



**TOWN OF HILLSDALE**  
**Town Board Meeting – December 10, 2024**  
**Minutes**

*NOTE: After a public hearing on April 25 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 December 10, 2024, at 7:00 pm.

Board members present:

**PRESENT:** Supervisor Mike Dvorchak  
Councilmember Joanna Virello  
Councilmember Irwin Feld  
Councilmember Jamie Carano

**PRESENT VIA ZOOM:** Councilmember Tom Carty

**ALSO PRESENT:** Robina Ward Town Clerk  
Emily Stalker Deputy Town Clerk

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Bart Zeigler

**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.

**ATTENDING ON ZOOM:** David Ruede

Supervisor Dvorchak called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm with the Pledge of Allegiance. and asked for a moment of silence in remembrance of Gaye Hoffman, Deputy Supervisor Steve Tigers wife, an active Town volunteer.

**Public Comment**

None.

**Approval of Minutes**

November 19, 2024, Regular Meeting

Councilmember Carano brought up the discussion about taking photographs of children and publishing them in the Town Newsletter and wants further discussion with the Town Attorney. Councilmember Carano stated that in the minutes the Town Board had come to a decision about the Newsletter

Town Clerk Ward read the section out loud and stated that it was what was said at the meeting and that the minutes did not state that there was a decision made by the board.

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

The motion was

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

Resolved the Town Board approves the November 19, 2024, Regular Meeting Minutes.

### Correspondence

Bordeaux, E. – Veteran Flags

Supervisor Dvorchak stated that he had not been in contact but would be with Ms. Bordeaux, and that veterans' flags were handled by the VFW, there is a VFW in Hillsdale.

### **Supervisor's Report**

#### County Report

Supervisor Dvorchak reported that The Occupancy Tax Implementation Committee met in November and discussed the project schedule. It looks as if the Address Identification work for the county will be completed in April with the launch of the portal six to eight weeks later in June. The Supervisors are requesting a meeting in January with Granicus to discuss implementation further.

### **Supervisor Financials**

#### Abstract Disbursements for November 2024:

General Account	20,786.05
Highway Fund	29,624.55
Sewer Fund	86.12
Park Fund	322.95

Supervisor Dvorchak stated that the Town of Hillsdale remains in good financial condition with a total of 1.7 million in book balances. He made special note of the Sewer Fund which is showing a balance of \$108,393 thanks in no small part to the diligence of the Town Clerk and the timely collection of EDU's and tracking of Tax Levy's. As per the resolution earlier this year, the repayment of \$33,089.41 to the Town for ARPA funds will happen on schedule on December 15. So, we have approximately 75K left to start 2025.

### Leaf Guard

Supervisor Dvorchak put forth approval of installing leaf guards on the gutters in Town Hall. The Town Hall is surrounded by Maple trees which clog up the drainage system which if left unattended contributes to the moisture in the basement where we had to have mold remediation. The product comes with a life-time guarantee. There was general discussion in reference to the down spouts of the new town gutters, that should be copper and not plastic. Supervisor Dvorchak will check with the Building Inspector and CPL to see if anything should or can be done.

### **Resolution 109-2024**

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

The motion was

ADOPTED	Ayes 5	Dvorchak, Virello, Carty, Feld, Carano
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Resolved the Town Board approves to allocate \$3,898 to be paid out of the Buildings Equipment fund.

Budget Amendments

Supervisor Dvorchak said he had looked at the abstracts and the town looked pretty good through the end of the year. He recapped some of the years' expenditures, software, Microsoft Licenses, moving supplies which were not budgeted for in this year's budget. Also, the retirement fund which the town has little control over as it is determined by the amount of State retirees.

There was a general discussion about prior spending without board approval.

**Budget Amendment 12-2024**

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

The motion was

ADOPTED	Ayes 4	Dvorchak, Virello, Carty, Feld
	Abstain1	Carano

Resolved the Town Board approves the budget amendment.

Credit Card Policy/Updated Procedure

Supervisor Dvorchak presented an updated credit card policy to ensure that transactions are being approved before charging on the Town Credit Cards. The policy was drafted with the advisement of Robert Patterson, our town Accountant.

**Resolution -2024**

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

Councilmember Carano stated that this was a completely new policy, Supervisor Dvorchak stated that it was written by Robert Patterson the Town Accountant. The councilmember asked why the policy was being changed, the Supervisor answered it was because of comments made by Councilmember Carano. Councilmember Carano stated that she had never made comments about the use of credit cards. The motion was tabled to the January 2025 meeting.

**Sewer District Report**

Supervisor Dvorchak related that testing is ongoing and that two representatives from our Town Engineers, CPL, will be in attendance for our January 14 to give us a status report. He reported that he and George Schmitt had a very productive video meeting with James Malcolm, our NYS DEC Rept. Mr. Malcolm was very glad to hear that we were ordering new fabrics and a control panel as part of the CREST Grant and appreciated the Town's openness and transparency with the DEC. Jamie, and the DEC, will be an integral part of the process going forward. George Schmitt and Tim Moot to address Town Board at January meeting.

Supervisor Dvorchak updated the board on the status of the grants, the Barret Crest Grant is being finalized, and the Hinchy grant is in the works.

**Highway Superintendent's Report**

Purchase of 2026 International HX620 SBA 6x4.

This will replace the current bond which ends in December 2024.

**Bond Resolution \$250,000**

A roll call was taken with all board members present.

**Resolution 108-2024**

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

The motion was

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

Resolved the Town Board approves the issuance of the bond in the amount of \$250,000.00

**Budget Amendment 12a-2024**

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

The motion was

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

Resolved the Town Board approves the budget amendment of \$88,855.73 to be paid from the 2024 Sales Tax revenue line to add to the bond for the total amount to pay for the truck.

