

TOWN OF SENECA
Regular Town Board Meeting
 June 16th, 2020

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 16th day of June, 2020 at 7:30 PM.

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

Supervisor Wickham called the regular meeting to order at 7:30 PM. The Supervisor led the Pledge of Allegiance. We shared a standing moment of silence for our friend and former Historian, Jane Wolfe, who recently passed away. May she Rest in Peace.

Roll call was passed over as everyone in attendance was acquainted.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Supervisor Wickham looked for a motion to approve the June 16th, 2020 meeting agenda. Motioned by Councilman Mosher, Seconded by Councilman Keeney. Carried.

Supervisor Wickham stated that he had an addition to add to the agenda for an amendment. Under Resolution #63-20 for warrants, Supervisor Wickham wanted to add a motion to approve an invoice for the new Seneca Castle Bell Tower that needed to be paid, but was received after board documents were prepared. 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.

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SUPERVISOR'S REPORT

WATER SYSTEM CAPITAL PROJECT UPDATE:

Supervisor Wickham stated that he has been in contact with The HUNT Group discussing where we are at and what is going on. He mentioned that due to the uncertain times, the Kashong Switch water tank appears to be on schedule for 2021 now.

Water Superintendent Prater stated that he met with MRB and Charlie Brockel from the Town of Geneva. They wanted to meet and discuss what is happening with our water project. He stated that they came out to look at and take pictures of our Kashong Switch site and Olson Road site. They are looking to design and possibly put out for bid in the Fall, start the Olson tank in the Spring, and Kashong Switch would follow.

Supervisor Wickham added that there is a hold on some of the funds for this project. He stated that this doesn't mean the funds aren't there, but we are looking for clarification on whether or not this funding could be pulled for any reason. Supervisor Wickham believes that the hold is just on grant disbursements, not the grants themselves. He said that there's no doubt COVID-19 had a huge impact on this project as normally we would be in high-gear at this point in the year, but we're at a slower pace and catching up with everything.

BUDGET UPDATE:

Supervisor Wickham stated that what we had budgeted for state highway aid was simply our CHIPS money at \$186,000. He stated that at the time we prepared the budget there was no guarantee for Pave NY or Extreme Weather so we didn't put those in the budget. He added that if we were paid at 100% for those things, we were eligible for \$42,400 from Pave NY and \$35,195 for Extreme Weather. He stated that the governor is likely to make a cut in those funds possibly up to 20%. We automatically took a 20% cut from those numbers, which gives us \$210,876 in State Highway Aid. We had budgeted \$186,000 originally, so we are expecting to be set with this.

For Sales Tax we had budgeted \$920,000, with a 20% cut this would be \$720,000. Supervisor Wickham spoke with Mary Gates recently and the county projects an 18.6% cut. She is still a little uncertain because some of the revenue might not have gotten included for May because they weren't required to file, so it may be better than that. Supervisor Wickham explained that he used 20% to be conservative and for easy numbers.

With 80% of our Sales Tax and 80% of our Total Highway Aid, that puts our total revenue down to about \$930,876 plus a little more. We had budgeted \$1,106,000. We had already made cuts to our spending back in March to cancel the truck purchase (\$95,000) and we decided not to do the Town Driveway (\$135,000), which is \$230,000 that we removed from our expense lines in the beginning of the COVID-19 Crisis. Our target revenue (\$1,106,000 minus \$230,000) is \$876,000 and at this point we're looking at a revenue of \$930,876, so we are expecting revenue over our target of almost \$55,000. Supervisor Wickham states that he believes we were prudent when we made our cuts, however; he does not think

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it will be necessary to make any additional cuts at this point in time. He explained that he does not expect any employee layoffs or furloughs and says that we should be able to move forward with where we are at, provided everything stays the course it is on.

Another thing that Supervisor Wickham wanted to discuss was where our contributions to date are in comparison to the model that he included for the Tax Stabilization fund. To bring the newer board members up to par, Supervisor Wickham explained that back when John Sheppard was our Town Supervisor, he established a tax stabilization fund. With the landfill we had additional revenue and at the time, we decided to give back a portion of it by buying down the county taxes and then we would place a portion of it in this tax stabilization fund. Supervisor Wickham stated that the theory behind the stabilization fund was with the end of the landfill estimated somewhere around 2029, we wouldn't be able to go without a town tax. So, there would be a Town Tax and there would be a County Tax. The thought was to step into it slowly by deferring the tax by using the money out of this fund over a period of years instead of having taxes shoot up, so that it was more of a gradual increase.

Supervisor Wickham acknowledged that he needs to adjust this model for several reasons.

1. There were rather steep increases in landfill revenue. Under 2020, the landfill revenue was entered for \$2.5 Million. We are budgeted for \$2 Million; we may come in a little higher than that but definitely not \$2.5 Million.
2. We haven't had anywhere near the growth in interest on the balance in the fund.

