

PRELIMINARY OFFICIAL STATEMENT DATED OCTOBER 29, 2024

RENEWAL/NEW ISSUE

BOND ANTICIPATION NOTES

In the opinion of Hawkins Delafield & Wood LLP, Bond Counsel to the District, under existing statutes and court decisions and assuming continuing compliance with certain tax certifications described herein, (i) interest on the Notes is excluded from gross income for federal income tax purposes pursuant to Section 103 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the "Code"), and (ii) interest on the Notes is not treated as a preference item in calculating the alternative minimum tax under the Code, however, interest on the Notes is included in the "adjusted financial statement income" of certain corporations that are subject to the alternative minimum tax under Section 55 of the Code. In addition, in the opinion of Bond Counsel to the District, under existing statutes, interest on the Notes is exempt from personal income taxes of New York State and its political subdivisions, including The City of New York. (See "Tax Matters" herein).

The Town will designate the Notes as "qualified tax-exempt obligations" pursuant to the provision of Section 265(b)(3) of the Code.

TOWN OF HIGHLANDS ORANGE COUNTY, NEW YORK (the "Town")

\$4,000,000 BOND ANTICIPATION NOTES – 2024 (the "Notes")

Dated Date: November 20, 2024

Maturity Date: November 20, 2025

Security and Sources of Payment: The Notes are general obligations of the Town of Highlands, Orange County, New York (the "Town", the "County", and the "State" respectively) and will contain a pledge of the faith and credit of the Town for the payment of the principal thereof and interest thereon and, unless paid from other sources, the Notes are payable from ad valorem taxes which may be levied upon all the taxable real property within the Town, subject to certain statutory limitations imposed by Chapter 97 of the New York Laws of 2011, as amended (the "Tax Levy Limit Law"). (See "Tax Levy Limit Law," herein).

Prior Redemption: The Notes will not be subject to redemption prior to their maturity.

Form and Denomination: The Notes will be issued in registered form and, at the option of the purchaser, the Notes may be either registered to the purchaser or registered in the name of Cede & Co., as nominee for The Depository Trust Company, New York, New York ("DTC") as book-entry notes. For those Notes registered to the purchaser, a single note certificate shall be delivered to the purchaser(s) for those Notes bearing the same rate of interest in the aggregate principal amount awarded to such purchaser at such interest rate. Those Notes issued in book-entry form will be registered in the name of Cede & Co. as nominee of The Depository Trust Company ("DTC"), New York, New York, which will act as the Securities Depository for the Notes. A single note certificate will be issued for those Notes bearing the same rate of interest and CUSIP number in the aggregate principal amount awarded to such purchaser at such interest rate. Individual purchases of any Notes issued in book-entry form may be made only in book-entry form in denominations of \$5,000 or integral multiples thereof. Noteholders will not receive certificates representing their respective ownership interests in any Notes issued in book-entry form. (See "Description of Book-Entry System" herein).

Payment: Principal of and interest on the Notes registered to the Purchaser will be payable in lawful money of the United States of America (Federal Funds) at such bank or trust company located and authorized to do business in the State of New York as may be selected by the successful bidder. Payment of the principal of and interest on any Notes issued in book-entry form will be made by DTC Participants and Indirect Participants in accordance with standing instructions and customary practices. Payment will be the responsibility of the DTC Participants or Indirect Participants and not of DTC or the Town, subject to any statutory and regulatory requirements as may be in effect from time to time. Principal and interest payments on any book-entry notes shall be payable at the office of the Town Clerk. (See "Description of Book-Entry System" herein.)

Proposals for the Notes will be received at 11:00 A.M. (Prevailing Time) on November 7, 2024 at the office of Munistat Services, Inc., 12 Roosevelt Avenue, Port Jefferson Station, New York 11776.

The Notes are offered subject to the final approving opinion of Hawkins Delafield & Wood LLP, New York, New York, Bond Counsel, and certain other conditions. It is expected that delivery of the Notes will be made on or about November 20, 2024 in New York, New York, or as otherwise agreed to by the Town and the purchaser(s).

THIS OFFICIAL STATEMENT IS IN A FORM "DEEMED FINAL" BY THE TOWN FOR THE PURPOSES OF SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION RULE 15c2-12 (THE "RULE"). FOR A DESCRIPTION OF THE TOWN'S UNDERTAKING TO PROVIDE NOTICES OF EVENTS FOR THE NOTES, AS DESCRIBED IN THE RULE, SEE "DISCLOSURE UNDERTAKING" HEREIN.

November , 2024



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ORANGE COUNTY, NEW YORK**

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* * *

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* * *

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No dealer, broker, salesman or other person has been authorized by the Town to give any information or to make any representations, other than those contained in this Official Statement and if given or made, such other information or representations must not be relied upon as having been authorized by the Town. This Official Statement does not constitute an offer to sell or the solicitation of an offer to buy, nor shall there be any sale of the Notes by any person in any jurisdiction in which it is unlawful for such person to make such offer, solicitation or sale. The information set forth herein has been obtained by the Town from sources which are believed to be reliable but it is not guaranteed as to accuracy or completeness. The information and expressions of opinion herein are subject to change without notice and neither the delivery of this Official Statement nor any sale made hereunder shall, under any circumstances, create any implication that there has been no change in the affairs of the Town since the date hereof.

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OFFICIAL STATEMENT

Relating to

TOWN OF HIGHLANDS ORANGE COUNTY, NEW YORK

\$4,000,000 BOND ANTICIPATION NOTES –2024 (the “Notes”)

This Official Statement, including the cover page and appendices thereto, has been prepared by the Town and presents certain information relating to the Town's \$4,000,000 Bond Anticipation Notes –2024 (the "Notes"). All quotations from and summaries and explanations of provisions of the Constitution and laws of the State of New York (the "State") and acts and proceedings of the Town contained herein do not purport to be complete and are qualified in their entirety by reference to the official compilations thereof and all references to the Notes and the proceedings of the Town relating thereto are qualified in their entirety by reference to the definitive form of the Notes and such proceedings.

All quotations from and summaries and explanations of provisions of the Constitution and laws of the State and acts and proceedings of the Town contained herein do not purport to be complete and are qualified in their entirety by reference to the official compilations thereof and all references to the Notes and the proceedings of the Town relating thereto are qualified in their entirety by reference to the definitive form of the Notes and such proceedings.

THE NOTES

Description of the Notes

The Notes are general obligations of the Town. The Town has pledged its faith and credit for the payment of the principal of and interest on the Notes and, unless paid from other sources, the Notes are payable from ad valorem taxes which may be levied upon all the taxable real property within the Town, subject to certain statutory limitations imposed by the Tax Levy Limit Law. (See “*Tax Levy Limit Law*” herein).

The Notes will be dated and will mature, without the option of prior redemption, as indicated on the cover page hereof.

The Town Clerk will act as Fiscal Agent for the Notes. Paying agent fees, if any, will be paid by the purchaser(s). The Town's contact information is as follows: Kelly Pecoraro, Town Comptroller, Town of Highlands, Town Hall, 254 Main Street, Highland Falls, NY 10928, telephone number (845) 446-4280 x325, email: kpecoraro@highlands-ny.gov.

Optional Redemption

The Notes will not be subject to redemption prior to their maturity.

Description of Book-Entry System

DTC will act as securities depository for any Notes issued as book-entry notes. Such Notes will be issued as fully registered securities, in the name of Cede & Co. (DTC's partnership nominee) or such other name as may be requested by an authorized representative of DTC. One fully registered note certificate will be issued for each Note bearing the same rate of interest and CUSIP number and will be deposited with DTC.

DTC is a limited-purpose trust company organized under the New York Banking Law, a “banking organization” within the meaning of the New York Banking Law, a member of the Federal Reserve System, a “clearing corporation” within the meaning of the New York Uniform Commercial Code, and a “clearing agency” registered pursuant to the provisions of Section 17A of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934. DTC holds and provides asset servicing for over 3.5 million issues of U.S. and non-U.S. equity issues, corporate and municipal debt issues, and money market instruments (from over 100 countries) that DTC's participants (“Direct Participants”) deposit with DTC. DTC also facilitates the post-trade settlement among Direct Participants of sales and other securities transactions in deposited securities, through electronic computerized book-entry transfers and pledges between Direct Participants' accounts. This eliminates the need for physical movement of certificates.

Direct Participants include both U.S. and non-U.S. securities brokers and dealers, banks, trust companies, clearing corporations, and certain other organizations. DTC is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Depository Trust & Clearing Corporation (“DTCC”). DTCC is the holding company for DTC, National Securities Clearing Corporation and Fixed Income Clearing Corporation, all of which are registered clearing agencies. DTCC is owned by the users of its regulated subsidiaries. Access to the DTC system is also available to others such as both U.S. and non-U.S. securities brokers and dealers, banks, trust companies and clearing corporations that clear through or maintain a custodial relationship with a Direct Participant, either directly or indirectly (“Indirect Participants”). Standard & Poor’s assigns a rating of “AA+” to DTC. The DTC Rules applicable to its Participants are on file with the Securities and Exchange Commission. More information about DTC can be found at www.dtcc.com and www.dtc.org.

Purchases of Notes under the DTC system must be made by or through Direct Participants, which will receive a credit for the Notes on DTC’s records. The ownership interest of each actual purchaser of each Note (“Beneficial Owner”) is in turn to be recorded on the Direct and Indirect Participants’ records. Beneficial Owners will not receive written confirmation from DTC of their purchase, Beneficial Owners are, however, expected to receive written confirmations providing details of the transaction, as well as periodic statements of their holdings, from the Direct or Indirect Participant through which the Beneficial Owner entered into the transaction. Transfers of ownership interests in the Notes are to be accomplished by entries made on the books of Direct or Indirect Participants acting on behalf of Beneficial Owners. Beneficial Owners will not receive certificates representing their ownership interest in the Notes, except in the event that use of the book-entry system for the Notes is discontinued.

To facilitate subsequent transfers, all Notes deposited by Direct Participants with DTC are registered in the name of DTC’s partnership nominee, Cede & Co., or such other name as may be requested by an authorized representative of DTC. The deposit of the Notes with DTC and their registration in the name of Cede & Co., or such other DTC nominee do not affect any change in beneficial ownership. DTC has no knowledge of the actual Beneficial Owners of the Notes; DTC’s records reflect only the identity of the Direct Participants to whose accounts such Notes are credited, which may or may not be the Beneficial Owners. The Direct and Indirect Participants will remain responsible for keeping accounts of their holdings on behalf of their customers.

Conveyance of notices and other communications by DTC to Direct Participants, by Direct Participants to Indirect Participants, and by Direct Participants and Indirect Participants to Beneficial Owners will be governed by arrangements among them, subject to any statutory or regulatory requirements as may be in effect from time to time.

Beneficial Owners of the Notes may wish to take certain steps to augment the transmission to them of notices of significant events with respect to the Notes, such as redemptions, tenders, defaults, and proposed amendments to the Note documents. For example, Beneficial Owners of the Notes may wish to ascertain that the nominee holding the Notes for their benefit has agreed to obtain and transmit notices to the Beneficial Owners. In the alternative, Beneficial Owners may wish to provide their names and addresses to the registrar and request that copies of notices be provided directly to them.

Neither DTC nor Cede & Co. (nor any other DTC nominee) will consent or vote with respect to the Notes unless authorized by a Direct Participant in accordance with DTC’s MMI Procedures. Under its usual procedures, DTC mails an Omnibus Proxy to the issuer as soon as possible after the record date. The omnibus Proxy assigns Cede & Co.’s consenting or voting rights to those Direct Participants to whose accounts the Notes are credited on the record date (identified in a listing attached to the Omnibus Proxy).

Principal and interest payments on the Notes will be made to Cede & Co. or such other nominee as may be requested by an authorized representative of DTC. DTC’s practice is to credit Direct Participants’ accounts upon DTC’s receipt of funds and corresponding detailed information from the Town on the payable date, in accordance with their respective holdings shown on DTC’s records. Payments by Participants to Beneficial Owners will be governed by standing instructions and customary practices, as is the case with securities held for the accounts of customers in bearer form or registered in “street name,” and will be the responsibility of such Participant and not of DTC (nor its nominee) or the Town, subject to any statutory or regulatory requirements as may be in effect from time to time. Payment of redemption proceeds, distributions, and dividend payments to Cede & Co. (or such other nominee as may be requested by an authorized representative of DTC) is the responsibility of the Town, disbursement of such payments to Direct Participants will be the responsibility of DTC), and disbursement of such payments to the Beneficial Owners will be the responsibility of Direct and Indirect Participants.

DTC may discontinue providing its services as depository with respect to the Notes at any time by giving reasonable notice to the Town. Under such circumstances, in the event that a successor depository is not obtained, note certificates are required to be printed and delivered to the Noteowners. The Town may decide to discontinue use of the system of book-entry transfers through DTC (or a successor securities depository). In such event, note certificates will be printed and delivered to the Noteowners.

Source: The Depository Trust Company, New York, New York.

The information contained in the above section concerning DTC and DTC’s book-entry system has been obtained from sample offering document language supplied by DTC, but the Town takes no responsibility for the accuracy thereof. In addition, the Town will not have any responsibility or obligation to participants, to indirect participants or to any beneficial owner with respect to: (i) the accuracy of any records maintained by DTC, any participant or any indirect participant; (ii) the payments by DTC or any participant or any indirect participant of any amount with respect to the principal of, or premium, if any, or interest on the Notes or (iii) any notice which is permitted or required to be given to Noteowners.

Authorization and Purpose

The Notes are being issued pursuant to the Constitution and statutes of the State of New York, including among others, the Town Law and the Local Finance Law, and various bond resolutions duly adopted by the Town Board of the Town on the date set forth below for the following purposes:

<u>Date Authorized</u>	<u>Purpose</u>	<u>Amount Authorized</u>	<u>Amount Outstanding</u>	<u>Amount to be Paid</u>	<u>Additional Amount to be Issued</u>	<u>Total Amount to be Issued</u>
08/14/2023	Improvements to WWTP and Sewer Lines	\$ 2,085,368	\$ 690,000	\$ 0	\$ 76,000	\$ 766,000
08/14/2023	Improvements to Various Waterways	6,885,600	174,000	0	0	174,000
08/14/2023	Drainage Improvements	2,303,310	356,000	0	0	356,000
08/14/2023 ^a	Improvements to Dog Kennel	325,000	54,000	0	271,000	325,000
08/14/2023	Improvements to Brooks Park	608,736	461,000	461,000	0	0
08/14/2023	Improvements to Various Town Roads	8,804,388	2,156,000	0	68,000	2,224,000
08/28/2023 ^a	Improvements to Town Hall	100,000	25,000	0	75,000	100,000
08/28/2023	Improvements to Police & Ambulance Building	163,000	84,000	29,000	0	55,000
	Totals:	<u>\$21,275,402</u>	<u>\$4,000,000</u>	<u>\$490,000</u>	<u>\$ 490,000</u>	<u>\$4,000,000</u>

a. Amended October 21, 2024

Impact of Recent Storm

In July of 2023, a storm caused extensive damage to the Town and the Village of Highland Falls. The storm caused extreme flooding which caused damage to buildings, roads, water wells and other Town infrastructure. The State of New York and the County of Orange both declared a state of emergency and assisted in search and rescue for those residents trapped in their homes. Many residents stayed in Red Cross shelters like hotels and motels because of structural damage to their homes, and were unable to use gas, electricity or water.

