

Minutes of March 11, 2025, 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

Town Attorney, Corinne Smith

Present via Zoom: Councilman Christian

Recorded by: Town Clerk, Joyce Vale

Supervisor Helsley opened the meeting and Led with the Pledge to the Flag, followed by a moment of silence for the passing of Victor DelPozzo.

Motion to enter into executive session at 7:01pm made by Councilmember Suarez, seconded by Councilman Kukon, with all in favor and none opposed.

Motion to come out of executive session at 7:23pm made by Councilmember Suarez, seconded by Councilman Sullivan, with all in favor and none opposed.

Motion to approve the February 11, 2025 Public Hearing minutes for LL A of 2025, Public Hearing minutes for LL E of 2024 and Town Board meeting minutes made by Councilmember Suarez, seconded by Councilman Kukon, with all in favor and none opposed.

Review of Financial Reports- Comments, Questions. Councilman Sullivan reviewed the reports. No comments from Council.

Written Communications to the Town Clerk

Town Clerk received History and Highway department reports. Town Clerk and the Town Board also received numerous emails with comments and concerns from residents, these emails are filed in the Town Clerk office.

MARCH REPORT

1-HAULED IN ROAD SAND

2-RECEIVED 100 TON OF SALT

3-SEVERAL SNOW AND ICE EVENTS

4-REPAIRS ON F-250 LEFT CALIPER, UNIVERSAL JOINT, FRONT BRAKE PADS, SHOCKS AND BAREINGS

5-REPAIRS ON F-350 UPPER AND LOWER BALL JOINTS

6-REPAIR ON VOLVO HEATING SYSTEM

7-FINISHED LIFTING CEILING IN BEER BOOTH

8-HAD SINK IN ACTIVITY BUILDING MOVED AND BLOW OUT VALVES INSTALLED

9-HAD WEATHER STRIPPING REPLACED AROUND GARAGE DOORS

10-STARTED PUTTING UP WALLS IN ACTIVITY BUILDING WHERE STORAGE WILL BE KEPT

ANTHONY CIDRAS
HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT

History Advisory Committee
February 22nd, 2025

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

- We discussed at length the draft roof replacement scope of work that Ethan drafted. We made substantial revisions during this meeting. Will send the finished draft to the Town Board with these minutes for consideration.
- Potential name for the Bard Parcel. The History Advisory Committee proposes to the Town Board that the Bard Parcel be officially named "Theodore Robinson Community Forest" when it opens to the public. This in honor of the man who lived and worked adjacent to the forest for almost his entire life, served in the 39th USCT during the Civil War, and led Memorial Day parades in Germantown in his later years.
- Resolution request from the Underground Railroad Consortium of New York State: The committee thought that the paragraph about outdoor signage was intrusive. Concerns about historical accuracy were also expressed. Tom will draft an additional "whereas" paragraph describing the Persons, Robinsons, and their neighbors on Maple Ave. Will highlight the signage paragraph for discussion and send the draft to the Town Board.
- Pomeroy Historic Marker Day: coming up on April 25th. Will take a look around, but most markers and monuments in Germantown are already repainted or cleaned. Might organize a gravestone cleaning session if the weather cooperates.
- Hometown Heroes banner program: the committee will brainstorm some veterans from the Civil War, and those who were killed in action during WWII.
- SHPO assigned a new person, Julie Maresco, for National Register of Historic Places determinations and associated work in our region.
- Berkshire Taconic Community Impact grant: Yvonne and Tom worked on this grant and submitted it a few weeks ago. Seeking approximately \$2,000 to fund a summer program at the Parsonage, and potentially the Bard Parcel, about native and invasive plants. The program would be led by Hawthorne Valley Farmscape Ecology Program if the grant is awarded.
- Pomeroy Historic Transportation Sign Grant: Opens in mid-March. Will apply for a sign marking the railroad station at the end of Main Street.

- We talked about a previously unknown-to-us passage in the “Historical Memoirs of William Smith Jr.” describing a visit by the Marquis de Lafayette to the Livingston Manor House in February 1178. Tom will reach out to the Pomeroy Lafayette program about potential signage at the site of the Manor House, the Roe Jan Boat Club.
- The American Battlefield Trust very recently awarded \$2,000 to Germantown Central School for a field trip to Fort Stanwix, Oriskany Battlefield, and Herkimer Home SHS.
- We expect a decision on the Americana Corner grant application very soon.
- Recent donations: Dale Hinkein donated several GCS items that Karen saved from the dumpster over the years, including a handwritten list of graduating classes from 1924 into the 1960’s.
- Events:
 - Walt Miller’s Drawings, Feb. 22nd 4PM to 6PM at MendesWoodDM
 - History Talks at Germantown Library, dates coming soon
 - Pomeroy Historic Marker Day April 25th
 - Rev. War Event at Hendrick Hudson DAR, May 10th
 - APHNYS Region 4 meeting, June 7th

Old Business

- Kellner Activity Building. Supervisor Helsley is behind schedule. Final electrical inspection will be in March.
- SPEDES permit- Review by DEC is still in process.
- Bard parcel. Resolution to purchase. Subject to referendums, draft a rider, send to DEC. Councilmember Suarez read the following Resolution:

