

September 9, 2026

The Town Board of the Town of Harpersfield held a public hearing and its regular meeting of the Board on September 9, 2026.

Present were:	Lisa M. Driscoll,	Supervisor
	Patrick F. Funk,	Councilmember, Dept. Supervisor
	Donna VanSickell,	Councilmember
	Dwayne C. Hill,	Councilmember
Also Present:	Heidi Loveless,	Town Clerk
	Russell Hatch,	Supt. of Highways
Others Present:	Liz Page,	Editor of The Mountain Eagle
	Thomas VanSickell	
	Nora Lisanti-Ortiz	
	Luis Ortiz	

Opening of the public hearing at 7:03pm by Lisa Driscoll. Supervisor Driscoll asked the board and those attending if there were any questions or comments regarding the Local Law to Regulate and Control Dogs within the Town of Harpersfield.

There were no questions or comments regarding the Local Law to Regulate and Control Dogs within the Town of Harpersfield.

Supervisor Driscoll brought the public hearing to a close at 7:04pm.

Supervisor Driscoll led the board and those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Supervisor Driscoll asked if there were any questions, comments or concerns regarding the minutes from August 12, 2026.

There were no questions, comments or concerns regarding the minutes from August 12, 2026.

A motion to accept the August 12, 2026, minutes was made by Patrick F. Funk. Seconded by Dwayne C. Hill. All voting Aye.

Supervisor Driscoll informed the board that next on the agenda is the Environmental assessment form for the Local Law to Regulate and Control Dogs within the Town of Harpersfield. Supervisor Driscoll informed the board that this form has a brief description of the

proposed action. Supervisor needs to sign this form and have it available in at the Town hall with the Local Law.

Supervisor Driscoll informed the board that next on the agenda is Resolution No. 019 of the year 2026, issuing a negative declaration under SEQRA and approving the adoption of Local Law no. 004 of 2026, Entitled "A Local Law of the Town of Harpersfield to Regulate and Control Dogs within the Town of Harpersfield". Supervisor Driscoll wanted to point out to the Town that within the Dog Control Law under section 5 the Towns Attorney added in, engage in habitual and loud and or excessive howling, barking, crying, whining or conduct as to reasonably and habitually disturb the comfort of any person other than the owner of such dog. The Towns Attorney also added to this Local Law under section 9, forty dollars for the impoundment of any dog owned by that person. Payment to be made at the shelter. The Town of Harpersfield will no longer be responsible for impoundment fees for the shelter. The Heart of the Catskills will issue a report at the end of each year showing the fees collected.

Town Clerk Heidi Loveless went on to say the only fees that the Town would be responsible for are the fees associated with the dogs that were not picked up by their owner and the shelter needs to adopt out or euthanize.

A motion was made to accept Resolution No. 019, Resolution issuing a negative Declaration under SEQRA and approving the adoption of Local Law No. 004 of 2026, Entitled: "A Local Law of the Town of Harpersfield to Regulate and Control Dogs within the Town of Harpersfield" by Patrick F. Funk. Seconded by Dwayne C. Hill. All voting Aye.

Supervisor Driscoll informed the board that next on the agenda is Resolution No. 018, A Resolution Authorizing the Catskill Humane Society to Charge for Services Related to the Seizure of Dogs under Local Law No. 004 of 2026.

A motion was made by Donna VanSickell to accept Resolution No. 018, A Resolution Authorizing the Catskill Humane Society to Charge for Services Related to the Seizure of Dogs under Local Law No. 004 of 2026. Seconded by Dwayne C. Hill. All voting Aye.

Supervisor Driscoll informed the board that next on the agenda is a Resolution for Delaware County Solid Waste Management Center. Supervisor Driscoll did not receive this resolution from the attorney, although she would still like the Town Board to be informed on information that has been brought to her attention. Supervisor Driscoll, while at the County Board meeting was part of a conversation that had taken place. The County Board members were informed that DEC is trying to impose stricter restrictions on water runoff that comes from the waste pile. DEC is trying to detect an amount of runoff in the trillions. Walton sends their wastewater runoff to a couple of the Towns to get processed at their water treatment plants. DEC is saying that they cannot do that any further. DEC is trying to require them to have their own water treatment

