

**TOWN OF SARATOGA TOWN BOARD**  
**DRAFT MEETING MINUTES**  
**12 SPRING ST., SCHUYLERVILLE, NY**  
**February 10, 2025**  
**7:00 P.M.**

Supervisor Ian Murray opened the meeting with the pledge of allegiance at 7:28 p.m.

**Roll call:** Town Clerk Michelle Conover, called the roll: Supervisor Ian Murray - present, Councilman Michael McLoughlin – present, Councilwoman Ruth Drumm – absent, Councilman Gary Squires – present, Councilwoman Maxine Lautenberg – absent.

**Also present:** Deputy Town Clerk Emilee M. Jones, Building Inspector/Zoning Officer Gil Albert and other interested persons.

**Recognitions/Presentations/ Bid openings/Public Hearings: None**

**Approval of Minutes:** A motion was made by Councilmember Michael McLoughlin and seconded by Councilmember Gary Squires, **to accept the minutes of the January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025 Regular Town Board meeting as written.** Supervisor Ian Murray- aye, Councilman Michael McLoughlin – aye, Councilwoman Ruth Drumm – absent, Councilman Gary Squires - aye, Councilwoman Maxine Lautenberg - absent.

**Carried 3 –0**

**Town Clerk’s report for January 2025:** Fees paid to the NYS Dept. of Agriculture and Markets for the Animal Population Control Program \$51.00. Fees paid to New York D.E.C. for hunting and fishing licenses \$0. Fees paid to the New York State Health Department for Marriage licenses \$0. Dog license fees to Supervisor Ian Murray \$230.00. Clerk fees to Supervisor Ian Murray \$110.00. Total State and Local Revenues received were \$391.00.

**Zoning Officer’s report for January 2025:** 4 Building Permits, 14 Building Inspections, 5 Certificates of Occupancy, 0 Junkyard Permits, 1 Complaints, 0 Fire Inspections, 0 Order to Remedy, 4 misc., 10 Building Permit Renewals and 0 Property Maintenance Inspections. A check for \$2,485.00 was given to Supervisor Ian Murray.

**Dog Control officer’s report for January 2025:** Ed Cross, Dog Control Officer answered 10 complaints, took 0 dogs to the shelter, 2 bite cases, traveled 20 miles, issued 7 warnings and 0 summons’ were issued.

**Town Court report for January 2025:** 37 Traffic tickets closed, 3 Criminal/penal law case closed, 3 Civil cases closed, 0 DWI cases closed, 0 Encon/DEC closed, 0 Town and Dog cases closed. Supervisor Ian Murray received a check from Justice John McCarron in the amount of \$3,260.00, a check from Justice Charles Sherman in the amount of \$170.00, for a total of \$3,430.00.

**Tax Collector’s report for January 2025:** As of February 12, 2025, 80% of taxes have been collected, with a total to date of \$3,448,414.37. 1,737 mailed in their payments, 204 made payments on-line and 694 payments were made by wire transfer.

### **Historians Annual Report for 2024:**

Summary: The Town Historian is obligated to inform the Supervisor, County Historian, and State Historian of the condition of the Town's historical collection and local historical activities. The annual report focuses on the office's efforts in research and writing, teaching and public presentations, historic preservation, organization, advocacy, and tourism promotion. Overview: 2024 was a year of remarkable progress, collaboration, and leadership in advancing the preservation and promotion of our region's history. Our partnership with the Saratoga County 250th American Revolution Commission, where I serve as Vice Chair, has been a cornerstone of these efforts. Collaborations with the Town of Stillwater and the broader regional initiatives underscore our commitment to honoring the rich Revolutionary War heritage of the area. Key achievements include:

- **Historical Collection Preservation:** The Town's historical collection remains in excellent condition, safeguarded in a facility free from flooding and environmental risks.
- **Leadership and Outreach:** Active participation in the Saratoga County 250th American Revolution Commission, the Town of Saratoga and Stillwater 250th American Revolution Committee, and trusteeship at the Saratoga County History Center at Brookside Museum have broadened our reach and influence.
- **Regional and National Advocacy:** Collaboration with Congresswoman Elise Stefanik on the Maurice D. Hinchey Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area Enhancement Act resulted in bipartisan passage in the House. This initiative aims to expand the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area to include all of Washington and Saratoga Counties, a milestone that highlights the importance of our shared history on a national scale. I still continue to serve on the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor Commission and advocate for the Champlain Canal while providing my knowledge and expertise across the State.

