

Approved
December 11, 2017

**TOWN BOARD MEETING
TOWN OF TAGHKANIC
September 11, 2017**

Note all documents in these minutes may be clicked on and enlarged for your reading pleasure


6:30 pm: The Town Board signed vouchers.

7 pm: The Taghkanic Town Board held its Regular monthly meeting on the above date at the Taghkanic Town Hall. Board Member Joyce Thompson opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of Silence in remembrances of those lost on this day in 2001.

Present: Joyce Thompson Board Member
Arthur McGuire Board Member
Richard Skoda Board Member
Cheryl Rogers Clerk

Absent: Ryan Skoda Supervisor

7 PM: Board Member Joyce Thompson opened the Public Hearing for Local Law 3-2017 Increase Limits for Alternative Veterans Law filing form. Board Member Joyce Thompson read the Local Law and asked if anyone had any comments, concerns or questions.

 Ray Colgrove: what is an alternate Veteran? no clear answer was available.
Board Member Arthur McGuire asked if anyone had an objection with him voting for Local Law 3-2017. None received.

7:04 PM: Board Member Joyce Thompson asked for a motion to close the Public Hearing for Local Law 3-2017, so moved by Board Member Richard Skoda, seconded by Board Member Arthur McGuire.

Approved: **3 Ayes (Arthur, Joyce, Richard)**
0 Nays
1 Absent (Ryan)

7:05 PM: Board Member Joyce Thompson opened the Public Hearing for Hilltop Communications, Inc. Hilltop has filed an Application for a Cable Television Franchise. Board Member Joyce Thompson introduced Jason Shelton from GTel.
Good Evening and thank you for your time.

Let me introduce Sherry Barringer, Accounting, Marybeth Imbarrato, Project Manager, and Lynn Clum, Customer Relations Manager.

As the board is aware GTel recently applied for and received 3 awards from the "NYS Broadband for All" initiative. We will be starting construction soon on that project and expect to have the main line distribution fiber passing all of the available homes in census blocks that GTel was awarded in the first two phases by the end of 2018.

- ✚ Board Member Joyce Thompson: please explain what is available for everyone.
- ✚ Jason Shelton: we will be here for all to sign up their emails and to answer any questions you may have after the meeting.

7:25 PM: Board Member Joyce Thompson asked for a motion to close the Public Hearing for Hilltop Communications, Inc., so moved by Board Member Richard Skoda, seconded by Board Member Arthur McGuire.

Approved: 3 Ayes (Arthur, Joyce, Richard)
 0 Nays
 1 Absent (Ryan)

Guest Speaker:

Board Member Joyce Thompson then asked for a motion to approve the following minutes:

August 14, 2017: Town Board meeting minutes were accepted as written with suggested changes, motioned by Board Member Richard Skoda, seconded by Board Member Arthur McGuire.

Approved: 3 Ayes (Arthur, Joyce, Richard)
 0 Nays
 1 Absent (Ryan)

The Correspondence consisted of:

- I. NYS Ag and Markets, Municipal Shelter Inspection
- II. NYS Dept. of Taxation: Final State Equalization Rate 108.25
- III. NYMIR Risk Management Bulletin
- IV. NYMIR, Public works fall/winter seminars
- V. Michael Simmons, Woodland Road
- VI. Arthur Baker, Highway Dept. Site Redevelopment

Board Reports:

- Animal Control:** Wes Powell, report submitted.
- ZBA:** James Romaine, Chair, no report submitted.
- Planning Board:** Katherine Bainer, Chair verbal report submitted.
- Assessor:** Craig Surprise report submitted.
- ZEO/CEO/Building Inspector:** Dennis Callahan report submitted.
- Historian:** Nancy Griffith, no report submitted.
- Traffic Safety Board:** Linda Swartz, no report, no meeting.
- Environmental Management Council:** Anna Kadish, no report submitted.
- Zoning Commission:** Joyce Thompson, report submitted.
- Office for the Aging:** Joyce Thompson, no report, no meeting.
- Clerk/Collector:** Cheryl Rogers, reports were submitted to the Board
- Supervisor:** Ryan Skoda, report submitted and the written report was available on the back table for the public.
- Highway:** Superintendent George Hotaling report submitted.

Board reports were accepted as submitted and read on a motion by Board Member Arthur McGuire, seconded by Board Member Richard Skoda.

