

August 13, 2025

The Town Board of the Town of Harpersfield held a Board meeting on August 13, 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:	Liz Page,	Editor of the Mountain Eagle
	Henry L. Browning	

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Lisa M. Driscoll. Supervisor Driscoll led the Board and those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Supervisor Driscoll informed the Board that the Town had received two Bids for a medium sized truck. The first bid that Supervisor Driscoll opened was from Depaula Ford. The dollar amount for that is \$76,056.50. Russ Hatch informed Supervisor Driscoll that the amount is just for the Cab and Chassis. The final amount will be more. The next Bid that Supervisor Driscoll opened was from Metro Ford, in the amount of \$110,961.42 for the Chassis and the Stahl all equipment included.

Councilmember Erick Reeve asked Russ if the trucks are diesel, and if the Highway department was confident in buying a new diesel. Russ answered that he had not heard anything bad and asked if Mr. Reeve had heard anything at this point. Mr. Reeve answered unless they had updated it, the cp4 pumps fail. Which could cost about \$16,000. Mr. Reeve asked if they give any municipal warranties. Russ answered that it would be three years he would imagine. The exhaust and power train are usually five years.

Supervisor Driscoll mentioned that the Bid from Depaula is conflicting in price. She questioned if they were taking off some money. Supervisor Driscoll would like to have phone call with them to make sure that it is the correct price. Metro Ford has a discounted price also.

Councilmember Patrick Funk suggested that Russ go through both Bids and see which is the better Bid.

Superviosor Driscoll informed the Board that we will move on with the meeting and come back to the Truck Bids when Russ is ready.

Supervisor Driscoll asked the Board if there were any questions, comments or concerns regarding the minutes from July 9 and 16, 2025. The Board had no questions, comments or concerns.

A motion to accept the minutes from July 9 and 16 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 Town had received a letter from Coughlin & Gerhart LLP informing the Town that Robert H. McKertich will be departing from Coughlin & Gerhart LLP, effective July 31, 2025. As a result, he will no longer be handling matters through their law firm. Coughlin & Gerhart, LLP remain committed to providing the Town with continuous, high-quality legal representation. Nicholas S. Cortese and Mark D. Spinner will be reassigned for the Towns matters.

Supervisor Driscoll informed the Board that next on the agenda is the Resolution for the Senior Tax Exemption.

Council member Patrick F. Funk explained to the Board that the whole purpose of this is every year C.O.L.A. goes up, if the exemption was to stay the same, eventually C.O.L.A. could cost people out of their exemption. Every year the Board has agreed to look at the numbers and adjust if needed.

TOWN OF HARPERSFIELD

RESOLUTION NO. 007 OF THE YEAR 2025

At the regular meeting of the Town of Harpersfield held on August 13, 2025, Councilmember Patrick F. Funk offered the following resolution and move its adoption:

TITLE: TAX EXEMPTION FOR PERSONS 65 YEARS OF AGE OR OVER.

WHEREAS, the existing income ceiling of \$27,700.00 for the Real Property tax exemption for persons 65 and older in the Town of Harpersfield is no longer effective in protecting the most vulnerable of this Town's citizens.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Resolution located in the Town minutes, dated June 14, 2023, entitled: TAX EXEMPTION FOR PERSONS 65 YEARS OF AGE OR OVER, is hereby rescinded and the

following be adopted for granting real property tax exemption for persons 65 and older in the Town of Harpersfield.

BE IT RESOLVED, that pursuant to the authority granted by Section 467 of the Real Property Tax Law, real property within the Town of Harpersfield owned by one or more persons, each of who is 65 years of age or over, or real property within the Town owned by husband and wife, one of who is 65 year of age or over, shall be exempt from Town tax levy according to the following schedule based on income of the owner or combined income of the owners of the property for the tax year immediately preceding the date of application:

Income \$22,750.00 or less.....50% exemption.

Income \$22,751.00 but less than \$23,749.00..45% exemption.

Income \$23,750.00 but less than \$24,749.00.....40% exemption.

Income \$24,750.00 but less than \$25,799.00.....35% exemption.

