

Minutes of September 12, 2023, Germantown Town Board meeting, held in the Germantown Town Hall, 50 Palatine Park Road, Germantown, NY and via Zoom, commencing at 7:00pm.

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 August 8, 2023 meeting minutes made by Councilmember Suarez, seconded by Councilman Kukon, with all in favor and none opposed.

Review of Financial Reports- Comments, Questions. The Financial reports were not ready yet for this month.

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

Written Communications to the Town Clerk

Town Clerk received monthly reports from Highway department, History department and the Parks Commission.

SEPTEMBER REPORT

- 1-SENT 10-WHEELER TO ZWACKS FOR REPAIRS
- 2-REBUILT BRIDGE BY BALLFIELDS
- 3-WENT THROUGH ROADS AND WEED EATED SIGHS, POSTS AND GUARDRAILS
- 4-HAVE STARTED MOWING ROADS AGAIN
- 5-DID 10 TONS OF PATCHING ON ROADS
- 6-REDID BENCHES IN PARK
- 7-HAULED SAND IN FOR WINTER
- 8-ORDERED PARTS FOR FORKLIFT
- 9-GOT GROWNS READY FOR 9/11 MEMORIAL
- 10-GOT ACTIVITY BUILDING READY FOR SPECIAL ELECTION AND GARDEN CLUB EVENT

ANYHONY CIDRAS
HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT

Germantown Parks Commission Meeting
September 5, 2023

In attendance:

Sarah, Kaare, Tom, Amy Jo, Jen Greim, Jen Crawford, Tracy, Nabal

OLD BUSINESS

- Oktoberfest event / Music by the Lake on 10/21/23 (1-9pm)
- Sarah reaching out to the group who organized the Music by the Lake this summer and who have expressed interest in also

organizing an Oktoberfest event at Palatine Park. Will see if they would like help from Parks and how they are planning to ask for sponsorship money (will that go through the Parks or not?). Possibly set up a meeting between this group and Parks to plan for the event soon. Plan is to have bands, fireworks, hayrides and more!

- Hover Grant / water chestnut
 - Believe there is somewhere around \$1,000 left from the initial \$2,500 Hover Grant. This money will be used to fix up the boat to help with Water Chestnuts.
 - Applied for another grant that we will find out about in late October
- BOGC/ Tree Plantings
 - Town Account has somewhere around \$4-5,000 marked for trees. Parks has a total of \$799.74 marked for trees. Barbara H. sent list of native trees to order and this list was given to Anthony so he could purchase for town. Thought was that Parks should pick out trees with the \$800 for Ice House Landing.. Martin will send tree list.
 - Roe Jan Kiosk - ask Phil Tillou - pay him materials - Sept/October
 - Plan is to mark posts for auger at Palatine and Roe Jan (Anthony) before the ground freezes. Sarah will reach out to Phil to see where things stand. Estimated around \$800 for materials. Idea to get Boy Scouts involved with a future kiosk?

NEW BUSINESS

- New interim president Sarah Suarez
 - Thank you Sarah!!
 - Open officer positions - 1 year term, board appoints yearly. - suggest to board 2 years. Start and end date and 60 days notice?
 - Officer Terms will be discussed at the Board Meeting on September 20th at 6:30pm. All three officers are looking to step down from their positions : Molly (President), Tracy (Secretary), Amy (Treasurer). Amy said she is happy to stay on through end of tax year (May 2024).
 - Nabal has kindly offered to create a social media handle for Parks and will get that up and running!
 - Amy is going to keep on top of the Park Gmail Account until new officers are figured out. Tracy suggested the role of Vice President should be to manage email communication for Parks?
- Winter Glow
 - Notes below from Feb 2023 meeting where we reviewed how the Luminary Event went. Plan is to discuss this years plan at our next Parks Meeting.

“ Gabe from GCS PTA reached out to collaborate with us/library/school for next year. General feeling from Parks is that we didn't have enough help and that too much fell on just a select group of people again. We need more volunteers next year. Possibly less streets so it's not as much work. Collaboration with the school/PTA. Kids to do carols next year. And have more activities for kids/families.”

