

Minutes of November 9, 2023, Germantown Town Board meeting, held in the Germantown Town Hall, 50 Palatine Park Road, Germantown, NY and via Zoom, commencing at 6:07pm.

Present: Supervisor Helsley  
Councilman Sullivan  
Councilman Kukon  
Councilmember Suarez  
Councilman Christian  
  
Town Attorney, Corinne Smith

Recorded by: Town Clerk, Joyce Vale

Supervisor Helsley opened the meeting and Led with the Pledge to the Flag.

Motion to approve the budget and Kellner workshop minutes, and the October board meeting minutes held on October 10, 2023, the October 16, 2023 budget workshop minutes and October 19, 2023 public hearing and special board meeting minutes made by Councilmember Suarez, seconded by Councilman Kukon, with all in favor and none opposed.

Review of Financial Reports- Comments, Questions. Brian was sick, no updated reports.

Motion to pay the audited bills for November 2023 made by Councilman Sullivan, seconded by Councilmember Suarez, with all in favor and none opposed.

#### **Written Communications to the Town Clerk**

Town Clerk received monthly reports from the History and Highway departments.

History Advisory Committee

October 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023

Attendance: Alvin Sheffer, Yvonne Crawford, Tony Albino, Rich Coons, Tom Shannon

- Rezoning Committee: Tom spoke briefly at the Oct. 5<sup>th</sup> committee meeting about codifying demolition permit procedure, protecting the five known cemeteries located on private land, and providing a layer of review for permits on approximately seventy historic properties. Tony said the committee is hoping to have a plan completed by January or February.
- Hover Foundation Grant 2024: Our request for \$7,220 was granted in full. The projects include \$2,000 for chimney repair at the Parsonage, \$2,100 for D-2 biological solution for gravestone cleaning, and \$3,120 for two NYS style historic markers- one at Ice House Landing and one for the 1923 fire in the pocket park. FOHG is the 501(c)3 sponsor.
- Eagle Scout Project: Hugh Black and other Eagle Scouts recently completed work on the Parsonage grounds including painting the garden fence, rehabbing the existing park bench, purchasing an additional park bench, painting the hitching post, cutting brush, and weed whacking. Hugh had about \$700 leftover from his Eagle Scout project GoFundMe campaign and he donated it to FOHG for Parsonage upkeep.
- Hudson River Bank and Trust Grant: Tom recently drafted and Ethan is currently reviewing a grant request to the HRBT Foundation. It is for \$7,500 to be put toward rebuilding the eastern chimney and repointing the western chimney on the Parsonage. Part of the grant is a draft scope of work that will eventually be issued in a RFP by the Town of Germantown. FOHG is the 501©3 sponsor.
- Pomeroy Foundation new transportation marker grant program: the next opportunity to submit a letter of intent will be in April 2024. We will work on choosing a particular site, as well as researching and writing an application in the interim.
- Notable visits to the Parsonage in the last week: Julia Van Duijvenvoorde, a doctoral candidate studying the Palatine migration visited Christopher, Alvin, and Rich at the Parsonage. Alvin also gave a tour to several Petrie family descendants from far flung locales.
- Bank of Greene County grant: the plan is to combine a history of Methodism in Germantown written by Rev. G.F. Wells in 1935 with the text of the Methodist Church

anniversary pamphlet from 1965, and write a new foreword covering 1965-2010 and the closure of the church. Tony suggested reaching out to Karen Targove for help with the printing process. Tom will speak with her this week. FOHG is the 501©3 sponsor for this \$1,000 grant.

- Drone footage: Tony has raised \$5,000 for FOHG to conduct more drone footage of historic areas in Germantown. The current focus is on Cheviot Park, Ice House Landing, and Lower Main Street.
- Recent donations: a Mini ball from Cedar Creek battlefield from Levi Rifenburg. (Several Germantown soldiers were captured during the early stages of the Battle of Cedar Creek). A large number of photographs and some documents from Susan Potts Rifenburg. Susan's donation included a good amount of old photos from the late Jeanette Best Danowsky's home. A handful of photos and documents from Mary Howell, including a photo of the Cold Spring district school in Livingston and an expulsion letter from the district school that Helen Henderson started her teaching career at.
- Events:
  - Dec.2<sup>nd</sup>, 4PM Reformed Church stained glass windows lecture.
  - Early Dec., Garden Club Christmas event at Parsonage.
  - Possible campfire evening at the Parsonage in the next few weeks, weather permitting.
  - Commemoration of the centennial of the Nov. 14, 1923 fire on Main St. Tony will reach out to the Fire Dept. to see if they want to combine efforts on this. Tom will see if there is any interest at GCS.
  - Zoom history talks at Germantown Library, this winter TBD. North Germantown, 1923 fire, and groundwater issues will be the topics.