Income \$25,800.00 but less than \$26,799.00.....30% exemption.

Income \$26,800.00 but less than \$27,599.00.....25% exemption.

Income \$27,600.00 but less than \$28,499.00.....20% exemption.

Income \$28,500.00 or moreno exemption.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all of the provisions of Section 467 of the Real Property Tax Law shall apply in the administration and interpretation of this resolution and such exemption shall not be granted unless the applicant qualified thereunder.

Seconded by Councilmember Donna VanSickell with the vote as follows:

Adopted: Lisa M. Driscoll, Supervisor Aye.

Adopted: Donna VanSickell, Councilmember Aye.

Patrick F. Funk, Councilmember Aye.

Erik R. Reeve, Councilmember Aye.

Dwayne C. Hill, Councilmember Aye.

Supervisor Driscoll informed the Board that next on the agenda is the Agreement with the Heart of the Catskills. The Town does this every year. The Town agrees to pay the Heart of the Catskills \$40 for each dog and \$5 for each cat. The Town shall also pay \$250. Due upon signing the contract.

A motion was made to sign the agreement with the Heart of the Catskills was made by Patrick F. Funk and seconded by Dwayne C. Hill. All voting Aye.

Supervisor Driscoll informed the Board that next on the agenda is the Resolution for the Sole Assessor Appointment. This is a 6-year term.

TOWN OF HARPERSFIELD

RESOLUTION NO. 008 OF THE YEAR 2025

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

TITLE: NOMINATION OF ONE SOLE TAX ASSESSOR FOR A SIX YEAR TERM FOR THE TOWN OF HARPERSFIELD.

WHEREAS, the Town of Harpersfield, a municipality in Delaware County, New York will appoint the following for a 6 year term commencing on October 01, 2025, through September 30, 2031:

Laurel L. Bedford Sole Town Tax Assessor

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Board of the Town of Harpersfield appoints Laurel L. Bedford as the Sole Town Tax Assessor for a six year term.

WHEREUPON, Councilmember Donna VanSickell seconded the motion and Resolution No. 008 of the Year 2025 was put to a vote and recorded as follows:

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

Councilmember Patrick F. Funk said that he thinks that Laurie Bedford is doing a great job.

Supervisor Driscoll informed the Board that next on the agenda is the contract with iWorQ. What the Town would like to do is use this program for the Transfer Station stickers. The biggest problem we have right now is if the person using the Transfer Station is not a resident of Harpersfield and the Town has their license plate number, we need to go to the other town clerks to see where the person resides. If there is an incident that needs immediate attention, the system we are using right now is not a sufficient process. With using iWorq we will be able to do a smart search with either car color, license plate number, make or model and pull up the

resident. iWorq have waived all the set-up fees and are charging us for the new module. The cost for the additional iWorQ module would be \$1,500 from the Transfer Station.

A motion to accept the agreement with iWorq was made by Dwayne C. Hill and seconded by Donna VanSickell. All voting Aye.

Supervisor Driscoll informed the Board that next on the agenda is the new sign for the Transfer Station and the B&B correspondence. Supervisor Driscoll went on to tell the Board that B&B people are coming in with no stickers. After many conversations with Russ and Heidi we believe that the owners of the B&B's should be responsible for the garbage. The Transfer Station should not be allowing people that are renting B&B's to come and use our Transfer Station. Supervisor Driscoll would like to write letters to all B&B owners stating that they will be responsible for getting rid of the garbage. The renters will not be allowed to use the Transfer Station. The Transfer Station will be checking stickers on a regular basis. They will inform people if they have no sticker they may not enter. Supervisor Driscoll informed the Board that we will also be getting a Banner to place on the gate that states no sticker no entry, loads need to be covered and smile you are on camera. Supervisor Driscoll also informed the Board that we had a lady on camera at 8:53am Wednesday, that decided to dump her garbage at the gate before the Transfer Station was open. The Town was able to find the name and address of the lady from the garbage that was left. Supervisor Driscoll has sent a warning letter to the lady.

