

September 10, 2025

The Town Board of the Town of Harpersfield held a Board meeting on September 10, 2025.

Present were:	Lisa M. Driscoll,	Supervisor
	Erik Reeve,	Councilmember
	Patrick F. Funk,	Councilmember
	Donna VanSickell,	Councilmember
	Dwayne C. Hill,	Councilmember
Also Present:	Russell Hatch	Supt. Highways
	Heidi R. Stevens,	Town Clerk
Others Present:	Thomas Giaguzzi,	Deputy Town Clerk
	Laurie Bedford,	Town Assessor
	Liz Page,	Editor of the Mountain Eagle
	Pierre Bessez	

The Meeting was called to order at 7:02 PM by Lisa M. Driscoll. Supervisor Driscoll led the Board and those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Supervisor Driscoll asked the Board if there were any questions, comments or concerns regarding the minutes from August 13, 2025. The Board had no questions, comments or concerns.

A motion to accept the minutes from August 13, 2025, was made by Patrick F. Funk and seconded by Dwayne C. Hill. All voting Aye.

Supervisor Driscoll asked if there were any correspondence.

Heidi Stevens answered yes, the Delaware County Historical Association had sent a letter to thank the Town of Harpersfield for the support of their organization. The Town had also received a thank you card from the Stamford Harpersfield Senior Club thanking them for the generous donation. Thomas Giaguzzi received a phone call today from the Stamford Library inviting all the Board members to the Stamford Village Hall on September 18<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM. The Stamford Library is showing the progress of the new Library project.

Supervisor Driscoll informed the Board that next on the agenda is the 2026 Tentative budget. Supervisor Driscoll informed the Board that she and Heidi had gone online to see what

percentage the Town of Harpersfield had for the Tax Cap. That percentage is 1.07%. At the moment the budget is at 3.7%. Supervisor Driscoll went on to explain that on the first page she broke down a summary of the general and some fund balances. The amount to be raised by taxes is \$1,224,681.68. Supervisor Driscoll said she would need to stay under \$1,205,576 to not go over the Tax Cap.

Councilmember Patrick F. Funk asked what the North Harpersfield Protection District was? Supervisor Driscoll answered that it is for Fire Protection from Jefferson in the North Harpersfield area. The Town of Harpersfield has paid for that for years. Mr. Funk asked why we do not put that in Special Districts? Supervisor Driscoll answered that she asked about that also. The Special Districts do not go in the Town of Harpersfield's Budget, the Protection District does. The Tax Cap must have the North Harpersfield Protection District but does not have to have Davenport, Hobart, or Stamford because they submit their own Budgets.

The Stamford Fire Department had their Budget meeting on Friday Supervisor Driscoll informed the Board that she had sent out information to the Board regarding that meeting. She did go and the Budget they had presented showed that they were going up around 2.5%, if she remembered correctly. The Budget from the Stamford Fire Department will be given to the Town soon. Those figures do not need to be added into our totals.

Supervisor Driscoll continued with the Budgets second page which is Revenue. She has added \$900 to Rental/Real Property. This is the amount that the Town is now receiving from Verizon monthly for the cell tower. Most of this is staying the same. Total Revenue is \$70,000 and with an Appropriated Fund Balance of \$70,650. Supervisor Driscoll has put a new line item in for the computer software she has taken the amount out of the other lines to combine in one line. That line would contain funds for our IT guy, IworQ's software, Microsoft 365, and equipment in case something breaks down. The Town Clerks line went up significantly because we are going to have the Deputy Town Clerk coming into the office more. The Town had reduced hours for him this year. The Attorney line is down \$2,000; Supervisor Driscoll did not want to lower that line too much. We are at around \$19,000 this year for the Attorney line. The insurance line is up for the increase that will happen this year. Ambulance Contractual was increased by the \$2000 that Headwaters had asked for. The Retirement line, not all the retirement comes out of this line there is also DB and DA lines for it, this line went up \$31,989. That line item cost us \$26,000 and we owe them \$32,000 for a prior employee from 2014, which are both in there.

Patrick F. Funk asked for New York State Retirement, do we have to pay in for members of the Board? Supervisor Driscoll answered that anybody who is employed by the Town can opt in to the New York State Retirement System. Mr. Funk asked if you could opt out? Supervisor Driscoll answered yes. The Town has to offer to everybody that becomes employed with the Town.

The Serial Bond Principal is at \$15,000 and next year it will be \$20,000. The Town has 2 more payments after next year then we will be done with that. Supervisor Driscoll asked the Board if anyone had any questions so far. There were no questions.

General B went up only \$178.46. The Building Inspector asked for an increase, one Planning Board member has asked not to be paid for his position on the Planning Board, which brought that line down \$250. Refuse and Garbage went up \$38.46.

