



**TOWN OF HILLSDALE
REGULAR MEETING
April 21, 2015**

Pledge of Allegiance.

A regular meeting of the Hillsdale Town Board was held on Tuesday, April 21, 2015 at the Town Hall at 7:00pm with the following members present

PRESENT: Supervisor Arthur Baer
Councilperson Jill Sims-Elster
Councilman August Sena
Councilman Carmen Barbato
Councilman Steve Tiger

OTHERS PRESENT: Bill Demma Town Clerk, Richard Briggs Highway Superintendent, Joe Hanselman Tax Collector, Jeff Paige, Robina Ward, Gretchen Stevens, CAC, Iona Lutey, Tom Carty, Hank Henward, Laura Griffin, Peter Cipkowski, Ruth Default.

Observers: Boy Scout Troop 752 and parents: Troop Leader Russ Elster.

APPROVE MINUTES

On motion of Councilman Sena, seconded by Councilperson Sims-Elster; the following resolution was

Adopted Vote ayes 5 nay 0

Resolved to accept the minutes as submitted for the Town of Hillsdale Board meeting held on Tuesday, March 21, 2015.

BUILDINGS

Councilman Sena reported that the business of building permits was beginning pick up with the improved weather. Victor Amendola had repaired some water damage to Town Hall walls and that he would be tightening its loose railing.

SEWER

Councilman Sena reported in the open session that the Town was currently using 60 – 65% of the sewer districts capacity. Research is in progress for broadening the size of the district, with the requirement that new members would buy their own equipment that would have to be the same as the equipment already being used. Any expansion of the district would have to be carefully designed; under the current agreement, the State bears liability for default on user non-payments

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PARKS

Councilperson Sims-Elster reported on the following:

Hamlet Park:

New equipment was expected during the week of this meeting (Side note—equipment did arrive) and that it should be ready for use the week of April 27, 2015. There is no cost to the Town for the new equipment as it is being funded by the fund raiser Flowers to Power and auction on May 3, 2015, at the fire hall.

Reading Program

A reading program will be offered again at the Roe-Jan Community Library and be included as a part of the summer youth program headed by Joe Raco.

Roe Jan Gala

The Roe-Jan Park Gala is scheduled for June 13, 2015; the Gala was bumped from Park structures due a conflict of scheduling, and that plans were in process to raise Town tents in case of rain.

Summer Youth Program

Summer Youth Program applications are available in paper form at Town Hall and on the Town website <http://hillsdaleny.com/parks-and-recreation/summer-youth-program/> . Completed applications have been arriving more slowly than expected.

COMMUNICATIONS

Peter Cipkowski reported that the Town now has a record number of subscribers to the newsletter, over 700. Art requested a bar graph of activity from Peter. March saw 695 newsletters sent out with 434 opened for a 64% open rate. Most interest went to the Vincent Family photos and the Dine Out for the Library fund raiser. April saw 706 newsletters sent out with 434 openings for a 63% open rate. The strongest interest went to the Civil War Memorial day and the Omi Park Garden.

HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

Superintendent Briggs raised the question of moving \$70,000 in highway savings from 2014 into the equipment reserve fund. Supervisor Baer stated his and the Town accountant's preference to keep the cash as a cushion against unforeseen costs. Baer further explained that two items coming up could affect available cash. The first is that the truck involved in the 2014 fatal accident was ready to be returned and that the Town needed to know if anything could be sold from it. Baer will also be meeting with the supervisors of Austerlitz and Ancram to discuss highway equipment and services sharing. Baer requested a delay of a couple of months before deciding on the purchase of equipment when there could possibly be a joint solution with other towns.

Supervisor Briggs and Councilman Barbato will determine if anything at all is salvageable from the towed truck and/or determine how much the Town could get from its sale. There is some doubt as to whether or not insurance would pay for return towing.

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(Highway Department cont.)

Baer requested specific dollar amounts from Briggs to begin the bond process for the purchase of the new truck which should arrive in 2 to 3 weeks following this meeting.

Briggs added that more people are stealing all types of signs adding to costs. (Baer suggested putting the observing Boy Scout troop at the meeting on the case.)

HIGHWAY GARAGE

Councilman Barbato and Supervisor Briggs reported that there has been further damage to the garage walls due to the missing roof from a previous storm. Also, the large doors do not open and close due to the storm damage. Barbato will discuss the garage with the Town engineer, Clark Engineering. Clark is to provide an estimate for repairs if repair is possible. Barbato, Briggs, and Tiger will get estimates for demolishing the building and new building costs. The Board will also need to know the dollar amount that will be covered by insurance of any/all of the above. Superintendent Briggs expressed relief that the large pieces of equipment were not in the garage when the large doors became inoperable. There may be a temporary need for a 50' x 50' tarp to protect other exposed garage contents.

