



**TOWN OF HILLSDALE
BOARD MEETING
March 8, 2022**

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A regular meeting of the Hillsdale Town Board was held on Tuesday, March 8, 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
Councilmember Robina Ward

OTHERS PRESENT: Kathi Doolan, Town Clerk; Elizabeth Sheer, Deputy Town Clerk; Matt Cabral, Town Attorney; Meg Wormley, Howard VanLenten, Gretchen Stevens, Mike Dvorchak, Tim Stookesbury, Gabor Rona, Bart Ziegler, Kelly Sweet

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

Accept Minutes of the February 8, 2022 Board Meeting.

Since the Minutes were not received on time for all Board members to review, acceptance was deferred until the April meeting.

Supervisor's Report – Supervisor Chris Kersten.

- Covid – 65% drop in new cases in the past two weeks. The recent declines are most gratifying. For those interested, masks and test kits are available in Town Hall while supplies last.
- County. The Bard of Supervisors approved \$175,000 in ARPA funding for the Mobile Crisis Assessment Team (MCAT). This funding was previously provided by the State and was discontinued in 2021. The MCAT is designed to assess people and connect them with appropriate services with three main goals in mind: avoid hospitalization, minimize police intervention, and link crisis callers to long-term service providers in the community.
The County has drafted a Local Solid Waste Management Plan for the next 10 years that will be subject to a Public Hearing tomorrow at 6:30 pm. The Supervisor will be in attendance.
Supervisors will be meeting with Sheriff Krapf later this month along with a tour of the jail.
- Donation for Gas cards. An anonymous benefactor has made a substantial gift to the HECDC to provide assistance for residents in need with gasoline expenses. A special email address is being set up for applicants to state their need and Hillsdale residence to qualify for a \$100 gas card. Tom Carty is handling the project.

Highway Superintendent – Richard Briggs. Busy with snow and ice as well as a number of soft roads and pot holes requiring maintenance. Have taken delivery of the inside mower that was scheduled for last October. The new truck has arrived in Albany and are awaiting body work to be completed. No delivery date. The solar speed signs have been moved to Craryville Road and moved the other between Shun Pike and Holm Road.

Town Clerk – Kathi Doolan- After a month of significant fees from Transfer Station stickers in January, February was much lighter. Shredding bins coming in on Monday for two weeks and are available to the public from 10:30 – 12:30 Monday through Friday and by appointment in the afternoons.

Fire District – Joe Hanselman, Jr. Not in attendance

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

Public Comments – None

Sewer District – Supervisor Kersten – The Sewer plant continues to operate normally at the rate of 10,800 gallons per day. The Sewer Committee met on February 15 to review progress. An inventory has been completed. The main concern is the Sewer’s debt to the Town. CPA Bob Patterson, in consultation with prior CPA Nelson Furlano, has communicated to the Board the findings owed to the Town is \$188,971.74. These numbers have been filed with the State over the years. Records show that deficits for 2019 and 2020 total \$98,000.

Supervisor Kersten stated: When I became Supervisor, I became aware of these deficits in meetings with Furlano and Wastewater professionals. I took immediate steps to reduce expenses, those relating to Grant writing and Engineering designed to expand the system. There was no case to expand a system that was operating at one-third capacity. The Town was not charging consumers correctly and was running a large deficit. After two years no Grants were submitted or awarded. Engineering reports were based on readings before a faulty meter was corrected in October 2019. The goal for 2021 was to stabilize the finances and operations of the Sewer District. As of December 31, 2021 operations are posting an \$8,000 surplus. The Board has communicated their need to reflect on the amount of the deficit for another month. The accountants, supported by legal counsel, have justified their recommendations. Perhaps the Board can explain why they think these numbers are incorrect. A decision as to the official amount owing the Town needs to be made at the April meeting.

Town Board Reports

Human Resources – Steve Tiger. Sexual Harassment Training available on Town website. Verification form.