The Town estimates that the cost of the damage is approximately \$25,000,000 and expects the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to aid in a portion of that cost. As the exact cost of the damage is yet to be determined, the Town is issuing the Notes to start repairing the damage caused by the storm. \$4,000,000 of the Bond Anticipation Notes have been issued to finance improvements related to the storm.

Security and Source of Payment

Each Note when duly issued and paid for will constitute a contract between the Town and the holder thereof.

The Notes will be general obligations of the Town and will contain a pledge of the faith and credit of the Town for the payment of the principal thereof and the interest thereon. For the payment of such principal of and interest on the Notes, the Town has the power and statutory authorization to levy ad valorem taxes on all taxable real property in the Town, subject to certain statutory limitations imposed by the Tax Levy Limit Law. (See “*Tax Levy Limit Law*,” herein).

Under the Constitution of the State, the Town is required to pledge its faith and credit for the payment of the principal of and interest on the Notes, and the State is specifically precluded from restricting the power of the Town to levy taxes on real estate for the payment of interest on or principal of indebtedness theretofore contracted. However, the Tax Levy Limit Law imposes a statutory limitation on the Town's power to increase its annual tax levy, unless the Town complies with certain procedural requirements to permit the Town to levy certain year-to-year increases in real property taxes. (See "*Tax Levy Limit Law*," herein).

RISK FACTORS

There are certain potential risks associated with an investment in the Notes, and investors should be thoroughly familiar with this Official Statement, including its appendices, in order to make an informed investment decision. Investors should consider, in particular, the following factors:

The Town's credit rating could be affected by circumstances beyond the Town's control. Economic conditions such as the rate of unemployment and inflation, termination of commercial operations by corporate taxpayers and employers, as well as natural catastrophes, could adversely affect the assessed valuation of Town property and its ability to maintain fund balances and other statistical indices commensurate with its current credit rating. As a consequence, a decline in the Town's credit rating could adversely affect the market value of the Notes.

If and when an owner of any of the Notes should elect to sell a Note prior to its maturity, there can be no assurance that a market will have been established, maintained and continue in existence for the purchase and sale of any of those Notes. The market value of the Notes is dependent upon the ability of the holder to potentially incur a capital loss if such Note is sold prior to its maturity.

There can be no assurance that adverse events including, for example, the seeking by another municipality in the State or elsewhere of remedies pursuant to the Federal Bankruptcy Act or otherwise, will not occur which might affect the market price of and the market for the Notes. In particular, if a significant default or other financial crisis should occur in the affairs of the State or any of its municipalities, public authorities or other political subdivisions thereby possibly further impairing the acceptability of obligations issued by those entities, both the ability of the Town to arrange for additional borrowing(s) as well as the market for and market value of outstanding debt obligations, including the Notes, could be adversely affected.

The Town is dependent in part upon financial assistance from the State in the form of State aid as well as grants and loans to be received ("State Aid"). The availability of such monies and the timeliness of such payment may be affected by a delay in the adoption of the State budget, the impact to the State's economy and financial condition due to the COVID-19 outbreak and other circumstances, including State fiscal stress. State aid appropriated and apportioned to the Town can be paid only if the State has such monies available therefore. Should the Town fail to receive all or a portion of the amounts of State Aid expected to be received from the State in the amounts and at the times anticipated, occasioned by a delay in the payment of such moneys, the Town is authorized to provide operating funds by borrowing in anticipation of the receipt of such uncollected State Aid; however, there can be no assurance that, in such event, the Town will have market access for any such borrowing on a cost effective basis. (See also "State Aid" herein.)

Future amendments to applicable statutes whether enacted by the State or the United States of America affecting the treatment of interest paid on municipal obligations, including the Notes, for income taxation purposes could have an adverse effect on the market value of the Notes (see "*Tax Matters*" herein).

The enactment of the Tax Levy Limit Law, which imposes a tax levy limitation upon municipalities, school districts and fire districts in the State, including the Town, without providing exclusion for debt service on obligations issued by municipalities and fire districts, including the Town, may affect the market price and/or marketability for the Notes. (See "*Tax Levy Limit Law*" herein.)

Federal or State legislation imposing new or increased mandatory expenditures by municipalities, school districts and fire districts in the State, including the Town, could impair the financial condition of such entities, including the Town, and the ability of such entities, including the Town, to pay debt service on the Notes.

A public health threat such as the COVID-19 pandemic may also affect the operations and/or finances of the Town. (See "*Impact of COVID-19*," herein.)

REMEDIES UPON DEFAULT

Neither the Notes, nor the proceedings with respect thereto, specifically provide any remedies which would be available to owners of the Notes should the Town default in the payment of principal of or interest on the Notes, nor do they contain any provisions for the appointment of a trustee to enforce the interests of the owners of the Notes upon the occurrence of any such default. Each Note is a general obligation contract between the Town and the owners for which the faith and credit of the Town are pledged and while remedies for enforcement of payment are not expressly included in the Town's contract with such owners, any permanent repeal by statute or constitutional amendment of a bond or note holder's remedial right to judicial enforcement of the contract should, in the opinion of Bond Counsel, be held unconstitutional.

Upon default in the payment of principal of or interest on the Notes, at the suit of the owner, a Court has the power, in proper and appropriate proceedings, to render judgment against the Town. The present statute limits interest on the amount adjudged due to contract creditors to nine per centum per annum from the date due to the date of payment. As a general rule, property and funds of a municipal corporation serving the public welfare and interest have not been judicially subjected to execution or attachment to satisfy a judgment. A Court also has the power, in proper and appropriate proceedings, to order payment of a judgment on such Notes from funds lawfully available therefor or, in the absence thereof, to order the Town to take all lawful action to obtain the same, including the raising of the required amount in the next annual tax levy. In exercising its discretion as to whether to issue such an order, the Court may take into account all relevant factors, including the current operating needs of the Town and the availability and adequacy of other remedies. Upon any default in the payment of the principal of or interest on a Note, the owner of such Note could, among other remedies, seek to obtain a writ of mandamus from a Court ordering the governing body of the Town to assess, levy and collect an *ad valorem* tax, upon all taxable property of the Town subject to taxation by the Town, sufficient to pay the principal of and interest on the Notes as the same shall come due and payable (and interest from the due date to date of payment) and otherwise to observe the covenants contained in the Notes and the proceedings with respect thereto all of which are included in the contract with the owners of the Notes. The mandamus remedy, however, may be impracticable and difficult to enforce. Further, the right to enforce payment of the principal of or interest on the Notes may be limited by bankruptcy, insolvency, reorganization, moratorium and similar laws and equitable principles, which may limit the specific enforcement of certain remedies.

In 1976, the New York Court of Appeals, the State's highest court, held in *Flushing National Bank v. Municipal Assistance Corporation for the City of New York*, 40 N.Y.2d 731 (1976), that the New York State legislation purporting to postpone the payment of debt service on New York City obligations was an unconstitutional moratorium in violation of the New York State constitutional faith and credit mandate included in all municipal debt obligations. While that case can be viewed as a precedent for protecting the remedies of holders of bonds or notes of the Town, there can be no assurance as to what a Court may determine with respect to future events, including financial crises as they may occur in the State and in municipalities of the State, that require the exercise by the State of its emergency and police powers to assure the continuation of essential public services. (See also, *Flushing National Bank v. Municipal Assistance Corporation for the City of New York*, 40 N.Y.2d 1088 (1977), where the Court of Appeals described the pledge as a direct Constitutional mandate.)

As a result of the Court of Appeals decision, the constitutionality of that portion of Title 6-A of Article 2 of the Local Finance Law enacted at the 1975 Extraordinary Session of the State legislature authorizing any county, city, town or village with respect to which the State has declared a financial emergency to petition the State Supreme Court to stay the enforcement against such municipality of any claim for payment relating to any contract, debt or obligation of the municipality during the emergency period, is subject to doubt. In any event, no such emergency has been declared with respect to the Town.

Pursuant to Article VIII, Section 2 of the State Constitution, the Town is required to provide an annual appropriation of monies for the payment of due and payable principal of and interest on indebtedness. Specifically, this constitutional provision states: "If at any time the respective appropriating authorities shall fail to make such appropriations, a sufficient sum shall be set apart from the first revenues thereafter received and shall be applied to such purposes. The fiscal officer of any county, city, town, village or school district may be required to set aside and apply such revenues as aforesaid at the suit of any holder of obligations issued for any such indebtedness." This constitutes a specific non-exclusive constitutional remedy against a defaulting municipality or school district; however, it does not apply in a context in which monies have been appropriated for debt service but the appropriating authorities decline to use such monies to pay debt service. However, Article VIII, Section 2 of the Constitution of the State also provides that the fiscal officer of any county, city, town, village or school district may be required to set apart and apply such revenues at the suit of any holder of any obligations of indebtedness issued with the pledge of the faith and credit of such political subdivision. In *Quirk v. Municipal Assistance Corp.*, 41 N.Y.2d 644 (1977), the Court of Appeals described this as a "first lien" on revenues, but one that does not give holders a right to any particular revenues. It should thus be noted that the pledge of the faith and credit of a political subdivision in the State is a pledge of an issuer of a general obligation bond or note to use its general revenue powers, including, but not limited to, its property tax levy, to pay debt service on such obligations, but that such pledge may or may not be interpreted by a court of competent jurisdiction to include a constitutional or statutory lien upon any particular revenues. The Constitutional provision providing for first revenue set asides does not apply to tax anticipation notes, revenue anticipation notes or bond anticipation notes.

While the courts in the State have historically been protective of the rights of holders of general obligation debt of political subdivisions, it is not possible to predict what a future court might hold.

In prior years, certain events and legislation affecting a holder's remedies upon default have resulted in litigation. While courts of final jurisdiction have generally upheld and sustained the rights of holders of bonds or notes, such courts might hold that future events, including a financial crisis as such may occur in the State or in political subdivisions of the State, may require the exercise by the State or its political subdivisions of emergency and police powers to assure the continuation of essential public services prior to the payment of debt service.

MUNICIPAL BANKRUPTCY

The undertakings of the Town should be considered with reference, specifically, to Chapter IX of the Bankruptcy Act, 11 U.S.C. §401, et seq., as amended ("Chapter IX") and, in general, to other bankruptcy laws affecting creditors' rights and municipalities. Chapter IX permits any political subdivision, public agency or instrumentality that is insolvent or unable to meet its debts (i) to file a petition in a Court of Bankruptcy for the purpose of effecting a plan to adjust its debts provided such entity is authorized to do so by applicable state law; (ii) directs such a petitioner to file with the court a list of a petitioner's creditors; (iii) provides that a petition filed under such chapter shall operate as a stay of the commencement or continuation of any judicial or other proceeding against the petitioner; (iv) grants priority to debt owed for services or material actually provided within three (3) months of the filing of the petition; (v) directs a petitioner to file a plan for the adjustment of its debts; and (vi) provides that the plan must be accepted in writing by or on behalf of creditors holding at least two-thirds (2/3) in amount or more than one-half (1/2) in number of the listed creditors.

Bankruptcy proceedings by the Town could have adverse effects on holders of bonds or notes including (a) delay in the enforcement of their remedies, (b) subordination of their claims to those supplying goods and services to the Town after the initiation of bankruptcy proceedings and to the administrative expenses of bankruptcy proceedings and (c) imposition without their consent of a reorganization plan reducing or delaying payment of the Notes. The Bankruptcy Code contains provisions intended to ensure that, in any reorganization plan not accepted by at least a majority of a class of creditors such as the holders of general obligation bonds, such creditors will have the benefit of their original claim or the "indubitable equivalent". The effect of these and other provisions of the Bankruptcy Code cannot be predicted and may be significantly affected by judicial interpretation.

Accordingly, enforceability of the rights and remedies of the owners of the Notes, and the obligations incurred by the Town, may become subject to Chapter IX and applicable bankruptcy, insolvency, reorganization, moratorium, or similar laws relating to or affecting the enforcement of creditor's rights generally, now or hereafter in effect, equity principles which may limit the specific enforcement under State law of certain remedies, the exercise by the United States of America of the powers delegated to it by the Constitution, the reasonable and necessary exercise, in certain exceptional situations, of the police powers inherent in the sovereignty of the State and its governmental bodies in the interest of serving a significant and legitimate public purpose and the limitations on remedies against public agencies in the State. Bankruptcy proceedings, or the exercise of powers by the federal or State government, if initiated, could subject the owners of the Notes to judicial discretion, interpretation and of their rights in bankruptcy or otherwise, and consequently may entail risks of delay, limitation, or modification of their rights.

The State has consented (see Title 6-A of the Local Finance Law) that any municipality in the State may file a petition with any United States district court or court of bankruptcy under any provision of the laws of the United States, now or hereafter in effect for the composition or adjustment of municipal indebtedness. However, it is noted that there is no record of any recent filings by a New York municipality. Since the New York City fiscal crisis in 1975, the State has legislated a finance control or review board and assistance corporations to monitor and restructure finance matters in addition to New York City, for the Cities of Yonkers, Troy and Buffalo and for the Counties of Nassau and Erie. Similar active intervention pursuant to State legislation to relieve fiscal stress for the Town in the future cannot be assured.

No current state law purports to create any priority for holders of the Notes should the Town be under the jurisdiction of any court, pursuant to the laws of the United States, now or hereafter in effect, for the composition or adjustment of municipal indebtedness.

The above references to the Bankruptcy Act are not to be construed as an indication that the Town is currently considering or expects to resort to the provisions of the Bankruptcy Act.

Financial Control Boards

Pursuant to Article IX Section 2(b)(2) of the State Constitution, any municipality in the State may request the intervention of the State in its “property, affairs and government” by a two-thirds vote of the total membership of its legislative body or on request of its chief executive officer concurred in by a majority of such membership. This has resulted in the adoption of special acts for the establishment of public benefit corporations with varying degrees of authority to control the finances (including debt issuance) of the Cities of Buffalo, Troy and Yonkers and the County of Nassau. The specific authority, powers and composition of the financial control boards established by these acts varies based upon circumstances and needs. Generally, the State legislature has granted such boards the power to approve or disapprove budget and financial plans and to issue debt on behalf of the municipality, as well as to impose wage and/or hiring freezes and in certain cases approve or disapprove collective bargaining agreements. Implementation is generally left to the discretion of the board of the public benefit corporation. Such a State financial control board was first established for New York City in 1975. In addition, upon the issuance of a certificate of necessity of the Governor reciting facts which in the judgment of the Governor constitute an emergency requiring enactment of such laws, with the concurrences of two-thirds of the members elected in each house of the State legislature, the State is authorized to intervene in the “property, affairs and governments” of local government units. This occurred in the case of the County of Erie in 2005. The authority of the State to intervene in the financial affairs of a local government is further supported by Article VIII, Section 12 of the Constitution which declares it to be the duty of the State legislature to restrict, subject to other provisions of the Constitution, the power of taxation, assessment, borrowing money and contracting indebtedness and loaning the credit of counties, cities, towns and villages so as to prevent abuses in taxation and assessment and in contracting indebtedness by them.

