

TOWN OF SENECA
Regular Town Board Meeting- Via Zoom Video Chat
 April 21st, 2020

The Regular Meeting of the Seneca Town Board, County of Ontario, State of New York was held on the 21st day of April, 2020 Via Zoom Video Chat at 7:30 PM.

PRESENT		Others Present	
Drew Wickham	Town Supervisor	Sue Campbell	Town Resident
Jason Mosher	Deputy Supervisor/ Councilman		
Howard Keeney	Councilman		
Jim Malyj	Councilman		
Jesse Orbaker	Councilman	Necessarily Absent	
Haley Eagley	Town Clerk/Tax Collector		
Shana Jo Hilton	Assessor/Bookkeeper		
Jerry Hoover	Code Enforcement Officer		
Jim Lawson	Highway Superintendent		
Brian Prater	Water Superintendent		

Supervisor Wickham called the regular meeting to order at 7:30 PM. The Supervisor led the Pledge of Allegiance with his own American Flag on screen for attendees to pledge to. Roll call was passed over as everyone in attendance was acquainted.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Supervisor Wickham looked for a motion to approve the April 21st, 2020 meeting agenda. Motioned by Councilman Mosher, Seconded by Councilman Keeney. Carried.

Supervisor Wickham stated that he has some additions to add to the agenda for an amendment. Under Supervisor’s Report add letter D, COVID-19 Budget Report. Also, under Supervisor’s Report add letter E, a Benton Water Request. Supervisor Wickham looked for motion to approve the amended agenda. Motioned by Councilman Mosher, Seconded by Councilman Malyj. Carried.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Supervisor offered privilege of the floor and nobody wished to speak at this time.

SUPERVISOR’S REPORT

COVID-19 COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT REPORT:

Supervisor Wickham stated that for around the last 6 weeks, they have had a county level conference call regarding COVID-19 on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. This last week they stopped doing Fridays. The purpose of these calls is to review what is going on and talk about any of the issues out there or anything that anyone was interested in addressing. Supervisor Wickham stated that these calls have been helpful. He also stated that there have not been many issues that they have had to deal with

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in the Town of Seneca and Ontario County as a whole. He shined a spotlight on our Code Enforcement Officer, Jerry Hoover as it is his duty to go out and check on non-permitted gatherings or non-essential jobs/jobsites. Supervisor Wickham was thankful that we have a great Code Enforcement Officer and that we stand by "educating first and forcing last". Supervisor Wickham stated that as the pandemic goes on, this may get tougher. Our Code Enforcement Office and Supervisor Wickham have been in constant contact about this ongoing issue and the Code Enforcement Officer has been on calls with neighboring towns as well.

Supervisor Wickham stated that the only area in the county that we have really had any trouble is at Ontario Center in Hopewell- the nursing facility. He made mention that there have been 4 deaths there (5 deaths counting the Monroe County resident that was here on rehab). Supervisor Wickham said that despite the issues, Ontario Center has been working extremely hard to mitigate them with the state involved. He stated that this issue accounts for a little over a third of our cases in Ontario County.

Supervisor Wickham stated that otherwise, we have been in really good shape. He has been in contact with our County Public Health Officer, Mary Beer and stated that we will see where Governor Cuomo takes us in the coming weeks. Supervisor Wickham asked if anybody had questions regarding COVID-19 and Councilman Mosher wished to speak.

Councilman Mosher asked Supervisor Wickham if there was any place in the county that people could go for testing. Supervisor Wickham said that this was a great question and that WE DO have places within the county that you can go for testing, but you must be referred by a doctor for testing. He made mention that if you were to call your doctor today and tell him that you had certain symptoms, if they didn't reach a certain threshold, you would be told that you have COVID-19, to shelter in place or quarantine, but that they would not send you to get a test. Supervisor Wickham stated that the only ones that are going to get tested are the ones that meet a certain threshold of symptoms that are at a level of almost needing hospitalization- then you can go get a test. As an example, Supervisor Wickham said that while we have around 80 confirmed cases, there are likely a lot more out in the community that have not been confirmed because there has not been a test on them.

Councilman Mosher followed up by asking Supervisor Wickham if he had heard anything about the Anti-Body Testing that the media has mentioned to date. Supervisor Wickham said that they have been talking about that and that Wegman's in the Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, Binghamton, and Albany areas were offering the anti-body testing. Supervisor Wickham said that the state was doing random Anti-Body (Finger Prick) testing of the people walking in and out of Wegman's in those areas to begin to come up with a rough statistical model of how many people may have actually had it versus how many reports we have.

