



**TOWN OF HILLSDALE
BOARD MEETING
April 12, 2022**

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A regular meeting of the Hillsdale Town Board was held on Tuesday, April 12, 2022 remotely through a ZOOM Conference call at 7:00 pm with the following members:

PRESENT:	Supervisor	Chris Kersten
	Councilmember	Tom Carty
	Councilmember	Steve Tiger
	Councilmember	Joanna Virello
ABSENT:	Councilmember	Robina Ward

OTHERS PRESENT: Kathi Doolan, Town Clerk; Elizabeth Sheer, Deputy Town Clerk; Matt Cabral, Town Attorney; Meg Wormley, Howard VanLenten, Carmen Barbato, Sandy Resin, Kevin Burns, James Fenwick, Craig Norton, Janis Smyth, Julie Kane, Kelly Sweet, Joyce Lapenn, Gaye Hoffman, Bart Ziegler, Rene Gibson, Barbara Pascale and other members of the public

The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance led by Supervisor Kersten. The Supervisor asked for a moment of silence for the atrocities in the Ukraine.

The Supervisor stated that since Councilmember Robina Ward is not in attendance, the Board will postpone the Sewer discussion planned for this evening and hold a Special Town Board meeting on May 11, 6:00 pm exclusively for this issue and a Special meeting on May 24 at 6:00 pm for the people who are impacted by this Sewer issue. Both meetings will be open to the Public.

The May Town Board meeting will be moved from May 10 to May 17.

The Board meeting on June 14 will include a final discussion of the Sewer debt and resolution.

The attorney noted at that date there will be a possibility of an Open in-person meeting.

Resolution #38. Accept Minutes.

On a motion by Councilmember Tom Carty and seconded by Councilmember Joanna Virello to accept the minutes of the February 8, 2022 Board meeting.

Adopted Vote:

Ayes – 4

Nays – 0

Resolved to accept the minutes of the February 8, 2022 Public Hearing.

Resolution #39. Accept Minutes

On a motion by Tom Carty and seconded by Steve Tiger to accept the minutes of the February 8, 2022 Public Hearing

Adopted Vote:

Ayes – 4

Nays – 0

Resolved to accept the minutes of the February 8 Public Hearing

Resolution #40. Accept Minutes

On a motion by Steve Tiger and seconded by Tom Carty to accept the minutes of the March 8, 2022 Board meeting

Adopted Vote:

Ayes – 4

Naus - 0

Resolved to accept the minutes of the March 8, 2022 Board Meeting

Resolution #41. Accept Minutes

On a motion by Tom Carty and seconded by Steve Tiger to accept the minutes of the March 21 Special meeting

Adopted Vote

Ayes – 4

Nays – 0

Resolved to accept the minutes of the March 21 Special Meeting

Steve stated that the website was missing several copies of the Minutes. The Deputy Town Clerk will bring them up to date.

Supervisor’s Report – Supervisor Chris Kersten.

- Affordable Housing – the Housing Committee is very active and will give a report this evening. The next meeting of the Tri-Town Housing Task Force is May 9. A Housing Forum, sponsored by the Columbia County Board of Supervisors and the Columbia Economic Development Corporation was held on March 30. Members of the Housing Committee and the Task Force and I attended this meeting. The discussion included issues in Hudson and Columbia County. Pattern for progress, the major presenter gave a presentation showed the numbers relating to Hillsdale, Copake and Ancram. Contact the Supervisor for a copy. There has been much discussion about the need. This is difficult work because the key elements: availability of land, the interest and availability of contractors and developers, and the availability of financial resources are all in short supply. Despite these challenges, the Hillsdale committee is seeking to find solutions to this need.
At Steve Tiger’s suggestion, the power point presentation will be on the Town website.
- On the County level, Ray Jurkowski, Commissioner of Public Works will be making a presentation to the County Board on a Master Facilities Plan of all County buildings at a forthcoming meeting. The Solid Waste Department will begin its food scrap pilot program this month, including at the Hillsdale sub-station.
- The County Jail, off Route 66 in Hudson hosted a tour yesterday with Sheriff Don Krapf. Constructed in the late 1980’s, this was one of the last linear designs that

have now moved to a pod system. Plans are underway to make needed improvements and recruitment efforts to restore the number of deputies and corrections officers to pre-pandemic levels.

