

The Theresa Town Board held a regular meeting January 14, 2026 at 6:00 p.m. in the Town Office at 215 Riverside Avenue and the following were present:

Kristopher Ryder	Supervisor
Timothy Busler	Councilman
Jamie Papin	Councilman
Lynn Brown	Councilwoman
Aimee Martini	Councilwoman

Vickie Karg	Town Clerk
Mark Savage	Highway Superintendent

Others present: Richard Neijens, Greg Parmes, Katherine Hunter

The meeting was called to order by Supervisor Ryder at 6 p.m.

Reports received and placed on file:

Town Clerk's & Building & Zoning December 2025 report
Transfer Site's December 2025 report
Supervisor's December 2025 report
Judge Robert's December 2025 report
Judge Oblender's Report- NO report

Res. # 1

Motion by: Lynn Brown
Seconded by: Jamie Papin

Resolved, that the minutes of December 30, 2025 be accepted as read.

VOTE: Kristopher Ryder-aye, Timothy Busler-aye, Jamie Papin-aye, Lynn Brown-aye,
Aimee Martini-aye Motion carried.

Res. # 2

Motion by: Timothy Busler
Seconded by: Lynn Brown

Resolved, that the following bills be paid:

Vouchers # 1-21 Total: \$ 28,822.57

General	\$ 15,204.03
General O/S	\$ 1100.75
Highway	\$ 12,365.63
Highway O/S	\$ 152.16

VOTE: Kristopher Ryder-aye, Timothy Busler-aye, Jamie Papin-aye, Lynn Brown-aye,
Aimee Martini-aye Motion carried.

Res. # 3

Motion by: Timothy Busler
Seconded by: Kristopher Ryder

Resolved, that the following resolution be passed on item and salary schedule and time of payments to be made in 2026, effective January 1, 2026:

- Board meetings will be held on the 2nd Wednesday of each month. All meetings will be at the Town Office, 215 Riverside Avenue, and will begin at 6:00 PM.
- Official Newspaper – Watertown Daily Times
- Official Online Newspaper - Newzjunky
- Depository for Supervisor, Building/Zoning Officer, Town Clerk/Tax Collector – Community Bank.

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- Depository for Town Justice's – Community Bank
- Historian: Timothy Minnick
- Town Board Members on Building Committee: Timothy Busler
- Account Clerk: Katherine Hunter
- Deputy Supervisor: Lynn Brown
- Deputy Town Clerk/Tax Collector: Kim Delles
- Budget Officer: Kim Delles

Wages/ Payment

Term	Name	Position	Salary	Schedule
1 year	Katherine Hunter	Bookkeeper P/T	\$ 25.30/hr	\$809.60/weekly
4 year	Isabelle Savage	Town Justice	\$10,723.00	\$893.58/monthly
3 year	Kristopher Ryder	Supervisor	\$19,200.00	\$1,600.00/monthly
1 year	Dale Raymo	Assessor	\$30,052.00	\$ 577.92/weekly
4 year	Vickie Karg	Town Clerk/Tax Collector	\$42,099.00	\$809.60/weekly
	Kim Delles	Budget off/deputy clerk/tax coll	\$22,787.44	Insurance
3 year	Mark Savage	Highway Supt.	\$75,334.00	\$1,448.73/weekly
3 year	Timothy Busler	Councilmember	\$1,395.00	\$116.25/month
4 year	Jamie Papin	Councilmember	\$1,395.00	\$116.25/month
4 year	Lynn Brown	Councilmember	\$1,395.00	\$116.25/month
3 year	Aimee Martini	Councilmember	\$1,395.00	\$116.25/month
1 year	Thomas Johnston	Building & Zoning Off.	\$31.00/hr	weekly
1 year	Michael Trickey	Zoning Officer	\$27.50/hr	weekly
1 year	Scott Booth	Cemetery Supervisor	\$1,500.00	yearly
1 year	Dan McIroy	Winter Rec Director	\$21/hour	weekly
1 year	Paige Bauer	Summer Rec Director	\$22/hour*	weekly
1 year	Recreation Assistants		\$16.00/hour	weekly
1 year	Timothy Beach	Cemetery Laborer	\$20.37/hour	weekly

TRANSFER SITE:

Larry Martin, Laborer	\$20.37/hour	weekly
Timothy Beach(laborer/temp)	\$20.37/hour	weekly

HIGHWAY EMPLOYEES:

MEO (Zachary Ramsey)	\$26.94/hour	weekly
MEO (Matt Ericzon)	\$27.26/hour	weekly
MEO (David Ebbrecht)	\$28.67/hour	weekly
MEO (Matt McCulloch)	\$28.67/hour	weekly
MEO (Rich Ault)	\$28.56/hour	weekly
MEO (Ronnie Vantassel)	\$28.56/hour	weekly
(3) Laborers	\$20.37/hour	weekly

LIBRARY:

1 year	Penny Ebbrect	Librarian P/T	\$19.00/hour	weekly
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PLANNING/ZONING BOARD: Board Members - \$30.00 each per meeting
 Board Member/Secretary - \$60.00 per meeting
 Non-Board Member Secretary - \$30.00 per meeting

All Town Employees - 72.5 cents per mile

Blanket Bond for all Town Officials: Supervisor - \$70,000.00, Tax Collector - \$95,000.00 and all other Officials - \$10,000.00 each.