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MEMORIAL DAY PLANNING:

Supervisor Wickham stated that he wanted to be honest and say that he has not done much planning because he is not sure it is going to be permitted to take place. He wants to see what happens over the next couple of weeks.

DAIGLER ENGINEERING HOST FEE AUDIT REPORT:

Supervisor Wickham stated that page #2 had the most information on it. He made mention that on the report is states that the number that Casella owed us is exactly what they paid us this year which is always a good thing. He reiterated that there's not usually a problem with this and we usually square up after the audit if needed, but this year matched dollar for dollar.

COVID-19 BUDGET REPORT:

Supervisor Wickham states that he has been getting a lot of information from the county and the state about some of the things that we can expect. He stated that he believes it is too early to quantify some of this stuff because we just do not know. Supervisor Wickham stated that he has been talking to our Bookkeeper, Shana Jo and some of the others and our budget is \$900,000 in sales tax revenue. He stated that this will be the largest area that takes a hit during the pandemic. Supervisor Wickham stated that depending on who you are listening to, the media is saying that it could be anywhere from a 30% hit to a 70% hit. He does not believe 70% is realistic, but just for the sake of math- they used 30% when thinking about the impact on our town which would take roughly \$300,000 away from the \$900,000. He mentioned that the Highway department had budgeted about \$180,000 dollars in CHIPS money from the state. Supervisor Wickham stated that as of now, they haven't said that we aren't getting all of that money however, watching the governor and seeing how he's been putting budget adjustment time tables out, he doubts that we will be able to keep that full \$180,000. Our Highway Superintendent Lawson told Supervisor Wickham that the Association of Highways made mention of a possible 25% cut in that money. Supervisor Wickham stated that if we remove the \$300,000 from the sales tax revenue and the \$180,000 from the CHIPS money- we are roughly a half a million dollars below what we budgeted in revenues.

Supervisor Wickham explained what this deficit means for us. He stated that we had a 4500 series truck budgeted in the Highway Department Budget that we were not sure we could get our hands on this year anyway. Highway Superintendent Lawson stated that he was planning on putting that purchase off which is \$80,000 that we planned on spending that will not be spent this year. Another item that they looked at was the \$150,000 that we budgeted for the driveway repave. Supervisor Wickham stated that the highway side of our driveway has parts that are getting bad however, talking with Highway Superintendent Lawson- he believes we can keep patching it for another year if we need to. With those two things removed from the budget- that is a \$230,000 savings that we are not going to spend this year. This brings the deficit from \$480,000 to roughly \$250,000.

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Supervisor Wickham stated that he believes we have 4 areas that we can work on to get that deficit back.

Reducing Expenses- the highway repair fund had \$500,000 budgeted in highway repairs with \$100,000 designated toward a culvert repair on Little Church Road. He stated that we just might not be able to pave and stone as many roads as we originally wanted to, but that the Little Church Culvert should probably get done this year. It will be a matter of adjustment and we may just need to let our highway department know if they will need to operate on a littler budget.

Reduce our Tax County Buydown- We had budgeted to buydown a half million dollars in county taxes like we have the past few years. We can reduce that or leave it the same.

Take the money out of the Tax Stabilization Fund- Supervisor Wickham stated that we could take the money out of this fund to cover the difference. We can do that by using the money to go toward the buydown so that we could keep the buydown at a half million.

Out of Fund Balance- Depending on how the year goes, we could do this.

Supervisor Wickham stated that his goal tonight was to give everyone the outline of what is facing us. He stated that he does not believe that we need to reduce personnel at this time. He said that we just got the Water Department where they need to be and we aren't spending a lot of money in the water department this year, but they do have a ton of work to do and they have their hands full. Supervisor Wickham stated that in highway, Jim Eldredge is out on disability at least until Mid-June making us one man down in Highway. They are discussing how they can get the mechanic work done that needs to be done in the shop and trying to figure out if they need to bring on any part-time help or not. Again, Supervisor Wickham stated that these are all just helpful ideas to think about for the future and he still believes it is too early to make major decisions at this point because they just do not know what's there. Highway Superintendent Lawson is aware of all that could possibly happen and will be conservative for the next few weeks.

