

Town of Keene – Regular Town Board Meeting

July 14, 2026 #13

5:30 PM – Town Hall

Vouchers: 582-598

Resolutions: 177--186

Abstract: 12

Board Members Present

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

Town Officials Present: Robyn Shumer, Town Clerk, Savana Li, Water Superintendent; Ryan Hall, Highway Superintendent

Town Counsel Present: Bryan Liam Kennelly

Call to Order

Supervisor Joe Pete Wilson called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM.

Pledge of Allegiance

Recited

Approval of Minutes

Resolution 177, motion to approve the June 24, 2026 Town Board meeting minutes made by Ms. Palen, seconded by Ms. Hough, all approved. Motion carried.

Transfer Station Electrical Project ***

- Prior to the regular agenda, the Board discussed the proposed electrical service upgrade at the Transfer Station.
 - An updated proposal and an electrical inspection report were reviewed.
 - Discussion focused on procurement procedures, code compliance, insurance requirements, contractor outreach, and whether the project scope had been adequately bid.
 - Following extensive discussion, the motion to award the electrical contract failed on roll-call vote. No contract was awarded. Mr. Biesemeyer will take next steps on this project. **Resolution 178.**
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Privilege of the Floor

Keene Diversity Advisory Committee Jane Haugh

- Representatives discussed community feedback regarding the recently installed welcome sign

and concerns about permitting on DEC property.

- Discussion broadened to the committee's mission, community inclusiveness, accessibility, and whether diversity initiatives should be incorporated into the Town's strategic planning process.
- Board members supported continuing the conversation through the upcoming strategic planning effort and discussed developing a formal Town sign policy.

Youth Commission / Summer Camp

- Public comment by Julie Walmsley addressed experiences at the Town summer camp, including concerns surrounding racial incidents and communication with families.
- Board members discussed the importance of documenting concerns, ensuring timely communication with parents, reinforcing expectations for respectful behavior, and reviewing policies for reporting and responding to incidents. The KYC Board is revising its policy book for review by the town board.

Town Clerk Business

No significant Town Clerk business requiring Board action was recorded during this portion of the meeting.

Highway Department Update

Highway Superintendent Ryan provided an update on equipment, ongoing maintenance projects, and anticipated capital expenditures.

- The 2017 Ford F-150 is currently undergoing repairs and requires replacement of the fuel system at an estimated cost of approximately \$12,000. Because the vehicle was purchased using CHIPS funding, it must remain in service for at least one additional year before it can be replaced.
- The 2013 John Deere tractor is at a repair facility in Westport and requires a turbo replacement and partial engine rebuild. Estimated repair costs are \$12,000–\$15,000, compared to an estimated \$80,000 replacement cost for a new tractor.
- To maintain roadside mowing operations while the John Deere tractor is out of service, the Highway Department proposes renting a replacement tractor for approximately 2–3 months at a cost of \$3,000 per month.
- **Resolution 179:** The Board authorized the Highway Superintendent to proceed with necessary repairs to the Ford F-150 and John Deere tractor, as needed. Motion made by Ms. Palen, seconded by Ms. Hough and approved unanimously.
- Ryan reported that 80% of the current excavator rental payments will be credited toward the eventual purchase of the machine. The total purchase price is estimated at approximately \$148,000, which would be funded through CHIPS funding. Even with the purchase, the Town would retain approximately \$228,000 in available CHIPS funds.
- **Resolution 180:** The Board authorized the continued rental of the excavator with the intent to purchase under the rental credit agreement. Motion made by Mr. Daly, seconded by Ms. Hough. Approved unanimously.
- Ryan reported that a culvert replacement on Schaeffer Road is underway.
- The Highway Department has received complaints from the Ausable Club regarding the condition of the asphalt on the lower road. Ryan reported that the section from the

retaining wall to Route 73 is planned for paving next year. While a final cost estimate is not yet available, he anticipates that approximately 75% of the project will be eligible for reimbursement through CHIPS, PAVE NY, and POP funding programs.

Water System Updates

Routine water system updates were received. Well building company will mobilize equipment and break ground week of 20th, we've been reimbursed already.

Old Business

Transfer Station Electrical Service (see *** on page 1)

New Business

Mr. Wilson read a thank you note from Jerry Huntley for the CEF grant awarded to Our Story Bridge.

Tina applied for grant from PERMA (\$1,075) for an ice alert kit we received it.

Ms. Hough and Palen reported that after leash law failed to pass they wanted to put something out to encourage responsible ownership of dogs. They created a trifold about responsible dog ownership. Emily Whitney the town dog-catcher has reviewed. Town Clerk will give with residents when they register/renew registration.

Rachel Cary is starting on the front yard to plant perennial garden.

2026 Budget Amendment – Planning Contractual

- **Resolution 181:** To amend the 2026 Budget by transferring funds to the Planning Contractual account to cover payment obligations.
 - Motion made by Ms.Palen /Ms. Hough.
 - Approved unanimously.

2026 Budget Amendment – Buildings Contractual

- **Resolution 182:** To amend the 2026 Budget by transferring funds from Contingency to the Buildings Contractual account to balance the General Fund.
 - Motion: Ms.Hough /Mr Daly.
 - Approved unanimously.

Supervisor's Monthly Report

- **Resolution 183:** To approve the Supervisor's Monthly Report.
 - Motion: Ms.Hough /Ms. Palen.
 - Approved unanimously.

- **Resolution 184:** To pay online bills
 - o Motion: Mr. Biesemeyer /Ms. Hough.
 - o Approved unanimously.

Monthly Abstract of Claims

- **Resolution 185:** To audit and approve payment of the monthly invoices.
 - o Motion: Ms. Palen /Ms. Hough.
 - o Motion carried.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn meeting made by Ms. Hough, seconded by Mr. Biesemeyer @ 656PM. All approved (**Resolution 186**).

Respectfully submitted,

Robyn Shumer

Town Clerk

		Town of Keene		
		Abstract of Claims		
		July 14, 2026		
		Town Board Meeting		
	Abstract #12, 2026			Voucher #'s 582-598
				Res. No.177-186
	Department	Prepaid Vouchers	Unpaid Vouchers	Total
	General	\$43,049.99	\$41,853.69	
	Highway	\$5,834.00	\$5,664.74	
	Library	\$2,320.44	\$2,320.44	
	Water District #1	\$1,095.71	\$1,075.51	
	Water District #2	\$1,976.03	\$1,934.96	
	Roost Enhancement Tax	\$4,253.15	\$4,253.15	
	HRA			
	Total:			\$0.00
		\$58,529.32	\$57,102.49	
	To the Supervisor,			
	I certify that the vouchers listed above were audited by the Keene Town Board on			July 14, 2026
	and allowed in the amounts shown.			
	You are hereby authorized and directed to pay the claimant the amount opposite his name.			
		7.14.2026		
	Robyn Shumer, Town Clerk		Date	