

**TOWN OF SENECA**  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024

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The Regular Meeting of the Seneca Town Board, County of Ontario, State of New York was held at 3675 Flint Road, Stanley, NY 14561 on the 21<sup>st</sup> day of May 2023 at 7:30 pm.

<b>PRESENT</b>	
Drew Wickham	Town Supervisor
Jason Mosher	Councilman
Howard Keeney	Councilman
Jim Malyj	Councilman
Jesse Orbaker	Councilman
Haley Eagley	Town Clerk/ Tax Collector
Shana Jo Hilton	Assessor/ Bookkeeper
Kathy Mastellar	Town Historian
Jim Lawson	Highway Superintendent
Randy Coolbaugh	Water Superintendent
Dan Jones	Ontario County Landfill

Supervisor Wickham called the regular monthly meeting to order at 7:30 pm. Supervisor Wickham led the Pledge of Allegiance and Roll Call was dispensed with CEO Hoover noted as necessarily absent.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Supervisor Wickham looked for a motion to approve the agenda for tonight's meeting. The approval was motioned by Councilman Mosher and seconded by Councilman Keeney. Motion carried. Supervisor Wickham added an item under Communications. Item G: Casella Host Fee Audit Report for 2023. Councilman Orbaker made a motion to accept the amended agenda and that was seconded by Councilman Malyj.

Privilege of the floor was offered, and nobody wished to speak at this time.

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**SUPERVISOR'S REPORT**

Supervisor Wickham explained that further down the agenda, there would be a communication regarding a concern for streetlights with a town resident. In reference to that, Supervisor Wickham said that he had reached out to the people at NYSEG that he was dealing with regarding the change to LED streetlights and they told him that the work order numbers have gone out to the contractor, and they should be starting that conversion soon. He also noted that some residents in Hall have reported the outages to NYSEG and they will try to replace the bulbs that are out in the meantime. Supervisor Wickham said that they communicated to NYSEG which areas had bigger outages so that they can attempt to target those areas first.

Supervisor Wickham looked for a motion to approve the Minutes for the April 16<sup>th</sup> Regular and May 7<sup>th</sup> Special Meetings. Councilman Keeney made the motion and councilman Mosher seconded. Motion carried.

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**COMMUNICATIONS**

All communications were reviewed and are available to view during business hours at the Town Hall upon request.

**STREETLIGHT COMMUNICATION:** Clerk Eagley was contacted regarding a large outage of streetlights in Hall. She referred the resident to the Line Department at NYSEG to have them report those outages, noting that they need the Pole Identification Number and rough location of the pole. The resident received a response that NYSEG would work on it and hopefully fix those outages soon.

**DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

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**CASELLA:** Dan Jones was in attendance in place of Brian Sanders tonight. He started by apologizing for not having a written report. He said that construction season is in full swing right now. They're working on the cell and are just about done digging. He said probably a couple more weeks of digging and then they'll start working on the cell itself. The southwest corner issue has been sealed up and all of the pumps, air lines, and vac. Lines are in. He said it's all currently running the way it should.

Supervisor Wickham asked Mr. Jones when their best guess of having that cell up and running would be. Mr. Jones stated that it won't be usable until the first of the year, but they anticipate being done with construction (depending rain delays or other hold-ups) by the end of October or Mid-November. Then there is a 45 Day waiting period. The first of the year is pretty close to when this will be up and running.

Supervisor Wickham asked if they had enough air space to carry them through to the new cell. Mr. Jones said they should be fine.

Councilman Mosher asked if they would have to cut back on anything to make the existing space last longer and Mr. Jones didn't think they would need to and that they aren't expecting any problems.

**HIGHWAY:** Supervisor Wickham noted that it's nice to see other towns trading trucks back and forth during the busy season. Councilman Mosher asked if there were any updates on the Kidder Road project. Highway Superintendent Lawson explained that he has a meeting with the engineers soon for final design changes. Soil and Water are on board with the proposals and the state is also onboard. Councilman Mosher asked in a perfect world when we would start that project and Superintendent Lawson said probably August. He explained that if it doesn't happen by September, they can't take a chance on the rains, and they would store the materials here until Spring.

Councilman Mosher asked how long it would take for this project to be completed. Highway Superintendent Lawson said about a month.

**WATER:** Councilman Mosher commented on the sheet that Water Superintendent Coolbaugh added specifically for Water Project. He said it was nice to have it specifically laid out in the report for them.

Supervisor Wickham added that water education and knowledge is a tough area. He commended our PWMA Cordell Rasmussen for being able to take a week-long water course and come out of it testing 100%. He said that is a really outstanding accomplishment and that he was a great choice to add to our team.

