

VILLAGE OF WILSON
 375 Lake Street
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 Wilson, NY 14172-0596



Gregory Martin, Mayor
 Carey L. O'Connor, Clerk-Treasurer
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Village of Wilson Board of Trustees
 Minutes – March 19, 2026

Village Representatives	Present	Absent	Village Representatives	Present	Absent
Mayor Greg Martin	X		Superintendent Keith Lepine	X	
Deputy Mayor Joanne Seefeldt	X		CEO Travis Evans	X	
Trustee Ellen Hibbard	X		Attorney Michael J. Dowd	X	
			Engineer Mike Marino	X	
Clerk-Treasurer Carey L. O'Connor	X		Legislator David Godfrey		X
Deputy Clerk-Treasurer Nicole Martin		X			

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Greg Martin called the Village Board meeting to order at 7:00pm. We then proceeded with the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC HEARING

Public hearing on Local Law 2-2026 to Override the Tax Levy Limit as Established in General Municipal Law Section 3-c: Mayor Martin opened the public hearing and thanked the public for coming. Budget cap speech:

Good evening, everyone. Thank you for being here tonight. Before we get into the numbers, I want to take a few minutes to explain not just what this budget does — but why we're here, and why this decision matters for the long-term health of our Village.

A municipal budget is more than a list of what we spend in a given year. It reflects how responsibly we manage our finances, how we protect the services you depend on, and how honestly we plan for the future.

Tonight, I want to be straightforward with you: this proposed budget does exceed the New York State property tax cap. That is not a decision I bring to you lightly, and I believe you deserve a full explanation.

Where we've been. Over the last five years, the Village of Wilson has run a cumulative deficit of approximately \$200,000. Despite our best efforts to control spending, we fell behind. The New York State Comptroller measures something called a Fiscal Stress Score — and ours told the story clearly. In 2023, we scored a 15.8. By 2024, that number had climbed to 31.7. Last year, we took action. We began adjusting our water and sewer rates and tightened our spending habits. The result: our score dropped to 6.7 — and I'll note that roughly half of that remaining score reflects environmental stress factors that are simply outside our control.

That progress is real, and I'm proud of it. But it also revealed just how much work remains.

Where we are. This year's preliminary budget represents a significant step — and yes, it is a jump. We've made cuts where we could. But we've also had to reallocate resources to correct something that can't wait any longer: our fund balance. Fund balance is the financial cushion that allows us to absorb unexpected costs, cover our bills when revenues haven't come in yet, and respond to emergencies without going into crisis. Our Village policy requires us to maintain a fund balance of at least 30% — and right now, we are below that threshold. That is a problem we must fix, and this budget begins to fix it.

Where we're going. Beyond correcting today's imbalance, we have to be honest about what's coming. Our infrastructure needs are real and they are significant. Water, sewer, roads — the work ahead will require millions of dollars. It will require grant matches and engineering consultation that we must be financially positioned to pursue. We cannot wait until the need is urgent to start preparing.

The same is true for our day-to-day operational needs — trucks, trailers, equipment. Our fleet is in reasonable shape right now. But the time to start building reserves is before something fails, not after.

What we can't control. Finally, I want to acknowledge something every household in Wilson already knows: the cost of everything has gone up. Electricity. Gas. Garbage collection. Our contractual obligations — including our agreement with the fire hall that keeps this community safe — are all influenced by the same outside pressures affecting your own budgets at home.

We shop around. We negotiate where we can. But some costs are simply not negotiable, and we absorb them the same way you do.

This budget is not about spending more for the sake of it. It is about being fiscally responsible — restoring the financial foundation this Village needs to operate safely, serve you well, and face the future from a position of strength rather than stress. I'm happy to answer your questions, and I welcome your input tonight. Thank you.

Residents in attendance: James Maden, Nick Bell, Alexandria McKenzie and our new Trustees Bob Morgan & Aaron Pringle. James Maden asked if we go above the 2% cap, do we have a cap on how high we can go? Mayor Martin stated no, its unlimited. Mayor Martin asked if anyone had any additional questions. None. Mayor Martin closed the public hearing and then proceeded to ask for a motion to approve Local Law 2-2026 to override the tax levy. Trustee Ellen Hibbard made a motion to approve the local law, seconded by Trustee Joanne Seefeldt. Clerk Carey O'Connor took roll call, Trustee Joanne Seefeldt, yes; Trustee Ellen Hibbard, yes; Mayor Greg Martin, yes. All in favor, Local Law 2-2026 has passed.

