

January 8, 2025

The Town Board of The Town of Harpersfield held an organization meeting, regular meeting and public hearings on January 8, 2025.

Present were: Lisa M. Driscoll, Supervisor
Patrick F. Funk, Councilmember
Erik R. Reeve, Councilmember
Dwayne C. Hill, Councilmember
Donna VanSickell, Councilmember

Also present: Russel Hatch, Supt. of Highways
Heidi R. Stevens, Town Clerk

Others present: Dean Darling
Henry L. Brown
Thomas VanSickell
Dennis King
Tim Powell
Robert Schneider
Elizabeth Page, Editor for The Mountain Eagle

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 PM by Supervisor Lisa M. Driscoll. Supervisor Driscoll led the Board and those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Amotion to appoint the following Town Officials was made by Patrick F. Funk:

Town Attorney – Allyson Phillips.

Town Bookkeeper – Karen Kropp.

Town Code Enforcement Officer – Christopher Plante.

Deputy Town Code Enforcement Officer – Miguel Martinez.

Town Court Clerk – Joy Musella.

Town Dog Control Officer – Jeffrey Bell.

Town Historian – Thomas Giaguzzi.

Town Planning Board Chairman – Dean Darling.

Deputy Planning Board Member – Dennis King

Deputy Superintendent of Highways – Otis Schermrhorn Jr.

Registrar of Vital Statistics – Heidi R. Stevens

Seconded by Dwayne C. Hill. All voting Aye.

Patrick F. Funk moved and second by Erik R. Reeve that when officials are on town business they be paid mileage at a rate of \$.70 cents per mile. All voting Aye.

A motion that the necessary bills be paid when due (Electric, Telephone) and audited by the Board at the next regular meeting was made by Dwayne C. Hill seconded by Donna VanSickell. All voting Aye.

A motion was made by Patrick F. Funk second by Dwayne C. Hill that in compliance with Open Meeting Law the regular Town Board meeting will throughout the year be held on the second Wednesday of the month at 7:00 PM at the Town Hall. All Voting Aye.

A motion to appoint Patrick F. Funk, Erik R. Reeve and Lisa M. Driscoll as the Highway Committee by Dwayne C. Hill second Donna VanSickell. All voting Aye.

Supervisor Lisa M. Driscoll asked for a motion for herself to represent the Town at the Catskill Rail Committee. A motion was made by Patrick F. Funk and second by Dwayne C. Hill. All voting Aye.

A motion was made by Dwayne C. Hill and second by Patrick F. Funk to change the Towns official newspaper to The Mountain Eagle. All voting Aye.

Supervisor Driscoll explained that with making the switch to The Mountain Eagle for the Towns newspaper, there will be different deadlines to get the information for Public Hearings published.

Councilmember Patrick F. Funk offered the following resolution and moved its adoption:

TITLE: INVESTMENT POLICY RESOLUTION.

BE IT RESOLVED, that investment in the Local Government of the Town of Harpersfield shall be undertaken in a manner which seeks to insure the preservation of capital. Each investment transaction shall see to avoid capital losses from securities, defaults of erosion of market value.

It is the intent of the Town of Harpersfield Local Government to maximize the returns on idle cash balances within the guidelines established by this policy.

This policy shall apply to idle monies in each of the various funds of the Town of Harpersfield. In accordance with State Law, the Supervisor and the Town Clerk / Tax Collector are permitted to invest the Local Government's idle cash in the following instruments:

An Interest Bearing Account, Certificate of Deposit, Savings Account or Money Market Account.

Seconded by Councilmember Donna VanSickell with the vote as follows:

Adopted:	Supervisor	Lisa M. Driscoll	Aye.
	Councilmember	Patrick F. Funk	Aye.
	Councilmember	Erik R. Reeve	Aye.
	Councilmember	Dwayne C. Hill	Aye.
	Councilmember	Donna VanSickell	Aye.

THE RESOLUTION WAS THEREUPON DECLARED DULY ADOPTED.

TOWN OF HARPERSFIELD
RESOLUTION NO. 002 OF THE YEAR 2025.

Councilmember Dwayne C. Hill offered the following resolution and moved its adoption:

TITLE: RESOLUTION ADOPTING A PROCUREMENT POLICY.

WHEREAS, Section 104-b of the General Municipal Law requires the governing body of every municipality to adopt internal policies and procedures governing all procurement of goods and which are not required by law to be publicly bid.

