



**DRAFT**

**TOWN OF HILLSDALE  
TOWN BOARD MEETING  
November 10, 2022**

A regular meeting of the Hillsdale Town Board was held on Thursday, November 10, 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; Meg Wormley, Heather Canetto, Jamie Carano, Bart Ziegler, Tod Wohlfarth, David Ruede, Raare Phillips, Joyce Lapenn, Kelly Sweet, Stu Summers, Erich Kress, Kathryn Levin, Howard VanLenten, Kathleen Williams, LLaura Johnson and other members of the public.

The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance led by Supervisor Kersten followed by a moment of silence in recognition of Veterans Day, November 11.

The Supervisor began with an opening statement regarding the evening's meeting and Public Comments. The Board meeting will begin with a 10-minute Public comment period. Remarks are confined to three (3) minutes.

Copies of the meeting's agenda are available for everyone in attendance. A presentation will be given by Kathryn Levin.

Supervisor Kersten commented on the recent resolution passed by the Board for the Columbia County Vulnerability Assessment and Climate Adoption Plan.

The approved Resolution does not take a stand on the causes or remedies of climate change. It authorizes the Hillsdale Climate Smart Community Task Force to take

advantage of free technical assistance to study the Town's state of readiness to manage flooding, heat and other threats.

On election day voters approved a \$4.2 billion Environmental Bond Act that will provide funds to fight the effects of climate change. That is what the Resolution approved by the Board is about.

Supervisor Kersten suggested advocacy efforts would be most effective focused at the State level where policies are promulgated. The Town has limited power or authority in this matter that appears to be of particular concern.

Councilmember Tom Carty added the Vulnerability Assessment and Adaption project the Town is participating in has nothing to do with the NYS Climate Action Council or its Scoping plan to reduce the State's Greenhouse Gas emissions. The Town's program, which is funded by the Department of Environmental Conservation, allows the Town to accept technical assistance from the DEC and to develop a Vulnerability Assessment and Adaption plan. It is supported by the Cornell Cooperative Extension and was adopted by the Columbia County Board of Supervisors. The goal of the Vulnerability Assessment is to identify, analyze, and prioritize the direct effects of climate hazards and risks like flooding, heat stress and long-term drought. The adaption portion of the plan will outline a set of strategies to help improve the Town's resilience to such hazards and protect the Town's resources. This is a local planning process that will be shaped by input from community members and it's stakeholders. The plan does not take a position on the effects of Greenhouse Gases but rather this is the first step to prepare the Town in the event of an actual Climate incident. Preparing for such events is the responsible action avenue to pursue. It will be conducted at no cost.

### **Public Comments**

Laura Johnson read a statement asking for clarification about some of the elements of the mission of the Climate Smart Task force as featured in the Town's website.

Eric Press gave the Board members and Town Clerk a copy of the movie "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington". He stated he was inspired to give them the film when he saw the Supervisor endorsing Proposal 1. Mr. Press said that when he watched the movie, he learned that every bill or law that is passed has fine print. "I would never pass anything without reading the fine print".

David Ruede stated he felt this meeting was a wonderful forum for people to express their views.

Datta Haynes who has a house in Hillsdale and Philmont encouraged the Board to look at the science. As an engineer, he said it is important to look at underlying activities.

Stu Summer stated he believes the Climate Smart plan is not. He read a statement of his views.

Kathryn Levin asked at what cost does being right come? She encouraged the community to listen and learn from each other.

All comments referred to the Vulnerability Assessment and Adaptation project.

**The regular business of the monthly meeting continued.**

**Resolution #88. Accept Minutes of the September 13, 2022 Town Board meeting.**

On a motion by Councilmember Steve Tiger and seconded by Councilmember Tom Carty to approve the minutes of the September 13 Town Board meeting.

**Adopted Vote**

Ayes – 4

Nays - 0

Abstain - 1

**Resolved to accept the minutes of the September 13, 2022 Town Board meeting.**

**Resolution #89. Accept Minutes of the October 11, 2022 Town Board meeting.**

On a motion by Steve Tiger and seconded by Councilmember Joanna Virello to approve the minutes of the October 11, 2022 Town Board meeting.

