

Minutes of May 13, 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
Councilman Christian

Town Attorney, Corinne Smith

Absent: Councilmember Suarez

Recorded by: Town Clerk, Joyce Vale

Supervisor Helsley opened the meeting and Led with the Pledge to the Flag.

Motion to approve the April 8, 2025 Town Board meeting minutes made by Councilman Kukon, seconded by Councilman Sullivan, with all in favor and none opposed.

Review of Financial Reports- Comments, Questions.

Motion to pay the audited bills for May 2025 made by Councilman Kukon, seconded by Councilman Sullivan, with all in favor and none opposed.

Written communications to the Town Clerk

Town Clerk received the monthly report from the Highway department and a Thank you note to the Town from the Clermont State Historic Site.

MAY REPORT

1-PICKED UP GARBAGE ALONG TOWN ROADS

2-INSTALLED ANCHORAGE AND CHEVIOT DOCKS

3-STARTED WORKING ON BALLFIELDS AND PUT DOWN CLAY

4-CUT MORE TREES ON ORCHARD ROAD

5-PUT OUT GARBAGE CANS AND PICNIC TABLES

6-TURNED WATER ON AT PAVILLION, BALLFIELD, PARSONAGE, AND MAINTENANCE BUILDING

7-STARTED OPENING UP BEACHHOUSE BATHROOMS

8-CHIPPED ALONG TRAIL

9-HELPED SCHOOL REMOVE MATERIAL FROM OLD PLAYGROUD AREA

10-HELPED CLERMONT HAUL MATERIAL FOR THERE NEW PLAYGROUND

ALSO, SURPLUS OLD 550 AND PLOW AND SAND THAT GOES WITH IT

ANTHONY CIDRAS

HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT

Supervisor Helsley announced a change to the agenda. Superintendent Bragg from GCS.

Presentation from GCS Superintendent, Benjamin Bragg and Finance director, Ryan Smith. Mr. Bragg reviewed the 2025-2026 Germantown Central School budget stating the key goals are: 1.) Provide a safe, inclusive, welcoming environment, 2.) promote community engagement, 3.) continue to develop innovative Pre K- 12 curriculum, intervention and assessment. Mr. Bragg spoke of the district success and continued academic success. Mr. Bragg spoke of the new initiatives and continuing initiatives. Voting date is next Tuesday, May 20th , 12-9pm in the Elementary gym. Mr. Smith said proposed budget is \$17,156,266.32 an increase of \$208,000, 1.23%. Mr. Smith said if the budget doesn't pass the first time the Administrative team and the board get together to discuss what adjustments to be made. If the budget fails the next time they will go to a contingency budget. Mr. Smith went over the expenditures. There were no comments from the town board or public.

Review and Q&A- Zoning and Subdivision Law Update- Matthew Rogers, LaBella Associates. Matthew thanked all the committee members. Matthew spoke in regards to the changes in the proposed zoning and subdivision law to align with the comprehensive plan. Matthew went through allowable use table and new uses. He went over the proposed amendment changes. and zoning Town Board will review and make changes then. The next steps would be Town Board, Planning & Zoning, Code Enforcement revisions, final formatting, town board acceptance, referral to Columbia County, public hearing, SEQRA, public hearing with 30 day comment period, revisions, town board adoption. Councilman Christian thanked for the analysis. Councilman Christian asked if the scenic view overlay district was adequate? Matthew said there could be more restrictive and identifying particular view sheds. Councilman Christian asked about the current zoning regulations on signage? Matthew there are no major concerns. Corinne said she would like the LWRP incorporated in zoning draft. When Corinne's review is done she will circulate to the Town Board and Matthew. Supervisor Helsley asked for time frame for all of the boards to review? Matthew said 30-45 days. Corinne asked if the Town Board could review and then go through the changes/suggestions at the next town board meeting.

Old Business

- Kellner Activity Building. Final Electrical inspection will be delayed due to damage to the outdoor vendor outlet and building.

- SPEDES permit- Supervisor Helsley met with DEC on 5/25- Draft Permit has been issued. It will be noticed in the Register Star on 5/14.

- Annual WWTP inspection occurred today. Supervisor Helsley said it went well with some recommendations.

