



9097 Daylight Drive - West Bloomfield, NY 14585

MINUTES

Town of West Bloomfield – Board Meeting

February 12, 2025

In Attendance: – *Supervisor Todd Campbell, Councilmembers, Bill Travis, Ruth Smith, Kevin Carey, Scott Harman, Town Clerk – Brenda Thompson, Chris Tobin, Jeff Harloff, Rita Dreimiller, Russell Dreimiller, Lynn Parrish, Laurie DeGraw, Steve DeGraw, Curt Barnes, Pete Thompson, one attendee via Zoom.*

Supervisor Campbell called the Town Board Meeting to order at 7:00pm.

Public Hearing - Town Clerk Thompson read the Public Hearing Notice. - LOCAL LAW #1-2025 TO OVERRIDE THE TAX LEVY LIMIT ESTABLISHED AT GENERAL MUNICIPAL LAW SECTION 3-C FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2025. PLEASE TAKE NOTICE, that a Local Law has been introduced to the Town Board of the Town of West Bloomfield, New York, designated as Local Law #1-2025 to Override the Tax Levy Limit Establishment at General Municipal Law Section 3-C for the fiscal year 2025. Supervisor Campbell provided an overview of the law and the basis for having the law on file. He stated the Town officials always work to keep below the tax cap; the Local Law is put in place as a precautionary protective measure. Steve DeGraw asked for verification of what the number will be, Supervisor Campbell advised that the number is not available until the State Publishes it. Councilmember Travis advised that the Town has not increased the tax rate in 3 years. Russell Dreimiller advised his tax bill increased 20% so he did not see how that could be true, inflation that is being shown is 3% so Town is looking for 8%? Supervisor Campbell asked for clarification on where he is getting 8% and stated that it is not the Town's intention to override the State Tax Cap, the Local Law is put in place as only a precautionary measure. The assessed values in the Town determine the Tax Levy amount for the Town. Councilmember Harman reminded residents to look at their current Town & County Tax bill and note the County Tax line amount and advised that the Town has no control over the County Tax rate. The Town only controls about 15% of the total tax bill. Rita Dreimiller asked the Town Board if they have ever had to use the Tax Cap override, Supervisor Campbell advised that in 2014 the override was used by the Town. She also inquired if there was a maximum limit, Supervisor Campbell advised that there was not, but the Board always works with the intention of staying within the limit provided by the State. Rita then asked if they have any estimates on what the salt crisis impact will be, Councilman Harman advised that the Town is on a contracted price for salt \$52.00 per ton, she then asked for confirmation that regardless the amount the Town used the price would be \$52.00 per ton with minimal impact to budget, Councilman Harman confirmed that is correct. Councilman Harman did provide the statement that the Town is in a strong financial position. Supervisor Campbell confirmed that notice and clear communication outlining the amount would be provided to the Public/Residents if the override is needed.

Information from NYS Association of Towns 2/4/2025 Managing the Tax Cap The rising trend of tax cap overrides underscores the need for modifications to the tax cap formula:

- Since 2022, the percentage of towns overriding the tax cap has increased by 8%.
- Last year, a quarter of all towns enacted an override.
- 22% of those overrides turned out to be unnecessary, indicating that the cap is too rigid and does not reflect actual municipal needs.

NYAOT has two recommendations for reform as they relate to the State Budget – 1. Exempt ambulance districts from the tax cap, and 2. exempt wage increases to support workforce development

Year	No Override	Override	% No	% Yes
2024	691	229	75%	25%
2023	742	229	76%	24%
2022	812	164	83%	17%
2021	772	210	79%	21%
2020	800	185	81%	19%

Supervisor Campbell asked if there were any additional questions or comments, hearing none he closed the Public Hearing at 7:09

Local Law 1-2025 – Override Tax Cap – Resolution # 18

Override tax cap as set forth in General Municipal Law 3-c

BE IT ENACTED BY THE TOWN BOARD OF THE TOWN OF WEST BLOOMFIELD, COUNTY OF ONTARIO AS FOLLOWS
Legislative Intent

The State Constitution, Article XVI, Section 1, reserves all taxing power to the State and therefore local governments possess only that taxing power which has been expressly delegated to them by the State Legislature (Opns St Comp, 1990 No. 90-39; Opns St Comp, 1981, No. 81-331; Opns St Comp, 1973, No. 72-1085, unreported; 23 Opns St Comp, 1967, p 788).

