

Town of St. Armand
Regular Board Meeting 6:30 pm
Thursday, April 23, 2026

These Meeting Minutes were approved by the St. Armand Town Board on May 19, 2026.

A Regular Board Meeting was conducted on the above date and time via webinar and in person at the Town Hall, 1702 NYS Route 3, Bloomingdale, NY. The Meeting was advertised and made available to the public.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Town Supervisor Davina Thurston, Deputy Supervisor Karl Law, Councilperson Donna Whitelaw, and Councilperson JP O'Neil were present at the meeting.

A quorum of the Board was in attendance.

BOARD MEMBER EXCUSED: Councilperson Raymond Tempestilli was excused from the meeting.

TOWN EMPLOYEES PRESENT: Water Superintendent Jonathan Neilsen, Wastewater Superintendent Joshua Woodruff, and Town Clerk Barbara Darrah.

GUESTS FROM THE COMMUNITY: In-person attendees: Michael Boon, Terry Buckley, Robert Buckley, Diane Chase, Rob Elfers, Missy Elfers, Cassidy Everritt, Jennifer Everritt, Dillon Fuller, Teresa Fuller, Kathy Hogan, Patrick Hogan, Alison King, Michael Knapp, Carter Kowles, K. Levesque, Cameron McCormick, James McCormick, Jeff Reyell, Rob Reyell, Alan Roberts, Richard Sofield, Diana Strablow, Suzan Sweeney, Larry Sweeney, Sheridan Swinyer, Stephanie, Stephen, Julie Walsh, Matt Warner, Rosemary Warner.

On-line attendees: Donald Amell, Josh Colby, Katie Long.

Supervisor Thurston opened the Regular Board Meeting at 6:30 pm and asked all to join in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Supervisor Thurston then opened the floor to the guest speaker Kaitlin Long, Deputy Director, North Country Rural Development.

Kaitlin: Hello. Thank you for allowing me to speak at your Board Meeting tonight. I'm going to kind of go over essentially what a land bank is, what we do at the Essex County Land Bank, how we do it, and open up the floor for some questions. So to start out, what a land bank is: A land bank is a quasi-governmental entity that's created to address vacant, abandoned, and tax delinquent properties. Essentially, land banks are designed to take control of problem properties, typically through the tax foreclosure process to stabilize or demolish unsafe buildings, rehabilitate or prepare sites for redevelopment, return properties to productive use, so for home ownership, rental or business, and to strengthen neighborhoods and our tax base. So, a land bank is not a traditional real estate developer, it is also not a lending institution or that type of a bank, but instead are tools for fixing blight and creating housing, as well as fixing properties that the private market has not so far addressed.

What we do at the Essex County Land Bank: We focus on improving housing conditions and expanding access to home ownership in the Adirondack region through property stabilization, creating affordable housing, focusing on economic development, and engaging in creative place making activities through public art. Basically our mission is a kind of four pillared approach to community development and housing development. Some of our core activities include acquisition in vacant, abandoned, or tax foreclosed properties, environmental remediation, IE: lead and asbestos abatement, which is huge, especially in our aging housing stock, rehabilitation of occupied or unoccupied residential structures, hiring sites for redevelopment, and workforce, and affordable housing in the area. Some of our key programs that we run and really how we started out was through subsidized home ownership programs where they have been blighted and vacant properties and rehabilitate them for occupancy. This program targets unqualified buyers, so it provides subsidized housing for homeowners who are typically first-time buyers, but not exclusively first-time home buyers at about 200 percent of the area median income. This provides affordable personal opportunities, including from the home and is a lot on local residents and the workforce. These are not intended to be short-term rentals. I know we have a lot of short-term rentals in our stock, which really doesn't help the local economy and it doesn't help our local community. These are meant to be owner-occupied units.

Another program that we do run is the Vacant Rental Program, which provides funding for property owners to rehabilitate long-term rental units. This could be turning a space that is not currently a residential unit into a residential unit for long-term rental, or it could be just taking a unit that maybe doesn't have the certificate of occupancy and getting it to a point where it can be occupied by an income qualified renter. These are targeted towards the lower end of the area median income. 60 to 80% of AMI and supplies between \$50,000.00 and \$75,000.00 per unit for rehab funding.

Some of our main funding sources: Most of our funding comes from the Office of Homes and Community Renewal, HCR, the Housing Trust Fund Corporation. These funding sources provide grants for acquisition, rehabilitation, demolition, as well as operations of these homes. We also administer statewide land bank initiative funding. Much of our funding comes from LBI. (Land Bank Initiatives). There are additional sources of funding, including local government contributions, and property donations. We've had some properties in the county donated to us for the purpose of either demolishing an unsafe structure or fixing up a home that is existing on the property. There are other federal grants rather than the state grants and then we can turn around and take any proceeds from property sales and reinvest them in future projects. I will say that we don't typically end up with a lot of proceeds from these sales just because we are selling the homes at such a subsidized rate, whereas the actual rehabilitation can sometimes be as much as \$400,000.00 to get these homes up to up to code.

Another exciting initiative that we have is the Move in New York program: This is a new initiative that's administered through HCR again to expand affordable move-in-ready homes, particularly in rural and upstate communities by installing cross-models. What is a cross-model? A cross-model is a kind of a cross between a manufactured home and a modular home as the name would imply and it's a factory built that combines the affordability of manufactured housing with some of the features of a traditional home or a modular home. These homes are based on permanent foundations, they have drywall interiors, they have higher pitched roofs, which is very important in our region, as they have greater snow loads. Again, also very important in our region and are built with energy efficient construction and energy efficient systems so that it can lower the costs for the occupants of the housing. Another really important aspect of these cross mod homes is that they are eligible for conventional mortgage financing, which you often cannot find in other traditional manufactured housing. Essentially, they look and function like site-built homes or stick-built homes but they cost less than the traditional construction. They do appraise similarly to conventional housing, and they allow homeowners to build equities.

Between a land bank and the move-in New York program, we can acquire properties or demolish existing structures on these properties and prepare the lots to be built on. And then, move in New York funding comes in to fund the placement of cross mods and helps with the subsidies to reduce the purchase cost for the home buyers. This is really important, especially in the North country in Essex County, because construction costs can be really high, the housing supply as it exists is extremely limited or is aging to a point where the structures are not always safe. We really need workforce housing in the area because if we want to bring people in to work at the jobs, they need places to live where they're not necessarily needing to commute distances of over an hour to get to work, particularly in the winter.

