

APPROVED
1/8/2024

December 11, 2023
Town of Taghkanic
Town Board Meeting

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

7 pm. The Taghkanic Town Board held its Regular monthly meeting on the above date with a combination of Supervisor Skoda, Board Members, Town Clerk, 11 residents at the Taghkanic Town Hall and 6 residents attending via Zoom. **Supervisor Ryan Skoda** opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance and moment of silence.

Present:

Ryan Skoda	Supervisor	
Joyce Thompson	Deputy Supervisor	ZOOM
Elisabeth Albert	Board Member	
Elizabeth Craig	Board Member	ZOOM
Kara Gilmore	Board Member	ZOOM
Linda Mirabelli	Board Member	
Cheryl Rogers	Clerk	

Absent:

Guest Speaker:

Supervisor Ryan Skoda then asked for a motion to approve the following minutes:

November 13, 2023: Town Board Regular meeting minutes were accepted as written with suggested changes and amendment on a motion by **Board Member Linda Mirabelli** seconded by **Board Member Elisabeth Albert**.

Approved: 5 Ayes (Ryan, Elisabeth, Elizabeth, Kara, Linda)
0 Nays
0 Absent

December 4, 2023: Town Board Public Hearing LL # 3 meeting minutes were accepted as written on a motion by **Board Member Linda Mirabelli** seconded by **Board Member Elisabeth Albert**.

Approved: 5 Ayes (Ryan, Elisabeth, Elizabeth, Kara, Linda)
0 Nays
0 Absent

The Correspondence:

- ✚ Stephen King, Claverak Library
- ✚ Patrice Perry, need a Town Representative for the CCCSCTF
- ✚ Columbia County 2024 MIS Agreement.

Board Member Linda Mirabelli motioned to approve the 2024 Col. Co. MIS Agreement, seconded by **Board Member Elisabeth Albert**.

Approved: 5 Ayes (Ryan, Elisabeth, Elizabeth, Kara, Linda)

0 Nays
0 Absent

✚ Columbia Greene Humane Society 2024 Agreement
Board Member Elisabeth Albert motioned to approve the 2024 Columbia Greene Humane Society Agreement, seconded by **Board Member Linda Mirabelli**.

Approved: 5 Ayes (Ryan, Elisabeth, Elizabeth, Kara, Linda)
0 Nays
0 Absent

Reports from the Boards:

Animal Control: Kyle Miller, no report submitted.

I have no entries this month.

ZBA: James Romaine, Chair, no report.

Planning Board: Katherine Bainer, report submitted as follows
Taghkanic Planning Board Report for November 2023

There was one meeting in November. Three applications were reviewed:
Luks, Sopak Rd minor subdivision.
Ellis, Taghkanic Rd minor subdivision
Spark Rock LLC. Rt 10. Minor subdivision, lot line revision, ZBA setback variance.
Previous application over 5 yrs.ago under different owner.
Fees paid for all.
All scheduled for public hearing on Dec. 5 meeting.

Assessor: Craig Surprise, report submitted.

ZEO/CEO/Building Inspector: Dennis Callahan, report submitted.

Historian: Nancy Griffith, no report submitted.

Traffic Safety Board: Board Member Linda Mirabelli, report submitted as follows.

The Columbia County Traffic Safety Board met at the Public Safety Building in Hudson on Thursday, November 16, 2023.

Columbia County Highway Department Highway Work Updates:

- Work on Fish & Game Road (CR 18) in Greenport is complete.
- Stall Bridge on Pleasantvale Road in Clermont: Construction Bid Opening held on November 10. Work set to begin in Spring of 2024.

Chairman Henry Swartz is hoping to establish a social media presence for the CCTSB to bring awareness to the CCTSB and to provide information to the public about our campaigns and events such as Child Safety Seat and seatbelt safety checks, railroad safety, DWI information, etc. Executive Secretary John Gallo will ask County MIS for a designated CCTSB email address for now, and we will figure out how to proceed from there.

The next meeting of the Columbia County Traffic Safety Board is scheduled for January 25, 2024.

