



**Town Board Meeting  
April 7, 2022, 7:00 p.m.  
Via Videoconference**

**Present:** Supervisor Neil Bettez, Councilman Dan Torres, Councilwoman Esi Lewis, Councilwoman Julie Seyfert-Lillis, Councilwoman Alex Baer.

At 7:03 p.m. a motion was made by Supervisor Bettez to open the meeting. Seconded by Councilman Torres, all aye votes cast, motion carried.

**Agenda:**

A motion was made by Supervisor Bettez to adopt the agenda as written. Seconded by Councilman Torres, all aye votes cast, motion carried.

**Public Input:**

-Edgar Rodriguez thanked the Board for considering a set of questions submitted by the New Paltz Coalition for Safety and Wellbeing for the applicants for the Police Commission. He also requested the Town set up a Finance and Facilities Task Force.

-Tom Jelliffe thanked the Board for participating in No-Mow May and for posting the Police Commission resolution.

**Interviews for Police Commission:**

No applicants this evening.

**Resolution-NY/NJ Watershed Protection Act-H.R. 4677**

A motion was made by Supervisor Bettez to adopt the following resolution. Seconded by Councilman Torres, all aye votes cast, motion carried.

**WHEREAS**, New York Congressman Tonko has proposed the NY-NJ Watershed Protection Act, a unique federal investment program to authorize \$50 million of federal funds to protect and restore all watersheds, including the Hudson River Watershed, that flow into New York-New Jersey Harbor and

**WHEREAS**, The Act has unanimous support among the Hudson Valley’s Congressional delegation; and,  
**WHEREAS**, the Act would provide benefits to diverse stakeholders such as the protection of fisheries and wildlife, conservation of natural resources and public and private lands, critical urban greenspaces, ocean and coastal resources, and various opportunities to improve the quality of life for community members throughout the region; and

**WHEREAS**, the Town of New Paltz is part of the most densely populated and economically important regions in the country, the proposed NY-NJ Watershed Act will provide enormous economic and environmental benefits locally, regionally and nationally; and

**WHEREAS**, watersheds provide drinking water, tourism and outdoor recreation, economic opportunities, as well as sustain fisheries, critical wildlife and provide vital infrastructure from flooding and rising sea levels; and

**WHEREAS**, the Act would provide matching funds to achieve the goals of New York State Department of Environmental Conservation’s Hudson River Estuary Program, a state program that has greatly benefitted Hudson Valley communities; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Act would fund shoreline management and restoration within the watersheds,

**WHEREAS**, as an elected body tasked with protection and safeguarding irreplaceable water-connected resources and nature-based flood hazard mitigation measures that are essential to protect human life and infrastructure; and

**WHEREAS**, this Act would direct the Secretary of the Interior to enhance collaboration and coordinate restoration activities at all levels of government to protect fish and wildlife habitats, endangered species, improve water quality, increase public access to the estuary, mitigate flood risks, and develop public outreach and educational activities; and

**WHEREAS**, many residents of the region of the NY-NJ Watershed live in communities lacking environmental justice, where access to and enjoyment of fish, wildlife, clean water, and other natural resources have been impaired or compromised, federal funding is necessary to mitigate these long overdue environmental and social issues; and

**WHEREAS**, the Town of New Paltz would benefit from the Act as it would establish beneficial programs and award grants to help fund valuable restoration projects in our local community; and

**WHEREAS**, the Town of New Paltz is a cornerstone in which its residents depend on and the region relies on for its resources to provide prosperity throughout the state, therefore, the Town of New Paltz must uphold its duty to protect the community’s access to drinking water and natural resources; and

**WHEREAS**, the Town of New Paltz has an opportunity to be a social and environmental leader of the state, by supporting the NY-NJ Watershed Protection Act, we may lead by example and facilitate much needed change;

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Town Board of the Town of New Paltz supports the passing of the NY-NJ Watershed Protection Act.

**Resolution-No-Mow May:**

A motion was made by Supervisor Bettez to authorize spending up to \$125 from the Clean Energies Community Grant for lawn signs and to adopt the following resolution. Seconded by Councilman Torres, all aye votes cast, Supervisor Bettez abstained. Motion carried.

