



**TOWN OF HILLSDALE**  
TOWN BOARD MEETING  
August 8, 2023

A regular meeting of the Hillsdale Town Board was held on September 12, 2023 at 7:00 pm in the Hillsdale Town Hall and via Zoom with the following members present:

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

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Elizabeth Sheer, Town Clerk, Matt Cabral, Town Attorney, Kelly Sweet, Mike Dvorchak, Jamie Carano, Russ Immageron, Kevin Hines and other members of the public.

Present via Zoom were: Meg Wormley, Dan Levy, Irwin Feld, Steve Bluestone, Barbara Olsen Pascale, and other members of the public

The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance led by Supervisor Kersten.

**Public Comment:** None

**Resolution #49. Approval of the minutes of the Town Board of August 8, 2023**

On a motion by Steve Tiger, seconded by Robina Ward, the Board voted to accept the minutes of August 8, 2023

**Adopted Vote**

**Aye: 4      Nay: 0**

**Resolved to accept the Minutes of the August 8, 2023 Town Board Meeting**

## **Supervisor's Report**

Supervisor Kersten reported that the previous week's thunderstorm had caused widespread power outages; most residences had power restored by Saturday night. He offered thanks to the Highway department for clearing the roads quickly.

Workforce housing – Supervisor Kersten complimented the many people who have stepped up to create solutions to the housing needs of the people. The Magyar property that was in question for purchase by the town has been sold. The hope is that the new owner will consider reverting this site to workforce housing.

Land Bank in Columbia County – Chris Brown is the new County Affordable Housing Coordinator. He has helped establish a land Bank in Columbia County through the CEC that will take control of vacant and abandoned properties.

Finances – The General Fund has a cash balance of \$1,878,578.94 including \$13,244 in earned interest.

The Highway Account has \$765,525,20

The annual budget process is underway. Preliminary budget is due by September 30, and workshop dates will be considered later in the meeting.

Town Hall Restoration – The bidding process is underway, and responses are encouraging. Contractor bids are due on September 22<sup>nd</sup>. Engineer recommendation will be out on September 25, after which the Town Board will consider the bids.

Later in the agenda, there will be discussion of the West End Bridge, and a report by Ryan Biggs on repair options,

The County Board of Supervisors has passed resolutions concerning 12-13 year old licensed hunters, with the supervision of an adult licensed hunter, among other subjects.

The Board will also consider an amendment on utilizing a weighted vote count for the Board of Supervisors, based on the 2020 census.

**Highway Report** – Superintendent Richard Briggs said that there are still roads that have not been cleared from the previous week's storm.

Mowing has been taking place.

The new truck is supposed to be delivered in December. The Town needs to come up with money because some roads will not make it through the winter; the new CHIPS proposed maintenance is a t10 year plan, and many roads will not make it to 10 years.

The loader has still not been delivered.

There are drainage issues in culverts on the roads off Overlook.

The tractor mower requires \$29,000 in repairs, but it is 20 years old. It would cost \$140,000 for a new mower.

Supervisor Kersten suggested that \$50,000 be moved to the Highway in 2024. Sales tax receipts from the general fund can make up the balance.

**Motion to sign a contract for a new mower**

A motion was made by Joanna Virello, and seconded by Robina Ward to sign a contract for a new mower

**Adopted Vote**

**Aye: 4      Nay: 0**

**The Board moved to sign a contract for a new mower.**

Sidewalk sealing – not included in the highway fund. The Town can piggyback off of a contract with Greene County. Supervisor Briggs urges the Town to do it this year. The sidewalk sealing would cost approximately \$10,000 and repair would cost \$9.50 per square foot.

**Motion to authorize money for sidewalk repair and sealant**

A motion was made by Joanna Virello, and seconded by Robina Ward to authorize the expenditure of up to \$23,000 for sidewalk repair and sealant, pursuant to Greene County bid.

**Adopted Vote**

**Aye: 4      Nay: 0**

**The Board moved to authorize up to \$23,000 for sidewalk repair and sealant, pursuant to Greene County bid.**

**Town Clerk's report**

There was one birth in past month.

Town Clerk Sheer said that she had received a new contract from Pitney Bowes for an updated and upgraded postage meter. This would cost approximately \$80 more per quarter.

**Motion to accept the new contract from Pitney Bowes**

A motion was made by Robina Ward, and seconded by Joanna Virello to accept the new Pitney Bowes contract

**Adopted Vote**

**Aye: 4      Nay: 0**

**The Board moved to approve the new Pitney Bowes contract**

**Fire District Report** – Joe Hanselman, Jr. was not present

**Tax Collector's Report** – Joe Hanselman, Jr. was not present

**Sewer Report** – 9500 gallons were used per day, on average. A necessary emergency repair to the generator had an actual cost of about \$6000. Next major payment to the town, in repayment off the sewer debt, of \$33,089.40 will occur in December.

