

**Minutes**  
**February 20, 2014 (rescheduled meeting)**  
 Workshop 6pm  
 General Meeting 6:30 pm

1. CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE TO FLAG (AT 6:00 start)
2. ROLL CALL

	PRESENT	ABSENT	LATE
Supervisor John C. Reilly	x		
Councilmember Donald Coons	x		
Councilmember Jeffery Galm	x		
Councilmember Eric Mortenson	x		
Councilmember John Fraser Paterson	x		

**MONTHLY THOUGHT:** I have a total irreverence for anything connected with society except that which makes the roads safer, the beer stronger, the food cheaper and the old men and old women warmer in the winter.... **Brendan Behan (Irish Poet and writer)**

On a motion by Councilman Mortenson seconded by Councilman Paterson and carried unanimously an executive session to discuss the employment record of a certain person was called at 6:05pm. On a motion by Councilman Paterson seconded by Councilman Mortenson and carried unanimously, executive session was closed at 6:20. The board returned to the Road Issue Workshop.

**3. WORKSHOP: Road Issues.** Over the last several years, the Town has run into numerous issues about private versus Town road delineation and the exact boundaries of both, as well as the status of several roads built in subdivisions prior to the zoning regulations adopted by the Town. Tonight's workshop will focus on procedure for properly abandoning parts of roads not clearly marked as private and establishing the exact boundaries of Town roads. The Town attorney will advise the Board on the potential use of Special taxing districts to those affected residents and the road voting guidelines for such a district at the March 2014 meeting as necessary. The Town Highway Superintendent will advise the board of the availability of NY State "chips" money for such projects

In particular the Board will look at the following road issues:

1. Near Rd East County removed bridge 2/10 miles  
The North side shared by two property owners. No house.  
The South side access to one non full time house, another driveway to property.

The board discussed sect 205b disuse for this road. If the road has not be plowed or maintained for 6 years it would fall under a certificate of abandonment. The road needs to be removed from inventory if it is not maintained.

2. Green Hill Rd 1.13 miles long only a portion maintained w/oil and stone. Delineate end of Town road past three current houses.  
Look in certificate of abandonment for this road.
3. Crock Rd .31 maintained. Dirt road to one home.  
Look in certificate of abandonment for this road.
4. Briggs Rd .04 miles. Currently a dirt road to two homes.  
Keep this road as is.
5. Selva Rd .21 miles/.03 Maintained Dirt road to one home.  
Owner to be contacted on the possible abandonment of this road.
6. Old Rt. 82.  
No action.

The Board is also looking to clarify the procedure for adoption of certain private roads that can meet Town specs through resident funding or special tax district to road residents only and which would qualify as future CHIPS projects with State funding.

The Roads under review by request of the residents:

1. Hoefffer Rd
2. Brookside Rd
3. Blackberry Hill Rd.

Board will ask Town Counsel for:

- A. Specific procedure for Town to take over private road. Step by step.
- B. Procedure to Abandon Town Road;

- 1) Abandon Road with one home on entire Road.
- 2) Abandon Road with no Homes.
- 3) Abandon Road that has not been maintained in 20+ years.

The board discussed holding certain existing dirt roads to a different level of the Town specs. The subdivision land owners would then improve the road and dedicate it to the Town using the specific spec set for the road. One option would be for the Town to bond the costs for the improvements and assess the costs back to the land owners. The board will investigate if CHIPS funding can be used on these roads to reduce the cost of improving them.

**Resolution 2014-35: The Town Board resolves to take the following actions regarding the abandonment of certain roads:**

On a motion by Councilman Galm seconded by Councilman Mortenson and carried unanimously the board recommends town attorney Replansky and Highway Superintendent Gomm to proceed with Near Road East, Green Hill Rd and Crock Rd, as described in these minutes.

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**START OF GENERAL MEETING**

**4. NEW BUSINESS SECTION February 2014**

1. **Resolution 2014-36.** Motion to accept contribution from Board for the money necessary to equip the Town Hall with a Keurig Coffee Maker.

**VOTE   5   (Yes)/  0   (No) Motion Councilman Paterson second Councilman Mortenson.**

2. **Resolution 2014-37.** Motion to form a Town Committee for the purpose of collecting, preserving and permanently displaying artifacts of Gallatin History in a space with Town Hall and to make a video history of Town figures. Digital copies of the artifacts and the video histories will be made available on the Town Hall public computer station to be created. The Committee is to be chaired by Adolpho and Anne Fecci. Committee members will include town Historian, Delores Weaver as well as Paul Weaver and Elaine Levy and Larry Brody, to start, with other members welcome.

**VOTE   5   (Yes)/  0   (No) Motion Councilman Mortenson  
second Councilman Coons**

Adolpho Fecci will record the video but needs a microphone at a cost of 200-300 dollars. The board requested a proposal from the committee for the microphone purchase.