**WHEREAS**, the Town of New Paltz wishes to expand pollinator-friendly habitat on public and private land, encouraging the community to adopt sustainable pollinator-friendly land management practices, and;  
**WHEREAS**, the Town of New Paltz is in a unique position to significantly increase pollinator-friendly habitat by encouraging pollinator-friendly lawn-care practices and by asking its citizens to take direct and meaningful action on their own properties, and

**WHEREAS**, ideal pollinator-friendly habitat is comprised of mostly native wildflowers, grasses, vines, shrubs, and trees blooming in succession throughout the growing season, is free or nearly free of pesticides, is comprised of undisturbed spaces including leaf and brush piles, un-mown fields or field margins; and provides connectivity between habitat areas to support pollinator movement and resilience; and  
**WHEREAS**, the formative period for establishment of pollinator and other insect species, and the many songbirds and other urban wildlife species which depend upon them, occurs in late spring and early summer when they emerge from dormancy and require flowering plants as crucial foraging habitat; and these opportunities are dramatically reduced with early spring leaf-litter removal and grass-mowing;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Town of New Paltz recognizes No-Mow May to actively promote and educate the community about the critical period of pollinator emergence, generation of crucial pollinator-supporting habitat and early spring foraging opportunities, and;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that for the duration of the month of May, the Town of New Paltz shall voluntarily delay lawn-care practices until June, allowing pollinator species to emerge and early flowering grasses and flowers to establish, and encourages homeowners to do the same and; that during the month of May, the Town of New Paltz shall not issue citations for excessive weed growth.

**Proclamation declaring May 2022 as Mental Health Awareness Month:**

A motion was made by Supervisor Bettez to proclaim May 2022 as Mental Health Awareness Month. Seconded by Councilman Torres, all aye votes cast, motion carried.

**WHEREAS**, mental health is essential to the well being and the vitality of our families, businesses, and communities; and

**WHEREAS**, mental health conditions are real and prevalent in our nation with 1 out of 5 Americans and 1 out of 5 children affected by mental illness.

**WHEREAS**, more people die from suicide in the United States than from traffic accidents and an estimated 22 veterans die from suicide each day.

**WHEREAS**, stigma and fear of discrimination keep many who would benefit from mental health services from seeking help; and

**WHEREAS**, with effective treatment those individuals with mental health conditions can recover and lead full, productive lives; and

**WHEREAS**, education, compassion, and awareness about mental illness can change negative attitudes and behaviors toward people with mental illness.

**WHEREAS**, each business, school, government agency, law enforcement agency, healthcare provider, organization and citizen shares the responsibility to promote mental wellness and support prevention efforts.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, The Town of New Paltz does hereby proclaim the month of May 2022, as **MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH**.

As the Supervisor, I also call upon all Town of New Paltz citizens, government agencies, public and private institutions, businesses, and schools to recommit our community to increasing awareness and understanding of mental illnesses, reducing stigma and discrimination, and promoting appropriate and accessible services for all individuals.

**Resolution of the Village and Town Boards Approving the New Paltz 2017 Community-Wide Greenhouse Gas Inventory, Reduction Targets, and Frequency of Inventory:**

A motion was made by Supervisor Bettez to adopt the following resolution. Seconded by Councilman Torres, all aye votes cast, motion carried.

**WHEREAS**, The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) which is a United Nations body for assessing the science related to climate change, has published the "*Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability*". Contribution of Working Group II to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. The report clearly states Climate Resilient Development is already challenging at current warming levels. It will become more limited if global warming exceeds 1.5°C (2.7°F). In some regions it will be impossible if global warming exceeds 2°C (3.6°F). This key finding underlines the urgency for climate action, focusing on equity and justice. Adequate funding, technology transfer, political commitment and partnership lead to more effective climate change adaptation and emissions reductions.

**WHEREAS**, The IPCC states that climate change is a threat to human well-being and the health of the planet. According to the new report, it requires urgent and far-reaching actions and fundamental changes in all

aspects of human life to increase people's and nature's ability to cope with, and respond to, climate change. IPCC recommends strategies that can increase the resilience of people and nature. One key to success is acknowledging climate, biodiversity, and human society as a coupled system, meaning that all components are interlinked. If we change one of them, it will affect the other two as well. Based on this recognition, conservation and climate change responses would be planned and implemented hand in hand – not only locally, but across landscapes, in cities as well as in rural areas, across sectors, state and country borders. **WHEREAS**, The IPCC states that we also know that impacts will continue to increase if drastic cuts in greenhouse gas emissions are further delayed – affecting the lives of today's children tomorrow and those of their children much more than ours. But science is also clear: with immediate action now, drastic impacts can still be prevented.

**WHEREAS**, The Shawangunk Ridge is one of New York's most iconic landscape features and one of the highest priority areas for biodiversity conservation in the northeastern United States according to the New York State Open Space Conservation Plan. The Nature Conservancy has designated the Shawangunk ridge as one of the Earth's "Last Great Places." It is also identified as a top priority in the Town of New Paltz Open Space Plan, noted for its unique geology and ecological Significance and will be impacted by Climate Change.

