

Town of Keene – Regular Town Board Meeting

February 10, 2026

5:30 PM – Town Hall

Board Members Present:

Joe Pete Wilson, Supervisor; Teresa Cheetham-Palen; Ann Hough; Robert Biesemeyer

Absent: Christopher Daly

Town Officials Present:

Robyn Shumer (Town Clerk); Ryan Hall (Highway Superintendent); Savana Li (Water Superintendent)

Town Counsel Present: Bryan Liam Kennelly, Esq.

Call to Order

The regular Town Board meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM by Supervisor Joe Pete Wilson.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made to approve the January 27, 2026 meeting minutes as submitted.

Motion: Made and seconded.

Vote: All in favor, motion carried.

Privilege of the Floor

No members of the public were present for Privilege of the Floor.

Town Clerk Business

- Bills were reviewed, signed, and approved; Teresa Palen, Ann Hough and Joe Pete all approved, Bob abstained.
- A request was received from Lynn Shenier and Nyman Peters, non-residents of Keene, requesting permission for green burial in the Town cemetery.
- Discussion followed regarding cemetery policy, residency requirements, limited space, and past precedent.
- The Board determined the applicants did not meet eligibility requirements.

Action: Request denied unanimously.

The Town Clerk will draft a letter explaining the decision.

- The Town Clerk requested approval to attend New York State Town Clerks Association annual training in Albany.
- Conference fee: \$562
- Lodging: \$155 per night (3 nights anticipated)

Motion: To approve travel and training expenses.

Vote: All in favor, motion carried.

Highway Department Update

- Discussion on procurement options for a new tandem axle dump truck, including stock truck versus custom chassis and body build.
- Supply chain delays and financing implications were reviewed.
- Additional information pending receipt of updated quotes.
- New grader delivered.
- Purchase price approximately \$334,000 before trade-in.
- Trade-in discrepancy identified; staff working with vendor to resolve.
- Grader purchase funded through CHIPS and departmental funds, consistent with asset management planning.

Communications / Cell Tower Lease Update

- Ongoing negotiations regarding a potential conversion of an existing lease to an easement.
- Discussion included access issues, DOT easements, cell service reliability, and financial implications.
- No action taken; negotiations ongoing. Any financial decisions will return to the Board for approval.

Water System Updates

- Booster station issues due to freezing temperatures were discussed.
- Temporary repairs completed; one pump currently operational.
- Rebuild option being explored; one resident impacted seasonally.
- Water infrastructure funding updates provided; state funding progressing, federal environmental review ongoing.

Resolutions

Resolution 1: Keene Fire Department water usage rate

- Establishes yearly high-traffic water usage rate.

- Eliminates hydrant rental fee.

Vote: Approved unanimously.

Resolution 2: Keene Valley Fire Department water usage rate

- Establishes yearly high-traffic water usage rate.
- Eliminates hydrant rental fee.

Vote: Approved unanimously.

Resolution 3: Amend Keene Water Law, Subsection 7

- Adds reporting requirements for hydrant usage (Sections 7.5 and 7.6).

Vote: Approved unanimously.

Resolution 4: Amend Keene Valley Water Law, Subsection 7

- Adds reporting requirements for hydrant usage (Sections 7.5 and 7.6).

Vote: Approved unanimously.

Old Business

- Correction to organizational meeting action regarding Deputy Supervisor salary.

Motion: To return the Deputy Supervisor salary to \$500.

Vote: All in favor, motion carried.

New Business

Annual audit of Town books discussed; scheduling to be coordinated.

The Supervisors Monthly Report was approved.

Financial Matters

- 2025 operating statement reviewed.
- Transfers approved within:
- General Fund
- Highway Fund

- Library Fund
- Water Fund
- 2026 year-to-date operating statement reviewed.
- Transfers within the General Fund approved.

Executive Session

No executive session was held.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:04pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Robyn Shumer

Town Clerk

Town of Keene