In 2013, the State established a new state advisory board to assist counties, cities, towns and villages in financial distress. The Financial Restructuring Board for Local Governments (the “FRB”), is authorized to conduct a comprehensive review of the finances and operations of any such municipality deemed by the FRB to be fiscally eligible for its services upon request by resolution of the municipal legislative body and concurrence of its chief executive. The FRB is authorized to make recommendations for, but cannot compel improvement of fiscal stability, management and delivery of municipal services, including shared services opportunities and is authorized to offer grants and/or loans of up to \$5,000,000 through a Local Government Performance and Efficiency Program to undertake certain recommendations. If a municipality agrees to undertake the FRB recommendations, it will be automatically bound to fulfill the terms in order to receive the aid.

The FRB is also authorized to serve as an alternative arbitration panel for binding arbitration.

Although from time to time there have been proposals for the creation of a statewide financial control board with broad authority over local governments in the State, the FRB does not have emergency financial control board powers to intervene in the finances and operations of entities such as the public benefit corporations established by special acts as described above.

Several municipalities in the State are presently working with the FRB. The Town has not applied to the FRB and does not reasonably anticipate submission of a request to the FRB for a comprehensive review of its finances and operations. School districts and fire districts are not eligible for FRB assistance.

No Past Due Debt

No principal or interest payment on Town indebtedness is past due. The Town has never defaulted in the payment of the principal of and/or interest on any indebtedness.

THE TOWN

The Town, which encompasses about 31 square miles and has a population of 12,883 according to the 2022 U.S. Census, is located in the southeastern corner of Orange County. It is bounded on the east by the Hudson River; on the north by the Town of Cornwall; on the west by the Town of Woodbury; and on the south by Rockland County. The Town includes the Incorporated Village of Highland Falls and is the site of the United States Military Academy at West Point. Parts of the Palisades Interstate Park and the Harvard Black Rock Forest are also located in the Town.

The Town is primarily residential in character with some commercial and industrial properties. Commercial enterprises are centered in the business district of the Village of Highland Falls; residential development consists of single-family homes and apartments. The United State Military Academy at West Point houses more than 8,000 military personnel and dependents and has a civilian employee payroll of approximately 4,000. Residents also find employment opportunities elsewhere in the Town, or they commute to New York City, Newburgh, Middletown and Goshen (the County Seat).

Electricity and natural gas is supplied to the Town by Orange & Rockland Utilities, Inc. and Central Hudson Gas & Electric Company. Sanitary sewer services is provided to about 50% of the Town residents located outside the Village by the facilities of the Fort Montgomery Sewer Improvement Area. The balance of the Town uses septic systems. Police protection is provided by the Town Police Force and fire protection is provided by the Fort Montgomery Fire District.

Rail transportation is provided by Consolidated Rail Corp. at Peekskill. Bus service is available from Highland Falls to various points, including New York City. Highway facilities include U.S. Route 6 and 9W and New York State Route 218 and 293.

Government

The Town was established in 1873. Two independently governed school districts are located partially within the Town which rely on their own taxing powers granted by the State to raise revenues. The school districts use the Town’s assessment roll as their basis for taxation of property located within the Town.

Subject to the provisions of the State Constitution, the Town operates pursuant to the Town Law, the Local Finance Law, other laws generally applicable to the Town, and any special laws generally applicable to the Town, and is classified as a first class town. Under such laws, there is no authority for the Town to have a charter, but pursuant to the Town Law and other laws generally applicable to home rule, the Town may from time to time adopt local laws.

The legislative power of the Town is vested in the Town Board, which consists of five members, including the Supervisor, who is the chief executive officer of the Town, elected for a term of four years. The four other members of the Town Board are elected to four-year terms. All the Town Board members are elected at large and there is no limitation to the number of terms each may serve.

The Town Supervisor is elected to a two-year term and the Town Clerk and Receiver of Taxes are elected to four-year terms. The Town Board appoints the Comptroller, Assessor, the Town Attorney, Highway Superintendent, and the Town Engineer.

Financial Organization

The Supervisor is the chief fiscal officer of the Town; his duties include administration, direction and control of budget and insurance, accounts payable and receivable and payroll. The Supervisor is also responsible for drafting and preparing the budget and securing and administering State and Federal grants.

Employees

The Town provides services through approximately 24 full-time and 54 part-time employees. 10 Highway Department employees are represented by Town of Highlands Employee Association under a contract which expires on December 31, 2024 and 18 Town police officers are represented by the Town of Highlands PBA under a contract which expires December 31, 2024.

ECONOMIC AND DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Population Characteristics

<u>Year</u>	<u>Town of Highlands</u>	<u>Orange County</u>	<u>New York State</u>
2000	12,939	341,367	18,976,457
2010	12,636	372,813	19,378,102
2020	12,252	380,085	19,572,319
2022	12,883	405,941	19,677,152

Source: United States Bureau of the Census

Income Data

	Per Capita Money Income			
	<u>2000</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2022</u>
Town of Highlands	\$17,830	\$19,328	\$31,423	\$37,596
County of Orange	21,597	28,944	34,959	39,507
State of New York	23,389	30,948	39,326	47,421

	Median Household Income			
	<u>2000</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2022</u>
Town of Highlands	\$52,816	\$74,906	\$92,037	\$106,792
County of Orange	52,058	69,523	79,944	85,640
State of New York	43,393	55,603	68,486	75,157

Source: United States Bureau of the Census

a. Based on American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate (2018-2022).

Unemployment Rate Statistics

Unemployment statistics are not available for the Town as such. The smallest area for which such statistics are available (which includes the Town) is the County of Orange. The information set forth below with respect to such County and the State is included for information purposes only. It should not be implied from the inclusion of such data in this Statement that the County and the State is necessarily representative of the Town or vice versa.

<u>Annual Averages:</u>	<u>Orange County (%)</u>	<u>New York State (%)</u>
2019	3.8	4.0
2020	8.4	10.0
2021	5.0	7.2
2022	3.2	4.4
2023	3.3	4.2
2024 (YTD)	3.8	4.2

Source: Department of Labor, State of New York

Selected Listing of Larger Employees

<u>Name</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Estimated Number of Employees</u>
United States Military Academy at West Point	Military	4,000
Orange Regional Medical Center	Hospital	2,524
Orange County Government	Government	2,148
Crystal Run Healthcare	Multi-Specialty Physicians' Practice	1,800
Access: Supports for Living	Non-Profit Organizations	1,289
St Luke's Cornwall Hospital	Hospital	1,247
Elant, Inc.	Senior Health and Housing	1,200
C & S Wholesale Grocers, Inc.	Food	800
Empire Blue Cross/Blue Shield	Health insurance	795
Spectrum Enterprise	Communications	750
The ARC of Orange County	Non-Profit Organizations	750
Amscan, Inc.	Distribution	525
Horizon Family Medical Group	Healthcare	500
Kolmar Laboratories Inc	Manufacturing	500
Bon Secours Community Hospital	Hospital	490
Staples, Inc.	Office Supplies	460
Verla International LTD	Cosmetic	445
YRC Worldwide	Trucking-Motor Freight	435
United Natural Foods, Inc (UNFI)	Organic Food Distributor	400
Adecco	Service/Staffing Service	400
Superior Pack Group Inc.	Packaging & labeling	325
SUNY Orange	Education	300

Source: Town Officials

INDEBTEDNESS OF THE TOWN

Constitutional Requirements

The New York State Constitution limits the power of the Town (and other municipalities and school districts of the State) to issue obligations and to otherwise contract indebtedness. Such constitutional and statutory limitations include the following, in summary form, and are generally applicable to the Town and the Notes.

Purpose and Pledge. The Town shall not give or loan any money or property to or in aid of any individual or private corporation or private undertaking or give or loan its credit to or in aid of any of the foregoing or any public corporation.

The Town may contract indebtedness only for a Town purpose and shall pledge its faith and credit for the payment of principal of and interest thereon.

Payment and Maturity. Except for certain short-term indebtedness contracted in anticipation of taxes, or to be paid in one of the two fiscal years immediately succeeding the fiscal year in which such indebtedness was contracted, indebtedness shall be paid in annual installments commencing no later than two years after the date such indebtedness shall have been contracted and ending no later than the expiration of the period of probable usefulness of the object or purpose as determined by statute or, in the alternative, the weighted average period of probable usefulness of the several objects or purposes for which such indebtedness is to be contracted; no installment may be more than fifty per centum in excess of the smallest prior installment, unless the Town has authorized the issuance of indebtedness having substantially level or declining annual debt service. The Town is required to provide an annual appropriation for the payment of interest due during the year on its indebtedness and for the amounts required in such year for amortization and redemption of its serial bonds and bond anticipation notes.

General. The Town is further subject to constitutional limitation by the general constitutionally imposed duty on the State Legislature to restrict the power of taxation, assessment, borrowing money, contracting indebtedness and loaning the credit of the Town so as to prevent abuses in the exercise of such powers; however, as has been noted under "*Security and Source of Payment*", the State Legislature is prohibited by a specific constitutional provision from restricting the power of the Town to levy taxes on real estate for the payment of interest on or principal of indebtedness theretofore contracted. However, the Tax Levy Limit Law imposes a statutory limitation on the Town's power to increase its annual tax levy, unless the Town complies with certain procedural requirements to permit the Town to levy certain year-to-year increases in real property taxes. (See "*Tax Levy Limit Law*," herein).

Statutory Procedure

In general, the State Legislature has authorized the power and procedure for the Town to borrow and incur indebtedness subject, of course, to the constitutional and statutory provisions set forth above. The power to spend money, however, generally derives from other laws, including the Town Law and the General Municipal Law.

Pursuant to the Local Finance Law, the Town authorizes the incurrence of indebtedness by the adoption of a bond resolution approved by at least two-thirds of the members of the Town Board, except if the Town determines to subject the bond resolution to voter approval by mandatory referendum, in which case only a three-fifths vote is required.

The Local Finance Law also provides a twenty-day statute of limitations after publication of a bond resolution which, in effect, estops thereafter legal challenges to the validity of obligations authorized by such bond resolution except for alleged constitutional violations. The Town has complied with such procedure for the bond resolutions authorizing the issuance of the Notes.

Each bond resolution usually authorizes the construction, acquisition or installation of the object or purpose to be financed, sets forth the plan of financing and specifies the maximum maturity of the bonds subject to the legal (Constitution, Local Finance Law and case law) restrictions relating to the period of probable usefulness with respect thereto.

Each bond resolution also authorizes the issuance of bond anticipation notes prior to the issuance of serial bonds. Statutory law in New York permits notes to be renewed each year provided that principal is amortized and provided that such renewals do not (with certain exceptions) extend more than five years beyond the original date of borrowing. However, notes issued in anticipation of the sale of serial bonds for assessable improvements are not subject to such five-year limit and may be renewed subject to annual reductions of principal for the entire period of probable usefulness of the purpose for which such notes were originally issued. (See "*Payment and Maturity*" under "*Constitutional Requirements*").

In addition, under each bond resolution, the Town Board may delegate, and has delegated, power to issue and sell bonds and notes, to the Town Supervisor, the chief fiscal officer of the Town.

In general, the Local Finance Law contains similar provisions providing the Town with power to issue general obligation revenue anticipation notes, tax anticipation notes, deficiency notes and budget notes.

Debt Limit. The Town has the power to contract indebtedness for any Town purpose so long as the aggregate outstanding principal amount thereof shall not exceed seven per centum of the average full valuation of taxable real estate of the Town and subject to certain enumerated exclusions and deductions such as water and certain sewer facilities and cash or appropriations for current debt service. The constitutional and statutory method for determining the full valuation is by dividing the assessed valuation of taxable real estate by the respective equalization rates assigned to each assessment roll. Such equalization rates are the ratios which each of such assessed valuations bear to the respective full valuation of such year, as assigned by the New York State Office of Real Property Services. The State Legislature is required to prescribe the manner by which such ratios shall be determined. Average full valuation is determined by adding the full valuations for the most recently completed assessment roll and the four immediately preceding assessments rolls and dividing the resulting sum of such addition by five.

There is no constitutional limitation on the amount that may be raised by the Town by tax on real estate in any fiscal year to pay principal and interest on all indebtedness. However, the Tax Levy Limit Law, imposes a statutory limitation on the power of the Town to increase its annual tax levy. The amount of such increases is limited by the formulas set forth in the Tax Levy Limit Law. (See "*Tax Levy Limit Law*," herein).

The following pages set forth certain details with respect to the indebtedness of the Town.

Computation of Debt Limit and Calculation of Net Debt Contracting Margin
(As of October 29, 2024)

Fiscal Year Ending <u>December 31:</u>	<u>Assessed Valuation</u>	State Equal. <u>Rate (%)</u>	<u>Full Valuation</u>
2020	\$517,328,692	93.00	\$556,267,411
2021	519,270,911	96.00	540,907,199
2022	519,690,107	78.30	663,716,612
2023	523,310,010	69.35	754,592,660
2024	525,976,927	65.60	<u>801,794,096</u>
Total Five Year Full Valuation			\$3,317,277,978
Average Five Year Full Valuation			663,455,596
Debt Limit - 7% of Average Full Valuation			46,441,892
Inclusions:			
General Purpose Bonds			70,000
Water Purpose Bonds			585,000
Sewer Purpose Bonds			2,622,624
Bond Anticipation Notes			<u>4,000,000</u>
Total Inclusions			<u>7,277,624</u>
Exclusions:			
Appropriations			490,000
Excluded Sewer Debt			
Excluded Water Debt			<u>585,000</u>
Total Exclusions			<u>1,075,000</u>
Total Net Indebtedness Before Issuing the Notes			<u>6,202,624</u>
The Notes			4,000,000
Less: BANs Being Redeemed by the Notes			<u>3,510,000</u>
Net Effect of Issuing the Notes			<u>490,000</u>
Total Net Indebtedness After Issuing the Notes			<u>6,692,624</u>
Net Debt Contracting Margin			<u><u>\$39,749,268</u></u>
Percent of Debt Contracting Margin Exhausted (%)			14.41

Debt Service Requirements - Outstanding Bonds ^a

Fiscal Year Ending December 31:	<u>Principal</u>	<u>Interest</u>	<u>Total</u>
2024	\$172,320	\$51,225	\$223,545
2025	172,304	48,892	221,196
2026	172,320	46,261	218,581
2027	167,320	43,655	210,975
2028	152,320	41,099	193,419
2029	152,320	38,569	190,889
2030	152,320	35,910	188,230
2031	162,320	33,104	195,424
2032	162,320	29,987	192,307
2033	162,320	26,738	189,058
2034	92,320	23,328	115,648
2035	92,320	22,561	114,881
2036	92,320	21,728	114,048
2037	92,320	20,845	113,165
2038	97,320	19,857	117,177
2039	97,320	18,770	116,090
2040	97,320	17,644	114,964
2041	97,320	16,482	113,802
2042	97,320	15,247	112,567
2043	102,320	13,885	116,205
2044	102,320	12,450	114,770
2045	102,320	11,016	113,336
2046	107,320	9,509	116,829
2047	107,320	7,893	115,213
2048	107,320	6,240	113,560
2049	112,320	4,511	116,831
2050	112,320	2,706	115,026
2051	112,320	902	113,222
Totals	<u>\$3,449,944</u>	<u>\$641,012</u>	<u>\$4,090,956</u>

a. Does not include payments made to date. Rounded to the nearest dollar. Does not include subsidy received from the New York State Environmental Facilities Corporation (“EFC”) by the Town on Town Bonds delivered to EFC in connection with the issuance of EFC Bonds on behalf of the Town.