Supervisor Driscoll informed the Board that next on the agenda is Positive Pay. With the amount of fraud now with people hacking into bank accounts. The bank offers a program that allows the Town to approve all withdraws from all bank accounts, including checks written or wire transfers. The Town had an incident with one of the vendors that was receiving their mail at a drop box. Their checks were getting stolen and ghosted to be made out to them and changing the dollar amount. Supervisor Driscoll would like to attach this to most of the Towns bank accounts for the extra protection.

Councilmember Patrick Funk asked how many bank account the Town has in total. Supervisor Driscoll answered at least 11. Mr. Funk asked if we could get a discounted price for having so many accounts? Supervisor Driscoll answered that she will ask the bank.

A motion was made to approve the Positive Pay program with NBT bank by Dwayne C. Hill and seconded by Donna VanSickell. All voting Aye.

Supervisor Driscoll informed the Board that next on the agenda is the Attorney for Article 7 Retainers and SCAR. The Board has a copy of each retainer in their folders. The Town would need the attorney to represent them being that they are Article 7 lawsuits. There are retainers for Tractor Supply, Walgreens and the building where Vasta's Restaurant was previously located.

A motion to approve all 3 retainers for the Article 7 lawsuits was made by Patrick F. Funk and seconded by Dwayne C. Hill. All voting Aye.

Supervisor Driscoll informed the Board that there are also SCAR small claims lawsuits. The Town Assessor Laurie Bedford will be representing the Town with those cases. The SCAR cases have required a lot of information including comparable reports and assessed value analysis reports. These small claims cases are scheduled for Monday August 18th.

Town of Harpersfield Assessor Laurie Bedford added that she will need to look at the properties that they are claiming to be comparable.

Councilmember Donna VanSickell asked who owns 1 Grant Place at this time. Laurie answered that she had not heard who the new owners are, if it had changed hands.

Laurie added that with Article 7's and the SCAR lawsuits, they are really wanting appraisals. The way the Town has done their assessments for the last 25 years is nowhere near an appraised value, that is where the full evaluation of the Town would be helpful. We would be getting somewhat of an appraisal for every property. The Towns that have done the full evaluation that are also going through the SCAR have enough information in the computer to come up with the values that they are looking for during the hearings.

Supervisor Driscoll mentioned the appraisals that the Town is needing for the upcoming Article 7 hearings. The Town has received quotes from KLV Appraisal Group, Inc. One quote for preliminary appraisals with all three properties at \$5,700. Another quote for the preliminary with court-ready self-contained reports for \$11,500 for all three properties. This same company has told Laurie that to do a full re-evaluation for the Town the cost would be \$100 a parcel.

Councilmember Erik Reeve asked if there are other companies that do this. Laurie answered that she has reached out to several places, she was able to find a man in Oneonta that will do commercial appraisals. He would do them for \$3,000 each. She is unsure if they are court ready reports.

Supervisor Driscoll asked that Laurie contact the man from Oneonta and see if his appraisals are court-ready. Laurie answered that she would reach out to him tomorrow. The Town will hold off on the appraisals until we have some more quotes.

Supervisor Driscoll informed the Board that next on the agenda is the NYS Retirement Budget. Supervisor Driscoll explained that she has received the next year's amounts for NYS Retirement. In 2025 the Town paid about \$68,000. It has gone up to \$79,095 for 2026 due to the rates going up. They are predicting that for 2027 it will cost the Town around \$97,000. Also, from 2014 – 2024 there was a mistake in the way the Town was paying into the Retirement system for an employee that has retired. That is an additional charge of \$32,512 for that ten-year period. That

amount is due on February 1, 2026. The total amount due to the NYS Retirement System in February of 2026 is \$111,607. A discussion was had.

Supervisor Driscoll asked if the council members have any items to address with the Board. Supervisor Driscoll informed the Board that she had a conversation with a resident regarding a concern that they had with their assessment. Supervisor Driscoll believes that the conversation she had with the resident was helpful and that they landed in a good place. She will touch base with Laurie regarding this conversation.

Patrick Funk asked if there had been any movement on any of the bridges in Stamford? Supervisor Driscoll answered no.