I guess our kind of final pillar to this, and this is just a small, and I would say in some ways temporary aspect is the initiatives: One of the things that we started doing last year is we received some land bank funding that was specifically earmarked for public art. This can help activate spaces, particularly those that are unsightly unattractive, but structurally sound and bringing these spaces to life. They improve visual appeal of some vacant lots and buildings in especially downtown areas. It reduces the perception of neglect in an area, and this can work to your advantage by deterring further deterioration of an area as well as deterring vandalism. It helps to build community identity and activate spaces temporarily, especially while long-term redevelopment plans are in process, and it can also encourage foot traffic and support local businesses by bringing people to the area. So you can see some evidence of this where we did a pilot program in Ticonderoga. If you find yourselves down in the area, we do have quite a few murals with a few new ones coming up, as well as some murals being installed in the town of Jay. I would encourage you to check that out and see kind of how those spaces have been transformed. I do have kind of a list of frequently asked questions that I can either go through or if Supervisor Thurston would like to open the floor to questions.

Supervisor Thurston: I actually have a couple of questions of my own; I hope everyone doesn't mind. Maybe you all have the same questions, so it might work out to our advantage. One of the comments that we've received about having the land bank own a home is, we weren't sure, so hopefully you can explain this to us: Say you bought a half acre, a house with a half-acre lot that was tax foreclosed and you went in and remodeled the house and now you're selling that house as a land bank house. What is the amount of income that, say, a family of a couple, a young married couple, what is their maximum income to buy that house? And what happens when they get ready to sell that house and buy a bigger home or move on?

Katie Long: Yes, those are really important questions.

Answer: It is a little bit tough to put a number to the amount of income because that is very dependent on the family or household size. So, for a two-person household in Essex County, 200% AMI is roughly \$185,000.00. So between the two of them, that would be their kind of income cap to qualify. When someone purchases this home, the ownership transfers to the home buyer. The land bank no longer owns the home. It is the kind of process like a traditional sale. But, then when the homeowner wants to sell it again, sometimes it can be the case that the land bank has the right of first refusal. Typically, as long as they are selling it to another income qualified buyer, there's a specific formula that kind of helps to keep track with the market rates, but the current owner would not be able to sell it at market rate. It would take into account whether they put in any improvements to the home, but it would still need to be kind of capped at a subsidized rate, and then the new buyer would need to also income qualify.

Supervisor Thurston: Okay, so that was one question that we had earlier. So for example, if they bought the house for \$200,000.00, and they owned it for 10 years, and they put a new deck or built a new shed or somehow made \$50,000 worth of improvements, does that count toward their equity when they go to sell it? Does that increase the value of the home for them to sell?

Kaitlin Long: Yes, absolutely. We want people to build equity. We want people to be able to start out, you know, perhaps in one of these land bank homes and then move on and then have another family who's just starting out or, you know, a young professional just starting out to have an opportunity at home ownership through this program.

Karl Law: So, Kaitlin, there is not a percentage cap on that as far as what they can get, even if it is five years, 10 years, 15 years down the road?

Kaitlin Long: I don't know if it's calculated by percentage. I don't have the formula in front of me but I do know that there is a formula that takes into account the market as well as any improvements that are made the amount of time that the home's been lived in just to keep it fair so that the homeowner can make some money or at least recoup some money on the sale.

Supervisor Thurston: Kaitlin, you said you have a frequently asked question list, so I'm assuming that's like a written document. Could you perhaps share that by email with us and I can share it with our board members and also, you know, post it on our social media so folks can have that information.

Kaitlin Long: Sure, I'd be happy to do that.

Supervisor Thurston: Does anyone else have any other questions for Kaitlin?

Diane Chase: I'm wondering, is there a minimal time that for somebody to have to live in the house before they would sell it, so that there wouldn't be a flipping of the house or something, for any reason, like they go in, they buy it at a price, then they sell it?

Supervisor Thurston: Well, that's what they're stopping. They're stopping that, so they can't sell it for a profit. They're essentially competing with, and maybe I'm wrong in this, Kaitlin, you can clear it up, and essentially they're competing with contractors that would go in and buy a property that's on quarry or short sale selling site.

Kaitlin: Right.

Supervisor Thurston: And then the contractor would go in traditionally and buy it and make it whole. And then they get the permits, whatever they want for profit but they would sell it at a much greater profit. I think I've read Kaitlin, that there is a cap on how much they can have for the count and I believe it was 165 and then I read as far as the percentage goes for when they go to resell is, and I could be wrong, is 10% over what they originally paid for it. And the renovator does get the first grab back at the property.

Kaitlin: Usually. It's got to stay in an affordable housing concept.

Supervisor Thurston: What is the time frame allowed, and Kaitlin, do you work with the Franklin County's land bank as well or just Essex County?

Katlin: Just Essex County. But, Franklin County mostly operates the same way and typically there's not a set minimum time for someone to, you know, need to remain in the house but they expect to sell it for, you know, for a profit if, you know, they've lived there for a year, they have long-term affordability kind

of written into the deed restrictions so that. They can't just flip the home because everyone would go that route if they could.

Karl Law: I do think it's important to know and for everybody to know in transparency when you do the property, there are no taxes being paid on that property as far as property tax, school tax, you're tax exempt, right?

Kaitlin: Yes.

Supervisor Thurston: If it takes four years to develop, that's four years without that those taxes coming in and you and I are making that difference. I do believe though, Karl, just so you know, there is a timeline on the grants and it's usually two years if they have a grant to flip or to repurpose. I know Essex County's grants have a two-year timeframe. What if the house returns to its previous state? Is there a penalty for that?

Kaitlin: That is a great question. We are new enough that we haven't fortunately seen that happen, but there are property maintenance requirements. So, similar to some of our owner occupied rehab projects that we do where we have to file lien or a property maintenance declaration basically in entering into this this contract they are agreeing to maintain the property for their time in it so that it does it doesn't return to that state.

Supervisor Thurston: Could it then be code violated and deed violated per the restrictions?

Kaitlin. The deed could be violated.

Supervisor Thurston: Any other questions for Kaitlin?

Kaitlin: The FAQ sheet that I have here does also include kind of steps for people who are interested in applying for land bank homes because they do work a little bit differently. It's not like you put in an offer and you wait for that to be accepted, you actually have to apply and go through housing.

