



**TOWN OF HILLSDALE  
TOWN BOARD MEETING  
October 11, 2022**

A regular meeting of the Hillsdale Town Board was held on Tuesday, October 11, 2022 at 7:00 pm in the Hillsdale Town Hall with the following members present:

<b>PRESENT:</b>	Supervisor	Chris Kersten
	Councilmember	Tom Carty
	Councilmember	Steve Tiger
	Councilmember	Joanna Virello
	Councilmember	Robina Ward

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Kathi Doolan, Town Clerk; Elizabeth Sheer, Deputy Town Clerk; Matt Cabral, Town Attorney; Craig Norton, Joe Hanselman Jr., Richard Briggs, Alison Newman, Patty Rohrlich, Bart Ziegler, Kathryn Levin, Meg Wormley, Howard VanLenten, and other members of the public.

The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance led by Supervisor Kersten followed by a moment of silence for the hurricane victims in Florida and the Carolinas, and the victims of the missile strikes in the Ukraine.

**Resolution. Accept Minutes of the September Town Board meeting.** The minutes were late in being sent to the Board members and will or will not be accepted at the next monthly Board meeting.

**Supervisor's Report** – Supervisor Kersten reported on the following projects:

- Thanked the Hamlet committee for a successful Pumpkin Festival
- Thanked Councilmember Steve Tiger for his work with Teamster's negotiations.
- Budget. September financials show the Town in a strong financial position.
- Tentative budgets for 2023 will be reviewed in workshops, Oct. 12, 13, and 17 if needed.
- Thanks to the Town's CPA, Bob Patterson, the Sewer District's financial report for 2014-2020 has been completed and will be reviewed later in the agenda.
- County Board of Supervisors. The Columbia Paper printed a detailed summary of the September 14 meeting. A day before the meeting, two resolutions were presented: one, pay overtime to migrant workers after 40 or 60 hours; two, the recently passed gun law regarding concealed weapons. After much debate, votes fell along party affiliations with Republicans prevailing.

- **Columbia Memorial Hospital.** Supervisor Kersten attended a special meeting about the financial and Human Resources pressures facing the Hospital. They, along with Capital Region Hospitals, including Albany Medical, are facing large deficits. Systemic problems include Medicare/Medicaid reimbursement that is not favorable to upstate hospitals, increasing in hiring and maintaining staff at all levels, and shortage of qualified health care workers. The Supervisors agreed to advocate on behalf of the hospital regarding needed changes.
- **Affordable Housing.** The County Board is creating a County-wide Affordable Housing Task Force and is hiring an experienced professional staff person to support housing initiatives throughout the County.
- **Videoconferencing.** The electronics have been ordered and the equipment will be installed as soon as received, along with the necessary operating training.

**Highway Superintendent,** Richard Briggs – Finished blacktopping the roads for the year. Completed most of the mowing. Removed the old sidewalks stored in the Highway Garage. Richard stated he sent an email to the Board requesting approval to auction off surplus equipment. The Board agreed. Discussion about the 2006 pick-up truck.

**Resolution #81** Sell the Highway 2006 pickup truck to Roe Jan Park for \$1.00.

On a motion by Steve Tiger and seconded by Tom Carty to sell the Highway

**Town Clerk -** Kathi Doolan. The number of marriage licenses has doubled to 22 this year versus 11 last year. Nothing to report from Dog Control Officer. Office busy with requests from new and current residents.

**Fire District,** Joe Hanselman, Jr.- Permissive referendum passed. Chicken barbecue held October 8. Food drive held October 8 and 9. Budget Hearing for Hillsdale/Copake Fire District October 20, 6:00 pm.

**Tax Collector** – Joe Hanselman, Jr. Nothing to report.

**Public Comments** – Kathryn Levin had several comments concerning the CAC, the arts program in Philmont, a new building code and barring the use of fossil fuel infrastructure in new buildings. Patty Rohrlich commented the Town's website is not user-friendly.

**Sewer District** – Supervisor Kersten stated that Sewer Operator Mike Scheller reports the system averaged 16,000 gallons a day in September. The plant continues to function normally and is running at one-third capacity. As of September 30, the Sewer District budget was running a \$4,917 surplus. With the fourth quarter billing, there should be an approximate \$20,000 surplus by the end of the year.

The Town's CPA, Bob Patterson has completed the report, commissioned by the Board, of the approximate \$200,000 Sewer debt incurred between 2014 and 2020. It includes income and expenses. The report has been presented to the Board and is available to the Public on the Town's website.

**Sewer District Audit** - Supervisor Kersten introduced Bob Patterson who shared his methodology and procedures used in the study and his recommendations. He went through each page of the report beginning with the statement:

This is not an audit, examination or review. If it were, there would be an opinion or a conclusion. This is an agreed-upon procedures report which may or may not have findings based on procedures applied. In the event there is a finding or findings, a recommendation is offered. The objective is to present facts that a reader can use to draw a conclusion.

Discussion. Councilmember Ward stated she would like more time to look at the details in the report. Supervisor Kersten replied this issue has been going on for a year. The detail has been looked at by a professional CPA firm and there is enough information to move forward.

Councilmember Tiger asked about the initial debt when the Sewer District was formed. Bob Patterson replied 2008-2013 is outside the scope of his engagement.

Since he found no variance from 2014-2020 of what was given to the State Comptroller by the accountants, he has confidence in the numbers prior to 2014. Discussion.

**Resolution #81. Adopt independent accounting report on the Sewer District from CPA Bob Patterson**

On a motion by Councilmember Tom Carty and seconded by Councilmember Joanna Virello to adopt the independent accounting report as discussed on the Sewer District from CPA Bob Patterson

**Adopted Vote**

Ayes – 5

Nays – 0

**Resolved to adopt the independent accounting report as discussed from CPA Bob Patterson on the Sewer District**

In addition to the report published on the Town website, it is available in hard copy in the Town Clerk's office.