The 2024 Meeting Schedule was set as follows: January 25, March 28, May 23, July 25, September 26 and November 21.

Environmental Management Council: Robert Brush no report submitted:

Columbia County Environmental Management Council Meeting Minutes
October 23, 2023

Present: Colleen Lutz, Ancram, Canaan Frederick Werwaiss, Chatham Amy Walsh, Village of Chatham John Bradley, Claverack Cara Boyle, Copake Carol Smillie, Gallatin Barbara Hughey, Germantown David Newman, Ghent Michael Grisham, Greenport Mary King, Hillsdale Michael O'Hara, Hudson, Chairman Melissa Miller, Kinderhook Stan Yarian, Livingston Bruce Shenker, New Lebanon Christian Sweningsen, Stuyvesant Robert Brush, Taghkanic

Open: Clermont Stockport **Non-Voting Members:** Tara Becker, CCDOH Village of Kinderhook Steven Gavlik,

Absent: Cara Humphrey, Austerlitz - Notified Sarah Crowell CGCC – Notified CCECG **Guest:** Maureen Gardner, Clerk Typist, Columbia County Planning Department Chairman Michael O'Hara opened the EMC Meeting at 6:35 p.m. It was determined that a quorum was met.

Approval of Meeting Minutes: A motion to approve the EMC Revised Draft September 25, 2023 Meeting Minutes was made by Michael Grisham and seconded by Barbara Hughey. All were in favor with none opposed.

Heat Smart Campaign: Representatives of each town reported their accomplishments. ♣ Austerlitz's Climate Smart Committee had a successful Heat Smart presentation attended by over twenty people. ♣ The Village of Kinderhook received their first \$5,000 Heat Smart Campaign reward. ♣ The Town of Kinderhook's Campaign will reach out to Code Enforcement Officers for the total number of installments and recommended that all towns continue this practice to ensure installations are recorded. ♣ Gallatin encouraged townspeople to request heat permits and waived the permit fee. ♣ The Town of Chatham qualified for the next level of funding (\$5,000) in the Campaign. Page 2 of 4 ♣ Report all installation information to David Newman, CCCSCTF Chairman, Christina Bohnsack, Capital District Community Energy, and/or Don Meltz, CSC Coordinator.

Columbia County Climate Smart Communities Task Force (CCCSCTF):

David Newman reported the CCCSCTF is moving toward a new system of appointments and composition of the Task Force. Patrice Perry, Director, Columbia County Planning Department, has reached out to town supervisors with the name(s) of those who have expressed a desire to continue to serve on the Committee. See Newman to verify a representative has been nominated in your respective town. Now is the time to generate ideas and brainstorm projects for January 2024. Audrey Kropp announced the next set of Vulnerability Assessment Workshops are scheduled. The Northern Cohort will meet on Wednesday, October 25th at PS21, and the Southern Cohort will meet at Columbia-Greene Community College on Friday, October 27th. The first sessions focused on the topic of threats. The second round of workshops are geared towards solutions and recommendations. A report will be published in March 2024, and she would like climate leaders to present it to their town boards and officially adopt the plans at each municipality and at the County level. Newman reported that the Community Greenhouse Gas Inventory (GHGI) is undergoing an update from 2010. The goal is to benefit from state funding next year. It is community wide and a precursor to the Climate Action Plan. He considers it a priority, and progress in reducing greenhouse gas emissions can be tracked over time. The first 2024 Tree Planting Campaign meeting will take place next week. A teacher and student from Hudson High School agreed to participate along with the Committee. Volunteers are needed to help with promotion. Columbia County will host another Climate Forum on December 2nd from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. at Columbia Greene Community College. An educated panel of speakers will be available to discuss concerns and answer questions. Eight (8) tables will be available to groups to distribute information. Newman will share more details when they become available.

