



MAY 2026  
ISSUE NO: 3

# NEWSLETTER

## A FLASH IN TIME

BEFORE BOSEN GARDENS

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## A COMPREHENSIVE PARTNERSHIP

THE NEW YORK STATE  
ASSOCIATION OF TOWNS

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RECORDS AND  
LICENSING

A decorative sign for Southport, Vermont. The sign features a central illustration of a river flowing through a forested landscape with trees and a small house. The text 'Est. SOUTHPORT 1822' is written across a banner above the river, and 'A Safe & Caring Community' is written in a cursive font below the river. The sign is mounted on a dark green post.

Est.

**SOUTHPORT**

1822

*A Safe & Caring Community*

Dear Residents and Visitors,

On behalf of the town council, it is my great pleasure to welcome you to our vibrant and close-knit community. Our town is rich in history, brimming with natural beauty, and fueled by an unwavering sense of togetherness.

Whether you are a long-time resident or a first-time visitor, you will find an array of activities, local businesses, and community events that contribute to the unique charm of our town. We are committed to fostering a safe, inclusive, and thriving environment for everyone. Thank you for being a part of our community, and we look forward to seeing you around town!

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in white ink that reads 'Joe Roman'.

Town Supervisor

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# A COMPREHENSIVE PARTNERSHIP

*The Association of Towns*

The Town of Southport participates and is a member in good standing with the New York State Association of Towns (NYSAOT). The Association serves and represents 933 town governments across the state which in total comprises approximately 9 million residents, and accounts for about half of the New York's total population. Its largest Town serves over 800,000 residents, its smallest is less than 100, truly comprising both the urban and rural parts of the State.

Our town continues to benefit from its active participation including valuable training opportunities for town officials and staff. Workshops, conferences, and policy discussions help Southport leaders stay informed about new regulations, funding opportunities, and innovative programs that can benefit our residents. One such example includes the 2026 conference and annual meeting attended in February where the NYSAOT laid out its annual legislative agenda. There were many agenda items... overall each designed to strengthen Towns and their operations within the framework of the New York State Assembly, Senate, and Governor as they consider budget and legislative priorities for the year.



**NYAOT**  
Celebrating America's 250<sup>th</sup> Birthday

Here is a small sample encompassing two of those key agenda items;

“Protect the constitutional authority of towns to govern local affairs, adopt local laws, manage land use, and respond to community needs without state overreach. Support state and federal recognition of home rule.” Home rule is extremely important as it allows those governmental entities which are closest to the people, the Towns, to manage their affairs without encroachments by the State and/or Federal Government. An example of the loss of Home Rule is the siting of renewable energy projects. Under Section 94-c of the Executive Law, the State is able to override local town zoning and land-use laws to approve large scale solar and wind projects if it finds the local laws are “unreasonably burdensome” to the state's climate goals.



# BUILDING A BETTER FUTURE

## *The Town of Southport Comprehensive Plan*



“Support highway, bridge and transportation funding to maintain and increase CHIPS, PAVE-NY, BridgeNY, Extreme Winter Recovery, POP, and other DOT capital programs to address significant local road and bridge funding gaps.” These programs directly benefit the Town of Southport and its highway department by providing resources to maintain our road system which is substantial... over 84 miles are under the Town’s jurisdiction. By contract, Chemung County has 250 miles of roads to maintain.

In addition to educational opportunities and representation for legislation, the NYSAOT provides technical expertise to which from time to time the Town of Southport has utilized, and lastly, the NYSAOT has been invaluable whereby our town officials have had opportunities to share and hear best practices, resources, and solutions from other Towns. It truly is a great partnership and enhances the Town of Southport’s ability to provide quality services to our residents.