The Supervisor asked about the email for employees regarding the Employee Handbook.

Steve to prepare.

Infrastructure – Robina Ward. Working on mold mitigation project for the Town Hall. Timing is planned for May.

Dates for the Engineering RFP have changed to April 8.

Also prepared RFP for Parks Maintenance.

Town Hall Chiller. Estimates from Bradway. Additional valve work is necessary at a cost of \$3,107.00. The estimate for the Chiller is \$19,006.43. Councilmember Ward is not receiving other estimates.

The Town attorney stated the Procurement Policy looks for three (3) estimates. If the number of proposals can not be obtained after a good-faith effort and those efforts are documented, it is up to the discretion of the Board as to whether they want to accept the one proposal. He recommended she circulate the RFP to the Board along with her explanation of attempts to secure proposals. The Board can review and approve in April.

Documentation was received from Richard Briggs from the division of Homeland Security Emergency Services Grant application for a generator for the Highway Garage. Need to discuss replacing the generator and adding one for the Town Hall. Deadline is June 1. There is a webinar March 9 between 10:00 am and 11:00 am which Tom Carty will attend.

Parks – Joanna Virello. Working with Joe Raco to find Counselors for the Summer Youth program.

Farmer's Market Agreement. Proposal in place. Needs review by Town Attorney.
Easter Egg Hunt in Hamlet Park.

Committee Reports

CAC – Gretchen Stevens. In February 2020 the Hillsdale Natural Resources Industry book was published. At that time the committee proposed a resolution to adopt it as a Town document. Nothing was decided. The committee would like to renew this request to adopt NRI as a Town document. It was put together to partially fulfill the goal set forth in the comprehensive plan to identify and preserve the most important environmental resources in the Town. The Town agencies would refer to NRI in decisions having to do with land use. The book is for information and recommendations. The Town is not required to do anything.

Adoption of the NRI as a Town document will earn points in the Climate Smart Communities for certification at the Bronze level.

Gretchen and David Lewis are revising the recommended Resolution and ask the Town Board to review the Resolution and discuss at the April meeting.

Climate Smart – Howard VanLenten. Would like to propose to the Board a survey to residents who live on streets where the traffic calming signs are being placed asking if they make a difference. This would also earn points in the Climate Smart Communities for certification at the Bronze level which opens up preferred access to DEC Grants.

The Supervisor asked if there was any objection. There was none.

Hamlet Committee –Tom Carty stated that Toby Butterfield had prepared a summary for the Board of events the Hamlet Committee is preparing for this year. These include a Car Show, the Flea Market and other programs. Robina said Tom is planning on

meeting with the Committee Chairs to go over how events are to be run. The Event policy and forms are being revised. Once the meetings are held and the policies and procedures are put in place it will be clear what is expected with these events.

Steve asked whether the issues Toby had written about with the HECDC and reimbursements to the Town had been settled. He also asked whether the Board could see the Budget lines in the HECDC for the events. The Supervisor said he and Tom are on the HECDC Board and that information can be available.

Economic Development – Tom Carty. Dana Bowen, one of the owners of the Sylvan Motor Lodge attended the last meeting and asked if she could be a member of the committee. Tom asked the Board’s approval.

Motion. On a motion by Steve Tiger and seconded by Robina Ward to make Dana Bowen a member of the Economic Development Committee.

Motion Vote:

Ayes – 5

Nays – 0

Motion Carried.

Public Comments – Richard Briggs asked about reviewing the Abstract for the Highway Department. The Town Clerk responded that typically the Board members receive the Abstract and sign off on them. She will include Richard now and in the future.

Joanna Virello asked if the Housing Committee is active. The Supervisor responded yes. He also stated that Public Comments are reserved for the Public.

Continuing/New Business

Bookkeeping Services. Bob Patterson has prepared a proposal to take on Bookkeeping Services. The Supervisor shared this with the Board for consideration and asked for comments. Discussion. Robina asked if there would be a conflict of interest. The Attorney said the Town would be expanding Patterson’s role as a municipal accountant and would not be a problem. The fee is \$12,000.

