

DRAFT- TOWN BOARD MEETING

Town of Ulysses

Jan. 28, 2025

The meeting was held in person at the Town Hall at 10 Elm St., Trumansburg NY as well as via Zoom videoconference. Notice of Town Board meetings are posted on the Town's website and Clerk's board.

*Video recordings of meetings are available on Youtube at
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCWVIs--q9CpHlxdk9YxZyPw>.*

CALL TO ORDER:

Ms. Olson called the meeting to order at 7pm.

ATTENDANCE:

TOWN OFFICIALS:

In person-

Supervisor- Katelin Olson

Board members- Mary Bouchard, Liz Weatherby, Michael Boggs

Town Clerk- Carissa Parlato

WSPPC (Water Source Protection Plan Committee) member & CSAC (Conservation & Sustainability Advisory Committee) chair- Roxanne Marino

WSPPC (Water Source Protection Plan Committee) chair- Linda Liddle

Absent-

Board member- Rich Goldman

OTHERS:

Nancy Cusumano, Jana Hexter, Maureen Shallish, Sigrid Pauen

Via Zoom-

Tyler Sherman, Alex Acuna, Chris Skawski & Jerry Sheng (Cornell Coop. Extension)

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Motion:

Mr. Boggs moved to approve with the amendment of removing the DPW presentation and the addition of the Highway Shared Service Agreement update. This was seconded by Ms. Weatherby and passed unanimously.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR (3 minutes per person):

Jana Hexter shared petitions to do traffic studies near Taughannock Park and the Black Diamond Trail due to concerns about the new parking area and a growing number of visitors to the area.

Ms. Olson said that the process for this is for the DPW Director/Highway Superintendent to approve, then the Town Board, the county, then NYS.

Nancy Cusumano added that she is concerned that since the new parking lot at Taughannock Park will be a paid one, people may park on road instead.

OLD BUSINESS:

A PROPOSED LOCAL LAW TO AMEND CHAPTER 174 REGARDING TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR VETERANS, SENIORS, AND DISABLED CITIZENS

Ms. Olson said that Tompkins County Assessment brought this to our attention and it has been quite a while since the income guidelines have been updated.

RESOLUTION #47 OF 2025: INTRODUCING A PROPOSED LOCAL LAW TO AMEND CHAPTER 174 REGARDING TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR VETERANS, SENIORS, AND DISABLED CITIZENS

WHEREAS, a local law entitled “A LOCAL LAW AMENDING CHAPTER 174 REGARDING TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR VETERANS, SENIORS, AND DISABLED CITIZENS” was introduced at this meeting, and

WHEREAS, the Town Board desires to hold a public hearing with respect to the adoption of said Local Law.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that a public hearing shall be held by the Town Board of the Town of Ulysses with respect to the adoption of the aforesaid Local Law on February 11, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. at Town Hall, 10 Elm Street, Trumansburg, New York; and it is further

RESOLVED, that the Town Clerk is hereby authorized and directed to cause public notice of said hearing to be given as provided by law.

Moved: Ms. Olson Seconded: Mr. Boggs

Olson	aye
Boggs	aye
Bouchard	aye
Goldman	absent
Weatherby	aye

Vote: 4-0

Date Adopted: 1/28/25

NYSERDA UPDATE

Ms. Marino shared a presentation highlighting the town hall and town barn solar panel production, noting that they are both still producing as expected (91-102% efficiency). She encouraged the board to use the NYSERDA grant money to install ground mount solar at the Town Barn property to offset usage at Town Hall. *See attached*

Mr. Boggs asked Mr. Skawski how he sees other municipalities handle the end of their solar lease contracts. Mr. Skawski said that we are one of the first to reach this point.

Ms. Olson noted that the attorney has found discrepancies in the contracts and will need to work on it more.

NEW BUSINESS:

HIGHWAY SHARED SERVICES AGRMT

RESOLUTION #48 OF 2025: APPROVAL TO SIGN UPDATED HIGHWAY SHARED SERVICES

Resolved that the Ulysses Town Board approves the updated shared services agreement originally approved at the Organizational Meeting, and

Further resolved that the Ulysses Town Board authorizes the Town Supervisor to approve

Moved: Ms. Olson

Seconded: Mr. Boggs

Olson aye

Boggs aye

Bouchard aye

Goldman absent

Weatherby aye

Vote: 4-0

Date Adopted: 1/28/25

AUDIT OF JUSTICE/COURT 2024 FINANCIAL YEAR

Ms. Olson said that the court has been very professionally managed and they do a great job. She noted that the NYS laws have reduced revenues in current years.

RESOLUTION #49 OF 2025: ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TOWN BOARD AUDIT OF 2024 JUSTICE COURT FINANCIALS

WHEREAS, NYS requires an annual audit of the finances of the Ulysses Town Justice Courts, either as an internal audit by Town Board members or by an auditing firm;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED that the Town of Ulysses Board acknowledges an internal audit of the Ulysses Justice Courts was completed by Town Board members Katelin Olson and Elizabeth Weatherby, on behalf of the Town Board, on January 17, 2025; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Town Clerk shall submit a certified copy of this resolution along with the results of the audit to the NYS Office of Court Administration.

Moved: Ms. Olson

Seconded: Mr. Boggs

Olson aye

Boggs aye

Bouchard aye

Goldman absent

Weatherby aye

Vote: 4-0

Date Adopted: 1/28/25

UPCOMING EVENTS

February 5- Comp Plan at 5:30pm

February 11 – Regular Town Board Meeting, 7pm @ Town Hall

February 25 – Regular Town Board Meeting, 7pm @ Town Hall

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

RESOLUTION #49 OF 2025: APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RESOLVED, that the Ulysses Town Board approve the meeting minutes as presented from January 14, 2025 regular meeting.