Details of Short-Term Indebtedness Outstanding
(As of October 29, 2024)

As of the date of this Official Statement, the Town has bond anticipation notes outstanding in the amount of \$4,000,000 for various town-wide improvements such notes mature on November 21, 2024 and will be redeemed by the Notes and available funds in the amount of \$490,000.

Authorized but Unissued Indebtedness

As of the date of this Official Statement, the Town has \$17,088,902 authorized but unissued debt outstanding for various Town-wide Improvements. (See also “*Impact of Recent Storm*” and “*Authorization and Purpose*” herein.)

Trend of Town Indebtedness

The following table represents the trend of outstanding indebtedness of the Town at the end of the last five preceding fiscal years.

	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>
Bonds	\$195,000	\$170,000	\$145,000	\$120,000	\$95,000
BAN's					4,000,000
EFC	<u>936,000</u>	<u>848,300</u>	<u>3,653,259</u>	<u>3,500,939</u>	<u>3,354,944</u>
Total Debt Outstanding	<u><u>\$1,131,000</u></u>	<u><u>\$1,018,300</u></u>	<u><u>\$3,798,259</u></u>	<u><u>\$3,620,939</u></u>	<u><u>\$7,449,944</u></u>

Calculation of Estimated Overlapping and Underlying Indebtedness

<u>Overlapping Units</u>	<u>Date of Report</u>	<u>Percentage Applicable (%)</u>	<u>Applicable Total Indebtedness</u>	<u>Applicable Net Indebtedness</u>
County of Orange	06/28/2024	1.69	\$3,805,120	\$3,550,690
Village of Highland Falls	12/21/2023	100.00	10,164,250	9,869,250
Highland Falls-Fort Montgomery CSD	06/30/2022	100.00	15,290,000	2,446,400
Haverstraw-Stony Point CSD	06/30/2023	0.21	<u>335,536</u>	<u>335,536</u>
Totals			<u><u>\$29,594,905</u></u>	<u><u>\$16,201,876</u></u>

Sources: Annual Reports of the respective units for the most recently completed fiscal year on file with the Office of the State Comptroller or more recently published Statements.

Debt Ratios (As of October 29, 2024)

	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Per Capita^a</u>	<u>Percentage Of Full Value (%)^b</u>
Total Direct Debt	\$7,277,624	\$565	0.908
Net Direct Debt	6,692,624	519	0.835
Total Direct & Applicable Total Overlapping Debt	36,872,529	2,862	4.599
Net Direct & Applicable Net Overlapping Debt	22,894,500	1,777	2.855

a. The estimated population of the Town is 12,883.

b. The full valuation of taxable real property in the Town for 2024 is \$801,794,096.

FINANCES OF THE TOWN

Financial Statements and Accounting Procedures

The Town maintains its financial records in accordance with the Uniform System of Accounts for Towns prescribed by the State Comptroller. The financial records of the Town are audited by independent accountants. The last such audit made available for public inspection covers the fiscal year ended December 31, 2023 and is attached as Appendix B. In addition, the financial affairs of the Town are subject to periodic compliance review by the Office of the State Comptroller to ascertain whether the Town has complied with the requirements of various State and Federal statutes.

The Statements of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Equity presented in Appendix A of this Statement are based on the Audited Financial Statements of the Town (2019-2023).

Fund Structure and Accounts

The Town utilizes fund accounting to record and report its various service activities. A fund represents both a legal and an accounting entity which segregates the transactions of specific programs in accordance with special regulations, restrictions or limitations.

There are three basic fund types: (1) governmental funds that are used to account for basic services and capital projects; (2) proprietary funds that account for operations of a commercial nature; and (3) fiduciary funds that account for assets held in a trustee capacity. Account groups, which do not represent funds, are used to record fixed assets and long-term obligations that are not accounted for in a specific fund.

The Town presently maintains the following governmental funds: General Fund, Town Outside Village Fund, Water Fund, Sewer Fund, Highway Fund, and the Capital Projects Fund. Fiduciary funds consist of a Trust and Agency Fund. There are no proprietary funds. Account groups are maintained for fixed assets and long-term debt.

Basis of Accounting

The governmental fund statements are reported using the current financial resources measurement focus and the modified accrual basis of accounting. Under this method, revenues are recognized when measurable and available. The Town considers all revenues reported in the governmental funds to be available if the revenues are collected within 365 days after the end of the fiscal year. Expenditures are recorded when the related fund liability is incurred, except for principal and interest on general long-term debt, sanitary landfill post closure costs, installment purchases, judgments and claims, and compensated absences, which are recognized as expenditures to the extent they have matured. General capital asset acquisitions are reported as expenditures in governmental funds. Proceeds of general long-term debt and acquisitions under capital leases are reported as other financing sources.

Investment Policy

Pursuant to the statutes of the State of New York and its adopted Investment Policy, the Town is permitted to temporarily invest moneys which are not required for immediate expenditures, with the exception of moneys the investment of which is otherwise provided for by law, in the following investments: (1) special time deposit accounts in, or certificates of deposit issued by a bank or trust company located and authorized to do business in the State, provided however, that such time deposit account or certificate of deposit is payable within such time as the proceeds shall be needed to meet the expenditures for which such moneys were obtained and provided further that such time deposit account or certificate of deposit, in excess of the amount insured under the Federal Deposit Insurance Act, be secured by either a pledge of eligible securities, an eligible surety bond or an eligible letter of credit, as those terms are defined in the law; (2) obligations of the United States of America; (3) obligations guaranteed by agencies of the United States of America where the payment of principal and interest are guaranteed by the United States of America; (4) obligations of the State of New York; (5) with the approval of the New York State Comptroller in tax anticipation notes or revenue anticipation notes issued by any municipalities, school district, or district corporation, other than those notes issued by the Town; (6) certificates of participation issued by political subdivisions of the State, as those terms are defined in the law; (7) obligations of a New York public corporation which are made lawful investments for the Town pursuant to the enabling laws of such public corporation; or (8) in the case of moneys held in certain reserve funds established by the Town pursuant to law, in obligations of the Town. Any investments made by the Town pursuant to law are required to be payable or redeemable at the option of the Town within such times as the proceeds will be needed to meet expenditures for purposes for which the moneys were provided and, in the case of obligations purchased with the proceeds of bonds or notes, shall be payable or redeemable in any event, at the option of the owner, within two years of the date of purchase. These statutes also require that the Town's investments, unless registered or inscribed in the name of the Town, must be purchased through, delivered to and held in custody of a bank or trust company in the State. All such investments held in the custody of a bank or trust company must be held pursuant to a written custodial agreement as that term is defined in the law.

Collateral is required for demand deposit, money market accounts and certificates of deposit not covered by Federal deposit insurance and the eligible securities utilized for such collateral must be held by a third party financial institution, pursuant to security and custodial agreements. Obligations that may be pledged as collateral are obligations of the United States and its agencies and obligations of New York State and its municipalities and school districts.

The Town maintains a list of financial institutions and dealers approved for investment purposes and establishes appropriate limits to the amount of investments which can be made with each financial institution or dealer. All financial institutions with which the Town conducts business must be creditworthy. Banks are required to provide their most recent Consolidated Report of Condition (Call Report) at the request of the Town. Security dealers not affiliated with a bank are required to be classified as reporting dealers affiliated with the New York Federal Reserve Bank, as primary dealers. The chief fiscal officer is responsible for evaluating the financial position and maintaining a listing of proposed depositories, trading partners and custodians. Such listing shall be evaluated at least annually.

The Town Supervisor is authorized to contract for the purpose of investments: (1) directly, including through a repurchase agreement, from an authorized trading partner, (2) by participation in a cooperative investment program with another authorized governmental entity pursuant to Article 5G of the General Municipal Law where such program meets all the requirements set forth in the Office of the State Comptroller Opinion No. 88-46, and the specific program has been authorized by the governing board; and (3) by utilizing an ongoing investment program with an authorized trading partner pursuant to a contract authorized by the governing board.

All purchased obligations, unless registered or inscribed in the name of the Town, shall be purchased through, delivered to and held in the custody of a bank or trust company. Such obligations shall be purchased, sold or presented for redemption or payment by such bank or trust company only in accordance with prior written authorization from the officer authorized to make the investment. All such transactions shall be confirmed in writing to the Town by the bank or trust company. Any obligation held in the custody of a bank or trust company shall be held pursuant to a written custodial agreement as described in General Municipal Law, §10.

The custodial agreement shall provide that securities held by the bank or trust company, as agent of and custodian for, the Town, will be kept separate and apart from the general assets of the custodial bank or trust company and will not, in any circumstances, be commingled with or become part of the backing for any other deposit or other liabilities. The agreement shall describe how the custodian shall confirm the receipt and release of the securities. Such agreement shall include all provisions necessary to provide the Town a perfected interest in the securities.

Repurchase agreements are authorized subject to the following restrictions: (1) all repurchase agreements must be entered into subject to a Master Repurchase Agreement; (2) trading partners are limited to banks or trust companies authorized to do business in New York State and primary reporting dealers; (3) obligations shall be limited to obligations of the United States of America and obligations guaranteed by agencies of the United States of America; (4) no substitution of securities will be allowed; and (5) the custodian shall be a party other than the trading partner.

Budgetary Procedures

The head of each administrative unit of the Town is required to file detailed estimates of revenues (other than real property taxes) and expenditures for the next fiscal year with the budget officer on or before August 15th. After reviewing these estimates, the budget officer prepares a tentative budget which includes his recommendations. A budget message explaining the main features of the budget is also prepared at this time. The tentative budget is filed with the Town Clerk not later than the 30th of September. Subsequently, the Town Clerk presents the tentative budget to the Town Board at the regular or special hearing which must be held on or before October 5th. The Town Board reviews the tentative budget and makes such changes as it deems necessary and that are not inconsistent with the provisions of the law. Following this review process, the tentative budget and such modifications, if any, as approved by the Board become the preliminary budget. A public hearing, notice of which must be duly published in the Town's official newspaper, on the preliminary budget is generally required to be held on the Thursday immediately following the general election. At such hearing, any person may express his opinion concerning the preliminary budget; however, there is no requirement or provision that the preliminary budget or any portion thereof be voted on by members of the public. After the public hearing, the Town Board may further change and revise the preliminary budget. The Town Board, by resolution, adopts the preliminary budget as submitted or amended no later than November 20th, at which time, the preliminary budget becomes the annual budget of the Town for the ensuing fiscal year. Budgetary control during the year is the responsibility of the Budget Officer. However, any changes or modifications to the annual budget including the transfer of appropriations among line items must be approved by resolution of the Town Board.

Budget Summary for the 2024 fiscal year may be found in Appendix A, herein.

Financial Operations

The Supervisor functions as the chief fiscal officer as provided in Section 2 of the Local Finance Law; in this role, the Supervisor is responsible for the Town's accounting and financial reporting activities. Pursuant to Section 30 of the Local Finance Law, the Supervisor has been authorized to issue or renew certain specific types of notes. As required by law, the Supervisor must execute an authorizing certificate which then becomes a matter of public record.

The Town Board, as a whole, serves as the finance board of the Town and is responsible for authorizing, by resolution, all material financial transactions such as operating and capital budgets and the issuance of bonds or notes.

Town finances are operated primarily through the General and Special Revenue Funds. The General Fund receives most of its revenue from real property tax and State aid. Current operating expenditures are paid from these funds subject to available appropriations. The Special Revenue Funds are made up of the Town outside Village, Highway, Sewer, Sanitation, Lighting, Ambulance and Water Funds. The primary source of income for these districts comes from special assessments levied against district properties at the same time real estate taxes are levied. Capital projects and equipment purchases are accounted for in special capital projects funds. The Town observes a calendar year (January 1 through December 31) for operating and reporting purposes.

The State Comptroller's Fiscal Stress Monitoring System

The New York State Comptroller has reported that New York State's school districts and municipalities are facing significant fiscal challenges. As a result, the Office of the State Comptroller has developed a Fiscal Stress Monitoring System ("FSMS") to provide independent, objectively measured and quantifiable information to school district and municipal officials, taxpayers and policy makers regarding the various levels of fiscal stress under which the State's school districts and municipalities are operating.

The fiscal stress scores are based on financial information submitted as part of each school district's ST-3 report filed with the State Education Department annually, and each municipality's annual report filed with the State Comptroller. Using financial indicators that include year-end fund balance, cash position and patterns of operating deficits, the system creates an overall fiscal stress score which classifies whether a school district or municipality is in "significant fiscal stress", in "moderate fiscal stress," as "susceptible to fiscal stress" or "no designation". Entities that do not accumulate the number of points that would place them in a stress category will receive a financial score but will be classified in a category of "no designation." This classification should not be interpreted to imply that the entity is completely free of fiscal stress conditions. Rather, the entity's financial information, when objectively scored according to the FSMS criteria, did not generate sufficient points to place it in one of the three established stress categories.

The most current applicable report of the State Comptroller designates the Town as "No Designation". (Fiscal Score: 3.3%; Environmental Score: 0.0%).

See the State Comptroller's official website for more information on FSMS. Reference to this website implies no warranty of accuracy of information therein.

In addition, the Office of the State Comptroller helps local government officials manage government resources efficiently and effectively. The Comptroller oversees the fiscal affairs of local governments statewide, as well as compliance with relevant statutes and observance of good business practices. This fiscal oversight is accomplished, in part, through its audits, which identify opportunities for improving operations and governance. Reference to this website implies no warranty of accuracy of information therein. The most recent audit was released on January 21, 2022. The purpose of the audit was to determine whether the Town's receiver of Taxes and Assessments property billed, collected, and disbursed taxes, fees, and penalties. The complete report may be found on the State Comptroller's website.

Revenues

The Town receives most of its revenues from a real property tax on all non-exempt real property situated within the Town. A summary of such revenues for the five most recently completed fiscal years and estimated revenues for the current fiscal year may be found in Appendix A.