3. **Resolution 2014-38.** Motion to move forward with legal documents to purchase the three-acre Columbia County owned parcel in the middle of the Gallatin owned 20+ acre landfill parcel. Councilman Eric Mortensen to present offer to County Attorney and Chairman and of Board of Supervisors for approval to sell parcel to Town for one dollar. Further, the town will order a title search on the Town parcel to ascertain survey results.

**VOTE   5   (Yes)/  0   (No) Motion Councilman  
Mortenson second Councilman Galm**

Update of Access to Roe Jan Trail: The DEC and Columbia Land Conservancy will be contacted about the process of removal of the methane pipes.

4. **Resolution 2014-39.** Motion to purchase a new laptop with applicable software to match the Court purchased computers at the Courthouse. The existing laptop is a 2007-based laptop and no longer functions with newer applications. Second, to purchase a new Board desktop to replace the current Supervisor desktop that is also antiquated. Budget line item by Town Bookkeeper for each item:

Court Laptop- Under \$1,000  
Board Computer – On Hold  
Assessor Desktop-Get a price for upgrade of Windows XP

**VOTE   5   (Yes)/  0   (No) Motion Councilman  
Mortenson second Councilman Paterson.**

5. **Resolution 2014-40.** Motion to set 2014 conference/training at the Federal Reimbursement rate for the destination city.

**VOTE   5   (Yes)/  0   (No) Motion Councilman Galm  
second Councilman Paterson**

6. **Resolution 2014-41.** Motion to switch Town Electric Accounts to Viridian Green energy- following the County lead. Councilman Mortenson to present recommendations.

**VOTE \_4\_\_\_ (Yes)/\_0\_\_\_ (No) 1 abstention Motion Councilman Paterson second Supervisor Reilly. Councilman Galm abstain.**

7. **Resolution 2014-42.** Motion to RFP for proposals to install Solar panels on town Buildings to include at least the Town Highway Garage. Grant and Town residual cost estimates to be included in the RFP due May 1, 2014. Draft RFP will be reviewed at the March meeting. The RFP will be reviewed by the Town Engineer before publication.

**VOTE -5-(Yes)/-0-(No) Motion Councilman Paterson second Councilman Mortenson**

8. **Resolution 2014-43.** Motion for Supervisor to authorize the switch of Town payroll services and quarterly tax filings to Paychex at a cost of approximately \$81 dollars a month starting in March 2014. Supervisor and Town Clerk will appeal the 2013 fines for missed tax filings and to change all addresses and financial matters to the current Supervisor as Chief Financial Officer for the Town.

**VOTE \_\_5\_\_\_ (Yes)/\_0\_\_\_ (No) Motion Councilman Mortenson second Councilman Paterson.**

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5. **MONTHLY BUSINESS SECTION**

- 1 Review of January Minutes for Errors/Clarifications
- 2 January Bill Review of Non-Reoccurring items

**Resolution 2014-44: Motion to accept minutes and pay bills for January 2014.**

<b>General Fund #12-39</b>	<b>\$14,097.97</b>
<b>Highway Fund #2-17</b>	<b>\$36,130.69</b>

**VOTE \_5\_\_\_ (Yes)/\_0\_\_\_ (No) Motion Supervisor Reilly second Councilman Galm**

3. Supervisor's Review of County Items- Airport- The review of the Airport purchase of easements and ROW ongoing. The owner Carmine Nero to relook at the County purchase of portions of the golf course.  
Pine Haven- Supervisor Reilly is on the new committee to review Pine Haven.  
STAR/Sharing and tax proposals by Governor (Article Attached)
4. Review of Planning Board Actions –filed.
5. Review of ZBA-no report.
6. Comments of Code Enforcement Officer On a motion by Councilman Mortenson seconded by Councilman Galm Code Enforcement officer Drew Weaver will attend the April conference at a cost of \$150 plus mileage. Report filed.
7. Assessor Comment's, filed.
8. Court Actions/Comments, no report.
9. Town Clerk Report, filed.
10. Dog Controller Officer Q&A Councilman Mortenson questioned Dog Control Office Jim Rielly about his accessibility to address complaints. Jim explained that he responds to his messages as quickly as he can. Most of the dog issues are in the Elizaville area. He will look into splitting coverage with another dog control officer if he can't respond in a timely manner.

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**6. PRESENTATION BY ASA WIRELESS ON RURAL PILOT PROGRAM**

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**7. OLD BUSINESS SECTION 2014**

1. **Review of 2013/2014 Financial Condition.** Confirmation of estimated 2013 reserve balance in General/Highway. The Town Board resolves to re-open the 2014 Budget for purposes for restating certain items, to designate surplus earmarks and appoint John Reilly and the Town attorney to draft an investment plan for Board review in MARCH 2014.