Through these efforts, we continue to build partnerships that strengthen historical preservation, foster community engagement, and promote economic growth through heritage tourism

Historical Publication: Connecting with the public remains a top priority, and online platforms have significantly amplified the reach of historical narratives. "The Schuyler House: A Tale of Destruction and Rebirth" was published in *Saratoga Today* and the *NY History Almanac*, ensuring a broad regional audience engaged with this compelling story. Additionally, the expansion of online efforts has been a game-changer.

The Historian's blog, linked to the Town webpage, continues to be a cornerstone of outreach. Over the past decade, the blog has accumulated over 121,000 views, showcasing more than 1,360 posts. In 2023 alone, the blog attracted 7,600 visitors and generated 11,600 views, underscoring its enduring appeal and effectiveness in reaching diverse audiences.

The office also manages active accounts on X (formerly Twitter), Instagram, Facebook, Threads, and Bluesky, directing communications to both local and national audiences. This year, a special Facebook group was launched to encourage reenactors to put the 250th reenactment on their calendars, fostering early engagement with this significant event.

The launch of a Substack platform introduced unique stories published in November and December, creating another avenue to engage readers with fresh, exclusive content. Combined with the blog's consistent performance and the reach of our social media platforms, these efforts highlight the office's commitment to making history accessible and engaging to the public, both within our community and across the nation.

Historical Research: This year, the office has prioritized research centered on the American Revolution, with a focus on two pivotal events: the Knox Artillery Train to Boston and the Battles of Saratoga. These efforts highlight the strategic importance of the region and the sacrifices made by those who shaped the Revolution.

In collaboration with the Saratoga County History Center, we are also contributing to a publication on African Americans in Saratoga County. This project explores the critical roles of Black individuals at the Battles of Saratoga, their connections to the Underground Railroad, and the intersections with Quaker abolitionist efforts. Additionally, the research examines Frederick Douglass's impactful visit to the county, reflecting on his legacy in the fight for freedom and equality.

These initiatives aim to deepen public understanding of Saratoga County's vital place in Revolutionary War history and the ongoing struggle for liberty and justice.

Public Lectures/Presentations: This year, I delivered several notable presentations and keynote addresses that highlighted Saratoga's rich historical legacy and engaged diverse audiences:

Keynote Presentation: Delivered the keynote at the Annual Conference of New York Superior Court Justices at the Gideon Putnam Hotel, sharing insights on Saratoga's historical significance.

- Saint Isaac Jogues: Presented on the life and legacy of Saint Isaac Jogues to the Galway Preservation Society.
- Battles of Saratoga: Spoke on the lead-up to the Battles of Saratoga for both Heritage Hunters and the Old Saratoga Historical Society, connecting regional audiences to the pivotal events of 1777.
- Saratoga 250 Updates: Provided updates on the Saratoga 250 Commission's progress and future plans to the Malta Rotary and Mechanicville Chamber of Commerce at their annual meetings.

These presentations reflect a continued commitment to engaging the public with Saratoga's history, fostering dialogue, and building awareness around the Semiquincentennial and beyond.

Conference/Workshops Attended: This year provided unique opportunities to engage in professional development and advocacy, making a meaningful impact while promoting heritage tourism:

- I Love NY Summit on the 250th of the American Revolution: Collaborated with Saratoga 250 at this important summit, focused on planning and promoting the Semiquincentennial and enhancing regional tourism initiatives. We brought a bus full of tourism professionals and I Love NY staff to Schuylerville.
- Congressional Testimony: In June, I had the honor of testifying before Congress on the Maurice D. Hinchey Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area Enhancement Act. The experience was both inspiring and productive, featuring a gracious and insightful meeting with the congresswoman and her staff in her historic office. Following the testimony, I participated in a remarkable tour of the Capitol, including a visit to the iconic dome.
- Exploring Washington, D.C.: While in the nation's capital, I visited several significant historic sites, including the National Museum of African American History and Culture and the vibrant Smithsonian Folklife Festival on the National Mall.