Supervisor Thurston thanked Kaitlin for taking the time to join and speak at our meeting.

WASTEWATER DEPARTMENT REPORT

Supervisor Thurston then opened the floor to Wastewater Superintendent Joshua Woodruff, explaining that Josh would be speaking on his role as Wastewater Superintendent and the role of maintaining the fields at the Ball Park, working closely with the Bloomingdale Boosters.

Josh spoke on the new SPDE Permit's requirements resulting from the state mandates, but the state was providing no additional funding to fulfill the mandates. One of Josh's concerns was that the PFOA's are to be tested quarterly at a cost of \$4,000 per each test. There will be a mercury minimization plan expected to be implemented in March of 2027. Copies of the permit were distributed to the Board. There were no questions regarding the Wastewater Report.

Josh then presented a Youth Field report on the ball fields and proposed construction of dugouts and requested funds from the occupancy tax to purchase a list of items needed for field improvements: Infield Mixes (70% and 30%) – 38 tons - \$3,800.00, Sta-Green Fertilizer (10 bags) - \$250.00, Break-away bases \$640.00, Dugouts - \$1,000.00, and Home Run fence and Home Run Poles \$4,459.38, for a total of \$9,049.38.

MOTION:

Supervisor Thurston asked for a Motion to use Occupancy Tax funds in the amount of \$9,049.38 for the purchase of the items listed above for improvements on the ball fields:

Councilperson JP O'Neil made a Motion to approve the use of \$9,049.38 for the youth field improvements. The Motion was seconded by Councilperson Donna Whitelaw. Supervisor Thurston requested a Roll Call Vote:

Supervisor Thurston	AYE
Deputy Supervisor Karl Law	AYE
Councilperson Donna Whitelaw	AYE
Councilperson JP O'Neil	AYE
Councilperson Raymond Tempestilli	ABSENT

All in favor.
Motion carried.

Supervisor Thurston thanked Josh for all of his time and effort into the fields for our kids. Josh invited all present to visit the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT MONTHLY REPORT

Highway Superintendent Douglas Snickles submitted the following report:

Town of St. Armand Highway Report for the April 23, 2026 Board Meeting

1. Still plowing and sanding.
2. Started painting the plows.
3. We had to unthaw some culverts.
4. Helped with a water break on Prospect Street.
5. Getting ready for picking up sand.
6. Put up net for the batting cage.
7. Cleaning garage and pole barn to put winter stuff away.
8. Helped Bob with repairs on 2022 Wester Star.

Mike Boon asked if there was a schedule for the road cleanup. Supervisor Thurston replied that they are working on the streets currently.

There were no further questions regarding the Highway department.

WATER DEPARTMENT REPORT

Water/General Maintenance Report for the April 23, 2026 Town Board Meeting
Submitted by Jonathan Nielsen, Water Superintendent

Water Treatment Plant Updates

1. Meter Reads, Reader swap outs, Chlorine Residual Testing, Daily testing at the Plant
2. Routine Ednyne Labs were collected and sent out this month for E-coli, Total Coliform (all ok)
3. Class action lawsuit for PFOA's; All paperwork including bills, lab testing results, and 10-year lookback on water withdrawal permits were submitted.
4. The Water Withdrawal permit modification to NYS DEC has been finalized and accepted
5. Still Inventorying parts and going through stock for future repairs this spring/summer.
6. Water Main Break repaired on Prospect St.

General Maintenance

1. Minor repairs in the town hall for office staff

There were no questions regarding the Water or General Maintenance report.

WATER AND SEWER CLERK MONTHLY REPORT:

Water and Sewer Clerk's Monthly Report for the April 23, 2026 Board Meeting
Submitted by Barbara Darrah, Water and Sewer Clerk

WATER/SEWER

The 2nd quarter billing for 2026 (January 1 – March 31, 2026) was completed on April 12, 2026, with the amount of the billing totaling \$ 77,388.32. The due date for second quarter payments is Monday, May 11, 2026.

Water gallon usage was high this quarter due to freezing temperatures. The 1,200-gallon credit was issued to customers for the 2nd quarter billing.

Barbara Darrah
St. Armand Water and Sewer Clerk

There were no questions regarding the Water and Sewer Clerk's Report.

Two adjustments were presented to the Town Board for Water & Sewer customer Jennifer Everitt and Skyler Snyder. The board agreed to adjust both bills to the eight quarter average of the second quarter of each year with the provision the issues were fixed prior to the due date of May 11, 2026. Water Superintendent Jonathan Neilsen will verify with both customers that the repairs have been made.

CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER REPORT

Code Enforcement Officer Rodger Thompkins submitted the following report for the April 23, 2026 Town Board Meeting.

Code Report - Submitted by Rodger Tompkins
April 23, 2026 - Prepared on April 14, 2026

- New Residential Building Permits Issued Since Last Report: 2
- New Water or Sewer Line Permits Issued Since Last Report: 0
- Extension of Residential Building Permits Issued Since Last Report: 0
- Commercial Building Permits Issued Since Last Report: 0
- Certificates of Completion Issued Since Last Report: 0
- Stop Work Orders Issued Since Last Report: 0
- Demolition Permits Issued Since Last Report: 0
- Solar PVS Permits Issued Since Last Report: 0
- New Short Term Rental Permits Issued Since Last Report: 0
- Code Violations Issued Since Last Report Issued: 0
- Sewer Code Violations Issued Since Last Report: 0
- Total number of Residential Building permits issued for the year 2026: 4
- Total number of Residential Certificates of Completion issued for the year 2026: 0
- Total number of Commercial Building permits issued for the year 2026: 0
- Total number of Commercial Certificates of Completion issued for the year 2026: 0
- Total number of Demolition permits issued for the year 2026: 1
- Total number of Demolition Certificates of Completion issued for the year 2026: 0
- Total number of Short Term Rental Permits Issued for the year 2026: 0
- Total number of Solar permits issued for the year 2026: 0
- Total number of Solar Certificates of Completion issued for the year 2026: 0
- Total number of Code Violations issued for the year 2026: 4
- Total number of Code Violation Certificates of Completion issued for the year 2026: 0
- Total number of Sewer Code Violations issued for the year 2026: 0
- Total number of Sewer Code Violation Certificates of Completion issued for the year 2026: 0
- Amount of fees collected for Code Office since last report: \$60.00
- Amount of fees collected for Water Department since last report: \$0
- Amount of fees collected for Sewer Department since last report: \$0
- Total amount of Water/Sewer fees collected via Code Office since last report: \$0
- Total amount of fees collected via Code Office for the year 2026: \$160.00

There were no questions regarding the Code Enforcement Officer report.

