

Minutes of July 8, 2025, Germantown Town Board meeting, held in the Germantown Town Hall, 50 Palatine Park Road, Germantown, New York and via Zoom, commencing at 6:40pm.

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 June 10, 2025 Town Board meeting minutes made by Councilmember Suarez, seconded by Councilman Kukon, with all in favor and none opposed.

Review of Financial Reports- Comments, Questions. Supervisor Helsley just received the reports today, they are on the table for the town board review.

Motion to pay audited bills for July 2025 made by Councilman Sullivan, seconded by Councilman Kukon, with all in favor and none opposed.

Written Communications to the Town Clerk

Town Clerk received the Highway and History department reports:

JULY REPORT

- 1-HAVE BEEN ADDRESSING ISSUES WITH BEAVERS
- 2-GOT GROUND READY FOR INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATION
- 3-WORKED ON BALLFIELD
- 4-MADE RAISE BEDS FOR SUMMER CAMP
- 5-COMPLETED PASS OF MOWING SHOULDERS
- 6-HAVE BEEN WORKING ON SHOULDERS ON VIEWMONT RD
- 7-PUT BENCHES BACK DOWN AT ANCHORAGE
- 8-HAVE BEEN BUSY MOWING
- 9-ASSISTING WITH TRANSITION AT SEWER PLANT
- 10-SANITIZED WATER LINES IN ACTIVITY BUILDING
- 11-WATER SAMPLES HAVE BEEN TAKEN WAITING ON RESULTS
- 12-WOULD LIKE TO THANK TASHA BROWN FOR VOLUNTEERING TO KEEP UP WITH THE CLEANING OF THE BATHROOMS AT THE INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATION

HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT

ANTHONY CIDRAS

History Advisory Committee
June 28th, 2025

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

- We discussed a general plan regarding the Parsonage archaeology project based on the recommendations SHPO sent us earlier in the month. Among the recommendations were setting a hard deadline for reports, recalling the artifacts and whatever field notes exist, and filling in the open excavations in the hearth room. If the Town Board is amenable to it, Tom will work with Joyce Vale on reorganizing the Town Records Room in July and August. This will give us an idea if the Records Room is feasible home for the artifacts. If not, we'll have to explore other options. Once we have a viable short term and long term plan for storage, reach out to Bard with a reasonable timetable for returning the artifacts. It was the consensus of the committee that another report timeable would just delay the inevitable. Formal MOU discussions with Bard began in May 2023 and ended in March 2024 for lack of agreement on producing reports.

- SHPO also encouraged us to discuss the "field school loophole" in NYS law, which helped produce the above described situation, with our state level representatives.

-We discussed an initiative that Friends of Historic Germantown is hoping to pursue: updating the National Register of Historic Places nomination form for the 1767 Parsonage. The original nomination was solely for architecture, and has a scant historical narrative. Additionally, nominating it as an archaeological resource will open grant opportunities to help us ameliorate the above described situation.

-Letter of Intent to the Hover Foundation due on July 1st. We will ask for Revolutionary War monuments for Roe Jan Kill Park and Twin Lakes based on accounts of a raid and skirmish described in William Smith, Jr's memoirs. Additionally, we will ask for a roadside NYS historic marker for the first public school in Germantown c. 1796. This will go on the pole where the "First Schoolhouse" sign is now on Church Ave. The existing first schoolhouse sign will be placed on a new pole at the First Reformed Cemetery on Sharp's Landing Road, the closest public land to the location of Rev. Haeger's c. 1711 school.

-The Bank of Greene County awarded \$1,000 through FOHG for cemetery cleaning efforts. We will focus on Valley View Cemetery on Hover Avenue this summer, shifting to Viewmonte Cemetery if there is any leftover. The grant ceremony will be held in early August.

-Recent donations: Jason Munz donated a dozen or so diaries kept by Anna Meiner, formerly of the old hamlet of Burden in the Town of Livingston.

-Hudson River Valley Ramble event on Sept. 27th, rain/wind date of Sept. 28th. Kayak tour of the Germantown Waterfront. Cheviot to Roe Jan Creek Boat Club and back, with stops at the boat club and Ice House Landing.

-PATH Through History event on Oct. 11th starting at 5 PM. Campfire evening at the Parsonage.

-Tom will give a talk on William Smith, Jr's memoirs at Clermont State Historic Site on August 16th at 2 PM.

-"The Enduring Impact of the Palatine Migration on Columbia County" is now available to view on the Hudson Area Library and Jacob Leisler Institute You Tube channels.

-Noah Coon, 2022 GCS Valedictorian and current Marist undergraduate, will be volunteering at the History Department this summer.

-The Germantown Library is putting together heritage programming for 2026 and has asked for assistance with local content for Women's and Black History Months, as well as a Palatine history month in October.