Supervisor Wickham asked when we may see the new Olson Rd. tank get filled. Superintendent Coolbaugh said that hopefully by the middle to the end of June. He said that once the builders are done, the remaining pipe needs to get tied in and then pressure and leak testing gets done.

Supervisor Wickham commented on the view up on that hill since some of the woods have been cleared.

**TOWN CLERK:** Councilman Mosher commented that he appreciated seeing the letter that was sent to a resident regarding their pavilion deposit not being returned. Councilman Malyj wondered if we should consider charging a higher security deposit to cover ourselves a little better as ours is fairly low and wouldn't cover much in the event something was really abused. Councilman Mosher said that this has happened more than once with this specific individual and maybe it wouldn't be a bad idea to increase the deposit. Clerk Eagley commented that there really isn't a ton of issues in the Pavilion and most people do respect it. There are just a handful of instances where things are not taken care of and respected the way that they should be. Councilman Malyj commented that this amount may be a little outdated and was just wondering.

Supervisor Wickham explained that we could discuss the possibility of this, but it's probably fair to stay where it is.

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**AMBULANCE:** Mr. Gibeau was in attendance for the Ambulance. He said that the sitework is done for the new 40x40 building. He spoke with Jay Newswanger of Seneca Pole Barns who said that he was waiting for approval from the Town for the building permit. Once he has that, he can start construction. All materials for that building have been ordered and are delivered. He's hoping to get it started by the first week in June.

Mr. Gibeau stated that Sloth Electric is going to be their vendor in electricity. He said that all of the supplies have been ordered for that and he'll come in after Seneca Pole Barns is finished with construction. He said he's hoping that by the end of June or in July they will be operating from that site. They plan to push the parking lot project off until they recover from all of the initial purchases that they have to make to get this new location up and running.

He added that their fundraiser from the mailer is still doing well. He doesn't have the exact number, but he believes that they've brought in over \$20,000 so far.

The Ambulance Crew will be at the Memorial Day Parade in Middlesex this week. And last, but not least, they are still looking for volunteers if anybody is interested.

Supervisor Wickham looked for the motion to accept Supervisor, Town Clerk, and CEO Financial Reports. Councilman Malyj made the motion and Councilman Mosher seconded.

**NEW BUSINESS**

RES. NUMBER	TITLE	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	MOTION	SECOND
#49-24	Authorization to pay the 2023 Audited Vouchers	5	0	0	Councilman Keeney	Councilman Mosher
MOTION #1	Set Public Hearing for Local Law #2-2024	5	0	0	Councilman Orbaker	Councilman Malyj
#51-24	Award Bid for Olson Rd. Tank Rehab	5	0	0	Councilman Mosher	Councilman Orbaker
#52-24	Appoint Planning Board Member	4	0	1 <i>(Wickham)</i>	Councilman Mosher	Councilman Keeney
<p><b>#52-24:</b> Supervisor Wickham added, in full disclosure, that the proposed Planning Board Member, Ben Wickham, is his son. He is abstaining from voting on this resolution. He asked if anyone had any questions on that and Councilman Orbaker questioned our Nepotism Policy. Supervisor Wickham stated that we do have a Nepotism Policy which states that nobody shall employ or hire in any <b>full-time capacity</b> a relative of a Town Official or present employee of the town except as provided by law. Adding that our policy doesn't have anything regarding committees or boards or anything like that. Councilman Orbaker wanted to bring attention to this, on the record.</p> <p>Councilman Orbaker added that he does think that Ben is a great candidate, but he just wanted to make sure that if there were others interested, they were looked into as well. Supervisor Wickham said that nobody else really showed interest in being on this board. He appreciated that Councilman Orbaker brought it up on the record.</p>						

**OLD BUSINESS**

Supervisor Wickham included a Short Term Rental packet in the Board Member's folder tonight. This was the same packet that they received at the May 7<sup>th</sup>, Special Meeting. The only difference was that the suggestions turned into recommendations. He explained that he would like to discuss them. Based on some suggestions from a few constituents, Supervisor Wickham explained that he doesn't think they're ready to schedule a Public Hearing on this quite yet. He said he thinks there is more editing that needs to be done before the final stages and wants to make sure that people have more opportunities to express their concerns and opinions. He asked the board if it would make sense to have another workshop, then set a public hearing at the June Regular

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Meeting for the July Meeting. There was nothing further scheduled on this topic, but we will give updates on this as we continue.

Supervisor Wickham asked if anyone had any questions on this and all of the Board Members said they felt that all of the recommendations were reasonable.

