

Town Board Meeting
Thursday
June 11, 2026
7:00pm

This meeting is being held "in-person" in Town Hall. The access information for the meeting has been posted and there are members of the public present virtually.

Members Present: Supervisor Wolf, Councilperson Gansowski, Councilperson Gabaccia, Councilperson Morningstar, and Councilperson Haight

Present: Town Clerk Lynn DeRocha, Attorney Jonathon Tingley (*virtually*)

Call to Order

At 7:00pm, Supervisor Wolf calls the Town Board meeting to order. Supervisor Wolf opens the Town Board meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Supervisor Wolf mentions that this meeting is being held in person in Town Hall but we are allowing remote access. This meeting is being recorded and the recording will be posted online within five business days.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Councilperson Morningstar and seconded by Councilperson Haight to waive a further reading and accept the Minutes as written for the Town Board Meeting of Thursday, May 10, 2026, and the Special Town Board Meeting of Monday, June 1, 2026.

All in favor. Motion approved.

Announcements

The Mobile Food Panty will be on Friday, June 12th from 12pm until 3pm, at Our Lady of Hope Parish in Copake Falls

Registration for Summer Camp is underway. Registration is open until June 19th

The town has several boards that need members, the CAC, CEDAC, the Park Commission; as well as, the open clerk position in the ZBA

The Keeping Identities of Seniors Safe (K.I.S.S.) program runs from June 1st through June 12th, 9am until 3pm Monday-Thursday, Saturday, 9am until 12N

2026 Music in the Park begins on Saturday, June 20th, at 4:30pm, Christina Dellea; and at 6pm, Dusk til' Dawn, at the Copake Memorial Park; Music in the Park is scheduled for every Saturday through August 29th, the concession stand will be open; weather permitting

American Red Cross Blood Drive, Copake Memorial Park, Saturday, June 27th, 8am until 12N

Apple Pie Baking Contest, Saturday, July 4th, Copake Memorial Park; drop off pies between 5pm and 6pm; the winner will be announced during the Music in the Park Concert Series break

Copake Falls Day, July 18th, 10am until 4pm

Rock Around the Clock Block Party, Saturday, July 25th, 5pm until 8pm

Columbia County Household Hazardous Waste Collection Day Event, 50 Grandinetti Drive, Ghent, Saturday, October 10th, 8am until 12N

Correspondence

From-Columbia County Office for the Aging, needs volunteers

From-Columbia County Solid Waste Department, Household Hazardous Waste Collection Day, October 10th

From-Columbia County Department of Public Works, Public Notice regarding County Route 7A Reconstruction and Preservation

From-Roe Jan Ramble Organizing Committee, letter regarding the Roe Jan Ramble

From-NYSDOT, CHIPS and EWR Equipment Pre-approval Request Form

From-Bruce Blakeman, gubernatorial candidate, expressing opposition of solar farms

From-Holly Tanner, memo regarding Lee Zeldin, expressing opposition of solar farms

Supervisor's Report

We've just received an important indication that the long-awaited, much-delayed County Route 7A "Reconstruction and Preservation" project actually may begin in the spring of 2027.

Columbia County Department of Public Works (DPW) Commissioner Ray Jurkowski will convene a public hearing at 10:00am on Saturday, June 27 at Copake Town Hall. Pursuant to the NYS Eminent Domain Procedure Law, the purpose of the hearing will be to present the project's purpose and location, and to provide property descriptions and maps of the properties to be acquired. At the conclusion of the hearing, there will be a public informational open house to discuss the project. The county DPW will be seeking comments and suggestions from Copakeans at the informational open house. Oral and/or written statements are welcome.

You may recall that last year we completed the Main Street municipal parking lot. This was done in anticipation of the 7A project being undertaken this spring. Although the start date was ultimately pushed back a year, we now have both the Church Street and Main Street lots to provide parking for customers of Hamlet businesses during the project construction.

