



TOWN OF HILLSDALE
Town Board Meeting – August 13, 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 August 13, 2024, at 7:00 pm.

Board members present:

PRESENT:

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

ABSENT:

Councilmember	Irwin Feld
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ALSO PRESENT:

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

OTHERS PRESENT: Patrick Ferencz, Steve Bluestone, Amy Farrell, Wendy Lidell, John Piwowarski, Meg Wormley, Steve Tiger, Michael Nicosia.

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: Tim Stooksberry, Alice Juliano, Amy Davidsen, Ellen Levy.

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

Public Comment

Steve Bluestone gave a report on the Scenic Sips event and the contribution to the park. There were close to 400 people attending. Amy Farrell gave a breakdown of ticket sales, 41% Columbia County, 40 % New York City and Westchester and 20% Massachusetts, Connecticut and elsewhere. Steve Bluestone stated that they hope to have another event next year, August 10. He presented a check for \$5,531.00

and they also donated 22 benches with an estimated value of \$3,000.00. A photo was taken of the organizers and members of the Town Board for the town newsletter.

John Piwowarski had a question about the Toll House and if it could be moved to a lot near Oxbow Road. Supervisor Dvorchak suggested that he contact Steve Bluestone who is a member of the Save Toll House Committee.

Correspondence

Kathryn Levin, July 20 5G

C. Doucette, July 31 5G

Approval of Minutes

July 9, 2024, Regular Meeting

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

The motion was

ADOPTED Ayes 4 Dvorchak, Virello, Carty, Carano Nordenstrom

Resolved the Town Board approves the July 13, 2024, Regular Meeting Minutes.

Supervisor's Report

Sewer District Report

DEC Report

Supervisor Dvorchak entered the June 2, 2024, report from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Division of Water, Municipal Wastewater Treatment Facility Inspection into the public record. He went on to report that the two major issues highlighted in the report were the need to replace the textile media sheets within the Orenco pods and that inflow and infiltration (I&I) is occurring within the collection system. This can be caused by excess rainwater or unauthorized pumping of water into the system by customers. The system will need a thorough I&I inspection. Supervisor Dvorchak noted that the replacement of the textile media sheets was a key item of the Barrett Grant application. The I&I Inspection will need an estimate to be submitted as part of the Hinchey Grant.

Connection Sewer Permit/Fee

Supervisor Dvorchak informed the Board that the Sewer Committee, in consultation with Les Coon from H2O Innovation, is recommending a \$1000 fee to hook up to the wastewater facility along with a \$1500 escrow that will be returned to the customer minus any fees incurred by the Sewer District.

County Report

Supervisor Dvorchak reported that Short Term Rental law is proceeding apace, with the Board of Supervisors voting on entering a contract with Granicus, a compliance firm. He said that there is wide-spread, bipartisan support for the measure. The county would hire Granicus, and the towns would have the option to contract with Granicus for further services, it would be a Town Board discussion and decision.

Supervisor Report and Financials

Supervisor Dvorchak reported that the Town of Hillsdale remains in good financial shape and that we are now entering in Budget season.

Abstract Disbursements for July 2024:

General Account	22,837.39
Highway Fund	277,055.48
Sewer Fund	68,992.71 A
Park Fund	9,684.74

A Transfer from sewer to general for loan repayment

Budget Adjustment #8 - 2024

General discussion on the suggested amendments.

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

The motion was

ADOPTED Ayes 4 Dvorchak, Virello, Carty, Carano Nordenstrom

Resolved the Town Board approves the budget amendment in the sum of \$15,510.00.

Resolution 66 -2024

Supervisor Dvorchak read the resolution.

Whereas the Town received certain insurance recovery payments in 2023, in the amount of \$50,578.29 for a damaged vehicle, which funds were carried over to 2024 in the Highway Fund unassigned fund balance and, whereas the Town has purchased a replacement vehicle in 2024, for which such funds were used; Now, therefore be it resolved that the 2024 Town of Hillsdale budget is hereby amended and modified as follows:

Highway Appropriated Fund Balance revenue line DA599 is increased by \$50,578.29 and the unassigned fund balance is decreased; accordingly, Highway Fund Machinery Equipment Appropriation line DA 51302 is increased by \$50,578.29.