- Bard Parcel. Remaining items. Recreation plan- review and approval. Planning of trails and other improvements. Completion of purchase. Resolution to name it the Theodore Robinson Community Forest. Ask the DEC to delineate the parcel's wetlands (free DEC service). Park Designation timing. Develop a stormwater protection plan for the trail improvements. Councilman Christian said Jen Crawford volunteered to help with construction of the trails. Councilman Christian will submit the application to DEC. Corinne pointed out the Resolution has not been adopted yet naming the forest. Motion to name the forest Theodore Robinson Community Forest made by Supervisor Helsley, seconded by Councilman Kukon, with all in favor and none opposed. Motion to except the recreation plan and submit to DEC made by

Councilman Kukon, seconded by Councilman Christian, with all in favor and none opposed. Supervisor Helsley thanked Councilman Christian and all the others that were involved.

- LWRP. Local laws still under legal review.

- Filming Permit review. Approve or recommend changes and set fees. Recommended fees. Councilmember Suarez wrote in recommendation to contact Columbia County Film office on fees. Supervisor Helsley will reach out to them. Tabled to June meeting.

- Hudson River Greenway Grant. Payment has been received. Thank you for everyone's hard work on this.

- Proposed Fire Alarm Law from Germantown Fire District. Review of law and recommendations for changes. Set dates for PH. Corinne said there is a revised redlined version based on the comments and the answers to her questions from Tony. Town Board agreed to send the revised version back to the Fire department and will set a date for the public hearing at the June Town Board meeting.

- Fees and agreements for use of Kellner Activity Building. Review agreement document and fee schedule. Town Board agreed on a \$100.00 deposit for use of the building. Supervisor Helsley will talk to insurance broker in regards to coverage, more discussion next month.

- Twin Pond Solar. Set a workshop date for review of agreements and estimates. Workshop set for June 3rd at 7:00pm. Corinne said the applicant and his attorney will be present.

- Establish an official school zone. What are the next steps? Dale Hinkein the school zone was discussed during an evacuation drill. Councilman Sullivan suggested reduced speed limit from 9G to Hover Avenue. Supervisor Helsley will talk to the chairman at the County meeting and Dale will talk to the traffic safety board.

- Salt Shed Solar RFP. Questions due 5/9- none received as of this agenda draft. Bid opening is Friday, June 6th at 1:00pm.

- Website requirements for .gov - as of the meeting date, application has been submitted.

- Harriet Tubman Scenic Byway. Resolution. Supervisor Helsley read the following Resolution:

**TOWN BOARD
TOWN OF GERMANTOWN
COLUMBIA COUNTY, NEW YORK
May 13, 2025**

**Resolution for Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad New York Scenic Byway
Nomination and Corridor Management Plan Adoption**

WHEREAS, the historic qualities of the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad New York Scenic Byway, as described in the corridor management plan, and the surrounding areas have been appreciated and celebrated for over a century by the residents of New York State, as well as tourists, historians, artists, authors, and other visitors to the region; and it is this unique combination of the journeys of Harriet Tubman and those Freedom Seekers who traveled on the Underground Railroad that create the special sense of place that is vital in telling the New York story of the human desire for freedom and the historic sites they utilized during their journey to emancipation; and

WHEREAS, the Steering Committee of the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad New York Scenic Byway, composed of representatives of 22 municipalities along the proposed scenic byway route, committed to working cooperatively to protect and promote the historic, scenic, recreational, and economic well-being of the 544-mile Corridor throughout the state and agreed to pursue the nomination of the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad New York Scenic Byway; and

WHEREAS, under the leadership of the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad New York Scenic Byway Steering Committee, each of the 22 counties contributed to the development of this corridor management plan by encouraging public participation, confirming the vision and goals, and leading individual meetings of the Collaborative; and

WHEREAS, the Steering Committee of the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad New York Scenic Byway, consisting of relatives of Harriet Tubman, descendants of Freedom Seekers, Harriet Tubman and/or Underground Railroad historians, representatives from state and federal agencies, has strengthened the historic integrity, representation, and the principles of the corridor management plan; and

