

**Approved**

**9/14/2020**

**August 10, 2020  
Town of Taghkanic  
Town Board Meeting**

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

Town Board Members audited and signed vouchers on August 8, and August 9, 2020 separately, due to the COVID-19 social distancing.

**6:30 pm:** Town Board met with Suzanne Muldoon, Town Accountant to discuss the submitted RFP and the possibility of additional reports required for the Town Financial Advisory Committee to audit monthly with.

**7:00 pm:** The Taghkanic Town Board held its regular monthly meeting on the above date at the Taghkanic Fire House. Supervisor Ryan Skoda opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance and moment of silence.

<b>Present:</b>	Ryan Skoda	Supervisor
	Elizabeth Craig	Board Member
	Kara Gilmore	Board Member
	Linda Swartz	Board Member
	Joyce Thompson	Board Member
	Cheryl Rogers	Clerk

**7:00 pm:** Supervisor Ryan Skoda opened the **Public Hearing for Local Law 1-2020** to abolish the elective office of Superintendent of Highways of the Town of Taghkanic and create the appointive office of Superintendent of Highways.

- + Arthur Griffith: will the appointed position cost more money?
- + Supervisor Ryan Skoda: if this law is approved and passed tonight it will be a referendum on the ballot in November giving the residents of Taghkanic the opportunity to vote on it. If approved in November, the Board will start the RFP process and discussion of wages then.
- + Carl Mulert: I am in favor, I feel having an appointed Superintendent will give the Town Board a better way to handle road problems that residents have concerns with. With appointed vs. elected supervisor, the appointed answers to the Town Board, the elected answers to the residents who voted them in.
- + Susan Raymond: via zoom: why is George leaving?
- + Supervisor Ryan Skoda: George will finish his term on 12-31-2021. The change to appointed Superintendent, if voted in, would start 1-1-2022.
- + Debbie Colgrove: would the appointed person need to live in town?
- + Supervisor Ryan Skoda: a Highway Supervisor must live in New York State but does not have to be a resident of the Town of Taghkanic. The Board would take into consideration the applicant's place of residence.
- + Board Member Kara Gilmore: The Board is presenting this Local Law now so we have time to add a referendum to the ballot in November 2020.

- + Joanne Klein: how has the appointment of a sole assessor gone?
- + Supervisor Ryan Skoda: Productive. This law will give the Board a better opportunity to remove if they are not doing the job correctly.
- + Susan Raymond: via zoom: is this an ongoing problem or just something new in the past few years?
- + Supervisor Ryan Skoda: not new, ongoing.
- + Board Member Elizabeth Craig: as a new Board Member I see there are a few issues:
  1. The road crew is under the direction of an Elected Official so the Town Board is further removed from boss of the crew. Superintendent Hotaling will do most things himself instead of telling the crew.
  2. As the Town Board we can ask, we can't demand.
- + Board Member Linda Swartz: as Elizabeth said, George is a Working Superintendent.
- + Carl Mulert: this is not against anything with George; this is more for chain of command.
- + Supervisor Ryan Skoda: Some residents are more comfortable to call me or a Town Board Member than calling the Highway Department.
- + Inge Dobelis: How does the Board handle the crew now?
- + Supervisor Ryan Skoda: Superintendent Hotaling has total control over crew and Highway Department.
- + Arthur Dobelis: what are the terms for elected officials?
- + Supervisor Ryan Skoda: All terms are (4) four-year terms.
- + Joanne Klein: who will interview?
- + Supervisor Ryan Skoda: if the Referendum passes, the Town Board would notice an RFP for the position and hold interviews. All will be done open to the public.
- + Arthur Griffith: term for this position?
- + Supervisor Ryan Skoda: 2 years. Are there any more questions, concerns or comments? As there are none. May I have a motion to close the Public Hearing?

**7:36 PM:** Board Member Linda Swartz motioned to close the Public Hearing for Local Law 1-2020, seconded by Board Member Joyce Thompson.

**Approved**      5 Aye      (Ryan, Elizabeth, Joyce, Kara, Linda)  
 0 Nays  
 0 Absent

**Guest Speaker:** Unable to make it because of weather and will be at the September 14, 2020 meeting, Christine Vanderlan of The Columbia Land Conservancy, Taghkanic Creek Watershed Connectivity Plan.

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

**July 13, 2020:** Town Board meeting minutes were accepted as written with suggested changes, motioned by Board Member Linda Swartz, seconded by Board Member Elizabeth Craig.

**Approved**      5 Aye      (Ryan, Elizabeth, Joyce, Kara, Linda)  
 0 Nays  
 0 Absent

**July 27, 2020:** Town Board meeting minutes were accepted as written with suggested changes, motioned by Board Member Linda Swartz, seconded by Board Member Elizabeth Craig.

**Approved**            5 Aye            (Ryan, Elizabeth, Joyce, Kara, Linda)  
                              0 Nays  
                              0 Absent

### **The Correspondence:**

a) Col. Co. Board of Supervisors, Police Reform Panel

Board Member Joyce Thompson: I suggest the 5 following items to keep track of actions on the above.