Supervisor Wickham stated that he received an email from Congressman Reed and they are working on a stimulus package to aid County Governments and Municipalities and in that email was a projection of what the county might receive and then it broke down the county by each town and what they would receive from this. On that sheet, Supervisor Wickham stated that it showed the Town of Seneca receiving \$400,000 in aid. Which is about what we are trading off. Supervisor Wickham reiterated that there are too many things out there to make any decisions at this point and that he hopes by the time we meet in May; we will have a better idea. He stated that if there is a ton of new information in between meetings, then we will have an extra meeting if we need to. Supervisor Wickham asked if anyone had any questions and nobody wished to speak.

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BENTON WATER REQUEST:

Supervisor Wickham stated that he just wanted to give people an FYI that we received a request from Supervisor Prendergast in the Town of Benton. They received funding for a District #5 and he's requesting another 10,000 gallons of water. Supervisor Wickham, Brian Prater, and Jim Lawson are working on this with the Town of Geneva and he does not project it is going to be an issue. This will give us an opportunity to make sure our agreements with Benton are in place as well.

Supervisor Wickham looked for a motion to approve the minutes of the March 17th, 2020 meeting. Motioned by Councilman Keeney and seconded by Councilman Orbaker. Carried

<p>DEPARTMENT REPORTS</p>

The department reports are available to view upon request at the Town Hall and can be emailed to anyone who is interested in this time of Pandemic. Please reach out to our Town Clerk, Haley Eagley, if you are interested in viewing these.

CASELLA (Landfill Status Report): Supervisor Wickham stated that he had a meeting early last week (the week of 4/13) up on the hill with Brian Sanders, Brian Young (from the County), Carla Jordan, and Mark Johnson. Mark Johnson has come back out from Vermont to try and help get the odor issues under control. Supervisor Wickham stated that that they are doing some good things on odor mitigation. They had two hotspots there, one was on the haul road and the other was on the East side of the transfer station. They got the haul road completed and they are working on the East side of the transfer station. They said that if the weather cooperated then that hotspot should be completed within the next couple nice days- weather permitting. Supervisor Wickham stated that he feels like Mark Johnson and Brian Sanders have been the most knowledgeable about Landfill Operations that we have ever had here. Supervisor Wickham believes that they have great ideas coming and the county also feels that way. Supervisor Wickham asked if anyone had any questions regarding the landfill.

Councilman Mosher asked Supervisor Wickham if he had any constructive conversations with them about their tonnage and if they are being drastically impacted during this pandemic. Supervisor Wickham answered that they are down a little bit but not as bad as they were expecting. Supervisor Wickham stated that they would know more in a month.

Councilman Malyj asked what period that the odor citation came from- he wanted to know if the news media was drawing attention to something that happened month ago or if it was relatively new. Supervisor Wickham answered that the violation just came in last week. Councilman Malyj stated that he personally thinks the odor has been a little better the last few weeks.

Councilman Keeney asked if there have been any fines levied. Supervisor Wickham stated that there have been fines levied, but he is not sure what they are at this point. He stated that it gets levied to the

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county and that this one could be large. The county takes the hit, but Casella has to pay us for it, it's part of their OML Agreement.

With that, Supervisor Wickham looked for a motion to approve the Supervisor, CEO, and Town Clerk Reports. Councilman Mosher motioned and Councilman Keeney seconded. Carried.

NEW BUSINESS

Resolution Number	Resolution Title	Ayes	Nays	Absent	Motioned	Seconded	Carried?
# 57-20	2020 Audited Vouchers	5	0	0	Councilman Malyj	Councilman Orbaker	Yes
# 58-20	Direct Energy Bid	5	0	0	Councilman Keeney	Councilman Mosher	Yes

OLD BUSINESS

Supervisor Wickham asked Councilman Malyj if they had any updates on the bell committee. Councilman Malyj stated that he believes the construction is underway on the bell tower and that our Code Enforcement Officer knows more about that- referring to Jerry Hoover. CEO Hoover stated that he met with Mike Bruno about 2 weeks ago to go over the final color scheme and that he has started the construction. Our vouchers this month included a down payment to Mr. Bruno for starting. He expects it to be ready in about 6 to 8 weeks.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Supervisor Wickham gave privilege of the floor. Nobody wished to speak.

Supervisor Wickham looked for a motion to adjourn at 8:02 PM, councilman Mosher motioned and Councilman Orbaker seconded. Carried. Meeting was adjourned at 8:02 PM and Supervisor Wickham thanked everyone for being flexible with the online meeting and he hoped to see everyone in person. He thanked Town Clerk, Haley Eagley, for setting up the online meeting and distributing the necessary information to the board members without gathering.

Haley Eagley
Town Clerk