TOWN BOARD
TOWN OF GERMANTOWN
COLUMBIA COUNTY, NEW YORK

March 11, 2025

WHEREAS, the Town was awarded a \$240,630 grant from NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (“DEC”) under the Community Forest Conservation Grant Program

to purchase a 23 acre parcel of vacant land with a successional forest located at the corner of

Maple Avenue and Maple Avenue Extension, Tax ID No. 158.-1-33 owned by Bard College (the “Property”); and

WHEREAS, with financing from this grant, Germantown will preserve and protect this valuable forest ecosystem, create a trail network so that it is usable by the public, start a forestry

program so that native species are encouraged while invasives are removed, and recreate the

historic relationship between this parcel, once farmed by free African Americans who lived on

Maple Avenue, and the adjacent 1767 Parsonage; and

WHEREAS, Bard College agreed to sell the Property to the Town of Germantown for \$240,630 pursuant to a Contract of Sale; and

WHEREAS, the action is a Type 2 action not subject to review under SEQR as the acquisition of 25 acres or less of land for parkland pursuant to 6 NYCRR 617.5(c)(39).

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

1. The Town Board finds that purchase of the Property is required for the public purpose of establishing a community forest for use and enjoyment by the public; and
2. The Town Board authorizes the Supervisor to execute a Contract of Sale with Bard College, subject to review and approval by the attorney for the Town and DEC, for the purchase of the Property for \$240,630;
3. The Town Board authorizes the Town to provide a minimum match of \$27,320, in DPW labor, volunteer labor, and closing costs and other fees paid by the Town associated with the purchase;
4. That the purchase of the Property is subject to permissive referendum;
5. That the Town Board authorizes the Supervisor to execute any other documents necessary to carry out the intent of this resolution subject to the permissive referendum; and
6. That the Town Clerk with assistance from the attorney for the Town is hereby authorized and directed to publish an abstract of this resolution in the Register Star, and post to the Town sign board and website within 10 days.

The motion to adopt the resolution was made by Councilperson Sullivan, seconded by Councilperson Kukon, and duly adopted by the following vote:

Supervisor Helsley	Aye
Deputy Supervisor Sullivan	Aye
Councilmember Christian	Aye
Councilmember Kukon	Aye
Councilmember Suarez	Aye

Joyce Vale, Town Clerk
Germantown Town Board

- The Columbia County Hazard Mitigation policy. The Public Review drafts of Volume I and Volume II of the HMP are available for download below:
Volume I
Volume II
The County will advertise the HMP during the public review period and will establish a date/time in March for a virtual public presentation of the HMP. All comments should be emailed to Henry Swartz at henry.swartz@columbiacountyny.com and Haley Rivers at Hrivers@tighebond.com
- Letter in support of the Stockbridge-Munsee Community NAGPRA Repatriation Grant has been signed and sent.
- LWRP-Resolution authorizing additional contract with EDR to complete the project. Supervisor Helsley read the following Resolution:

TOWN BOARD

TOWN OF GERMANTOWN
COLUMBIA COUNTY, NEW YORK
Dated: March 11, 2025

WHEREAS, the Town desires to engage Environmental Design & Research Landscape Architecture, Engineering & Environmental Services, D.P.C. (“EDR”) to perform additional planning services on the Town’s Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (“LWRP”); and

WHEREAS, the Town received an Agreement from EDR for these additional services at a cost of \$10,000.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, that the Town Board of the Town of Germantown hereby approves the annexed Agreement, subject to the review and approval of the attorney for the Town, and authorizes the Supervisor to sign same, and to take all steps necessary to carry out the intent of this resolution.

On a motion by Councilmember Suarez, and seconded by Councilman Sullivan, and having been approved by a majority of the Board, this Resolution was declared duly adopted by the Town of Germantown Town Board.

Joyce Vale, Town Clerk

- Local Law E- Filming. Resolution to adopt. Supervisor Helsley read the following Resolution:

TOWN BOARD
TOWN OF GERMANTOWN
COLUMBIA COUNTY, NEW YORK

RESOLUTION ADOPTING LOCAL LAW NO. 2 OF 2025

WHEREAS, Local Law No. E of 2024 regulating filming through the issuance of permits, a copy of which is attached, was laid on the desks of the members of the Town Board for at least 10 days; and

WHEREAS, a public hearings were duly noticed and held on February 11, 2025 and March 11, 2025, during which time members of the public had the opportunity to submit oral and written comments on the local law.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Town Board of the Town of Germantown that Local Law No. E of 2024 is hereby adopted and renumbered as Local Law No. 2 of 2025.

Introduced by Councilman Sullivan
Seconded by Councilman Kukon

The question of the adoption of the foregoing Resolution was duly put to vote, which resulted as follows:

Supervisor Helsley	Aye
Deputy Supervisor Sullivan	Aye
Councilmember Christian	Aye
Councilmember Kukon	Aye

Councilmember Suarez

Aye

Corinne reminded the Town Board of the fees to be set. Supervisor Helsley will have the set fees in the Resolution for the April town board meeting.