TOWN JUSTICE REPORT

St. Armand Town Court Report for March 2026
submitted by Francis Whitelaw, Town Justice

- Total fines and surcharges collected for the month of March 2026: \$1023.00
- Total collected year-to-date: \$1589.00
- Total parking fines for March 2026: \$0.00
- Total parking fines year-to-date: \$0.00

There were no questions regarding the Town Justice Report.

Supervisor Thurston discussed the purpose of Resolutions #36, #37, #38:
Resolution #36 is regarding the increase in the town clerk's salary because it is an elected position and the salaries had been previously posted in the 2026 Budget. In order to change the budgeted salary of an elected official, it has to actually become a local law for the year. We are seeking a new Town Clerk due

to Barbara Darrah trying to retire, and in order to attract more applicants for the position, we will be introducing the Resolution tonight to increase the town clerk salary to what amounts to a total of \$26,208.00, which includes \$2,000.00 for records management and \$24,208.00 for town clerk salary, which would be an increase from \$16,042.00. The \$2,000.00 for Records Management remained the same. The new amount brings the Town Clerk Salary up to what we feel is more in line with the position. It's about \$21.00 per hour now instead of \$16.00 and some odd cents. So Resolution #36 of 2026 is the Resolution introducing the local law to increase the town clerk salary.

We will need to conduct a public hearing to adopt Local Law # 2 30 days after this evening, so that will be held on Wednesday, May 27th, at 5:30 pm.

I would also like to suggest we conduct a Special Board Meeting immediately following the Public Hearing in order to review the zoning surveys that we have received.

The Town Board agreed to this date and time: May 27th at 5:30 p.m., the Public Hearing for the local law, and then move into a Special Board Meeting where we will adopt this resolution and review zoning surveys.

Supervisor Thurston explained Resolution #37 of 2026 is introducing a proposed local law to place a moratorium on any development and construction of certain solar energy systems, and this would be community solar and commercial solar activities. The only reason we are talking about doing this moratorium is to make sure that we have those two items in place before any new commercial solar or community solar project companies come forward and want to do a project that we are not ready for. We are not saying to ban these facilities at this time, but we do not have any local law regarding solar commercial or community solar projects, nor do we have a building permit for these projects.

Question from audience: So are you saying that there's stuff that is going to go on the moratorium is not going to cover things that might have already be considered or is it I'm confused and are you need laws for like the new stuff coming in and solar coming in? I am Stephanie and I live on Route 3 and that solar farm is bordering my property and surrounding me and so is the one on Trudeau. Is that the one you're talking about? There's a huge solar farm going in right next to me the lithium Batteries, I believe that's going to connect them.

Supervisor Thurston: There's two different things that we're talking about. So last month this Board passed a one-year moratorium on battery energy storage systems within Town of St. Armand. Resolution # 37 is introducing a Local Law to put a one-year moratorium on **community or commercial solar activities** so that it gives the town time to create a building permit application for these facilities and come up with a local law to regulate those facilities.

Audience member: I got it.

Supervisor Thurston: But my understanding is that there's already a solar going in that's going to come out.

Audience member: So it's covering that as well?

Supervisor Thurston: Yes.

Audience member: Okay, that's news I did not know.

Supervisor Thurston: They have not applied for a building permit with us. They are right now going through the process of APA which takes time to get through that that's why we're putting this one forward so that we have time to get ready for them and hear from the community members to see if the people want it.

Audience member: If you know this is something we want to move forward with but you know like this, that this is what's happening is there's 20 acres and the 20 acres are part of the 20 acres next to our house our property is getting a solar field. That's what they want. That's what they want to do. This is not Pisgah?

Supervisor Thurston: No. That's why we're doing it.

Audience member: So it didn't happen.

Supervisor Thurston: It is not approved. They did not apply for it; we don't have a building permit application for a community solar.

Audience member: But for the solar panels, that the solar panels are going in, they go in either way?

Supervisor Thurston: That's what this is for because we're not ready to determine if it's in our best interest. I know it's confusing. We don't know anything about it and we're learning all about it right now so this is why tonight is just introducing this local law and then we'll have to hold a public hearing which I would like to suggest we do at the same time we do the public hearing for the Town Clerk salary. Then we'll immediately follow that with this public hearing and then we'll move into a special board on the zoning so this at least helps us put it back in review.

Audience member: Yeah, no that's in California and we watch things burn down and we watch people get cancer and it's not what you want.

So this is introducing a one-year moratorium. I would like to suggest that we hold the public hearing on this immediately following the town clerk on May 27th at 530 p.m.

RESOLUTION # 37 of 2026

RESOLUTION # 37 was tabled until May's meeting.

Resolution # 38 –

Supervisor Thurston announced we had Resolution #38 on the agenda, however the Town's attorney was not able to complete that Resolution in time for tonight's meeting therefore we will be introducing it next month. This Resolution will be a Local Law to ban battery energy storage systems town wide in St. Armand. We're not exactly sure exactly what that local law will look like. We have a lot more work to do on that and that is why we were not able to get that done for tonight. So we wanted to make sure that we had it correct and right the first time. This is brand new technology.

I know that most of you already know that there is a battery energy storage system that Carson Power wants to install on Trudeau Road. They are holding an information session at Mount Pisgah on April 29th, I think it's 5 p.m. So I will be there. I'm sure the other board members will also plan on being there and all of you. So just a little bit of information for you all. We have received a petition from many residents up on Trudeau Road that signed, stating that they did not want this in a residential area.