Guideline 1. Every prospective purchase of goods or services shall be evaluated to determine the applicability of General Municipal Law #103. Every Town Officer, Board

Member, Department Head or other personnel with the requisite purchasing authority (hereinafter Purchaser) shall estimate the cumulative amount of the items of supply or equipment needed in a given fiscal year. That estimate shall include the canvas of other Town Departments and past history to determine the likely yearly value of the commodity to be acquired. The information gathered and conclusions reached shall be documented and kept with the file or other documentation supporting the purchase activity.

Guideline 2. All purchases of (a) supplies or equipment which will exceed \$10,000.00 in the fiscal year or (b) public works contracts over \$20,000.00 shall be formally bid pursuant to General Municipal Law #103.

Guideline 3. The following method of purchase will be used when required by this policy in order to achieve the highest savings:

ESTIMATED AMOUNT OF PURCHASE CONTRACT:	METHOD:
0 TO \$5,000.00	Discretion of purchaser.
\$5,000.00 to \$7,000.00	Oral request for the goods and Oral/fax/email/quotes from two vendors.
\$7,000.00 to \$20,000.00	A written request (RFP – Request For Proposal) and written/fax/email/ Quotes from three vendors.
ESTIMATED AMOUNT OF PUBLIC WORKS CONTRACTS:	METHOD:
\$500.00 TO \$5,000.00	Discretion of purchaser.
\$5,000.00 to \$15,000.00	Written Request For Proposal Proposal (RFP) and written/fax/ email/proposals from two contractors.
\$15,000.00 to \$35,000.00	Written Request for Proposals (RGP) and written/fax/ email/proposals from three

contractors.

Any written Request For Proposal (RFP) shall describe the desired goods, quantity and the particulars of delivery. The Purchaser shall compile a list of vendors from whom written/fax/email/oral quotes have been requested and the written/fax/email/oral quotes offered. All information gathered in complying with the procedures of this Guideline shall be preserved and filed with the documentation supporting the subsequent purchase or public works contract.

Guideline 4. The lowest responsible proposal or quote shall be awarded the purchase or public works contract unless the Purchaser prepares a written justification providing reasons why it is in the best interest of the Town and its taxpayers to make an award to other than the lowest bidder. For example, the second lowest bidder is a business in the Town, paying Town property taxes and their quote was within 5% of the low bidder which is an out-of-state business or supplier. If a bidder is not deemed responsible, facts supporting that judgement shall also be documented and filed with the record supporting the procurement.

Guideline 5. A good faith effort shall be made to obtain the required number of proposals or quotations, the Purchaser shall document the attempt made obtaining the proposals. In no event shall the inability to obtain the proposals or quotes be a bar to procurement.

Guideline 6. Except when directed by the Town Board no solicitation of written proposals or quotations shall be required under the following circumstances:

- (a) Acquisition of professional services.
- (b) Emergencies.
- (c) Sole source situation.
- (d) Goods purchased from agencies for the blind or severely handicapped.
- (e) Goods purchased from another government agency.
- (f) Goods purchased from correctional facilities.
- (g) Goods purchased at auction.
- (h) Goods purchased for less than \$250.00.
- (i) Public Works Contract for less than \$500.00.
- (j) Insurance purchase.
- (k) Leases.

Guidelines 7. This policy shall be reviewed annually by the Town Board at its organization meeting or as soon after as is reasonably practicable.

Seconded by Councilmember Patrick F. Funk with the vote as follows:

Adopted:	Supervisor	Lisa M. Driscoll	Aye.
	Councilmember	Patrick F. Funk	Aye.
	Councilmember	Erik R. Reeve	Aye.

Councilmember Dwayne C. Hill Aye.

Councilmember Donna VanSickell Aye.

THE RESOLUTION WAS THEREUPON DECLARED DULY ADOPTED.

At 7:11 PM Supervisor Driscoll opened the Public Hearing to amend Local Law NO. 2 of 2024 providing real property tax exemptions for Volunteer Firefighters and Ambulance workers pursuant to section 466-a of real property tax law.

Supervisor Driscoll explained that the new local law will extend the exemption to any resident volunteer firefighter and volunteer ambulance worker to a neighboring city, village, town, county or school district.

Supervisor Driscoll asked all present if there was any questions comments or concerns. There was no questions comments or concerns.