Climate Smart Communities Reports: Ancram - ♣ Ancram's Solarize Campaign continues to work with Solstice and reported #29 sign ups and bonuses. ♣ A grant application for solar is in the final stages. ♣ The first successful repair café was held at the Roe Jan Library. ♣ The Library will host a Clean Heat Campaign presentation at the end of 2023 and early 2024. ♣ Christmas tree mulching will be offered this year at the highway garage. ♣ CAC's Watershed Plan was discussed. ♣ The Resiliency Farming Group held a well-attended event held last week. Claverack – ♣ John Bradley reported the Board agreed to submit a decarbonization plan for the garage, and progress is being made. ♣ The documentary, "Regenerating Life", was presented at TSL in Hudson October 8th and focused on the climate crisis by filmmaker John Feldman. Page 3 of 4 Copake – ♣ An EV charging station will be installed in November or December. ♣ An application for Climate Smart will be submitted at the end of the year. Ghent – ♣ David Newman reported Partners for Climate Action are co-sponsoring training with Mothers Out Front on the shift to green energy. The event will be held on Thursday, November 16th at SUNY Albany, and it can be accessed via Zoom. Gallatin – ♣ Carol Smillie requested information on the procedure needed to hire and fund a Coordinator for Climate Smart efforts in Gallatin and other County towns. David Newman referred her to Partners for Climate Action for grant funding. Ghent and Austerlitz share the same person. Frederick Werwaiss suggested making a request at this time because towns are preparing their budgets. Greenport – ♣ Blue Wave Energy submitted an application to the Greenport Planning Board for approval of the first battery storage facility in Columbia County. Visit the website: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1HG36QHCCf9w6QR-HxSfpFhIWppOAIXLy> Stuyvesant – ♣ Christian Sweningsen reported the Stuyvesant Climate Smart Committee and the Stuyvesant Garden presented a program by Doug Tallamy on October 22nd at the Stuyvesant Town Hall.

Homegrown National Park: Doug Tallamy's presentations supply information for homeowners on how to turn their yards into homegrown national parks by providing habitats for wildlife, planting native plants, and removing invasive species. The events are well attended. People need encouragement, training, workshops, and a model to gain funding. Bob Brush suggested outreach using homegrown signs and organizing a group to make home visits. Cara Boyle encouraged keeping up the momentum and sharing with other municipalities. David Newman spoke about various techniques for success. Mary King believes mowing grass pollutes the soil and urged government agencies to make a statement. However, County municipalities are mandated to mow grass and salt roads. Colleen Lutz noted that Ancram's crew stopped mowing the field by the Town Hall and will transition landscaping

equipment by doing away with emissions. Growing grass at schools is educational, and a great science project for students. The benefits of letting grass grow need to be communicated to the community. Lutz offered suggestions to share with parents; start a momentum to create change and implement projects. Newman added that change requires knowledge, time, and money, and advised applying for a grant. Solar panels on school buildings were discussed.

Affordable Housing: Robert Brush reported An Affordable Housing presentation has been scheduled for Saturday, October 28th at the West Taghkanic Fire House featuring professionals who are working with communities on solutions across the County. Page 4 of 4

Columbia County Health Report: Tara Becker reported. ♣ The last rabies clinic for pets will be held on Saturday, November 4th at the Kinderhook Town Hall in Valatie and the Martin H. Glynn School. Cats and ferrets 2 p.m. to 3 p.m., and dogs 3 p.m. to 4 p.m. ♣ Rabid raccoons are still a concern; #1 person was bitten. ♣ There are no COVID-19 patients hospitalized at this time; #185 County residents have passed from COVID-19. An outbreak of #25 occurred at a local Nursing Home, but only sporadic cases reported at other area nursing homes. ♣ There will be a flu and COVID-19 vaccine clinic on October 26, 2023 at the A.B. Shaw Firehouse in Claverack from 3:00 PM – 6:00 PM. Pre-registration is required. ♣ There has been an uptick of latent TB cases at Berkshire Farm Center which is used for undocumented children vaccinations, and positive TB cases have been reported. ♣ Concerns about a recent local house fire, and the County fire companies who actively fight fires caused by electric equipment and EVs were discussed. Proper battery storage and other fire prevention methods were addressed. ♣ Invasives and restrictions were identified.

Adjournment: Chairman O'Hara adjourned the meeting at 8:07 p.m. The next meeting will be held in person on Monday, 11/27/2023 at 6:30 p.m.