Supervisor Helsley would like to thank Natasha Brown for cleaning the bathrooms during the Independence Day event.

Old Business

- Zoning and Subdivision Law Update- Initial legal comments submitted. Next steps based on councilmembers review. Councilman Sullivan will ask Matthew for a word doc. Councilmember Suarez suggested a workshop, Corinne agreed. Councilman Christian suggested having questions to Matthew ahead of time. Town Board discussed comments and revisions. Supervisor Helsley will talk to Matthew Rogers to see what date works with him.

- Kellner Activity Building. Final Electrical inspection completed 7/1/2025- final certificate should be received early in the week of 7/14. Councilman Kukon said next fix the air conditioners. Supervisor Helsley said they have already been looked at a few times, there was a crack in one of the pipes outside the building. Supervisor Helsley mentioned that some of the units have a recall because the insulation they used has a chemical reaction to the copper causing the leaks. Anthony is in the process determining if this unit is one with a recall.

-Bard Parcel. Resolution naming the property Theodore Robinson Community Forest. Supervisor Helsley read the following Resolution:

**TOWN BOARD
TOWN OF GERMANTOWN
COLUMBIA COUNTY, NEW YORK**

**RESOLUTION NAMING FOREST
THE THEODORE ROBINSON COMMUNITY FOREST
July 8, 2025**

WHEREAS, with a grant from NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (“DEC”) under the Community Forest Conservation Grant Program the Town purchased a 23 acre parcel of vacant land with a successional forest located at the corner of Maple Avenue and Maple Avenue Extension, Tax ID No. 158.-1-33 from Bard College (“the Property”); and

WHEREAS, with financing from this grant, Germantown will preserve and protect this valuable forest ecosystem, create a trail network so that it is usable by the public, start a forestry program so that native species are encouraged while invasives are removed, and recreate the historic relationship between this parcel, once farmed by free African Americans who lived on Maple Avenue, and the adjacent 1767 Parsonage; and

WHEREAS, the History Advisory Committee recommended that the Town Board consider officially naming the Property the “Theodore Robinson Community Forest” to honor the man who lived and worked adjacent to the forest for almost his entire life, served in the 39th USCT during the Civil War, and led Memorial Day parades in Germantown in his later years.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Town Board of the Town of Germantown that the Property be named the Theodore Robinson Community Forest.

Introduced by Councilmember Suarez

Seconded by Councilman Kukon

The proposed Resolution having been approved by a majority of the Board, the same was declared duly adopted by the Germantown Town Board.

Dated: July 8, 2025

Joyce Vale, Town Clerk
Germantown Town Board

- Proposed Fire Alarm Local Law. Declare the action an Unlisted Action pursuant to SEQR. Complete the EAF parts 2 and 3. Resolution to adopt. Set fee for permit.

Motion to declare the action an unlisted action pursuant to SEQR made by Councilmember Suarez, seconded by Councilman Kukon, with all in favor and none opposed. Corinne said for Part I the Town Board will authorize Supervisor Helsley signature and for Part II short EAF Corinne suggests answering questions 1-11 as “no” or “small impact may occur”.

Motion issuing a negative declaration and determining that this action will not result in any adversal environmental impacts made by Councilman Kukon, seconded by Councilmember Suarez, with all in favor and none opposed.

Supervisor Helsley read the following Resolution:

TOWN BOARD
TOWN OF GERMANTOWN
COLUMBIA COUNTY, NEW YORK

RESOLUTION ADOPTING LOCAL LAW
Dated: July 8, 2025

WHEREAS, Local Law A of 2025 regulating false alarms and requiring alarm permits, a copy of which is annexed hereto, was laid on the desks of the members of the Town Board for at least 10 days; and

WHEREAS, a public hearing was duly noticed and held on July 8, 2025 during which time members of public had the opportunity to submit oral and written comments on the local law; and

WHEREAS the Town Board has determined that the proposed legislative action is an Unlisted action pursuant to Article 8 of the Environmental Conservation law of the State of New York, and the regulations promulgated thereunder at 6 NYCRR 617 (“SEQRA”); and

WHEREAS the Town Board, as Lead Agency, has completed the SEQRA process which has resulted in a determination that the proposed action will not result in any significant adverse environmental impacts.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Town Board of the Town of Germantown that Local Law A of 2025 is hereby adopted and renumbered as Local Law No. 3 of 2025; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED by the Town Board of the Town of Germantown that the following fees be established pursuant to the Local Law:

Alarm System Permit Fee (Initial) \$25.00
Alarm System Permit Fee (Renewal) \$25.00

Introduced by Councilmember Suarez
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.