**Town Board Reports.**

**Human Resources** – Steve Tiger. On September 15, the third negotiations meeting with the Teamsters and the Highway Department was held. It was agreed to accept a Memo of Agreement which amends the current contract

**Resolution #82. Accept the Memo of Agreement with the Teamsters Union and the Highway Department**

On a motion by Councilmember Steve Tiger and seconded by Councilmember Tom Carty to accept the Memo of Agreement with the Teamsters Union and the Highway Department

**Adopted Vote**

Ayes – 5

Nays – 0

**Resolved to accept the Memo of Agreement with the Teamsters Union and the Highway Department**

**Infrastructure** – Robina Ward. Nothing to report.

**Roe Jan Park** – Joanna Virello. The Taconic Hills 5-K run was held today, October 11. Met with Ron Bixby regarding improvements for the Farmer's Market. A list was distributed to the Board. Funds would come from the Farmer's Market, not the Town. The last day of the Farmer's Market this year is November 19.

**Committee Reports**

**Economic Development** – Tom Carty. The mural is not going to happen this year. Joanna Virello added numbers have increased on social media for the Instagram page this year. The Car Show and the Pumpkin Festival were promoted on social media, October 25, 2022.

No changes to Hillsdale Civil Pride fundraising. The website project is being worked on. The Climate Smart Community Task force has a grant submission. LED lights are coming this Fall. Solar Panel installation at the Town Garage is not yet connected.

**Hamlet** – Not in attendance.

**Safe at Home** – Shirley Bresler

- October 22, 10:00 am – 1:00 pm, Senior Chore Day  
Volunteers helping with outdoor chores
- October 25, 10:00 am – 11:30 am, Coffee Hour, Hillsdale House  
Speaker from the Columbia County Office of the Aging discussing eating healthy for heart and body.
- November 12, 10:00 am – 12:30 pm, Workshop, Hillsdale Fire House,  
Adapting Homes as we Age in Place. Exhibitors and Presentations

**Public Comments** – Bart Ziegler asked who is in charge of the Sewer District. The Supervisor responded, the Town Board.

Heather Cannetto spoke regarding the proposed resolution to work with the CDRPC and develop voluntary assessment climate adaption plan. She shared a report about called Outlook, dated September 2022, from the NY State ISO which she will give to the Board for consideration. It is about the electrical power industry.

Kathryn Levin shared her experience with climate change issues.

**Continuing/ New Business**

**Local Law – NRI.** The Town Attorney asked it be postponed until the November meeting.

Howard VanLenten reported the Town has been given a \$5,000 grant from NYSERTA to launch a LED lightbulb give-away program. The program will be developed over the next few weeks.

The Climate Smart Task Force is recommending the Board approve a resolution for Climate Smart Vulnerability Assessment/CDRPC Technical Assistance Plan which Howard explained.

Kathleen Williams asked to speak on behalf of farmers. Several other members of the public chose to comment. The Supervisor explained the procedure of two Public Comments on the agenda and the need to continue with the agenda and Town business.

**Resolution #83. Climate Smart Vulnerability Assessment/CDRPC Technical Assistance Plan**

On a motion by Councilmember Tom Carty and seconded by Councilmember Robina Ward to adopt the Climate Smart Vulnerability Assessment/CDRPC Technical Assistance Plan

**Adopted Vote**

Ayes – 5

Nays – 0

**Resolved to adopt the Climate Smart Vulnerability Assessment/CDRPC Technical Assistance Plan.**

**Grants/Engineering.** Supervisor Kersten. Members of the Board received a copy of the building facilities plan over 5 years. To repair the Town Hall, the Town Garage and the Sheriff's substation would be a total of \$590,000. The Supervisor asked the Board to review it for discussion at a later date.

Victor Cornelius has met with the Supervisor and Tom Carty regarding political advocacy for the Bridge New York grant. The grant has not been released yet.

**Resolution #84. Request the DOT establish a lower maximum speed on County Route 11 between the town of Taghkanic and NYS Route 23.**

On a motion by Councilmember Steve Tiger and seconded by Councilmember Robina Ward to adopt the resolution to request the DOT establish a lower maximum speed on County Route 11 between the town of Taghkanic and NYS Route 23.

**Adopted Vote**

Ayes – 5

Nays – 0

**Resolved to request the DOT establish a lower maximum speed on County Route 11 between the town of Taghkanic and NYS Route 23.**

**Resolution #86. Support passage of the Clean Water, Clean Air, Green Jobs Environmental Bond Act of 2022.**

On a motion by Councilmember Tom Carty and seconded by Councilmember Robina Ward to support the passage of the Clean Water, Clean Air, Green Jobs Environmental Bond Act of 2022

**Adopted Vote**

Ayes – 5

Nays – 0

**Resolved to support passage of the Clean Water, Clean Air, Green Jobs Environmental Bond Act of 2022**

**Resolution #87. Pay Bills. Abstract dated October 14, 2022. The Board has approved the Abstract for the following:**

**Abstract dated October 14, 2022**

General	\$ 22,405.37
Highway	33,737.19
Sewer	511.15
Parks	579.27
Lighting	0.00
Capital Fund	6,138.86

**Motion. Adjourn Meeting.** On a motion by Steve Tiger and seconded by To Carty to adjourn the Town Board meeting at 8:58 pm.

**Motion Vote**

Ayes – 5

Nays - 0

**Motion Carried**

The next Town Board meeting will be Tuesday, November 8, 2022 at 7:00 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathi Doolan, Town Clerk

