



**TOWN OF HILLSDALE
TOWN BOARD MEETING
February 11, 2025
Minutes**

NOTE: After a public hearing on April 25, 2024, and at a Special Town Board Meeting the Town Board approved a resolution to allow "Extraordinary Circumstances Videoconferencing", "ECV". this allows a Town Board member who has a qualifying disability to attend, be part of a quorum and vote at all Town Board Meetings.

The meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Hillsdale, Columbia County in the State of New York was held at the Town Hall, 2609 State Route 23, Hillsdale, NY 12529 on February 11, 2025, at 7:00 pm.

Board members present:

PRESENT:

Supervisor	Mike Dvorchak
Councilmember	Joanna Virello
Councilmember	Tom Carty
Councilmember	Irwin Feld
Councilmember	Jamie Carano Nordenstrom

ALSO PRESENT:

Robina Ward	Town Clerk
Emily Stalker	Deputy Town Clerk
Richard Briggs	Highway Superintendent
Ken Dow	Town Attorney

OTHERS PRESENT: Members of the public.

TRADITIONAL VIDEOCONFERENCING NOTICE:

Notice of said meeting was posted on the Town Website. The public is invited to participate at the town hall or the videoconference meeting location at 2609 State Route 23, Hillsdale, NY 12529.

Supervisor Dvorchak called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment

Members of the public made statements against the paving of Texas Hill Road and Appletree Lane.

Approval of Minutes

January 6, 2025, Organizational Meeting

On a motion of Councilmember Feld, seconded by Councilmember Virello.

The motion was

ADOPTED	Ayes 4	Dvorchak, Virello, Carty, Feld
	Abstain 1	Carano Nordenstrom

The Town Board approves the January 6, 2024, Organizational Meeting Minutes.

January 14, 2025, Regular Meeting

On a motion of Councilmember Feld, seconded by Councilmember Carty.

The motion was

ADOPTED Ayes 4 Dvorchak, Virello, Carty, Feld

Nays 1 Carano Nordenstrom

The Town Board approves the January 14, 2025, Regular Meeting Minutes.

January 27, 2025, Special Meeting

On a motion of Councilmember Feld, seconded by Councilmember Carty.

The motion was

ADOPTED Ayes 4 Dvorchak, Virello, Carty, Feld

Nays 1 Carano Nordenstrom

The Town Board approves the January 27, 2025, Special Meeting Minutes.

Supervisor's Report

January Financial Report

Abstract Disbursements for January 2025:

General Account 15,666.36

Highway Fund 76,329.10

Sewer Fund 19,531.33

Park Fund 733.60

Abstracts 1/7/2025 and 1/17/2025 were reviewed by Town Board members, Dvorchak, Feld, Carty, Virello, Carano Nordenstrom and Highway Superintendent Briggs, with approvals from Dvorchak, Feld, Carty, Virello and Highway Superintendent Briggs.

2024 financial Report

Supervisor Dvorchak reported that the Town is in a strong financial position as of December 31, 2024. The general fund has approximately \$1.2 million in fund balance of which \$100k is being used to offset the 2025 budget.

The revenue for 2024 remained strong as in years past. Sales tax revenue came in \$54k over budget by year end. Sales tax makes up 38% of the Town general fund revenue. Two other notable revenues that came in over budget are bank interest and building permits. Through year end, interest is over budget by \$27k, which makes up 3% of Town revenue, and building permits are over budget by \$16k.

Supervisor Dvorchak read a list of some of the 2024 accomplishments. He thanked all involved and stated that he looks forward to accomplishing even more in 2025.

Budget Amendment 2025-2

Supervisor Dvorchak stated that there was no budget amendment this month.

Highway Superintendent's Report

Highway Superintendent Briggs submitted his monthly report.

Superintendent Briggs introduced Robin VanValkenburgh, attending the meeting on Zoom, an asphalt specialist from Vestal Asphalt Inc., to explain the chip seal process proposed for Texas Hill Road, Appletree Lane and Stone Hill Road, gravel roads. He stated that the asphalt – water emulsion used was nonhazardous, it was practical and financially responsible.

Superintendent Briggs continued, restating his 37 years' service at the Town Highway Department and 20 years as an elected town official, the Highway Superintendent. His priorities are safety and financial responsibility.

Superintendent Briggs presented display boards with photographs, the first was Texas Hill Road, a gravel road, the second was Herrington Road, chip sealed last year, both photographs taken about 10 days apart this winter. Two smaller photographs of the gravel road and the chip sealed road surfaces were presented. The third display board was of a paved road, Rockledge Road. Asphalt paving is not what is being proposed for Texas Hill Road, Appletree Lane or Stone Hill Road. The final board showed the cost breakdown of a dirt road versus a chip sealed road. The cost of \$25,500.00 is only for the cost of materials, a 2" application of gravel, 18 feet wide over 1 mile for one year. The cost of chip sealing to the Hillsdale taxpayers is zero, a 5-to-10-year CHIPS program.