FIREHOUSE/ENERGY

There was an enthusiastic response to a reference to the recent renovation of the Firehouse. Because the Firehouse is a privately owned property, the new renovation (the first since 1962) required no tax dollars; costs were covered by donations, contractors, and the firemen.

Joe Hansel has investigated alternative ways to save on energy and energy costs for the firehouse. Going solar was discussed briefly as an option that would not provide tax incentives but would provide cost savings over time. Baer mentioned that Greenport's solar system was generating some excess power that could be sold back to the grid. Briggs will look into a presentation for the Town on solar power.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Iona Lutey, a 27 year resident who works with the Columbia County division of the Lobby for Climate Change, presented a climate change resolution for small towns on behalf of herself as a Town resident. The resolution had already been endorsed by Hillsdale's Conservation Advisory Committee. Iona's presentation focused on the advantages of small towns such as Hillsdale having a resolution to encourage its residents and businesses to use renewable energy. She stated that she was pleased to be a resident of a Town that was already working on energy efficiency with projects being researched through NYSEG (see February 2015 minutes) and changing over to more energy efficiency lighting in the parks and Highway Department.

The content of Iona's talk, including her mentioning of our local loss of some farmland due to excess rains and the concerns of milk producers as well the full contents of the adopted climate change resolution are included as addendums to these minutes.

Hank Henward stated that local business (Herrington's and Catamount) had been approached by Congressman Gibson for their thoughts on climate change. Businesses spoke in support on the need for climate control and how current climate changes had already affected their businesses. Gibson needed input from businesses and support from local government bodies to aid him in moving the issue forward in Congress.

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CLIMATE CHANGE RESOLUTION

On motion of Councilman Tiger, seconded by Councilman Sena, the following resolution was

Adopted Vote ayes 5 nays 0

Resolved to accept The Resolution of the Town of Board of the Town of Hillsdale, NY regarding Climate Change dated April, 29, 2015 as written. (see addendums)

SIDEWALK & LIGHTING PROJECT

Clark Engineering had begun its survey work in Hillsdale for the sidewalks and lighting project, and Supervisor Baer stated that the Town would move quickly with plan approval from the DOT following the completion of their work. Baer had also met with Town businesses to discuss their issues and fears related to the pending construction. He reported that the people with whom he spoke were satisfied with the Town's plans and care being taken to not disrupt business.

OTHER BUSINESS

COUNTY NURSING HOME

Supervisor Baer reported that the Council of Supervisors had voted to sell the nursing home to a firm with solid regional interests, allowing the needs of the infirm to be dealt with in a cost efficient manner employing staffing and equipment sharing techniques. The company's ratings are 4 on a 5 scale.

COUNTY ECONOMY

Baer reported that Columbia County has the 2nd lowest unemployment rate in the State which may ultimately prove to be an impediment to economic growth; businesses may not move or open here if they cannot find staffing.

HILLSDALE LIQUOR STORE

The IGA will be opening a new liquor store to replace B&G.

ROE JAN RAMBLE BIKE TOUR

With the knowledge that the bike shop at Mirror Mirror will be opening within a few days, the Board discussed sponsoring the Roe Jan Ramble Bike Tour in the hopes of drawing additional tourism and new businesses to our Town. Sponsorship of the Bike Tour would mean that the Tour would be covered by Town insurance. The Board unanimously passed the following resolution to sponsor the Bike Tour:

On motion of Councilman Sena, seconded by Councilman Barbato; the following resolution was
Adopted Votes ayes 5 nays 0

Resolved that the Town of Hillsdale will sponsor the Roe Jan Ramble Bike Tour for 2015.

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OPEN SESSION

Gretchen Stevens of the Conservation Advisory Committee (CAC) requested that the Town include an aquifer overlay map. The existing map could be used and adopted. \The decision was postponed until May meeting.

Laura Griffin announced that the Copake Hillsdale Farmers Market will be joining with the Taconic Hills Harvest Club at the school to extend the Farmers Market season into winter, extending the season for the farmers and giving the high school students additional time to study agriculture.

8:25pm-BREAK TO APPROVE BILLS

PAY BILLS

On motion of Councilman ---, seconded by Councilperson ---- the following resolution was

Adopted vote ayes nays

Resolved to pay the bills in the following amounts:

For April 20, 2015 meeting

General Fund	Voucher #114-161	\$11,602.87
Highway Fund	Voucher#72-101	\$82,847.80
Parks & Rec	Vouchers #3-19	\$ 1,234.18
Sewer Fund	Voucher#12-22	\$ 2,065.46
Street Lights	Voucher#5	\$ 548.66

Meeting adjourned 8:52pm

+Respectfully submitted,

William Demma, Town Clerk