

Minutes of August 11, 2026, Germantown Town Board meeting, held in the Germantown Town Hall, 50 Palatine Park Road, Germantown, NY and via Zoom, commencing at 7:06pm.

Present: Supervisor Helsley
Councilman Sullivan
Councilman Kukon
Councilmember DuFresne

Town Attorney, Corinne Smith

Present via Zoom: Councilman Christian

Recorded by: Town Clerk, Joyce Vale

Motion to go into regular session made by Councilman Sullivan, seconded by Councilmember DuFresne with all in favor and none opposed.

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

Motion to approve the July 14, 2026 Town Board meeting minutes made by Councilman Sullivan, seconded by Councilman Kukon, with all in favor and none opposed.

Review of Financial Reports- Comments, Questions. Supervisor Helsley just received the reports today.

Motion to pay the audited bills for August 2026 made by Councilman Kukon, seconded by Councilmember DuFresne, with all in favor and none opposed.

Written Communications to the Town Clerk

Town Clerk received History monthly report.

History Advisory Committee
July 25th, 2026

Attendance: Tony Albino, Rich Coons, Yvonne Crawford, Alvin Sheffer, Hank Himelright, Tom Shannon, Phil Williams

- Archaeology update: there was some email contact on July 17th, 2026. Bard clarified a few points, will discuss internally, and present a plan for return of the artifacts in the near future.
- Newspaper digitization: The majority of the Germantown History Department newspaper collection has been digitized and added to Hudson River Valley Heritage. This was paid for with a grant from the Bank of Greene County and additional funding from Friends of Historic Germantown. We have one more Germantown Post and a number of maps that we would like to have digitized in a future project.
- Theodore Robinson Community Forest update: Town Board member Kaare Christian will be here today to mark out the boundaries of the new parking lot, which will consist of six parking spots. It is located directly across Maple Avenue

from the trailhead. This is a requirement of the NYSDEC grant program necessary for the Town to be reimbursed for purchasing the Robinson Forest.

- Valley View Cemetery update: Mowing has been an issue here this year, though it was mowed and weed whacked in the middle of July. This was reportedly the first time mowed since Memorial Day. Keeping an eye on the situation.
- Rezoning update: The Town Attorney circulated version 6 of the draft plan and maps to Town Committee Chairs on July 23rd. Tom will circulate these to the History Advisory Committee. Please review and let Tom know your input by Aug. 8th. Tom will prepare a letter with the Committee's input to send to the Town Board.
- Tom prepared a letter of support for the African American Archive of Columbia County in their pursuit of a NYS grant to perform ground penetrating radar, cemetery cleaning, and restoration at the Persons of Color Cemetery and a portion of the Reformed Cemetery in Kinderhook.
- Legislation designating Phase I of the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway was signed into law by Gov. Hochul on June 13th. Phase I includes the entire stretch along the Hudson River, including Germantown. This Committee previously drafted a letter of support for the Byway that was adopted by the Town of Germantown.
- We have received a request from State Assemblywoman Didi Barrett's office for a biography for the annual Women's History publication. Tom is leaning toward Julia Rockefeller, WWII Marine Corps veteran.
- Local Law B of 2026 (A Local Law Governing the Use of Town Parks and Facilities) update: This law was discussed at a public hearing prior to the July Town Board meeting. The law was tabled so that each individual Town property parcel can be specifically listed in the law. The History Advisory Committee recommends that the parcels for the 1767 Parsonage, Cheviot Cemetery, First Reformed Cemetery, Theodore Robinson Community Forest, Ice House Landing, and the old dump on Round top Road be listed in addition to the four official parks.
- Michael Lucas, Curator of Historical Archaeology at the NYS Museum, visited the Parsonage on June 15th. He took a good look at the artifacts on display with an eye towards including some of them in a NYS Museum exhibit for the upcoming Enslavement to Freedom 1627-1827-2027 initiative.
- Details aren't settled yet, but there will likely be space available for municipal historians to display at the Columbia County Fair. Start thinking about what we want to display.
- Hover grant preparation: we need price quotes for the desktop computer and two library bookshelves that we requested. Application due on Aug. 1st.
- The Recreation Committee grant application for a pickleball court at Palatine Park was successful. Of note to this Committee is that among the first couple of steps will be a survey of the parcels that make up Palatine Park, as well as a Cultural Resource Management archaeological survey.

- Two new roadside historic markers- first public school in Germantown and the 1778 Loyalist Raid- have arrived from the foundry. To be installed soon.

- Recent Donations: A complete 1920's era baseball uniform from an Elizaville team, initially donated to Greene County Historian Jonathan Palmer. A jpg of the original photograph of the Germantown Train Station c. 1905 used for a postcard, shared by Ulster County Archivist Jonathan Palmer from the Winchell Collection. The GCS track and field record plaque, donated by Ryan Broast via Hank Himelright. Meyerdiercks property map and love letter donated by Fran Bufl.

- Events:

- **Sept. 19th at 11:30 AM.** Tom will speak at the Columbia Mid-Hudson Valley Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution meeting in Hyde Park. Subject: the Revolutionary War in Columbia County.

- **Sept. 26th at 1 PM.** Hudson River Valley Ramble hiking tour of the Germantown from the Reformed Church to the Theodore Robinson Community Forest and back. Break at the Parsonage.

- **Sept. 30th at 8:30 AM.** Tom will present a talk entitled "Revolution on Livingston Manor" at the Association of Public Historians of NYS annual conference in Utica.

- **Oct. 12th.** Haunted Hayrides.

- **Oct. 14th.** Potential PATH through History Weekend event.

