



**TOWN OF HILLSDALE**  
**Town Board Meeting – November 19, 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 November 19, 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
Richard Briggs	Highway Superintendent

**OTHERS PRESENT:** John Krakowski, Mike Nicosia, David Ruede, Meg Wormley, Amy Davidsen

**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:** Jeremy Dodd

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

**Public Comment**

Mr. Nicosia asked about the report from Gretchen in reference to migratory birds. Supervisor Dvorchak answered that this would be discussed at the December Board meeting and rewriting the lease referencing the mowing schedules.

A member of the public mentioned the dog signs in the Roe Jan Park, Supervisor Dvorchak stated that the signs went up very quickly and that there is no question about the rules of the park. General discussion about state parks and dog wardens.

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**Approval of Minutes**

October 8, 2024, Regular Meeting

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

The motion was

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

Resolved the Town Board approves the October 8, 2024, Regular Meeting Minutes.

**Approval of Minutes**

October 29, 2024, Special Meeting

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

Councilmember Carano asked why her comments and votes via Zoom at this meeting were not included in the minutes. Attorney Dow answered that she had not met the requirements of Resolution 49-2024, to be heard and seen, therefore be identifiable to the town board and the people participating and watching.

The motion was

ADOPTED        Ayes 4                    Dvorchak, Virello, Carty, Feld

                     Nays 1                    Carano

Resolved the Town Board approves the October 29, 2024, Regular Meeting Minutes.

**Sewer District Report**

**Sewer Update – Status of Testing**

Supervisor Dvorchak reported that the initial excavation and testing has begun. The initial results confirmed that the leech fields are not working properly and that more testing is required. George Schmitt from CPL is working on preparing a report to the Town Board for the December meeting or we may have a special meeting.

Councilperson Carano suggested that the CAC be involved, Supervisor Dvorchak stated that they were more than welcome to join the public meeting but until the testing is done, it is ongoing, we don't know the extent or the remedies.

**CREST Grant Status (Barrett)**

Supervisor Dvorchak relayed that the Grant is in the final stages with the Dormitory Authority, and he is working with a DA rep to put the finishing touches on the grant for approval.

**CREST Grant (Hinchey)**

Supervisor Dvorchak said that the Grant application has been signed and is now with the Ways & Means Committee. This is a months-long process, but he will keep the Board posted if there is any word.

**Supervisor's Report**

**County Report**

**Columbia County Hotel, Motel, Short Term Rental Law**

Supervisor Dvorchak reported that Local Law 2024-5 did pass the County Board of Supervisor and that there was an implementation committee working on the details of what happens next. He did contact the firm Granicus, the compliance firm, to get specifics of what services are available to the Town. He will have more information at the December meeting.

**Supervisor Financials**

**Abstract Disbursements for October 2024:**

General Account	28,716.42
Highway Fund	131,607.55
Sewer Fund	0.00
Park Fund	1,954.11

Remaining Funds 2024 Operating Budget

Supervisor Dvorchak presented a spreadsheet of surplus sales tax and mortgage revenues that was not budgeted in the 2024 Operating Budget. Currently there is a \$41,484.62 overage in Sales Tax with an additional projected \$100,000 to come in for the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter, which means that we have an overage of \$141,000.00. We also are over \$38,627.84 on Mortgage Tax. We have a total surplus of \$180,00.00. He suggested that the board approve the following resolutions and budget amendments including the following expenditures.

New windows in the basement have not arrived yet, previously approved, and we did have approval for a replacement of the bulletin Board for the one that is rotting outside.

Town Hall Front Steps – Iron Works Bid

The guard rails on the front steps of Town Hall needs refurbishing. They do not have proper drainage and are causing the concrete steps to crack. Currently there is one guardrail that had to be removed for safety concerns. He presented a bid by Budd Ironworks for \$4,990.

Councilmember Carano had a question about the procedure for approving budget amendments, Supervisor Dvorchak stated that the correct procedure is to approve the work to be done then approve the budget amendment.

**Resolution 100-2024**

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 expenditure of \$4,990.00 for the refurbishment of the guard rail.

Supervisor Dvorchak stated that the Hamlet Park, the gravel, grass seed, dirt needed to prepare for the new parking lot and other amenities were already paid for. Instead of being paid out of the reserve account it was paid out of the overage. There is a light pole that was replaced by the Highway Department.

Hamlet Park – Creation of Map

Once the public survey has been completed, our Town Engineer will take guidance from the Hamlet Committee and the existing Chazen plan to create a plan for the park and suggest a plan of attack for the amenities. CPL has submitted a proposal for \$3,500.

**Resolution 101-2024**

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

The survey closes on December 31. The Town Board will review the survey results.

The motion was

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

Resolved the Town Board approves the expenditure of \$3,500.00 for the creation of a map for the Hamlet Park.

Purchase of 2026 International HX620 SBA 6x4– Updated Estimate

Highway Superintendent Richard Briggs submitted an updated estimate for a 2026 International HX620 6x4 of \$338,855.73 and increase from the amount that the Board had originally approved of \$272,000.

Dvorchak Supervisor suggested that we allocate \$88,855.72 of the surplus sales tax to the purchase of the truck, thereby leaving a Bond amount of \$250,000.

**Resolution 102 -2024**

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

The motion was

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

Resolved the Town Board approves the purchase of the 2026 International HX620 SBA 6X\$ at the price of \$338,855.73.