plant to process the wastewater and then detect it down to the trillions. This would cost millions of dollars to build a water treatment plant, then there would be no technology to figure out how to detect down to the trillions. What potentially could happen is that the Town would ship the garbage to Walton; Walton would take the biodegradable stuff to make the dirt and continue to sell the dirt like they currently do. Whatever was leftover would have to be shipped out of state. There are probably three big waste management plants that would be willing to deal with this. This operation could potentially cost taxpayers a lot of money. Young and Sommers have been working with Delaware County, they have submitted comments to DEC. Supervisor has asked Young and Sommers to make the Town a Resolution that could be sent to Albany to get the State Senators aware of the situation. This Resolution would also be sent to the other towns and villages even out of Delaware County so that they could pass it themselves and send a message. Supervisor Driscoll believes that DEC has two months to look at the comments that have just been sent to them regarding this. Supervisor Driscoll is hoping to have this Resolution for the October meeting.

Patrick Funk stated that he has to believe this would affect more than just Harpersfield.

Supervisor Driscoll answered yes, this would affect everyone in New York State. This is why it is important for this to be brought to the attention of the Senate and the other Town and Villages in New York.

Supervisor Driscoll informed the board that next on the agenda is the Verticalbridge Easement interest for the Verizon tower. Verticalbridge has taken over the Verizon tower. What they are asking is they would like to make the Town of Harpersfield an offer for the payments being sent to the town. Option one would be a lump sum payment of \$125,000. Option two would be \$30,000 over a five-year period equivalent to \$150,000. Option three would be \$175,000 over a ten-year period. Or we can keep the agreement that we have and renegotiate in five years, they will continue to pay the Town a monthly salary of \$920.00. Which goes on indefinitely.

A motion was made by Patrick F. Funk to deny the request from Verticalbridge. Seconded by Donna VanSickell. All voting Aye.

Supervisor Driscoll informed the board that next of the agenda is Resolution No. 020 of 2026. A Resolution authorizing Town of Harpersfield Highway Department employees to upgrade license classification at town's expense. This resolution states that if an employee needs help paying for the examination and the training, the Town of Harpersfield would pay these fees for them. There is a three-year obligation with the Town of Harpersfield for this service.

Patrick F. Funk asked if there are different levels of driver's licenses with in the CDL?

Russ answered yes there are different levels inside the commercial driver's license. For instance, there are only 3 employees in the Highway Department that can pull a trailer. Some of the Highway Employees would like to get their license to pull trailers.

Patrick asked if there was protection for the town within the Resolution for discretion. If the town believes that an employee should not be eligible for this service.

Supervisor Driscoll answered that this service is only for the Highway Department. With working for the Highway Department these licenses are a necessity.

Russ added that in the past they have hired employees who did not have these licenses, the town helped them obtain the license and the employee quit the Highway Department not long after.

Supervisor Driscoll informed the board that this would be for full-time and part-time positions, Union and nonunion employees. The town will not be responsible for renewals this would be for the initial licensing process.

Patrick asked how many different licenses would there be under the CDL umbrella?

Russ answered the town can get employees a B license and a B license with an endorsement for pulling a trailer.

Patrick asked if they would be given a pay increase for both licenses?

Russ answered that the Union guys do not.

Supervisor Driscoll said that we will make it a \$1.00 pay raise maximum for any licensing that the Town of Harpersfield pays for with employees that are not part of the Union.

A motion to adopt Resolution No. 020 of 2026, A Resolution authorizing Town of Harpersfield Highway Department employees to upgrade license classification at Towns expense was made by Patrick F. Funk. Seconded by Dwayne C. Hill. All voting Aye.

Supervisor Driscoll informed the board that next on the agenda is the 2027 Tentative Budget. Transfer Station is showing that the salaries will increase, insurance on the roll-off truck is in the new budget. The price of electric has gone up to \$900-\$1,000 per month, and that line item needed to be increased to \$10,000 to cover the increases for 2027. There is a decrease in the equipment line due to all the work that was done this year. The retaining wall will be done next year. FICA and NYS Retirement went from \$12,000 to \$15,893. Health insurance is going up. Last year the Transfer Station was at \$196,000 and for 2027 \$205,000. This is the first increase for the Transfer Station in three years. For 2026 it was \$39.49 per person and for 2027 it went up to \$41.28. The Tentative Budget has been sent to all the Towns and the Villages asking for any

questions or comments. Supervisor asked if the board had any questions or comments on the Transfer Station Budget.

There were no questions or comments.