- + What are the criteria for choosing panel members?
- + How will diversity be assured?
- + How will interviews be conducted? Will the public be able to observe?
- + Who will decide on the Panel Members
- + Will there be a Co-Chair of color?

b) Shepherd's Run Solar Project

Board Member Joyce Thompson: [Has the County provided recommendations to the State Siting Board for the Application in Copake?](#)

+ Supervisor Ryan Skoda: we have a Supervisors meeting Wednesday. I will find out.

c) NYSEG, Natural Gas Pipeline Safety

d) KISS 8/31/2020 – 9/11/2020

e) NYS Department of Taxation and Finance, Cert. of Final Telecommunication Ceiling

f) NYMIR, Our Policy

The following are some general guidelines for reopening and some department specific ideas to help protect the public and those who serve them:

#### **General Guidelines:**

- Develop cleaning policies with lists of items to be cleaned, how often they should be cleaned and who is responsible to maintain the program and ensure the cleaning is being done. Provide workers with tissues, no-touch trash cans, hand soap, alcohol-based hand rubs with at least 60 percent alcohol, disinfectants, and disposable towels to clean their work surfaces. Consider electrostatic sprayers to disinfect workplaces and vehicles. Keep a cleaning record including date/time and who did the work. This can be done as part of the Blood Borne Pathogen policy.

### **Reports from the Boards:**

**Animal Control:** Kyle Miller, report submitted.

I have no new entries for this month's report.

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

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

**Assessor:** Craig Surprise report submitted.

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

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

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

The Columbia County Traffic Safety Board held its first meeting of 2020 at the Public Safety

Building in Hudson on July 23, 2020. All previous meetings in 2020 were cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. CDC Guidelines were followed; masks were required, social distancing protocols were followed, and names and temperatures taken at the door for tracking purposes.

The Board welcomed two new members to the Board, Louis Bray from the CCSO and Wayne Oles from the NYSP. DOT received a call from a Taghkanic resident who was upset that DOT had cut brush and trees along his driveway on Route 82 and did not previously contact him regarding the work and “left a mess”. DOT advised the resident that the work was done on the state right-of-way, not on his property.

DOT advises that several maintenance contracts between the State and the County have been terminated due to limited personnel and equipment and fiscal issues.

DOT Columbia County Residency is working at about 60% staffing.

The next meeting of the CCTSB is scheduled for September 23, 2020, at the Public Safety Building in Hudson. CDC Guidelines will continue to be met.

**Environmental Management Council:** no report submitted.

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

The Zoning Commission met on 6 and 20 July.

Commission Members developed “scenarios” to test the code. The purpose of these tests was to confirm that definitions, regulations and cross-references were valid, and that the wording was as straight forward as possible.

The Co-chairs continue to conduct a copy edit of the approved draft. As stated last month, upon completion of this process the draft code will go back to the ZC Consultant, Ted Fink, for additional confirmation of all edits. The Zoning Commission Members will then receive a Final Draft for individual review and group approval before forwarding it to the Town Board for its review and scheduling of a Public Hearing.

The next Zoning Commission meetings are scheduled for 17 August and 7 & 21 September. They are being held in-person at the Taghkanic Fire House from 4:00 to 6:00 P.M. As always, these meetings are open to all and public attendance is welcomed. Masks and social distancing practices are required.

✚ **STR Sub-Committee:** Board Member Elizabeth Craig, Chair, report submitted as follows.



✚ **Board Member Elizabeth Craig:** the STR Sub-Committee approved the updated proposed Mission Statement.

- **Board Member Kara Gilmore:** number 1 we do not need how many or percentages just an overview would work.

1. *Evaluate existing Short Term/Transient Rentals in the Town of Taghkanic, and assess what percentage of these represent home-based businesses, and how many are more correctly understood as investment property. With this understanding, craft clear definitions of different types of STRs understood to exist in Taghkanic at present.*

- **Supervisor Ryan Skoda:** we need the Task Force to provide a proposed regulation to the Zoning Commission and Town Board so that we can move in the right direction. We do not need numbers of the STRs.

✚ Board Member Elizabeth Craig: presented revised verbiage for #1 of the proposed Mission Statement as follows:

1. *Provide an overview of existing Short Term/Transient Rentals in the Town of Taghkanic, and an understanding of whether these are primarily home-based businesses or investment properties. Craft clear descriptions of different types of STRs understood to exist in Taghkanic at present.*

Board Member Kara Gilmore motioned to approve the STR Mission Statement as amended, seconded by Board Member Linda Swartz.

