

October 21, 2025 Town Board Meeting

Meeting minutes

CALL TO ORDER/ PLEDGE TO FLAG

Supervisor Reilly called to order the October 21, 2025 Gallatin Town Board meeting at 6:30 PM. All present stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Supervisor John C. Reilly - Present Council-member Jeff Jorve - Present Council-member Sara McGhee - Present Council-member Michael Moran - Present Council-member Dan Quinn - Present

NEW BUSINESS SECTION 2025

Resolution 38-2025: Standard Workday Resolution for inclusion into NYSLRS

Supervisor Reilly presented a Standard Workday Resolution for Madeleine Defoe, court clerk, for inclusion into the retirement system. The standard workday was established as 6 hours with an average of 7.5 hours per week (approximately 35 hours per month) with monthly pay frequency.

Motion to approve Resolution 38-2025 made by Council-member McGhee, seconded by Council-member Moran. Motion carried unanimously.

Resolution 39-2025: Pro-Housing Community Resolution

Supervisor Reilly invited Chris Brown, housing representative, to give an overview of the Pro-Housing Community Resolution. Mr. Brown explained that the Pro-Housing Certified Communities program was launched by the governor's office about a year and a half ago as an incentive program that rewards communities making progress toward easier housing development. The program unlocks access to approximately \$750 million worth of state funding programs.

Mr. Brown clarified that there are two paths to certification: either achieving a growth target of one-third of one percent increase in housing units over the past three years or adopting the resolution before the board. Gallatin missed the growth target by exactly one housing unit, making this resolution necessary. He emphasized that the language in the resolution is not binding in any way and does not require changes to zoning or building permitting processes.

After the resolution discussion, Supervisor Reilly and Mr. Brown discussed a 2.5-acre town-owned parcel that could potentially be developed for affordable housing. Mr. Brown suggested the Community Land Trust (CLT) might be a good partner for this project, explaining that CLTs separate land ownership from building ownership through 99-year ground leases and include resale restrictions to maintain affordability. He noted that the town would need to address zoning to allow for potentially 3-4 senior cottages on the site.

Supervisor Reilly then read the Pro-Housing Community Resolution which commits the town to steps including streamlining permitting, adopting policies that affirm fair housing, incorporating regional housing needs into planning decisions, increasing development capacity for residential uses, and encouraging a range of housing development options.

Motion to approve Resolution 39-2025 made by Council-member Moran, seconded by Council-member McGhee. Motion carried unanimously.

Resolution 40-2025: Climate Smart Communities Pledge

Supervisor Reilly noted that Gallatin was named a Bronze Certified Climate Smart Community. He read Resolution 40-2025, which recognized the town's previous Climate Smart Communities pledge from February 2025 and its recent bronze certification. The resolution committed the town to partnering with Cornell Cooperative Extension of Columbia and Greene Counties to develop a webpage addressing climate change emergencies and hosting up to 12 social media posts to inform residents of this resource.

Motion to approve Resolution 40-2025 made by Council-member McGhee, seconded by Council-member Moran. Motion carried unanimously.

Resolution 41-2025: 2025 Hazard Mitigation Plan

Supervisor Reilly presented Resolution 41-2025, adopting the June 2025 Columbia County Hazard Mitigation Plan. The resolution recognized the threat natural hazards pose to people and property and acknowledged that the county plan identifies mitigation goals and actions to reduce or eliminate long-term risks from future hazards and disasters.

Motion to approve Resolution 41-2025 made by Council-member Jorve, seconded by Council-member Moran. Motion carried unanimously.

Resolution 42-2025: Public Hearing Open for Review of 2025 Budget

Supervisor Reilly opened the public hearing on the 2026 town budget.

Motion to open the public hearing made by Council-member Quinn, seconded by Council-member Moran. Motion carried unanimously.

Supervisor Reilly explained that the budget includes a 5% raise for all town employees, including highway staff and town hall staff. He noted that planning and zoning board members' compensation would increase to \$50 per meeting and the chairman to \$75 per meeting, amounts that had not been raised in at least 15 years. The budget also includes raising the Board of Assessment Review hourly rate to \$25 and deputy clerks to \$30 per hour. The budget contemplates a new highway superintendent at \$65,000. Town Board salaries would increase to \$3,000.

Supervisor Reilly explained that the budget includes an additional \$175,000 for road repair to make up for CHIPS money previously allocated to plow purchases. Highway Superintendent Gomm confirmed this would allow the highway department to address about 4-5 miles of road instead of the planned 3 miles.