Supervisor Driscoll moved on to the Town Tentative Budget for 2027. The Town of Harpersfield had received \$128,000 for the mortgage tax. Supervisor Driscoll was attempting to use those funds to help offset the budget and be able to stay under the tax cap. That will have implications. For the revenue on the post office and Verizon that's \$22,15. The Town usually receives about \$20,000 from the mortgage taxes. Town Board line has stayed the same. The Town Justice has increased; he has not gotten a raise in a couple of years. There is a \$50 increase in the Justice Contractual for the use of an interpreter if needed. That cost would be \$1.00 a minute. Supervisor Driscoll has increased her salary. Supervisors Contractual has increased to cover Positive Pay. The Assessor is getting an increase. Town Clerk has gone up. There is an additional \$4000.00 in the Attorney line. The Town is reimbursed from the county for the elections, so that line shows a decrease. Buildings Contractual has gone up \$11,000 for fuel and electricity costs. Unallocated insurance is up 10% from last year. Traffic control went up to \$5000; the Town ordered a lot of signs in 2026. Headwaters had asked the town for a 2% increase, Supervisor Driscoll is still waiting on the contract from Headwaters. Garage Contractual increased by \$9000 because of NYSEG increases. Retirement, last year there was a hit for \$30,000 because of an error that they had found. That line was able to be brought down to \$29,851.22. Social Security is the salaries times 7.65%. Health insurance has a 13.6% increase. The bond is going up to \$20,000 with the interest decreasing to \$2,000. The bond will be paid off in 2027. General A as a whole went up \$25,610.16. General B, most things will stay the same. The Building Inspector has asked for a bit of a raise, his contractual line was brought down by \$500. Planning Board line went up a little, one of the members that didn't want to be paid before has now asked to be paid. General B went up \$2,516.79. DA, Bridge and Culvert line we kept the same. Machinery Contractual went up per the Union plus the overtime hours come out of that line for the Highway Department employees. Machinery Equipment line has \$3000 now. Machinery Contractual line went up \$5000 because of how expensive things are getting. Health insurance, Social Security and Retirement went up \$4,000. DA went up \$24,752.78. DB, Retirement went up to \$44,119.00. Health insurance went up to \$98,879.00. General Repairs went from \$100,000 to \$168,000; we are anticipating a huge increase on fuel.

Russ added, hopefully the county will increase what they pay the town for the roads that Harpersfield takes care of for them. Snow removal is increased by \$1,000.

Supervisor Driscoll continued, DB has a total increase of \$34,409.69. SL fund stayed the same. The town is still waiting on the N. Harpersfield Fire Protection budget increase for 2027, that

line will stay the same until the town hears otherwise. Last is the salaries which we will go into an executive session to discuss some of these.

Dwayne C. Hill stated that most of the increases are out of the towns control.

Supervisor Driscoll agreed. She also explained that the town had gotten \$128,000 for the mortgage tax and she was trying to use these funds to keep the town from going over the Tax Cap. By doing this the town would be using a lot of the Fund Balance. Which would potentially make next year's budget increase substantial to recover the Fund Balance. The Fund Balance is there for unforeseen bills that may come to the town due to natural disasters and things to that nature. A discussion was had.

Patrick F. Funk asked if the town stayed at the Tax Cap, which is 2% how much Fund Balance would need to be used?

Supervisor Driscoll answered \$300,000.

Patrick F. Funk stated that the problem that would come from doing that would be the taxpayers. This year nothing will increase, but next year they will get a big hit, and the taxpayers will not be ok with that. Patrick asked if the town went to 3% how much of the Fund Balance would be used?

Supervisor Driscoll answered \$50,000 maybe. Ms. Driscoll asked the Town Board members do we stay under the Tax Cap or if she should rework the budget to go over the Cap? A discussion was had.

The Town of Harpersfield Town Board decided to have Supervisor Driscoll rework the budget to go to 3.9% increase.

A discussion was had.

Supervisor Driscoll informed the board that next on the agenda is a Transfer Station bill. The Town of Harpersfield received a bill from the Department of Public Works in the amount of \$1,748.74 for repairs on 3 different containers. They have sent the town detailed repair lists for each container. Supervisor Driscoll wanted to bring this bill to the Town Boards attention. The county had told the town previously that they would start charging the town for any damage that is done to the county's containers.

