

**Approved**

August 13, 2018

**July 9, 2018  
Town of Taghkanic  
Town Board Meeting**

Note all documents in these minutes may be clicked on and enlarged for easier reading

**6:30 pm:** Town Board members audited and signed vouchers.

**7 pm:** The Taghkanic Town Board held its regular monthly meeting on the above date at the Taghkanic Town Hall. Supervisor Ryan Skoda opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance, and moment of silence.

**Present:** Ryan Skoda Supervisor  
Arthur McGuire Board Member  
Richard Skoda Board Member  
Linda Swartz Board Member  
Cheryl Rogers Clerk

**Absent:** Joyce Thompson Board Member

**7 pm:** Public Hearing Taghkanic Volunteer Fire Company 2018 Contract: Supervisor Ryan Skoda asked if anyone had any questions or concerns. There were none. Supervisor Ryan Skoda asked for a motion to close the Public Hearing.

**7:01 pm:** The Public Hearing was closed on a motion by Board Member Arthur McGuire, seconded by Board Member Richard Skoda.

**Approved** 4 Aye (Ryan, Arthur, Linda, Richard)  
0 Nays  
1 Absent (Joyce)

Guest Speaker:

Supervisor Ryan Skoda then asked for a motion to approve the following minutes:

**June 11, 2018** Town Board meeting minutes were accepted as written with suggested changes and amendments, motioned by Board Member Linda Swartz, seconded by Board Member Arthur McGuire.

**Approved** 3 Aye (Ryan, Arthur, Linda)  
0 Nays  
1 Absent (Joyce)  
1 Abstained (Richard)

The Correspondence consisted of:

1. NYS Dept. Tax and Finance, tentative equalization rate
2. Kenneth Dow, Town of Copake, Public Hearing Notice
3. Jeff Brown, Independent Film Company
4. Perry Ascher, email roads

**Then followed reports from the Boards:**

**Animal Control:** Wes Powell, report submitted.

**ZBA:** James Romaine, Chair, no report.

**Planning Board:** Katherine Bainer, Chair report submitted.

**Assessor:** Craig Surprise report submitted.

- ✦ Board Member Richard Skoda motioned to grant permission for Assessor Surprise to hire Helen Hemendinger as his new Clerk, seconded by Board Member Linda Swartz.

**Approved**      **4 Aye**            **(Ryan, Arthur, Linda, Richard)**  
                         **0 Nays**  
                         **1 Absent**        **(Joyce)**

**ZEO/CEO/Building Inspector:** Dennis Callahan report submitted.

**Historian:** Nancy Griffith, no report submitted.

**Traffic Safety Board:** Linda Swartz, report submitted.

**Environmental Management Council:** Anna Kadish, no report submitted.

**Zoning Commission:** Joyce Thompson, report submitted and read as follows.

The Zoning Commission met on 4 and 25 May 2018.

This month the Commission completed working through most of the feedback from meetings with Supervisor Skoda, Board Members Skoda and McGuire, ZEO Callahan and Assessor Surprise. As was said in June, significant questions have led to important discussions to improve consistency and clarity. The last set of feedback materials is from Justice Tallackson and will be considered in July.

Thorough review is documented in the minutes that present review methodology, discussion, and final dispositions.

Minutes of these meetings – as is the case with all ZC meetings - are available on the Town Website or upon request to Joyce Thompson at 518.851.3487.

Next meetings: 2 & 16 July and 6 & 20 August. Meeting time continues to be 5:00 PM – 7:00 PM. All meetings are held at Town Hall and open to the public. If a meeting date or time is changed, it will be noticed on the town website at [www.taghkanic.org](http://www.taghkanic.org).

**Office for the Aging:** Joyce Thompson, report submitted

The Advisory Council of the Office for the Aging met on Friday, 15 June 2018 at the Human Services Building in Hudson. It was the third of three scheduled Spring meetings.

**Town News**

The Northern Columbia County Village movement continues to develop and is now ready to become a 501 C (3) non-profit organization. This a membership organization that provides a platform for members to help each other. Services can be offered on an exchange basis and/or at low rates – depending on how the organization decides would work best. It is a model that can be fitted to specific community needs and is a valuable addition to a growing grass-roots support system for residents who chose to age in place.