Office for the Aging: *Joyce Thompson*, no report submitted.

Clerk/Collector: *Cheryl Rogers*, reports were submitted to the Board.

Supervisor: *Ryan Skoda*, no report submitted



Highway: *Roberts Burns*, report submitted as follows:



✚ **Surplus Equipment:** *Supervisor Ryan Skoda: Superintendent Rob Burns* has provided us with a list of equipment he would like permission to declare as surplus and to put out for seal bid as follows

- 2011 Chevy 1 ton with plow and sander NO rear-end and wiring issues
- 1990 morbark chipper 8-inch feed has issues with the rollers and feed house

Board Member Linda Mirabelli motioned to grant permission for Superintendent Burns to declare the above mentioned equipment as surplus to put out for seal bids, seconded by **Board Member Elisabeth Albert**.

Approved: 5 Ayes (Ryan, Elisabeth, Elizabeth, Kara, Linda)
0 Nays
0 Absent

✚ **Surplus Scrap:** *Supervisor Ryan Skoda: Superintendent Rob Burns* needs permission to scrap 1995 green six-wheeler for Scrap for the town

Board Member Elisabeth Albert motioned to grant permission for Superintendent Burns to declare the 1995 green six-wheeler as scrape, seconded by **Board Member Linda Mirabelli**

✚ **Generator Quotes: Supervisor Ryan Skoda:** Superintendent Burns has provided us with 3 quotes as follows:

- 1 Schnackenberg Electric Inc.: Generac 24KW \$11,968.00
- 2 R. P. Schmidt & Son LLC: Generac 26KW \$13,500.00
- 3 Hudson Valley Wind & Solar LLC 24KW \$14,500.00

Board Member Linda Mirabelli motioned to approve the Quote from Schnackberg Electric Inc for a 24KW Generac Generator in the amount of \$11,968.00, seconded by **Board Member Elisabeth Albert**.

Approved: 5 Ayes (Ryan, Elisabeth, Elizabeth, Kara, Linda)
 0 Nays
 0 Absent

✚ **Solar:** Further discussion in February 2024

✚ **New Forge Road: Supervisor Ryan Skoda,** Superintendent Burns and I have asked the Columbia County Highway Dept. how they felt about abandoning 4/10 of a mile, part of New Forge Road II which is in front of Fran Murcott’s house and to the bridge. The County does not recommend abandoning.

- **Fran Murcott:** why
- **Supervisor Ryan Skoda:** I will have Superintendent Burns contact you.

Advisory Board reports:

Financial Advisory Committee Report: Joyce Thompson: report submitted as follows:

Budget Amendment #12-2023 General Fund: Yearend adjustments. There are multiple lines with probable excess funds but it is cleaner to draw from Fund Balance and all the other line remainders to replenish the FB at year closing in the first quarter. Highway Fund: Adjustments made per request by Highway Superintendent to finish out the year.

The following Budget amendment is needed.

Town of Taghkanic				
	11-Dec-23	Budget Amendment #12-2023		
			Increase	Decrease
GENERAL FUND				
	ACCOUNTANT	A1340.41	925.00	
	ASSESSOR CLERK	A1355.11		925.00
			925.00	925.00
	GARAGE CONTRACT	A5132.4	6,000.00	
	USE OF FUND BALANCE	A9110		6,000.00
	RETIREMENT	A9010.8	6,793.00	
	USE OF FUND BALANCE	A9110		6,793.00
	HOSPITALIZATION	A9060.8	6,020.00	
	USE OF FUND BALANCE	A9110		6,020.00

			18,813.00		18,813.00
HIGHWAY FUND					
	MACHINERY	DA5130.4	6,500.00		
	PARTS	DA5130.41	2,000.00		
	BRUSH & WEEDS CONTRACT	DA5140.4	1500		
	SNOW REMOVAL CONTRACT	DA 5142.4			10,000.00
			10,000.00		10,000.00

Board Member Elisabeth Albert motioned to approve Budget Amendment #12 – 2023 as presented, seconded by **Board Member Linda Mirabelli**.

