

**TOWN OF CLAVERACK**  
**Regular Monthly Town Board Meeting**  
**December 14, 2023**  
**6:00 pm**

Board Members Present

✓	Clifford Weigelt (CW) Supervisor	✓	George Duntz (GD) Councilman
✓	Stephen Hook (SH) Councilman	✓	Douglas Colwell (DC) Councilman
✓	Kathleen Cashen (KC) Councilwoman		

Also Present

✓	Louis LaMont, Superintendent of Highways
✓	Robert Fitzsimmons, Jr., Esq, Attorney for the Town
✓	Michael Brandon, Town Judge
✓	Mary J. Hoose, Town Clerk
✓	Vonda Teaney, Deputy Clerk

**PUBLIC HEARING on proposed Extension of the Claverack (AB Shaw) and Mellenville Fire Districts**

RF read a description of the proposed changes to the boundaries of the Claverack (AB Shaw) and Mellenville Fire Districts to cover the properties currently in the West Ghent Fire Protection District of Claverack. RF explained that the Town is not in the business of “fire protection.” He stated the State is more comfortable with the proposed change.

Stephanie Sussman, resident, questioned where map of the proposed changes can be found. RF stated this will be on posted on the Town’s website.

Robbie Speed, representative of Mellenville Fire Company, wanted to remind the public that both fire companies have been taking care of this area for over two years. He stated that putting these boundary changes in place just solidifies what has already been happening.

There being no further comments, the Public Hearing was closed at 6:05pm.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES** - *Town Board meeting minutes of 11/9/23 and Town Workshop Meeting of 11/27/23*

**Motion:** SH      **Seconded:** KC

**Vote:** Yes: 5 No:     Abstention(s):           Accepted    Rejected    Tabled

**CORRESPONDENCE** – Including, but not limited to:

- Applications for Board of Assessment Review (BAR)
- Chad Leonard, Sr. – Re: Emeron Land Company – Checking on status - Had attended Board meeting in September 2023
- Philmont Library – Holiday Festivals
- Claverack Library – Invoice for mowing services
- Anna Harrod-McGrew – e-mail – Re: Climate Adaption and Resiliency Planning – Pubic Survey #2
- Claverack Free Library – Requesting donation
- Columbia Economic Development – e-mail – Re: Climate Forum
- Claverack Climate Action Plan 0 e-mail – Municipal Climate Action Plan
- Hyde Clarke – e-mail – Re: Emerson Solar Decommissioning Bond Form
- Philmont Neighbors – e-mail – Re: Columbia County Planning to Adapt to Climate Change
- KC.ACT – How to get a copy of your Benefit Statement for the past seven years
- Healthcare Consortium – Re: Healthcare Consortium and Rip Van Winkle Foundation joining forces to improve access to to healthcare in Columbia County. Requesting funds
- Columbia Economic Development Corp. – e-mail – Re: December Newsletter for December 2023
- Kyle Miller – Dog Control Officer – Monthly Report for November
- Social Security Star – e-mail – December 2023 Highlights
- Denise Keegan 0 e-mail – Re: 2024 KISS shredding dates
- Philmont Neighbors – e-mail – Selects Rice-Lipka Architects Design Team
- Philmont Library n- e-mail – Upcoming Events
- George Duntz – e-mail – Re: Digital speed signs on Rte. #23B

**HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT REPORT** - *Department has completed servicing of trucks along with installing plows, wings, and sanders. Have pulled up the blacktop on the basketball courts at the Town Park to prepare for subbase and base for repaving. Have been patching all zones as needed. Have worked two small snow events.*

**DOG CONTROL REPORT** – *On file with the Town Clerk*

**HISTORIAN REPORT** - Working on program called "America 250." Looking for new president of Claverack Historical Society. Money has been given for a historical sign for the Fuller-Ginsberg property. A check was given to the Town Bookkeeper who will deposit and write a check for marker. Commemoration event will be held in the spring. Discussion of the VanDeusen cemetery on Bates & Snyder town Roads. Is there something on a Town level that should or can be done? KW said that the first thing would be to determine if it is private property. The Town is responsible for the County cemeteries. SH said she would have to contact the State – if the Town does it there are all kinds of rules and regulations that would have to be followed. RF advised he could research and try to find out who owns - that would be a starting place. Jean will do more research as well. Stephanie Sussman, resident, asked if it would be possible to get school kids involved in clean up. KW advised first we must find out who owns. Jean thought student involvement would be awesome. Jean will be also looking into the burial grounds on Bates Rd extension.