*Joe Roman*  
Town Supervisor

# SOUTHPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

**BEFORE BOSEN GARDENS - BIELKE GREENHOUSES  
DRY RUN ROAD, PINE CITY, NEW YORK**

Axel (Lagerstam) Bielke (1872-1941) was trained as a gardener/Florist in Sweden. He immigrated to the United States in 1892. He met Elna Hoftrup, who had also immigrated from Sweden about 1892. They were married in 1899. In 1901, they purchased a farm next to the one-room schoolhouse on Dry Run Road, near where Elna's family lived. Axel grew fancy tomatoes and other garden vegetables, along with cut flowers, all of which he sold to the hotels and restaurants in Elmira, New York.

In the mid 1940's, Axel Bielke sold the greenhouses to Alex Bosen. In the winter months, the remaining foundations of the greenhouse complex can be seen from the intersection of Dry Run Road and Peacefield Road when looking across Dry Run Creek.



Before Axel arrived in the United States and opened his business, he travelled by ship and train and he told about his travels in the letter below . . .

Axel Bielke wrote a letter to his parents Johan and Sophia in Swedish and the original letter was transcribed by Dr. Peterson. Portions of that letter are listed below.



We laid in our bunks and laughed about how things started moving from one cabin to another because of the storm. But the laughing stopped in the morning because we had a corpse on board, an old woman from Kalmar had died during the night.

The 31st still bad storm, funeral at eleven o'clock. The day went slow and many cursed the day when he or she left home. I was fortunately healthy and could help the sick. It was supposed to be a doctor on board, but he seems to be only for first and second class. April 1st the weather somewhat better, thinking about home as this was the day before Easter. We celebrated the day before Easter with a group of people by eating pie and pastry. Englishmen and Americans do not celebrate holidays. April 2nd Easter, listened to a Catholic service. April 3rd sighted land at 10 o'clock.

Arriving in New York like the inlet to Stockholm, very impressive and docked at seven o'clock. Only the first and second class allowed to go ashore. April 4th eight o'clock we started to disembark-through customs and then the ferry to Castle Gardens, an island where we were sorted and closed up in cages. They who would continue the trip were shut in cages.

The rest, including me, went on a no charge ferry to New York. Went on my own to get lodging and was quite successful. Am living in a Swedish hotel with Swedish employees. But the real Swedish hotels are palaces compared to these. Cost \$5 a week including food which is considered cheap. I have looked over the city and it is quite nice. I think I will fit in here.

April 5th have been around somewhat but not yet to Sandström, He lives a quarter of a Swedish mile up in the city (going to visit). I will put an ad in paper on my own looking for work. I think I will like it here. I will write soon when I get a job. Many, many greetings from Axel to father, mother, brothers and friends. If father writes the address is Axel Lagerstam, Greenwich ST 4, New York, North Amerika.



**Note:** Castle Garden was the immigration station operated in New York State near the Battery to help new people get started on their new life. By 1890, the flow of immigrants had reached over 7 million and 700 thousand. Conditions at the facility had become so overtaxed a subsidiary depot was opened on Wards Island in the East River. January 1, 1892, the Federal government opened Ellis Island to replace the state depot with the intension to screen out those deemed undesirable or not acceptable for one reason or another or to be returned. The lucky ones walked into the Reception Hall where many were reunited with friends or relations who had proceeded them. Axel did land and did come through the newly opened facility.

# HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

The Southport Highway Department has begun an early start on tree trimming and removal this year. This program consists of removing dead and diseased trees and the trimming of healthy trees within the Town's "right-of-way". This right of way is measured 25' from the center of any town road or street.

Just a reminder that no new tree plantings are allowed within the Town's right-of-way. So should a mature tree be removed from that space please do not plant a new tree in its place but rather on the home side of the sidewalk or outside the right-of-way limit.

Seasonal maintenance is underway which includes clearing roadside debris, inspecting culverts and drainage systems and repairing potholes from winter damage.

Some resident responsibilities for the warmer season are:

- Keep mailboxes clear and properly secured.
- Avoid placing trash, brush, or landscaping materials in the roadway.
- Trim vegetation that obstructs visibility near intersections

We would also like to remind residents not to blow yard waste into the roadway, this debris plugs up the storm drains causing numerous drainage problems.