#### MONTHLY REPORT

1-CHEVOIT AND ANCHORAGE DOCKS ARE OUT

2-ALL TRUCKS HAVE BEEN INSPECTED

3-RECIEVED ESTIMATE FOR ACTIVITY BUILDING GENERATOR (SOURCEWELL CONTRACT PRICE)

4-TRUCKS ARE READY FOR WINTER

5-RECIEVED BEAVER DAMAGE PERMIT FROM D.E.C

6-AG AND MARKET DID THEIR YEARLY INSPECTION

7-ASSISTED IN SET UP AND BREAK DOWN OF OCTOBERFEST

8-ALL PICNIC TABLES AND GARBAGE CANS HAVE BEEN PUT AWAY

9-ESTIMATE FOR TRUCK CAME IN (ITS NOT COMPLETE THEY FORGOT TO ADD PLOW) IT WILL STILL BE UNDER WHAT WE BUDGETED FOR

10-JOHN DEERE MOWER IS AT KEELES HAVING NEW MOWER INSTALLED

11-INSTALLED NEW LEAF SPRINGS ON 550

12-PUT MOWERS AWAY

13-NEED BLACK FORD F-150 DECLARED SURPLUS SO WE CAN PUT IT ON THE AUCTION SITE

HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT  
ANTHONY CIDRAS

#### **Old Business**

- 2024 Budget. Resolution to adopt. Supervisor Helsley read the following Resolution:

TOWN BOARD  
TOWN OF GERMANTOWN  
COLUMBIA COUNTY, NEW YORK

RESOLUTION ADOPTING ANNUAL BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024

Dated: November 9, 2023

WHEREAS, a public hearing was duly held on the Preliminary Budget approved by this Board and filed with the Town Clerk for the fiscal year commencing January 1, 2024 and having heard all persons desiring to be heard in the matter and the matter of the budget for this Town for such fiscal year having been fully discussed and considered, it is

RESOLVED, that the said Preliminary Budget is approved and filed as aforesaid, and hereby amended as follows:

No amendments.

And established as the budget for the Town of Germantown for the fiscal year beginning January 1, 2024.

Introduced by Councilman Sullivan

Seconded by Councilman Kukon

The question of the adoption of the foregoing Resolution was duly put to vote, which resulted as follows:

Supervisor Helsley	Aye
Deputy Supervisor Sullivan	Aye
Councilmember Christian	Aye
Councilmember Kukon	Aye
Councilmember Suarez	Aye

This Resolution having been approved by a majority of the Board, the same was declared duly adopted.

- Kellner Activity Building- quote received for backup generator at state bid price including installation. Supervisor Helsley said the quote for the generator fully installed came in at \$47,172.00. Supervisor Helsley said that it is not budgeted for until 2024. Corinne said because it is a state bid that it is exempt from multiple bids. Councilman Sullivan said they could do a budget amendment.

Motion to approve the Supervisor to enter into an agreement with Electric Ace for the generator installation in the amount of \$47,172 made by Councilman Sullivan, seconded by Councilmember Suarez, with all in favor and none opposed.

- STR Law- Next steps as proposed by the board. Councilmember Suarez suggested the town board review the comments for another month. Supervisor Helsley said they will table the STR Law until next month. Councilman Christian asked if there was a spot where those comments were located? Supervisor Helsley said on the google drive and Councilmember Suarez said the Town Clerk just added the letters and comments to the minutes. Corinne will create an FAQ. Councilmember Suarez and Councilman Christian will help with that.

Motion to enter into executive session at 6:16pm to discuss attorney client privileges made by Councilman Sullivan, seconded by Councilmember Suarez, with all in favor and none opposed. Exited executive session at 6:57pm.