**CONFIRMATION OF 2013 final numbers- Presentation by Town Bookkeeper at March meeting.**

**2. Town Hall Building Restoration/Systems:** Presentation and Discussion. **Fraser Patterson to update with ideas and drawings. Fraser Patterson to present idea of working with neighboring Blackburn parcel to flatten town hall parcel, install drainage and green space and allow resident to build berm on adjoining private land.** The Town Board resolves to appoint Drew Weaver, (with a stipend to be determined if appropriate), to review the Town Hall for restoration of the School House features and for efficiency guidelines on the office set-up and for general review of building condition and major system assessment for capital reserves purposes. Drew Weaver will also review the Highway Department building for the same recommendation regarding equipment shelters and systems. Any approved projects will come only from contributed funds if legally possible and existing fund balances and will not impact taxing levels. Fraser Paterson to act as Board Liaison to Project. John Reilly to act as Contributions Liaison in accordance with Town attorney direction regarding contributions to public buildings restoration. Lisa Deleeuw to review grants guidelines and opportunities.

\*Drew Weaver commented that the Schoolhouse portion of the Town hall dates back to the early 1900's and is not as old as many of the schoolhouses in the area.

\* Matt Blackburn has volunteered his services to flatten out the property surrounding the Town Hall to expand the green space. He will take the extra fill in return for his services.

\* A donation committee will be formed to pay for restoration of the Town hall.

**3. Assessors' Project: Presentation and Discussion.** The Town Board resolves to appoint Rene Deleeuw, (with a stipend to be determined if appropriate), to review any Town personal and real property assets for current valuation and to provide guidance on same to include, but no be limited to the old Town Highway Building and the Roe Jan Kill parcel. In addition Rene will work with the Town Highway Superintendent to establish proper assessment of Town Equipment standards and lifespan for the Highway Superintendents Board report on equipment needs. Update on Old Garage DEC status.

Ongoing.

**4. Public Computer Access: Presentation and Discussion** The Town Board resolves to purchase 1-2 computers (or use existing Town equipment) out of current reserve funds and set-up a computer station at the Town Hall by the end of 2014 for use by Town residents for links to libraries and other resources when Town Hall is open. The computers will also provide local business links and video files on the history of Gallatin and its farmers, authors, artists, artisans of all types and farms, vistas, houses and other

noteworthy items for perusal by prospective residents, students and other interested parties. The computer station will attempt to use current copier resources and ASA wireless system. **Town to purchase windows based PC. Supervisor to donate a Mac based desktop.**

\*On going. The Town public computers will have software to control access to certain websites.

**5. Highway Department Technology Issues:** The Town Board will provide the highway office with working Internet service and computer resources for proper bidding, planning and emergency systems monitoring. Councilmen Donald Coons and Jeff Galm will meet with the Highway Superintendent to advise the Board on needs. Any funding to come from current Highway reserves and not future tax dollars.

\*On going.

**6. Board Report on Town Retirement and Health Benefits Programs:** Lisa Deleeuw and John Reilly to review current Town retirement benefits and employees health insurance and to provide the Board guidance on same to include recommendation on additions, modification of current benefits by March 2014. **Employee policy handbook- New Lebanon.**

\*On going.

**7. Website update and resident email lists.** Link local businesses and libraries. Impact of Nextdoor.com

\*On going.

**8. GIS, Gallatin Geological Information System.** To provide town with software mapping ability to properly delineate roads, enforce codes, track signage and culvert ages. GIS will help Town Government; Fire districts and Road maintenance sharing under Governors proposed plan. GIS training program.

Councilman Paterson discussed the purchase of ESRI software to provide the ability to create maps that will aid the building inspector, assessor and highway superintendent. Training would be conducted by Chris Lobrutto. Councilman Paterson will report back to the board at the March meeting with more details of the purchase.

9. On a motion by Councilman Mortenson seconded by Councilman Paterson, Supervisor Reilly will apply for a debit card from First Niagara Bank.

Vote 5 yes 0 no.

10. Supervisor Reilly will contact the Columbia County Treasurer concerning if the Copake Rescue Squad fees are covered by County chargeback.



**PUBLIC COMMENT ON OLD BUSINESS- No additional comment.**

**MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT**

\*\*\* THE BOARD ASKS YOU TO PLEASE LIMIT ALL COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS TO THE PUBLIC COMMENT PORTION OF THE MEETING ONLY. ABUSIVE LANGUAGE OR PERSONAL DEROGATORY STATEMENTS WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.

THANK YOU IN ADVANCE FOR YOUR COOPERATION,

GALLATIN TOWN BOARD  
GALLATIN TOWN CLERK

## **Towns on the spot**

Cuomo ties homeowner tax relief to cap, shared services by localities

*By Nina Schutzman of the Poughkeepsie Journal*

Homeowners' eligibility for certain tax rebates soon could be linked to their local government's performance, if Gov. Andrew Cuomo's state budget proposals are approved.