Approved: 3 Ayes (Arthur, Joyce, Richard)
0 Nays
1 Absent (Ryan)

Financial: Joyce Thompson submitted the following:

The Financial Advisory Committee (FAC) will meet on Thursday, 14 September so that audit report will be available at the October Town Board meeting.

Review of the August 2017 Supervisor's Report by chair, Joyce Thompson, established the following:

Revenues: There are no issues in either Fund (General and Highway). Both funds continue to be above the expected level for the end of August.

General and Highway Expenditures: There are no general issues at this time but two lines need attention as described below.

Project Update: The last bill has been paid and the bank account balance is \$35,314.10.

Budget Amendment #6-17:

For some months, we have been watching the Court Clerk payroll line and the Garage Contractual line because they seemed likely to need more funds before the end of the year. The Clerk line is higher than budgeted because of the volume of court activity. Higher Fines and Forfeitures revenue offsets these additional wages. The Garage Contractual line was under-budgeted because we did not take into account the cost of fitting out the new garage.

Funding will be transferred from the Contingency line to cover September through December bills on both of these lines. The amounts needed for each line was determined by getting a monthly average and multiplying by four. If there is money left over at the end of the year for these lines, it will revert to the General Fund Balance.

Financial Advisory Board report was accepted as submitted and read on a motion by Board Member Richard Skoda seconded by Board Member Arthur McGuire.

Approved: 3 Ayes (Arthur, Joyce, Richard)
0 Nays
1 Absent (Ryan)

Advisory Board Reports:

Conservation Advisory Committee: Anna Kadish: report submitted.

✚ **Anna Kadish:** Iron Mine Talk is October 7th and the Wild Turkey Talk is October 21 at 10am. For the Nature Walk on Sam Pratt's property, no date has been set yet.

Broadband Advisory Committee: Arthur McGuire verbal report submitted.

✚ **Board Member Arthur McGuire** all discussed during the public hearing.

Advisory Board reports were accepted as submitted and read on a motion by Board Member Richard Skoda, seconded by Board Member Arthur McGuire.

Approved: 3 Ayes (Arthur, Joyce, Richard)
0 Nays
1 Absent (Ryan)

OLD BUSINESS:

- A. **Solar Training:** Board Member Joyce Thompson, not happening this year.
- B. **Allen Road Issue Update:** Board Member Arthur McGuire there is some concerns with the WMA with clear cutting and there is an article by Moisha Blechman that is of some interest. (see attached)
 - ✚ Larry Kadish: DEC has said they are not clear cutting, if they are not going to clear cut and no hazardous materials used, the only problem is the location of the parking areas.
 - ✚ Board Member Arthur McGuire; we denied the one parking area, so we should still have the right to approve or disapprove.
 - ✚ Board Member Joyce Thompson: we were not asked and the parking lot in Taghkanic on Allen Road was established without permission and much against the wishes of the residents.

NEW BUSINESS:

- 1. **October 2017 Calendar:** Board Member Arthur McGuire moved to approve the October Calendar, seconded by Board Member Richard Skoda.

Approved: 3 Ayes (Arthur, Joyce, Richard)
 0 Nays
 1 Absent (Ryan)

- 2. **2018 Budget Workshop date set:** Date is October 20, 2017 at 6:30 pm.
- 3. **Taghkanic Fire Company 3 year proposed contract:** Clerk Rogers, Supervisor Ryan Skoda wanted this introduced to the board for their review for the budget workshop.
- 4. **T-Mobile Escrow Account Closing:** Clerk Rogers informed the Board that the application for T-Mobile has been completed and approved and the Escrow account needs to be closed. Board Member Arthur McGuire motioned to approve the closing of the T-Mobile Escrow and to refund T-Mobile \$1,680.37 the remaining amount being held by the Town, seconded by Board Member Richard Skoda.

Approved: 3 Ayes (Arthur, Joyce, Richard)
 0 Nays
 1 Absent (Ryan)

- 5. **Budget Amendment #6:** Board Member Arthur McGuire motioned to approve Budget Amendment # 6-2017, seconded by Board Member Richard Skoda.

Town of Taghkanic

SEPTEMBER 11, 2017

Budget Amendment # 6

GENERAL FUND		Increase	Decrease
JUSTICE CLERK	A1110.13	5,600.00	
GARAGE CONTRACTUAL	A5132.40	4,000.00	
CONTINGENCY	A1990.40	_____	9,600.00
		9,600.00	9,600.00

Approved: 3 Ayes (Arthur, Joyce, Richard)
0 Nays
1 Absent (Ryan)

6. **Churchtown Fire Company LOSAP Audit 2013, 2014, 2015, authorization for Supervisor Skoda to Sign:** Board Member Arthur McGuire motioned to authorize Supervisor Ryan Skoda to sign the Churchtown Fire Company LOSAP Audit for 2013, 2014, and 2015, seconded by Board Member Richard Skoda.