**New Business**

- Capital Project Presentation by GCS. Superintendent Bragg introduced himself and Ryan Smith Business Administrator they are here to speak in regards to the bond proposal for the Capital Project. Mr. Bragg said the Board of Education passed a resolution at the November meeting to put forth a 2023 Capital Improvements Project Bond to voters on December 19, 2023. Mr. Bragg listed the scope of work needed:

New maintenance facility, basement has flooding issues, Gym bathroom and locker room renovations, roofing repairs, flooring replacement, sewer line to 9G, repave parking lot, outdoor speakers for emergencies, access road to fields for emergency vehicles, new door hardware with lockdown function, generator for school so the building can be used as a shelter when needed, replace chair lifts with ramps, replace steps to cafeteria entrance and install sidewalks around auditorium. The total project budget is \$13,918,711. Ryan mentioned the public hearing is Wednesday, November 15<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm in the GCS Auditorium and there is more detailed information on the GCS website <https://www.germantowncsd.org/district-office/capital-project/>

- CSC seeking approval to solicit bids for a solar array on the salt shed roof. Christina Bohnsack said they have completed 15 heat pumps installations. Christina said we were tentatively awarded \$45,000 grant money towards a large solar array on the salt shed roof. Christina said that these are reimbursement grants and that the town will have to go out of pocket but once these projects are completed the town will be reimbursed by NYSERDA. Corinne said competitive bidding is required. Corinne asked Christina to give her a scope of work proposal and she can help draft the RFP. Councilman Christian asked if we could write the RFP telling the contractor how much money we have and they can put in that amount of solar for the money. Corinne said we usually don't do it that way. Christina said New Lebanon did grants flex 50% easy application would like to apply. Town Board gave their permission to apply for the grants.
- Propose a Local Law to increase the income limits for Senior Citizens as well as low income and disabled to receive a Real Property Tax Credit. Supervisor Helsley said Columbia County did this. Corinne said there are some in place but they are much lower levels and they want to match Columbia County. Supervisor Helsley said the Local Law is too late for this coming year 2024 but will do it for 2025 and he will keep this on the agenda as Old Business.
- Review of solar law to confirm lot coverage definition.

Motion to introduce Local Law Establishing a Three Month Moratorium on Tier 3 Solar Energy Systems made by Councilman Sullivan, seconded by Councilmember Suarez, with all in favor and none opposed.

Supervisor Helsley said this will be referred to the planning board for review. There will be a public hearing on December 12, 2023 at 6pm on proposed Local Law No. D of 2023 Tier 3 Solar Moratorium.

Motion declaring Type II action to SEQR made by Councilman Sullivan, seconded by Councilman Kukon, with all in favor and none opposed.

- Develop an RFP for repairs to the Parsonage chimneys. Corinne said Tom sent the scope so she can draw up the RFP. Supervisor Helsley said it is hard finding contractors. Tom said the cost would be between \$8,000-\$15,000. Tom said they have \$3,000 and is putting in for another grant for \$7,500. Corinne said competitive bidding isn't necessarily required so she will keep it in mind when drafting the RFP.
- We need to find a replacement for Claude DiMauro on the Board of Assessment Review for a term of 5 years, concluding September 30, 2028. Supervisor Helsley thanked Claude for his years of service. Planning and Zoning along with Councilmember Suarez and Councilman Sullivan will be conducting the interviews.

### **Supervisor's Report**

- Oktoberfest was a great event, a little bit soggy. Thank you to all of the volunteers and sponsors for this year's events.
- Veteran's Day is Saturday, November 11<sup>th</sup>. Thank you to all of the Veterans, past and present, for protecting our freedom.

### **Comments from Councilmembers**

Councilman Christian said they would like to appoint someone to the Flood Resilient Network and if they can deal with this in December and appoint someone in January. Councilman Christian said they had received a letter from Kristen Peck of the DEC on the comment deadline on the permit for the Taconic Bioscience. Supervisor Helsley said the correct version is not available yet for public view.

Councilmember Suarez said the Winter Glow is December 9<sup>th</sup>. Councilmember Suarez said the Farmer's Holiday Market and activities will be held during the day at the park ending with caroling to the hamlet.

#### **Comments and Questions from the public**

John Salerno asked if the public hearing on December 12<sup>th</sup> is about the Solar Moratorium and is this public hearing separate from a public hearing before you obtain solar panels on your property? Corinne answered those applications would go before the planning board.

Christina Bohnsack said on December 16<sup>th</sup> 8:30am-1:30pm Scenic Hudson event at Basilica in Hudson to discuss Hudson River access plan and future river problems there is a rumor that Amtrak is talking about their fencing proposals.

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:03pm made by Councilman Sullivan, seconded by Councilmember Suarez, with all in favor and none opposed.

Supervisor Helsley said there will a public hearing on December 12<sup>th</sup> at 6:00pm with the Town Board meeting immediately following.

Respectfully submitted,