**WHEREAS**, On July 18, 2019, the New York State Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (Climate Act) was signed into law. New York State's Climate Act is among the most ambitious climate laws in the world and requires New York to reduce economy-wide greenhouse gas emissions 40 percent by 2030 and no less than 85 percent by 2050 from 1990 levels. The law creates a Climate Action Council charged with developing a scoping plan of recommendations to meet these targets and place New York on a path toward carbon neutrality and on September 17th, 2019, Ulster County approved Resolution No. 315 "Establishing A Policy Regarding Ulster County's Use Of Renewable Energy" resolved to decrease greenhouse gas emissions associated with its operations by 25% by the year 2025 and 80% by the year 2050 using the County's 2012 greenhouse gas emission inventory as a baseline.

**WHEREAS**, The Local Government for Sustainability (ICLEI) prescribed in the Global Protocol for Community-scale GHG Emissions (GPC) and Local Government Operations (LGO) Protocol the standards and tools we need to measure our emissions, build more effective emissions reduction strategies, set measurable and more ambitious emission reduction goals, and to track their progress more accurately and comprehensively.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, That the Town and Village of New Paltz approves the presentation and document of the "New Paltz NY 2017 Inventory of Community-wide Greenhouse Gas Emissions" as our baseline and will utilize it as a reference for ongoing decision making and efforts to reduce our Greenhouse Gas emissions.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that no later than 30 days after passage of this Resolution, shall update Town and Village websites with the approved document and presentation of the "New Paltz NY 2017 Inventory of Community-wide Greenhouse Gas Emissions" for raising the awareness of the New Paltz Residents, Businesses, and Organizations within our community

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Town and Village of New Paltz is committed to decrease greenhouse gas emissions associated with its operations (Community and Government) by 40% by the year 2030 and 80% by the year 2050 using the 2017 baseline greenhouse gas emission.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, That the Climate Smart Community Task Force, in collaboration with the resources and staff of the Town and Village, shall reinventory the Community and Government of New Paltz on a frequency of no less than every 5 years to assess our progress of reducing Greenhouse Gas emissions against the targets.

#### **Consent Agenda:**

A motion was made by Supervisor Bettez to approve and/or authorize the following as part of the consent agenda. Seconded by Councilman Torres, all aye votes cast, motion carried.

- a. Approval of Minutes: Police Commission March 17, 2022; Town Board March 17, 2022
- b. Approval of new meeting date for Zoning Board of Appeals: 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of the month, 7:00 pm
- c. Approval of new meeting date for Environmental Conservation Board: 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of the month, 7:30 pm
- d. Approval for NAMI Mid-Hudson to put up ribbons during the weekend of April 30th and remove them no later than June 1st, 2022
- e. Authorization to hire Sean Benkert, Logan Pece, and Kobe Wulfmeyer as seasonal laborers for Moriello Pool at the rate of \$14.00 per hour, from April 9, 2022 through May 21, 2022

#### **Authorization to issue water refund:**

A motion was made by Supervisor Bettez to authorize to issue a refund in the amount of \$100 to the previous owner of 52 N. Manheim Blvd, account #68-0 due to an overpayment. Seconded by Councilman Torres, all aye votes cast, motion carried.

**Authorization to expend funds:**

A motion was made by Supervisor Bettez to authorize the expenditure of up to \$8,000.00 of parkland funding for dirt for the Fields at Clearwater Park. Seconded by Councilman Torres, all aye votes cast, motion carried.

**Toshiba Copier-Highway Department:**

A motion was made by Supervisor Bettez to authorize the purchase of the existing copier and service contract. Seconded by Councilman Torres, all aye votes cast, motion carried.

**Executive Session:**

At 7:21 p.m. a motion was made by Supervisor Bettez to go into executive session to discuss personnel. Seconded by Councilman Torres, all aye votes cast, motion carried.

At 7:30 p.m. a motion was made by Supervisor Bettez to come out of executive session. Seconded by Councilman Torres, all aye votes cast, motion carried.

A motion was made by Supervisor Bettez to authorize Payroll to accrue benefits at a full-time rate for Diann Lee while she is working 40 hours per week. Seconded by Councilman Torres, all aye votes cast, motion carried.

7:31 p.m. Pledge

At 7:31 p.m. p.m. a motion was made by Supervisor Bettez to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Councilman Torres, all aye votes cast, motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rosanna Rosenkranse  
Town Clerk