

## **TOWN BOARD MEETING – JANUARY 21, 2026**

The Town Board Meeting was held on Wednesday, January 21, 2026 at 7:00 p.m. at the Frank D. Greco Multi-Purpose Building located at the corner of Market and Robinson Streets in the Village of Saugerties. The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance with the following members present:

Councilmember Bill Barr  
Councilmember Leeanne Thornton  
Councilmember Mike Ivino  
Councilmember Stephanie Bassler  
Supervisor Fred Costello

### **PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD:**

Jo Cicale – experienced an unfortunate situation with the police department, Ryan Hampel was harassing and intimidating and denied her the right to free speech; detective never should have called her house. The police department needs to be looked at regarding policy and more training.

Martin Steingesser – read a poem about battery storage

Deborah Sanchez – concerned about battery storage unit, Elm Street project, Winston Farm and zoning issues. New to the area and don't know a lot about these projects.

Michael Corvin – wondering about necessity of this in our community, we deserve to be here over this plant.

Christine Johnson – concerned about battery storage, it is not worth the risk and brings no benefit to Saugerties.

Dia Mansbach – (requested not to be videoed but it is a public meeting) being overburdened by projects and very concerned about battery project. We will not let this happen.

Lauren Piperno – recent resident, in favor of progress but not in favor of no safety regulations; would like to feel safe.

Eric Delmar – battery storage presents many dangers.

Supervisor Costello interjected at this point to say that there are a number of factors that brought us to this point; NYSERDA has met regarding new fire codes, it is not a surprise that they picked this area; trying to curtail greenhouse emissions, technology is rampant and trying to educate as best we can. A presentation will be available on the website from NYSERDA.

Regarding Winston Farm, the final draft is being developed.

Elizabeth Reece – failure of TV23 to post town board meetings, basic function has not been met, the town is responsible for keeping public informed; dialog is being controlled and not given to the general public.

Cheryl Donahue – against battery storage, need more than a volunteer fire department, dangerous, toxic chemicals

Stephen Shafer – full moratorium is not necessary, could be bad to prolong a decision, the town board should start deliberating.

Elizabeth Strum – supports exploration of battery storage, solar farms are not enough. Keep moving it forward, keep learning toward a sustainable NYS; safety features are improving every year.

Skip Arthur – reiterate open space on Town of Saugerties Comprehensive Plan, 73% open space as a part of a PPD.

Janet Asiain – supports CAC 100% on open space, Winston Farm is the piece of planet we can save

Marc Brodtkin – need to recapture who we are, are we all self-absorbed; lack of appreciation should not be who we are.

Patrick Sheehan – we will see more of these in the future since in 2019 the Governor signed legislation. At some point batteries will be obsolete, we are going to lose home rule.

Technology is changing; 100% opposed to battery storage and it will impact property values.

Tonya Triberto – tired of being scared of air that we are breathing; needs better regulation with storage and better communication.

Tim Scott – do we already have enough energy? Safety and cost is continuing to change, we need to follow protocol.

#### **SUPERVISOR’S COMMENTS:**

Public comment has been helpful tonight, thank you to all who spoke.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Motion made by Supervisor Costello, seconded by Councilmember Thornton to approve the minutes of the Organizational Meeting on January 7, 2026, carried.

#### **APPROVAL OF BILLS:**

Motion made by Supervisor Costello, seconded by Councilmember Ivino to approve the bills as presented, carried.

General Fund	\$771,306.74
General Outside Village	52,781.98
Highway	260,003.69
Capital Projects	7,490.40
Ambulance District	137,331.08
Sewer O&M	127,811.03
Water O&M	14,665.07
Central Hudson	39,476.77

**DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS:**

Chief Swart – annual report is on file at the Town Clerk’s Office

Ray Mayone – another big storm is coming, clean up went well after the last storm

John Hanzl – two water main breaks have been repaired

**BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

Councilmember Barr – CAC is working hard to get up to speed regarding battery storage plant

Councilmember Thornton – STAC met deadline for grant application; Bristol Beach and

Greenway Grant motion to approve going for it which is due January 31; Repair Café will be

held on February 7 at the Senior Center and on February 1 Boys & Girls Club will hold their

bowling fundraiser. Looking ahead to July 3 there will be a Food Truck Festival to benefit the Splashpad.