Moved: Ms. Olson

Seconded: Ms. Bouchard

Olson	aye
Boggs	aye
Bouchard	aye
Goldman	absent
Weatherby	aye

Vote: 4-0

Date Adopted: 1/28/25

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR (3 min limit per person):

Ms. Liddle gave an update on the WSPPC. The draft plan is in the works. They are collaborating with RCAP Solution and NYS DOH to create a public workshop in May.

Alex Acuna, Cold Springs Rd. residents, inquired about a land donation to the town.

Ms. Olson said the town was approached by a property owner last fall. The town authorized a survey to help determine whether it is a good idea. The town board will need to decide whether it is in the best interest of the public to move forward. No formal donation has been made at this time. The issue could be on the board's agenda in Feb.

ADJOURN:

Ms. Bouchard made a motion to adjourn at 7:58pm. This was seconded by Ms. Weatherby and passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by Carissa Parlato, Town Clerk
2/5/25

APPENDIX:

Major NYSERDA Clean Energy Communities program actions taken by the Town of Ulysses that have resulted in recent grant awards totaling \$160,000

- **Installed solar panels on Town Hall and Highway Barn roofs via lease agreement with Solar Liberty**
 - Panels online March 2013; current lease ends January 2026 or 2027 (contract ambiguity, being researched)
 - Annual generating capacity (estimated) of 23,560 kWh (Barn) and 20,176 kWh (Town Hall)
- **Continuously subscribed to a NYS documented 100% Renewable Energy electricity supplier since 2019**
- **Installed air source heat pumps and energy recovery ventilation system and LED lighting in Town Hall**
 - Installation completed and removed natural gas heating November 2020
 - Funded by previous NYSERDA CEC grant award of \$100,000
 - Annual Greenhouse Gas emission reduction of 29%
- **Completed Benchmarking (tracking and reporting) of annual energy use in municipal buildings**
 - Data from 2022 and 2023
 - Qualified for a no-cost building energy study, currently proceeding (Town Highway Barn)

Ulysses Town Board meeting, January 28, 2025

Prepared by Roxanne Marino, chairperson of the CSAC / CSC Task Force

Energy Benchmarking 2022 & 2023:

Net amount of electricity billed annually

This represents the amount of electricity purchased on annual average, above the solar generated and used onsite

Town Hall	25,000 kWh / yr
Town Highway Building	- 4,600 kWh / yr

Average over the 2 yrs of most recent Energy Benchmarking (2022 & 2023), from NYSEG bills
Negative number indicates more electricity generated than consumed on annual avg

Town Solar Installations Details:

Lease

- from Solar Liberty, signed December 2011
- Panels installed and fully online March 1, 2013
- Lease term is up January 2026 or 2027 (contract ambiguity, being researched)
- Town can negotiate terms for new lease, for purchase of panels, or have panels removed at Solar Liberty's cost

Annual production estimates from Lease documents

- ❖ Town Hall 20,176 kWh
- ❖ Town Highway Barn 23,560 kWh

Current average production from solar meter data

(multi-year data and averages)

- ❖ Town Hall 18,394 kWh (91.2% efficiency)
- ❖ Town Highway Barn 24,140 kWh (102% efficiency)

Solar panels typically decline in efficiency at 0.5-1% per year

Month	Estimated kWh
January	952
February	1217
March	2011
April	2488
May	3104
June	2984
July	3128
August	2710
September	2054
October	1424
November	748
December	740
Highway Barn total	23560

\$100,000 NYSERDA grant application for 25 kW of Solar Installation

“The Town of Ulysses is exploring the possibility of installing new solar generation to augment and/or replace existing aging equipment at the Highway facility and Town Hall. The town currently has 44KW of installed capacity across both buildings through a lease agreement with a third-party company and is nearing the end of the lease period. The intent will be to assess options for replacement of the existing panels at both sites, as well as assess installation of new capacity via ground-mount at the town barn site. There may also be battery storage as needed/possible.”

- Received approval 12/2024
- Kickoff meeting with NYSERDA Project Manager on Jan 3
- NYSERDA needs a detailed plan specifying one site, and installed capacity (and storage if desired)
- Gave a March 1 target deadline, to work through specifics and update our proposal on the web portal

Ground Mount installation at the Town Barn site, perhaps 20kW of capacity plus battery storage

Rationale:

- There is no additional technical data that will meaningfully inform a decision related to keeping or removing the current panels (re: discussion with CEC coordinator and others)
- We can continue taking detailed readings of panel performance so that during the next months as we find out what options Solar Liberty might be offering, to inform a cost-benefit analysis as to which to choose (removal, lease extension, purchase)
- Leaving up our current panels through the end of the lease and installing 20 kWh more generation this year can cover more than half of the purchased electricity need for our combined buildings demand (assuming system online June and generating ~13,800 kWh as per current panels performance)
- There is no obvious advantage to waiting months to hear what Solar Liberty offers; at worst (panels removed) we would use this grant to replace 20-24 kWh; we can start 6 mo. earlier by moving forward with Ground Mount
- There is no obvious advantage to using the grant to install new Rooftop panels, vs. Ground Mount, since there is plenty of available, level space at the Town Barns and the panel orientation can be better optimized
- Battery storage gives storm resilience and buffers the Town better from erroneous billing and crediting of the remote net metering with NYSEG; also gives capability to reduce the peak demand charge for added cost savings