- Discussion of Lake George South algae bloom and safety of animal use / signs removed
 - Unsure if there is a simple water test that could be taken to see if it is safe again or if this is more of a visual inspection. It seems that the algae bloom is no longer present.
- PC Goals for 2024 : Sarah is going to put something together so we can vote on our top 3 goals for 2024
 - Top Priority : Swimming / Swimming Lessons / Other Water Activities back at the Lake at Palatine Park.
 - Bring back the Snack Bar – along with swimming
 - Add Information / copy on all of Germantown's Parks to the Town and Park Websites. Create a map eventually? Make it clear we are a 501c3 organization.
 - Bring back the Haunted Hayrides and involve kids to work there as they did in the

past – multiple weekends

- Fix/rebuild the tent platforms at Roe Jan Park.
- Replace/rebuild the docks at Cheviot Park.
- Cut trails through the land north of the Parsonage if the Bard deal works out.
- Fix the soffit and fascia on the garage at the Parsonage.

- Choose different green for the Town Buildings when the time comes... other mural opportunities on the sides of buildings?
- Sleigh riding on the hill behind the Parsonage.
- Park Commission t-shirts and other merch.
- Help the Town make Ice House landing an official Hudson River Greenway Water Trail site.
- Continue promoting and advocating for water chestnut removal from the Hudson.
- Look into the feasibility of turning the old dump on Round Top Road into hiking trails. The dump has been capped for 40 years this year, which I believe is how long it has to be dormant before other uses can be proposed.

NEXT MEETING : We are switching our regular meeting date the first Wednesday of the Month. Next meeting will be October 4th at 5pm.

- For the October Meeting – we will be congregating at Ice House Landing to discuss improvements down there for grant money
 - Trees
 - Tent Platforms
 - Stairs
- Reminder to Kaare to look into the grant money for platforms / stairs (\$10/\$11K)
- Additional thoughts on Ice House Landing :
 - Apply for permit with Amtrak for town maintenance
 - Tivoli had no issue receiving a similar permit – Tom/Jen will connect Sarah to Emily to find out more details on this
 - Sarah + Kaare will then speak to David to get his take on this idea for Ice House town maintenance. Possibly bring to future board meeting.

For a future meeting:

- (Jen? Sarah? Tom?) – Reaching out to Jim to see if he will come speak to Parks about the Twin Lakes example of Swimming.
- Note that Fingar Insurance covers Twin Lakes.
- Also ask Fingar Insurance about Sledding – Tom to send Sarah a line for that proposal behind Parsonage.

Historian's notes September 2, 2023 - No meeting held on August 26th. - Waiting on a quote from the Columbia County MIS department for new computers to be paid for with grant money from the William G. Pomeroy Foundation. - Five out of seven recently completed oral histories are now on the Germantown History Department YouTube channel. - Nothing new to report on the Memorandum of Understanding about archaeology with Bard College. - Gravestone cleaning: we are officially out of D-2 biological solution. The Second Lutheran Cemetery and approximately 300 stones at the Reformed Cemetery were cleaned this summer. - Alvin repainted the entrance sign at Valley View Cemetery on Hover Avenue. - The Palatine Sandwich is available at Otto's for the month of September. It is a collaboration with the Germantown Library and History Department. - Hugh Black, an Eagle Scout, has been in touch about doing a weekend project in September at the Parsonage. Tom showed him a handful of potential hedge trimming, walkway edging, and weed whacking projects to do. - Tom, Kaare Christian, and Jan Borchert are working on the NYSDEC Community Forest Conservation Grant to preserve, and make accessible to the public, the 23 acres north of the Parsonage that belong to Bard College. Events - Sept. 9th 4PM-7PM Tom and Emily Majer, Q and A at Quittner. - Sept. 16th Hudson River Valley Ramble. Kayak/History Tour from Lasher Park to the Ramshorn Livingston Sanctuary with Greene County Historian Jon Palmer. - October 21st, part of Oktoberfest. House tours, cornhole boards, and a campfire at the Parsonage, 1 PM to 9 PM. - December 2nd, 4 PM, lecture on the stained glass windows at the Reformed Church with Pastor Dave Tipple. - June 7th and 8th, 2024: Philip Otterness will be the keynote speaker at the national PalAm conference in Albany, NY.
Presentation by Sky High Farm

