C. Michael Learn, seconded by Ronald Hoffman.

Meeting adjourned at 7:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kellie Kretchmer
Town Clerk/Collector

Next meeting March 17, 2026 at 7:00pm