Approved: 3 Ayes (Arthur, Joyce, Richard)
0 Nays
1 Absent (Ryan)

7. **2017 General and Highway Inventory:** Clerk Rogers and Superintendent George Hotaling submitted the 2017 General and Highway Inventory to the Town Board. Board Member Arthur McGuire motioned to accept the 2017 General and Highway Inventory as submitted, seconded by Board Member Richard Skoda.

Approved: 3 Ayes (Arthur, Joyce, Richard)
0 Nays
1 Absent (Ryan)

8. **Local Law 3-2017 Increase Limits for Alternative Veterans Law :**

✚ **SEQRA:** Board member Joyce Thompson read through the SEQRA form.

✚ **Resolution 16-2017 SEQRA Negative Declaration:** Board Member Arthur McGuire motioned a Negative Declaration of SEQRA for Local Law # 3-2017, seconded by Board Member Richard Skoda.

Approved: 3 Ayes (Arthur, Joyce, Richard)
0 Nays
1 Absent (Ryan)

✚ **Resolution 17-2017 for the Enactment of Local Law 3 of 2017:** Board Member Richard Skoda motioned to approve Resolution 17-2017 for the Enactment of Local Law 3 of 2017, seconded by Board Member Arthur McGuire.

Approved: 3 Ayes (Arthur, Joyce, Richard)
0 Nays
1 Absent (Ryan)

9. **GTel Telecommunication:**

✚ **Authorization:** Board Member Arthur McGuire motioned authorization for Supervisor Ryan Skoda to sign the Telecommunications Authorization letter, seconded by Board Member Richard Skoda.

Approved: 3 Ayes (Arthur, Joyce, Richard)
0 Nays
1 Absent (Ryan)

✚ **Franchises Agreement:** tabled

AUDIT OF MONTH'S BILLS:

August 24, 2017: Board Member Richard Skoda moved that the August 24, 2017 abstract has been audited and approved for payment seconded by Board Member Arthur McGuire.

✚ 2017 General Fund Vouchers	# 278	-	287	\$	9,614.50
✚ 2017 Highway Fund Vouchers	# 155	-	156	\$	5,556.88
✚ 2017 Highway Project Vouchers	#	-		\$	

Approved: 3 Ayes (Arthur, Joyce, Richard)
0 Nays
1 Absent (Ryan)

September 11, 2017: Board Member Richard Skoda moved that the September 11, 2017 abstract has been audited and approved for payment with the exception of holding payment on Voucher #301 for Maria Smith, (Board Member Richard Skoda asked for clarification on why the town has to pay for an interpreter); seconded by Board Member Arthur McGuire.

2017 General Fund Vouchers	#288	-	302	\$	7,329.75
✚ 2017 Highway Fund Vouchers	#157	-	176	\$	12,693.64
✚ 2017 Highway Project Vouchers	#	-		\$	
✚ 2017 Escrow Vouchers	#	-		\$	

Approved: 3 Ayes (Arthur, Joyce, Richard)
0 Nays
1 Absent (Ryan)

PUBLIC COMMENT – FIFTEEN MINUTES:

- ✚ Larry Kadish: as a Doctor the hospital by law would have to pay for an interpreter.
- ✚ Linda Swartz: Hillsdale is installing a charging station; the town should look into doing this at the Town Hall.
- ✚ Board Member Arthur McGuire: there was a grant we tried to apply for but we were too late.
- ✚ Susan Raymond: I sent a letter for the August 14th meeting and I would like guidance on how to get help with DOT speed limit and police monitoring on List Bypass – it is very dangerous with school buses and trucks because of the detour related to the bridge construction.
- ✚ Superintendent George Hotaling: if used for a detour there are no limits.
- ✚ Susan Raymond: when are they going to finish? Date is not known at this time.
- ✚ William Hilscher: please don't close List-By-Pass, it is very difficult for the fire, ambulance, etc. to reach people on CR 27 without it.
- ✚ Ray Colgrove: what about local traffic only signs?
- ✚ Arthur Griffith: Planning Board Meeting there is a public Hearing for Gas Land?
- ✚ Clerk Rogers: No, not yet.
- ✚ Arthur Griffith: DOT authorized no passing on Route 82 but what about the speed limit?
- ✚ Board Member Joyce Thompson: that will be addressed during the process of the Gas Land application with a traffic study.
- ✚ Debbie Colgrove: Taghkanic Road truck traffic problem is going on again.
- ✚ Linda Swartz: There is still a problem with truck traffic; we need to look into the speed and weight limit for Taghkanic Road again.
- ✚ Clerk Rogers: the Town of Gallatin did not agree so that is the hold up.
- ✚ Linda Swartz: I will bring it up at the traffic safety meeting.