All Necessary sums and totals of budgeted appropriation and revenues shall be adjusted accordingly.

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

The motion was

ADOPTED Ayes 4 Dvorchak, Virello, Carty, Carano Nordenstrom

Resolved the Town Board approves the budget amendment in the sum of \$50,578.29.

West End Bridge

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

Supervisor Dvorchak reported that preliminary discussions have begun with the Town Engineer on the next steps. There is lot that needs to happen before work can begin, need to file a NEPA, so we are looking at Spring 2026 at the earliest before work can begin. We will be applying for a BAN as well as opening a separate bank account. Resolutions for Board approval will be forthcoming.

The Highway Superintendent made a comment about CPL the town engineers, first step is to send out a RFQ which CPL might not qualify.

Anthony Streetscape TAP Grant

Follow Up Teams Meeting with DOT

Supervisor Dvorchak reported on a conference call with several members of NYS DOT as well as Justin Steinbach from CLP and Robina Ward, Tom Carty and Mike Dvorchak. The plan was called a “really great project” and we were encouraged to reapply in 2025. We have some work to do for the right of way and surveying to make it an even stronger application. The Town Clerk is investigating what we and the County have on file before getting a bid for needed Surveys.

Harlem Valley Rail Trail Bridge – Update (Dvorchak)

Supervisor Dvorchak relayed that the bridge is further delayed by revised estimates of more than double the amount since it was calculated pre-COVID. He is trying to get more information and is meeting with the head of the Harlem Valley Rail Trail along with the Copake Supervisor and local business leaders on Thursday. He will report back at next month's meeting. This is a concerning development, and we will need to mount a full-force campaign to obtain additional funding.

Councilmember Virello asked who did the estimate to build the bridge, Supervisor Dvorchak stated that the NY State Parks Department did the estimate 5 years ago.

Highway Superintendent's Report

The Highway Superintendent had submitted his report for work completed in July 2024.

Highway Superintendent stated he is starting to "chip seal roads".

Town Clerk Report

Town Clerk Ward reported that there was one death this month.

We will be issuing Hunting and Fishing Licenses, and we will be able to accept credit card payments sometime in September.

Roe Jan Ramble – Update

Supervisor Dvorchak has talked to the organizer of the Roe Jan Ramble, Tom Goldsworthy. The Ramble is endeavoring to obtain liability insurance for its volunteers. Tom understands that while the Town of Hillsdale did pass a resolution sponsoring the event, the sponsorship carries no town insurance for any volunteers.

Highway Superintendent Briggs asked if the Highway Department would still be able to loan the cones for the event, Supervisor Dvorchak stated that they could.

Councilmember Carano Nordenstrom had a question about other events not in the Town of Hillsdale and insurance. Further discussion. Supervisor Dvorchak stated that when the event comes before the board, we will discuss whether it needs insurance coverage.

Hamlet Committee

KIDSDALE: Halloween Edition (Virello, Hamlet Committee)

Saturday, October 26th /Rain Date (Sunday, 27th).

Resolution 67 - 2024

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

The motion is to approve the expenditure of up to \$3,000.00 for the Kidsdale Halloween,

The motion was.

ADOPTED Ayes 4 Dvorchak, Virello, Carty, Carano Nordenstrom

Resolved the Town Board approves expenditure, out of the Celebrations Account, of up to \$3,000.00 for the Kidsdale Halloween.

Removal of Bleachers

Supervisor Dvorchak entered the photo of the overgrown and rusty existing aluminum stands into the public record. He believes that they were originally donated from the High School. He also stated that there are only a few games played a year without spectators and that the bleachers are uncomfortable. Baseball or T-Ball will be discussed as part of the overall plan for the park, but the bleachers currently do not serve a purpose. The Highway Department can move and dispose of the bleachers.

