

Summary
Rhinebeck Regular Town Board Meeting
Monday, March 10, 2025

For more information regarding this meeting's agenda and resolutions, go to Rhinebeck Town Government Agenda webpage at <https://ecode360.com/RH0960/documents/Agendas> . Scroll down and click on the **Town Board** meeting agenda for March 10, 2025.

Present: Deputy Supervisor Chauncey Walker
Councilperson Allan Scherr
Councilperson Chad Kleitsch
Councilperson Dana Peterson

Supervisor Spinzia was absent from this meeting.

Before Deputy Supervisor Walker began the meeting, he announced that the Board would adjourn for an executive session pursuant to a litigation matter. The matter is addressed on page 3 of this summary.

Announcements

Deputy Supervisor Walker announced that the Town of Rhinebeck Historical and Archeological Handbook will receive an award from the NYS Planning Federation Board on April 7th, acknowledging the handbook's contribution to historical preservation.

Resolutions

The Town Board (TB) addressed 12 resolutions, passing all 12 unanimously. Below is a summary of the major resolutions addressed and passed. Other resolutions addressed by the board may be viewed on the town's website as noted in the opening paragraph.

Resolution 2025-089 – Resolution Authorizing the Town of Rhinebeck to Enact Local Legislation Imposing an Occupancy Tax Within the Town.

The TB approved this resolution allowing the Town to impose an occupancy tax similar to those enacted by many other New York State municipalities by having the New York State Legislature authorize the Town to impose a 3% Occupancy Tax on hotels, motels and short-term rentals (STR's) utilized for stays of 30 days or less, effective at the earliest possible date. This tax would provide a much-needed source of revenue that will help improve the Town's roads, parks and public services without placing an additional burden on local residents. Enactment of this tax will commence once approved by the state legislature.

Resolution 2025-090 - Renewing Contract with Alta Planning & Design for "Amtrack to Village Trail" Feasibility Study.

According to Resolution 2020-146, the Town entered into contract with Alta Planning + Design, Inc. (“Alta”) for a trail feasibility study to link Rhinecliff and the Village and extended the contract by Resolution 2021-217 through October of 2022. Due to disruptions from the COVID Virus, there have been significant delays in finishing the study. As a result, the project is taking on a larger scale to satisfy revised NYS DOT guidelines (e.g., paths must now be 10 feet wide as opposed to 8 feet) which require additional public outreach and increased time to ready the project to file for grant monies.

The original project budget was \$42,818, of which \$23,941.96 has been spent and \$18,876.04 of the fee remains to be applied when work resumes. The revised cost for the project is now \$53,930. The anticipated project budget would need to be increased by \$35,053.96. The TB approved this resolution and authorized the Supervisor to sign any relevant paperwork.

Resolution 2025-091 – Community Choice Aggregate (CCA) Contract Extension.

Deputy Supervisor Walker announced that the TB received new information from Direct Energy which will prevent the TB from agreeing to the proposed, sort-term extension contract at this time. The TB agreed to move this matter to the March 24 TB meeting or at a Special TB meeting at a date to be announced.

Resolution 2025-092 – Appointment of Dog Control Officer and Deputy Dog Control Officer.

The TB approved the appointment of Leslie Hill as the new Dog Control Officer and Patricia Wind as Deputy Dog Control, both from 3/11/2025 to 12/31/2025, for a yearly prorated stipend of \$6,000 and either a Town-issued cell phone or partial cell phone reimbursement as established by the Town.

Resolution 2025-094 – Sign Language Services Agreement.

Deputy Supervisor Walker stated that the Town will provide sign language services for Town events and meetings if an interpreter is requested. Mid-Hudson Interpreter Services can provide this service on an as-needed basis at a cost of \$107 per (weeknight) hour with a 2-hour minimum.

It should be noted that if the public does request an interpreter, this request must be made to the Town Clerk at least two weeks in advance of the meeting to allow adequate time for Mid-Hudson Interpreter Services to provide the needed interpreter.

Discussion Items

Civil Suit - At the start of the meeting, the TB adjourned for the purpose of going into executive session. The following is a summary of that executive session discussion and background information bringing about the legal issue.

Town attorney, Warren Replansky, announced that the Town will be joining others in a civil suit (Article 78 Petition) at the Dutchess County Supreme Court against the Town of Hyde Park, the Town of Clinton and other possible respondents. The issue with this suit involves alleged violations of NYS Code, court decisions and SEQRA regulations by the respondents. According to Replansky, the resort involved in this suit would have detrimental impacts on the citizens of the

Towns of Rhinebeck, Clinton and Hyde Park. Once the suit is filed in the County Supreme Court, the parties and issues will be made public.

InterContinental Hotels Groups (IHG) has proposed building a luxury brand hotel/resort (40,000-square-foot spa, house-sized villas, a restaurant, several swimming pools and more) named Six Senses, located at 2450 Route 9G and Naylor Road in Towns of Clinton & Hyde Park. While most of the hotel/resort is located in the Town of Hyde Park, its entrance, located off Route 9G, is in the Town of Clinton.

For more information on this project's development background, master plan diagram, and opposition issues, go to Common Senses HV, Save Our Rural Towns website at <https://sites.google.com/view/stopsixsensesny/home> .

Workforce Housing Project Issue - Deb Hecht, a member of the Town's Communications Committee, along with a local resident, brought up an issue that was raised at the recent community forum at the Morton Library regarding what happens to a tenant should his or her income increase beyond the eligibility requirement(s). Will that tenant be evicted? While Mr. Replansky stated that this matter has not been addressed by the Town, it will be at a later date. Councilperson Peterson read an email provided by Kearney Developers that addressed this issue. According to the email:

- The program requires each tenant to be income-certified, which includes verifying his/her income and assets.
- After the initial certification, tenants are recertified every year to ascertain if they continue to be income-eligible for the unit they occupy. If a tenant's income increases to a level that exceeds the maximum income for that unit, the tenant will be certified to a higher income unit and will pay the higher rent associated with that unit. Their lower income bracket (unit) will then be made available to an existing tenant whose income may have decreased or possibly to a new move-in from the waitlist.
- This is referred to as the "Next available unit" rule. If a tenant's income increases to a point that is 140% above the county median income level, then the tenant will be notified that he/she will be charged the "Market Rate" for that unit.

Hillside Fire Station Closure and Need for Volunteers - Hecht also discussed the question raised at the community forum regarding the issue of the Hillside Fire Station upcoming closure due to decreased number of volunteers, and whether or not the Village's fire department is experiencing the same. She explained that at the recent village candidates' forum, sponsored by the Rhinebeck Democrats Club, Mayor Bassett expressed that the Village's fire department is well staffed, with volunteers from all age levels, and there no threat of closure or reduced services.

The next TB meeting will be held on Monday, March 24, 2025 at 6:00 PM.