Supervisor Driscoll also wanted to mention that there was a problem with the health insurance for the Highway Department and union employees. The union health insurance had mailed out an audit form for the employees to fill out and send back within a certain time frame. If they did not receive this form back the employee's health insurance would be terminated on August 31, 2026. This termination of insurance did happen to some employees. Supervisor Driscoll has

made sure to put this as a reminder on her board for next year so that she can help with reminding the employees to make sure they are reading all the mail that comes in from the health insurance company to ensure that this doesn't happen again. This insurance is not issued by the town; therefore, the town doesn't receive the information regarding the insurance. The town receives a monthly bill for the union health insurance and pays that well in advance of the due date.

Supervisor Driscoll asked if there were any items that the council members would like to address with the board.

Supervisor Driscoll informed the board that the cameras are in at the Highway Garage.

Russ informed the board that the Town of Harpersfield was granted the grant that they had applied for from Soil and Water. The Town of Harpersfield received \$150,000 towards the Gun House Hill and Reed Road culvert project. That brings the town to \$650,000 for the project. The design isn't made yet and they do not have an estimate on the price at this time, but with \$650,000 Russ is hoping to let the project go out to contractors rather than tying the Highway Department employees up for basically the entire summer on one project. Russ attended a meeting on the 3rd of September; there is still 1.5 million dollars at Soil and Water. Hopefully the Town of Harpersfield could put in for additional funds if there is some overrun.

Patrick Funk asked if the Town of Harpersfield has to put in money for the grant?

Russ answered that is why Soil and Water granted us \$150,000. The Town was to come up with 25% for the last grant on this project. The \$150,000 is to cover that 25%.

A discussion was had.

Supervisor Driscoll agrees with Russ on contracting out that project. The town now has the money and there is potential for the town to receive more if needed from Soil and Water.

Russ stated that Soil and Water want to be the brains of the project, they'd like to take over the bidding process and everything. So, Russ suggests letting Soil and Water take over.

Supervisor Driscoll added that if the Town of Harpersfield lets Soil and Water take over they would pay the bills and everything. Other than the town putting up some road signs saying road closed, the town would not need to do anything with the project.

The board agrees to put the Gun House Hill and Reed Road culvert project out to bid.

Russ informed the board that he did get the backhoe on Auctions International. He also put a thumb from the old backhoe on there also. He is asking the board if it is ok for him to use his judgement on a dollar amount so that it does not have to wait until the next board meeting. Russ would just like to get the backhoe sold.

The board approved Russ to use his judgement for the sale of the backhoe.

Supervisor Driscoll added that the town has spent a lot of money working on the improvements at the Transfer Station. The sale of the backhoe will give money back to the Transfer Station.

A discussion was had.

The Town Clerks report for the month of August was issued to the board. The amount the town received was \$1,857.54.

Supervisor Driscoll informed the board that next on the agenda is the abstract and vouchers. Supervisor Driscoll asked Heidi if the signage that was just purchased for \$450 was the signage required by the State of New York to be posted.

Heidi answered yes.

Supervisor Driscoll would like Heidi to call around and get prices to compare for 2028. That price seems to be very high.

Supervisor Driscoll informed the board that the town had approval to pay the attorneys from the Mountain Top Airfield, LLC escrow. The Transfer Station abstract shows a lot of bills that were for the improvements. The roof that is over the cardboard at the Transfer Station was leaking. That has just been replaced.

Dwayne C. Hill made a motion to pay the bills that were presented to the board. Seconded by Donna Van Sickell. All voting Aye.

Supervisor Driscoll informed the board that next on the agenda is the Profits and Losses. Supervisor Driscoll used a lot of these numbers in the budget. General A the town is at \$504,000 the budget is \$615,000. General B the town is at \$50,000 the budget is \$73,000. A few of the yearly contributions were just sent out. DA the town received \$191,000 the town is at \$173,000. There is \$50,000 in the fund balance. The one that Supervisor Driscoll is concerned about is the Transfer Station. The contractual is at \$90,000 we have budgeted \$68,000. A discussion was had.

A motion to go into executive session to speak about personnel at 8:20pm was made by Dwayne C. Hill. Seconded by Patrick F. Funk. All voting Aye.

A motion to come out of executive session at 9:22pm was made by Donna VanSickell. Seconded by Patrick F. Funk. All voting Aye.

The next regular meeting of the Town Board will be held on Wednesday October 14, 2026 at 7:00pm.