These experiences not only advanced my professional knowledge but also deepened my understanding of the intersection between history, advocacy, and tourism promotion.

Tourism Projects: Collaboration has been at the heart of this year's tourism promotion efforts, with significant advancements in establishing Saratoga as a premier destination for Revolutionary War heritage tourism.

### **America's Turning Point Heritage Center**

The most transformative project this year has been the development of America's Turning Point Heritage Center at the Champlain Canal Region Gateway Visitor Center in Schuylerville. Located in the heart of the Siege Battlefield—the site of the British and German troops' surrender in 1777—this facility embodies Saratoga's pivotal role in the American Revolution. Saratoga County signed a five-year lease for the site in September 2024.

The County Historian's office, under the leadership of Lauren Roberts and her staff, has undertaken the heaviest lifting on this project, while I have played a key support and review role, particularly with the recently awarded \$200,000 American Battlefield Grant. This grant focuses on creating engaging, visitor-centered experiences that highlight the region's Revolutionary War legacy.

Visitors will be introduced to prominent historical figures identified in the 2022 Scoping Grant and guided to local sites and storylines that most resonate with their interests. Interactive exhibits, including a projection table and augmented reality features, will provide layered perspectives on the Saratoga Campaign of 1777. These stories will amplify voices often overlooked, including Royalist Americans, enslaved individuals, Indigenous peoples, women, and soldiers from diverse backgrounds.

### **Lady Acland Pocket Park**

Adjacent to the Empire State Trail and Hudson River, the Lady Acland Pocket Park at the Town of Saratoga Boat Launch offers another immersive experience. This site honors Lady Harriet Acland's journey to care for her wounded husband, Major John Dyke Acland, after the Battle of Bemis Heights. Through augmented reality, visitors will accompany Lady Acland on her courageous crossing of enemy lines under a flag of truce, gaining insight into her bravery and the humanity that transcended wartime divisions.

### **Community Collaboration**

This year's collaborative efforts have enhanced Saratoga's historical storytelling and tourism potential:

- Path Through History Weekend: Partnered with County Historian Lauren Roberts to coordinate statewide events at key locations such as Saratoga National Historical Park, the Stillwater Blockhouse, and the Gateway Visitors Center.
- Surrender Day: Partnered with Saratoga 250 to plan and execute this October 17 event, commemorating the British surrender at Fort Hardy. Efforts included hosting five travel writers in collaboration with Discover Saratoga, showcasing the region's Revolutionary War heritage and local amenities. Supported the Saratoga 250 Committee organizing an event at the Spa Little Theater at SPAC.
- Town of Saratoga & Stillwater 250th Committee: Worked with the Stillwater Historian to establish a Semiquincentennial committee focused on events honoring the American Revolution.

- Women at War Symposium: Assisted Saratoga 250 with the Schuylerville American Legion as the location to host this May 4 symposium, which featured national and regional historians discussing women's contributions during the Revolution.
- Community Engagement: Participated in regional events such as the Turning Point Parade Festival, the Belmont Festival, and SPAC's "1812 Overture" concert, strengthening ties between history and modern cultural experiences.

Through collaboration, innovation, and strategic partnerships, these efforts are transforming Saratoga into a dynamic destination that connects visitors to its Revolutionary War legacy while supporting local communities.

Historic Preservation Projects: A key priority in historic preservation is the ongoing effort to expand the Maurice D. Hinchey Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area Enhancement Act. This initiative will bring federal expertise in historical preservation and heritage development to our region, ensuring that our community's unique historical narrative is preserved while aligning with broader regional and national preservation goals.

In Schuylerville, transformative changes are on the horizon. A quiet collaboration with the Village of Schuylerville's office has focused on preserving the remains of Fort Hardy, an integral site within the Siege of Saratoga. Efforts to enhance the site as both a recreational and cultural hub for the community are progressing steadily, with the NY Forward program providing the momentum to further these preservation goals. This collaboration marks an important step ward revitalizing Schuylerville while honoring its historical significance.