Joyce Vale, Germantown Town Clerk

- LWRP- The Harbor Management Local Law cannot be adopted until the Harbor Management Plan (part of the LWRP) is approved by the Secretary of State. Shoreline Local Law. Recommended that it is incorporated into the zoning revisions and adopted as part of that process- will require referral to Planning Board and Columbia County Planning Board if adopted separately- no need to duplicate efforts. Corinne suggested talking to the planner to see what was sent to NYS. Councilman Christian suggested finalizing the Harbor Management Local Law and incorporating it into the draft the DOS is in the process of approving.

- Local Law B 2025- Law Requiring Prior Notice of Defects. Resolution to adopt.
Supervisor Helsley read the following Resolution:

TOWN BOARD
TOWN OF GERMANTOWN
COLUMBIA COUNTY, NEW YORK

RESOLUTION ADOPTING LOCAL LAW
Dated: July 8, 2025

WHEREAS, Local Law B of 2025 requiring prior written notification of defects on Town highways, a copy of which is annexed hereto, was laid on the desks of the members of the Town Board for at least 10 days; and

WHEREAS, a public hearing was duly noticed and held on July 8, 2025 during which time members of public had the opportunity to submit oral and written comments on the local law.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Town Board of the Town of Germantown that Local Law B of 2025 is hereby adopted and renumbered as Local Law No. 4 of 2025.

Introduced by Councilmember Suarez
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.

Joyce Vale, Germantown Town Clerk

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-IFB Parsonage roof. Pre-bid conference to be held on August 1, 2025. Corinne said bids will be received by the end of August and award bid at the September meeting. Corinne said Tom recommended a minimum of 26 gauge. Supervisor Helsley said a 24 gauge is preferred, then said they could bid it both ways.

- Salt Shed Solar array- Contract was signed before the June 30, deadline. New service estimates will be received in July for award at August board meeting. Councilman Christian said there are two things we need are a copy of the signed contract and the NY sun numbers.

New Business

- Franchise Agreement with Hilltop Communications. Resolution authorizing the extension through the end of 2025.

Supervisor Helsley read the following Resolution:

**TOWN BOARD
TOWN OF GERMANTOWN
COLUMBIA COUNTY, NEW YORK**

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING RENEWAL OF FRANCHISE AGREEMENT

Dated: July 8, 2025

WHEREAS, the Town of Germantown and Hilltop Communications, Inc. are parties to a Cable Television Franchise Agreement dated July 19, 2010 (the "Agreement"), with initial term of 10 years; and

WHEREAS, the parties have mutually agreed to renew said Agreement for a term from July 19, 2025 through December 31, 2025.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Town Board of the Town of Germantown that renewal of the Agreement is in the best interests of the residents of the Town, and the Town Supervisor is hereby authorized to execute a renewal agreement with Hilltop Communications, Inc., in a form approved by the attorney for the Town, and any documents necessary to carry out the intent of this resolution.

Introduced by Councilman Sullivan
Seconded by Councilmember Suarez

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

Dated: July 8, 2025

Joyce Vale, Germantown Town Clerk

-Authorize the Supervisor to sign the agreement with H2O Innovation for Sewer Plant operation- Effective July 1, 2025 for a 3 year term.

Motion to authorize the Supervisor to sign the agreement with H2O Innovation for Sewer Plant operation made by Councilman Sullivan, seconded by Councilmember Suarez, with all in favor and none opposed.

- Big Towel Spa. Authorize a new license agreement for late summer/Fall. Councilmember Suarez brought up about a frost free connection and the outside lighting. Supervisor Helsley said there are now floodlights on the building. Anthony told Kelly they could run a hose from the utility building. Supervisor Helsley thinks they could put a frost free faucet in the back of the building. Kelly also talked to Anthony about plowing a path to the saunas. Supervisor Helsley will figure out the cost for the extra electricity. Kelly would also like to use the Activity Building for some events. Councilmember Suarez told her to book dates with Town Clerk and Supervisor Helsley said there would be a fee for the Activity Building. Supervisor Helsley read the following Resolution:

TOWN BOARD
TOWN OF GERMANTOWN
COLUMBIA COUNTY, NEW YORK

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING LICENSE AGREEMENT

Dated: July 8, 2025

WHEREAS, Big Towel Spa LLC desires to enter into a license agreement with the Town of Germantown to operate two mobile saunas on Lake George South Beach between August 23, 2025 and May 29, 2026.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Town Board of the Town of Germantown that the License Agreement is in the best interests of the residents of the Town; and the Town Supervisor is hereby authorized to execute the License Agreement, in a form approved by the attorney for the Town, with Big Towel Spa LLC.

Introduced by Councilmember Suarez

Seconded by Councilman Sullivan

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

Joyce Vale, Germantown Town Clerk

Supervisor Helsley said they would get the agreement finalized and get signatures.