A motion to close the public hearing was made by councilmember Patrick F. Funk and second by councilmember Dwayne C. Hill.

A motion was made to amend Local Law NO. 2 of 2024 was made by councilmember Patrick F. Funk and second by councilmember Dwayne C. Hill with the vote as follows:

Supervisor	Lisa M. Driscoll	Aye.
Councilmember	Patrick F. Funk	Aye.
Councilmember	Erik R. Reeve	Aye.
Councilmember	Dwayne C. Hill	Aye.
Councilmember	Donna VanSickell	Aye.

TOWN OF HARPERSFIELD
LOCAL LAW NO. 001 OF THE YEAR 2025

A LOCAL LAW OF THE TOWN OF HARPERSFIELD TO AMEND LOCAL LAW NO. 002 OF THE YEAR 2024 PROVIDING REAL PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS AND AMBULANCE WORKERS PURSUANT TO SECTION 466-a OF THE REAL PROPERTY TAX LAW.

Be it enacted by the Town Board of the Town of Harpersfield, in the County of Delaware, as follows:

SECTION 1. PURPOSE AND INTENT:

New York State Real Property Tax Law Section 446-a authorizes a partial exemption from real property taxes on qualifying residential real property for volunteer firefighters and volunteer ambulance workers, as defined in Real Property Tax Law Section 446-a.

The Town of Harpersfield adopted LOCAL LAW NO. 002 OF THE YEAR 2024 pursuant to Section 466-a of the Real Property Tax Law, establishing a partial exemption from the Town portion of real property taxes for volunteer firefighters and volunteer ambulance workers who own qualified residential real property within the Town of Harpersfield.

In December 2022, Governor Kathy Hochul signed legislation that allowed local governments in any County – as opposed to special laws that authorized specific Counties – to adopt, after a public hearing, a local law or resolution offering a real property tax exemption of up to 10 percent for volunteer firefighters and ambulance workers in certain situations.

The State legislature has now provided express authorization for local governments that provide the emergency service responder real property tax exemption to members providing services within their jurisdiction to extend the exemption to any resident volunteer firefighter or ambulance worker that provides their volunteer services to a neighboring City, Village, Town, County or School District. The Town of Harpersfield desires to amend the eligibility requirements in LOCAL LAW NO. 002 OF THE YEAR 2024 consistent with this legislation to extend the tax exemption to any resident volunteer firefighter or ambulance worker that provides their volunteer services to a neighboring City, Village, Town, County or School District.

SECTION 2. AMENDMENT:

Section 2(a) of LOCAL LAW NO. 002 OF THE YEAR 2024 is hereby deleted in its entirety and replaced with the following:

- (a) The applicant resides in the Town of Harpersfield which is served by such incorporated volunteer fire company or fire department or incorporated voluntary ambulance service, or a resident volunteer firefighter or ambulance worker that provides their volunteer services to a neighboring City, Village, Town, County or School District; and

SECTION 3. EFFECTIVE DATE:

This Local Law shall take effect immediately upon filing in the office of the New York State Secretary of State.

Supervisor Driscoll informed the Board that Bob Schneider, Mayor of Stamford, has come to the Town Board meeting to talk about the River Street Bridge replacement. This Bridge is owned by the Town of Harpersfield, Village of Stamford and the Town of Stamford. The Village of Stamford has applied for and received a 1.1 million dollar grant to replace the bridge with a culvert.

Mr. Schneider went on to explain how the bridge needs to be repaired. He would like to have the Village be responsible for the bridge. So that in 40 or 50 years when changes need to be made there is no question who is responsible.

Supervisor Driscoll informed the Board that what the Village of Stamford is looking for from the Town of Harpersfield, is the approval to draw up an agreement for an easement that states that the Village of Stamford is responsible for the bridge. The bridge right now is scheduled to start the bidding in 2026.

Russel Hatch told the Town that River Street is not on his inventory right now. Which leads him to believe that there was an agreement made in the past. The County the Village of Stamford and the Town of Harpersfield are looking for any documentation that there may have been in the past. A discussion was had.

Councilmember Patrick F. Funk made a motion to start the Resolution for the easement second by Donna VanSickell. All voting Aye.

Supervisor Lisa M. Driscoll informed the Board that next on the agenda is Tim Powell from the Stamford Fire department, to talk about the 2025 Stamford Joint Fire District Budget.