- ✦ Debbie Colgrove: culverts being replaced on Taghkanic Road, are the residents going to be notified or is it going to be a surprise when the road is closed.
- ✦ Superintendent George Hotaling: surprise, but they will close half of the road at a time and will let vehicles through as much as possible.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None

With no further business, on a motion by Board Member Richard Skoda, seconded by Board Member Arthur McGuire, the meeting was adjourned at 8:47 pm. carried unanimously by all members present. The next Regular meeting will be **Monday October 9, 2017** at the Taghkanic Town Hall.

Audience:	Linda Swartz	Debbie Colgrove	Ray Colgrove
	Arthur Griffith	John Thompson	George Hotaling
	Walter Thompson	Clayton Kirking	Laura Perlman
	Eric Perlman	Jason Shelton	Sherry Barringer
	Marybeth Imbarrato	Lynn Clum	Larry Kadish
	Anna Kadish	Susan Raymond	William Hilscher
	Chris De La Rama		

NY's "Young Forest Initiative": nice name, bad idea

By Moisha K. Blechman, Commentary

A major program of the Department of Environmental Conservation is the Young Forest Initiative. Sounds good doesn't it? A "Young Forest Initiative" suggests that the DEC is promoting the growth of new forest, possibly in lands that have few if any trees.

Instead, the reverse is true.

With the newly created Doodletown Wildlife Management Area in Columbia County, the "initiative" plans to clear-cut between 70 and 140 acres designated a forest of "Regional Significance." The plan includes maintaining it without trees in perpetuity.

The DEC justifies the clear-cutting by claiming it is creating shrub-land habitat for the declining New England cottontail rabbit, and at the same time increasing game opportunities for hunters. However, it is questionable if either of those goals will be served by the proposed logging.

Adjacent to the Doodletown Wildlife Management Area, the rabbit already has naturally existing fields of shrub land that are, in effect, "young forest".

Clear-cutting is a major disruption to the complex forest ecology that benefits us all. It will negatively impact forest and wildlife still recovering from the logging that occurred over 150 years ago for sheep grazing and industrial-use charcoal.

The Wildlife Management Area now consists of hills and steep slopes, and is the source of a web of intermittent streams that feed the city of Hudson's reservoir. Water from forests runs cold and clear. Deforestation of as many as 140 acres will reduce the quality and quantity of water for our towns and for Hudson, a growing city.

There is a larger issue at stake. We are facing a future of rapid and severe global warming. Although the Young Forest Initiative worked for the DEC in the past, the past is not the future in a changing climate.

All our trees, young and mature, are vulnerable as the climate heats up and sucks out moisture everywhere. Mature trees in a forest setting protect each other. They will likely protect young trees, wetlands, swamps, and all other species with their shade. Now, and in the future, we need the cool breezes and the rain which trees generate.

One acre of mature trees can capture 2.6 tons of carbon dioxide per year. Multiply that by 70 acres not logged, and it will sequester 182 tons of carbon dioxide every single year. If the DEC clear-cuts 140 acres, the loss would be 364 tons of CO₂ removed from the atmosphere every year.

Soil in the forest contains a large quantity of carbon dioxide. Logging releases that carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, increasing CO₂ emissions. It would deny us another role of trees that cleanses the air of other pollutants.

Life on Earth evolved in sync with 280 parts per million of CO₂ in the atmosphere. Today, it is up to 410 ppm, and we could be facing a sixth extinction. Trees can help reduce that 410 number. It makes no sense to remove this brake to catastrophe.

The DEC must recognize that the greater environmental good is to save every tree. I urge Gov. Andrew Cuomo, who has declared that New York will meet the Paris Agreement, to use his office to counter this misguided and dangerous proposal.

Moisha K. Blechman is a member of the Climate Crisis Committee, Atlantic Chapter, Sierra Club.