Appreciation: Acknowledgment is extended to Deputy Historian Patricia Peck, whose support has been instrumental amid time constraints due to full-time employment and expanded county and regional responsibilities. Gratitude is also expressed to Supervisors Murray, Town Clerks Conover and assistants Jones and McCabe, and the dedicated Town of Saratoga team. The collaborative spirit of the team, especially in the 250th anniversary projects, is recognized as a valuable asset.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sean Kelleher  
Historian

**Assessor's report January 2025:** No Report.

**Highway Superintendent's report for January 2025:**

- ❖ Cleared tree's & large branches from highways & right of way
- ❖ Repaired/replaced damaged or missing road signs throughout town
- ❖ Patched pot holes throughout town highways
- ❖ Removed snow & ice from town highways and parking lots
- ❖ Took holiday banners down in Village of Schuylerville
- ❖ Cleaned shop & equipment
- ❖ Multiple shop work projects completed
- ❖ Completed fabrication of V plow to push plate
- ❖ Replaced Gas tank straps Pick up #4
- ❖ Installed timbren suspension kit Pick up #3
- ❖ Refabricated gab handled Truck #9
- ❖ Plow repair completed on Truck #3

- ❖ Completed full services on Gradeall, Chipper, John Deere deck mower & Grader

**Supervisor's report:**

**SUPERVISOR'S REPORT JANUARY 2025**

**GENERAL FUND – TOWNWIDE (A FUND)**

Balance on hand 1/1/2025	\$ 288,429.48
Revenues	+1,696,409.02
Disbursements	-(157,355.40)
Balance 1/31/2025	\$1,827,483.10

**GENERAL FUND – OUTSIDE VILLAGE (B FUND)**

Balance on hand 1/1/2025	\$ 2,311,116.28
Revenues	+ 3,850.57
Disbursements	-(12,752.18)
Balance 1/31/2025	\$ 2,302,214.67

**HIGHWAY FUND – OUTSIDE VILLAGE (DB FUND)**

Balance on hand 1/1/2025	\$ 278,777.72
Revenues	+ 74.39
Disbursements	-(48,446.13)
Balance 1/31/2025	\$ 230,405.98

SCHUYLER PARK 1/31/2025	\$ 55,214.62
YOUTH RECREATION & SERVICE 1/31/2025	\$ 8,673.85
HIGHWAY EQUIPMENT RESERVE 1/31/2025	\$ 160,804.89
BUILDING RESERVE 1/31/2025	\$ 483,976.68
CDPHP & HRA 1/31/25	\$ 5,279.16
AHC HOME IMPROVEMENT 1/31/25	\$ 14,331.00
SCENIC BY WAYS QRTRLY 1/31/2025	\$ 312.41
PARKS RESERVE 1/31/2025	\$ 376,956.55
GFNB Certificate of Deposit 1/31/2025	\$ 813,726.60
NYCLASS 1/31/2025	\$ 789,701.78

**January 2025 Distribution - Sales Tax Received -\$145,454.00**

**January 2025 Distribution - Mortgage Tax Received – \$18,607.00**

**Public comments on agenda items:** None.

**Committee reports:**

**Landfill:** No report.

**Insurance:** No report.

**Youth:** No report.

**Park Committee:** No report.

**Office of Emergency Management (OEM):** No report.

**WEMS:** No report.

**Old Business:**

❖ **P.U.D. discussion:** Supervisor Murray asked Brandon Ferguson from Environmental Design Partnership who's legally representing the Peterson's on this P.U.D. project. Have you read the Town's P.U.D. regulations? Brandon replied yes.

Supervisor Murray stated that the Town of Saratoga Town Board will be lead agency on SEQRA for this project, once the application is accepted, the Town Board will send it to the Planning Board.

Supervisor Murray read the following statement, letter F from the Town's P.U.D. regulations: "The Planning Board shall approve, approve with modifications or disapprove such applications and shall report its findings to the Town Board within 62 days following the date of referral to the Planning Board. This period may be extended with the consent of the applicant."