In Dutchess County, the average homeowner pays \$4,600 in property taxes and has a home assessed at \$327,000, the state Citizen Connects website says.

The \$137 billion state budget focuses on tax reform, government consolidation and educational initiatives. Other plans call for tax relief for manufacturers, but those in Dutchess wouldn't be eligible for the rebate under the proposal, since they pay the Metropolitan Transportation Authority tax.

In 2011, Cuomo and the state Legislature enacted a property-tax cap. It limits a tax district's portion of the budget funded by property taxes — or levy — to an increase of 2 percent a year or the inflation rate, whichever is less. Since then, local officials have cut jobs, programs and other spending to come in under the wire.

This year, the cap was set at 1.66 percent.

But Cuomo said local governments need to do more to curb expenses.

New York's high property taxes are due partly to its nearly 10,500 local governments, Cuomo said. Proposals include \$39 million in grants to encourage municipal consolidations, regional services and tax credits for eligible homeowners, businesses, manufacturers and renters.

"When you hear people complain, they complain about the property tax," Cuomo said in his budget proposal presentation.

To promote consolidation, one proposal is a five-year tax-reform plan that links a homeowner's ability to get rebates to a local government's willingness to share services and stay below the tax cap. It starts with a two-year property-tax freeze.

In year one, homeowners could get tax credits if their local governments stay within the tax cap. In the second year, local governments would need to stay within the cap and have a plan to consolidate services and save money.

In years three through five, the locality would need to save a small combined percentage of its levy.

The state would pick up the cost of the tax-levy freeze — \$400 million in the first year and \$976 million in the second. Homeowners in participating localities would get a rebate check of \$350 to \$500, starting with their school-tax bills this fall, officials said.

If the goals aren't met, the state could take the money back.

"What does freezing property taxes do to our educational system?" said John Lumia, a Wappingers Central School District board member. "Unless school mandates are reduced or totally funded, we will see more of a decline in our public education."

A proposal to reduce manufacturers' tax burden is drawing criticism in Dutchess, a county that would be ineligible for the break since the credit is allowed only to regions not paying MTA taxes.

"That's scary," Town of Wappinger Supervisor Barbara Gutzler said. "What's to stop someone from going right across the bridge to Ulster (County) ... what would it do to Dutchess?"

Town of Fishkill Supervisor Bob LaColla said he's optimistic the state will "take a look at how to expand that (program)," which Cuomo said will give 21,000 manufacturing firms \$136 million in relief; there's also a proposed corporate income-tax rate of zero percent outside MTA tax regions.

"There's a fear some businesses will pick up and move," LaColla said. "That doesn't help the state overall, and we feel the governor shares that sentiment."

Officials working to balance budgets and homeowners struggling to pay taxes had different thoughts on a potential property-tax freeze.

Property taxes are a major revenue source for local governments, which also face rising pension and health care costs. This year, the Town of Wappinger's total budget was \$15.3 million with a tax levy of \$7.9 million. It stayed under the cap at 1.65 percent.

In general, consolidation efforts could mean layoffs and an increase in unemployment, Gutzler said.

Town of Wappinger resident Joe Torres said the tax cap forces local governments to be responsible and accountable for their actions.

"By consolidating services, one or more of the municipalities will probably have to relinquish some control over that part of their budget," Torres said. "They will also likely have to account for their sometimes inexplicable spending."

Dutchess County Executive Marc Molinaro has called shared services "the best path forward" and prompted consolidation in 2013 with the Dutchess County Municipal Consolidation and Shared Services grant program, funded with \$2 million in sales-tax revenue. It funds projects designed to increase efficiency or share services between localities.

A \$200,000 Dutchess County Municipal Consolidation and Shared Services grant went to the towns of Poughkeepsie and Wappinger and Village of Wappingers Falls for energy-efficiency upgrades at the Tri-Muni Waste Water Treatment System. Parts of both towns and all of the village use the plant.

"This was an opportunity where we could share the project," Wappingers Falls Mayor Matt Alexander said.

The village moved the court, zoning office and village hall into one building, enabling them "to share services," he said.

"We're trying to go through our budget and find places where we can not only stay stable, but come up with decrease ... but it's hard to keep doing

that over and over,” he said.

#### **Additional Facts:**

#### **STEPS FOR TAX REBATES**

Below are the steps municipalities would need to take for residents to get tax rebates.

Year one: Local governments would need to stay within the 2 percent tax cap.

Year two: Local governments would need to stay within the cap and have a plan to consolidate services and save money.

Years three through five: Local governments would need to save a small combined percentage of their levy.

Result: If local governments meet these requirements, homeowners would get a rebate check of \$350 to \$500, starting with school-tax bills this fall.