Special Town Board Meeting
Wednesday
October 21, 2026
9:00am

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, Highway Superintendent William Gregory, Administrative Assistant Gwen Menshenfriend, and Town CPA Robert Patterson

Call to Order

At 9:00am, Supervisor Wolf calls the Special 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.

The purpose of this Special Town Board Meeting is to hold a budget hearing and to address two new resolutions.

Resolutions

TOWN OF COPAKE
RESOLUTION

No. 28 of October 21, 2026

A Resolution Reaffirming the Authorization of the Application to the Hudson River Valley Greenway Planning Grant Program for a Grant to Support the Establishment of a Community Preservation Fund

WHEREAS, Chapter 524 of the Laws of 2025, signed into law by Governor Hochul on November 21, 2025, authorizes the establishment of a Community Preservation Fund by the Copake Town Board to implement a plan for the preservation of community character by acquiring interests or rights in real property, and further authorizes the Town Board to impose a real estate transfer tax to purchase interests or rights in real property to preserve community character, and

WHEREAS, Chapter 524 of the Laws of 2025 delineates preservation of community character as including, but not limited to, preservation of: open space; predominantly viable agricultural land; lands of exceptional scenic value; freshwater marshes or other wetlands; forested land; and, historic places and properties listed on the New York State register of historic places, and

WHEREAS, the Copake Town Board wishes to establish a Community Preservation Plan for the preservation of community character by acquiring interests or rights in real property, and otherwise undertake efforts to preserve Copake's community character, and

WHEREAS, a grant from the Hudson River Valley Greenway Planning Grant Program would facilitate the creation of a Community Preservation Plan for the Town of Copake, and

WHEREAS, the Copake Town Board adopted Resolution No. 9 of April 9, 2026, authorizing the preparation and submission of an application to the Hudson River Valley Greenway Planning Grant Program for a grant to facilitate the establishment of a Community Preservation Plan for the Town of Copake, now, therefore

It is hereby **RESOLVED** that the Copake Town Board authorizes and reaffirms preparation and submission of such application to the Hudson River Valley Greenway Planning Grant Program for a grant to facilitate the establishment of a Community Preservation Plan for the Town of Copake.

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

Resolution No. 28
Dated: October 21, 2026
Copake, New York

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

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Lynn M. DeRocha, Town Clerk

(seal)

TOWN OF COPAKE
RESOLUTION

No. 29 of October 21, 2026

A Resolution Supporting Operation Green Light for Veterans 2026

WHEREAS, the residents of the Town of Copake have great respect, admiration, and the utmost gratitude for all the men and women who have selflessly served our country and this community in the Armed Forces; and

WHEREAS, the contributions and sacrifices of those who served in the Armed Forces have been vital in maintaining the freedoms and way of life enjoyed by our citizens; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Copake seeks to honor individuals who have made countless sacrifices for freedom by placing themselves in harm's way for the good of all; and

WHEREAS, veterans continue to serve our community in the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, religious groups, civil service, and as County Veterans Service Officers in 29 states to help fellow former service members access more than $52 billion in federal health, disability and compensation benefits each year; and

WHEREAS, approximately 200,000 service members transition to civilian communities annually; and

WHEREAS, active military service members transitioning from military service are at a high risk for suicide during their first year after military service; and

WHEREAS, the National Association of Counties encourages all counties, parishes and boroughs to recognize Operation Green Light for Veterans; and

WHEREAS, The Town of Copake appreciates the sacrifices of our United States military personnel and believes specific recognition should be granted;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, with designation as a Green Light for Veterans County, The Town of Copake hereby declares November 4-11, 2026, as a time to salute and honor the service and sacrifices of those transitioning from active service; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that in observance of Operation Green Light, The Town of Copake will display a green light in the Town Hall from Wednesday, November 4, 2026, through Wednesday, November 11, 2026; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town of Copake encourages its citizens in patriotic tradition to recognize the importance of honoring all those who made immeasurable sacrifices to preserve freedom by displaying green lights in a window of their place of business or residence from November 4-11, 2026.

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

Resolution No. 29
Dated October 21, 2026
Copake, New York

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

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Lynn M. DeRocha, Town Clerk

(seal)

October 21, 2026

Public Hearing

Supervisor Wolf opened the Public Hearing regarding the 2027 Preliminary Budget for the purpose of public comment.

Supervisor Wolf outlined the financial status and budget projections for 2027. The town continues to fund capital projects through fund balances rather than raising taxes or taking on debt. The town maintains a strong financial position, including approximately $2.6 million in unassigned fund balance and $5.7 million in total reserves. The budget includes salary increases of 3.5% for staff, along with adjustments to the salaries for the supervisor and council members. Major planned expenditures include the reconstruction of the basketball court. Supervisor Wolf noted potential variables, such as ongoing legal and engineering costs, while highlighting that sales tax revenue has remained high. Costs for fuel, salt, and insurance are rising, with insurance expected to increase by 11% to 12%. EMS funding, which was previously charged back, is now handled directly by the towns.

Public Comment

Town CPA Robert Patterson commented positively on managing capital projects without debt and without raising taxes.

A motion was made by Councilperson Morningstar and seconded by Councilperson Gabaccia to close the public hearing.

All in favor. Motion approved.

Adjournment

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

All in favor. Motion approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn M. DeRocha