Highway Superintendent – Richard Briggs. The non-stop rain causes issues. The crew is patching pot-holes and replacing gravel on bald spots. Tree cutting on Hunt Road and on Texas Hill Road. The State budget has been passed. The 284 will be re-written with the new dollar amounts and proposed next projects. Clean-up day will be May 14 at the Town Highway Garage. No tires, televisions, or chemicals are accepted. There is a fee of \$40 for disposal.

Town Clerk – Kathi Doolan. The Town still has a supply of Covid Test kits and masks. The Gas Card program, managed by Tom Carty is also available through the Town Clerk's office. Kyle Miller, the Dog Control Officer reported two entries this month. Two blue-tick hounds were reported missing from Cold Water Street in March. Both dogs were located and reunited with their owner. Also, a large white dog was spotted on Route 23 headed toward Craryville on March 14. No further report.

A copy of a Resolution for the New York State retirement system was sent to the Board regarding newly appointed or elected officials. This resolution is standard and the same as adopted in past years.

Resolution #42. New York State Retirement System Elected and Appointed officials.

On a motion by Tom Carty and seconded by Steve Tiger to approve the resolution for the New York State Retirement System including appointments of Pam Cook, Lee Heim and Kyle Miller and the elected official Richard Briggs.

Adopted Vote:

Ayes – 4

Nays – 0

Resolved to approve the Resolution for the New York State Retirement System Elected and Appointed officials.

Fire District – Joe Hanselman, Jr. Not in attendance.

Richard Briggs asked to speak on behalf of the Fire District. He questioned why they had not received the annual reimbursement tax check. The Town Clerk stated it would be taken care of this week.

Tax Collector – Joe Hanselman, Jr. Not in attendance.

Public Comments – None

Sewer District – Supervisor Kersten. The report has been moved as discussed earlier.

Town Board Reports

Human Resources – Steve Tiger. There are two candidates for the Bookkeeper position. Interviews are April 13. He recommended posting future positions on social media. Joanna Virello did post this position on social media and asked about including request

for proposals. The Supervisor agreed.

The Employee Handbook is available on the website. A hard copy will be given to the Highway Department and two will be in the Town Hall.

Infrastructure – Robina Ward. Not in attendance.

Parks – Joanna Virello. Joanna had a meeting this week with two women who would like to plant a vegetable garden and donate them to the Food Pantry. She has recommendations to update the Garden and will ask the Town Board to approve funding. For the Summer Camp program, 20+ applications have come in. On May 1 the applications will be processed and then the checks deposited. Joe Raco is handling the hiring of the Counselors. The Supervisor asked the maximum numbers of Campers. Joanna to discuss with Joe Raco.

Regarding the Farmers Market agreement, Joanna heard back from the State. She will write a report and share with the Board.

Committee Reports

Climate Smart – Howard VanLenten. Howard recommended adopting a Resolution to have the Board approve Community Solar in Hillsdale. It would be organized and managed by the Climate Smart committee's task force. Community Solar is a NYSERTA program allowing any electric utility customer to subscribe to an off-shore solar project and access renewable solar energy at zero cost. The program has been adopted by the County Climate Smart task force. The Town would work with two solar vendors the County has selected. Signing up for Community Solar would allow electric utility customers in Hillsdale to save up to 10% per month on their electricity bill. Once they sign up, they receive a \$100 cash bonus from the vendor. Customers keep their current energy provider. There is no cost to sign up. The Town benefits. For each customer that signs up, the Town receives \$50. Once ten people sign up the Town receives points toward bronze level certification and the Town qualifies for a \$5,000 NYSERTA Grant that can be used for saving on Solar energy infrastructure projects.

Resolution #43. Approve Community Solar in Hillsdale

On a motion by Tom Carty and seconded by Steve Tiger to approve Community Solar in Hillsdale.