WHEREAS, in the process of developing this corridor management plan, the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad New York Scenic Byway Steering Committee has strengthened the bonds of inter-municipal cooperation, and the involved entities envision further benefit through scenic byway designation including sustained collaborative progress, increased funding opportunities for recommendations identified in the plan, enhanced partnerships with agencies responsible for the stewardship of resources along and adjacent to the byway route, and an improved visitor experience that interprets and promotes the corridor's intrinsic qualities and resources; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Germantown owns the 1767 Parsonage, which was owned by a black man, Harry Moore, from 1847 to 1852, and another black man, Henry Persons and his family, from 1852 until 1911, and was home to four enslaved Africans in 1790, and was part of a clustered community of five African American families who lived on or near this section of Maple Avenue from the mid-1800s into the early 1900s, the most notable of whom was Theodore Robinson, who served in Company K of the 39th United States Colored Troops during the Civil War.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Board of the Town of Germantown supports the designation of the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad New York Scenic Byway which includes programs for stewardship and enhancement of the historic scenic byway and guidance to manage future activities along its corridor; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, should the route be designated as a scenic byway, the Town of Germantown confirms that it will not approve any requests for new off-premise outdoor advertising signs along the designated Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad New York Scenic Byway route in accordance with 12 USC § 131(s); and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town of Germantown will work in partnership with the other municipalities along the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad New York Scenic Byway and local and regional stakeholders in order to support future Byway programs, economic development, marketing, and collaborate with these interested entities to explore opportunities for cooperation to realize the Scenic Byway goals.

Introduced by Councilman Christian

Seconded by Councilman Kukon

The proposed Resolution having been approved by a majority of the Board, the same was declared duly adopted by the Germantown Town Board.

Dated: May 13, 2025

Joyce Vale, Town Clerk

Germantown Town Board

New Business

- Declare 2005 F550 surplus and approve putting it up for auction. Councilman Sullivan added the sander and the plow also. Motion to surplus the 2005 F550 with sander and plow made by Councilman Sullivan, seconded by Councilman Kukon, with all in favor and none opposed.
- Resolution authorizing the IFB for the Parsonage roof. Supervisor Helsley read the following Resolution:

TOWN BOARD
TOWN OF GERMANTOWN
COLUMBIA COUNTY, NEW YORK

RESOLUTION
Dated: May 13, 2025

WHEREAS, the First Reformed Sanctity Parsonage located at 52 Maple Avenue in the Town of Germantown (the “Parsonage”) is a municipally-owned Palatine vernacular structure listed on the New York State and National Registers of Historic Places; and

WHEREAS, the Parsonage is in need of a new roof; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to 6 NYCRR Part 617.5(c)(2) “replacement, rehabilitation or reconstruction of a structure or facility, in kind, on the same site, including upgrading buildings to meet building, energy, or fire codes unless such action meets or exceeds any of the thresholds in section 617.4 of this Part” such as replacement of the Parsonage roof have been determined not to have a significant impact on the environment and are precluded from environmental review under Article 8 of the Environmental Conservation Law.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Town Board of the Town of Germantown as follows:

1.

The Town Board declares itself lead agency for purposes of State Environmental Quality Review (“SEQR”) for the proposed project and hereby finds that the proposed project is a Type II action and is not subject to any further review under SEQR; and

2.

1.

The Town Supervisor, in consultation with the attorney for the Town and the Town Historian, is authorized to issue the Invitation for Bids requesting proposals from qualified historic roofing contractors to replace the existing degraded cedar shake roof with a new standing seam metal roof on the Parsonage according to the specifications contained therein and to receive sealed bids to be opened at the Town Hall.

2.

On a motion by Councilman Sullivan and seconded by Councilman Kukon 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

Supervisor's Report

- Plant Sale this Saturday, May 17th, 8AM- 1PM at the Pavilion and Kellner Activity Building.
- Reminder of the State Burn ban until May 16th.
- Grievance Day is Wednesday, May 27th, 2-4PM and 6-8PM
- Memorial Day Ceremony and Parade- Monday, May 26th.

Comments from Councilmembers

Councilman Sullivan said the town wide yard sale is Saturday, May 17th, the map is on **aroundgtown.com**

Councilman Christian said Councilmember Suarez wanted it noted that Big Towel wants to come back for the fall/winter season.

Comments and Questions from the public

Dale Hinkin asked about the flag pole. Supervisor Helsley said it has been taken care of.

John Salerno wanted the town to be aware of the Twin Pond Solar project that the Planning Board has approved the renewal letter of credit for the decommissioning. Mr. Salerno would like to have proof that the lines are capable of handling that volume of electricity.

Corinne commented the Planning Board has no authority to approve that type of security on the Town Board does.

Tony Albino said the Fire Commissioners meeting is Monday night.

Motion to enter into executive session at 9:05pm made by Councilman Sullivan, seconded by Councilman Kukon, with all in favor and none opposed.

Motion to come out of executive session at 9:15pm made by Councilman Sullivan, seconded by Councilman Kukon, with all in favor and none opposed.

Motion to adjourn at 9:15pm made by Councilman Sullivan, seconded by Councilman Kukon, with all in favor and none opposed.

Respectfully submitted,