**Agency News**

**OFA:**

- **Big News!** The **Columbia County OFA** will hold a **Senior Day Event on Thursday, September 13, 2018 at the Stuyvesant Falls VFW facility from 11:30 – 2:30.** There will

be a picnic lunch, a DJ and sing-along, Flu Shots if available, Collection of expired medications by the Sheriff's Department and Community Service Providers' booths with lots of good information. This year the event is for **all** seniors; senior volunteers AND all other seniors in Columbia County are invited.

For reservations please call 518.828.4258.

- Plans are underway for transportation to help seniors who do not drive to be able to attend. **Perhaps we in Taghkanic could reach out to our senior residents and get a sense of who might need a ride.**
- **Farmers' Market Vouchers!** They are a booklet of 5 4\$ vouchers totaling a \$20 value. Call OFA at 518.828.4258 to inquire and request.
- There is a new newsletter at the back table. Please take a copy!

**Clerk/Collector:** Cheryl Rogers, reports were submitted to the Board

**Supervisor:** Ryan Skoda, report submitted and the written report was available on the back table for the public.

**Highway:** George Hotaling, report submitted.

- ✚ Board Member Linda Swartz: asked Superintendent Hotaling how the new guy was working out?
- ✚ Superintendent Hotaling: very good
- ✚ Board Member Arthur McGuire: asked about mowing town roads.
- ✚ Superintendent Hotaling: we mow them twice a year.

**Financial Advisory Committee Report:** Board Member Joyce Thompson reported the following:

The Financial Advisory Committee (FAC) audited May financials on Thursday, 4 June, as scheduled. June financials will be audited on 9 August because of vacation schedules. The results for June and July will be reported at the August Town Board meeting.

#### **Revenue and Expenditure Review**

There is nothing of note to report for Revenues or Expenditures for June. Both are within acceptable range for the half-year point.

#### **Basis for Department Head Management of the Department Budget**

As was stated in June, by law, no expenditure may be authorized by a department without sufficient money already appropriated to cover it. Work with the Bookkeeper confirmed that two reports will provide department heads the information necessary for them to assure no charge is authorized without sufficient funds to cover it. The reports are: 1) Revenue & Expenditures YTD Comparison and 2) Revenue & Expenditures – Budget vs. Actual for January through a given month. At the June Town Board meeting, a motion passed execute a policy that all department heads/board chairs approve vouchers before spending funds. This will require checking the above documents, and a system developed by each department head / board chair to assure as much as possible that no appropriation will exceed the budget number without prior authorization.

### **Advisory Board reports:**

**Conservation Advisory Committee:** Anna Kadish, report submitted.

At Kadish home, June 21, 2018

Members present: Joyce Thompson, Larry Kadish, Anna Kadish, Tony LaSalvia, Valerie Hoffman, Zita Kobos, and Speaker: Jill Falchi

The meeting began at 5:00 PM. Speaker was Jill Falchi, Clran Energy Coordinator Capital District Regional Planning Commission. She spoke about the Clean Energy Communities Program (CECP). Technical assistance is available for all communities at no cost. In order to be certified, Each community is asked to complete four of the ten of the “High Impact Actions” listed.

These included “Benchmarking” (adopting the policies of the CECP). The policies we deemed to be appropriate for a small town like Taghkanic were:

- 1) Benchmarking (adopting the policies to regulate energy use by municipal buildings)
- 2) Clean Energy Upgrades – achieve a 10 % reduction in energy use in municipal buildings
- 3) Solarize – Community program to adopt the NYS Unified Solar Permit
- 4) Energy Code Enforcement Training for Town Officials

Another possibility was Climate Smart Community Certification which we thought would not be possible at the present time. Another is Community Choice Aggregation transition to affordable energy supply ( the town must attempt to get 100 % green energy and select an energy administrator for the area. Ms Falchi assured us that significant assistance is available to assist towns in achieving these goals. Significant funding is available for this purpose.