The project will result in resurfaced Church and Main Streets, new sidewalks, and has been designed to improve drainage issues in the Hamlet, which we anticipate will resolve basement flooding problems in homes along both sections of County Route 7A.

I want to thank the many volunteers who have contributed their efforts to this project. Members of the Roads Advisory and Historic Preservation Committees are developing a design for the community space upon which the Copake Memorial Clock will rest. The Roads Committee is working to identify decorative lighting, plantings, seating and bicycle racks to enhance the look and “feel” of the Hamlet.

Fingers crossed that the project will be undertaken next Spring!

Solar Update-May 2026

There has been no change in the status of Hecate Energy’s application before the New York State Office of Renewable Energy Siting and Energy Transmission (ORES) for a siting permit to construct a 42-megawatt utility-scale solar factory, which it calls “Shepherd’s Run.”

Pending before an Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) since mid-April is the town’s request to be granted party status in the matter, which would enable us to present evidence at an adjudicatory hearing about important unresolved issues, including flood protection and preservation of wetlands. We would demonstrate why the proposed facility site is inappropriate and why Hecate’s application should be rejected. As I’ve reported before, no “host community” has ever been granted party status by ORES. We deserve to be the first.

Last week, in a hearing conducted by the Commissioner of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, our U.S. Representative Josh Riley spoke out against Hecate for sourcing its solar panels from China, claiming that slave labor was used to manufacture them. He argued that beautiful, upstate New York farmland should not be covered with panels, and that they should go on brownfields and rooftops. The Agriculture Secretary said she would work with Representative Riley to defeat Shepherd’s Run. Then, a few days later, EPA Secretary Lee Zeldin came out against Shepherd’s Run as well.

Two days ago, the ALJ filed in the case record her emails with Hecate regarding wetlands. These were written in February, and we don’t know why they’ve just been filed. We may find out any day now.

Department Heads/Committee Reports

Highway Department

None

Conservation Advisory Committee

a. NYSERDA grant update

None

Public Forum

Lindsay LeBrecht, Copake Lake resident, addressed the board regarding safety concerns on Route 23, and urged federal-level intervention to assist the town in opposing the Shepherd's Run project.

New Business

a. Amended 284 Agreement

A motion was made by Councilperson Gabaccia and seconded by Councilperson Gansowski to accept the Amended 284 Agreement.

All in favor. Motion approved.

b. Approval of Colarusso bid for Park perimeter pathway

This will be handled in Resolutions

c. Lawsuit challenging provisions of RAPID Act

This has been tabled until the next Town Board meeting.

d. Roe Jan Ramble

A motion was made by Councilperson Gansowski and seconded by Councilperson Gabaccia to approve the date of September 19, 2026, as the date for the Roe Jan Ramble; and its designation as a town event.

All in favor. Motion approved.

Old Business

None

Resolutions

The board conducted a State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) assessment for the construction of a 3,500 linear foot perimeter walking path at Copake Memorial Park.

A motion was made by Councilperson Gabaccia and seconded by Councilperson Gansowski to approve Parts 1 and 2, of the SEQRA, determining that the project constitutes a minor addition and will not result in significant adverse environmental impacts.

All in favor. Motion approved.

A motion was made by Councilperson Morningstar and seconded by Councilperson Gansowski to approve Part 3 of the SEQRA.

All in favor. Motion approved.

TOWN OF COPAKE

RESOLUTION

Number 19 of June 11, 2026

To Accept the Bid Proposal of A. Colarusso & Son, Inc. to Construct a Walking Path at the Copake Memorial Park

WHEREAS, the Town of Copake desires to construct a walking path around the perimeter of Copake Memorial Park (the “Project”), and advertised for bids for the construction thereof; and

WHEREAS, in response thereto, the Town of Copake received three (3) bid proposals from qualified bidders; and

WHEREAS, the low bid of \$140,815.00 was received from A. Colarusso & Son, Inc. and the Town Board, based on its prior experiences with A. Colarusso & Son, Inc., deems such bidder to be responsible; and