- **Point #1: Residency and/or Local Property Manager available**
  - The owner of the property must be a New York State Resident or have a local Property Manager available with contact information if needed. He explained that we aren't intending to have thousands of these picked up by corporations.
  - Councilman Orbaker asked what would be considered "local" for property manager, adding that it would hopefully be someone closer than Syracuse-distance to answer any issues that come up. Supervisor Wickham explained that we may need to define what "local" is. Councilman Orbaker added that he wouldn't suggest the person have to be a Town of Seneca Resident, but maybe have a certain travel time to get to the property. Supervisor Wickham suggested maybe at least a resident of Ontario County. This will be discussed further.
- **Point #2: Quiet Hours Posted**
  - The Quiet Hours idea is primarily for the renters, so they know there is some responsibility there. During quiet hours, noise level at any neighboring residential property line shall not exceed 75 decibels. Supervisor Wickham explained that this is mostly just to give CEO Hoover a line in the sand to cut off what is "too loud" if someone calls a rental in.
- **Point #3: \$200.00 Annual Registration Fee, payable to the Town**
  - Supervisor Wickham asked the board if that was appropriate and looked for comments regarding whether the board felt that it was High or Low. Councilman Mosher commented that it seemed reasonable to him, and the other board member nodded in agreement that it was reasonable.
- **Point #4: Penalties for Violations**
  - Any owner is subject to penalties for violations made in a 12 month period. The first violation is \$200, the second violation is \$500, and the third violation is \$1,000 and revocation of the registration. Supervisor Wickham explained that he feels a 12 month period is reasonable as he doesn't believe these things should stick with the property owner forever.

Supervisor Wickham explained that we will probably take the recommendations that are currently in the document and tentatively lock them into "black and white". We are still taking recommendations and will be changing some items; however, the above points haven't raised any hesitation with the Board.

With that, Supervisor Wickham announced that we would not be making a nothing to set the Public Hearing for Short-Term Rentals as we are not ready to do that at this time. We, also, will not be scheduling a Special Meeting tonight as we have to find a time that works best for all Board Members. We will update all when we know.

**PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR**

Privilege of the floor was offered, and Mr. Townley added that he would like to be notified and involved in the special meetings and public hearings regarding Short Term Rentals as he's helped research and come up with some of the ideas in the document. He would like to share where they came up with the research and why. Another point Mr. Townley added was which zones where short term rentals would be allowed and how many in the town would be allowed. His suggestion would be to limit the amount in each area and break it up a bit. His reasoning for this idea is that there are areas that are being overrun by short term rentals and now are short on housing for the residents.

He would also like the board to think about going over the use of campers and tents on the property. Basically, saying that the person would be renting a "house", not the grounds to place campers and tents on.

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Another point that other towns had firmed up on is not allowing places to become a revolving door where it became a place for different people every single night. Giving a minimum-night stay to the Short Term Rentals.

On another note, Mr. Townley wanted the Town Board to consider the possibility of reviewing their definition of a home-based business in the Comprehensive Plan. Specifically stating that a household business in his mind would be inside the house or a small building outside and that his recommendation would be to put a maximum square footage to it, that is reasonable. Just because there's a home on the property doesn't make it a household business. He said the idea wasn't meant for a huge business on a residential property. Some examples that he sees fit for a home-based business would be a small hair salon, pet grooming, etc.

He also added for the Stanley Hall Gorham Ambulance to get in touch with Clerk Eagley about putting things on the website for them. Much like the local fire departments that have pages on the Town of Seneca website, he explained that he's talked to Clerk Eagley and she would be willing to make a page specifically for the Ambulance.

Moving on, Roslyn Grammar asked if anyone has looked at the Emergency Comprehensive Plan as the one on the Town Website is dated 2011. Supervisor Wickham stated that they've looked into it a little bit, but we will take a bigger look at that soon.

Supervisor Wickham added that all are invited to the Memorial Day Service we have here at The Memorial Park outside of the Town Hall. He said it is at 8:30 am on Monday, May 27<sup>th</sup>. The service usually lasts about 20-30 minutes and will be put on rain or shine (inside the Pavilion if needed).

Mr. Townley wanted to add one more thing before adjournment. He said that he, his wife, and a few others around are selling tickets for a raffle for Thrive to Survive. He said that the Grand Prize is a Jeep Compass from Friendly Dodge, Chrysler, Jeep in Geneva. The Second prize is \$3,000 and third prize is \$1,500. One ticket is \$30 or 3 tickets for \$75.

**ADJOURNMENT**

At 8:15 pm a motion was made by Councilman Keeney to adjourn the regular monthly meeting of the Town Board and the motion was seconded by Councilman Orbaker.

Respectfully,

Haley Eagley  
Town Clerk