General discussion. Councilmember Carano Nordenstrom contested the Highway Superintendents' statements about the financial costs of maintaining gravel /dirt roads.
Further discussion.

SEQRA

Supervisor Dvorchak asked Town Attorney Dow to lead the discussion for the review.

Attorney Dow stated that the SEQRA should be classified as unlisted as the application does not meet any other classification requirements. The information required are simple facts, name of project, location etc. He spoke with Superintendent Briggs for basic information, size of area. His conversation with the Town Clerk was about the official town address and phone number.

Resolution 27-2025

To classify the SEQRA as unlisted.

On a motion of Councilmember Feld , seconded by Councilmember Virello.

Councilmember Carano Nordenstrom asked for a counter motion to declare it a type 1 and a positive.

Further discussion on types of actions required for SEQRA.

The motion was

ADOPTED	Ayes 4	Dvorchak, Virello, Carty, Feld
	Nays 1	Carano Nordenstrom

Resolved the Town Board approves to classify the SEQRA as unlisted.

Attorney Dow read the SEQRA form, he is not making any decisions, this is a board decision.

Resolution 28-2025

Is the answer to 5B SEQRA consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, checked off as NO.

On a motion of Supervisor Dvorchak , seconded by Councilmember Carano Nordenstrom.

Supervisor Dvorchak asked Councilmembers who vote that the action is not consistent with the Comprehensive Plan to raise their hand, Councilmember Carano Nordenstrom.

Supervisor Dvorchak asked Councilmembers who vote that the action is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan to raise their hand, Councilmembers Carty, Feld, Virello, Supervisor Dvorchak

The motion was

ADOPTED	Ayes 4	Dvorchak, Virello, Carty, Feld
	Nays 1	Carano Nordenstrom

Resolved the Town Board approves the answer to 5B, SEQRA is yes, it is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

Section 6 SEQRA, is the proposed action consistent with the predominant character of the existing built or natural landscape?

Supervisor Dvorchak asked Councilmembers who vote that the action is not consistent with the predominant character of the existing built or natural landscape to raise their hand, Councilmember Carano Nordenstrom.

Supervisor Dvorchak asked Councilmembers who vote that the action is consistent with the predominant character of the existing built or natural landscape to raise their hand, Councilmembers Carty, Feld, Virello, Supervisor Dvorchak

The motion was

ADOPTED Ayes 4 Dvorchak, Virello, Carty, Feld
 Nays 1 Carano Nordenstrom

Resolved the Town Board approves the answer to 6, SEQRA is yes, it is consistent with the predominant character of the existing built or natural landscape.

Supervisor Dvorchak read the remaining sections with further discussion and future consultation with the DEC. We will continue the discussion at a later date at another Town Board meeting.

Salt Shed Grant

Resolution 29-2025

To accept the CPL proposal for a grant writer for the Salt Shed.

On a motion of Councilmember Feld , seconded by Councilmember Virello.

The motion was

ADOPTED Ayes 5 Dvorchak, Virello, Carty, Feld, Carano Nordenstrom

Resolved, the Town Board accepts the CPL proposal for a grant writer for the Salt Shed.

Resolution 30-2025

To appoint Mike Dvorchak and Richard Briggs and Lead Contact person.

On a motion of Councilmember Feld , seconded by Councilmember Carty.

The motion was

ADOPTED Ayes 5 Dvorchak, Virello, Carty, Feld , Carano Nordenstrom

Resolved the Town Board to appoint Mike Dvorchak and Richard Briggs and Lead Contact persons.

Town Clerk Report

Town Clerk Ward addressed some comments that were made about the minutes.

The Town Clerk acts as the clerk to take minutes at the Town Board meetings, and the minutes should include and consist of a record or summary of all motions, proposals, resolutions and any other matters formally voted upon at the meeting. The Town Clerk is not required to include verbatim notes.

The January 14, 2025, minutes noted at the top of the Highway Superintendent report that if anyone wanted to see the entire discussion they should go online.

We are working on digitizing records and updating the Town website.

Sewer District Report

Supervisor Dvorchak reported that the Purchase Orders have been sent out for the new fabrics and control panel. Delivery is expected in April, with installation soon after. We will be conducting further testing so we can be better informed about what the next steps are. The DEC will be leading this project. CREST Grant (Barrett) and CREST Grant (Hinchey)

Supervisor Dvorchak reported that both grants are still under review. He is proposing applications for two additional grants from Hudson River Bank & Trust and Rheinstrom.

Resolution 31-2025

To approve submission of grant application to the Hudson River Bank & Trust and Rheinstrom.

On a motion of Councilmember Feld, seconded by Councilmember Carty.

The motion was

ADOPTED Ayes 5 Dvorchak, Virello, Carty, Feld, Carano Nordenstrom
Resolved to approve submission of grant application to the Hudson River Bank & Trust and Rheinstrom.