Supervisor Murray stated the Planning Board is a good board, it may take a couple months to get through the application, possibly more than the 62 days allotted. This is a pretty involved application and they did a good job of packaging it. There may be some back and forth with questions on this application and Supervisor Murray wanted this to be known.

Supervisor Murray asked is any of Town Board members had any questions after looking at the application. None of the Town Board members had any questions at this time.

**Supervisor Murray then made a motion that we accept the Paterson Residence and Music Barn P.U.D. application and start the review process. Seconded by Councilmember Michael McLoughlin,** was adopted by vote: Supervisor Ian Murray- aye, Councilman Michael McLoughlin – aye, Councilwoman Ruth Drumm – absent, Councilman Gary Squires - aye, Councilwoman Maxine Lautenberg - absent.

**Carried 3 - 0**

**Supervisor Murray then made a motion that the Town Board appoint Libby Clark from the Libby Clark Law Firm, (Special Project Council), for the Paterson Residence and Music Barn P.U.D. application, Seconded by Councilmember Michael McLoughlin,** was adopted by vote: Supervisor Ian Murray- aye, Councilman Michael McLoughlin – aye, Councilwoman Ruth Drumm – absent, Councilman Gary Squires - aye, Councilwoman Maxine Lautenberg - absent.

**Carried 3 - 0**

**New Business:**

**Communications:** None

**Privilege of the floor:** No one addressed the board.

**Upcoming meetings:**

❖ Regular Town Board meeting – Monday, March 10th, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.

**Audit the Bills:** On a motion by Councilmember Gary Squires and seconded by Councilmember Michael McLoughlin, the following **Resolution #25-34 - Approving the Payment of Bills in Abstract 15G of 2024**, was adopted by vote: Supervisor Ian Murray- aye, Councilman Michael McLoughlin – aye, Councilwoman Ruth Drumm – absent, Councilman Gary Squires - aye, Councilwoman Maxine Lautenberg – absent.

**Carried 3– 0.**

**RESOLVED**, by the Town Board of the Town of Saratoga to authorize payment of the bills listed in **Abstract 15G of 2024 in the following amounts:**

<b>General Fund A</b>	<b>No. 872, 874 &amp; 876-880</b>	<b>\$ 6,376.53</b>
<b>General Fund B</b>	<b>No. 873 &amp; 881</b>	<b>\$ 4,345.67</b>
<b>General Fund HPO</b>	<b>No. 836</b>	<b>\$ <u>2,495.00</u></b>

**Grand Total \$ 13,217.20**

**Audit the Bills:** On a motion by Councilmember Michael McLoughlin and seconded by Councilmember Gary Squires, the following **Resolution #25-35 Approving the Payment of Bills in Abstract 2G of 2025**, was adopted by vote: Supervisor Ian Murray- aye, Councilman Michael McLoughlin – aye, Councilwoman Ruth Drumm – absent, Councilman Gary Squires - aye, Councilwoman Maxine Lautenberg - absent.

**Carried 3 - 0**

**RESOLVED**, by the Town Board of the Town of Saratoga to authorize payment of the bills listed in **Abstract 2G of 2025 in the following amounts:**

<b>General Fund DB</b>	<b>No. 41-53</b>	<b>\$ 21,180.21</b>
<b>General Fund A</b>	<b>No. 26, 39, 63-91</b>	<b>\$ 24,781.33</b>
<b>General Fund B</b>	<b>No. 55-62</b>	<b>\$ 10,294.66__</b>
<b>General Fund H</b>	<b>No. 40</b>	<b>\$ <u>25.15</u></b>

**Grand Total \$ 56,281.35**

A motion was made by Councilmember Michael McLoughlin and seconded by Councilmember Gary Squires to adjourn the meeting at 7:40 p.m. Supervisor Ian Murray - aye, Councilmember Michael McLoughlin – aye, Councilmember Ruth Drumm – absent, Councilmember Gary Squires - aye, Councilmember Maxine Lautenberg - absent.

**Carried 3– 0**

**Meeting Adjourned**

Respectfully Submitted,

Michelle Conover  
Town Clerk