Real Property Taxes

See "Tax Information", herein.

State Aid

Based on the audited financial reports of the Town, the Town received approximately 2.70% of its total General Fund operating revenue (predominantly mortgage tax revenues) from State aid in 2023. There is no assurance, however, that State appropriations for aid to municipalities will continue, either pursuant to existing formulas or in any form whatsoever. The State is not constitutionally obligated to maintain or continue such aid and has the ability to reduce funding to municipalities and school districts in order to balance its own budget.

If the State should not adopt its budget in a timely manner, municipalities and school districts in the State, including the Town, may be affected by a delay in the payment of State aid. Additionally, if the State should experience difficulty in borrowing funds in anticipation of the receipt of State taxes in order to pay State aid to municipalities and school districts in the State, including the Town, in this year or future years, the Town may be affected by a delay in the receipt of State aid until sufficient State taxes have been received by the State to make State aid payments.

On March 11, 2021 the Federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) was enacted. The ARPA is a \$1.9 trillion economic stimulus bill intended to contain the COVID-19 pandemic and accelerate the nation's economic recovery. The ARPA provides the State with \$12.6 billion in general aid ("recovery aid"), as well as \$17.2 billion in categorical aid for schools, universities, childcare, housing and other purposes. (See "*Impact of COVID-19*", herein). The enacted 2021-22 State budget provides for an increase in All Funds spending of 9.7% over 2020-21, relying on a combination of the new federal funding and revenue-raising initiatives to avoid cuts and support additional investments.

The 2023 enacted budget continues the support of the pandemic recovery with over \$2 billion in one-time investments, including: \$800 million for the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP), \$800 million for hospitals, \$250 million in utility arrear assistance, \$125 million in homeowner and landlord assistance and \$25 million in other one-time, non-recurring investments.

The State receives a substantial amount of federal aid for health care, education, transportation and other governmental purposes, as well as federal funding to respond to, and recover from, severe weather events and other disasters. Many of the policies that drive this federal aid may be subject to change under the federal administration and the current Congress. Current federal aid projections, and the assumptions on which they rely, are subject to revision in the future as a result of changes in federal policy, the general condition of the global and national economies and other circumstances.

Should the Town fail to receive State aid expected from the State in the amounts and at the times expected, occasioned by a delay in the payment of such monies, the Town is authorized by the Local Finance Law to provide operating funds by borrowing in anticipation of the receipt of uncollected State aid.

The following table sets forth the percentage of the Town’s General Fund revenue comprised of State aid for each of the fiscal years 2019 through 2023, inclusive.

<u>Fiscal Year Ending</u> <u>December 31:</u>	<u>Total General</u> <u>Fund Revenue</u>	<u>State Aid</u>	<u>State Aid To</u> <u>Revenues (%)</u>
2019	\$4,110,577	\$133,584	3.25
2020	4,143,776	224,927	5.43
2021	4,451,492	205,592	4.62
2022	4,675,960	279,647	5.98
2023	4,686,161	126,591	2.70

Sources: Audited Financial Statements (2019-2023)

Expenditures

The major categories of expenditure for the Town are General Government Support, Public Safety, Transportation, Economic Assistance and Opportunity, Home and Community Services, Culture and Recreation, Employee Benefits and Debt Service. A summary of the expenditures for the five most recently completed fiscal years may be found in Appendix A hereof.

Employee Pension System

Substantially all employees of the Town are members of the New York State and Local Employees’ Retirement System (“ERS”) or the State and Local Police and Fire Retirement System (“PFRS”), which together are known as the “Retirement System”. The Retirement System is a cost-sharing multiple public employer retirement system. The obligation of employers and employees to contribute and the benefits to employees are governed by the New York State Retirement System and Social Security Law (the “Retirement System Law”). The Retirement System offers a wide range of plans and benefits which are related to years of service and final average salary, vesting of retirement benefits, death and disability benefits and optional methods of benefit payments. All benefits vest after five years of credited service. The Retirement System Law generally provides that all participating employers in the Retirement System are jointly and severally liable for any unfunded amounts. Such amounts are collected through annual billings to all participating employers. Generally, all employees, except certain part-time employees, participate in the Retirement System. The Retirement System is non-contributory with respect to members hired prior to July 27, 1976. All members hired on or after July 27, 1976 and before January 1, 2010 must contribute three percent of their gross annual salary towards the costs of retirement programs until they attain ten years in the Retirement System, at such time contributions become voluntary. On December 10, 2009, then Governor Paterson signed into law the creation of a new Tier 5, which is effective for new ERS employees hired on or after January 1, 2010. New ERS employees in Tier 5 contribute 3% of their salaries. Tier 5 employees will vest in the system after ten years of employment and will continue to make employee contributions throughout employment.

On March 16, 2012, Governor Cuomo signed into law the new Tier 6 pension program, effective for new ERS employees hired after April 1, 2012. The Tier 6 legislation provides for increased employee contribution rates of between 3% and 6%, an increase in the retirement age from 62 years to 63 years, a readjustment of the pension multiplier, and a change in the time period for final average salary calculation from 3 years to 5 years. Tier 6 employees will vest in the system after five years of employment and will continue to make employee contributions throughout employment.

Pension reform legislation changed the billing cycle for employer contributions to the ERS retirement system to match budget cycles of the Town. Under the previous method, the Town was not provided with required payment until after the budget was implemented. Under the reforms implemented, the employer contribution for a given fiscal year is based on the value of the pension fund on the prior April 1, instead of the following April 1. As a result, the Town is notified of and can include the actual cost of the employer contribution in its budget. Legislation also required a minimum payment of 4.5% of payroll each year, including years in which investment performance of the fund would make a lower employer contribution possible.

In addition, the pension payment date for all local governments was changed from December 15 to February 1 and permits the legislative body of a municipality to establish a retirement contribution reserve fund for the purpose of financing retirement contributions in the future. The New York State Retirement System has advised the Town that municipalities can elect to make employer contribution payments in December or the following February, as required. If such payments are made in December prior to the scheduled payment date in February, such payments may be made at a discount amount.

In the event of capital market declines, the State’s Retirement System portfolio may experience negative investment performance and severe downward trends in market earnings. As a result, the employer contribution rate for the State’s Retirement System may be higher than the minimum contribution rate established in the past. The State calculates contribution amounts based upon a five-year rolling average. To mitigate the past increases in the employer contribution rate, various forms of legislation has been enacted that would permit local governments to borrow a portion of their required payments from the State pension plan.

The Town does not have outstanding amortization payments to the Retirement System.

The Town is required to contribute an actuarially determined rate. The required contributions for the five most recently completed fiscal years and the budgeted amounts for the current fiscal year are as follows:

Required Contributions to the Retirement Systems

Fiscal Year Ending <u>December 31:</u>	<u>ERS</u>	<u>PFRS</u>
2019	\$206,885	\$70,903
2020	207,958	68,382
2021	228,235	88,332
2022	167,477	77,714
2023	194,137	72,604
2024 (Budgeted)	235,200	90,500

Source: Town Officials.

Other Post Employment Benefits

The Town provides post-retirement healthcare benefits to various categories of former employees. These costs may be expected to rise substantially in the future.

GASB Statement No. 75 (“GASB 75”) of the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (“GASB”), requires state and local governments to account for and report their costs associated with post-retirement healthcare benefits and other non-pension benefits (“OPEB”). GASB 75 generally requires that employers account for and report the annual cost of the OPEB and the outstanding obligations and commitments related to OPEB in essentially the same manner as they currently do for pensions. Under previous rules, these benefits have generally been administered on a pay-as-you-go basis and have not been reported as a liability on governmental financial statements. Only current payments to existing retirees were recorded as an expense.

School districts and Boards of Cooperative Education Services, unlike other municipal units of government in the State, have been prohibited from reducing retiree health benefits or increasing health care contributions received or paid by retirees below the level of benefits or contributions afforded to or required from active employees. This protection from unilateral reduction of benefits had been extended annually by the New York State Legislature until recently when legislation was enacted to make permanent these health insurance benefit protections for retirees. Legislative attempts to provide similar protection to retirees of other local units of government in the State have not succeeded as of the date hereof. Nevertheless, many such retirees of all varieties of municipal units in the State do presently receive such benefits.

GASB 75 requires that state and local governments adopt the actuarial methodologies to determine annual OPEB costs. Annual OPEB cost for most employers will be based on actuarially determined amounts that, if paid on an ongoing basis, generally would provide sufficient resources to pay benefits as they come due.

During the year ended December 31, 2018, the Town adopted GASB 75, which supersedes and eliminates GASB 45. Under GASB 45, based on actuarial valuation, an annual required contribution (“ARC”) will be determined for each state or local government. The ARC is the sum of (a) the normal cost for the year (the present value of future benefits being earned by current employees) plus (b) amortization of the unfunded accrued liability (benefits already earned by current and former employees but not yet provided for), using an amortization period of not more than 30 years. If a municipality contributes an amount less than the ARC, a net OPEB obligation will result, which is required to be recorded as a liability on its financial statements.

GASB 75 establishes new standards for recognizing and measuring OPEB liabilities, deferred outflows of resources, deferred inflows of resources, and expense/expenditures to provide more transparent reporting and useful information about the liability and cost of benefits. Municipalities and school districts are required to account for OPEB within the financial statements rather than only noted in the footnotes as previously required by GASB 45. It is measured as of a date no earlier than the end of the employer’s prior fiscal year and no later than the employer’s current fiscal year. The discount rate is based on 20-year, tax exempt general obligation municipal bonds. There is no amortization of prior service cost.

For the fiscal year ended December 31, 2018, the Town implemented GASB 75. The implementation of this Statement resulted in the reporting of the entire actuarial accrued liability for other post-employment benefits. The Town’s total OPEB liability at December 31, 2023 is as follows:

Total OPEB Liability at Dec 31, 2022	<u>\$6,010,863</u>
Charges for the Year:	
Service Cost	291,648
Interest	256,560
Changes of Benefit Terms	0
Differences between expected and actual experience in measurement of OPEB liability	52,492
Changes in Assumptions or Other Inputs	393,544
Benefit Payments	<u>(116,407)</u>
Net Changes in total OPEB liability	<u>877,838</u>
Total OPEB Liability at Dec 31, 2023	<u><u>\$6,888,701</u></u>

Actuarial valuation will be required every 2 years for OPEB plans with more than 200 members, every 3 years, if there are less than 200 members.

REAL PROPERTY TAX INFORMATION

Real Property Taxes

The Town derives a major portion of its revenues from a tax on real property (see “Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balance” in Appendix A, herein.) Property taxes accounted for approximately 53.75% of total general fund revenues, for the fiscal year ended 2023. On June 24, 2011, the Tax Levy Limit Law was enacted, which imposes a tax levy limitation upon the municipalities, school districts and fire districts in the State, including the Town, without providing an exclusion for debt service on obligations issued by municipalities and fire districts, including the Town. (See “*Tax Levy Limit Law*” herein).

The following table presents the tax rates for each of the last five fiscal years.

	Tax Rates				
	(per \$1,000 Assessed Valuation)				
	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2024</u>
County	\$3.74	\$3.83	\$3.58	\$3.51	\$3.32
Town Wide	4.85	5.04	5.23	5.25	5.34
Ambulance	0.22	0.18	0.43	0.48	0.55
Highway	2.29	1.96	2.31	2.44	3.40
Part Town	0.13	0.84	0.02	0.01	0.00
Fort Montgomery Fire	1.94	1.97	1.99	2.00	2.02
Fort Montgomery Light	0.20	0.18	0.16	0.18	0.19
School	21.66	22.01	21.93	21.91	22.47
Village	10.53	10.61	10.51	10.83	11.56

The following table sets forth the percentage of the Town's General Fund revenue (excluding other financing sources) comprised of real property taxes for each of the fiscal years 2019 through 2023.

Fiscal Year Ending <u>December 31:</u>	<u>Total Revenue</u>	<u>Property Taxes</u>	<u>Property Taxes To Revenues (%)</u>
2019	\$4,110,577	\$2,313,738	56.29
2020	4,143,776	2,336,692	56.39
2021	4,451,492	2,555,309	57.40
2022	4,675,960	2,559,318	54.73
2023	4,686,161	2,518,824	53.75

Sources: Audited Financial Statements (2019-2023)

Tax Collection Procedure

Town tax bills, which include the County levy, are mailed on or about January 1 of each year, and may be paid without penalty or interest charge on or before January 31. Penalties for delinquent payment are imposed at the rate of 1% for bills paid in February 2% for bills paid in March. After March 31, all unpaid taxes and the penalties thereon must be paid to the County Commissioner of Finance, and an additional penalty of 5% is added thereto.

Pursuant to the Real Property Tax Law, the Town retains from the first tax collections an amount sufficient to satisfy the amounts levied for all Town purposes. The balance is then paid to the County Commissioner of Finance. In April, the Town files a report of uncollected taxes with the County Commissioner of Finance. In the event the Town does not collect sufficient amounts to satisfy all Town purposes, the County is permitted under the Local Finance Law to issue tax anticipation notes to provide funds to pay delinquent Town items to the Town.

School District taxes are billed in September and payable without penalty to September 30th. Penalty for delinquent payment are imposed at a rate of 1% for bills paid in October and 2% for bills paid of November 1st through 5th. After November 5th, unpaid School District taxes are returned to the County Treasurer and relieved on the County Tax Roll with a 7% penalty added.

The full amount of the Town tax levies are guaranteed by the County.

Tax Levy Limit Law

Prior to the enactment of Chapter 97 of the New York Laws of 2011 (the "Tax Levy Limit Law") on June 24, 2011, all the taxable real property within the Town had been subject to the levy of ad valorem taxes to pay the bonds and notes of the Town and interest there without limitation as to rate or amount. However, the Tax Levy Limit Law imposes a tax levy limitation upon the Town for any fiscal year commencing after January 1, 2012, without providing an exclusion for debt service on obligations issued by the Town. As a result, the power of the Town to levy real estate taxes on all the taxable real property within the Town is subject to statutory limitations, according to the formulas set forth in Tax Levy Limit Law.

The following is a brief summary of certain relevant provisions of the Tax Levy Limit Law. The summary is not complete and the full text of the Tax Levy Limit Law should be read in order to understand the details and implications thereof.

