

TOWN OF SENECA
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
June 7th, 2022

The Special Meeting of the Seneca Town Board, County of Ontario, State of New York was held at 3675 Flint Road, Stanley, NY 14561 on the 7th, day of June 2022 at 7:00 PM.

PRESENT	
Drew Wickham	Town Supervisor
Jason Mosher	Deputy Supervisor/ Councilman
Jim Malyj	Town Councilman
Jesse Orbaker	Town Councilman
Haley Eagley	Town Clerk
Shana Jo Hilton	Town Assessor
Aaron Lattanzio	Causewave Community Partners

Supervisor Wickham called the special meeting to order at 7:00 PM. The Supervisor led the pledge of allegiance. Roll call was completed and everyone in attendance was acquainted. Supervisor Wickham noted that Councilman Keeney was necessarily absent.

The Supervisor looked for a motion to approve the agenda. Motion was made by Councilman Mosher and seconded by Councilman Malyj. There were no additions to the agenda.

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

SUPERVISOR'S REPORT

SUPERVISOR WICKHAM GAVE BACKGROUND FOR TONIGHT'S MEETING:

About a year and a half ago, the county started the process of developing a strategic plan for the Ontario County Solid Waste Department. A part of that plan is to decide the future of Solid Waste in Ontario County. The Ontario County Landfill has a large part of what we are doing with our solid waste today, but what will that look like in 2028? That question is what starts the conversation of how the town feels about what is going on and where the landfill should go in the future. The Town will be seeking input from the town residents. In trying to figure out the best way to gather the thoughts, questions, and discussion of our town residents, Supervisor Wickham reached out to a company that assists in that.

A non-profit organization called Causewave Community Partners has been working with Ontario County for a couple of years on several projects with experience in the Solid Waste Department. Supervisor Wickham reached out to Causewave for the Town and requested for them to assemble a proposal. Supervisor Wickham turned the meeting over to Mr. Aaron Lattanzio of Causewave to present his proposal to the Board.

AARON LATTANZIO, CAUSEWAVE COMMUNITY PARTNERS, LLC:

Mr. Lattanzio appreciated the opportunity to come and propose how his group would engage the community in discussion and feedback on the future of the landfill. A brief background of the company was given along with details on what they have done in the past and what they continue to do.

Mr. Lattanzio explained that they only work with other non-profits and municipalities or organizations of that type. Causewave Community Partners has been around since 1950, so there's a lot of history there. They are based in Rochester, but work with companies throughout the Finger Lakes spanning between the central and Western New York region.

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Causewave does several different types of programming and focuses on strategic planning, board development, marketing communications, and engaging people in feedback. They assist in holding Community Tables around different things like lead poisoning, traffic safety, water pollution and many other topics where there are coalitions working to address change around large matters.

They help educate the public and promote different events that are available to residents and different initiatives that can help residents dispose of waste in appropriate ways. Mr. Lattanzio, again, thanked the board and the public for allowing him to present. He explained that he will move forward with his proposal and allow questions after.

CAUSEWAVE COMMUNITY PARTNERS PROJECT PROPOSAL:

REASON AND NEED: The contract with the Ontario County Landfill expires in 2028 it is of high importance to our Town Board to get input and feedback from residents on how they feel or what we should do with the landfill going forward. Ontario County needs input and decision from the Seneca Town Board within the year in order to move forward with the additional planning. Although 2028 is a few years away, there is a lot of planning that needs to go in place before anything can happen.

KEY MESSAGE: A key message from Causewave regarding their mission with this project is that they are not pushing one way or the other on this topic. They are here to be as factual as possible with the information regarding the contract being up and that a decision needs to be made. There are two possible outcomes that the board will be deciding on: either we decide to close the landfill, or we expand the footprint of the landfill to continue operations as it cannot continue in the current footprint. Mr. Lattanzio pointed out the benefits that the residents get through the landfill revenue, followed by the impacts that residents will incur if the landfill closes.

INCLUDING RESIDENTS AND PUBLIC: Causewave Community Partners will start by holding 3 public discussion sessions, one at each Fire Hall in the Town. Town Residents will be required to pre-register for these events due to maximum occupancy and they will get a chance to speak if they so choose. Information on these sessions will be coming out as this project unfolds. There will also be an online stream of these meetings for those that are not residents. A few ways that they will be reaching out to residents is by placing information on our Town Website, utilizing social media, gathering feedback at the public sessions, postcard mailings, community posters, give tools to local business who also reach the public, utilize local media outlets to get information out and offer surveys for Town Residents.