They did not want this near their homes because of the risk of fire and possible contamination if it were to catch on fire of water and groundwater. I know people have a lot of feelings about this. I'm going to briefly allow comments on this resolution that we don't have for tonight. If anybody wants to say anything, they can. I'm just going to tell you right now, and I've talked to every board member here, and we are of the opinion that the residents of St. Armand have reached out to us. They have signed petitions explaining that they do not want this on Trudeau Road. We are elected by them and we represent them. They don't want it. And we all have agreed that we will not allow it because we represent them. Now, that's not to say, I know that town lines are invisible lines on the ground. St. Armand abuts Harriestown, North Elba and the Village of Saranac Lake and all those folks, we care about their opinions, too. We also care about the opinions of folks who live in Onchiota, Vermontville, and Gabriels, even though they're not even in Essex County; even though we aren't elected to represent them, we do care about your opinion. And we know that everybody has opinions. Some people really like these (BESS) and want to see these go forward. And then the residents of that area have come to us and express their concern, not wanting them. But we represent the St. Armand residents who have signed a petition and said they don't want it. And we collectively as a Board agree, right, everyone? We all agree that this will not go through. Thank you.

RESOLUTION # 38 was tabled until May's meeting

Diane Strablow: Present, but also submitted a letter, stated she finds the ban disturbing. We need affordable, reliable electricity to run our homes and buildings. You were going you were doing that to gather information. What information? I find the signs that are placed in the area and the sentiments that no BESS facility should be located anywhere in the town that's quite disturbing. As we gradually transition off of fossil fuels, our electricity needs will grow. Many homes here in the North Country have aging oil and gas heating systems. Imagine wanting to replace that system with electric energy, efficient heat pump, but not having reliable, affordable electric supply to do so, and therefore being stuck with the continued use of expensive delivered fuels. We are all seeing volatility of gas and oil prices in real time right now.

Which is safer for your lives? It seems that not having access to reliable, affordable source of electricity leading to continued reliance on oil and propane to heat our homes and buildings would increase the fire risk throughout the other elements I have been reading about BESS facilities and watching webinars on the subject doing my best to inform myself including one this afternoon hosted by Kate Rogers, the deputy town supervisor of the Town of East Hampton. Her town approved without opposition a BESS facility that they are currently benefiting. Then I learned this afternoon that the town of St. Armand is planning to ban Carson Power facility. I'd like to know what research has been done to reach this conclusion to ban this facility. What base of knowledge did the residents who signed the petition against this facility use? It was stated when the moratorium was put in place that it was not to take a stand against facility, but to give time to study and gather information. What has been done to study and provide public information before reaching a conclusion that affects all of us, not only St. Armand, but surrounding communities? Has any effort been made to look into the possible benefits of this facility? Has any effort been made to hear from experts about concerns that have been raised, including noise and fires, to hear from experts on what the true risk is, what can be done to alleviate any sound issues. I thought that was the purpose of the moratorium. Shouldn't decisions the Town makes be based on facts? Shouldn't even those who have signed a petition against us have the opportunity to hear from the experts? What about the Town's own firefighters? Have they been consulted? What is the hurry to ban this facility? Why has this resolution been sent to a lawyer before Carson Powell has even been given a chance to do their public information session next week? There's already a moratorium in place. Please stop this process to ban and take time to study and consider the facts as you stated that you would.

Supervisor Thurston: I'm going to address a couple of your questions. You asked quite a few, so I might not get them all, and I apologize if I don't. But I would like to tell you that I have done a lot more research personally since the last meeting, just so you know, and we've all discussed this. The second thing I want you to know is there is a hurry on this, and the reason is I have been reading things that are going on in Albany about Albany possibly passing legislature prohibiting Towns from banning facilities in their Towns. New York State is a Home Rule State, so I know that there would be a class action lawsuit which we would certainly join, but if we get the ban in place prior to that legislation going through, then we are already covered. And the third thing I would like to say is we have heard from our residents and we are listening to our residents who overwhelmingly do not want this in their town, and our job, what we are elected for, and what we do, and what we will not stop doing is listening and respecting our residents and what their concerns are. So, as far as I'm concerned, you are absolutely correct; there might be only a 0.01 chance of a BESS catching on fire and contaminating groundwater and wells in that area and if the residents of St. Armand overwhelmingly proved to us that they don't want it, which they've done. Our job is to listen and represent them and we will continue to do so.

Sue Abott Jones: I've been attached to the community since 1988 just for the record. I live on Trudeau and have for 13 years. I'm not asking that we go right ahead and do this, I'm in the middle of researching it myself, but a moratorium is a moratorium, you got to hear or take six months if you think that Albany's going faster than we are.

Councilperson Karl Law: Thank you so much Mrs. Jones. You taught in my second grade. Many were on the petition, I believe it was 167 and while not all of them were St. Armand residents, overwhelmingly they were on that stretch of land. Trudeau Road is basically what I'm talking about there because those are the folks that we have to listen to right now. But I really think we need to give this more careful consideration and hear from the rest of St. Armand.

Supervisor Thurston: Well, I will tell you, you are the very first resident that lives on Trudeau Road that was for the BESS facility.

Sue Abbott Jones: I am not saying I'm for or against it. I just think we should take more time.

Supervisor Thurston: I did and I explained just now the reason that we're moving forward is because of Albany and yes, they want to mow over us. And, we do have Home Rule Law and I'm not willing to risk what the residents of that area overwhelmingly have said to this board: "We don't want this." I'm not willing to wait. I'm not willing to wait one more month.

Kathy Hogan: I live at 21 Mount Pisgah Road. I've lived in St. Armand for 27 years. I just have three quick points to express and I'm coming from a perspective of a very umbrella look at the Adirondack Park. So in my way, any threat of risk of toxicity, fire, noise, is a risk to the park and not just our little neck of the woods. I have reached out to the APA, the Adirondack Council, and I get a sense of being muzzled; these agencies are being muzzled by yet another layer of the Office of Renewable Energy site. Who benefits from this; National Grid and Carson Power. Are we going to get more service from National Grid? Is it going to be decreasing our bills? Who's the big user? Is it Lake Placid? Then maybe put it in Lake Placid. My third point is, as on a personal note, I lived in the little creamery next to the

existing National grid structure when it was sold by Harry Hollis to National Grid. At that point, we were going to buy the land that we currently live in. But then we were told, oh, there won't be any noise, there will be noise remediation, the power lines are going to be up there, you won't see them. Tell that to the pole that's right in the middle of my view. Tell that to the noise that is constant and increasing from National Grid. I welcome all of you to please come to the bottom of Mt. Pisgah Road, sit in your car with the radio off and the windows down and hear this. Some days it's worse than others and it's definitely worse than it was when we constructed it in 1980.