The Town Board of the Town of West Bloomfield, County of Ontario, has reviewed the financial needs and obligations of the Town. Due to contract obligations, limited revenue from non-real property tax sources, the rising cost of commodities and health care, compliance with unfunded mandates, reductions in the state and federal revenue sharing programs coupled with the limitations on raising revenue set forth in General Municipal Law, Section 3-c, the Town Board of the Town of West Bloomfield, County of Ontario, hereby determines that it is necessary to override the tax cap for the fiscal year 2025.

Authority

General Municipal Law, Section 3-c (5) authorizes the Town Board to adopt a local law to override the tax cap by the adoption of a local law approved by a vote of sixty percent of the Town Board.

Tax Cap Override

The Town Board of the Town of West Bloomfield, County of Ontario, hereby overrides the tax cap as required by General Municipal Law, Section 3-c as for the town fiscal year 2025.

Severability

If any clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision, or part of this local law or the application thereof to any person, firm or corporation, or circumstance, shall be adjusted by any court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid or unconstitutional, such order or judgment shall not affect, impair, or invalidate the remainder thereof, but shall be confined in its operation to the clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision or part of this Local Law or in its application to the person, individual, firm, or corporation or circumstance, directly involved in the controversy in which such judgment or order shall be rendered.

Councilman Travis made the resolution to approve Local Law 1-2025 seconded by Councilman Harman.

Adopted: Ayes – Campbell, Carey, Travis, Smith, Harman- Nays, None

Resolves that Local Law 1-2025 is approved.

Effective Date: This Local Law shall take effect immediately upon filing with the Secretary of State.

Supervisor Campbell called the Town Board to order at 7:10pm

Privilege of the Floor –

- Boyan & Code – Town Attorney David Hou – he provided an update on the firm; they are merging with another firm in March. He stated that nothing should change with regards to his accessibility and support of the Town. Rates should remain the same.
- Pat Brede – West Bloomfield Town Assessor
 - Last Update was in 2022, work started in early 2021
 - 2026 would be the next update, work would begin in the Spring of 2025
 - NY State reviews all numbers
 - Equalization rates is decreasing rapidly – A Class (residential) 70% of market value – Farmland/vacant land 65% of market value
 - 2025 is a reappointment year, she would not want to start the update without reappointment due to the amount of work involved and would like to have another certified assessor work on the update with her to become familiar with the Town and its requirements.
 - She offered to provide a PowerPoint presentation on the assessment process for the Board
 - Fair apportion needs to be provided for the Town, this is getting more challenging every year
 - Supervisor Campbell provided the following from a county perspective: over the last 2 years Assessors have tried to get the Towns to an equalization rate that is 100%, meaning the State agrees with all the Assessors' values for the Town. What we are seeing at the County level is many of the Towns start out with an equalization rate even after a revalue at 90, 80, 70, 60 %. There are impacts to the Town when the County does its budget if the equalization rate is down. He advised that when doing the Town Budget, the Board does not present a budget based on the assessed value of the Town, it is based on the services and needs of the residents, while remaining fiscally responsible. School districts & the County do not always function in the same way.
 - Equalization rate looks at what your current assessment is vs sale price. Town is not at full market value. Apportionment – County apportions their taxes/levy by bringing all Towns up to 100% and then they divide the levy into all the assessed value to get the rate. There is an impact at being at a low number, the Town would end up paying more to the County if not at 100%.
 - She makes sale books showing every sale, Informal's in February and early March.
 - Councilman Carey asked what factors are making this process harder every year. Pat said the market is out of control, sales are coming in \$100,000 plus over assessed value. People are paying a premium to be in this area that combined with the scarcity of available homes/land is driving extremely high sale prices.
 - Supervisor Campbell again stated there is a "pain point" if our equalization rate is too low, we need to be as close to 100% as possible.
 - Supervisor Campbell asked for confirmation from David Hou on the process of re-appointing Pat prior to the end of the current appointment, he is going to provide further guidance.

Resolution # 19 – Code Enforcement Report

Code Officer Schultz submitted the Code Enforcement Report for January 2025 via email on 2/5/2025.

Supervisor Campbell asked for a resolution to accept the Code Officer report as submitted.

Councilmember Harman made the resolution to approve the Code Officer report, seconded by Councilmember Smith.