VOTE: Kristopher Ryder-aye, Timothy Busler-aye, Jamie Papin-aye, Lynn Brown-aye, Aimee Martini-aye
 Motion carried.

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Res. # 4

Motion by: Kristopher Ryder
Seconded by: Lynn Brown

Resolved, that the Supervisor be authorized to transfer \$2,837.86 from 2025 General Fund Appropriation Account, A-1990.4 to the following General Fund Appropriation Accounts:

- \$32.92 Town Justice II, PS A-1110.11
- \$2,804.94 Buildings, CE A-1620.4

VOTE: Kristopher Ryder-aye, Timothy Busler-aye, Jamie Papin-aye, Lynn Brown-aye, Aimee Martini-aye
Motion carried.

Discussion:

- Welcome Aimee Martini to the Town Board.
- Bookkeeper P/T- \$42,099, Supervisor Ryder states we had a conversation with Katherine about returning it back to hourly and adding some accrued sick time and vacation time- something similar to the Highway contract- as far as sick time, 8 days sick and 5 vacation days. Lynn Brown states that it should not exceed a 32-hour work week, previously no sick days or vacation days. Effective January 19th,2026.

Rick Neijens states that NYS passed a Law in December with their intentions of making 100% disabled veterans tax exempt, I would like to ask the Board to consider. NYS passed a Law that 100% disabled vets be tax exempt on property tax IF the Town Board votes it in. On the 6th of January the Assembly sent back an amendment, on 8th January the Senate set up an amendment and Mr. Neijens would like the Town of Theresa to jump on ahead of everyone else and get the Law in the books and lead the way for Jefferson County and NYS. He left some reading materials. Mr. Ryder will look more into this matter, research it and get information.

Use of Facilities: Chapman Days-

Desi Howard would like to use all the Town facilities for Chapman Days, Aug. 21-23, that is also the timeframe for the Joel Davis Tournaments. She mainly needs the rink. The Town Board will work with her.

Highway update:

Supervisor Savage states that it's just short and sweet, it's been one of those winters. Councilwoman Brown asked about the Philly fuel bill and would like to touch base on it more, probably burned 1200 gallons of just diesel fuel last month. 4 plows going out at a time round trip is 3 hours with most of the time 2-3 trips a day, clean up afterwards. One employee keeps track of trips and over 50 trips so far.

Weather permitting will continue to do work here in the office, get stuff fixed up and cleaned up and looking presentable.

If anyone knows what to do with the rolltop desk, it was given to the Town. Maybe see if the library has some space for it. If in the future we get the historical society set up, it could be a historical piece for that.

Parks & Rec:

The rink is slow but is ready to go. The kids have worked a couple times and waiting out the warm weather.

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Comprehensive Planning:

Supervisor Ryder states that it was budgeted for Lynn Brown spoke with Melanie Rafferty with Cortel Improvement, check her out online. Strategic planning, think about who else should be involved, built to do in an 8-hour session with all-in-one day or 2-4-hour sessions. It can't be open to the public but will eventually open to a public meeting. It is a budgeted expense, and read over the information, Ms. Rafferty would come to a meeting to answer questions. These grants would be life changing, room for growth, senior housing/infrastructure, water & sewer. Timothy Busler states that it's already been budgeted and agreed on in October. Think about who would be invited, work on it next month, thoughts, collaborations. The planning board and village officials. Lynn Brown will reach out to Ms. Rafferty to put us on the calendar.

Date to Audit Town books:

Supervisor Ryder asked the Board if audits have always been done in a Board meeting. The Town Clerk would like to be audited in March.

Date to Audit Justice books:

Supervisor Ryder will send emails to the previous Judges to set up times to be audited in February.

Supervisor Ryder states he would like to change audits between the Clerk/Tax Collector and the Justice to be in the office vs the Board meeting.

Possible Town and Court Audits:

Pause on the Court, talk about the Town, when was the last audit? 2013 was the last time an audit was conducted. Mr. Ryder feels that there should be an audit, most Towns do them every 3-5 years. The Board feels with the change that it would be perfect timing.