One of the main projects of the highway department this year will be the replacement of the Kinner Hill box culvert. Road projects for 2026 are currently being evaluated on need and funding availability.

Also, with the warmer season comes road repair please remember to slow down in work zones, watch for flaggers and equipment and keep a safe distance from highway vehicles.

The Highway Department will be replacing two single axle dump trucks this year, these trucks are over 20 years old. One is being funded by NYS Consolidated Highway (CHIP's) money and the other is being purchased by the town with the assistance of a \$50,000 grant from USDA (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture).

As always, the Highway Department has an open door policy, please reach out with any questions or concerns as we are accountable to our taxpayers and are committed to resident satisfaction.

  
Highway Superintendent

# PLAYGROUNDS & PATHWAYS

Elmer Goodwin

March 2026

- Tuesday, March 27th- St. Patrick's Day we had a virtual 60-minute tour to Dublin, Ireland held at our Chapel Park Senior Center.
- Tuesday, March 24th at 1:30pm will host a virtual tour to Venice Italy and Thursday, March 26th at 11:00am will be touring Gdansk, Poland.



APRIL 2026

- On April 4th at 11:00am sharp we will hold our annual Town of Southport Easter Egg Hunt.
- On April 18th we are holding our 2nd annual Bowling Fundraiser in which money raised will go towards our Summer Parks Program. This money will help with financial assistance to families in need in the Town of Southport. So, please come out support a great cause and participate and or reach out to Ivan Purifoy, Director of Parks and Recreation in May about financial assistance opportunities.



JUNE 2026

- On June 1st we will open sign-ups for our Summer Parks Program for Chapel and Goodwin Park.
- \$45 per child, six weeks program starting July 6th ends August 14th, Monday-Friday from 9:00am-2:45pm.



THANK YOU,

*Juan Purifoy*

Director; Parks and Recreation  
Town of Southport

# ASSESSOR'S OFFICE

Dear Southport Residents,

As we move into the spring seasons, the Assessor's Office would like to share important updates and reminders regarding property assessments, exemptions, and upcoming deadlines.

## PROPERTY ASSESSMENTS

The Assessor's Office continues to maintain fair and equitable property assessments throughout the Town of Southport. Our goal is to ensure that all properties are assessed at a uniform percentage of market value in accordance with New York State Real Property Tax Law.

If you have recently purchased property, completed renovations, or experienced changes that may affect your assessment, please contact our office to ensure your property record is accurate.



## TENTATIVE ASSESSMENT ROLL

The Tentative Assessment Roll will be available for public inspection on May, 1st, 2026. You may review your property assessment online or in person at the Assessor's Office during regular business hours.

## GRIEVANCE DAY

If you believe your property assessment is incorrect, you have the right to file a formal complaint.

Grievance Day is scheduled for: May, 16th, 2026

Appointments are recommended. Forms and instructions will be available on the Town website or at our office.

# ASSESSOR'S OFFICE

## PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTIONS

Residents may be eligible for various exemptions that can reduce property taxes. Common exemptions include:

- STAR (School Tax Relief)
- Enhanced Star for seniors
- Veterans Exemption
- Senior Citizens Exemptions
- Agricultural Exemptions



Deadline to apply for exemptions: March 1st every year

If you missed the deadline this year, we encourage you to prepare for next year's filing.

We're Here to Help!

If you have any questions about your assessment, exemptions, or the grievance process, please reach out:

Town of Southport Assessor's Office

Phone: 607-734-4424

Office Hours: Tuesday & Thursday 8:00AM – 4:00PM

We appreciate your cooperation and are committed to providing transparent and helpful service to all Southport residents.

Sincerely,

*Dave Reger*

Assessor  
Town of Southport

# CODE ENFORCEMENT

High Grass and Use of the Town's Brush Lot It's time to mow the grass and trim the weeds and brush again. Grass shall be kept under 10 inches tall per Town Code. When you mow the lawn, please don't place the clippings into the roadway. Grass can block storm drains and lead to flooding when it rains.