- Recreation Committee. Any updates needed at this time? Councilmember Suarez said the members are excited to begin. Once confirmed Councilmember Suarez will inform everyone of the meeting dates.
- Hudson River Greenway Grant. Claim for payment has been signed.
- Big Towel regarding the use of the park public saunas. Town Board will review license agreement and set fees. Councilmember Suarez said the fees should be similar to Hudson's \$50.00 fee. Councilmember Suarez also thinks there should be an additional cleaning fee. Supervisor Helsley said there should be a \$100 refundable deposit. Corinne will add these into the agreement. Resolution pending Attorney review and insurance certificates. Councilmember Suarez read the following Resolution:

TOWN BOARD
TOWN OF GERMANTOWN
COLUMBIA COUNTY, NEW YORK

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING LICENSE AGREEMENT

Dated: March 11, 2025

WHEREAS, Big Towel Spa LLC desires to enter into a license agreement with the Town of Germantown to operate two mobile saunas on Lake George South Beach between April 1, 2025 and June 30, 2025.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Town Board of the Town of Germantown that the License Agreement is in the best interests of the residents of the Town; and the Town Supervisor is hereby authorized to execute the License Agreement, in a form approved by the attorney for the Town, with Big Towel Spa LLC.

Introduced by Councilmember Suarez

Seconded by Councilman Kukon

This Resolution having been approved by a majority of the Board, the same was declared duly adopted.

Joyce Vale, Germantown Town Clerk

- Proposed Fire Alarm Law from Germantown Fire District. Review of law and recommendations for changes. Set dates for PH. Corinne still has to redline the draft. The Town Board will review and comment.
- Fees and agreements for use of Kellner Activity Building. Review agreement document and recommend changes. Supervisor Helsley went over the new agreement and fees. Councilmember Suarez asked if the Board could review the agreement and discuss in April meeting.

New Business

- Authorize the Supervisor to enter into a contract with Legion Fireworks in the amount of \$7,500.00. Motion to authorize the Supervisor to enter into a contract with Legion Fireworks in the amount of \$7,500.00 made by Councilmember Suarez, seconded by Councilman Sullivan, with all in favor and none opposed.
- Twin Ponds Solar. Please review all documents- Host agreement still pending for Community Solar. Supervisor Helsley said approved by the Planning Board. Multiple documents need approval by the Town Board, all copies are in the Google Drive. Supervisor Helsley and the Town Board will review all the documents. Corinne mentioned the town engineer is looking at storm drainage.
- Supervisor to sign the enhanced patrol agreement with the Columbia County Sheriff. Motion to authorize the Supervisor to sign the enhanced patrol agreement with the Columbia County Sheriff made by Councilman Sullivan, seconded by Councilman Kukon, with all in favor and none opposed.

Supervisor's Report

- Planning for Independence Day celebration- July 5, 2025- Rain date July 12, 2025. The band 90 Proof is booked for July 5th, Second Chance Band is booked for July 12th. Jami will be setting a date to begin the process.
- A burn ban for Columbia County is in effect immediately.

Comments from Councilmembers

Councilman Sullivan said the Tax Collector has three sewer bills for the Town Board to review and adjust.

Councilmember Suarez mentioned the Park Commission had a meeting on March 19th to discuss the Haunted Hayride. Councilmember Suarez also talked with Billy Kimmel and the date for the Town Wide Yard Sale and the Garden Club Plant Sale in on Saturday, May 17th.

Comments and Questions from the public

Santiago Suarez thanked the for the waterfront. Mr. Suarez is concerned about the solar project. Supervisor Helsley explained that the Planning Board approved the permit and the site plan and the Town Board has to review all agreements and approve it before anything can take place. Corinne said the Planning Board is the only board with the authority to review and issue the site plan and special use permit and the Town Board's authority is approval of any Resolutions. Mr. Suarez brought up there is a conflict of interest with two of the board members. Corinne suggested to submit everything in writing it is all part of public record. In closing Mr. Suarez said he is suing the solar company.

A resident said the Planning Board didn't inform the residents along this corridor and how it affects the value of their homes. This resident is not against solar energy but feels this is the wrong place for it.

John Salerno has been investigation Chad Dickason. Mr. Salerno found out if the Planning Board voted against the project they would be sued by Mr. Dickason. Mr.

Salerno would like an Article 78 review and to watch the video of what took place. Mr. Salerno commented that Jen Crawford and Chris Brown should have recused themselves from voting.

Mimi Brauch said she lives next to where the solar project is proposed to go in and Ms. Brauch stated her property already has water issues without any further disturbance. Ms. Brauch said it will ruin the character of the area and doesn't belong there. Ms. Brauch is opposed to the solar project.

Resident on Zoom said the solar farm cannot connect to the power lines and is not connected to the grids. The resident also stated several board members should have recused themselves. Supervisor Helsley stopped this resident from making any further comments with accusations.

Councilman Sullivan made a motion to close public comment, seconded by Councilman Kukon, with all in favor and none opposed.

Motion to adjourn at 8:20pm made by Councilmember Suarez, seconded by Councilman Sullivan, with all in favor and none opposed.

Respectfully submitted,