**Human Resources** – Steve Tiger said there was an issue that will be discussed in executive session

**Infrastructure** – Robina Ward said welcome signs are being added to insurance

**Emergency Response** – a draft has been distributed to Board members. It will all need to be discussed. A committee needs to be formed.

Supervisor Kersten suggested that the Board take the month to peruse the draft and get a fact sheet.

Attorney Cabral said that there are County resources in place that the town can use

Kevin Hines said that he is about to open a café on Anthony Street but the county will not allow it because the water lines and sewer lines are too close together. He asked whether the Town could do anything to get this moving, to help get a variance from the county. He is ready to open but needs approval.

There is a subscription required for the software for a walking tour of the town. Councilmember Ward suggests reinstating a Town credit card.

**Roe Jan Park Report** –Joanna Virello the signage for Park rules was ready, but a little long. Attorney Cabral will take a look at it. There will be two signs at the Hilltop Barn, one for dogs, and one for general park rules.

**Motion to approve full text of the park signs to be posted on the web site**

A motion was made by Joanna Virello, and seconded by Steve Tiger to approve the full text signs of park rules and Dog Rules for the web site.

**Adopted Vote**

**Aye: 4      Nay: 0**

**The Board moved to approve the full text of Park Rules and Dog Rules to be posted on the Town web site.**

Highway Superintendent Briggs said that the dead trees in the front of the park will be removed.

Supervisor Kersten said that he had heard from Mike Nikosia about the mowing issue that arose earlier in the year, asking what the town was doing about it.

Joanna Virello suggested that the Town change the terms of the farm leases.

Attorney Cabral said that the state offered guidance on a timeline. He said that he would look at the lease and determine what changes could be made, revise the leases and that could be discussed with tenants.

Board member Virello said that the Porta Potties used by the camp were getting picked up.

**Committee Reports** – Councilmember Tom Carty said that there was an update review of 6 committees which had been given to the Supervisor and the Board.

Board member Steve Tiger suggested that membership be updated. He asked whether all of the listed committees are still functioning – for instance, there is no history committee, and perhaps there is no hamlet committee. Councilmember Carty said that at the moment the hamlet committee might be moribund, but it would resume at some time in the future.

Steve Tiger commended the housing committee. He said that the committee had done a good job of identifying issues and suggested that it might be better served by becoming a 501C-3.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Supervisor Kersten requested a resolution for the approval of Local Laws 1-3.

**RESOLUTION #50:** Approval of tax exemptions for volunteer fire and emergency workers, disabled citizens of limited income, and elderly citizens of limited income, consistent with county law.

A motion was made by Joanna Virello, and seconded by Robina Ward to adopt a resolution to pass Local Laws 1-3.

### **Adopted Vote**

**Aye: 4      Nay: 0**

**The Board moved to adopt a resolution to pass Local Laws 1-3, granting tax exemptions to various citizens.**

Supervisor Kersten said that budget workshops would be held on October 4,5 and 11 at 3 PM, live at Town Hall.

Concerning the Town Hall Renovation, two contractors came to look at the project last week and one more is coming. Supervisor Kersten said that it was crucial to get the roof repairs done before winter.

The log house is moving in the right direction.

Ryan Biggs Proposal on West End Bridge- the question is what the Town can do to keep it operational before the next round of grants. Another inspection will take place next month. An estimate has been given of \$8000 to make new recommendations.

**Motion to approve \$8000 for Ryan Biggs Consulting to inspect and make recommendations on West End Bridge**

A motion was made by Joanna Virello, and seconded by Robina Ward to approve the funds to hire Ryan Biggs to offer recommendations on West End Bridge

**Adopted Vote**

**Aye: 4      Nay: 0**

**The Board moved to approve the funds to employ Ryan Biggs consulting to make recommendations on repairs to West End Bridge**

**Salt Shed** – The Town received specs from the Austerlitz salt shed. The question is where it would go. Highway Superintendent Briggs said that he needs the Board’s approval to determine its location, and that he will talk with Lee.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Jamie Carano offered suggestions on changing the committees listed on the web site to make a distinction between Board committees and citizen’s advisory committees.

**Resolution #51 – Abstract dated August 8, 2023. The Board has approved the abstracts of the following:**

General	\$10,524.39
Highway	\$19,519.31
Sewer	\$12,849.83
Parks	\$242.45
Lighting	\$0.0
Capital Fund	\$0.0

**Resolution #52 – Abstract dated August 21, 2023. The Board has approved the abstracts of the following:**

General	\$2600.43
Highway	\$224127.82
Sewer	\$58.78
Parks	\$0
Lighting	\$0.0
Capital Fund	\$2725.33

**Motion to adjourn.**

A motion to adjourn was made by Steve Tiger, and seconded by Tom Carty

**Adopted Vote**

**Aye: 5      Nay: 0**

**The Board moved to adjourn at 8:22**

**The next town Board meeting will take place at 7 PM on October 10, 2023.**