There was general discussion. The discussion will be returned to the Hamlet Committee for further review.

Request for \$750 Holiday Decorations at Town Hall

Resolution 68 - 2024

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

The motion is to approve the expenditure of \$750.00 for decorations at the Town Hall.

The motion was,

ADOPTED Ayes 3 Dvorchak, Virello, Carty,
 Abstain Carano Nordenstrom

Resolved the Town Board approves the expenditure of \$750.00 for Holiday Decorations.

Economic Development Committee

Request for \$750 – Flags for Light poles

Resolution 69 – 2024

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

The motion is to approve the expenditure of \$750.00 for banner flags for the Street Light poles

The motion was,

ADOPTED Ayes 3 Dvorchak, Virello, Carty,
 Abstain Carano Nordenstrom

Resolved the Town Board approves the expenditure of \$750.00 for Flags / banners.

Housing Committee

Councilmember Carty distributed and read out the one-page report from the Housing Committee in reference to ADU's and adjusting out town laws. There was general discussion. The report will be sent back to the Housing committee for further discussion.

Climate Smart Committee

Silver Certification

Councilmember Carano stated that the policies should be discussed with the Climate Smart Committee and the Town Board. General discussion continued. This is the first stage and overview.

Oldtone Proclamation

Resolution 70– 2024

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

Supervisor Dvorchak read the proclamation.

The motion is to approve the proclamation for Oldtone,

The motion was,

ADOPTED Ayes 4 Dvorchak, Virello, Carty, Carano Nordenstrom

Resolved the Town Board approves the proclamation.

Infrastructure

Town Hall Repairs – Update

Supervisor Dvorchak relayed that we are in the final stages of the Town Hall project. We are investigating alternatives to a hard-wired Fire Alarm System as many of the walls are concrete and would require unsightly, exposed wiring or costly repairs to the historic structure. The Town Clerk is currently tallying up Herrington expenses charged to the Town Account. We will have additional costs due to painting and molding work. We are receiving a \$1000 rebate, about 20% off the moving invoice.

Repaving of Town Hall and Substation Parking Lots

Both the Town Hall and Substation parking lots could use repaving. The Infrastructure Committee is obtaining bids. Highway Superintendent Briggs obtained a bid also. We should budget for this expenditure in the 2025 budget.

Roe Jan Park

Maintenance

Councilmember Virello stated that the water line was replaced, the hydrant had a problem. New posts are being installed for the signs at the other entrance to the park, the kiosk is being ordered. Councilmember Virello questioned what is happening with the potholes in the park, Highway Superintendent will talk to the Copake superintendent as the road is a Copake Road.

Migratory Bird Update

The town received a report from Gretchen Stevens. Some of the birds have returned to the park, Gretchen has visited the park a few times and was there this morning. Supervisor Dvorchak thanked Gretchen for her time and asked for a report in September and October to have a further discussion. NY State Guidelines is August 15 for further mowing. Mr. Nicosia stated he is now more interested in the smaller mammals as the farmer cannot adjust his mower blade height. There needs to be further discussion to plan for next year. Mr. Piwowarski had a question about the swallows' nests that are not in the barn. Recent activity may have disturbed their nesting.

Signage for Youth Program

The youth program director will advise the town of what type of signage he will need for next year's Summer Youth Program.

Policy Review

Credit Card Policy

Supervisor Dvorchak spoke about the Credit Card Policy, it's a yearly review. Councilmember Carano suggested reviewing the policies at the next meeting allowing time for review. Supervisor Dvorchak stated we should do the same for the Fund Balance Policy, and we should make a list and do a ranking for review.

Grant Workshop

Supervisor Dvorchak suggested Thursday September 26, midafternoon.

Adjournment

With no further business before the Town Board on a motion of Councilmember Virello, seconded by Councilmember Carty, the meeting was adjourned at 8.48 pm, carried unanimously.