**Adopted Vote**

Ayes - 5

Nays - 0

**Resolved to accept the Minutes of the October 11, 2022 Town Board meeting.**

The Supervisor stated two resolutions were passed on October 12 as part of the Budget session: **#85**, requesting the DOT establish a lower maximum speed on County Route 7 between the Town of Austerlitz and County Route 21 and **Resolution #88**, the Chargeback Agreement Increase, Community Rescue Squad.

**Ratify the Resolutions #85 and #88 for Speed Limit Reductions and Chargeback Agreement Increase, Community Rescue Squad.**

On a motion by Steve Tiger and seconded by Joanna Virello to ratify the approvals of the above-mentioned Resolutions

**Motion Vote:**

Ayes – 5

Nays – 0

**Motion Carried**

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

- The Board Town Budget for 2023. Increases for General Fund and Highway Fund with no increases in property taxes.
  - Three-year Teamsters contract approved by the Board
  - Established Sewer District debt
  - County Board of Supervisors report.
- Major renovations at the Greenport Transfer station; plans for a \$15.5 million, 25,000 square foot facility for the Office of the Aging and Nutrition Center to be located on a six-acre parcel on Route 9H next to the Fire Training Center. Once approved, the facility will take two years to construct. A major kitchen will provide 300 meals a day.
- The Board authorized distribution of Mortgage Tax monies for the period April 1 through September 30. Of the total \$1,399,699, Hillsdale will receive \$47,899.94.

**Highway Superintendent's Report** - Richard Briggs not in attendance. His report was read by Councilmember Robina Ward. The crew is cleaning leaves left by residents in the roads; mixing sand in preparation for winter and working on winter equipment. The department took delivery of the truck that was expected a year and a half ago. Assisting Philmont with their leaf vacuum problem. Accepting the bids for two pieces of equipment - the blower/boom, \$6,827.32 and a loader, \$226,868.00. Both would come out of this year's budget.

**Resolution #90: Approve purchase of two pieces of equipment for the Highway Department; a blower/boom, \$6,827.32 and a loader, \$226,868.00.**

On a motion by Tom Carty and seconded by Joanna Virello to approve the purchase of two pieces of equipment for the Highway Department described above.

**Adopted Vote:**

Ayes – 5

Nays – 0

**Resolved to approve the purchase of two pieces of equipment for the Highway Department as described above.**

Robina reported that Richard has replaced the lights in and around the garage with LEDs.

**Town Clerk** - Kathi Doolan. The Shredding bins will be in November 28 through December 9. Dog Control Officer reported a stray black lab on October 13 with a red collar running behind Stewart's on Route 22. There have been no further sightings. A lot of activity in the Town Clerk's office.

**Fire District** - Joe Hanselman, Jr.- Not in attendance

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

**Sewer District** – Supervisor Kersten stated that the Sewer District continues to operate at 10,000 gallons a day and systems are running smoothly. At the end of October, the Sewer budget was running a modest surplus of just over \$7,000.00 that should grow by year-end.

**Town Board Reports:**

Human Resources – Steve Tiger. Nothing to report.

Infrastructure – Robina Ward. Nothing to report.

Roe Jan Park – Joanna Virello. Working on concerts with the Library.

**Committee Reports**

**Economic Development** – Tom Carty. Dana Bowen and Tod Wohlfarth are working on a walking tour of the Hamlet that is guided through a telephone.

**Hamlet** – Not in attendance.

**Safe at Home** – Joyce Lapenn. The committee had its second annual Senior Chores service day. There were 15 homes that had volunteers helping with outside chores. There were nine adults and 25 students from Taconic Hills who participated in this Service Day. An intergenerational group. Joyce gave special acknowledgement to volunteers Carol Pickens, Andy Dash, Fred Hickman, and Mike Vanderhall who were with them on the first and second annual Senior services day.

Coming up is a Workshop on “adapting one’s home as we age in place” on Saturday, November 12, 10:00 am – 12:30 pm at the Firehouse. There will be a series of experts who will teach what one needs to do to make sure homes are safe and fit as people age in place.