Adopted: Ayes – Campbell, Smith, Travis, Carey, Harman Nays – None

Resolves that the Code Officers report as submitted is accepted.

Supervisor Campbell did confirm that Alan Pearce (Fire Marshall) will continue working on the fire inspections for the Town.

Resolution # 20 - Minutes

Supervisor Campbell asked for a resolution to approve January 8, 2025, minutes. Councilmember Travis made the resolution to approve minutes seconded by Councilmember Harman.

Adopted: Ayes – Campbell, Smith, Travis, Carey, Harman - Nays, None

Resolves that January 8, 2025, minutes are accepted as submitted.

Resolution # 21 - Supervisor Report

A version of the January Supervisor report was distributed and discussed, Supervisor Campbell did state that the report is not correct, budget modifications are being worked on. 4th quarter sales tax went up approximately 2%. \$950,000 budgeted for sales tax distribution, in 2024 it was a little over \$1,000,000, adding approximately \$125,000 into fund balance. Supervisor Campbell to provide a corrected report when modifications have been completed.

- Fire Department Contract -Supervisor Campbell has been working the last 2 weeks to have discussions with the Chiefs of the Fire Departments. He had a scheduled meeting, one of the departments did not show up, he stated they called the other department and stated they would not show attend, but Supervisor Campbell did not find out until the meeting. The funding of the Fire Departments has been a topic this Board has struggled with for some time. Over approximately the last 10 years tax funds have been equaled out between departments, the Board has attempted to work with the departments to try to request them to collaborate more. Supervisor Campbell stated from a fund perspective on behalf of the residents, the total amount of equipment across the two departments appears to be more than required. He stated having too many trucks puts a burden on the Town. The discussion he attempted to have with the departments was to try and create a formula or way to apportion the fire department tax funding, residents in North Bloomfield are taxed for the fire protection from Honeoye Falls Fire Department, the remainder of the residents in West Bloomfield are taxed for the coverage between West Bloomfield and Ionia Fire Departments. Supervisor Campbell provided the following chart for review:

*Town of West Bloomfield
Supervisor
Todd D Campbell
P.O. Box 87
West Bloomfield NY 14585*

2025 FD Budget \$190,000.00
WB/Ionia tax rate .8056/1,000
NB tax rate .6136/1,000
WB 2024 Reports 8 active, 6 Ext 2 Int
Ionia 2024 Reports 21 active, 8 Ext 13 Int

“Credits” Exterior 1, Interior 2
WB total of 10
Ionia total of 34
Combined Total 44 “credits”

1. \$9,500.00 base each		
a. WB \$39,000.00	total	\$48,500.00
b. I \$132,000.00	total	\$141,500.00
2. \$18,000.00 base each		
a. WB \$35,000.00	total	\$53,000.00
b. I \$119,000.00	total	\$137,000.00
3. \$29,000.00 base each		
a. WB \$30,000.00	total	\$59,000.00
b. I \$102,000.00	total	\$131,000.00
4. \$40,000.00 base each		
a. WB \$25,000.00	total	\$65,000.00
b. I \$85,000.00	total	\$125,000.00

He attempted in his discussion to take the information provided from the Fire Departments, including membership roster, active members including a breakdown of the interior and exterior firefighters. He stated Firefighters have a specific need for gear and apparatus when they respond to calls. He wanted to reflect on the fact that interior firefighters have a different set of requirements. He stated he does not want this to be a detriment to either department. His recommendation was number 4 (from above list/chart) for inclusion in the 2025 West Bloomfield/Ionia Fire Department contract. He stated to take the expense reports received from the departments and cover their base operations, keep the lights and heat on, provide base maintenance of equipment/vehicles. He suggested the 2025 contract reflect \$65,000 for West Bloomfield, \$125,000 for Ionia. Supervisor Campbell admitted it is a large difference between departments vs the original 50/50 split between departments. Supervisor Campbell asked the Board if they agreed with his submission, and if it validates which department is responding to calls, where membership is. If membership increases the numbers/budget can reflect this. He stated he wants to make sure the departments get what is needed to run their operations. He pulled IRS reports from 2023 for both departments to see the fire department's fund balances. Councilman Harman agreed with number 4. Councilmember Smith agreed number 4 looked the fairest out of the list. Councilmember Travis stated it is clear that one department has more members, it needs to be reapportioned