MINUTES

Mayor Greg Martin asked for a motion to accept the meeting minutes from the February 19, 2026 board meeting. The meeting minutes can be found on the Village website. Trustee Joanne Seefeldt made a motion to accept the minutes, seconded by Trustee Ellen Hibbard. All in favor, motion passed.

MONTHLY BILLS

Mayor Greg Martin asked for a motion to approve payment of all vouchers (attached). The abstracts are located at the back of the room. Trustee Ellen Hibbard made a motion to approve all payments, seconded by Trustee Joanne Seefeldt. All in favor, motion passed.

BUSINESS

Mayor Greg Martin opened the business portion of the meeting.

Resolution 5-2026: A Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of Wilson Accepting a Donation of a Fence Installation from the American Fence Association for use in Martin Park. Mayor Martin explained that this started from a Facebook post from a family asking if there was a playground in the area that is fenced in for their special needs child. From there, Mayor Martin put into action to find a grant that could get a fence in Martin Park. He also received some quotes. Owner of Woodsmith Fence reached out and said the American Fence Association puts out grants for just this sort of thing. With that, the fence will be donated by the American Fence Association. Mayor Martin read the attached resolution. Mayor Martin asked for a motion to approve the resolution. Trustee Ellen Hibbard made a motion to approve, seconded by Trustee Joanne Seefeldt. Roll call was taken by Clerk

O'Connor, Trustee Joanne Seefeldt, yes; Trustee Ellen Hibbard, yes; Mayor Greg Martin, yes. All in favor, resolution passed.

Resolution 6–2026: Resolution Supporting Increased Aid to Municipalities and Strengthening NY States's Local Partnership. Mayor Martin read the attached resolution and then asked for a motion to approve resolution. Trustee Joanne Seefeldt made a motion to approve, seconded by Trustee Ellen Hibbard. Roll call taken by Clerk O'Connor, Trustee Joanne Seefeldt, yes; Trustee Ellen Hibbard, yes; Mayor Greg Martin, yes. All in favor, resolution passed.

Resolution 7–2026: Resolution Authorizing Temporary Remote Work Arrangement for Deputy Clerk–Treasurer following Medical Treatment: Mayor Martin read the attached resolution and then asked for a motion to approve resolution. Trustee Elen Hibbard made a motion to approve, seconded by Trustee Joanne Seefeldt. Roll call taken Clerk O'Connor Trustee Joanne Seefeldt, yes; Trustee Ellen Hibbard, yes; Mayor Martin abstained from voting as the Deputy Clerk Treasurer is his wife. Majority in favor, resolution passed.

Mayor Greg Martin announced the public hearing on the Tentative Budget will be held at the Re-Organizational meeting on April 6, 2026 at 7pm, here at the Town hall. Trustee Ellen Hibbard asked the Clerk Treasurer would have the Tentative budget ready for the public. Clerk O'Connor stated that it is ready for the public.

Mayor Greg Martin announced that we have a new Zoning Board of Appeals member, Mike Seeley who was a previous Town Planning Board member is moving over the Village. He has great experience and we are excited to have him. Mayor Martin asked for a motion to appoint Mike Seeley as a Zoning Board member. Trustee Joanne Seefeldt made a motion to appoint Mike Seeley, seconded by Trustee Ellen Hibbard. All in favor, motion approved.

Mayor Greg Martin announced a public hearing for amending Chapter 143, Structures Unsafe of the Village Code will be held at the April 16, 2026 board meeting. Mayor Martin stated that this needs to be updated to be in compliance with State Codes.

Mayor Greg Martin started the discussion on the Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) law. This law is not too crazy as we currently have a moratorium on them that is set to expire next month. We have not had one application in the 18 months we've had the moratorium. We just need to be prepared and was drafted with the guidance of NYSERDA and the Village of Lancaster's law. It has been preliminarily looked at by Niagara County Planning. They do not have any suggestions or amendments and has not been approved by them yet. We will send this to them before we vote on it. We need to have it on the books, just in case we may need it. If anyone has any questions in regards to this law, please reach out to him.