Supervisor Driscoll asked the Board to take the Tentative Budget home with them and look it over good. If there are any questions, they can call her or email her, she realizes it is a lot to look at and take in all at one time.

Supervisor Driscoll reminded the Board that A and DA are lines for the Town and Village, B and DB are lines for Town only.

Supervisor Driscoll continued to go down the line items, Machinery PS is just Joes salary because he repairs all the Town's machinery. That has increased to show Joes raise. The health insurance has increased, as well as social security. The change in DA is about \$854.57.

Superviosor Driscoll is anticipating about the same amount for NY State C.H.I.P.S which will be a wash out, the Town puts it in the Revenue line and the expense line. That money will be used for machinery and roads next year. The retirement for DB went up \$8,720 that is for the Highway personnel not including Joe. Health insurance went up \$3,372. General repairs PS and Snow removal PS is the Highway personnel salaries. Social security went up a little to cover the increases. DB has an increase of \$18,074.

Highway SL fund is the \$2,000 the Town put in for the streetlights, that is the same every year. The fire districts will be filled in later.

The last page being the Salaries, The Supervisor went up to \$13,500. The Town Clerk/ Collector went up 2 to 3%.. The Justice had asked for his Justice Clerk to get a raise which the Town provided, the Justice hasn't had a raise in a long time, so Supervisor Driscoll increased his salary to \$10,500, he did not ask for this raise of \$300 but he has not gotten a raise in years. The Councilmen all stayed the same. The Assessor went up \$250. The Highway Superintendent got his 2 to 3% raise. Planning Board stayed the same. Code Enforcement Officer asked for \$18,500 and Supervisor Driscoll gave him \$18,000. Dog Control Officer stayed the same. The Justice Clerk went up \$450. The Deputy Clerk gets paid time not salary, that is just how much time he will be here. The Town had decreased that line last year not knowing exactly when the new Town Clerk would get a Deputy. The Deputy Highway Superintendent got a \$50 raise as well. Supervisor Driscoll asked if there were any questions about the budget this far. There were no questions.

Next is the Transfer Station, the Salaries have gone up. The Budget reflects the \$1 raise they will get and the part-time help, including the work that the Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk do for the Transfer Station. The C&D has increased because the cost for C&D has gone up. Under the miscellaneous line is \$1,500 for the new IworQ software to keep track of everything. Improvements that the Town would like to make for the Transfer Station include a new Backhoe. In which case the Town will sell the old Skid Steer and old Backhoe to purchase a new one. The stairs need to be replaced. The Transfer Station has requested that there be a concrete pad poured by the recyclables, so the containers are easily pulled out onto the pad. That is a discussion that will need to be had. Total cost for 2025 was \$39.46 per person, 2026 would be \$39.49 per person. Supervisor Driscoll has sent the Transfer Station budget over to the Town of Stamford and the Town of Kortright to look at.

Supervisor Driscoll asked the Town Board if there were any questions on the Tentative Budget for 2026? There were no questions about the Tentative 2026 Budget. Supervisor Driscoll once again informed the Board to take the Tentative Budget home and look it over and if there are any questions she would be happy to go over it again.

Councilmember Dwayne C. Hill stated most of the increases in the Tentative Budget is for insurance and NY State Retirement, which the Town can do nothing about. Supervisor Driscoll agreed. A discussion was had.

Supervisor Driscoll informed the Board that next on the agenda is Article 7 & Commercial Assessments. Supervisor Driscoll has spoken with the Towns Attorney, and the Town will not be settling. The Attorneys are doing a scheduling order which basically means there is a way that they move forward. Once they have more information they will get back to the Town. The Town has received a couple of commercial appraisal quotes that the Town will not be doing until the Attorney advises us to. The Town and the Towns Attorney are trying to minimize costs as much as possible.

Supervisor Driscoll informed the Board that next on the agenda is the SCAR decisions. The Board have all been issued a copy in their packet. On the handout that they received the decision is on the bottom of the second page. Supervisor Driscoll stated that she is a little disappointed as to what they have decided. Supervisor Driscoll asked the Town Board if they had any questions for Laurie Bedford regarding the SCAR decisions.

Patrick F. Funk asked what they used to make their decision. Laurie answered that what she learned with the one is if a house sells at a good sale, that is the market value of that house. Whether or not they think it has appreciated or depreciated that is the amount that needs to be used. She is finding that the value of older doublewides are showing that they are worth a lot more because the Town cannot revalue unless the Town get a full reevaluation. So those

assessed values may not be as accurate as the homeowners would like. Mr. Funks asks if one house sells in a district for \$200,000, Laurie can go and assess the house at \$200,000. Laurie answered no, just because they bought it for a higher price does not mean that the taxes can be increased.