Councilmember Ivino – year-end report from the Animal Shelter is on file at the Town Clerk’s Office, a dedicated group of volunteers has raised around \$25,000.00 recently.

Councilmember Bassler – HUD has 127 active vouchers and vouchers/funds have been put on

hold by the federal government; Historian is working with HPC to restore blue/yellow historical

markers; met with Housing Advisory Committee, waiting for news on grant outcome, Arts

Commission meets next week and CPC meets in the near future.

**MOTIONS & RESOLUTIONS:**

Motion made by Councilmember Ivino, seconded by Councilmember Thornton to approve a pay rate of \$27.00 per hour for the following Building Department employee James Bruno, part time Building Inspector 1, effective January 1, 2026.

Vote: Adopted – 5 Yes

Motion made by Councilmember Bassler, seconded by Supervisor Costello to approve the resolution, as on file, regarding the reconstruction of the basketball court at Jaycee Field.

Discussion: Supervisor Costello is looking forward to seeing this through.

Vote: Adopted – 5 Yes

Motion made by Councilmember Barr, seconded by Councilmember Thornton to approve the resolution, as on file, regarding the Bristol Beach Trails Project.

Vote: Adopted – 5 Yes

Motion made by Councilmember Thornton, seconded by Supervisor Costello to accept the Retirement/resignation of George Wynkoop from the Highway Department, with his last day of employment being January 20, 2026.

Discussion: Supervisor Costello said we wish him the best.

Vote: Adopted – 5 Yes

Motion made by Supervisor Costello, seconded by Councilmember Barr authorizing Supervisor of Highways, Raymond Mayone to hire Victor Kosbia as a part time “as needed” plow driver for the Highway Department rate of pay of \$25.00 per hour effective immediately.

Vote: Adopted – 5 Yes

Motion made by Councilmember Ivino, seconded by Councilmember Bassler to add to the Ice Arena’s part time call out List Dwight Bonn at a rate of \$19.00/hour as per the recommendation of the Ice Arena Director and the Parks & Buildings Superintendent.

Vote: Adopted – 5 Yes

Motion made by Councilmember Bassler, seconded by Councilmember Barr to raise the hourly rate of school crossing guards from \$18.00 per hour to \$19.00 per hour, effective January 26, 2026.

Vote: Adopted – 5 Yes

Motion made by Councilmember Barr, seconded by Councilmember Thornton to hire Doreen Meyer as a part time School Crossing Guard at a pay rate of \$19.00 per hour, effective January 26, 2026.

Vote: Adopted – 5 Yes

Motion made by Councilmember Thornton, seconded by Supervisor Costello to hire Michael Yonta as a part time School Crossing Guard at a pay rate of \$19.00 per hour, effective January 26, 2026.

Vote: Adopted – 5 Yes

Motion made by Supervisor Costello, seconded by Councilmember Ivino to raise the hourly rate of the Discovery Clerk John Tremper from \$30.00 to \$32.00 per hour, effective January 26, 2026.

Discussion: Chief Swart added that this is a demanding job and he goes above and beyond.

Vote: Adopted – 5 Yes

Motion made by Councilmember Ivino, seconded by Councilmember Thornton to allow the Supervisor to sign a letter of support for Hudsonia to apply for a grant to do water quality monitoring throughout the Lower Esopus Corridor.

Vote: Adopted – 5 Yes

Motion made by Councilmember Bassler, seconded by Supervisor Costello to enter into Executive Session regarding the employment history of a particular person at 8:37 p.m., carried.