**SUPERVISOR REPORT** – Spoke with Paul Cогnetta, Vice President of Operations at Penflex to attempt to figure out issues with Churchtown Fire Company and dissolving the fire protection district. Also, spoke with Terry Hannigan, Attorney, who has been assisting with the boundary issues with AB Shaw/Mellenville fire companies regarding West Ghent. Met with Village of Philmont Board along with SH regarding the Blues Festival proposed for Town Park in 2025. After this discussion, contacted the individual in charge of the proposed Festival and suggested possibly holding it at the old Ockawamick school grounds rather than at the Town Park, as the facility is just not a good fit for something this large. Together with SH, met with the Town of Greenport regarding 2024 water rates. Arrived at an agreement that they will not be raising the rates at this time. Attempting to put together more information on the history of the rates and increases for further review and discussion. Talked with Supervisor in Greenport. They are considering a roundabout at 9H-66, Bells Pond, and correcting the one by Bridge as well as putting one on Catskill side. Advised the end of year meeting with the full Board of Supervisors is at 3pm on 12/27/23.

## **TOWN BOARD MEMBER REPORTS**

**Councilman Hook** - Selective Insurance; Village of Philmont Board Meeting; Town of Greenport negotiations with Kippy and Louie water deal for 3 years; Met with Town of Greenport Building Inspector and supervisor; conducted Court Audit; NextGen park sign with SK, Peter, Katy; Food Pantry; Recycling; Bank Trips/Deposits; office and checks and signed checks; Check in at Office (every day); R. Nesbit meeting on insurance; Met with Bookkeeper; Spoke with Lisa Gill at UHY; Moved dirt at cemetery at Martindale and assisted with burial.

**Councilman Duntz** - Attended Town Board workshop on 11/27/23; Having discussions with Dave Chavez regarding the national fitness campaign.

**Councilman Colwell** – Attended Town Board workshop on 11/27/23; could not attend ZBA meeting as it was cancelled.

**Councilwoman Cashen** - *Worked with union, health insurance broker and attorney on dental and vision options for union and non-union full-time employees. Along with Deputy Supervisor Hook and two representatives, met with NextGen sign company to describe the features for the Welcome to Claverack sign for the hamlet park. Asked the Board to consider if and where the “guns” to the park could be moved to. She will let NextGen know to move forward on sign. Continued work on budget information to NYS for park grant. The grant will provide funding for the new surfacing of the basketball and tennis courts as well as reimbursing the town for the playground equipment previously purchased. Observed the Claverack Court Audit. Attended the December Claverack Climate Smart Committee meeting.*

**PROPOSED MOTIONS/RESOLUTIONS**

**Motion** to appoint Cory Birk to assist on an as needed basis due to health issues of current Building Inspector with a start date of 12/7/23. Employment will be covered as shared services with Town of Greenport.

**Motion:** SH      **Seconded:** DC

**Vote:** Yes: 5 No: \_\_\_ Abstention(s): \_\_\_      **Motion:**  Accepted    Rejected    Tabled

**Motion** to set a public hearing for February 8,, 2024 on raising Board of Assessment Review membership from 3 to 5 members.

**Motion:** SH      **Seconded:** GD

**Vote:** Yes: 5 No: \_\_\_ Abstention(s): \_\_\_      **Motion:**  Accepted    Rejected    Tabled

**Motion** to accept the 2024 contract with the Columbia-Greene Humane Society.

**Motion:** KC      **Seconded:** SH

**Vote:** Yes: 5 No: \_\_\_ Abstention(s): \_\_\_      **Motion:**  Accepted    Rejected    Tabled

**Motion** to accept the agreement with Columbia County for the period of 1/1/2024 through 12/31/2024 for computer and technology services.

**Motion:** KC      **Seconded:** DC

**Vote:** Yes: 5 No: \_\_\_ Abstention(s): \_\_\_      **Motion:**  Accepted    Rejected    Tabled

**Motion** to nominate John Bradley to serve another two-year term as the Town of Claverack representative on the Columbia County Climate Smart Community Task Force beginning January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024. (Mr. Bradley previously agreed to serve in this capacity and his nomination was sent to the Columbia County Planning Department on 11/29/23).

**Motion:** GD                      **Seconded:** SH

**Vote:** Yes:   5   No:    Abstention(s):                         **Motion:**  Accepted    Rejected    Tabled

**Motion** to reappoint Chris Post for an additional 5-year term as a member of the Town of Claverack's Zoning Board of Appeals. Term effective 1/1/2024 -12/31/2028.

**Motion:** DC                      **Seconded:** SH

**Vote:** Yes:   5   No:    Abstention(s):                         **Motion:**  Accepted    Rejected    Tabled

**Motion** to reappoint Tim Wyman for an additional 7-year term as a member of the Town of Claverack's Planning Board. Term effective 1/1/2024 -12/31/2030.