to equip the members. The Town Board has had many discussions on the best way to utilize tax funds for the departments. Supervisor Campbell made the statement if at some point if there was one department in Town would there be significant savings? Supervisor Campbell stated it is for the departments to review. Supervisor Campbell stated as the Town Board they need to explain and validate how they came to this formula but also that they are clear to the residents about what they are providing for the fire departments. Supervisor Campbell stated that as a Board they potentially utilize Town fund balance to hire a company to do a study on the fire/emergency equipment needed for the Town separate from North Bloomfield to determine if the number of vehicles/equipment is accurate/adequate. He gave the example: a pumper truck costs \$800,000 or more and has to be supported for 10-20 years, the budget provided is only \$190,000 a year, Is there too much equipment to support on the budget provided and is that the most effective use of tax dollars. Supervisor Campbell did call out the constraints and unique requirements of the Town, for example minimal water districts/availability of water. Supervisor Campbell did advise the Board he is unsure if the Fire Departments will sign the contract.

Resolution #22 Fire Contract: Supervisor Campbell asked for a resolution. Councilmember Harman made a resolution to update the 2025 West Bloomfield/Ionia Fire Department contract to include \$65,000.00 to West Bloomfield Fire Department and \$125,000.00 to Ionia Fire Department, Councilmember Travis seconded. Adopted: Ayes – Campbell, Smith, Travis, Harman— Abstained – Carey Nays – None Resolves that the contract is to be updated as stated.

Supervisor Campbell asked Town Clerk Thompson what should be done with the vouchers on Abstract 2 that were reflecting the 50/50 split of \$95,000 to West Bloomfield Fire Department and \$95,000.00 to Ionia Fire Department, should they be amended/reprinted with the amounts that are going to be submitted in the updated contract. Town Clerk Thompson stated they should be cancelled and reprinted when the Fire Contract is signed, the Fire Departments have not agreed to this allocation of Fire Funds and vouchers should not be created for amounts that have not been agreed upon by the Fire Departments. Supervisor Campbell mentioned they did not agree to the 50/50 split of allocation of funds, Town Clerk Thompson advised they did when they attended the Town Public Budget Hearing on November 13, 2024, and stated in the minutes. Councilmember Harman confirmed it was the assumption. Supervisor Campbell confirmed the vouchers 24 & 25 will be pulled from Abstract 2 for 2025.

Councilmember Harman asked if a resolution is needed for a study on Fire Departments. Supervisor Campbell stated he is going to contact the County to see if they have information available from resent studies that can provide data on requirements for emergency services / fire protection for Towns. This information is to be brought back to the Board for review, Supervisor Campbell stated a resolution was not required.

Resolution #23– Justice Report

Supervisor Campbell asked for a resolution to approve the January 2025 Justice report. Councilmember Travis made the resolution to approve, seconded by Councilmember Harman. Adopted: Ayes – Campbell, Smith, Travis, Carey, Harman- Nays – None Resolves that the January 2025 Justice report is accepted as presented.

Resolution #24 Vouchers – Payment of Bills

Supervisor Campbell asked for a resolution to approve the payment of bills on Abstract 2 for 2025 for General (voucher 24 & 25 to be voided) and Highway. Councilmember Harman made the resolution to approve the bills/vouchers as presented, seconded by Councilmember Travis Adopted: Ayes – Campbell, Travis, Smith, Carey, Harman - Nays, None Resolves that the payment of bills on Abstract 2 for 2025 are approved.

Parks & Recreation - No Updates

Resolution #25 – Highway Report

Highway Superintendent Ball submitted the January – February 2025 Highway report. Supervisor Campbell asked for a resolution to approve the Highway Report. Councilmember Carey made the resolution to approve the Highway report, seconded by Councilmember Smith.

Adopted: Ayes – Campbell, Smith, Travis, Carey, Harman Nays – None
Resolves that the January- February 2025 - Highway report is accepted as presented.

Councilmember Harman made a statement on the statewide salt shortage, and the great job Highway is doing on managing it. He stated that the fact Highway Superintendent Ball is able to purchase salt at the contracted price which is 50% less than the market rate. He commented next year's numbers will most likely not be as favorable.

Resolution # 26- Close Meeting

At 7:51pm, Councilmember Carey made the resolution to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Councilmember Smith. Adopted: Ayes – Campbell, Smith, Travis, Carey, Harman - Nays, None
Resolves that the meeting is closed.

Respectfully Submitted,
Brenda Thompson– Town Clerk