

TOWN OF HORNBY
PUBLIC HEARING ON ACQUIRING HORNBY CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCH & REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
SEPTEMBER 8, 2025

A public hearing on Acquiring the Hornby Congregational Church and the regular meeting of the Hornby Town Board was held on Monday September 8, 2025 at the Hornby Town Hall. Present were: Supervisor Justin Eberlin, Councilmembers Hazel Russell, Ken McLaughlin, John Hale, Highway Superintendent Ron Divens, and Town Clerk Pam Smith. Also in attendance were Eunie Taggart, Dan Bulkley, Dolores Bixby, Pastor Mark Gilbert, Carol Kellogg, Douglas Kellogg, Edith Stempin, Nancy McLaughlin, Thomas Havens, Sue Pierce, Ron Pierce, Scott Russell, Marleah Brenning, Randy Brenning, Mike Gustina, Amber McChesney, William Clark, Cat Hill, Frank Phalen, Mike Martin, Marge DiMeo, Sheila Cook, Julia Taylor and Steven Taylor.

The public hearing on Acquiring the Hornby Congregational Church was opened at 6:00 pm and the legal notice as published in The Leader was read by Supervisor Eberlin.

Historian Eunie Taggart gave a short history of the church and showed pictures of the outside and inside of the church.

Supervisor Eberlin asked if there were any questions on the fact sheet that was handed out to the attendees. There were no questions.

Supervisor Eberlin stated that there would be a one-time cost for the Town of \$800 to get a survey done on the property. After that, yearly insurance would be approximately \$250, plus the cost of cutting the grass, which the Town would pay.

Councilmember McLaughlin stated that he and Mike Martin went through the church, and had a list of items that should be repaired. The church is in pretty sound condition, but has maintenance needs that include the following:

- o The back of the church has paint peeling, and the siding might have to be replaced, and the trees that do not allow sunshine to get to the back of the church should be cut down or trimmed.

- o All windowsills have peeling paint, and need to be worked on.
- o Boards need to be replaced near the roof line.
- o The windows should be glazed or replaced.
- o The front door should be replaced.
- o The roof over the church portion of the building is still good, has architectural shingles, and has about 10 more years before it needs to be replaced.
- o The hardwood floors are starting to buckle, and need to be taken care of, as well as dehumidifiers running.
- o There is no standing water in the basement.

Councilmember McLaughlin also stated that the historical society would be paying for the electric and heating, at a cost of \$3200, and he suggested that \$8,000-\$10,000 or more be saved every year for maintenance on the church. Discussion was held. That amount is before the maintenance costs are split by the historical society and Town.

It was stated that if the church got the designation as a historical landmark, it would be eligible for grants, however, that also will limit how the maintenance work is done.

Mike Martin will create a list of maintenance items with estimates attached for the Town Board to get a better idea of costs. Nothing needs immediate attention.

The public hearing was opened to hear from the attendees. The attendees were asked to give their names, whether or not they were a resident, and yes or no to acquiring the church.

Tom Havens – non-resident – member of Shady Grove Church – yes.

Sue Pierce – resident – yes.

Cat Hill, Planning Board Chairperson, explained some of what could and couldn't be done with the church property if it was sold/given to anyone other than the Town.

Pastor Mark Gilbert – resident – yes.

Ron Pierce – resident – yes.

Frank Phalen – non-resident, but used to live here – asked if there would be a tax raise. He was told that there might be a tax raise due to the acquisition.

Julia Taylor – resident – wanted to know if it could be used as a rental. Discussion was held.

Mike Gustina – resident – yes – asked what the timeframe was. He was told it could take around 4 months to get a decision from NYS.

Nancy McLaughlin – resident – asked what maintenance has to be done right away and was told by Mike Martin that nothing needs to be done immediately.

Dolores Bixby – resident –

Cat Hill – resident – suggested winterizing and fundraising

Mike Brenning – owns property on Cox Rd – Town could sell the church building and make money if things did not work out.

Julia Taylor – resident – yes.

Frank Phalen – non-resident, but was a boy scout in that church – nothing to lose if do it for a year or so.

Marge DiMeo – wants a group of townspeople to get together and discuss what has to be done with the church.

Doug Kellogg – resident – stated that the County work crew did cut the trees when they put the roof on the back of the building.

Discussion was held on if there are certain projects over a certain cost threshold that the Town would not be able to use the mobile work crew.

Councilmember McLaughlin is concerned that the historical society is getting older, and no young people are joining.

The public hearing was closed at 6:57pm

The regular Town Board meeting was opened at 7:03pm by Supervisor Eberlin.

