

Notes from Hamilton Town Council August Meeting

Newly appointed highway Superintendent Luke Dowsland attended his first Town Council meeting and reported on summer roadwork. Looking ahead to snow season, there was a discussion of how to better structure the winter workforce and their hours by hiring additional seasonal workers to increase efficiency and manage overtime expenses. Advertisements for these positions with the Highway department are posted on the Town website. Inquiries can also be directed to the Town Office, with applications due by August 23.

The Town Council resolved to accept the 2018 Audit and accepted the January - July 2019 financial report.

Town Clerk Reymers reported that hunting licenses went on sale on August 1. Marriage and dog licenses are up. Deputy Clerk Robertson is researching fee schedules for planning, permits and zoning for updates. Part time Clerk Benson has been in training at the front desk and is organizing birth, death, and marriage records.

Codes Enforcement Officer Miller conducted numerous inspections and monitored the progress of large-scale projects, including new home construction. The Dunham Wedding Barn on Poolville Road recently received an approved amendment for their Special Use Permit.

Council member Dinski, working with the Partnership for Community Development (PCD), requested funds as part of the Village of Hamilton building revitalization grant application for the creation of a family outreach center at St. Mary's Parish Hall. The center would be open to local residents with a focus on youth.

The Zoning Update Committee met with the Town Council and Planner Nan Stolzenberg to review and discuss proposed zoning updates such as allowing for Conservation Subdivisions and changes in building density. The group continues their work on updating elements such as site plan review and subdivision law.

The Hamilton Climate Preparedness Working Group (HCPWG) held visioning workshops with local community members. The result of those meetings is a climate vision statement which frames where the Town and Village of Hamilton aspire to be in 2030 in terms of climate resiliency. The Town Council adopted the vision by resolution:

The Town and Village of Hamilton are climate responsible communities, proactively working to reduce our contributions to climate change and to prepare our community for the impacts of a changing climate. In 2030, Hamilton is a model community that:

- Serves as a leader and supportive partner to other rural communities seeking to prepare for climate change.
- Tracks and manages our activities in order to reduce our emissions of carbon dioxide and other contributors to the greenhouse warming effect, with a long-term goal of eliminating or offsetting our part in climate change.
- Develops a diverse, multi-use transportation infrastructure, emphasizing modes that reduce or eliminate dependence on fossil fuels, such as public transportation, carpooling, walking and biking, and low- or zero-emission vehicles powered by clean and renewable energy.
- Supplies clean and renewable energy to our homes and businesses and invests in conservation measures to make our buildings as efficient as possible.
- Supports our farmers by buying local and responsibly produced food that protects and improves soil health and natural resources, rural livelihoods and social well-being, fair treatment of animals and livestock, and that builds ecological, community, and economic resiliency.
- Develops opportunities for land-use models, protections, and strategies that encourage ecosystem health and mitigate climate impacts.
- Achieves a deep capacity to prevent, endure, and recover from climate-related disruptions.
- Includes ALL community members in this vision and supports our most vulnerable neighbors from the dangers of a changing climate.

Councilor Mary Dinski was appointed Personnel Officer and Liaison by Town Council resolution.

Autumn is when the Town begins its budgeting process for 2020. A Tentative Budget, which is the first look at a draft budget, will be presented to the Town Council at a meeting on September 18 at 5:30 pm at the Poolville Community Center. The Budget Public Hearing will be scheduled for late October. Community members are invited to attend both meetings.

Supervisor Shwartz reported that Congressman Brindisi and representatives from Senator Gillibrand were in the area speaking about broadband initiatives. Congressman Brindisi is supporting legislation to restore net neutrality and increase oversight of telecommunications companies. Both Congressional representatives will be working to assist Madison County in its efforts to create a County owned fiber network that would improve Broadband access to underserved areas of the County and improve affordability through increased competition.

The Hamilton Town Council meets on the second Thursday of the month at the Village Courthouse in the Village of Hamilton at 6:30 pm. Our next meeting is September 12. We invite and encourage you to join us. For more info visit www.townofhamiltonny.org

Submitted by Chris Rossi, Hamilton Town Council