

Ruth Groff – Monthly Board Report March 2026

My job envelops all aspects of town business, engaging with taxpayers, overseeing day-to-day administration, meetings with external organizations and internal committees, personnel issues, and coordinating the Town Board meeting agenda with the Town Clerks.

I continue to oversee the Planning Department, but I rely on the professional input from MRB Group and current staff.

I continue to act as the grant administrator for the Zoning Update grant from the New York Department of State.

I have been a member of the negotiating team for the Yellow Barn Solar (YBS) project, with guidance from Matt Eldred at the law firm of Harter, Secrest, & Emery. Matt has a state-wide reputation of being one of the best attorneys specializing in energy. Together with Joseph Wetmore and the team from Groton, we are in the final stretch of the process with YBS and the New York State Office of Renewable Energy Sitings (ORES).

EXTERNAL COMMITTEES/ORGANIZATIONS:

Group of Six: February 12, 10am

This group is comprised of the Supervisors and Mayors from the six municipalities that utilize and have an agreement with the Ithaca Area Wastewater Treatment Facility (IAWTF).

An update was given as to the status of the Department of Environmental Conservation's (DEC) determination that the IAWTF is out of compliance with certain standards related to phosphorous. The IAWTF has engaged an outside firm to perform a year-long study to analyze the output from the plant and other sources that may contribute to noncompliance. CSI will also be engaged in the study.

The Mayor of the Village of Cayuga Heights (VCH) discussed the timing of sewer rate increases. The villages' fiscal year is June through May, and the towns are on a calendar year, so when the VCH increases their rates in June, it has historically created a problem for the towns in terms of the towns' budgets. The mayor explained that they can do nothing to change their billing cycle, but she did give an estimate that the increase may be in the 10%-12% range for this year.

The group reviewed the 2003 Intermunicipal Agreement, which expires on May 15, 2026. Rich DePaolo discussed a few of the clauses that should be addressed, either through clarification or modification. All in all it is a rather short agreement and they should be able to update it in time for the May 15th timeline. The next meeting was set for April 16, at 1pm.

Ithaca Tompkins County Transportation Council – Policy Committee: February 17, 1pm

Nathaniel joined me in attending this meeting virtually. Among other agenda items that were primarily administrative in nature, the 2026-2027 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) was approved. This UPWP includes use of carry-over Federal Highway Association (FHWA) funds of \$6,000 for Lansing Footpaths Design and Liability Study. Also included in current FHWA funds is \$5,000 for a Lansing Greenway Signage and Wayfinding Study, and \$4,000 "in cooperation with Tompkins County and the Town of Lansing, the ITCTC will contract with a qualified attorney to conduct a preliminary legal analysis of the status of ownership of the (currently inactive) rail line along the East shore of Cayuga Lake from Salt Point to the Simms-Jennings preserve, and research other rail trail issues."

Elected Officials: March 5, 8:30am

Elected Officials is a monthly meeting of elected officials in the county (mayors, supervisors, and county administrator.

Southern Cayuga Lake Intermunicipal Water Commission (Bolton Point [BP]):

- **Personnel and Organization Committee:** February 25, 1pm

The committee approved the January minutes, then heard reports from the Shop Steward, Production Manager, Distribution Manager, Finance Manager, Human Resources Manager, and General Manager. The Shop Steward had nothing new to report. The Production and Distribution Managers shared lists of training courses that their staff attended. The General Manager told of events that he and his staff participated in, as well as upcoming professional events that BP attends or participates in.

- **Budget and Finance Committee:** March 5, 3:45pm

The 2025 fiscal year is closed and the audit is scheduled for April. There were no questions about the vouchers.

- **Commissioners' Meeting:** March 5, 4:00pm

The Commissioners approved the February minutes, then heard reports from the Production Manager, Distribution Manager, Finance Manager, Human Resources Manager, and General Manager. The Production and Distribution Managers shared lists of training courses that their staff attended. The General Manager told of events that he and/or his staff participated in, as well as upcoming professional events that BP attends or participates in. Agendas for all Commissioners' meetings are found on the Bolton Point website: <https://www.boltonpoint.org/commission-meeting-packets>

Town Supervisors: March 9, 10am

The meetings are generally without an agenda but rather are a forum for Town Supervisors within Tompkins County to meet and discuss issues that are faced by Supervisors, sharing lessons-learned.

Technical Assistance Session, Tompkins County: March 12, 10am

Representatives from Tompkins County reviewed and explained the municipal template for emergency preparedness plans. The County developed their plan and have distributed that template for the municipalities to devise their individual plans in coordination with the county.

INTERNAL COMMITTEES AND/OR MEETINGS:

February 18 – I met with Matt Eldred from Harter, Secrest, & Emery to discuss the Yellow Barn Solar project Host Community Agreement (HCA) payment schedule.

February 19 – Monthly update from the construction manager for the Department of Public Works (DPW) facility. Agenda items for these meetings include communication, quality, contract documents, cost & billing, schedule, site logistics & mobilization, submittals, and Requests for Information (RFI). The project is substantially on track with the milestone schedule.

February 23 – Joseph Wetmore and I met with Shaun Logue from MRB Group to discuss Planning Board schedules and updating fee schedules. Shaun agreed to send his list of recommendations for Planning Department and Planning Board.

February 24 – I met with Bud Shattuck from MRB Group to brainstorm on ideas for development in Lansing. Bud has a long history with Lansing and knows it very well, so his insights are respected. I have been meeting with him every few months over the past couple of years to bounce ideas off him and to hear his thoughts on possible development in Lansing.

February 24 – Personnel Management Committee – The agenda and points of discussion included: Clothing Allowance Policy; review new job descriptions for Director of Parks and Recreation, and Assistant Director of Parks and Recreation; and a brief discussion on the Social Media Policy for the Town.

February 25 – Operations and Code Revision Committee – The committee began discussions on developing a noise law for the Town of Lansing. The committee is looking at ordinances from other municipalities of similar size and demographics and ultimately created a list of topics to be covered in such a law. We decided that we would consult Guy Krogh to see what noise laws he was familiar with, and which ones he felt were successful. We all agreed that a few public input sessions were critical for such an endeavor.

March 2 – Department heads and Jordan, the new Facilities Maintenance Director, met to discuss the newly formed process and maintenance of the budget for this position within the Department of Public Works.

March 3 – Monthly check in with the state and with Colliers regarding contract compliance for the Smart Growth Zoning Update. The representative from the State was unable to attend, but the Colliers contractors and Joe and I met anyway to settle on plans for the next Zoning Advisory Committee (ZAC) meeting and public participation event on March 25. Joe requested that the consultants include the entire committee on the details of the postcard that is to be sent to all landowners in Lansing (outside of Village), as well as the issues to be covered in the public survey.