Tim Powell explained that there was increase in the Budget for 2025, they needed to have a new roof put on the Fire House, they also had a truck that needed to be replaced. Both of those are reflecting on this 2025 budget. They also had new members join the fire department. Each member needs to have equipment. With everything, that comes out to a 33% to a 35% increase. A discussion was had. Tim Powell told the Board that the Stamford Fire Department has their meetings the 2nd Tuesday of every month at 7:00 PM. They also post the minutes to their website at stamfordfiredep.com. A discussion was had.

Supervisor Lisa M. Driscoll informed the Board that next on the agenda is Paintcare update. She needs to fill out the paperwork to get the money back. Hoping to get that before the close of the books. Right now, we are aiming for January 21st to start collecting paint. Collecting up to 5 gallons per household per day. When the shed is full, we cannot take anymore until the company comes and takes the paint from the shed. The paint cans must have labels on them. They cannot have dried up paint in the cans. An attendant needs to be present to accept the paint. There are certain paints that we cannot accept. There will be a list posted on the outside of the shed. A discussion was had.

Supervisor Driscoll informed the Board that next on the agenda is the Planning Board end of year report. Dean Darling chairperson for the Planning Board presented the end of year report. Dean Darling told the Board that there was two Subdivisions. Truesdell Road and State Hwy. 23 Hornbeck Road site. One Boundary Line Adjustment North Harpersfield site and one Site Plan Application Wilcox Road Site. Blue Wave Solar – 5MW Project, #3 site on

Bruce Hill Road and Verizon Communications Tower – Town of Harpersfield Highway Garage Site are continuing items. There are three Subdivisions Inquires one on Middlebrook Hill Road, one on South Worcester Hill Road and one on Odell Lake Road, Odell Lake Extension sites.

Supervisor Driscoll wanted to talk about the grant for the waiver that the Town Board gave approval for. There have been a lot of misconceptions regarding the waiver. The Town made a change to the Local Law that allowed the Planning Board to grant a waiver if they deemed it necessary for the project. The Planning Board will grant that waiver if they move forward with the applicant. Supervisor Driscoll asked Dean Darling, if the Planning Board moves forward with the Verizon Tower, the Planning Board would grant that waiver during the approval process? Mr. Darling answered yes that is correct. The applicant would have to request that waiver in the site plan application. Verizon did do that. The discussion continued.

Supervisor Lisa M. Driscoll informed the Board that next on the agenda is the County Planning Board Contract.

Patrick F. Funk made a motion to accept the Delaware County Planning Board Contract second by Donna VanSickell. All voting Aye.

Patrick F. Funk made a motion to accept the North Harpersfield Fire District contract second by Dwayne C. Hill. All voting Aye.

Supervisor Lisa M. Driscoll informed the Board that next on the agenda is the Senior low income land tax exemption amounts.

Patrick F. Funk explained that the exemption that is in use now is from their income in 2023. If the Town holds off and approves the rates in June the income from 2024 would be used. Mr. Funk explains that every year social security does an adjustment for COLA. If the Town does not adjust the numbers every year, people who qualify could potentially lose the exemption. Using the 3.2% COLA for 2023 these figures are to be used for 2025.

Income:

22,750 or less: 50%

22,750-23,749: 45%

23,750-24,749: 40%

24,750-25,799 35%

25,800-26,799 30%

26,800-27599: 25%

27,600-28,499: 20%

28,500 and above no exemption.

A motion was made by Patrick F. Funk to approve these number and set into a resolution in June of 2025 second by Erik R. Reeve. All voting Aye.

Supervisor Driscoll informed the Board that next on the agenda is the 2024 year end budget reconciliation. Supervisor Driscoll told the Board that we have 60 days to file our final report with the New York State Comptroller. Most of the bills for December have come in and will be presented to the Board at this meeting. Supervisor Driscoll asked the Board if there is anything that they could think of that should be coming out of 2024 budget? She went on with the reimbursement from Paintcare may come to us after the reconciliation. Russel Hatch said that the CHIPS money may be after the deadline as well. Supervisor Driscoll told the Board that in February of last year the Town was charged for SUI which is a tax. This was a mistake through Heartland. The Town is still waiting for that money and is not sure if that will be back before the deadline for the 2024 budget.

Supervisor Driscoll informed the Board that next on the agenda is a charge for photo copies. In the FOIL process we can charge \$.25 per copy for records. Because of the amount of record requests and FOILS we would like to set that amount for after 7 pages \$.25 per page.