Supervisor Dvorchak stated that George Schmitt and Jamie Malcom from the DEC will address the CAC. Councilmember Carano Nordenstrom asked that the Sewer Project be referred to the CAC. On a motion of Jamie Carano Nordenstrom seconded by Supervisor Dvorchak. Supervisor Dvorchak stated that there should be a single point of contact. Further discussion. No vote was taken.

Infrastructure

Historic Light Poles Insurance

Councilmember Feld is waiting for an estimate for the replacement of the light pole.

Moving of Poles

Councilmember Feld stated that he and Supervisor Dvorchak met with the Town Engineer George Schmitt and walked Route 23 and determined what needed to be relocated, George will be putting together a schematic of the relocation and be in contact with the DOT.

Roe Jan Park

Councilmember Virello stated she had sent the request to the state for the wind screen.

Amendment to Berkshire Farms Lease

Resolution 33-2025

To approve the amended Berkshire Farms Lease.

On a motion of Councilmember Feld , seconded by Councilmember Virello.

The motion was

ADOPTED Ayes 5 Dvorchak, Virello, Carty, Feld, Carano Nordenstrom
Resolved the Town Board approves the amended Berkshire Farms Lease.

Hamlet Committee

Rehabilitation of Basketball Court, Supervisor Dvorchak said that we are waiting on CPL to submit a RFP to the Board for approval.

He went on the report on the following events are being spearheaded by the Hamlet Committee.

Easter Egg Hunt - Saturday April 12 at 2PM with Saturday, April 19 as the rain date.

Memorial Day Parade – Monday, May 26

Hillsdale Flea – Saturday, May 24, Rain Date Sunday May 25

Car Show – To be determined.

Councilmember Carano Nordenstrom stated that the engineer should be involved with the surface water runoff at Hamlet Park.

Policy

Sexual Harassment & Discrimination Prevention Policy and Workplace Violence Prevention Policy.

Councilmember Carano Nordenstrom stated that she is waiting for feedback. There was only a 60% compliance rate for 2024. General discussion, Supervisor Dvorchak will provide feedback.

AARP Grant Application

Councilmember Carano Nordenstrom stated that the grant was for the two picnic areas that were adopted as part of the Hamlet Park Plan in 2021.

Project Overview - \$17,559.88 Total Project Costs, \$13,559.88 requested, \$2,000.00 Town match, \$2,000 private match (HECDC), no match required.

Resolution 32-2025

To approve the application for a grant from AARP

On a motion of Supervisor Dvorchak , seconded by Councilmember Feld.

The motion was

ADOPTED Ayes 5 Dvorchak, Virello, Carty, Feld, Carano Nordenstrom

Resolved the Town Board approves the application for a grant from AARP.

Safe at Home Liaison

To appoint Jamie Carano Nordenstrom as the Safe at Home Liaison. Tom Carty is a current liaison.

Resolution 34-2025

To appoint Jamie Carano Nordenstrom as the Safe at Home Liaison. Tom Carty is a current liaison.

On a motion of Councilmember Feld, seconded by Supervisor Dvorchak.

The motion was

ADOPTED Ayes 5 Dvorchak, Virello, Carty, Feld, Carano Nordenstrom

Resolved the Town Board appoints Jamie Carano Nordenstrom as a Safe at Home Liaison number two.

Local Law: Changing Date of Grievance Day

To amend local law for Grievance Day to move from 4th Monday of May to the first Monday following the 4th Monday of May.

Resolution 35-2025

Motion to set a public hearing on March 18, 2025, prior to the Regular Town Board meeting.

On a motion of Councilmember Feld, seconded by Councilmember Virello.

The motion was

ADOPTED Ayes 5 Dvorchak, Virello, Carty, Feld, Carano Nordenstrom

Resolved the Town Board approves to set a public hearing on March 18, 2025, at 6:45pm prior to the Regular Town Board meeting.

Resolution 36-2025

Motion to Amend Resolution 21-2025. An Affordable Energy Event will be held on June 7, not June 14.

On a motion of Councilmember Carano Nordenstrom, seconded by Supervisor Dvorchak.

The motion was

ADOPTED Ayes 5 Dvorchak, Virello, Carty, Feld, Carano Nordenstrom

Resolved the Town Board approves to Amend Resolution 21-2025. An Affordable Energy Event will be held on June 7, not June 14.

Real Estate Purchase:

¼ Acre from 2605 State Route 23 Appraisal

Supervisor reported that the appraisal came back at \$10,000. He did forward to the current owner and got a one-word reply “interesting.” He has not heard further word and will keep the Board apprised of any developments.

Public Comment

Members of the public made statements against the paving of Texas Hill Road and Appletree Lane.

Any other Business that may come before the Town.

Highway Superintendent presented the Town Clerk with a large package of emails in answer to a FOIA request.

Adjournment

With no further business before the Town Board, on a motion of Councilmember Feld, seconded by Supervisor Dvorchak and a unanimous vote the meeting was adjourned at 9:33 pm.

Robina Ward, Town Clerk