### **Continuing/ New Business**

#### **Resolution #91. Adopt 2023 Budget.**

On a motion by Councilmember Robina Ward and seconded by Councilmember Tom Carty to adopt the 2023 Budget

#### **Adopted Vote**

Ayes –

Nays – 0

#### **Resolved to adopt the 2023 Budget.**

Attorney Matt Cabral gave an introduction of the resolution to pass Local Law #3 of 2022 was originally the proposed Local Law #2 of 2022. This Law recognizes the Natural Resources Inventory (NRI) as an official planning document of the Town and encourages its use in connection with land use decisions made by the Town Board, Zoning Board, etc. There was a Public Hearing in connection with this Local Law on September 13. The attorney then went through Part 2 of the environmental assessment form.

**Motion.** Indicate a negative declaration for the purposes of SEQR in relation to Local Law #3 of 2022.

On a motion by Steve Tiger and seconded by Tom Carty to indicate a negative declaration for the purposes of SEQR in relation to Local Law #3 of 2022

#### **Motion Vote**

Ayes – 5

Nays – 0

#### **Motion Carried**

#### **Resolution #92. Adopt Local Law #3 of 2022.**

On a motion by Councilmember Joanna Virello and seconded by Councilmember Robina Ward to adopt Local Law #3 of 2022 recognizing the NRI as an official planning document of the Town of Hillsdale

#### **Adopted Vote**

Ayes – 5

Nays – 0

#### **Resolved to adopt Local Law #3 of 2022.**

**Lighting and Solar,** Tom Carty. The Solar on the Highway garage has been turned on by NYSEG and is fully operational. The 58 LED lights in the lighting district began installation today and should be completed tomorrow, November 11.

**Grants/Engineering**, Supervisor Kersten. Grant writer Victor Cornelius provided a report.

**West End Bridge**

- The application to Congressman Delgado has not advanced because of his transition
- Senator Schumer included the Bridge in his list of projects for funding. Still waiting for a decision. The 2023 appropriations budget has not yet passed.
- No word on the Bridge New York grant application process. Victor Cornelius is following up to make certain the Town meets the application deadline. Cornelius is beginning to work on a DASNY grant.

**Five-Year Building Plan.**

A meeting with Engineers from CPL November 18 will discuss a road map for a five-year building plan to repair the three Town buildings. A report will be available during the December Town Board meeting.

**Tribrook Bridge.**

The bridge is closed. The DOT has posted 2.5-mile detour signs directing traffic to Collins St. and Route 22. A recent DOT inspection report identified a significant section loss of each of the main girder webs and related concerns. Based on the age of the bridge and its limited use, the County Engineering Department is considering permanent closure and removal of the superstructure. The bridge would cost between \$750,000 to \$1.5 million in repair or replacement costs. The County Engineering department is considering permanent closure.

**Resolution #93. Pay Bills. Abstracts dated October 15, 2022 and October 28, 2022. The Board has approved the Abstracts for the following:**

**Abstract, October 15, 2022**

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

**Abstract, October 28, 2022**

General	\$ 4,779.16
Highway	13,502.46
Sewer	425.00
Parks	0.00
Lighting	0.00
Capital Fund	0.00

**Public Comments.** David Ruede. Regarding the Supervisor's comments about the new building for the Office of the Aging, David asked him, in representing Hillsdale, to encourage the Columbia County Board of Supervisors to look at adaptive re-use of an existing building that is empty to preserve the environment, and protect undeveloped land. He said there are many empty buildings that could be used.

Supervisor Kersten said he will convey that message.

Kathryn Levin passed out information encouraging people to attend a meeting in Lenox, Massachusetts Thursday, November 17 regarding Safe Zoning By-laws. The meeting will explore health and environmental issues with cell service.

**Motion. Adjourn Meeting.** On a motion by Joanna Virello and seconded by Tom Carty to adjourn the Town Board meeting at 8:00 pm.

**Motion Vote**

Ayes – 5

Nays - 0

**Motion Carried**

The next Town Board meeting will be Tuesday, December 13, 2022 at 7:00 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathi Doolan, Town Clerk