MOTION by McLaughlin, seconded by Russell,

To approve the minutes of the Town Board meetings dated August 11, 2025.

No discussion was held.

Vote: Eberlin – aye, Reed – not present, Russell – aye, McLaughlin – aye, Hale – aye.

MOTION by Russell, seconded by McLaughlin,

To approve the payment of General Fund vouchers, numbered 135-147 on abstract G-09-25 in the amount of \$11,904.01; the payment of Highway Fund vouchers numbered 117-130 on abstract H-09-25 in the amount of \$42,440.61; and the payment of Trust and Agency voucher numbered 62 in the amount of \$7,086.93.
Vote: Eberlin – aye, Reed – not present, Russell – aye, McLaughlin – aye, Hale – aye.

Supervisor Eberlin stated that we have a new DCO, and that he helped with the rabies clinic Saturday.

Supervisor Eberlin is working on budgeting and union negotiations. He has contacted someone for the website and has received a quote of \$995.00, with a monthly charge of \$16.95, plus an hourly cost of \$95 for upgrades to the website. Discussion was held.

Highway Superintendent Divens stated that they are currently ditching and getting ready for graveling roads. The estimated date to work on Pine Hill is September 22.

The Youmans are selling their house and questions have come up on one road that borders their house – North Road, which used to be part of Buck Hollow Rd. The road was abandoned in 1950 per paperwork that the town clerk has in the vault. The Town is not being paid for the road mileage, and it has not been worked for more than 6 years. Per the red book, a road is considered abandoned if it has not been maintained for 6 years, and the road/land then reverts back to the landowner. However, there are no legal documents stating the road is abandoned. Discussion was held.

Discussion was held on sealing the parking lot.

MOTION by McLaughlin, seconded by Hale,
To approve spending up to \$3,000 to chip seal the parking lot of the town hall, monies to come from building fund.
Vote: Eberlin – no, Reed – not present, Russell – aye, McLaughlin – aye, Hale – aye.

Discussion was held on acquiring the Hornby Congregational Church.

MOTION by Hale, seconded by Eberlin,
To accept the offer of the Hornby Congregational Church being deeded to the Town, upon acceptance of the Attorney General.

Vote: Eberlin – aye, Reed – not present, Russell – abstain, McLaughlin – aye, Hale – aye.

Councilmember Russell is the president of the Hornby Historical Society, so she abstained from the vote.

MOTION by McLaughlin, seconded by Hale,
To accept the resignation of Ed Fratarcangelo as Dog Control Officer, effective August 31, 2025.

Vote: Eberlin – aye, Reed – not present, Russell – aye, McLaughlin – aye, Hale – aye.

Budgeting has been delayed due to union negotiations and its impact on several accounts. Discussion was held on any amount changes from last year, such as salaries, lawyer cost, building costs, etc. The Fire Department agreed to the proposed rates from last month's meeting for the next three years.

Due to the new system to put legal notices into The Leader, and the long lead time, the town board planned out dates for budgeting.

MOTION by Eberlin, seconded by Russell,
To hold two public hearings on the proposed local override law and the preliminary budget on Thursday November 5, 2025 at 6pm, with a special town board meeting following the public hearings.

Vote: Eberlin – aye, Reed – not present, Russell – aye, McLaughlin – aye, Hale – aye.

October 13 will be a normal town board meeting, with the tentative budget being reviewed.

Finger Lakes Landscaping was the only bid for the tree removal at the museum. Nate's Enterprising removed their bid.

MOTION by McLaughlin, seconded by Hale,
To accept the Finger Lakes Landscaping quote of \$1203.00 to remove the tree and wood from the museum property.

Vote: Eberlin – abstain, Reed – not present, Russell – aye, McLaughlin – aye, Hale – aye.

The Historical Society potluck is September 28th from 1-3 at the Fire Hall. They have 3 fundraisers going right now – Lillian's book, calendars and shirts.

MOTION by Eberlin, seconded by McLaughlin,

To go into executive session at 8:07pm to discuss matters relating to collective negotiations pursuant to Article 14 of Civil Service Law.

Vote: Eberlin – aye, Reed – not present, Russell – aye, McLaughlin – aye, Hale – aye.

The regular meeting was resumed at 9:01pm.

MOTION by McLaughlin, seconded by Hale,

To adjourn the meeting at 9:03pm.

Vote: Eberlin – aye, Reed – not present, Russell – aye, McLaughlin – aye, Hale – aye.

Pamela A. Smith
Hornby Town Clerk