COST: The numbers provided at this meeting are estimated based on the time the Causewave thinks will take them to help us through this process. There is a local fund that Causewave can utilize called the Hallowell Fund which offsets the cost for Non-Profit Organizations. Mr. Lattanzio explained that if there are mailings or any publications/prints that are done, those will be outside of this proposal and based on a separate invoice. As for the cost of their time and efforts in this project, the Hallowell Fund can cover just over half of the project cost, leaving the Town of Seneca with a total not to exceed \$2,375.00.

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QUESTIONS

- ★ **Councilman Orbaker verified with Mr. Lattanzio that the position of Causewave on this matter will be neutral through the process and that they wouldn't try to sway anybody in one direction or the other.**
 - Mr. Lattanzio explained that they will remain neutral in the process and that he doesn't feel that there's an intent to try and sway anybody. He explained that the outcome of this will not impact their ability to work with the Ontario County in the future, so there's really no reason for them to try and sway anybody one way or another. They are merely an impartial facilitator for this project.
- ★ **Councilman Mosher asked when Mr. Lattanzio would envision this project to be finished.**
 - Mr. Lattanzio explained that (assuming the board decides to move forward with this) a rough estimate for this project to be finished would be in late summer. They intend to hold the 3 public sessions in late June, then field the survey for roughly 3 weeks to allow time for results to come in, then present something around mid-august. He explained that there is room for adjustments, and this is not a hard timeline, but those times are what they are shooting for.
 - Supervisor Wickham added that Ontario County is very interested in what the Town of Seneca is looking to do and what the board is doing. Supervisor Wickham believes that our discussions will drive Ontario County in a significant way, so they will be waiting to hear from our process before they begin to discuss it on their end. He also explained that while we don't need or want to do this quickly, there's no reason in drawing this out over a long period of time. He said that most people have their opinions and that he would like to hear them. Once opinions are heard, we'll have to decide.
- ★ **Councilman Malyj asked if Causewave would go into more detail on the financial impact as this project unfolds. Adding that this Town is a large agricultural community, and a lot of people would be interested to know how it will affect agricultural land and infrastructure.**
 - Mr. Lattanzio said they will absolutely go into more detail at the public sessions being held and there are certainly more details to be provided. He also explained that we would post materials on the Town's website for people to view.

Some of our town residents were in attendance and gave some input before Mr. Lattanzio left for the evening. The major topics discussed were:

- ★ Large agriculture community- focusing on that and the effects to farmland.
- ★ Consistency- The same individuals from Causewave at all 3 discussion sessions.
- ★ Benefits of NOT having the Landfill extended (noise, odor, etc.).
- ★ Changing maintenance and conditions of the roads with less heavy trucks (if it were to close).
- ★ Are there any other options besides closing or extending the life? (Reducing intake, limiting what is acceptable, accepting town waste only, etc.)
- ★ Once the Town Board decides, is the decision definite? Can the state step in and choose otherwise?

Supervisor Wickham thanked all the residents for taking the time to attend the meeting and appreciated their input and thoughts. He reiterated that this decision is not all about money and financials. It's about quality of life and what we are willing to tolerate or what are we sick and tired of. This is the discussion we are going to have. Supervisor Wickham explained that this will be best served with the group like Causewave because they will help us get to the right answer and get good feedback.

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NEW BUSINESS

RES. NUMBER	TITLE	AYES	NAYS	ABSENT	MOTION	SECOND
#61-22	Approve Proposal with Causewave Community Partners, LLC.	4	0	1	Councilman Orbaker	Councilman Mosher
MOTION #1	Set Public Hearing for June 21, 2022, at 7:30 PM regarding the adoption of the Ontario County Fair Housing Plan	4	0	1	Councilman Malyj	Councilman Mosher
MOTION #2	Set Public Hearing for June 21, 2022, at 7:35 PM regarding the Community Block Development Grant	4	0	1	Councilman Mosher	Councilman Malyj

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

A Town Resident gave input that the Town Transfer Station driveway needs some attention. He pointed out the large potholes there. Supervisor Wickham said that he would work with Casella to see if they can address that.

A few other comments were offered regarding the landfill:

- ★ Can we mail a ballot to every town resident to get a vote on whether the Landfill should close or expand?
 - The answer to this is no. Supervisor Wickham asked this question to our Town Attorney and asked if we could hold a referendum. They cannot do something like that on this decision, but the best we can do, legally, is the survey that we plan to do when we have the public discussion sessions. The reason being is that the Town elected our Town Board to make decisions like this for our Town. It would be illegal to have a referendum in the state of New York.

With a few other comments made, Supervisor Wickham explained that either outcome will have major hurdles to jump over. It won't be easy to complete either side of this.

ADJOURNMENT

With nothing left to be said Councilman Orbaker made a motion that was Seconded by Councilman Malyj to adjourn the Special Town Board Meeting at 7:39 PM.

Respectfully,

Haley S. Eagley
Town Clerk
Town of Seneca