The Tax Levy Limit Law imposes a limitation on increases in the real property tax levy of the Town, subject to certain exceptions. The Tax Levy Limit Law permits the Town to increase its overall real property tax levy over the tax levy of the prior year by no more than the "Allowable Levy Growth Factor", which is the lesser of one and two one-hundredths or the sum of one plus the Inflation Factor; provided, however that in no case shall the levy growth factor be less than one. The "Inflation Factor" is the quotient of: (i) the average of the 20 National Consumer Price Indexes determined by the United States Department of Labor for the twelve-month period ending six months prior to the start of the coming fiscal year minus the average of the National Consumer Price Indexes determined by the United States Department of Labor for the twelve-month period ending six months prior to the start of the prior fiscal year, divided by: (ii) the average of the National Consumer Price Indexes determined by the United States Department of Labor for the twelve-month period ending six months prior to the start of the prior fiscal year, with the result expressed as a decimal to four places. The Tax Levy Limit Law also provides for adjustments to be made to the Town's tax levy based upon changes in the assessed value of the taxable real property in the Town. Additionally, the Town will be permitted to carry forward a certain portion of its unused tax levy capacity from the prior year. The Town is required to calculate its tax levy limit for the upcoming year in accordance with the provision described above and provide all relevant information to the New

York State Comptroller prior to adopting its budget. The Tax Levy Limit Law sets forth certain exclusions to the real property tax levy limitation of the Town, including exclusions for tort judgments payable by the Town. The governing board of the Town may adopt a budget that exceeds the tax levy limit for the coming fiscal year, only if the governing board of the Town first enacts, by a vote of at least sixty percent of the total voting power of the Town Board, a local law to override such limit for such coming fiscal year.

The Tax Levy Limit Law does not contain an exception from the levy limitation for the payment of debt service on either outstanding general obligation bonds or notes of the Town or such indebtedness incurred after the effective date of the Tax Levy Limit Law. As such, there can be no assurances that the Tax Levy Limit Law will not come under legal challenge for violating (i) Article VIII, Section 12 of the State Constitution for not providing an exception for debt service on obligations issued prior to the enactment of the Tax Levy Limit Law, (ii) Article VIII, Section 10 of the State Constitution by effectively eliminating the exception for debt service to general real estate tax limitations, and (iii) Article VIII, Section 2 of the State Constitution by limiting the pledge of its faith and credit by a municipality or school district for the payment of debt service on obligations issued by such municipality or school district.

Large Taxable Properties
2024 Assessment Roll ^a

<u>Name</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Assessed Valuation</u>
Orange & Rockland	Utility	\$16,381,393
State of New York	Utility	12,769,200
Central Hudson	Utility	11,155,183
CSX Corporation	Commercial	6,550,874
West Point Realty Inc.	Commercial	6,004,000
Sidamon Eristoff C	Commercial	5,053,900
Highland Greens MHP LLC	Commercial	3,850,000
Highland Falls Preservation LP	Commercial	3,425,000
MRS Realty Corp	Commercial	2,679,000
On the Square Apartments Inc.	Commercial	<u>2,610,000</u>
Total ^b		<u><u>\$70,478,550</u></u>

a. Assessment Roll established in 2023 for levy and collection of taxes in 2024.

b. Represents 13.40% of the 2024 Taxable Assessed Valuation of the Town.

LITIGATION

In common with other towns, the Town from time to time receives notices of claim and is party to litigation. In the opinion of the Town Attorney, unless otherwise set forth herein and apart from matters provided for by applicable insurance coverage, there are no significant claims or actions pending in which the Town has not asserted a substantial and adequate defense, nor which, if determined against the Town, would have an adverse material effect on the financial conditions of the Town.

CYBERSECURITY

The Town, like many other public and private entities, relies on technology to conduct its operations. As a recipient and provider of personal, private, or sensitive information, the Town faces multiple cyber threats including, but not limited to, hacking, viruses, malware and other attacks on computer and other sensitive digital networks and systems. To mitigate the risk of business operations impact and/or damage from cyber incidents or cyber-attacks, the Town invests in various forms of cybersecurity and operational controls; however, no assurances can be given that such security and operational control measures will be completely successful to guard against cyber threats and attacks. The results of any such attack could impact business operations and/or damage Town digital networks and systems and the costs of remedying any such damage could be substantial.

IMPACT OF COVID-19

The American Rescue Plan Act (“ARPA”), a \$1.9 trillion COVID-19 relief package includes \$350 billion federal aid to state, local and territorial governments to keep their frontline workers employed, distribute the vaccine, increase testing, reopen schools and maintain vital services. The American Rescue Plan also includes an additional \$1,400 payment to eligible individuals and families, enhanced unemployment aid, rental and utility assistance to low and moderate income households, an increase in food stamp benefits, additional funding for child care and an increase in child care tax credits.

Although the ARPA provides for funds to be paid to the State, it is not possible to predict whether any future federal legislation will contain reduction in other federal aid to the State. Any reduction in Federal funding levels could have a materially adverse impact on the State budget. In addition to the potential fiscal impact of policies that may be proposed and adopted by the new administration and Congress, the State budget may be adversely affected by other actions taken by the federal government, including audits, disallowances, and changes to federal participation rates or other Medicaid rules.

TAX MATTERS

Opinion of Bond Counsel

In the opinion of Hawkins Delafield & Wood LLP, Bond Counsel to the District, under existing statutes and court decisions and assuming continuing compliance with certain tax certifications described herein, (i) interest on the Notes is excluded from gross income for federal income tax purposes pursuant to Section 103 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the “Code”), and (ii) interest on the Notes is not treated as a preference item in calculating the alternative minimum tax under the Code, however, interest on the Notes is included in the “adjusted financial statement income” of certain corporations that are subject to the alternative minimum tax under Section 55 of the Code. The Tax Certificate of the District (the “Tax Certificate”), which will be delivered concurrently with the delivery of the Notes, will contain provisions and procedures relating to compliance with applicable requirements of the Code. In rendering its opinion, Bond Counsel has relied on certain representations, certifications of fact, and statements of reasonable expectations made by the District in connection with the Notes, and Bond Counsel has assumed compliance by the District with certain ongoing provisions and procedures set forth in the Tax Certificate relating to compliance with applicable requirements of the Code to assure the exclusion of interest on the Notes from gross income under Section 103 of the Code.

In addition, in the opinion of Bond Counsel to the Town, under existing statutes, interest on the Notes is exempt from personal income taxes of New York State and its political subdivisions, including The City of New York.

Bond Counsel expresses no opinion as to any federal, state or local tax consequences arising with respect to the Notes, or the ownership or disposition thereof, except as stated above. Bond Counsel renders its opinion under existing statutes and court decisions as of the issue date, and assumes no obligation to update, revise or supplement this opinion to reflect any action thereafter taken or not taken, any fact or circumstance that may thereafter come to its attention, any change in law or interpretation thereof that may thereafter occur, or for any other reason. Bond Counsel expresses no opinion as to the consequence of any of the events described in the preceding sentence or the likelihood of their occurrence. In addition, Bond Counsel expresses no opinion on the effect of any action taken or not taken in reliance upon an opinion of other counsel regarding federal, state or local tax matters, including, without limitation, exclusion from gross income for federal income tax purposes of interest on the Notes.

Certain Ongoing Federal Tax Requirements and Certifications

The Code establishes certain ongoing requirements that must be met subsequent to the issuance and delivery of the Notes in order that interest on the Notes be and remain excluded from gross income under Section 103 of the Code. These requirements include, but are not limited to, requirements relating to use and expenditure of gross proceeds of the Notes, yield and other restrictions on investments of gross proceeds, and the arbitrage rebate requirement that certain excess earnings on gross proceeds be rebated to the federal government. Noncompliance with such requirements may cause interest on the Notes to become included in gross income for federal income tax purposes retroactive to their issue date, irrespective of the date on which such noncompliance occurs or is discovered. The Town, in executing the Tax Certificate, will certify to the effect that the Town will comply with the provisions and procedures set forth therein and that it will do and perform all acts and things necessary or desirable to assure the exclusion of interest on the Notes from gross income under Section 103 of the Code.

Certain Collateral Federal Tax Consequences

The following is a brief discussion of certain collateral federal income tax matters with respect to the Notes. It does not purport to address all aspects of federal taxation that may be relevant to a particular owner of a Note. Prospective investors, particularly those who may be subject to special rules, are advised to consult their own tax advisors regarding the federal tax consequences of owning and disposing of the Notes.

Prospective owners of the Notes should be aware that the ownership of such obligations may result in collateral federal income tax consequences to various categories of persons, such as corporations (including S corporations and foreign corporations), financial institutions, property and casualty and life insurance companies, individual recipients of Social Security and railroad retirement benefits, individuals otherwise eligible for the earned income tax credit, and taxpayers deemed to have incurred or continued indebtedness to purchase or carry obligations the interest on which is excluded from gross income for federal income tax purposes. Interest on the Notes may be taken into account in determining the tax liability of foreign corporations subject to the branch profits tax imposed by Section 884 of the Code.

Original Issue Discount

“Original issue discount” (“OID”) is the excess of the sum of all amounts payable at the stated maturity of a Note (excluding certain “qualified stated interest” that is unconditionally payable at least annually at prescribed rates) over the issue price of that maturity. In general, the “issue price” of a maturity (a note with the same maturity date, interest rate, and credit terms) means the first price at which at least 10 percent of such maturity was sold to the public, i.e., a purchaser who is not, directly or indirectly, a signatory to a written contract to participate in the initial sale of the Notes. In general, the issue price for each maturity of Notes is expected to be the initial public offering price set forth in this Official Statement. Bond Counsel further is of the opinion that, for any Notes having OID (a “Discount Note”), OID that has accrued and is properly allocable to the owners of the Discount Notes under Section 1288 of the Code is excludable from gross income for federal income tax purposes to the same extent as other interest on the Notes. In general, under Section 1288 of the Code, OID on a Discount Note accrues under a constant yield method, based on periodic compounding of interest over prescribed accrual periods using a compounding rate determined by reference to the yield on that Discount Note. An owner’s adjusted basis in a Discount Note is increased by accrued OID for purposes of determining gain or loss on sale, exchange, or other disposition of such Discount Note. Accrued OID may be taken into account as an increase in the amount of tax-exempt income received or deemed to have been received for purposes of determining various other tax consequences of owning a Discount Note even though there will not be a corresponding cash payment.

Owners of Discount Notes should consult their own tax advisors with respect to the treatment of original issue discount for federal income tax purposes, including various special rules relating thereto, and the state and local tax consequences of acquiring, holding, and disposing of Discount Notes.

Note Premium

In general, if an owner acquires a note for a purchase price (excluding accrued interest) or otherwise at a tax basis that reflects a premium over the sum of all amounts payable on the note after the acquisition date (excluding certain “qualified stated interest” that is unconditionally payable at least annually at prescribed rates), that premium constitutes “note premium” on that note (a “Premium Note”). In general, under Section 171 of the Code, an owner of a Premium Note must amortize the bond and note premium over the remaining term of the Premium Note, based on the owner’s yield over the remaining term of the Premium Note, determined based on constant yield principles (in certain cases involving a Premium Note callable prior to its stated maturity date, the amortization period and yield may be required to be determined on the basis of an earlier call date that results in the lowest yield on such bond and note). An owner of a Premium Note must amortize the note premium by offsetting the qualified stated interest allocable to each interest accrual period under the owner’s regular method of accounting against the note premium allocable to that period. In the case of a tax-exempt Premium Note, if the note premium allocable to an accrual period exceeds the qualified stated interest allocable to that accrual period, the excess is a nondeductible loss. Under certain circumstances, the owner of a Premium Note may realize a taxable gain upon disposition of the Premium Note even though it is sold or redeemed for an amount less than or equal to the owner’s original acquisition cost. Owners of any Premium Note should consult their own tax advisors regarding the treatment of bond and note premium for federal income tax purposes, including various special rules relating thereto, and state and local tax consequences, in connection with the acquisition, ownership, amortization of bond and note premium on, sale, exchange, or other disposition of Premium Notes.

Information Reporting and Backup Withholding

Information reporting requirements apply to interest on tax-exempt obligations, including the Notes. In general, such requirements are satisfied if the interest recipient completes, and provides the payor with, a Form W-9, “Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification,” or if the recipient is one of a limited class of exempt recipients. A recipient not otherwise exempt from information reporting who fails to satisfy the information reporting requirements will be subject to “backup withholding,” which means that the payor is required to deduct and withhold a tax from the interest payment, calculated in the manner set forth in the Code.

For the foregoing purpose, a “payor” generally refers to the person or entity from whom a recipient receives its payments of interest or who collects such payments on behalf of the recipient.

If an owner purchasing Note through a brokerage account has executed a Form W-9 in connection with the establishment of such account, as generally can be expected, no backup withholding should occur. In any event, backup withholding does not affect the excludability of the interest on the Notes from gross income for federal income tax purposes. Any amounts withheld pursuant to backup withholding would be allowed as a refund or a credit against the owner’s federal income tax once the required information is furnished to the Internal Revenue Service.

Miscellaneous

Tax legislation, administrative actions taken by tax authorities, or court decisions, whether at the federal or state level, may adversely affect the tax-exempt status of interest on the Notes under federal or state law or otherwise prevent beneficial owners of the Notes from realizing the full current benefit of the tax status of such interest. In addition, such legislation or actions (whether currently proposed, proposed in the future, or enacted) and such decisions could affect the market price or marketability of the Notes.

Prospective purchasers of the Notes should consult their own tax advisors regarding the foregoing matters.

LEGAL MATTERS

Legal matters incident to the authorization, issuance and sale of the Notes will be subject to the final approving opinion of the law firm of Hawkins Delafield & Wood LLP, Bond Counsel to the Town. Said opinion will be available at the time of delivery of the Notes, and will be substantially in the form set forth in Appendix C.

DISCLOSURE UNDERTAKING

At the time of the delivery of the Notes, the Town will provide an executed copy of its Undertaking to Provide Notice of Events substantially in the form set forth in Appendix D.

The Town reserves the right to amend or modify the Undertaking under certain circumstances set forth therein; provided that, any such amendment or modification will be done in a manner consistent with Rule 15c2-12 as then in effect.

RATING

The Notes are not rated. The Town does not have an outstanding long-term rating.

MUNICIPAL ADVISOR

Munistat Services, Inc. (the “Municipal Advisor”), is a Municipal Advisor, registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Municipal Securities Rulemaking Board. The Municipal Advisor serves as independent municipal advisor to the Town on matters relating to debt management. The Municipal Advisor is a municipal advisory and consulting organization and is not engaged in the business of underwriting, marketing, or trading municipal securities or any other negotiated instruments. The Municipal Advisor has provided advice as to the plan of financing and the structuring of the Notes and has reviewed and commented on certain legal documents, including this Official Statement. The advice on the plan of financing and the structuring of the Notes was based on materials provided by the Town and other sources of information believed to be reliable. The Municipal Advisor has not audited, authenticated, or otherwise verified the information provided by the Town or the information set forth in this Official Statement or any other information available to the Town with respect to the appropriateness, accuracy, or completeness of disclosure of such information and no guarantee, warranty, or other representation is made by the Municipal Advisor respecting the accuracy and completeness of or any other matter related to such information and this Official Statement.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Additional information may be obtained upon request from the office of Kelly Pecoraro, Town Comptroller, Town of Highlands, Town Hall, 254 Main Street, Highland Falls, NY 10928, telephone number (845) 446-4280 x325, email: kpecoraro@highlands-ny.gov or from the office of Munistat Services, Inc., 12 Roosevelt Avenue, Port Jefferson Station, New York 11776, telephone number (631) 331-8888 and website: <https://www.munistat.com>.