Adopted Vote:

Ayes – 4

Nays – 0

Resolved to approve Community Solar in Hillsdale

Housing – Ellen Levy. There is a lack of adequate housing in Hillsdale and Columbia County. Businesses cannot find staff because employees cannot find a place to live. The Housing committee continues to work on this issue. For several years they have searched for property on which rental units could be developed. They are currently engaged in discussions with a local landowner and are meeting with consultants and will soon be working again with Habitat for Humanity. If anyone has viable property they would like to donate or sell please let the committee know. Donations are tax-

deductible. Current landowners have asked for confidentiality.

Hamlet Committee – Steve Tiger stated the Hamlet Committee Chair, Toby Butterfield, sent an e-mail this afternoon regarding the Hamlet Committee should be read. Councilmember Virello read it for the public. Attached. The Supervisor stated he is confident the report Tom Carty put together is accurate and comprehensive. Tom Carty stated he believes the work he completed for the report is accurate. The Supervisor added that all members of the Board have a copy of the report and it is available to anyone. It is a detailed analysis of the income and the expenses and he does not believe these accusations are justified. They are not based on fact. The Supervisor stated a thorough accounting was done and it came out very well. JAMS was a new effort this year. Lessons were learned. The Town has established new policies and procedures that are in place. Many of the procedures were in place but not followed. Committee members need to follow the procedures because these funds are Town funds. The Supervisor stated the Board will respond to Toby's email in a respectful and fact-based way.

Public Comments – None

Continuing/New Business:

Grant Writer Appointment. The Supervisor reported he and Tom Carty had conducted interviews with LaBella and with Scott Williams. Both were impressive. They recommend LaBella be engaged to produce two proposals; one for Hamlet Park Renovation, \$6,000 and the Streetscape project, \$3,000, for a total engagement of \$9,000. A more comprehensive project, between \$15,000 and \$20,000 would provide further research, and additional proposal writing. The Supervisor stated he and Tom recommended starting with the two proposals at this time. Tom added that he agreed with the Supervisor.

Resolution #43. Accept proposal from LaBella for the Hamlet Park Renovation and the Streetscape project.

On a motion by Steve Tiger and seconded by Joanna Virello to accept the proposal from LaBella under the terms stated.

Adopted Vote

Ayes – 4

Nays – 0

Resolved to accept the proposal from LaBella under the terms stated for the Hamlet Park Renovation and the Streetscape project.

West End Bridge Grant. The Supervisor stated that Victor Cornelius is continuing as Grant writer for the West End bridge replacement. Victor has proposed that he continue with a Federal appropriation request. An RFP is due April 15. Victor would like to submit a West End bridge request to Congressman Delgado and in May to Senators Gillibrand and Schumer. These will be 80% grants, similar to those the Town applied for last year. Victor asked the Supervisor and Tom Carty for the go-ahead and both agreed.

Engineering Project.

The Supervisor reported Bart Ziegler had prepared a Press release announcing the Public meeting on April 21. The date has been advertised and will be publicized with social media.

Bart added the meeting will show the mock-ups of how the new sidewalks and replacement sidewalks will look. The Engineering firm has superimposed drawings with existing photos of the streets. The project involves replacing and extending the sidewalk on Anthony Street down toward the Roe Jan Brewing company and around the corner to where the new Coffee Shop is planned. There will be a sidewalk going toward the Rail Trail entrance. The existing sidewalk on Cold Water Street would be replaced. Additional areas on Anthony Street will be replaced or added. There is a problem with drainage. New and additional drainage pipes will be added and catch basins which will offset the drainage issue.

The Supervisor stated this is part of a larger Hamlet project that includes the Park and access to the Rail Trail and helps to bring the Hamlet together in a 21st century way.

Highway Garage Solar. Tom Carty stated that placing Solar panels on the Highway Garage had been discussed at the last Town Board meeting. His proposal gave the possibility of putting 21 panels on the Highway Garage. The cost would be \$4,770.99. The Town would use a portion of the \$80,000 NYSEDA Grant which is primarily going to street lights. Some of the Grant is left for solar panels but not enough to pay for them in total. The remainder that would be due to the Town is \$4,770.99. The Town is now looking at a larger installation. He sent the Board four additional options.
32 Panels at a price of \$16,500 would give a 35% reduction in the Garage's electric bill.
48 Panels at a price of \$28,660 would give a 52% reduction in the Garage's electric bill.
72 Panels at a price of \$50,000 would give a 78% offset in the Garage's electric bill.
96 Panels, at a price of \$69,000, a complete offset, 104 %, would earn money back. These prices are lower than Tom presented the last time because the Town received an additional NYSEDA Grant, the New York Sun Grant, with the Solar installation and the use of the New York Sun installer.