**West End Bridge**

**RFQ Submissions**

The RFQ's were received on December 2,2024 and reviewed on December 3,2024. Submissions in order of receipt:

McLaren

GPI

CPL

Councilmember Feld stated the subcommittee did meet. Richard commented the next day.

The subcommittee unanimously chose GPI, the best presentation in terms of its ecological considerations and that they were the engineers for a bridge in Hillsdale on County Route 21 in the past and were the engineers on the Sidewalk project. That the subcommittee makes the recommendation of GPI as the engineers for the West End Bridge Project.

**Resolution 110-2024**

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

The motion was

ADOPTED       Ayes 4               Dvorchak, Virello, Carty, Feld

Abstain 1       Carano

Resolved the Town Board approves the appointment of GPI as the engineering company for the West End Bridge project.

**Town Clerk Report**

Town Clerk Ward reported that there were 6 instances of loose dogs in the town, the majority of which were reunited with their owners.

Town Clerk Ward presented a renewal contract with Columbia Greene Humane Society, Attorney Dow has reviewed and approved.

**Resolution 111-2024**

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

The motion was

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

Resolved the Town Board approves the renewal of the contract with Columbia Greene Humane Society.

Hillsdale Holiday Event December 7<sup>th</sup>

Supervisor Dvorchak reported that the event went very well and that everyone seemed to really enjoy the event. He thanked Hillsdale Fire Company #1 for allowing the Town to be a part of their annual tradition as well as all the businesses who had coinciding events. He presented a final budget of just under \$2,000 including the trees which would have been purchased regardless

**CAC Funds**

The CAC wants to use their stipend of \$1,000.00 on water testing for the town buildings.

**Resolution 112-2024**

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

The motion was

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

Resolved the Town Board approves the CAC to spend up to \$1,000.00 on water testing for the town buildings

**Roe Jan Park**

Maintenance Update, Councilmember Virello stated that the plaque for the Rhinestrom Funding came in and they were going to get that put up, near the kiosk and to start planning for next year.

Berkshire Farms

**Resolution 113-2024**

To reduce the yearly lease by 1/3 in consideration of the missed mid-summer harvest to allow for migrant bird nesting, resulting in a new total of \$3,878.

Two mows instead of three: 2/3 of \$5,875 = \$3,878

On a motion of Councilmember Feld , seconded by Councilmember Virello

The motion was

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

Resolved the Town Board approves the reduction in the lease for 2025 with Berkshire Farms

Renewal of Farm Lease Markristo

**Resolution 114-2024**

On a motion of Councilmember Feld , seconded by Councilmember Virello

The motion was

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

Resolved, the Town Board approves the five-year extension option of Markristo to lease farmland at the Roe Jan Park.

**Hamlet Park**

Preliminary Survey Results – Survey Officially Ends 12/31/24

Supervisor Dvorchak stated that he had some preliminary results which he shared with the board, the survey officially ends December 31. He may extend it with the January Newsletter. This survey augments the Chazen Plan, which did include public meetings, (name changed to LaBella), and the PPS Plan. We did not get the original grant, which was for over a million dollars, but in retrospect it was not unexpected.

What can we fund and do to start to work on the park, we can prioritize various projects that were in the original grant. A work in progress. The Highway Department has done a lot of work on the park, tree removal, regrading the lawn. The Hamlet Committee will review the results of the survey and recommend actions to the Town Board. Further general discussion.

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**Grants**

NYSERDA Clean Energy Designation Grants

**Resolution 115-2024**

Councilmember Carano stated that the contract needs to be updated with the Town Clerks contact information and the correct official town address. Councilmember Carano stated that she would contact the state. General discussion on the fast chargers.

On a motion of Councilmember Carano , seconded by Councilmember Feld

The motion was

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

Resolved, the Town Board approves the contract for the NYSERDA grant with changes noted.

**The Bank of Greene County Charitable Foundation**

Councilmember Carty stated that the Bank of Greene County had committed more funds, however the limit was still \$2,500.00 per application. Four town committees had said that they were interested. Supervisor Dvorchak suggested that the Historic Committee apply and asked Irwin to contact the chair. Councilmember Carano said that she had just received an idea from the RJP Steering Committee for a locked storage area for the Farmers Market and a Sliding door to protect the farmers from the wind and rain. Council member Virello suggested that when the RJP Steering Committee had their ideas planned to send them to Joanna who would get estimates for the work paid either through the HECDL or the Rhinestrom grant funds, the State would be involved.

**Vacancies/Term Ending to be advertised in paper of record and newsletter:**

Board of Assessment Review Member Expiring 9/30/24

Board of Assessment Review Member Expiring 9/30/25 (Augie Sena Resignation)

Planning Board Secretary

Planning Board Member (Term ending 12/31/24)

Planning Board Member (Term ending 12/31/29)

Planning Board Alternate

Zoning Board Member (Term ending 12/31/24)

CAC Member - Vacant

Handyman – Town Buildings

General discussion re video conference meetings.

**Resolution 116-2024**

To approve the expenditure of up to \$1,000.00 from the Planning .4 accounts for new Town Event signs.

On a motion of Councilmember Feld , seconded by Councilmember Virello

The motion was

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

Resolved, approves the expenditure of up to \$1,000.00 from the Planning .4 account for new Town Event signs.

**Adjournment**

With no further business before the Town Board on a motion of Councilmember Feld, seconded by Councilmember Virello, the meeting was adjourned at 9:25pm, carried unanimously.

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Robina Ward, Town Clerk