Munistat Services, Inc. may place a copy of this Official Statement on its website at www.munistat.com. Unless this Official Statement specifically indicates otherwise, no statement on such website is included by specific reference or constitutes a part of this Official Statement. Munistat Services, Inc. has prepared such website information for convenience, but no decisions should be made in reliance upon that information. Typographical or other errors may have occurred in converting original source documents to digital format, and neither the Town nor Munistat Services, Inc. assumes any liability or responsibility for errors or omissions on such website. Further, Munistat Services, Inc. and the Town disclaim any duty or obligation either to update or to maintain that information or any responsibility or liability for any damages caused by viruses in the electronic files on the website. Munistat Services, Inc. and the Town also assume no liability or responsibility for any errors or omissions or for any updates to dated website information.

Any statements in this Official Statement involving matters of opinion or estimates, whether or not expressly stated, are intended as such and not as representations of fact. No representation is made that any of such statements will be, in fact, realized. This Official Statement is not to be construed as a contract or agreement between the Town and the original purchasers or owners of any of the Notes.

The preparation and distribution of this Official Statement has been authorized by the resolutions of the Town which delegate to the Town Supervisor the power to sell and issue the Notes.

TOWN OF HIGHLANDS, NEW YORK

By: s/s MERVIN R. LIVSEY
Town Supervisor and Chief Fiscal Officer
Town of Highlands
Highland Falls, New York

November , 2024

APPENDIX A

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

.

Balance Sheet
General Town Funds

Fiscal Year Ending December 31, 2023

	Town-Wide General Fund	Town Outside Village Fund	Highway Fund	Water Fund	Sewer Fund
Assets:					
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 1,393,119	\$ 1,796,837	\$ 454,450	\$ 46,578	\$ 816,786
Restricted Cash	928,730	82,395	210,087	100,721	51,503
Accounts Receivable	37,069	170	19,465	126,243	274,327
Leases Receivable	259,727				
Due from Other Funds	1,564,075	100,000			
Due from other Governments	6,098	308,686			
Prepaid Expenses	94,663	28,027	19,581	1,141	2,074
Total Assets	<u>\$ 4,283,481</u>	<u>\$ 2,316,115</u>	<u>\$ 703,583</u>	<u>\$ 274,683</u>	<u>\$ 1,144,690</u>
Liabilities:					
Accounts Payable	\$ 99,534	\$ 1,918	\$ 28,948	\$ 94,370	\$ 8,270
Accrued Liabilities	895,716	19,298	22,512	1,458	8,970
Due to Other Funds				364,075	
Deferred Inflows of Resources	258,534				
Total Liabilities	<u>1,253,784</u>	<u>21,216</u>	<u>51,460</u>	<u>459,903</u>	<u>17,240</u>
Fund Balance:					
Nonspendable	94,663	28,027	19,581	1,141	2,074
Restricted	928,730	82,395	210,087	100,721	51,503
Assigned	562,000	2,184,477	422,455		1,073,873
Unassigned	1,444,304			(287,082)	
Total Fund Balances	<u>3,029,697</u>	<u>2,294,899</u>	<u>652,123</u>	<u>(185,220)</u>	<u>1,127,450</u>
Total Liabilities and Fund Balances	<u>\$ 4,283,481</u>	<u>\$ 2,316,115</u>	<u>\$ 703,583</u>	<u>\$ 274,683</u>	<u>\$ 1,144,690</u>

Sources: Audited Financial Report of the Town (2023).

NOTE: This Schedule is NOT audited.

Balance Sheet
General Town Funds

Fiscal Year Ending December 31, 2022

	Town-Wide General Fund	Town Outside Village Fund	Highway Fund	Water Fund	Sewer Fund
Assets:					
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 2,762,255	\$ 1,451,595	\$ 317,078	\$ 55,214	\$ 848,116
Restricted Cash and Cash Equivalents	852,025	78,464	196,346	87,941	73,663
Accounts Receivable	36,138	350	286,883	259,437	209,680
Due from Other Funds	297,315	127,127			
Due from other Governments	6,095	284,898			
Prepaid Expenses	73,043	28,235	17,661	982	1,823
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Total Assets	<u>\$ 4,026,871</u>	<u>\$ 1,970,669</u>	<u>\$ 817,968</u>	<u>\$ 403,574</u>	<u>\$ 1,133,282</u>
Liabilities:					
Accounts Payable	\$ 123,533	\$ 17,473	\$ 8,232	\$ 168,027	\$ 38,155
Accrued Expenditures and Other Liabilities	912,664	22,359	22,326	987	3,029
Due to Other Funds				424,442	
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Total Liabilities	<u>1,036,197</u>	<u>39,832</u>	<u>30,558</u>	<u>593,456</u>	<u>41,184</u>
Fund Balance:					
Nonspendable	73,043	28,235	17,661	982	1,823
Restricted	852,025	78,464	196,346	87,941	73,663
Assigned	266,839	1,824,138	573,403		1,016,612
Unassigned	1,798,767			(278,805)	
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Total Fund Balance	<u>2,990,674</u>	<u>1,930,837</u>	<u>787,410</u>	<u>(189,882)</u>	<u>1,092,098</u>
Total Liabilities and Fund Balances	<u>\$ 4,026,871</u>	<u>\$ 1,970,669</u>	<u>\$ 817,968</u>	<u>\$ 403,574</u>	<u>\$ 1,133,282</u>

Sources: Audited Financial Report of the Town (2022).

NOTE: This Schedule is NOT audited.

Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and Fund Balances
General Fund - Town Wide

	Fiscal Year Ended December 31:				
	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>
Revenues:					
Real Property Taxes	\$ 2,312,835	\$ 2,307,757	\$ 2,368,500	\$ 2,555,716	\$ 2,517,437
Real Property Tax Items	10,458	9,727	12,755	10,304	10,086
Non-Property Tax Items	35,937	34,620	34,065	54,153	33,041
Departmental Income	109,188	75,939	113,574	141,477	168,814
Use of Money and Property	30,747	26,757	7,638	20,120	61,132
Licenses & Permits	73,070	96,297	81,398	93,976	83,721
Fines & Forfeitures	282,396	127,209	112,110	149,122	158,741
Sale of Property & Compensation for Loss	8,593	35,065	10,727	2,988	5,116
Miscellaneous	169,555	274,325	247,544	235,381	264,865
State & Federal Aid	133,854	224,927	205,592	264,187	186,260
Total Revenues	<u>3,166,633</u>	<u>3,212,623</u>	<u>3,193,903</u>	<u>3,527,424</u>	<u>3,489,213</u>
Expenditures:					
General Government Support	794,905	848,840	855,712	863,801	898,142
Public Safety	131,336	138,906	108,612	139,134	127,935
Transportation	153,215	180,583	161,364	170,031	130,709
Economic Assistance and Opportunity	20,496	14,496	8,594	11,860	7,670
Culture and Recreation	450,681	407,950	454,625	506,450	477,503
Home and Community Services	750,222	791,226	858,501	915,000	967,567
Employee Benefits	590,601	636,577	695,762	722,325	749,714
Capital Outlay	7,200	247,746	5,400	426,735	19,902
Debt Service		17,835	38,924	73,674	71,048
Total Expenditures	<u>2,898,656</u>	<u>3,284,159</u>	<u>3,187,494</u>	<u>3,829,010</u>	<u>3,450,190</u>
Excess (Deficiency) of Revenues Over Expenditures	<u>267,977</u>	<u>(71,536)</u>	<u>6,409</u>	<u>(301,586)</u>	<u>39,023</u>
Other Financing Sources (Uses):					
Proceeds from Obligations		81,912		327,447	
Operating Transfers In					
Operating Transfers (Out)					
Total Other Financing Sources (Uses)	<u>0</u>	<u>81,912</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>327,447</u>	<u>0</u>
Change in Fund Balances	<u>267,977</u>	<u>10,376</u>	<u>6,409</u>	<u>25,861</u>	<u>39,023</u>
Fund Balance Beginning of Year	<u>2,768,165</u>	<u>3,036,142</u>	<u>2,958,404</u>	<u>2,964,813</u>	<u>2,990,674</u>
Fund Balance Adjustments	<u></u>	<u>(88,114)^a</u>	<u></u>	<u></u>	<u></u>
Fund Balance End of Year	<u>\$ 3,036,142</u>	<u>\$ 2,958,404</u>	<u>\$ 2,964,813</u>	<u>\$ 2,990,674</u>	<u>\$ 3,029,697</u>

Sources: Audited Financial Reports of the Town (2019-2023).

NOTE: This Schedule is NOT audited.

a. The Town implemented GASB 84, Fiduciary Activities in 2020. As a result, the Town recorded a cumulative effect adjustment.

Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and Fund Balances
General Fund - Town-Outside Village

	Fiscal Year Ended December 31:				
	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>
Revenues:					
Real Property Taxes	\$ 903	\$ 28,935	\$ 186,809	\$ 3,602	\$ 1,387
Non-Property Tax Items	927,158	865,251	1,050,976	1,118,093	1,158,296
Departmental Income	4,170	2,400	2,700	2,575	2,560
Intergovernmental Changes	1,428			1,241	
Use of Money and Property	2,744	5,122	12		3,931
Sale of Property & Compensation for Loss		130	3,747	3,115	27,547
Miscellaneous	7,541	29,315	13,345	4,450	3,227
State & Federal Aid				15,460	
Total Revenues	943,944	931,153	1,257,589	1,148,536	1,196,948
Expenditures:					
General Government Support	42,695	39,860	65,002	66,620	60,115
Public Safety	581,059	570,748	613,039	566,953	533,028
Public Health			30,237	30,720	31,639
Transportation	28,676	29,574			
Home and Community Services	1,538				
Employee Benefits	169,735	167,885	192,635	179,215	173,073
Capital Outlay		45,825		110,193	
Debt Service	23,414	33,861	21,924	35,032	35,031
Total Expenditures	847,117	887,753	922,837	988,733	832,886
Excess (Deficiency) of Revenues Over Expenditures	96,827	43,400	334,752	159,803	364,062
Other Financing Sources (Uses):					
Proceeds from Obligations		45,825		90,350	
Operating Transfers In					
Operating Transfers (Out)					
Total Other Financing Sources (Uses)	0	45,825	0	90,350	0
Change in Fund Balances	96,827	89,225	334,752	250,153	364,062
Fund Balance Beginning of Year	1,162,838	1,259,665	1,345,932	1,680,684	1,930,837
Fund Balance Adjustments		(2,958) ^a			
Fund Balance End of Year	\$ 1,259,665	\$ 1,345,932	\$ 1,680,684	\$ 1,930,837	\$ 2,294,899

Sources: Audited Financial Reports of the Town (2019-2023).

NOTE: This Schedule is NOT audited.

a. The Town implemented GASB 84, Fiduciary Activities in 2020. As a result, the Town recorded a cumulative effect adjustment.

**Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and Fund Balances
Highway Fund**

Fiscal Year Ended December 31:

	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>
Revenues:					
Real Property Taxes	\$ 613,683	\$ 709,928	\$ 671,230	\$ 675,463	\$ 755,237
Use of Money and Property	3,430	1,700	33	3,620	10,312
Sale of Property & Compensation for Loss	21,788	34,532		18,140	27,465
Miscellaneous		16,438	17,701	82,266	14,923
State & Federal Aid		124,519	473	286,883	
Total Revenues	<u>638,901</u>	<u>887,117</u>	<u>689,437</u>	<u>1,066,372</u>	<u>807,937</u>
Expenditures:					
General Government Support	895	849	852	741	768
Transportation	446,468	320,838	383,714	361,239	349,415
Employee Benefits	171,461	179,255	175,578	184,850	191,168
Capital Outlay	15,867	229,963	76,515	154,302	26,996
Debt Service	30,712	39,006	64,283	63,650	87,994
Total Expenditures	<u>665,403</u>	<u>769,911</u>	<u>700,942</u>	<u>764,782</u>	<u>656,341</u>
Excess (Deficiency) of Revenues Over Expenditures	<u>(26,502)</u>	<u>117,206</u>	<u>(11,505)</u>	<u>301,590</u>	<u>151,596</u>
Other Financing Sources (Uses):					
Proceeds from Obligations		40,956	76,515		
Operating Transfers In					
Operating Transfers (Out)					
Total Other Financing Sources (Uses)	<u>0</u>	<u>40,956</u>	<u>76,515</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Change in Fund Balances	<u>(26,502)</u>	<u>158,162</u>	<u>65,010</u>	<u>301,590</u>	<u>151,596</u>
Fund Balance Beginning of Year	<u>321,148</u>	<u>294,646</u>	<u>420,810</u>	<u>485,820</u>	<u>787,410</u>
Fund Balance Adjustments		<u>(31,998)^a</u>			<u>(286,883)^b</u>
Fund Balance End of Year	<u>\$ 294,646</u>	<u>\$ 420,810</u>	<u>\$ 485,820</u>	<u>\$ 787,410</u>	<u>\$ 652,123</u>

Sources: Audited Financial Reports of the Town (2019-2023).

NOTE: This Schedule is NOT audited.

a. The Town implemented GASB 84, Fiduciary Activities in 2020. As a result, the Town recorded a cumulative effect adjustment.

b. The Town recorded a prior period adjustment as of January 1, 2023 for the following item: Receivables Correction \$(286,883).

**Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and Fund Balances
Water Fund**

	Fiscal Year Ended December 31:				
	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>
Revenues:					
Department Income	\$ 538,841	\$ 505,735	\$ 504,595	\$ 570,572	\$ 513,771
Use of Money and Property	391	264	5	1,263	4,779
Miscellaneous	597	852	961	9,224	1,117
State & Federal Aid	8,977	8,716	7,511	33,921	12,860
Total Revenues	548,806	515,567	513,072	614,980	532,527
Expenditures:					
General Government Support	61	63	64	60	86
Home and Community Services	376,282	333,448	344,340	401,659	427,602
Employee Benefits	7,344	9,858	10,209	10,620	11,223
Capital Outlay				26,704	5,974
Debt Service	115,047	114,804	113,519	79,157	82,980
Total Expenditures	498,734	458,173	468,132	518,200	527,865
Excess (Deficiency) of Revenues Over Expenditures	50,072	57,394	44,941	96,780	4,662
Other Financing Sources (Uses):					
Operating Transfers In					
Operating Transfers (Out)					
Total Other Financing Sources (Uses)	0	0	0	0	0
Change in Fund Balances	50,072	57,394	44,941	96,780	4,662
Fund Balance Beginning of Year	(437,407)	(387,335)	(331,603)	(286,662)	(189,882)
Fund Balance Adjustments		(1,662) ^a			
Fund Balance End of Year	\$ (387,335)	\$ (331,603)	\$ (286,662)	\$ (189,882)	\$ (185,220)

Sources: Audited Financial Reports of the Town (2019-2023).

NOTE: This Schedule is NOT audited.

a. The Town implemented GASB 84, Fiduciary Activities in 2020. As a result, the Town recorded a cumulative effect adjustment.

Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and Fund Balances
Sewer Fund

	Fiscal Year Ended December 31:				
	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>
Revenues:					
Department Income	\$ 308,498	\$ 308,921	\$ 314,934	\$ 321,773	\$ 394,802
Use of Money and Property	713	419	9	1,062	2,839
Sale of Property and Compensation for Loss				885	4,191
Miscellaneous	1,834	24,043	670		
State & Federal Aid		125,000		17,531	17,310
Total Revenues	311,045	458,383	315,613	341,251	419,142
Expenditures:					
General Government Support	213	235	249	239	245
Home and Community Services	157,469	196,676	209,084	228,238	235,852
Employee Benefits	8,657	16,811	18,958	14,070	14,330
Capital Outlay	28,400	302,464		11,632	40,200
Debt Service		3,000	17,121	115,981	161,838
Total Expenditures	194,739	519,186	245,412	370,160	452,465
Excess (Deficiency) of Revenues Over Expenditures	116,306	(60,803)	70,201	(28,909)	(33,323)
Other Financing Sources (Uses):					
Operating Transfers In					68,675
Operating Transfers (Out)					
Total Other Financing Sources (Uses)	0	0	0	0	68,675
Change in Fund Balances	116,306	(60,803)	70,201	(28,909)	35,352
Fund Balance Beginning of Year	995,303	1,111,609	1,050,806	1,121,007	1,092,098
Fund Balance Adjustments					
Fund Balance End of Year	\$ 1,111,609	\$ 1,050,806	\$ 1,121,007	\$ 1,092,098	\$ 1,127,450

Sources: Audited Financial Reports of the Town (2019-2023).

NOTE: This Schedule is NOT audited.

Budget Summaries
General Fund

	Fiscal Year Ended December 31:	
	2023	2024
Revenues:		
Real Property Taxes	\$ 2,517,437	\$ 2,553,214
Real Property Tax Items	10,000	10,000
Non Property Tax Items	35,000	34,000
Departmental Income	136,457	163,165
Use of Money & Property	8,800	48,200
Licenses and Permits	58,115	72,865
Fines and Forfeitures	150,000	150,000
Sale of Property and Compensation for Loss	1,800	1,800
Miscellaneous Local Sources	224,794	227,794
State Aid	110,000	75,000
Federal Aid	40,000	40,000
Appropriated Fund Balance	266,839	562,000
Total Revenues	\$ 3,559,242	\$ 3,938,038
Expenditures:		
General Support	\$ 972,022	\$ 1,042,308
Public Safety	165,782	154,024
Transportation	138,910	181,580
Economic Assistance and Opportunity	21,900	16,600
Culture and Recreation	527,832	514,728
Home and Community Services	955,545	1,067,928
Employee Benefits	706,200	860,000
Debt Service	71,051	
Other Budgetary Purposes		100,870
Total Expenditures	\$ 3,559,242	\$ 3,938,038

Sources: Adopted Budgets of the Town.

TOWN OF HIGHLANDS
APPENDIX B
AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2023

[▶ Click Here For 2023 Audit](#)

NOTE: SUCH FINANCIAL REPORT AND OPINIONS WERE PREPARED AS OF THE DATE THEREOF AND HAVE NOT BEEN REVIEWED AND/OR UPDATED IN CONNECTION WITH THE PREPARATION AND DISSEMINATION OF THIS OFFICIAL STATEMENT.

APPENDIX C

FORM OF BOND COUNSEL OPINION

FORM OF OPINION OF BOND COUNSEL

Hawkins Delafield & Wood LLP
7 World Trade Center
250 Greenwich Street
New York, New York 10007

November , 2024

The Town Board
Town of Highlands, in the
County of Orange, New York

Ladies and Gentlemen:

We have acted as Bond Counsel to the Town of Highlands (the “Town”), in the County of Orange, a municipal corporation of the State of New York, and have examined a record of proceedings relating to the authorization, sale and issuance of the \$4,000,000 Bond Anticipation Notes – 2024 (the “Notes”) of the Town dated and delivered on the date hereof.

In such examination, we have assumed the genuineness of all signatures, the authenticity of all documents submitted to us as originals and the conformity with originals of all documents submitted to us as copies thereof. Based upon and subject to the foregoing, and in reliance thereon, as of the date hereof, we are of the following opinions:

1. The Notes are valid and legally binding general obligations of the Town for which the Town has validly pledged its faith and credit and, unless paid from other sources, all the taxable real property within the Town is subject to the levy of ad valorem real estate taxes to pay the Notes and interest thereon, subject to certain statutory limitations imposed by Chapter 97 of the New York Laws of 2011, as amended. The enforceability of rights or remedies with respect to such Notes may be limited by bankruptcy, insolvency, or other laws affecting creditors’ rights or remedies heretofore or hereafter enacted.

2. Under existing statutes and court decisions and assuming continuing compliance with certain tax certifications described herein, (i) interest on the Note is excluded from gross income for federal income tax purposes pursuant to Section 103 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the “Code”), and (ii) interest on the Note is not treated as a preference item in calculating the alternative minimum tax under the Code; however, interest on the Note is included in the “adjusted financial statement income” of certain corporations that are subject to the alternative minimum tax under Section 55 of the Code.

The Code establishes certain requirements that must be met subsequent to the issuance of the Notes in order that the interest on the Notes be and remain excludable from gross income under Section 103 of the Code. These requirements include, but are not limited to, requirements relating to the use and expenditure of proceeds of the Notes, restrictions on the investment of proceeds of the Notes prior to expenditure and the requirement that certain earnings be rebated to the federal government. Noncompliance with such requirements may cause the interest on the Notes to become subject to federal income taxation retroactive to the date of issuance thereof, irrespective of the date on which such noncompliance occurs or is ascertained.

On the date of issuance of the Notes, the Town will execute a Tax Certificate relating to the Notes containing provisions and procedures pursuant to which such requirements can be satisfied. In executing the Tax Certificate, the Town represents that it will comply with the provisions and procedures set forth therein and that it will do and perform all acts and things necessary or desirable to assure that the interest on the Notes will, for federal income tax purposes, be excluded from gross income.

In rendering the opinion in this paragraph 2, we have relied upon and assumed (i) the material accuracy of the Town's certifications, statements of intention and reasonable expectations, and certifications of fact contained in the Tax Certificate with respect to matters affecting the status of the interest on the Notes, and (ii) compliance by the Town with the procedures and certifications set forth in the Tax Certificate as to such tax matters.

3. Under existing statutes, interest on the Notes is exempt from personal income taxes of New York State and its political subdivisions, including The City of New York.

We express no opinion as to any other federal, state or local tax consequences arising with respect to the Notes, or the ownership or disposition thereof, except as stated in paragraphs 2 and 3 above. We render our opinion under existing statutes and court decisions as of the date hereof, and assume no obligation to update, revise or supplement our opinion to reflect any action hereafter taken or not taken, any fact or circumstance that may hereafter come to our attention, any change in law or interpretation thereof that may hereafter occur, or for any other reason. We express no opinion as to the consequence of any of the events described in the preceding sentence or the likelihood of their occurrence. In addition, we express no opinion on the effect of any action taken or not taken in reliance upon an opinion of other counsel regarding federal, state or local tax matters, including, without limitation, exclusion from gross income for federal income tax purposes of interest on the Notes.

We give no assurances as to the accuracy, sufficiency or completeness of the Preliminary or Final Official Statement or any proceedings, reports, correspondence, financial statements or other documents, containing financial or other information relative to the Town which have been or may hereafter be furnished or disclosed to purchasers of said Notes.

Very truly yours,

APPENDIX D

FORM OF UNDERTAKING TO PROVIDE NOTICES OF EVENTS

UNDERTAKING TO PROVIDE NOTICES OF EVENTS

Section 1. Definitions

“EMMA” shall mean the Electronic Municipal Market Access System implemented by the MSRB.

“Financial Obligation” shall mean “financial obligation” as such term is defined in Rule 15c2-12.

“GAAP” shall mean generally accepted accounting principles as in effect from time to time in the United States.

“Holder” shall mean any registered owner of the Securities and any beneficial owner of Securities within the meaning of Rule 13d-3 under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934.

“Issuer” shall mean the Town of Highlands, in the County of Orange, a municipal corporation of the State of New York.

“MSRB” shall mean the Municipal Securities Rulemaking Board established in accordance with the provisions of Section 15B(b)(1) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934.

“Purchaser” shall mean the financial institution referred to in the Certificate of Determination, executed by the Town Supervisor as of November 20, 2024.

“Rule 15c2-12” shall mean Rule 15c2-12 under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended through the date of this Undertaking, including any official interpretations thereof.

“Securities” shall mean the Issuer’s **\$4,000,000 Bond Anticipation Notes – 2024**, dated November 20, 2024, maturing November 20, 2025, and delivered on the date hereof.

Section 2. Obligation to Provide Notices of Events. (a) The Issuer hereby undertakes, for the benefit of Holders of the Securities, to provide or cause to be provided either directly or through Munistat Services, Inc., 12 Roosevelt Avenue, Port Jefferson Station, New York 11776 to the Electronic Municipal Market Access (“EMMA”) System implemented by the Municipal Securities Rulemaking Board established pursuant to Section 15B(b)(1) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, or any successor thereto or to the functions of such Board contemplated by the Undertaking, in a timely manner, not in excess of ten (10) business days after the occurrence of any such event, notice of any of the following events with respect to the Securities:

- (i) principal and interest payment delinquencies;
- (ii) non-payment related defaults, if material;
- (iii) unscheduled draws on debt service reserves reflecting financial difficulties;

- (iv) unscheduled draws on credit enhancements reflecting financial difficulties;
- (v) substitution of credit or liquidity providers, or their failure to perform;
- (vi) adverse tax opinions, the issuance by the Internal Revenue Service of proposed or final determinations of taxability, Notices of Proposed Issue (IRS Form 5701-TEB) or other material notices of determinations with respect to the tax status of the Securities, or other material events affecting the tax status of the Securities;
- (vii) modifications to rights of Securities holders, if material;
- (viii) Bond calls, if material, and tender offers;
- (ix) defeasances;
- (x) release, substitution, or sale of property securing repayment of the Securities, if material;
- (xi) rating changes;
- (xii) bankruptcy, insolvency, receivership or similar event of the Issuer;

Note to clause (12): For the purposes of the event identified in clause (12) above, the event is considered to occur when any of the following occur: the appointment of a receiver, fiscal agent or similar officer for the Issuer in a proceeding under the U.S. Bankruptcy Code or in any other proceeding under state or federal law in which a court or government authority has assumed jurisdiction over substantially all of the assets or business of the Issuer, or if such jurisdiction has been assumed by leaving the existing governing body and officials or officers in possession but subject to the supervision and orders of a court or governmental authority, or the entry of an order confirming a plan of reorganization, arrangement or liquidation by a court or governmental authority having supervision or jurisdiction over substantially all of the assets or business of the Issuer;

- (xiii) the consummation of a merger, consolidation, or acquisition involving the Issuer or the sale of all or substantially all of the assets of the Issuer, other than in the ordinary course of business, the entry into a definitive agreement to undertake such an action or the termination of a definitive agreement relating to any such actions, other than pursuant to its terms, if material;
- (xiv) appointment of a successor or additional trustee or the change of name of a trustee, if material;

- (xv) incurrence of a financial obligation, as defined in Rule 15c2-12, of the Town, if material, or agreement to covenants, events of default, remedies, priority rights, or other similar terms of a financial obligation of the Issuer, any of which affect security holders, if material; and
- (xvi) default, event of acceleration, termination event, modification of terms, or other similar events under the terms of a financial obligation of the Issuer, any of which reflect financial difficulties.

(b) Nothing herein shall be deemed to prevent the Issuer from disseminating any other information in addition to that required hereby in the manner set forth herein or in any other manner. If the Issuer disseminates any such additional information, the Issuer shall have no obligation to update such information or include it in any future materials disseminated hereunder.

(c) Nothing herein shall be deemed to prevent the Issuer from providing notice of the occurrence of certain other events, in addition to those listed above, if the Issuer determines that any such other event is material with respect to the Securities; but the Issuer does not undertake to commit to provide any such notice of the occurrence of any event except those events listed above.

Section 3. Remedies. If the Issuer shall fail to comply with any provision of this Undertaking, then any Holder of Securities may enforce, for the equal benefit and protection of all Holders similarly situated, by mandamus or other suit or proceeding at law or in equity, this Undertaking against the Issuer and any of the officers, agents and employees of the Issuer, and may compel the Issuer or any such officers, agents or employees to perform and carry out their duties under this Undertaking; provided that the sole and exclusive remedy for breach of this Undertaking shall be an action to compel specific performance of the obligations of the Issuer hereunder and no person or entity shall be entitled to recover monetary damages hereunder under any circumstances. Failure to comply with any provision of this Undertaking shall not constitute an event of default on the Securities.

Section 4. Parties in Interest. This Undertaking is executed to assist the Purchaser to comply with (b)(5) of the Rule and is delivered for the benefit of the Holders. No other person shall have any right to enforce the provisions hereof or any other rights hereunder.

Section 5. Amendments. Without the consent of any holders of Securities, the Issuer at any time and from time to time may enter into any amendments or changes to this Undertaking for any of the following purposes:

- (a) to comply with or conform to any changes in Rule 15c2-12 (whether required or optional);
- (b) to add a dissemination agent for the information required to be provided hereby and to make any necessary or desirable provisions with respect thereto;
- (c) to evidence the succession of another person to the Issuer and the assumption of any such successor of the duties of the Issuer hereunder;

- (d) to add to the duties of the Issuer for the benefit of the Holders, or to surrender any right or power herein conferred upon the Issuer;
- (e) to cure any ambiguity, to correct or supplement any provision hereof which may be inconsistent with any other provision hereof, or to make any other provisions with respect to matters or questions arising under this Undertaking which, in each case, comply with Rule 15c2-12 or Rule 15c2-12 as in effect at the time of such amendment or change;

provided that no such action pursuant to this Section 5 shall adversely affect the interests of the Holders in any material respect. In making such determination, the Issuer shall rely upon an opinion of nationally recognized bond counsel.

Section 6. Termination. This Undertaking shall remain in full force and effect until such time as all principal, redemption premiums, if any, and interest on the Securities shall have been paid in full or the Securities shall have otherwise been paid or legally defeased in accordance with their terms. Upon any such legal defeasance, the Issuer shall provide notice of such defeasance to the EMMA System. Such notice shall state whether the Securities have been defeased to maturity or to redemption and the timing of such maturity or redemption.

Section 7. Undertaking to Constitute Written Agreement or Contract. This Undertaking shall constitute the written agreement or contract for the benefit of Holders of Securities, as contemplated under Rule 15c2-12.

Section 8. Governing Law. This Undertaking shall be governed by the laws of the State of New York determined without regard to principles of conflict of law.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned has duly authorized, executed and delivered this Undertaking as of **November 20, 2024**.

TOWN OF HIGHLANDS, NEW YORK

By: _____
Town of Supervisor