Supervisor Driscoll gave the latest update on the racetrack. The Department of Health contacted Ms. Driscoll and informed her that the court case that was scheduled for July has been moved to August 27th. The Department of Health is preparing for that hearing now. The Department of Health has been putting up placards at the racetrack to find that they are being removed. The Department of Health's comment to Ms. Driscoll was that they would just like them to follow the rules. They would like to make sure that everyone is safe. A discussion was had.

Dwayne C. Hill asked if our Codes Enforcement officer has gone to the camper that is parked on Fenn Hill. Heidi Stevens answered that she had mentioned to Christopher Plante that there was a camper parked off the road on Fenn Hill Road. She has not heard if he has gone up to take a look at this point.

Supervisor Driscoll informed the Board that Verizon will be putting up the Tower in the first week in September.

Russ informed the Board that regarding the Bids, both companies used the same outfitter. The outfitter came in at \$62,092. Metro Ford added wrong. Metro Fords cab and chassis is \$70,844.42. Depaula's cab and chassis is \$76,056. If it is added correctly Metro Ford for the whole truck should be \$132,936.42. Metro put on paper \$110,961. The actual amount is the cheaper of the two Bids, but his numbers are wrong. Metro is cheaper by about \$6,000.

Supervisor Driscoll mentioned that the Town did get \$30,000 from Robinson Brodhurst and CHIPS will cover the rest.

Russ asked if we should contact Metro and let them know that they are the low bidder, but they should check their numbers. Supervisor Driscoll answered yes. Supervisor Driscoll stated that if the Bid remains cheaper, they go with Metro Ford if it is higher than Depaula Ford the Town will redo the bidding process.

A motion to accept the Bid from Metro Ford if it comes out cheaper than Depaula Ford was made by Erik Reeve and seconded by Donna VanSickel. All voting Aye.

Russ informed the Board that the Truck was completed, they had do some reprogramming on it. He was told that the company will be finishing up tomorrow.

Supervisor Driscoll asked if Russ had the final cost for the equipment. Is the Town still paying the same amount that was agreed upon? Russ answered yes.

Russ informed the Board that the warrantee will not go into effect until the Town takes possession of the new truck. A discussion was had.

Russ informed the Board that the Highway department has been working on all the parking lots, prepping them to be seal coated. He is hoping to get to the Transfer Station before the end of August. Hoping to pour some concrete next week at the Town Hall and at the Transfer Station. A discussion was had.

Supervisor Driscoll informed the Board that next is the Shared Service Agreement with DOT. This agreement is for the next 4 years.

A motion to accept the agreement with DOT was made by Patrick F. Funk and seconded by Erik Reeve. All voting Aye.

The Town Clerks report for the Month of July was issued to the Board. The amount the Town received was \$333.82.

Supervisor Driscoll informed the Board that next on the agenda is the Abstract and Vouchers. There was large amount for Mirabito at \$18,000, also C&D went up for the Transfer Station. A discussion was had.

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

Supervisor Driscoll informed the Board that next on the agenda is the Profit and Losses. The Town did pay the bond today at \$15,000, next year it goes up to \$20,000 the interest will be lower than we will have one more year and we will be done. The information for the retirement was sent to Karen. Next budget the Town will have a new line item for the software and computers.

Patrick F. Funk asked if the Town was going to start saving for the re-evaluation of the Town in next year's budget. Supervisor Driscoll answered that she is going to show the budget with and without that and the Board will have to decide then. If we decide to put money aside, she will need to speak with the Towns attorney to see how to do that legally. A discussion was had.

A motion to go into an executive session at 8:30pm for personnel purposes was made by Patrick F. Funk and seconded by Dwayne C. Hill. All voting Aye.

A motion to come out of an executive session at 8:53pm was made by Patrick F. Funk and seconded by Donna VanSickell. All voting Aye.

No motions are to be made regarding the executive session.

A motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:54pm was made by Donna VanSickell and seconded by Erik Reeve. All voting Aye.

The next regular meeting of the Town Board will be held on Wednesday September 10, 2025 at 7:00pm.