Approved: 5 Ayes (Ryan, Elisabeth, Elizabeth, Kara, Linda)
0 Nays
0 Absent

Conservation Advisory Committee/Climate Smart Community: Doug Craig report submitted as follows: the lighting upgrade project for the

Present were Doug Craig, Bob Brush, Larry Kadish, Perry Ascher, Jean Feinberg, Peter Paden, Charlene, Paden, Celine Kagen, David Koehler, Tony LaSalvia.

1. Climate Adaptation / Resiliency Plan There was a discussion of the CARP Plan. There was general agreement that the Taghkanic plan outlined as a result of the meetings a Columbia Greene College was very superficial and not particularly useful for the town. We identified three actions that would be useful in preparing Taghkanic for potential climate-related threats:

a. Organize an Emergency Preparedness Plan (EPP), with a focus on what to do in the face of an event like, for example, the October 4th winter storm of 1987, where trees and branches were down everywhere and even emergency vehicles were unavailable for several days. The general idea is to create a system where neighbors watch out and check on each other and can report on needed follow-up. The system would doubtless include an emergency contact list of phone numbers and email addresses, but it would be much more than that. When the plan is ready, it will be presented to the town in a Taghkanic Talk.

Tony has agreed to take the lead on organizing the plan, with help from Larry and David, and the rest of us as needed of course.

b. Put together an emergency contact list of phone numbers / email addresses. This may be achieved using a number of approaches: solicit info at the emergency preparedness talk; add a flyer to property tax statements that will be sent out in January; other.

c. Reach out to the authorities in the City of Hudson to become familiar with what they have done already, thought about doing, or have developed a plan for in the event of a rain event that would threaten the integrity of the reservoir on Reservoir Road. After reviewing this information, we will decide if there are any measures the town of Taghkanic ought to address related to the reservoir in its CARP agenda. Peter Paden has offered to reach out to the City of Hudson on this matter.

2. Affordable Housing In a discussion of the recent Taghkanic Talk presentation on Affordable Housing, it was the view of the CSC members that this was not, at present, within the scope of issues for this committee. If, at some time in the future, the town chooses to explore creating affordable housing in Taghkanic, then there might be a role, e.g., related to land use, for the CSC / CAC to provide input.

Board Member Elisabeth Albert: Solstice Community Solar Partnership with Taghkanic. **Board Member Linda Mirabelli** motioned approved the Solstice Community Solar Partnership Agreement, seconded by **Board Member Elisabeth Albert**.

Approved: 5 Ayes (Ryan, Elisabeth, Elizabeth, Kara, Linda)
0 Nays
0 Absent

Digital Communication Advisory Committee: Betsy Albert: no meeting.

Old Business:

- 1. **Zoning Law Review:** *Supervisor Ryan Skoda*, Attorney Fitzsimmons is reviewing.

- 2. **Local Law STR Regulations:** *Supervisor Ryan Skoda*, a Public Hearing was held on December 4, 2023 at 7 pm at the Taghkanic Fire House.
 - ✦ *Board Member Linda Mirabelli:* I feel there are some concerns that were mentioned that need further discussion and may need to be added to the Regulations.
 - ✦ *Board Member Elizabeth Craig:* total agree
 - ✦ *Board Member Kara Gilmore:* if we make changes will we need to hold another public hearing?
 - ✦ *Supervisor Ryan Skoda:* as long as they are minor changes no.
 - ✦ *All agreed to hold another STR workshop meeting on January 29, 2024 6:30 pm.*

3. **Answer for vested LOSAP participants:**

Supervisor Skoda: Attorney Howard, Attorney Fitzsimmons for Claverack, LOSAP Attorney Hannigan, Penflex and State Comptroller holding weekly meeting. We feel we have an answer for the Churchtown LOSAP and feel we will be putting up for a public vote in February. The Taghkanic LOSAP we feel is going to be a favorable outcome.

4. **Resolution 18-2023 Creating a Fire District:** *Board Member Elisabeth Albert* motioned to Resolution 18-2023 Approving the creation of the Taghkanic Fire District and Dissolution of Taghkanic Fire Protection District #1 and Taghkanic Fire Protection District # 2, seconded by *Board Member Linda Mirabelli*.