As of today, Supervisor Wickham states that this graph estimates that we should be around \$4-\$4.5 million dollar and we sit at \$3 Million. Our last major contribution was in 2018 when we contributed \$575,000. We contributed nothing in 2019 as we were gearing up for the water project, so we held our cash reserves back in order to meet the cash needs of the water project while we were waiting for reimbursement from the state. Supervisor Wickham said that he felt it was important to get this in front of the board so that we were on note of two things- (1) To have a little conversation about some of the issues that we face moving forward with this fund, and (2) He will be working on that for this budget season.

As we were moving into the water expansion projects, we learned quickly that this was *only* for tax stabilization and nothing else. Meaning, we can't just go get the money to use for the water project or anything else. It's strictly only to defer taxes. Supervisor Wickham threw a scenario out to the board

["The day after tomorrow, somebody comes up with a brilliant idea that somehow reduces the waste that we are taking in at Casella down to 10%. If the waste intake is 10% of what we are putting in there now, the life of the landfill could go long beyond 2029. We could be receiving landfill revenue beyond 2029. Here we sit with a tax stabilization fund that we can't get our hands on, but possibly don't need for quite some time."]

Supervisor Wickham explained that he's not looking for a decision with anything today or within the next 6 months, he just wanted to get the numbers out in front of the board so they could see where we are at. He also wanted to shed light on the fact that the cash that we've been setting aside for the water project will be largely reimbursed by the state. Once we get done, we'll have a pretty large fund balance

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to figure out what we want to do with it at that point in time. Supervisor Wickham stated that it's looking like it will be closer to 2021 for the end of the water project, so that's possibly when we'll think about the next contribution. Supervisor Wickham states that he needs to update this graph and tune it into present day. Councilman Mosher mentioned that he thinks it's a good time to give this account and graph attention. Due to COVID-19 and all of the changes that have been happening, we should be starting the conversation.

Councilman Malyj inquired about whether or not this was an interest bearing account or not. Supervisor Wickham responded to say yes and that the line share of this account sits at Canandaigua National Bank. He stated that the last time that these funds were up for renewal, they got really good rates locked in. These rates expire in the not-too-distant future, maybe early 2021.

Supervisor Wickham said that as long as we were talking about money, he wanted to share that we have about \$500,000 in Key Bank. He stated that Key Bank is not living up to their bargain of providing the collateral information that we want. Supervisor Wickham, along with Shana Jo and some advice from Councilman Mosher, made the decision to take that money out of Key Bank and place it in Community Bank. Key Bank is not local anymore and if they aren't going to give us what we need to collateralize a \$500,000 investment then we are going to get it out of there.

Supervisor Wickham looked for a motion to approve the minutes of the May 19th, 2020 meeting. Motioned by Councilman Keeney and seconded by Councilman Orbaker. Carried

<u>COMMUNICATIONS</u>

All communications are available to view at the Town Hall.

-We had a letter from the Public Health Department certifying the completed works on the water line that was installed at Melvin Hill.

-Town of Benton letter of request for the water agreement: Supervisor Wickham stated he and the Town of Benton Supervisor will draft an inter-municipal agreement.

-Notification from the NYS Board on Electric Generating and Siting: Waterloo Solar Project.

-June Inside Dirt Newsletter.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

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All reports are available to view at the Town Hall upon request.

HIGHWAY:

Initially there were no questions for Highway Superintendent Lawson's Report. Although Mr. Lawson was necessarily absent this evening, he gave Supervisor Wickham a detailed update so that he was able to answer any questions.

Supervisor Wickham wanted to point out that they profiled Brown Rd. and the South end of Gillette Rd. to correct the slope. He stated that they are absolutely loving the new grader that we purchased in the beginning of 2020. There are a ton of new possibilities with this grader. Highway worker, Mike Murphy, has been the one being trained in the machine. He is still learning everything that can be done with this piece of machinery, but he said that there's already so much that he can do with it. At this point in time they are just training Mike in the grader, but they will most likely train a backup person as well.

Supervisor Wickham reminded that board that Highway Superintendent Lawson has budgeted \$130,000 to pave Lake to Lake Road between County Road 5 and Little Church Road and that Seneca Stone Corp. quoted \$87,380 for both trucking and paving, a savings of over \$42,000. Now complete, the actual cost was just over \$75,000, a huge win for our highway budget with a savings of over 42% of the original budget.

With the oil prices down and companies holding their cards tight, Supervisor Wickham has encouraged Jim to consider any deal that there is due to COVID-19. In light of this, we have one more segment of Lake to Lake Road to pave. Highway Superintendent Lawson contacted Seneca Stone to inquire about the cost of this section, but figured that it would be \$150,000 - \$180,000 depending on what needed to be done on that stretch. Seneca Stone came back at \$112,000. Although this is a great price, Highway Superintendent Lawson is worried about going over budget with this (initially planning on completing this section next year). Supervisor Wickham stated the idea that if he reduces the highway budget next year by how much he went over this year, then it may work out. Before making any decisions on this specific project for this year, Highway Superintendent Lawson would like to evaluate a few other possible necessities.