Attorney Dow stated that the budget amendment needed to be altered to reflect the increase to the revenue line, assignment of revenue.

General discussion about excess funds and expenditure.

**Budget Amendments 11-2024**

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

The motion was

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

Resolved the Town Board approves the budget amendment 11-2024.

**Highway Superintendent's Report**

Monthly Report submitted.

Hamlet Park – Electric Pole Replacement finished.

Highway Department Gas Tank Bids. The town received two bids.

Highway Superintendent Briggs stated that the bid from Songer was considerably less and he suggests that the town approves that bid.

**Resolution 103-2024**

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

The motion was

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

Resolved the Town Board approves the bid from Songer Contracting in the amount of \$12,205.00.

**West End Bridge**

NYS BRIDGE GRANT - \$1,084,000 (5% match = \$54,200)

RFQ - Due Date of December 2.

Subcommittee Meeting December 3, 11:00 am.

Supervisor Dvorchak stated that the Board can expect to see a recommendation for approval at the December Town Board meeting.

**Town Clerk Report**

Clerk Ward reported that we need three new files cabinets for the Building Inspector, 2 of the file cabinets are broken and are dangerous, the cost would be approximately \$275.00 each.

That we should add to the December meeting the possible need for cell phones for the clerk and the supervisor.

There was one death, a few dog licenses and a wedding license.

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

Supervisor Dvorchak said that they had engaged a Brass Quintet from Bard College for the event and that posters and social media were up around town. So far, the allocations are about \$1,400 for the event and he hoped to see everyone there on the 7<sup>th</sup>. The Fire Department will be doing the tree lighting.

Councilmember Carano stated that she had noticed the photos of children at events and the need for a release form. Attorney Dow stated that as the events were public and outdoors it would not require a release form. There was no legal requirement.

Newsletter

Supervisor Dvorchak thanked Meg Wormley for her work over the past four years in producing the Hillsdale Town Newsletter. The Board discussed the next steps, the Newsletter should come through the Clerk's Office.

**Roe Jan Park**

Maintenance Update, Councilmember Virello stated that the septic system at the farmhouse had been resolved.

Renewal of Farm Lease Markristo

Supervisor Dvorchak and Town Park Lead Joanna Virello met with Martin Stosiek to confirm that they would like to exercise the option to renew their lease for an additional five years. Ken Down is updating the lease to send to the Stosieks.

Berkshire Farms

Supervisor Dvorchak said that he was trading phone messages with Mr. Main to discuss payment for this year and how best to move forward for the next year. The Board will be discussing at the December or January Board meeting revising the lease considering the information submitted by Gretchen Stevens regarding the migratory birds.

Riverkeeper Sweep at Roeliff Jansen Park

Councilmember Carano stated that the second sweep happened this year under the DEC guidelines. She asked if there was any interest in road signage from the Town Board. The Roe Jan Park Steering Committee has asked for guidance from the town board.

**Resolution 104-2024**

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

The motion was

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

Resolved the Town Board is supportive of the concept of signage.

Hudson River Estuary Program

Councilperson Carano stated that the committee would like to pursue signage for estuary crossings, the DOT is responsible for the signs.

Workshop Dates TBA

Councilmember Carano wanted to alert the board that this was happening, date to be advised.

Columbia Land Conservancy (CLC) Columbia County Open Space Plan

**Resolution 105-2024**

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

The motion was

ADOPTED      Ayes 5                      Dvorchak, Carty, Feld, Carano, Virello  
Resolved to appoint Councilmember Carano as a representative to the Open Space Plan for the Columbia Land Conservancy.

Hudson River Valley Greenway

Councilmember Carano stated that this grant was dropped, the due date was November. There would probably be the need to include the Town of Copake Town Board. Councilmember Carano suggested that the town become a "Compact Community" greatly increasing the towns chances for grants. It is an opportunity for the town.

NYSERDA Grant

The Town was awarded a grant in the amount of \$110,000.00. Councilmember Carano stated that she had forwarded the contract to the Town Board. It needs to be included in the next meeting. Attorney Dow should review and redline it for comments. Supervisor Dvorchak talked about installation costs; the estimates should be attached. Councilmember Carano stated that there was an estimate, there was no public input about location. Hillsdale Highway Superintendent stated that there was a pole with an outlet. General discussion on the estimate of costs involved and the contract.

Town Hall Energy Study

Dates for inspection are the week of December 16.

Biodegradable Products Institute Municipal Membership

Motion to join at the Municipality level for no cost.

**Resolution 106-2024**

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

The motion was

ADOPTED      Ayes 5                      Dvorchak, Carty, Feld, Carano, Virello  
Resolved to join at the Municipality level for no cost.

Roeliff Jansen Steering Committee

**Resolution 107-2024**

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

The motion was

ADOPTED      Ayes 5                      Dvorchak, Carty, Feld, Carano, Virello  
Resolved to appoint Ann Marie Farrell to the Roe Jan Park Steering Committee.

Economic Development Committee

Tod Wohlfarth has resigned as co-chair of the committee but wants to retain his membership.

Supervisor Dvorchak asked to move the Town Board meetings to the third Tuesday of the month for 2025. The board agreed.

The Organizational Meeting is scheduled for January 6<sup>th</sup> in the late afternoon.

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**Adjournment**

With no further business before the Town Board on a motion of Councilmember Feld, seconded by Councilmember Virello, the meeting was adjourned at 8:50pm, carried unanimously.

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Robina Ward, Town Clerk