Audience member (unidentified):

So, information that I happen to have just because of where our property is situated and things that we've been involved with. Just so you know, Carson power came in first before we all knew about it and went into political groups that are active in Saranac Lake and started soft selling them to try to get them involved and get them engaged and get them advocating for it under this green energy without letting anybody know that there was a lithium storage. That this solar power is going to be havoc and then it was going to go on to lithium storage. So the residents didn't know that before. And that's what these companies do. We watched PG do all kinds of stuff like this. So, that's their course of business. I just want everyone, as we go and we listen to them, understand that was their first foot forward. Also have been made promises to the people who are landowners that they need to have either the panels or the whatever of they are going to be, it will be legacy wealth for your family. It's going to be passive income your family. So again, they are in the business of selling. But there was lots of hard sells and lots of promises made for people. They need that our landowners here to participate in this without coming to the board and letting the board know; I don't know where anything is with the APA. It is not gossip on the hearing. I'm hearing it direct from the people who have been told things specifically by a person at Carson. That's all. I just want you to know. I want everybody to know that. I'm wondering what this has to do with the zoning survey and zoning.

Supervisor Thurston. It actually is coincidence. Believe it or not If you all listen to our board meetings from five months ago actually, Diane Chase is the catalyst for the zoning survey and it was over five months ago now that we had talked about possibly doing some zoning. And we had formed a committee to create a zoning survey. The committee met a couple of times, we created the survey, we brought it back to the board, the board approved the survey. We also wanted to do the robo call sign up because we were having issues getting ahold of people to let them know about water breaks. So we did both of those at the same time. The zoning and the BESS are completely coincidental. But clearly there could be some overlap there. Even if we don't pass the ban and the state prohibits us from passing the ban, can we just have zoning ordinance and say, well, we have zoning so you can't build it anywhere except right here? Zoning takes a long time.

Audience member (unidentified): One of the things that I noticed over and over and I apologize for interrupting, some of the questions that people were saying in the zoning survey is you really should have an updated comprehensive plan before you tackle zoning.

Supervisor Thurston: We do. We got a grant. We have a brand new comprehensive plan. It was completed in 2025 and there's a link to that on our website. So, we're taking the steps properly. I just want everyone to know that.

Allison King: I live in Onchiota and I can address the elephant in the room. Your firefighters serve us. We care about whether they're monitoring a fire. There's nobody to come down to Onchiota where two homes have burnt down. One might have polluted the pond where you guys all come swim in the summer. So you know, we have a stake, but we're also, there's a group of us who are trying to do the right thing climate wise and in the Town of Franklin, we had substations. We're trying to figure out should we be in these? We have a group that includes two engineers who've worked in either renewable or nuclear power, a hydrogeologist retired from the USGS who helped us determine what are the questions about groundwater and surface water? So we submitted to Carson Power questions about a week ago because we don't want to ask questions this week and they said, "Oh we didn't think about that." We submitted it and asked them to provide written responsive risk supporting citations. We are seeking, and this is bold and underlined, local site-specific answers to why here in an atonic region served by hydroelectric and nuclear power. So we have a paragraph in there:

"We recognize the value of energy storage systems in your state and serving communities growing energy needs by building resilience of our electrical system, increasing reliability, integrating renewable energy and protecting atonic layers."

So this is why I think it's premature to ban, I hear you on the concern about New York State I would look into, you know, and others who are working on state-level legislation to see what's the timing on that as much as I can find out.

We said it would be helpful for Carson Power to explain its best siting process before addressing specific risks and benefits of the proposed project to local communities in key topics.

What are the risks to health, safety, property so you know property value and the environment address risks to adjacent neighbors (the Trudeau road area) and community served by the region's volunteer fire departments as well as risk mitigation so it's different you know when you say NIMBY I mean there's one yard there's one person where this is in their backyard you know there are others I get that it's noisy there but whether this is noisy; that's part of the question. What's the noise going to be? What's the noise mitigation? How does that compare to here in the snow, in the snow blowers making snow? How does it compare to National Grid? We all deserve the answers to those questions. And for us, if we want to be in the Town of Franklin, we need to know all this too. How will the benefit the people downstate who have paper plants that are polluting? How does it benefit here to have guests here and or neighboring Adirondack communities?

I've already pushed back when we sent this in and the person from Carson Power wrote back about brownouts. I wrote right back to say, where in the North Country are brownouts and where? Because I sure haven't had a brownout. They can't get away with generalities. But this is why I think, don't ban it yet. Let's figure it out. And the answer may be, it doesn't belong here. But we'll know why, and then we'll understand, can we do it someplace else? We're very winter dependent in our economy. And there are issues long-term as, you know, I went from wood and solar panels, moved up here and its oil and then a protein generator. We're trying to get off of that. Electric car, getting heat pumps, this is all our electric rates are jacking up. So describe effects on local cost of electricity, local power reliability, property or school tax savings with the pilot, and energy for peak electricity demand. Our peak plants are hydroelectric. So how does this work? I get how it works downstate, but we want to know how it would work here. How would this best also contribute to future energy resilience and bolster this aging grid infrastructure as energy needs increase? So my comment is don't ban it right away when we already have a moratorium and encourage people learn about this. I made copies of these questions and the parts that I'm learning as we go. There are people in our little group that have tremendous experience and could craft questions that aren't easy to answer, that require data, and if they don't answer them well, you know, we can hold them accountable.

Supervisor Thurston: We are doing our due diligence, but we need to move forward with the meeting I know we could talk about this all night and I don't want to cut anybody off and I respect everyone's opinion But we do have to move forward with the meeting. Thank you for coming. Thank you for voicing your opinion. We do appreciate it.

RESOLUTIONS # 36 - # 38 OF 2026

RESOLUTION # 36 OF 2026 RESOLUTION INTRODUCING PROPOSED LOCAL LAW NO. 2 FOR THE YEAR 2026 ENTITLED "A LOCAL LAW INCREASING THE 2026 SALARY OF THE TOWN CLERK OF THE TOWN OF ST. ARMAND"

Councilperson JP O'Neil, who moved its adoption, offered the following Resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED that the Town of St. Armand Town Board hereby introduces proposed Local Law No. 2 of 2026 entitled "Local Law Increasing the 2026 Salary of the Town Clerk of the Town of St. Armand" reading and provided as follows:

A LOCAL LAW INCREASING THE 2026 SALARY OF THE TOWN CLERK OF THE TOWN OF ST. ARMAND

SECTION I. TITLE.