Supervisor Wickham stated that we have a few options here between keeping the highway budget exactly where it is or we need to figure out what the most necessary project is for this year. Councilman Orbaker mentioned he would like to see us take advantage of the savings we may be able to get this year. He stated that if we already planned to spend the money next year and we can get a great drop in price this year, then we should think about doing it this year. All of the other board members seemed to agree that the price of oil is only going up from here and that it may even sky-rocket soon. Supervisor Wickham said that he felt enough of an agreement to have Highway Superintendent Lawson check into this. We might have to come together for a Special Board Meeting in the near future for this topic once Highway Superintendent Lawson looks into this.

WATER:

Supervisor Wickham asked what Water Superintendent Prater's plan was for the hydrants. Water Superintendent Prater said that they planned to start working on the hydrants the day after our meeting

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(June 17th, 2020). Water Superintendent Prater said they are going to see what is the most cost effective and quickest way to complete them and go from there.

CODE ENFORCEMENT:

CEO Hoover wanted to add that since he is holding off on the concrete for the basketball court, he wondered if he should get quotes on paving that parking lot since the price of pavement is still pretty low. CEO Hoover stated that if he can get a quote that is within his budget, then maybe we should look into getting it done this year.

Supervisor Wickham stated that CEO Hoover could certainly get his quotes for this parking lot; however, the key thing is to stay within his budget. He stated that since this is going to be a multi-year project, putting concrete in the basketball court or pavement in the parking lot isn't going to make a huge difference. CEO Hoover will price these options out and we will go from there.

A section in CEO Hoover's report raised the question of whether or not we were going to allow football, lacrosse and soccer. CEO Hoover has had requests about when the park was going to open up for sports. Governor Cuomo was pretty strict on allowing low impact sports only (such as baseball). We've decided not to open up until there is a greenlight for the other sports. CEO Hoover followed up with a question that "technically" the is not closed to those who would like to walk in the park as long as there is less than 25 people. CEO Hoover asked what happens if the sports showed up in groups of less than 25 on their own. Supervisor Wickham stated that the issue lies with the panting and heavy breathing and that we are just going to keep the park and pavilion off limits for everyone including organized events as there's no way to monitor. The Town of Seneca will be waiting until the proper phase opens to be confident that we won't be creating a mess. We will be addressing this at the next board meeting.

Supervisor Wickham wanted to draw attention to the very nice job that CEO Hoover and a few of our guys did at Seneca Castle Park with the Bell Tower. There will be a photo on our Facebook page and website to view.

LANDFILL REPORT:

Councilman Keeney asked if they had any plans to continue picking up the garbage that falls out of the truck. Supervisor Wickham stated that Route 5 & 20 is usually on a regular basis and the side roads get cleaned approximately once per month.

Supervisor Wickham stated that the work at the landfill has been going very well. He spoke of the maps that he's been able to look at from the drone coverage at Casella. These maps show exactly where the fugitive gas is coming out. Supervisor Wickham mentioned that he received information that most of the vertical wells are watered in and aren't even working. When Mark Johnson first came here, he said there were less than 15 wells that were actual functioning and they've currently been in the 70s for working wells, which is an amazing improvement.

Supervisor Wickham stated that Mark Johnson, the Vice President of Landfills for Casella Waste Systems, has been back up here managing the gas portion. While Brian Sanders, the current manager, has been

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living here and managing the landfill part very closely. Supervisor Wickham commented that both men are very passionate about fixing this landfill and they work great together.

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

NEW BUSINESS

Resolution Number	Resolution Title	Ayes	Nays	Absent	Motioned	Seconded	Carried?
# 63-20	2020 Audited Vouchers	5	0	0	Councilman Orbaker	Councilman Keeney	Yes
MOTION	Amended #63-20 for new motion to approve the Audited Vouchers. Two lighting districts were mistakenly left out the first time. Councilman Malyj presented the remaining two lighting districts.	5	0	0	Councilman Orbaker	Councilman Mosher	Yes
# 64-20	Appoint Jerad Campbell to ZBA	5	0	0	Councilman Malyj	Councilman Orbaker	Yes
#65-20	Appoint Bryant Jones to ZBA Alternate	5	0	0	Councilman Malyj	Councilman Keeney	Yes
# 66-20	Authorize Extension of 2019 Mowing Contract through 2020 mowing season	5	0	0	Councilman Mosher	Councilman Keeney	Yes

Supervisor Wickham wanted to add a motion to approve an additional invoice to the general fund. Clerk Eagley already had the board meeting information completed but another invoice had trickled in with a bit of urgency. The Town Board agreed and a motion was made to add the invoice for Ace Of Arts, who completed the fabrication of the Seneca Castle Bell Tower. This invoice was in the amount of \$1,940.00. Supervisor Wickham made the motion, Councilman Mosher seconded, and all agreed to carry.

OLD BUSINESS

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Nobody wished to speak at this time.

Supervisor Wickham looked for a motion to adjourn at 8:35 PM, councilman Mosher motioned and Councilman Malyj seconded. Carried. Meeting was adjourned at 8:35 PM.

Haley Eagley
 Town Clerk