Approved 5 Aye (*Ryan, Elisabeth, Elizabeth, Kara, Linda*)
 0 Nays
 0 Absent

5. **Application to the Comptroller:** *Board Member Elisabeth Albert* motioned to the application to the comptroller requesting permission, pursuant to Town Law §170, to create Taghkanic Fire District No. 1 of said Town in the manner set forth in Resolution No. 18 - 2023, of the Taghkanic Town Board dated December 11, 2023, seconded by Board Member Linda Mirabelli.

Approved 5 Aye (*Ryan, Elisabeth, Elizabeth, Kara, Linda*)
 0 Nays
 0 Absent

6. **Appointments for the ZBA and PB:** Tabled till the yearend meeting December 28, 2023 at 9 am.

James Romaine ZBA	Joshua Plass PB
Joseph Coradato ZBA	Peter Padan PB

The Board agreed they would like to see the attendance record for 2023 and would like the input of the Chairs on the letters of interest. *Supervisor Ryan Skoda* will contact the chairs before the year-end meeting.

New Business:

A. February 2024 Calendar: *Board Member Linda Mirabelli* motioned to approve the February calendar with suggested changes, seconded by *Board Member Elisabeth Albert*.

Approved: 5 Aye (Ryan, Elisabeth, Elizabeth, Kara, Linda)
0 Nays
0 Absent

The bills were audited and approved for payment as follows:

✦ **November 24, 2023 Abstract:** on a motion by *Board Member Linda Mirabelli* was approved for payment, seconded by *Board Member Elisabeth Albert*.

2023 General Fund Vouchers	#	362 - 373	\$	21,064.44
2023 Highway Fund Vouchers	#	-	\$	
2023 Escrow	#	-	\$	

Approved: 5 Ayes (Ryan, Elisabeth, Elizabeth, Kara, Linda)
0 Nays
0 Absent

✦ **December 4, 2023 Abstract:** on a motion by *Board Member Linda Mirabelli* was approved for payment, seconded by *Board Member Elisabeth Albert*.

2023 General Fund Vouchers	#	374 -	\$	28,697.00
2023 Highway Fund Vouchers	#	153 -	\$	22,669.00

Approved: 5 Ayes (Ryan, Elisabeth, Elizabeth, Kara, Linda)
0 Nays
0 Absent

✦ **December 11, 2023 Abstract:** on a motion by *Board Member Linda Mirabelli* was approved for payment, seconded by *Board Member Elisabeth Albert*.

2023 General Fund Vouchers	#	375 - 400	\$	8,536.89
2023 Highway Fund Vouchers	#	154 - 169	\$	58,504.84

Approved: 5 Ayes (Ryan, Elisabeth, Elizabeth, Kara, Linda)
0 Nays
0 Absent

The following people commented during the fifteen minute public comment:

✦ **Supervisor Ryan Skoda:** *William Hilscher, Columbia County Deputy Director Emergency Management Mitigation*, FYI the county will be having a kick off meeting very soon to update the Col. Co. Emergency Hazard Mitigation Plan we will be needing representatives from each town. Updating this plan will help with , bridge and culvert grant projects.

✦ **Arthur Griffith:** town equalization rate?

✦ **Supervisor Ryan Skoda:** after the last re-valuation the market became very hot and properties sold for very high prices, knotting everything out of whack again.

✦ **Larry Kadish:** thanking Kara and Elisabeth for the past four years of service, job well done.

Executive Session: none

With no further business, on a motion by **Board Member Linda Mirabelli**, seconded by **Board Member Elisabeth Albert** the meeting was adjourned at **7:50 pm**, carried unanimously by all members present. The next Regular Town Board meeting will be **January 8, 2024** at the Taghkanic Town Hall.

Audience at Town Hall: Arthur Griffith Jeff Browne Laura Browne Dennis Callahan
Tony LaSalvia Perry Ascher Scott Schneider Arthur McGuire
David Kohler Fran Murcott William Hilscher

Audience via Zoom: Joyce Thompson Celine Kagan Doug Craig Larry Kadish
Anna Kadish Donay Queenan