More information is available at the Nysesda clean energy website. Jill Falchi can be reached at [Jill.Falchi@cdrpc.org](mailto:Jill.Falchi@cdrpc.org) or at (518) 453-0850

The meeting ended at 7:00 PM

### **Broadband Advisory Committee: Arthur McGuire, report submitted.**

In lieu of its 2 p.m. meeting on June 28th, the Broadband Committee opted for a Broadband presentation at 1 p.m. that day at the Hudson Library. Joyce Thompson, Chris Tallackson and Arthur McGuire attended. The presentation had been organized by Assembly member Didi Barrett and featured Jeffrey Nordhaus, Executive Vice President, Innovation and Broadband at Empire State Development. Members of Connect Columbia, town officials of various Columbia County towns and a staff member at Representative John Faso’s office were in attendance.

While much of the discussion was about problems with Charter/Spectrum in towns north of us, we did learn more about GTel. The problems with pole licenses from National Grid have been resolved with the assistance of the State. We were told that the pole licenses will be granted at more reasonable fees than that which National Grid had originally demanded. Approval for GTel to drill under the Taghkanic State Parkway does not appear to be a problem. Also, improved maps are available online.

The July 1 GTel report shows further progress including about four miles of construction in Taghkanic. We remain encouraged that GTel will get the job done.

### **Old Business:**

1. **County Route 15 Complaint:** Supervisor Ryan Skoda, I called Attorney Decaire and I am going to read you his response: “ *On Heesch: I was under the impression that the default motion had already been made. I was wrong and take full responsibility for not catching that. We will have it filed this week and will provide you with a copy to bring the Board up to speed.*” Ryan, I am requesting he be at the next meeting.

✚ John Thompson: Frustrated, get another attorney.

2. **Newsletter:** The draft newsletter was reviewed by the Board Members present, all agreed it looks good and to proceed.
3. **Taghkanic Volunteer Fire Company 2018 Contract:** Board Member Richard Skoda motioned to accept the 2018 one year contract, seconded by Board Member Linda Swartz.

**Approved**      **4 Aye**      **(Ryan, Arthur, Linda, Richard)**  
                          **0 Nays**  
                          **1 Absent**      **(Joyce)**

4. **Highway Facility Landscape Plan:** Supervisor Ryan Skoda: a rough draft plan of what should be planted is being worked on. Superintendent of Highways Bernie Kelleher informed Ryan that the intersection of Pumpkin Hollow and Route 27 will be done this summer and the Murcott Cul-de-sac will be next spring. The Murcott deed transfer is a done deal.

- + Board Member Arthur McGuire: if the intersection is done by fall can we start planting?
- + Supervisor Ryan Skoda: yes if it is done.

5. **Culvert Inventory:** Supervisor Ryan Skoda; there is a meeting set for July 23, 2018 at 10 a.m. at the town hall to meet with Trout Unlimited and Cornell Cooperative Extension of Columbia and Greene Counties that I and the CAC will be attending. This meeting is to start the development of a Town Wide Road-Stream Crossing Replacement Plan. By doing this program it will help us to go after grants because the culvert inventory will have been done by professionals. I need a motion to send the following letter of support to the Hudson River Estuary Program.

Hudson River Estuary Program  
 New York State Department of Environmental Conservation  
 21 South Putt Corner Road  
 New Paltz, NY 12561

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the Town of Taghkanic, I want to offer our support to Trout Unlimited (TU) and Cornell Cooperative Extension of Columbia and Greene Counties (CCECG) in the development of a Town Wide Road-Stream Crossing Replacement Plan (RSCRCP).

Taghkanic would benefit from this evaluation in several ways. Initially, it would serve as a reference resource to the town highway department. This resource will allow the town to move forward with culvert management in a timely, prioritized manner. The proposed work will summarize all the culvert assessments within the town boundaries, provide a ranking of structures for replacement and includes designs for the top priorities. This will allow for a more complete and thoughtful approach to culvert management. It could also serve as a comprehensive planning document to guide future projects and funding applications or appropriations.

The Town of Taghkanic supports the development of this document and we hope the Hudson River Estuary Program will fund this phase of our town's culvert management. We believe that our community would benefit from reconnecting high quality aquatic habitat and improving our flood resiliency and road infrastructure conditions.

Board Member Arthur McGuire motioned to approve sending the letter of support in the development of a Town Wide Road-Stream Crossing Replacement Plan, seconded by Board Member Linda Swartz.