Josh Bardfield and Dan Cohen. Josh is the owner of 11 Main Street in Germantown. Josh started the presentation by stating they are a non-profit organization and they have been operating the farm based in Ancramdale for 10 years. Josh said 100% is donated to food insecure New Yorkers and 98% remains in Columbia and Dutchess counties. They run a farmer training program where they train young people about agriculture and the context of a non-profit. They make grants to other farms and farmers in NYS. They are planning an Art Exhibition in May at 11 Main Street in Germantown. Dan added they have rented out Cotsbon in Tivoli and they are organizing an all day festival for May 18th 2024. Dan said they are working with UOG and some of the bigger dance companies. There will be dance performances and educational programming. Dan said this is a fund raising event. They will be organizing an Art Exhibition where Sky High will not be selling the work the artist will be working with art dealers to sell the work and commit a certain percentage to come to their organization. Dan said they are working with festival planners and will be partnering with museums and curators. Dan then mentioned that parking is a concern for this event. It will run from May to September. Supervisor Helsley asked how many people do they expect to attend? Josh said there could be up to 1,500 people for the festival and they should have a better picture by December. Councilmember Suarez asked how many parking spaces at 11 Main Street? Josh said maybe 15 parking spaces. Councilman Christian said this is a lot to digest. Councilman Christian asked if they are representing a separate organization than Sky High Farm? Josh answered "no" he founded Sky High Farm. Josh said any non-profit has to think outside the box trying to try and raise money to feed as many people as they can. Councilman Christian asked if there is anything online about this? Josh answered nothing yet they have slides on the presentation and they will share with the Town Board. Supervisor Helsley gave them the Town Board email address. Martin Overington is supportive but cautious he is concerned about the parking. Martin asked if this was a yearly event. Josh answered every other year. The Festival is at Cotsbon in Tivoli.

Old Business

- It was asked if we could get a temporary permit to serve beer at the Oktoberfest planned for 10/21/2023. Corinne said to make sure that it is covered under the insurance and do they need a special rider? Supervisor Helsley said as long as they get the permit as directed to it is covered under the insurance policy. Councilman Sullivan said it is a town event and would be treated like the 4th of July. Councilmember Suarez will do the application. Councilman Kukon said there will be less people attending compared to the July 4th celebration what do we serve? Supervisor Helsley will talk with Jim.
- Electronic Planning and Zoning docs- Supervisor Helsley said will create a separate google drive. Councilman Christian agrees. Councilman Christian did a training with Jami and more training will be needed. Councilman Christian put links on every calendar for Planning and Zoning until the end of the year.
- Kellner Activity Building- Set a workshop date to discuss plans. Workshop date is planned for October 10, 2023 at 6:30pm. Councilman Sullivan is concerned about all buildings electrical over-tapped. Councilman Sullivan would like to see some of the money spent on the electrical service. Supervisor Helsley said the Activity Building should have a 400AMP service.
- STR Law- Workshop for revisions? Councilmember Suarez asked if the board wanted to make any more revisions to the draft law before the workshop? Town Board said no revisions to be made. Supervisor Helsley said he will move all the documents in the STR google drive. The date was set for a Public Hearing for the STR Law on October 19, 2023 at 6:00pm in the Town Hall.
- Community Forest Conservation Grant Program update on Bard property. Councilman Christian said they had a meeting with Bard's vice president of finance and assistant chair of the board of trustees and they are in favor of what we would like to do. Councilman Christian said they are very supportive to selling the land to Germantown because of the conservation aspect and make it publicly accessible. Councilman Christian said they would like offer as low a price as possible. Councilman Christian said there is a few steps coming up, they opened up the application the state's grant gateway there are a list of tasks, fill out the application, support letter, map of the property, photos of property and an assessment. Supervisor Helsley will reach out to Ralph. Councilman Christian said the grant is due October 11th. Tom asked if Ralph is able to do the appraisal being Ralph is the Town Assessor? Corinne said this is just an assessment to get the value it's not a full appraisal that later on they will need a full appraisal. Corinne will get the deed.