Letter sent to the village Board from Village Residents Jeff Fire of Wilcox Street: Mayor Martin read the attached letter from the resident. The board would like Keith and the DPW to inspect the tree and get back to the Board Tabled by Trustee Joanne Seefeldt and Trustee Ellen Hibbard until we hear back from the DPW. Superintendent Keith Lepine will discuss with the guys.

Mayor Greg Martin closed the business portion of the meeting.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mayor Greg Martin opened public participation.

Alexandria McKenzie stated that she has a friend that wanted to inform the board about her concerns of the truck traffic on Lake Street and is concerned about the threat to the infrastructure and is tired of hearing it and seeing it all day long. Mayor Martin reached out to the State DOT in reference of the

issue and our sewer laterals are over 100 years old and could be in trouble. He has not heard back yet. He has cc'd Keith Lepine on it, so hopefully we will hear back from that soon.

James Maden asked what has changed with our drainage as his yards have flooded and the flooding in the road. He stated that it has never happened. Mayor Martin explained that there were some issues that have been addressed and there is a plan to hopefully rectify this situation before it happens again. Discussion ensued.

Mayor Greg Martin closed public participation.

REPORTS

Mayor Greg Martin opened reports.

WWTP Operator Keith Lepine reported (notes attached):

Wastewater

- We've had very high influent flows this past month. There was a week where our plant's average flow of 0.312 MGD more than doubled and hit a max flow of 0.710 MGD. This caused a minor non-compliance for settleable solids in our plant's effluent. Our permit allows 0.3 mL/L, but we hit 2.0 mL/L due to the sustained high flows and wash through. This non compliance was recorded and submitted to the DEC.
- We also had a flight chain break on our west secondary clarifier. We were able to drain the tank and fix the chain during some cold weather.
- With the nicer weather starting, I've been able to get the hoses out and start to clean the tanks better in addition to the regular skimming of the floatables. One by one we will drain and clean each tank this summer and do a thorough inspection. We will also switch from the north digester currently being used to the south digester to allow us to clean and inspect the north digester.
- Our Raptor fine screen has a new solenoid installed on it. We received 2 more solenoids today and will be installed tomorrow. The new solenoids will help the fine screen work through its process sequence better and not have a valve stick and waste large amounts of potable water, that was previously happening.
- Our Maintainers will move forward on concrete work around our drive systems that give them their support. This work is needed this summer, as the current concrete supports have crumbled severely to the point that gear drives falling and coming apart is a real possibility without this work. We will attempt to do this work in house to keep the repair costs down.
- We also received a LR fluoride pocket colorimeter which would detect fluoride in water samples if it was finding its way into a sewer. Fluoride retains its residual, as opposed to chlorine that gets eaten up in the presence of organics that would be in the sewer. County Water puts approx. 0.7mg/L of fluoride in the water it sends out. A sewer sample with fluoride in it would tell us that potable water is leaking and making its way into the sewer, rather than surfacing.
- We still need to replace wetwell pump #2 and we need to move forward on installing a bypass channel bar screen. Replacing heater fan motors that are beginning to fail can be put off until at least the Fall but should be kept on the radar. Building a cover over our UV system to protect it from the elements should also move forward.

Water

- We are still seeing increased daily water demand for the Village since Feb. 18th. The extra water demand is approximately 30,000 GPD. We suspect there is a leak in the system but the water is not surfacing, which makes it very difficult to locate the leak. We've had Rural Waters come with their leak locating equipment. We did a dig where their equipment suggested the leak would be, but there was no leak found there. We brought in Town of Lockport to camera the sewers in the suspected area, but everything appeared to be normal. We have reached out to a third party contractor for a quote to assist with leak detection.

- We continue to move forward with the water service line survey, when we can fit in time for inspections.
- Spot checks on chlorine residuals have shown that chlorine residuals are at safe levels, ensuring there is sufficient disinfectant in our water, keeping it safe to drink.
- We are purchasing a locating wand that will allow the PW Maintainers do their locating of pipes for Safe Dig locates

Roads

- The past couple of weeks, we have needed to lay salt on roads with a few last blasts of winter.
- High winds have caused a lot of branches to fall and PW Maintainers have been around picking up the fallen debris
- The guys have also been working on clearing out DI's and ditches to allow water to flow away and not pool

CEO Travis Evans reported he has issued eight new permits, closed three. Completed three fire inspections. There are up to six storage containers in the Village and we are having issues with people living in campers within the village. We have nine tickets that will be heading into court. Met with the demolition company for the grocery store. Travis has been in contact with Dollar General corporate and they do not care. The store is closed because they have themselves closed, it's not on this office. We need some more language on storage containers and campers in the law to give him power to enforce. Mayor Martin stated they are currently working on these laws, they should be finished soon.