Supervisor Driscoll informed the Board that Heidi and she had been in discussion regarding the full reevaluation of the Town. She went on to say that the Bond that the Town had taken out to fix the Town Hall is coming to an end in three years. Instead of trying to save money or put money aside for the whole Town Reevaluation which would increase taxes for the homeowners. When that Bond runs out in three years, the Town could rebond and do the reevaluation at that point. This way the Bond still carries in the budget with no increases to the taxpayers and the reevaluation will get done.

Donna VanSickell stated that it was not a bad idea. Patrick F. Funk asked if the Town would pay attention to the interest rates at that time. Supervisor Driscoll answered yes, all of that will be taken into consideration when that time comes. The Town would have a plan of attack to do the reevaluation in three years, without the increase of costs to taxpayers. It would be a line item that exists and would continue. Laurie Bedford informed the Board that she would not be ready for the full reevaluation for at least three years. Laurie is finding so many properties that are not in the system at this point she is needing to add them as she finds them.

Supervisor Driscoll informed the Board that next on the agenda is the Community Building by the Harpersfield Historical Society. Harpersfield Historical Society's president Bill Nicholson contacted Supervisor Driscoll with a proposal to build a community center with The Harpersfield Historical Society's funds. This building would be built next to the Historical Society's building. Councilmember Dwayne C. Hill asked why Harpersfield would need another community center when we already have the Grange? Donna VanSickell agreed. Patrick F. Funk thinks that it would be a waste of money. Dwayne C. Hill agreed. Mr. Hill says that the Grange Hall sits empty waiting for someone in the community to use it. The Grange Hall allows events and does not charge for that service. Councilmember Erik Reeve asked if the Historical Society has the money to pay for the building. Supervisor Driscoll answered yes, that is what Mr. Nicholson has told her. Mr. Nicholson is looking for feedback from the Board. Mr. Reeve asked what kind of activities would be held there? Supervisor Driscoll answered any kind of gathering whether it be a picnic or party. Supervisor Driscoll asked Mr. Nicholson what kind of involvement the Town would have? He answered the Town would not be involved. The Historical Society would be taking care of everything. Councilmember Patrick F. Funk stated that he thinks it would just be a bad idea. People just do not get together like that anymore. He wishes they did but they just do not. Mr. Funk suggested that they take some of the Historical Society money and help fix up the Grange Hall. That Community Center already exists in Harpersfield. Donna VanSickell and Dwayne C. Hill

agreed. Supervisor Driscoll thinks that Mr. Nicholson has good intentions about trying to get the community together. Supervisor Driscoll will give Mr. Nicholson the feedback from the Town Board. A discussion was had.

Supervisor Driscoll informed the Board that next on the agenda is the seal coating of the Town Parking Lots and the new concrete pads at the back of the Town Hall. Superintendent of Highways Russ Hatch informed the Board that the Parking Lots at the Town Hall have all been done as well as a couple of concrete walks, the Highway department also did a couple of Roads while they were here. The Town is done with the oil and stone for the year. The Highway Department poured some concrete at the Transfer Station where they would put the backhoe down to protect the blacktop that was poured. Russ also informed the Board that they can paint the arrows at the Transfer Station soon. A discussion was had.

The Highway Department is also running the new truck; everything seems to be running well. They are trying to get some miles on it before winter. A discussion was had.

Russ also informed the Board that they had ordered the 550. The ballpark on that is December. Patrick F. Funk asked whatever came of the wrong numbers with the bids. Russ answered that Depaula Ford and Metro Ford numbers were just for the cab and chassis, the Outfitter was used by both dealerships. In saying that the numbers should have been the same from the outfitters. Russ called the Outfitters Charles Stahl to make sure that the quotes were the same from them to both dealerships. He assured Russ that the quotes were exactly the same to both Metro Ford and Depaula Ford. Charles Stahl contacted Metro Ford to see where the mess up was. Metro Ford informed Charles that they made a mistake of \$20,000 when adding the outfitters numbers to the cab and chassis numbers. Charles Stahl called Russ back and explained to him what Metro Ford had told him. When the error was corrected Metro Ford was still the low bidder.

Supervisor Driscoll informed the Board that the Risk Assessment for NYMIR was done. He really had no comments for us. He told the Town that the security improvements that they had made were great. He was very impressed with the cleanliness of the Highway Departments garage. He had two recommendations for us, the signs that we have placed on the road that say children at play he says that they all have to come down because we are encouraging our children to play in the roads. He had given the Town a couple of recommendations to replace the signs with ones that say we love our children, please drive slowly or something along those lines. Otherwise, the Town could be liable if a child gets hit in the road. Also, there is a program called NYS LENS (License Event Notification Service) for the purpose of ensuring that the driver has a valid driver's license or CDL and exhibits a safe driving record. This is at no cost for government entities. There is also another software that we are going to look into that keeps track of all culverts, signs and driver inspections of the trucks to make sure they are all safe. A discussion was had.