**Motion:** GD                      **Seconded:** KC

**Vote:** Yes:   5   No:    Abstention(s):                         **Motion:**  Accepted    Rejected    Tabled

**Resolution #43 of 2023** to allow for all bills covering goods and services for the Year 2023 to be paid as received and authorize the Budget Officer to make necessary transfers in the 2023 Budget without warrant prior to January 2024 meeting

**Motion:** SH                      **Seconded:** DC

**Vote:** Yes:   5   No:    Abstention(s):                         **Motion:**  Accepted    Rejected    Tabled

**Resolution # 44 of 2023** to acknowledge that the required audit and examination of the financial records of the Town Court of the Town of Claverack, Columbia County, New York, for the year 2023 were completed on December 5, 2023 and all is in order.

**Motion:** SH                      **Seconded:** KC

**Vote:** Yes:   5   No:    Abstention(s):                         **Resolution:**  Accepted    Rejected    Tabled

**Resolution #45 of 2023** – *Resolution Approving the Extensions of the Claverack Fire District (FD261) and Mellenville Fire District (FD283) and Providing for the Dissolution of Claverack Fire Protection District (FP283).*

**Motion:** KC                      **Seconded:** SH

**Vote:** Yes: 4 No: \_\_\_ Abstention(s): GD    **Resolution:**    ✓ Accepted     Rejected     Tabled

**Resolution #46 of 2023** – *Resolution Approving the Contract with Center for Governmental Research, Inc. and the Town of Claverack effective 2/15/23 to assist in analyzing scenarios for reorganization and develop an implementation plan for Claverack’s Fire Districts/Departments.*

**Motion:**        SH                      **Seconded:** KC

**Vote:** Yes: 5 No: \_\_\_ Abstention(s): \_\_\_    **Resolution:**    ✓ Accepted     Rejected     Tabled

**Motion** to set Public Hearing for January 4, 2024 to extend the 3-month moratorium on Camps and Camgrounds.

**Motion:** SH                      **Seconded:** KC

**Vote:** Yes: 5 No: \_\_\_ Abstention(s): \_\_\_    **Motion:**    ✓ Accepted     Rejected     Tabled

## OTHER BUSINESS

\*No December Workshop

## PUBLIC COMMENTS

**Stephen King, resident** - *Thanked the Town for utilizing the electronic speed signs. He is hoping to see the signs on Route 23B in spring. KW advised he spoke with County Engineer and is trying to have the speed limit lowered to 40 all the way through.*

**Stephanie Sussman, resident** – *Expressed gratitude to Katy Cashen for her time in serving the constituents of the Town. Ms. Sussman stated that Hudson City Schools are now live streaming Board meetings and Village of Philmont is recording meetings and posting. She questioned where the Town is at with this? DC advised that with the Memorandum of Understanding approved at tonight’s meeting with the County, the Town can now “piggybank” with them to get things for the County’s price. The hope is to be able to have this in the works relatively soon.*

**Susan Roberts, resident** – Asked KW if he had an update on boundary of her property? KW advised he will go in and speak with Ray at the County and then let her know what he says. At that time, if Ms. Roberts is not satisfied with the County’s answer, she will need to get her own survey. Ms. Roberts asked when he would be having this conversation and KW advised next week.

**John Bradley, resident** – Advised of a Climate Smart program called “Solarize.” People may have signed up for this in the past. It is his understanding that “things” will be happening for the town and a few residents very soon. He is hopeful the Town savings will be \$3,000- \$4,000 per year. Mr. Bradley is not sure how individuals will know if this program is “active” for them.

**Mike Brandon, Town Judge** – Advised the Court will be facing real challenges in the coming year due to results of recent vote. He is asking all (Board and Residents) to have vision moving forward.

**Brenda Shufelt, resident** – Expressed her thanks to Katy Cashen. Invited all to attend a reception in honor of Katy on January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at 5:00pm at the Claverack Library.

Supervisor Weigelt stopped the meeting at 6:42pm for attendees to personally speak with and thank Councilwoman Cashen and enjoy refreshments.

### EXECUTIVE SESSION

**Motion to move into Executive Session:** SH

**Seconded:** GD

**Vote:** Yes: 5 No:     Abstention(s):   

**Motion:**  Accepted  Rejected  Tabled

Time moved into Executive Session: 7:11 p.m.

---

**Motion to Return to Regular Session:** SH

**Seconded by:** KC

**Vote:** Yes: 5 No:     Abstention(s):   

**Motion:**  Accepted  Rejected  Tabled

Time Returned to Regular Session: 7:40 p.m.

**Motion** to set Public Hearing for January 4, 2024 for a 3-month moratorium on Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS).

**Motion:** DC

**Seconded:** GD

**Vote:** Yes: 5 No:     Abstention(s):   

**Motion:**  Accepted  Rejected  Tabled