You can take grass clippings, leaves, limbs, shrubs, flowers and garden vegetation to the Town's Brush Lot on Bob Masia Drive. It is open on select days to the Town of Southport residents only. To find the days and hours of operation, please go to [www.townofsouthport.com](http://www.townofsouthport.com) website. Prohibited items include rocks, garbage and wood products. Commercial landscapers and tree services companies are prohibited from using the lot. If you notice any illegal dumping at the brush lot give us a call (607) 737-5268. Video cameras have been installed to help



monitor the lot and we will continue to prosecute violators. Such violations are punishable by paying a fine or imprisonment or both.

Remember there is no burning of brush from March 15th to May 15th. Open burning is the largest cause of spring wildfires in New York State. When past fall's debris and leaves dry out, wildfires can start and spread easily. Wildfires are fueled by winds and a lack of green vegetation.

# CODE ENFORCEMENT

## YARD SALES

There is a new ordinance regarding Yard Sales under Section 525-134. A resident of the town may conduct a sale at their dwelling no more than three (3) times per calendar year, limited to two (2) consecutive days in duration and not more than ten (10) hours each day. All signs must be removed within 24 hours after the sale. The definition of “yard sale” means

All sales entitled “yard sale,” “garage sale,” “lawn sale,” “attic sale,” “rummage sale,” or any other similar sale of personal property. It does not include auctions or estate sales conducted by professional auctioneers. A yard sale is not permitted in a business or commercial location or anywhere that it is prohibited by zoning, except as authorized under a site plan. Check with the Chemung County Health Department if you plan to sell food at your sale.



*Peter Rocchi*  
Code Enforcement Officer

# TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE

The Town Clerk's Office is frequently considered the center of the municipal government. This is the office that is responsible for recording the activities of the Town Board and their meetings and is the central place for all town records to be filed. The Town Clerk by law is the Records Management Officer, Public Information Records Officer, responsible for issuing marriage licenses, issuing conservation licenses, handicapped permits, dog licenses, etc. The Town Clerk may execute the Constitutional Oath of Office to all municipal officers serving them.

Since the weather is getting warmer, we will touch on the following subjects:

## DOG LICENSING

Every dog, regardless of age, owned or harbored in New York State for longer than 30 days must be licensed in the town, city or village where the dog is being harbored. The following are the only license exemptions:

Dogs under four months - If the dog is under four months of age and not running-at-large (off the owner's premises)

Non-resident dogs - If a non-resident brings a dog into New York State for less than 30 days and the dog is licensed according to the resident state's licensing laws.



Residents of the Town may license their dogs in person at the Town Clerk's office with the required documentation of a spay/neuter certificate and proof of current rabies vaccination.

# TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE



Fishing season opened in New York State on April 1st. Fishing licenses are valid for a full year (365 days) from the date of purchase, the fee for the license is \$25.00 (resident, ages 16-69) and \$5.00 for a resident senior. A non-resident fishing license can be purchased for \$50.00. Free fishing days for 2026 will be June 27-28, September 26th and November 11th, anyone can fish the fresh or marine waters of New York State and no license is required.

The Town in conjunction with Chemung County will be offering the Trash disposal Program for

the month of August 2026. The same format as last year will be followed for this program which will include picking up your voucher at the Town Clerk's office with proper identification (Driver's License in addition to a utility bill or tax bill). The Clerk's office will begin to issue vouchers on Monday, July 13th with disposal dates beginning the first week of August. These vouchers will be issued on a first come first serve basis and you must use the voucher in the week that it is issued for. More information will be handed out when you come in to pick up the voucher that outlines the days, hours and what is acceptable for disposal.

I am very pleased to make our residents aware of the many compliments about our staff and the level of customer service they provide. Our employees always strive to be courteous, helpful and proactive in situations. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at 607-737-5270 or by e-mail at [crenko@townofsouthport.com](mailto:crenko@townofsouthport.com).



*Carolyn Renko*  
Southport Town Clerk