Steve Tiger asked how much the 104% means in dollars. Tom replied he doesn't know what the Highway Garage bill is but this would represent significant savings.

The Supervisor stated he was drawn to Option three, 48 Panels with a 52% offset and asked the Town Attorney, Matt Cabral, if ARPA funds could be used. Matt will look at ARPA rules specifically to look at this. It is likely that those funds could be used.

Matt stated that the timeline shows the investment paying for itself with the savings that come with the reduced energy expenses. Tom said it would be 30 years for 21 panels. Matt suggested it would be based on the entirety of the project.

For 48 Panels Tom read that the current utility bill is \$528.20 per month. The new bill, would be \$269.70 representing a savings of \$238.50 per month. Estimated savings of \$114,000 over 30 years.

Resolution #44. Install 48 Solar Panels on the Highway Garage

On a motion by Steve Tiger and seconded by Joanna Virello to approve the selection of Option three (3), 48 Panels, waiting for the attorney's review of the ARPA Guide for

procurement to be able to use those funds for this purpose.

Adopted Vote

Ayes – 4

Nays – 0

Resolved to Install 48 Solar Panels on the Highway Garage

Encumbrances.

Resolution #45. Approve transferring money raised at the Car Show from the Celebrations account to an appropriated Reserve balance for the Car Show sub-committee.

On a motion by Tom Carty and seconded by Joanna Virello to transfer \$2,149.71 raised at the Car Show from the Celebrations account A2705, to an appropriated reserve balance, to be set aside for the use of the Car Show sub-committee.

Adopted Vote

Ayes – 4

Nays – 0

Resolved to approve transferring money raised at the Car Show Form the A2705 account to an appropriated reserve balance account

Resolution #46. Approve transferring the \$250 Tourism Grant from the Celebrations account to the JAMS account.

On a motion by Joanna Virello and seconded by Tom Carty to approve transferring the \$250 Tourism Grant from the Celebrations account to the JAMS account.

Adopted Vote

Ayes – 4

Nays – 0

Resolved to approve transferring the \$250 Tourism Grant from the Celebrations account to the JAMS account.

The Supervisor stated that the Town CPA, Bob Patterson had sent a memo to the Board about the tractor purchase for the Highway Department

Resolution #47. Approve transferring \$127,404.48 for a tractor purchase by the Highway Department the Board approved in December 2021.

On a motion by Joanna Virello and seconded by Tom Carty to approve the transfer of \$127,404.48 for a tractor purchase

Adopted Vote

Ayes – 4

Nays – 0

**Resolved to approve transferring \$127,404.48 for a tractor purchase
HECDC Accounts.**

The Supervisor provided to the Board a summary of activity for HECDL requested by Councilmember Steve Tiger for information purposes. This includes starting and ending balances as of April 1, 2022 in each of the accounts listed. Steve asked if these are available to look at past and/or future ones. The Supervisor replied they are available on

demand.

Resolution #48. Pay Bills, Abstract #4

On a motion by Steve Tiger and seconded by Tom Carty to pay the bills subject to Town Board review by Thursday of this week:

General	\$ 8,800.33
Highway	162,053.85
Parks	0.00
Sewer	1,129.13
Lighting	0.00
Capital	2,775.00

Adopted Vote:

Ayes – 5

Nays – 0

Resolved to pay the bills as presented subject to Town Board review

Adjourn Meeting

On a motion by Joanna Virello and seconded by Steve Tiger to adjourn the meeting at 8:28 pm.

Motion Vote:

Ayes – 4

Nays – 0

Motion Carried

The Supervisor will be on vacation April 24 to May 5. The next Town Board meeting will be Tuesday, May 17, 2022 in person in Town Hall.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathi Doolan, Town Clerk