- GCS Student Mural. Application process? Concepts review? Councilmember Suarez had communication with Teresa O'Connor Sadler, GCS High School Art teacher in regards to the during a mural for the upcoming school year. Councilmember Suarez they also asked the Parks Commission for sponsorship for supplies, which the committee provided. They talked about the name of the Town with imaginary around it, a farm scene or Hudson Valley landscape. Councilmember Suarez mentioned they would be doing the mural on sheets of plywood so it wouldn't be permanent. They are asking for the Town Board permission and where to put the mural. Suggestions were on the north side of the Town Hall where the painting is now or on the Salt Shed facing the road. Supervisor Helsley thinks it's a great idea and would not mind the mural painted right on the building instead of plywood.

- Authorize Camp counselors. Councilman Sullivan read the list of counselors:

Linda Gerlach
Chloe VanWagner
Kirstyn Peterson
Jonathan Mollo
Bryan Bathrick
Gavin Burger
Julianna Stagno
James Meek
Amanda Terry
Emma Weber
Kyle Stracher

CITS:

Peyton Burleigh
Tadeo Costa
Duke Dufresne
Cooper Dufresne

Motion to authorize Camp counselors and CIT's made by Supervisor Helsley, seconded by Councilmember Suarez, with all in favor and none opposed.

- Town Informational sign in need of replacement. Supervisor Helsley received quotes and will work with Anthony on it. Councilman Sullivan would like a nicer sign. Phil Salvatore will ask the Fire Department if they will donate their sign board to the Town, the Fire Department is getting a new electronic sign. The Town Board liked the idea of a permanent sign.

Councilmember Suarez has received public comments with traffic issues of speeding, wreckless driving through the hamlet. Councilmember Suarez spoke with Dale Hinkein and Dale suggested a mobile speed sign. Supervisor Helsley will talk to the Columbia County Safety Board. Councilmember Suarez suggested speed bumps and extending the school zone. Stu is asking for the Town Board's help with the speeders through the hamlet. Lee Wurtzberger said they are repeat offenders.

Supervisor's Report

- The Town has changed sewer plant operators effective July 1, 2025. H2O Innovation is the new plant operator. An informational letter will be going out and posted to the Town website.

- The Independence Day event was a huge success! Thank you to all of the volunteers and the hard work put in by everyone involved. Rain date event- July 12, 2025- Second Chance Band will be performing from 5-9PM- some food vendors (TBD) will be there- Free admission.

- Supervisor Helsley will be out of town, July 21st- 25th.

Comments from Councilmembers

Councilmember Suarez brought up the Recreation Committee's Pickle ball pop up day is July 26th, open play. The committee is researching grants. Councilmember Suarez said the soccer league will start in the fall. Either cash or check. Corinne said the Town Board could pass a Resolution with types of

Councilman Kukon added followed up with the GCS and said the price was \$40

Councilmember Suarez announced the Haunted Hayride would be on October 18th with a raindate on October 19th.

Councilmember Suarez suggested putting paddle boats on the agenda.

Councilman Christian said DEC is replacing the docks at Lasher Park.

Comments and Questions from the Public

Phil Salvatore said that GCS is not under the town law, they are under Questar. Corinne comply with Columbia County fire alarm. No exemptions built into the Germantown Local Law once filed with NYS Corinne will send the Law to the Fire Department.

Phil next mentioned that he has had numerous calls as the Dog Control Officer, around 8-10 calls a week. Phil said there is no way to enforce the law and we should start using forms and enforcing the dog law. With the ability to issue a ticket. Corinne will review the Local Law. Phil suggested Pro Printers could make the forms, tickets.

Martin Overington said Happy 4th, it was a great event. Martin thanked the Fire Department for giving the WAC a motor, which is much better than the old one. The Park Commission was very supportive. Martin feels the water chestnuts will be gone in the next few years, there is no need for spraying. Martin commented about people parking in the Library parking lot during the Independence Day event. Martin would like to talk to Supervisor Helsley about the town sound machine. Martin has concerns about the event that Sky High Farms is having on July 13th.

Councilmember Suarez said residents to tour. Martin is concerned about the parking.

Kerrie Abela brought up giving the Town Board three properties questioning the sewer pricing. Councilman Sullivan asked if Kerrie issued them bills, he said to bill them "as is". Supervisor Helsley and the Town Board will review the sewer law.

Motion to go into executive session at 7:55pm made by Councilmember Suarez, seconded by Councilman Kukon, with all in favor and none opposed.

Motion to come out of executive session at 8:27pm made by Councilmember Suarez, seconded by Councilman Kukon, with all in favor and none opposed.

Motion to appoint Eli Fieser as interm Building Inspector made by Councilman Sullivan, seconded by Supervisor Helsley, with all in favor and none opposed.

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:31pm made by Councilmember Suarez, seconded by Councilman Sullivan, with all in favor and none opposed.

Respectfully submitted,