**Approved**      **5 Aye (Ryan, Elizabeth, Joyce, Kara, Linda)**  
**0 Nays**  
**0 Absent**

**Office for the Aging:** Joyce Thompson, no meeting to report.

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

**Supervisor:** Ryan Skoda, report submitted as attached.



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



### Advisory Board reports:

**Financial Advisory Committee Report:** Board Member Joyce Thompson report submitted as follows:



**TGazette Newsletter Advisory Committee:** Nadja Palenzuela report submitted.

#### **TGazette newsletter statistics**

##### **July 2020**

Total Sent:                    233 (same as last month)  
Open Rate:                     70%  
Click-through rate:         35%  
Bounce rate:                    1  
Unsubscribe:                  0

COVID Scams most popular article

Open by device: 40% vs. 50% mobile last month  
60 % vs. 50% desktop last month  
Desktop is back down from last month

Website: 111 subscribers  
Last 4 weeks: 382 visits vs. 540 visits to website last month (down 34%),  
643 post views (down 29%)

### **Facebook**

Total likes: 186

**Conservation Advisory Committee: Tony LaSalvia** no meeting to report:  
**Broadband Advisory Committee: Arthur McGuire**, report submitted as follows:  
**Broadband Committee Update, August 10, 2020**

As reported earlier, all locations in Taghkanic have fiber on poles or underground that that has been spliced and tested. All that remains is the installation to unconnected properties. In that regard, service has been installed to 244 locations in our town, with 18 more scheduled by the end of August. Every resident on Sam Hill Road has been connected. It now takes about four weeks for a resident to get fiber installed.

Installation of fiber and an additional public Hotspot at Lake Taghkanic State Park should begin at the end of August.

The good news is that nearly everyone in Taghkanic who wants Broadband has it, is awaiting installation, or can have it within four weeks of requesting it.

### **Old Business:**

- 1. County Route 15 Complaint:** Supervisor Ryan Skoda: Attorney Howard papers were filed with Sheriff's Department for the sale of the property. We are now waiting for the Sheriff's Department to be able to proceed with the 40 day noticing.
- 2. Highway Facility:** Supervisor Ryan Skoda: Everything is still on hold waiting for DEC's decision on the proposed Soil Management Plan submitted months ago.
- 3. Culvert Inventory:** Supervisor Ryan Skoda: On July 15, 2020 at 2pm there was an on-site review of three culverts with the potential of meeting the requirements of the DEC, Trout Unlimited and Cornell Extension for replacement. It was attended by, Superintendent George Hotaling, Board Member Joyce Thompson, Anna and Larry Kadish, and representatives from Trout Unlimited, Inc. and CCE. The purpose was to finalize the recommendations from the CCE and Trout for 3 culverts on Taghkanic/Churchtown Road.
  - +** Board Member Joyce Thompson reported the top priority is the culvert closest to County 10 near 100 Taghkanic/Churchtown Road.
  - +** Supervisor Ryan Skoda: that culvert leads down to a waterfall which I have a feeling they do not know about; I will contact them.

- ✦ Board Member Joyce Thompson: The #1 problem culvert which is in real need of repair does not meet the ecological qualification. It is located near the intersection of Taghkanic/Churchtown Road and Cross Street.
- ✦ Supervisor Ryan Skoda: George and I spoke and he is going to get quotes to replace that culvert.

4. **Census 2020: Reminder to everyone to fill out the 2020 Census!**

- ✦ Board Member Joyce Thompson: I called Rebecca A. Brodeur inquiring about arranging for the mobile unit to be placed here in town either by the Town Hall or by the Fire House. I am also calling Gallatin and Livingston to see if they would like to join in with us.

5. **LL #1-2020 Appointed Highway Superintendent: Supervisor Ryan Skoda does the Town Boar any further comments, question of concerns, as there are none let proceed with the review of the Environmental Assessment Form, we have no impact of the environment I need a motion for a Negative Declaration of SEQRA.**

- ✦ **SEQRA:** Board Member Joyce Thompson motioned a Negative Declaration of SEQRA, seconded by Board Member Linda Swartz.

**Approved**

**5 Aye (Ryan, Elizabeth, Joyce, Kara, Linda)**  
**0 Nays**  
**0 Absent**

- ✦ **Enactment of LL 1-2020 Abolishing the Elective Office of Town Highway Superintendent and creating the appointive Office of the Town Highway Superintendent:** Board Member Linda Swartz motioned to approve Local Law 1 -2020 Abolishing the Elective Office of Town Highway Superintendent and creating the appointive Office of the Town Highway Superintendent, seconded by Board Member Elizabeth Craig.

**Approved**

**5 Aye (Ryan, Elizabeth, Joyce, Kara, Linda)**  
**0 Nays**  
**0 Absent**

**New Business:**

1. **October 2020 Calendar:** Board Member Elizabeth Craig moved to accept the October 2020 calendar with additions, seconded by Board Member Linda Swartz.

**Approved**

**5 Aye (Ryan, Elizabeth, Joyce, Kara, Linda)**  
**0 Nays**  
**0 Absent**

1. **Justice Court Assistance Program:** Clerk Rogers: Beverly Reiner-Baillargeon, Court Clerk, gave me the form from the Justice Assistance Program to request reimbursement for personal protective equipment (PPE). The town can be reimbursed up to a \$1,000.00 for the purchasing of PPE for the court. I am asking for permission to proceed with purchasing the equipment needed to protect the court personnel. All Board Members agreed.



Inge Dobelis  
Debbie Colgrove

Joanne Klein  
Andrew Howard

Bill Hilscher

Ray Colgrove

Audience via Zoom:

Susan Raymond  
Tony LaSalvia

Donay Queenan

Polly Horton