This Local Law shall be known and cited as Town of St. Armand "Local Law Increasing the 2026 Salary of the Town Clerk of the Town of St. Armand.

SECTION II. LEGISLATIVE INTENT.

It is the intent of this Local Law to increase the salary of the Town Clerk position for the 2026 fiscal year.

The payment vouchers for April’s bills were presented for the Board’s approval as follows:

- General Vouchers # 80 - # 107 in the amount of \$ 78,189.80
- Trust and Agency Vouchers # 7 - # 9 in the amount of \$ 342.39
- Highway Vouchers # 40 - # 53 in the amount of \$ 14,327.18
- Water & Sewer Vouchers # 42 - # 59 in the amount of \$ 11,162.16
- Fire Protection Fund Vouchers # 10 - # 13 in the amount of \$ 44,086.23

Councilperson Donna Whitelaw made the Motion to approve payment of April’s bills. The Motion was seconded by Deputy Supervisor Karl Law. A Roll Call Vote was as follows:

Supervisor Davina Thurston	AYE
Deputy Supervisor Karl Law	AYE
Councilperson Donna Whitelaw	AYE
Councilperson JP O’Neil	AYE
Councilperson Raymond Tempestilli	ABSENT

All in favor. Motion carried.

MONTHLY REPORT FROM THE SUPERVISOR

Supervisor Thurston requested approval for March 2026 Supervisor’s Reports. Councilperson JP O’Neil made the Motion to approve the Supervisor’s Report for March. The Motion was seconded by Deputy Supervisor Karl Law.

All in favor. Motion carried.

MOTION TO APPROVE MEETING MINUTES

Deputy Supervisor Karl Law made the Motion to approved the Regular Board Meeting Minutes for the March 19, 2026, Meeting Minutes. The Motion was seconded by Councilperson Donna Whitelaw.

All in favor. Motion carried.

TOWN CLERK’S MONTHLY REPORT

Town Clerk Barbara Darrah reported the following Town Clerk revenue collected for the month of February 2026:

Dog Licenses (4): 4 FS		\$ 28.00
Gaming License: License \$30.00	Fee: \$45.00	\$ 75.00
Genealogy Request (1)		\$ 22.00
Certified Death Certificates (5)		\$ 50.00
Total Revenue:		\$ 175.00
Total Checks Written:		
Town Supervisor: A \$ 54.00, B \$ 72.00, NYS Comp. \$ 45.00, Dept. of A&M \$ 4.00		\$ 175.00

OLD BUSINESS

* Robo Call Info and Zoning Survey – Supervisor Thurston reported she is still receiving survey responses and the date has been set for the Special Board Meeting on May 27th to go over the surveys.

* Well Field Purchase – Supervisor Thurston reported she, Jonathan Neilson, Anna Reynolds, Greg Swart, who is our engineer, had an on-line meeting to discuss the PFOA project. Greg Swart gave a

quote of \$5,000.00 to assist the Town with all the paperwork, including SEQR and what is needed for the PFOA grant. The Town has \$5,000 remaining from the water well field purchase and this fits under the water funding. She asked for a Motion to transfer that remaining \$5,000.00 left over from the water well field purchase to pay for this engineering quote for the PFOA costs.

MOTION

Deputy Supervisor Karl Law made the Motion to move the remaining funds of \$5,000.00 from the well field purchase to the PFOA grant costs. The Motion was seconded by Councilperson Donna Whitelaw.

Supervisor Thurston requested a Roll Call vote:

Supervisor Thurston	AYE
Deputy Supervisor Karl Law	AYE
Councilperson Donna Whitelaw	AYE
Councilperson JP O'Neil	AYE
Councilperson Raymond Tempestilli	ABSENT

All in favor. Motion carried.

* Porta Potties – Last month Sheridan Swinyer requested that a bathroom be opened up at the ball park for people to use while visiting the ball park. Supervisor Thurston reported she made several phone calls and reached out to the Village of Saranac Lake to ask them how they operated their public restrooms. They have a contract with Scooter's Cleaning who goes there every day and unlocks and cleans the bathrooms daily. The contract for 2026 is currently \$22,000.00. The Village police lock the bathrooms every night between 8:00 – 9:00 pm. If there is an incident where there's anything wrong, then the Village of Saranac Lake has full-time year-round housekeeping staff on site, and they have gone down there. The village manager has gone down there and dealt with whatever issues have arose. It's a substantial monetary investment for something like this.

Supervisor Thurston reported she also reached out to the village of Lake Placid. They do not have a contract for opening and closing, but they do have full-time year-round staff that go in every day, clean the bathrooms. They go up every night, lock the bathrooms, and it's a lot of money.

She reached out to Boyers to ask if we could get two cleanings on the porta potties a week and unfortunately that won't work but an option would be to get three porta potties instead of two. If the town were to open a bathroom even May through October or something like that, we would need to have staff on hand to unlock that bathroom every single day, clean that bathroom every single day, and then go to that bathroom every single night to lock. Even if there was a locking mechanism, we still need to make sure that the bathroom is appropriate at all times. We would also have to make sure that there was somebody available 24 seven 365 or for however many days that it's open someone would have to be on call to go down there if there were needles or feces, or blood and she was told quite a few stories that she did not want a repeat. After those discussions, Supervisor Thurston stated she would rather staff the building and just have a bathroom open. She reported we should get those port-a-potties right away and that's part of this discussion because regardless if the Board wants to move forward with having a bathroom open, we're not going to have it as soon as we need it. Boyers would be at the park every Thursday doing the emptying and cleaning. There were no issues with the porta-potties last year. And we do have the youth building open for all of the booster practices and all the boosters games. We do have a summer crew that runs the snack shack and they check the bathrooms. The bathrooms are available in the winter skating season as well. But, it is ball field time, and we need to get the porta-potties immediately. The price for the port-a-potties: \$160.00 a month for the regular and the handicapped port-a-potty, which we have to have at least one, is \$225.00 a month and then a delivery fee of \$35 and a pickup of three is \$35.00 per month. The cleaning fee is included with those two quarters that that monthly fee.

And then decide, you know, what you want to do about having if you want to move forward with a bathroom, you know what that's to look like.