**Approved**      **4 Aye**      **(Ryan, Arthur, Linda, Richard)**

0 Nays  
1 Absent (Joyce)

6. **Time Clock:** Supervisor Ryan Skoda: I have contacted Attorney Decaire to ask him to research the legality of the town using a biometric time clocks, and I will read his response: *“Responding to your question regarding the use of biometric time clocks, while New York Labor Law 201-A prohibits the fingerprinting of employees unless fingerprinting is otherwise required by law, this provision does not apply to employees of the state “or any municipal subdivisions or departments thereof”. I have found a few examples of other municipalities in the state who utilize biometric time clocks. If the decision is made to move forward with this plan, there are a number of options available, including standard fingerprinting versions and others that simply measure the features of a person’s hand without capturing or utilizing the fingerprint itself. That second method has been proved for all employers in NY (public and private) since it does not technically “fingerprint” the employee. If/when the decision is made to move forward, we need to draft and publish notices to the employees.”*

**New Business:**

- A. **August 2018 Calendar:** Board Member Linda Swartz moved to accept the August 2018 calendar with suggested changes, seconded by Board Member Richard Skoda.

**Approved**      4 Aye      (Ryan, Arthur, Linda, Richard)  
0 Nays  
1 Absent      (Joyce)

- B. **Draft Resolution to adopt Columbia County Multi-jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan:** Supervisor Ryan Skoda introduced the draft resolution and asked all Board Members to review for next month.

- C. **Columbia County Planning Board:** Supervisor Ryan Skoda informed the Board that Alice Platt has resigned and we need to find a volunteer to fill the remaining term ending December 31, 2019. The representative on the County Planning covers Taghkanic and Gallatin; Ryan will get in touch with John Reilly and see if he has a name of a volunteer.

- D. **RFP Attorney Town and ZBA:** Board member Linda Swartz motioned to notice for RFP’s for Town Attorney and for ZBA Attorney with a cutoff date of August 3, 2018, seconded by Board Member Arthur McGuire.

**Approved**      4 Aye      (Ryan, Arthur, Linda, Richard)  
0 Nays  
1 Absent      (Joyce)

**The bills were audited and approved for payment as follows:**

- ✦ **June 25, 2018 Abstract:** on a motion by Board Member Linda Swartz, seconded by Board Member Arthur McGuire.

2018 General Fund Vouchers	# 221 - 236	\$ 4,275.32
2018 Highway Fund Vouchers	# 142 - 143	\$ 6,770.42
2018 Hwy Project Fund vouchers	#	\$
2018 Escrow Fund Vouchers	# -	\$

**Approved**      4 Aye      (Ryan, Arthur, Linda, Richard)

0 Nays  
1 Absent (Joyce)

✚ **July 9, 2018 Abstract:** on a motion by Board Member Linda Swartz, seconded by Board Member Arthur McGuire.

2018 General Fund Vouchers	#	237	-	249	\$	3,713.28
2018 Highway Fund Vouchers	#	144	-	159	\$	7,758,172
2018 Hwy Project Fund vouchers	#	3	-	4	\$	595.00
2018 Escrow Fund Vouchers	#		-		\$	

**Approved** 4 Aye (Ryan, Arthur, Linda, Richard)

0 Nays  
1 Absent (Joyce)

**The following people commented during the fifteen minute public comment:**

- ✚ John Thompson: newspaper article about grant money for trees and shrubs
- ✚ Supervisor Ryan Skoda: 95% of Columbia County is exempt from the program,
- ✚ Arthur Griffith: the Trees for Tribes need some attention.
- ✚ Larry Kadish: Tony LaSalvia is the contact person, I believe.
- ✚ Arthur Griffith: the former Taconic Motel is it tax exempt now?
- ✚ Supervisor Ryan Skoda: unsure at this time will ask the Assessor.

**Executive Session:** None

**With no further business,** on a motion by Board Member Richard Skoda, seconded by Board Member Arthur McGuire, the meeting was adjourned at 7:55 pm, carried unanimously by all members present. The next Regular meeting will be **August 13, 2018** at the Taghkanic Town Hall.

Audience: John Thompson                      Anna Kadish                      Larry Kadish                      Arthur Griffith  
                    Chris De la Rama                      George Hotaling