Engineer Mike Marino reported that we have received comments from the DEC on the Collection System report. We will get them addressed. We can use the report to apply for grants for I & I. Waiting for the contract for the WWTP evaluation and the ZEV charging station. Hopefully soon.

Trustee Joanne Seefeldt asked how much the demolition was. Travis stated that it was handed in. The Mayor stated it was quoted at \$25,000. She stated that she will miss Ellen, she brought a lot of knowledge to us.

Trustee Ellen Hibbard would like to thank the guys at how they have worked hard in finding the water issues. Thank you to everyone for allowing her to be a part of it for a few years longer and will be hard to walk away without looking back. She thanked everyone for allowing her to be a part of it.

Attorney Mike Dowd has nothing to report at this time.

Clerk Treasurer Carey O'Connor reported (notes attached):

1. We had the Village of Wilson Election yesterday to elect two Trustees to a seat with the Village Board. Bob Morgan and Aaron Pringle were nominated to the seats. Their first meeting will be on Monday, April 6, 2026 at the Village Re-Organizational Meeting.
2. We sent out the March water & sewer bills.
3. Attended the Budget meeting on March 5th and continued working on budget with adjustments to meet again on March 18th. Copies of the tentative budget can be picked up in the Village office starting tomorrow from 9-4pm.
4. Attended the Meet & Greet at the Library on Tuesday, March 10th to meet with our Trustee Candidates. Great discussions.
5. Ran Village election for the two 4-year Trustee seats. Bob Mogan & Aaron Pringle will be our new Trustees starting at the April 6th meeting. Congratulations Gentleman.
6. With the new election, our current Trustee, Ellen Hibbard will finally be leaving the Village office. She has given over 30 years to our Village and I would like to thank her for all that she has done to assist me. Thank you Ellen!

Mayor Greg Martin reported: that he didn't keep track of all the stuff he did but he did work a lot on the budget. Working on the LWRP committee, working on WABA, an hour and a half phone call with Mr. Steven Barth, downtown revitalization guy. He has worked on Wellsville, started eleven businesses there. Just discussing how to get our downtown alive again. Looking for investors, grants we can get. Looking for professional services that we can use to get more downtown businesses. Looking into some zoning changes, as a lot of our codes are from the '70's. What's easy to stimulate growth. Looking at discussing a change to our Village tax law to allow us to defer taxes onto investments of the downtown for up to ten years. Anything to stimulate growth, responsibly. Wrote an application for a \$500,000 water meter grant, \$100,000 match. Northern Border Regional commission. On Friday, the 13th, we had the guy from Auditing Erie County. He filed a FOIL request for our credit card policy and some statements for last year. As you know, we keep all of our bills out every month, we have nothing to hide. What he is doing is not about transparency, it's about clicks. He doesn't care about the 1st amendment, he doesn't care about what we spend on Amazon. It's about getting his name out there. As Village tax payers, he is wasting Village taxpayers money, not just once, but twice as he goes up to the Town Clerk, we pay into that fund that funds the Clerks, then the Village and the Clerks there. It's not about the FOIL request that takes some time, it's about the two weeks of harassing phone call, the degrading phone calls, as it prevents our residents who have a real question about their local needs, you cannot get through. They're wasting time and money but tying up the phone lines. What is also not good for our community, it's the people championing these people online. When you're enticing and laughing about this, you're hurting our community and our tax base. I am asking you as the Village Mayor, to tell these people to stop. Don't encourage it, tell them to move on. Thank you. Clerk O'Connor thanked the Mayor for that, as well resident's in the audience.

Mayor Greg Martin closed reports.

CLOSING

Mayor Greg Martin stated that we will be having our Re-Organizational Meeting on Monday, April 6, 2026 at 7pm, here at the Town Hall. Our next Employee and Board meeting will be on Thursday, April 16th at 2:30pm and 7:00pm here at the Town Hall. Mayor Martin asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:05pm. Motion made by Trustee Ellen Hibbard, seconded by Trustee Joanne Seefeldt. All in favor, meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Carey L. O'Connor

Carey L. O'Connor
Village Clerk-Treasurer