Sheridan Swinyer: I don't like them. There's no place to get them in there. There's no place to wash your hands down there. You teach the kids, every time you go to batting, make sure you wash your hands. And then we have these port-a-potties down there and no place for anybody to wash your hands or anything like that. I mean, there should be someplace for kids to get a drink of water, to wash their hands, do something down there. I understand that it would cost some money. Discussion ensued regarding the

summer program and other programs. Supervisor Thurston offered to do a Motion to expend \$2,000.00 for an outdoor drinking fountain, using Occupancy Tax funds. The Board agreed.

MOTION

Councilperson JP O’Neil made a Motion to expend \$2,000.00 of Occupancy Tax funds for the purchase of an outdoor water fountain for the Youth Field. The Motion was seconded by Deputy Supervisor Karl Law. Supervisor Thurston requested a Roll Call Vote:

Supervisor Thurston	AYE
Deputy Supervisor Karl Law	AYE
Councilperson Donna Whitelaw	AYE
Councilperson JP O’Neil	AYE
Councilperson Raymond Tempestilli	ABSENT

All in favor. Motion carried.

* Veterans Park fence project – Supervisor Thurston reported that the Veteran’s Park Fence project would be approximately \$1,700.00 to install. Sheridan Swinyer offered to help install the fence along with Robert Snickles. Supervisor Thurston requested a Motion to expend Occupancy Tax funds in the amount of approximately \$1700.00 for the cost of the fence installation.

MOTION

Councilperson Donna Whitelaw made the Motion to expend \$1700.00 in Occupancy Tax funds for the cost of installing a fence at the Veterans Park. The Motion was seconded by Councilperson JP O’Neil. Supervisor Thurston requested a Roll Call Vote:

Supervisor Thurston	AYE
Deputy Supervisor Karl Law	AYE
Councilperson Donna Whitelaw	AYE
Councilperson JP O’Neil	AYE
Councilperson Raymond Tempestilli	ABSENT

All in favor. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

* Spruce Up St. Armand – Spring clean-up time is approaching and the Spruce Up St. Armand annual clean-up is underway. The flier will be displayed advertising orange trash bags and gloves available for pick up at the Town Hall and everyone is welcome to participate.

* Crossing Signs – Supervisor Thurston acknowledged that there was a lot of discussion on crosswalks, specifically across the road at Lil Tykes Day Care. She would also like to see two on Roosevelt coming up the hill one going down the hill just because the kids are always running in and out of there.

Deputy Supervisor Karl Law: I personally had to run down to Dollar General and then was coming back and it was a baseball night and I had a little boy out from me that I didn't see but I'm one of the drivers on that road that goes four miles an hour and I do know plenty of drivers on that road that don't go four miles an hour and if it was one of the other drivers we were looking at really bad situations and I like those. It will stop them from driving fast and it might make somebody take their foot off the gas.

Discussion ensued regarding so many signs already existing on Roosevelt Lane. The no parking signs were originally only installed for the Block Party but were never pulled back up afterward. During the ball season many cars park along Roosevelt and occupants watch the ball games.

Supervisor Thurston reported she researched and found some signs which are 36 X 36 and \$201.00 each. They are the high reflective ones. It would be under Highway costs. Supervisor Thurston requested a Motion to order the road signs.

MOTION

Deputy Supervisor Karl Law made a Motion to approve the purchase of 4 road signs at a cost of \$201.00 each. The Motion was seconded by Councilperson Donna Whitelaw. Supervisor Thurston requested a Roll Call Vote:

Supervisor Thurston	AYE
Deputy Supervisor Karl Law	AYE
Councilperson Donna Whitelaw	AYE
Councilperson JP O’Neil	AYE
Councilperson Raymond Tempestilli	ABSENT

All in favor. Motion carried.

* Adirondack Explorer Article – There was an article in the Adirondack Explorer regarding the water infrastructure in Adirondack communities, to include St. Armand.

* Saranac Lake Rescue Squad Annual Report – copies of the report were included in the Town Board’s packets for their review.

* Approval to apply for EFC Engineering Planning Grant – West Main Street – Supervisor Thurston explained there is a Wastewater Infrastructure Engineering Planning Grant, funded by EPG and stated she would like to apply for this grant for the West Main Street project. It would be from the four corners to the Y. The paving would be all lumped in as well. Any time and every time we have had an EPG grant, an engineering report is part of it. This is a smaller grant; it's only up to \$95 ,000.00, there's a 20% match, but it can be in-kind services. We can do work, paperwork, whatever, 20% administrative. Supervisor Thurston requested permission to apply this year for the West Main Street EPG planning grant. Discussion ensued and upon conclusion a Motion was requested:

MOTION

Councilperson JP O’Neil made a Motion to approve applying for the West Main Street EPG planning grant. The Motion was seconded by Councilperson Donna Whitelaw. Supervisor Thurston requested a Roll Call Vote:

Supervisor Thurston	AYE
Deputy Supervisor Karl Law	AYE
Councilperson Donna Whitelaw	AYE
Councilperson JP O’Neil	AYE
Councilperson Raymond Tempestilli	ABSENT

All in favor. Motion carried.

QUESTIONS, COMMENTS OR CONCERNS FROM GUESTS AND STAFF:

Supervisor Thurston asked if there were any comments or concerns from those both present and on-line. There were no further questions from anyone in the audience or on-line.

Supervisor Thurston announced the Board needed to go into Executive Session for a Personnel matter. She asked for a Motion to move into Executive Session.

MOTION TO MOVE INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION

Councilperson JP O’Neil made the Motion to move into Executive Session. The Motion was seconded by Councilperson Donna Whitelaw. The Executive Session began at 8:56 pm.

MOTION TO END EXECUTIVE SESSION

Deputy Supervisor Karl Law made the Motion to end the Executive Session. The Motion was seconded by Councilperson Donna Whitelaw. The Executive Session ended at 9:08 pm.

MOTION TO ADJOURN REGULAR BOARD MEETING

Councilperson Donna Whitelaw made a Motion to adjourn the Regular Board Meeting. The Motion was seconded by Councilperson JP O'Neil. The Regular Board Meeting was adjourned at 9:09 pm.

I, Barbara J. Darrah, Town Clerk for the Town of St. Armand, does hereby certify that the above is a true and correct transcript of the Regular Board Meeting minutes held on the above-referenced date.

Dated: April 23, 2026

Barbara J. Darrah
St. Armand Town Clerk