Resolution #32. Retain the services of Bob Patterson on a month-to-month basis at the specified fee.

Motion. On a motion by Tom Carty and seconded by Steve Tiger to retain the bookkeeping services of Bob Patterson on a month-to-month basis at the specified fee until the Town hires its own Bookkeeper.

Adopted Vote

Ayes – 5

Nays – 0

Resolved to retain the services of Bob Patterson on a month-to-month basis.

Steve Tiger will develop a job description, anticipated hours, and budgetary parameters in order to hire and retain a part-time bookkeeper.

Streetlight/Solar Panel Project – Tom Carty. Tom received an email from his contact at NYPA saying progress is being made. They have put the construction contract in place with BJ Electric. All materials should be ordered this week. It will take eight to twelve weeks to receive the materials.

On the Solar project Tom is over by \$7,710.99 in total for both budgets. There is no negotiating. The number of solar panels has been cut back from 25 to 21 in order to get a better price. Tom is asking the Board for this money.

Robina asked if they could increase the investment of solar panels back to 25. Tom will get the prices for more panels to discuss at the next meeting.

Private Driveway Naming, Dan Levy: Bellweather Place.

The Supervisor checked with the Highway Department and the Assessor and there is no objection to naming the private driveway Bellweather Place.

Resolution #33. Private Driveway Naming

On a motion by Joanna Virello and seconded by Tom Carty to ratify the decision and register no objection to naming Dan Levy's private driveway Bellweather Place. The Supervisor will submit the letter to EMS on behalf of the Town.

Adopted Vote:

Ayes – 5

Nays – 0

Resolved to ratify the decision and register no objection to naming Dan Levy's private driveway Bellweather Place.

Engineering Update

Streetscape. Option Four (4) developed by CPL firm and Tim Moot. A date has been established for a Public hearing in March to receive input. CPL submitted a supplemental bid which was forwarded to the Board in the amount of \$11,500.00 for preparation to present two tasks, a conceptual layout of the project and public presentation materials.

Steve questioned the wording, Anthony Street to Route 22. It should say Anthony Street to Route 23. He also questioned the date. It was agreed to recommend CPL move the date to April.

Resolution #34. Accept proposal from CPL.

On a motion by Tom Carty and seconded by Robina Ward to accept the proposal from CPL for Tasks One and Two

Adopted Vote

Ayes – 5

Nays – 0

Resolved to accept the proposal from CPL

Whippoorwill Road. Report from Engineering firm Creighton Manning for improvement of signage. They are recommending installation of an intersection Warning Flashing Beacon Assembly on Route 22. The proposal was sent to the Board.

Richard Briggs commented the recent accidents on this intersection were caused by people who live on this road. He suggested creating a No left turn from Whippoorwill on to Route 22 and put the flashing sign on Route 22. The Attorney suggested these ideas be taken to the Engineers and to the DOT. The Supervisor agreed.

Grant Writer. Proposals are being received. The Supervisor and Tom Carty will review the RFPs. Robina asked they be sent to the Board members for review and potential

selection next month.

Victor Cornelius has submitted a proposal to continue with the West End bridge project.

Resolution #35. Accept proposal from Victor Cornelius for Grant Writing Services

On a motion by Steve Tiger and seconded by Tom Carty to accept the proposal from Victor Cornelius for the fee of \$7500 for Grant writing services with the West End bridge project.

Adopted Vote

Ayes – 4

Nays – 0

Abstain – 1

Resolved to accept the proposal from Victor Cornelius for the fee of \$7500.

Resolution #36. Pay Bills, Abstract #3

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 8:45 pm.

Motion Vote:

Ayes – 5

Nays – 0

Motion Carried

The next Town Board meeting will be Tuesday, April 11, 2022 via ZOOM at 7:00 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathi Doolan, Town Clerk