Supervisor Driscoll informed the Board that next on the agenda is the Robinson Broadhurst grant for an Excavator. Russ told the Board that the one we have right now is still in good shape and the hours on it are low. It would be a good time to sell or trade for a new one. Eklunds told Russ that the value for the Towns Excavator is probably between \$40,000 and \$50,000. The new ones are a bit different. The one we have has the motor on the side, the new ones have the motor on the back along with larger counterweights on the back. They have made some good improvements to the machines. The quote for a new Excavator is \$123,074.62. The Town would like to write a Grant for the cost of the new machine, along with using C.H.I.P.S money.

#### TOWN OF HARPERSFIELD

#### RESOLUTION NO. 009 OF THE YEAR 2025

Councilmember Patrick F. Funk offered the following resolution and moved it adoption:

TITLE: RESOLUTION FOR REQUESTING A GRANT FROM ROBINSON-BROADHURST FOUNDATION, INC. FOR THE APPLICATION OF A 20,000LB EXCAVATOR.

WHEREAS, the Town of Harpersfield, a municipality in Delaware County, New York, will request a grant from the Robinson-Broadhurst Foundation, Inc. for \$123,074.62 to purchase a 20,000LB Excavator.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT BE RESOLVED, that the Town Board of the Town of Harpersfield authorizes the Town Supervisor to apply for a grant from the Robinson-Broadhurst Foundation, Inc. for the 20,000LB Excavator.

WHEREUPON, Councilmember Dwayne C. Hill seconded the motion and Resolution No. 009 Of The Year 2025 was put to a vote and recorded as follows:

Supervisor	Lisa M. Driscoll	Aye.
Councilmember	Patrick F. Funk	Aye.
Councilmember	Erik R. Reeve	Aye.
Councilmember	Dwayne C. Hill	Aye.
Councilmember	Donna VanSickell	Aye.

Supervisor Driscoll informed the Board that next on the agenda is the Shelter agreement. The Town Board had already agreed on this agreement at the last Board meeting, Supervisor Driscoll wanted to bring to the Boards attention the \$250 check that she needed to write for the agreement. That check has been sent to the Heart of The Catskills.

Supervisor Driscoll informed the Board that next on the agenda is the Transfer Station. Russ told the Board that the Backhoe that the Transfer Station has now has a lot of oil leaks and it is getting tired. The machine is a much bigger machine than what the Transfer Station needs. When the Town bought the new Skid Steer the Town did not sell the old one. What Luis had mentioned to Russ was he would like to sell the old Skid Steer and the Backhoe and purchase a decent used Backhoe. The Backhoe that Luis is using now has a broken front bucket so when he sits it down on the black top it opens and is digging up the black top. Russ is going to start watching the auctions for a Backhoe. A discussion was had.

Supervisor Driscoll asked if there was anything that the council members would like to address with the Town Board. Patrick F. Funk asked if the old satellite dish that is out front of the Town Hall is being used and if not, could the Town remove it? It just looks rusty and old. Russ answered that it is an old internet satellite and yes it can be removed. Mr. Funk also asked if we could get information from the Stamford Harpersfield Senior Club so we could post about them. That way the residents know about the Club. A discussion was had.

Erik R. Reeve asked if anyone had contacted the Dog Control officer about being able to get in touch with him better. Supervisor Driscoll answered no but he did get an answering machine. A discussion was had.

The Town Clerks report for the month of August was issued to the Board. The amount the Town received was \$530.38.

Supervisor Driscoll informed the Board that next on the agenda is the Abstract and Vouchers. The truck was paid for which was \$144,701. The C.H.I.P.S reimbursement has to be in November 7<sup>th</sup>, we will put the truck and the other roads that were done in that so we can get reimbursed. The concrete for the Transfer Station is showing.

A motion to pay the bills that were presented to the Board was made by Patrick F. Funk and seconded by Donna VanSickell. All voting Aye.

Supervisor Driscoll informed the Board that next on the agenda is the Profit and Losses. The retirement has been split up; there is some money in General A that needs to go over to the Transfer Station. The Town is at \$430,000 with \$568,000 that has come in, so there is \$138,000 to be used for the rest of the year. There is also \$50,000 in Appropriated Fund Balance that can be used if need be. The Attorneys line is at \$19,000 and hoping that the Town can get by with \$25,000. General B looks to be good. DA looks good also. DB just had \$176,000 from C.H.I.P.S. so that line will go up from zero.

Snowplow Proposal will go into the newspaper and on the website. A discussion was had.



A motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 PM was made by Patrick F. Funk and seconded by Donna VanSickell. All voting Aye.

The next regular meeting of the Town Board will be held on Wednesday October 8, 2025 at 7:00 PM.