A motion was made to charge \$.25 on any copies of after 7 pages by Dwayne C. Hill second by Donna VanSickell. All voting Aye.

Supervisor Driscoll informed the Board that next on the agenda is the destruction of Dos computer and at least two Dos printers. These items are outdated and cannot be updated. They are not in use at this time. Dwayne C. Hill approved the removal and the destruction of these items second by Erik. R Reeve. All voting Aye.

Supervisor Driscoll asked if there was any correspondence to share with the Board? Heidi R. Stevens answered yes. There is a registration for the Association of Towns training that is being held in New York City. Registration for this can be done online and must be in by February 17th, 2025.

Supervisor Driscoll asked the Board if they had any Items to address at this time? Erik R Reeve asked if we ever have more than one applicant for a position at the Town, is it legal to go into an executive session to speak about the applicants? Or maybe a formal interview process? Supervisor Driscoll explained that there are only a few reasons for a Town Board to go into executive session. She does not believe that would constitute as one of them. She

will check with the Towns attorney to see if that would be considered. The discussion continued.

Supervisor Lisa M. Driscoll informed the Board that she is going to ask the new Codes Enforcement Officer that she would like to have a monthly report to present in front of the Board. This will keep the Board informed as to what permits have been issued or the issues that he is having issuing permits, if any. A discussion was had.

Supervisor Driscoll informed the Board that next on the agenda is the Town Highway Superintendent. Russel Hatch told the Board that the newest update with the new truck came today. The truck should be going in the shop at the end of next week and the company has all the equipment to be put on it. The Highway Department had plans to drive down to look at the body but have been too busy plowing snow. That will happen when they have a chance.

Russel also informed the Board the Grant in the amount of \$500,000.00 to replace the structures on Gunhouse and Reed Road has been granted. This grant came from DEC. It is a water quality improvement grant. This Grant will not cover the whole project the will probably exceed \$650,000.00. A discussion was had. Russel told the Board that 2026 is estimated start for these projects. They have limited timing due to DEC. opening and closing the streams because the streams protected. The discussion continued.

Russel is looking to do quite a lot of oil and stoning in the year 2025. He is also looking at the culvert on Whiskey Hollow Road.

Towns Clerk Report for the month of December was issued to the Board. The amount that the Town received was \$1,171.94.

Supervisor Driscoll informed the Board that next on the agenda is the Abstract and Vouchers for the month of December. Supervisor Driscoll issued the vouchers to be reviewed by the Board. Supervisor Driscoll went over the vouchers with the Board. Supervisor Driscoll has asked that the Town Board members sign the abstracts showing that each person has reviewed all the vouchers. Supervisor Driscoll brought attention to the Board that last month there was a typo on a check that was to go to CINTAS. The check was supposed to be for \$217.00. The check was in the amount of \$17.00. The Town Board had already approved the voucher for the \$217.00 last month. So that correction has been made and attached to that voucher. A discussion was had. A motion to pay the bills that have been reviewed as presented was made by Dwayne C. Hill second by Patrick F. Funk. All voting Aye.

The Supervisors Report was issued to the Board for January 2025 – December 2024. Supervisor Driscoll told the Board that a lot of those are still Decembers bills. For total Revenues the Town has \$536,762.65, there is \$100,000.00 in the Appropriated Fund Balance

that is not included in the revenue. The Town can bring that over if it's needed. Total Expenditures are \$582,521.52 we also have the bills from the meeting that would add to that balance for General A and General B mostly General A. The Town will be within the budget. For General B fund revenue there is \$72,718.19 the Town expenditures are \$73,749.86. For the DA Fund revenue, the budget was \$292,382.00 some interest earnings which brought us to \$287,543.51 in expenditures. DB Fund revenue of \$450,821.04. That does not include the CHIPS Funds of \$150,000.00. Total Expenditures for DB are \$648,320.51.

Supervisor Driscoll informed the Board that the credit card has not come in the mail yet but would like the approval to pay that as soon as it comes in so no late fees. When the Town receives the bill, the vouchers will be made up and sent to each board member to get the approval to pay the bill.

A motion to adjourn was made by Patrick F. Funk second by Erik R. Reeve. All voting Aye.

The next Regular Meeting of the Town Board will be held on Wednesday February 12, 2025 at 7:00 PM

Heidi R. Stevens

Town Clerk