New Business

- CSC Proposals. Christina Bohnsack said the first she would like to talk about is the Green Revolving fund. They met with Joe Meyers and Jake made a report, did a map and energy savings. Christina said the first thing to use the money on is BFD's on the blowers this would save quite a bit of energy and will pay for itself in about 3 ½ years. This was the only thing they found not working very well. Christina said this is just over \$5,000 and the CSC has money left over that they can donate if it goes over. Christina said this something for the Town Board to think over. Supervisor Helsley suggests running this by the Town Engineer who designed the plant. Matt Mercier said this is perfect use for the Green Revolving fund. Corinne recommended to check this was built into the budget and the Engineer start pulling getting quotes. Christina asked if Delaware can give any recommendations for quotes. Christina said she would like to talk about is NYSEDA grants. Christina said in the past they had talked about solar on the salt shed roof. Supervisor Helsley said the only thing about that is there is no power to tie into that there is only a small service fed from the garage. Christina said the grant would pay for that as well. Christina said they are guaranteed to get at least \$15,000 to work with within the next few weeks. Matt added the more heat pumps they get installed the more money they get from this. Matt said the proposal they got the array will barely cover the roof of the public works building. Matt said the biggest energy users are, WWTP, Highway and Town Hall. Christina said these are reimbursement grants that the town would have to budget for. Christina said the newest thing is the Inflation Reduction Act which will allow for state and local governments to apply for federal direct pay tax credit. Supervisor Helsley said to get him the numbers so he can put that in the 2024 budget.
- Schedule a budget workshop? Budget workshop set for October 10, 2023 at 6:00pm. Corinne reminded Supervisor Helsley about the Public Hearing for the budget. The Town Board agreed on November 9, 2023 at 6:00pm for the Budget Public Hearing with the Town Board meeting to immediately following.
- Finalize date for Independence Day 2024 (Saturday, July 6?) Independence Day set for Saturday, July 6, 2024 with a rain date Saturday, July 13, 2024.
- Germantown welcome sign improvements. Councilmember Suarez said LuRae will do some landscaping around the sign and she would cover the cost of the trees the town would just have to do the planting. Supervisor Helsley will talk to Anthony.
- Workshop on a harbor management local law, and a shoreline preservation local law. Councilman Sullivan said they need an updated timeline from the rezoning committee. Councilman Christian said the local laws need to be in place by May. Supervisor Helsley will put these on the November agenda as Old Business.

Supervisor's Report

- We raised \$222 with the dunk tank at the 9/9/23 music event. This will be donated to the Germantown Food Pantry. Final music event scheduled for 9/23/23 at 6PM.

Comments from Councilmembers

Councilmember Suarez emailed Jim Rushmore about taking donations for the liquor license that the Parks Commission should be excepting the donations for. Supervisor Helsley will make budget adjustments for 2024.

Councilmember Suarez said the Park Commission will pick a date for the Winter Glow. Councilman Christian asked about the letter to Amtrak? Supervisor Helsley said he did not send the letter out because he thought it was too harsh and didn't want to stir up a hornets nest. Supervisor Helsley will re-word the letter and send to the Town Board for review.

Councilmember Suarez thinks we should keep a good relationship with Amtrak. Tom mentioned the sign closing Cheviot because they are redoing the crossing.

Councilmember Suarez asked if they ordered the trail cams? Supervisor Helsley said no they haven't. Supervisor Helsley said there is a sign on the trail at the Parsonage end saying no unauthorized vehicles.

Councilman Christian said Jeff Anzevino from Scenic Hudson was in touch with Jen Crawford about getting support for Castleton-on-the-Hudson to get pedestrian crossing to access the park. Supervisor Helsley will write a letter of support. Councilman Christian will follow up tomorrow.

Comments and Questions from the Public

Martin Overington asked to add a Right-of-Way to the Ice House in the conversation to Amtrak. Martin said WAC has put in grants to DEC for \$70,000. Martin said they will put in second DEC grant for \$100,000. Councilman Sullivan asked what the second grant is for. Martin answered a second machine for cutting the water chestnuts. Martin said the grant deadline is November 1st. Martin will ask Didi Barrett's staff to write the grant. Martin said Didi wrote a letter of support for the first machine. Martin said they raised a lot of money for trees to plant at Cheviot. Martin announced Ice House clean-up will be this fall- first in October. Martin lastly thanked the Town Board for their support.

Tom Shannon mentioned the GCS Arts Project and would like ideas for places to put the murals. Councilman Sullivan would love to see the school do a mural at the school.

Tom has some landscaping ideas at the Parsonage for the Eagle Scouts. Councilman Sullivan a good Eagle Scout project would be helping plant trees.

Tom said Anthony is having trouble finding contractors to replace the chimney at the Parsonage and suggested an RFP. Corinne has a form and if Tom gets the scope of work for the RFP she will fill it out so it can then go to the town board. Supervisor Helsley will take a look at the chimney with Tom.

Tom mentioned the kayak trip from Lasher Park to Ramshorn Livingston Sanctuary.

Motion to adjourn the meeting made by Supervisor Helsley, seconded by Councilman Sullivan, with all in favor and none opposed.

Meeting closed at 8:40pm.

Respectfully submitted,