Court Issues:

Isabelle Savage states 2019 to current is what she walked into, 5 banker boxes full, six, seven, eight years' worth of stuff just thrown into boxes. This is how our community has been served for the last few years. Justice Savage states that working in the Court system she knows what she is looking at so she was able to in seven days figure out where she was at, she ran lots of reports. She found checks/money orders from 2020 behind a desk in Justice Roberts office. She found two checks just in a drawer in Justice Oblenders office, she was able to deposit one of the checks and had to send the other one back to the person to take it back to the bank and re-issue. In Rachel's office there was a check that was found from 2022 that she had to send back to the person to ask them to take it back to the bank. Mrs. Savage has started sending out some letters, and obviously people aren't very happy when they call but she has to get things cleared up and closed out. When she did the transfer from both of the other Judges to her there was over 3000 cases transferred. Justice Savage states that we are a Town, there should not be 3000 cases. 517 current open arrest reports for Theresa, all of these arrest are open, but does that mean that the case wasn't disposed of and they pleaded guilty and paid the fine, no it just means that the Judge at the time didn't finish doing their job, so these people all have open arrest on their reports. Supervisor Ryder asked if there was a possibility that they could have been resolved, Lynn Brown asked how she would know the difference. Justice Savage states that she would have to pull every single case and hope she can find it and if she can't find it, she would have to go into the program that is used and she believes it only goes back to 2016. So, if it is not in there she would have to go to the basement and look through boxes. One case could turn into hours of research. There are a couple of cases that are from the 90's. She may have to contact an attorney. She states that the Court is a nightmare and at some point, she will have to get an attorney Judge in here and sit down and go through criminal files with her, luckily, she knows a lot of it from working in County Court. There are a lot of Laws to know and keep up with. This stuff must be cleaned up, and this can affect peoples lives.

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Justice Savage says that there are Court files downstairs that are just thrown everywhere, its surreal, she can not believe that someone would run for a position and not take it seriously, and she gets it, she was the Judge from 2000-2007, nobody has ever gave a crap about the Courts, they were just there to make money, it was made very clear to her and that is why she got out of office the last time. Justice Savage states that the Court is not there to make money, it's there as another branch of government just like Kris's position, just like the Board's position, it's not there to make the Town money, it's there to serve the community and we have done a wicked disservice to this community. The even more frustrating thing is that Vickie finally started calling and spoke with Peter Hakes who is our special counsel that all the Judges in this district report to. Vickie just started talking to him, he could have been contacted a long time ago, just like Rebeca's reports and audit never getting finished last year and the previous Supervisor just letting it go. There are things that could have been done but people just chose not to do it. So now there is a humongous mess in there. When Isabelle spoke with Peter, he said this stuff has got to get cleaned up.

Lynn Brown asks if there is a way to prioritize the severity of the crime, like if there was a crime against a child. Justice Savage states that 1990-1999 shows the penal Law, but the more current do not show me what the codes are.

Justice Savage says that there are 7 file cabinet drawers full of cases, she has to go through all of them, 3 piles and 3 bankers boxes and has spent 40 hours since the beginning of the year just trying to organize it and going through the boxes to get stuff put together because of the way it was given to her. Last year, the Town had 710 cases started in the Court and only 226 of them are closed. Zoning tickets that haven't even been input yet, that people have plead guilty to.

Supervisor Ryder asks what can we do moving forward? Justice Savage says that even working 40 hours a week, she couldn't ever do it all on her own. She has spoken with the Court clerk in Philly who is willing to come in 10-15 hours a week to help, she can have her get some of the traffic stuff done, unfortunately Justice Savage will have to do the criminal cases or another Judge because she states you have to know what you are looking at, she does know what she is looking at because it's what she does every day. Lyndsay Meyers from Philadelphia Court would be willing to come to help, she is proficient in traffic. Mrs. Savage needs to get things cleaned up and closed out. Lynn Brown told Isabelle to track her hours and that there is only \$10,000 for the entire year budgeted for the Judge and they will reconsider month by month. Mr. Ryder states that the Court needs a financial audit. Peter Hakes is putting the Town of Theresa on the list for an audit. In previous meetings when asked how many open cases, it was always we will have to get back to you.

Katherine Hunter states that when she is in the office she is there to keep the office open and answer the phone, she doesn't have anything to do some of the time she is super slammed through the week but she is willing to help organize and go through boxes and go through things, file, match up things. Judge Savage states that in order to touch files she would have to be fingerprinted and approved through the Court administration and then she would have to show what to do. If she could get Lyndsay in, she would already know what to do and hit the ground running.

Supervisor Ryder says to offer Lyndsay Meyer \$21 per hour and a cap of 100 hours and then will reassess after the 100 hours if she accepts.

He will also look into the price of audits for the Town and Court, will bring back information to the next meeting.

Res. # 5

Motion by: Kristopher Ryder

Seconded by: Lynn Brown

Resolved, that the Town Board go into executive session at 7:20 p.m.

VOTE: Kristopher Ryder- aye, Timothy Busler- aye, Jamie Papin- aye, Lynn Brown- aye, Aimee Martini- aye
Motion carried.

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Res. # 6

Motion by: Kristopher Ryder
Seconded by: Timothy Busler

Resolved, that the Town Board ends executive session at 7:48 p.m.

VOTE: Kristopher Ryder- aye, Timothy Busler- aye, Jamie Papin- aye, Lynn Brown-
aye, Aimee Martini- aye Motion carried.

Res. # 7

Motion by: Kristopher Ryder
Seconded by: Jamie Papin

Resolved, that the meeting be closed at 7:49 p.m.

VOTE: Kristopher Ryder- aye, Timothy Busler- aye, Jamie Papin- aye, Lynn Brown-
aye, Aimee Martini- aye Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Vickie Karg
Town Clerk