During public comments, resident Benjamin Maron asked whether some of the additional highway funds could be devoted to private roads. Supervisor Reilly and Highway Superintendent Gomm explained that tax dollars cannot be used on private roads, but the town could explore clarifying what would be required to bring private roads up to standard for potential town adoption.

Tara Silberberg asked if there could be funds for the CAC to complete the Natural Resources Inventory. The CAC felt there're needed to be more work than the consultant provided.

Supervisor Reilly also reviewed the town's financial position, noting current bank reserves of approximately \$2.82 million, with additional funds expected from CHIPS, sales tax, court income, and a Greenway grant. After expected expenditures, the town would have approximately \$3.2 million in total reserves.

From these reserves, Supervisor Reilly proposed allocating: \$200,000 for cash flow; \$350,000 toward a new plow; \$500,000 toward town hall rehabilitation; \$40,000 for zoning attorney fees; \$308,000 to pay off the retirement penalty; \$426,000 for bond repayment; \$175,000 for roads; \$175,000 for a 58% tax reduction for 2026; and \$59,100 for reassessment in 2028 or 2029.

Resolution 43-2025: Close Public Hearing

After receiving no further public comment, Supervisor Reilly closed the public hearing.

Motion to close the public hearing made by Council-member Jorve, seconded by Council-member Moran. Motion carried unanimously.

Resolution 44-2025: Approve 2026 Town Budget

Motion to approve the 2026 Town Budget made by Council-member McGhee, seconded by Council-member Moran. Motion carried unanimously.

Clean Up Day Reminder

Highway Superintendent Jack reminded everyone about Clean Up Day scheduled for November 1st from 8 AM to 12 PM.

Formally Set Joint Meeting for Zoning Review November 18, 2025 at 5pm

Supervisor Reilly proposed setting the joint meeting for zoning review before the next town board meeting on November 18, 2025, at 5 PM. The zoning draft would be distributed at least 10 days before the meeting. The joint meeting would include ZBA, CAC, Planning Board, and Town Board members, with Zoom availability for those who couldn't attend in person.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON NEW BUSINESS

No additional public comments were received.

MONTHLY BUSINESS SECTION

Review of September 2025 Minutes for Errors/Clarifications Resolution 45-2025

Supervisor Reilly noted that the minutes had been reviewed. Motion to approve the September 2025 meeting minutes made by Council-member Moran seconded Councilmember McGhee. Motion carried unanimously.

Bill Review of Non-Recurring Items Resolution 46-2025

Motion to approve the bills made by Councilmember Quinn second by Councilmember Moran. . Motion carried unanimously.

General Fund	142-154	\$4,946.15
Highway Fund	99-109	\$11,532.73

Acceptance of Monthly Financial Report Resolution 47-2025

Financial reports for September 2025 were presented for approval.

Motion to approve the September 2025 monthly financial reports made by Council-member Moran seconded Councilmember McGhee. Motion carried unanimously.

Highway Superintendent Comments/Report

Highway Superintendent Jack Gomm reported that the highway department had replaced an 12' x 60' culvert pipe on Taghkanic Rd. and was working on the last round of roadside maintenance. They will be paving a section of Silvernails Road between County Route 7 and Gallatinville Rd. Road. He mentioned he would be attending a mid-build meeting for the new truck next Tuesday, and they hoped to have the truck by December 1st. He noted that his last day of employment would be December 30, 2025, with retirement effective December 31, 2025.

Comments of Code Enforcement Officer

Code Enforcement Officer Jake Exline reported a relatively slow month with four permits issued: a porch, a single-family residence (the first new house of the year), and a garage replacement. He reported 53 total permits for the year, 9 certificates of occupancy issued, 3 CO searches, and 12 site inspections performed.

Clerk Reports

The Town Clerk reported \$1,106 in building permit renewals, \$15 in postage, \$31.64 in public notices, \$300 in certified copies, \$225 in CO searches, \$7,750 in building permits, \$150 in planning board approval applications, \$250 in recreation fees, and \$101.50 in dog license fees.

Assessor Comments

Assessor Rene DeLeeuw noted that the state is requiring a full property reevaluation, which is now scheduled for 2029, approximately 8-10 years since the last evaluation. He hoped the housing market might stabilize by then, noting that small houses in Gallatin that were \$250,000 fifteen years ago were now selling for \$850,000 to \$1,100,000.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON OLD BUSINESS

No additional public comments were received.

MEETING ADJOURNED BY RESOLUTION OF THE GALLATIN TOWN BOARD

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 PM.

Motion to adjourn made by Council-member Moran, seconded by Council-member Quinn. Motion carried unanimously.