WHEREAS, the Project is an Unlisted Action under the State Environmental Quality Review Act and the Town Board has reviewed the Part 1 of the Short Environmental Assessment Form for the Project as prepared by the Attorney for the Town and signed by the Supervisor; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board has reviewed and adopted Part 2 and Part 3 of the Short Environmental Assessment Form as prepared by the Attorney for the Town and has adopted a negative declaration under SEQRA for the Project, finding that the Project will not result in any significant adverse environmental impacts;

WHEREAS, the Town Board of the Town of Copake now wishes to accept the aforementioned low bid and to enter into a contract with A. Colarusso & Son, Inc. for construction of the Project; now, therefore,

It is hereby **RESOLVED**, that the Town Board determines that A. Colarusso & Son, Inc. is the lowest responsible bidder; and

It is hereby **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Town Board hereby accepts the bid of, and awards the contract for the Project to, A. Colarusso & Son, Inc. and hereby authorizes the Town Supervisor, on behalf of the Town of Copake, to enter into a contract with A. Colarusso & Son, Inc., in the amount of \$140,815.00, for the construction of Project.

Roll Call Vote The foregoing Resolution, offered by Councilperson Gabaccia, and seconded by Councilperson Morningstar, was duly put to a roll call vote as follows:

Resolution No. 19
Dated June 11, 2026
Copake, New York

Roll Call Vote:	Supervisor Wolf	yes
	Councilperson Gansowski	yes
	Councilperson Gabaccia	yes
	Councilperson Haight	yes
	Councilperson Morningstar	yes

Lynn DeRocha, Town Clerk

(seal)

June 11, 2026

Appointments

The Town Board agrees to continue to advertise for Summer Camp Counselors for the 2026 Summer Park Program.

The Town Board will continue to advertise for vacancies on the CAC, CEDAC, and the Park Commission.

The Town Board agrees to advertise for a clerk, a member vacancy, and an alternate member vacancy on the ZBA.

Budget-Approval of Budget to Actual Reports and agreement to post

a. Preliminary Budget to Actual Report-May 31, 2026

b. Agreement to post Budget to Actual Report

A motion was made by Councilperson Gabaccia and seconded by Councilperson Gansowski to approve and post the budget to actual report May 31, 2026.

All in favor. Motion approved

Councilpersons' Reports

Councilperson Morningstar previewed the upcoming "Rock on the Clock" event scheduled for July 25th, which will include a magician, car show, kids' activities, craft vendors, and potential bed races.

Councilperson Morningstar commended Tom Goldsworthy for six years of service as chair of the Cedar Power Commission, noting his contributions to town infrastructure projects, the town website, and business associations.

Councilperson Gabaccia reports that the Comprehensive Plan 2026 provided updates on the Conservation Advisory Committee, which is currently planning future events and interviewing a potential new member, and noted that the Historic Preservation committee did not meet.

The Comprehensive Plan 2026 and other members discussed a redevelopment proposal for the old school building, which, according to Councilperson Gansowski, a developer intends to convert into a health spa with hotel rooms, restaurants, and amenities. Councilperson Gabaccia noted that the project is currently awaiting a variance from the Zoning Board of Appeals before it can proceed to the Planning Board. The committee reviewed survey results and discussed proposed action steps, which are expected to be posted for public review shortly.

Councilperson Gansowski reports that the Park Commission did not have a quorum for their meeting.

Councilperson Gansowski attended the ZBA meeting, and wanted to mention that someone is interested in developing the Roe Jan School building.

Supervisor Wolf reports that he unable to attend the Comprehensive Plan Meeting, but will review the results of the surveys.

Public Forum

Sara Traberman, Taghkanic resident, asks Councilperson Gansowski to repeat his earlier comments regarding the possible development of the Roe Jan School.

Approval of Bills

Done

Executive Session

None

Next Meeting Date

Thursday, July 9, 2026, 7:00pm

Adjournment

A motion was made by Councilperson Gabaccia and seconded by Councilperson Haight to adjourn the meeting.

All in favor. Motion approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn M. DeRocha