Old Business

- Zoning and Subdivision Law Update. Latest Revisions have been sent to Planning Board and ZBA for review. Requested comments to be back by September 1, 2026. There is a Planning and ZBA Zoning and Subdivision workshop set for August 21, 2026 at 9:00am - 12pm.

- Salt Shed Solar array service. Supervisor Helsley and Councilmember Christian began the process of Direct Pay. Additional documentation is needed and will be completed in the upcoming weeks.

- School Zone. See email from Beverly Meagher. Approximately 451 students. Approximately 12 walk/bicycle to school. 25 or more walk to local shops (Stewarts, Xtra Mart) after school prior to extra circular activities. The crosswalk is not supervised. Corinne asked for the school to send the letter on school letterhead. The Town Board will have to do a Resolution. The Town Board would like the school zone to be the longest length it can be with the crosswalk included in the school zone.

- Big Towel agreement for Fall 2026- Spring 2027. Utility usage has been reviewed and proposed at \$125 per month on average. Supervisor Helsley thanked Councilman Sullivan for putting all the numbers together. Supervisor Helsley commented the majority of the usage is propane. Supervisor Helsley will sign the agreement then send it to Kelly from Big Towel.

- Parsonage Archaeology Agreement with Hartgen. No response yet from Bard. Tom heard nothing from Bard yet, he will talk to Professor Lindner.

- Resolution Approving the Standard Workday for NYSLRS. Town Clerk did not receive any response yet.

New Business

Surplus the Quonset Hut behind Kellner Activity Building- Winning Bidder must disassemble and provide liability insurance for said work. Supervisor Helsley will put the Quonset Hut on the Auction site.

Motion to surplus the Quonset Hut made by Councilman Sullivan, seconded by Councilmember DuFresne, with all in favor and none opposed.

- Enact a Moratorium on the Solar for a period of six months. Corinne said to enact a Local Law specifying time frame. Planning Board. Public Hearing under 3 months, above 3 months. County Planning Board. Corinne refer it to County Planning to be on their agenda for September and then on the Town Board agenda for October meeting. Supervisor Helsley. Councilman Christian said revising the new zoning law as if it falls in those six months new zoning is adopted in those six months. Corinne all wrapped up in that six month time frame. Councilman Sullivan asked what about somebody applies today or tomorrow? Corinne said new projects will be paused. Only three tier solar. Corinne said it makes more sense for the six month time frame, potentially adopted in October. Public hearing set for October 13, 2026 at 6:45pm with the Town Board meeting immediately following.

- Due to extensive storm damage, Hunterstown Road and Reuter road require significant repairs- estimates put the repair costs at \$160k for Reuter Road and \$243k for Hunterstown. Discussion and approval to expend funds. Highway Superintendent, Anthony Cidras said that Cheviot Road and Sharps Landing are fixed. Anthony said milled & raised up- binder. Anthony said Hunterstown needs 3-4 feet pipes, raise the road, use larger to protect the inlet side. Columbia County qualify for FEMA. Not heard from NYS. Supervisor Helsley is going to the DPW meeting next week.

Motion to approve made by Councilman Sullivan, seconded by Councilwoman DuFresne with all in favor and none opposed.

Councilwoman DuFresne asked who does the dam on the fire pond belong to? Anthony answered it belongs to the town. Something to look into. Cost would be millions of dollars. Councilman Christian said the Hazard Mitigation plan some funding sources listed in it, one of the things they looked at in Germantown. Supervisor Helsley will talk to Director Harrison. Councilman Christian brought up the bottom of Anchorage Road there is not much drainage there. Anthony said we need to find out if there is a right-of-way on that pipe. Tried contacting the homeowner- no response. Easement on that property. Anthony said cleaning the inlet of the pipe is the solution. Councilman Christian will ask the homeowner to get in touch with Anthony. Supervisor Helsley asked Corinne to do a title search on that property.

- Lower Main Street is a County road. Supervisor Helsley will be attending the County Public Works Meeting on August 19th at 5PM to obtain more information on the proposed repairs and timeline. Last estimates to fix were 3-6 months. Kathy Overington mentioned now everyone is going down Funk Road. Anthony commented Funk Road is part of his FEMA reimbursement, if damage does occur it will be repaired.

Supervisor's Report

- The major rain event of July 29th. Huge thank you to all of the first responders and the DPW for their extraordinary efforts- No injuries were reported in Columbia County.

- Surplus Ambulance. Supervisor Helsley said they will advertise locally. A public notice will be posted for sealed bids to be received by 11:00AM on Friday, September 4th, 2026.

Comments from Councilmembers

No comments from Council.

Comments and Questions from the public

Tatiana Carayanis said they are waiting on the paperwork for the pickleball grant. Tatiana said they are doing a survey, lot line adjustment and archeology report in the fall. Tatiana said in mid March will break ground, asphalt and resurfacing. Tatiana said the Park Commission is holding a fund raiser on September 17th at Nine's. There is a Pickleball pop-up this Saturday, August 15th. Haunted Hayrides will be held Saturday, October 10th, with a raindate of Sunday, October 11th, they will also have a haunted house this year. Planning started for the Winter Glow.

Councilman Sullivan brought up Halloween is on a Saturday this year and a good idea to have Main Street to Palatine Park Road closed again. Supervisor Helsley will bring this up at the DPW meeting. Tatiana there will be a Trading Post where children can trade candy in.

Motion to adjourn at 7:57pm made by Councilman Sullivan, seconded by Councilmember DuFresne, with all in favor and none opposed.

Respectfully submitted,