

TOWN OF SENECA
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
June 20th, 2023

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 20TH day of June 2023 at 7:30 pm.

PRESENT	
Drew Wickham	Town Supervisor
Jason Mosher	Councilman/ Deputy Supervisor
Howard Keeney	Councilman
Jim Malyj	Councilman
Jesse Orbaker	Councilman
Haley Eagley	Town Clerk/ Tax Collector
Kathy Mastellar	Town Historian
Jim Lawson	Highway Superintendent
Randy Coolbaugh	Water Superintendent
Brian Sanders	Manager of the 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 a note that Assessor Hilton was 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 Keeney and seconded by Councilman Orbaker. Motion carried. Supervisor Wickham added an item under Supervisor's Report. Item D: Event Center/ Short Term Rental Moratorium. Councilman Mosher made a motion to accept the amended agenda and that was seconded by Councilman Malyj.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Supervisor Wickham looked for anyone who had questions, comments, or concerns. Amanda Gibeau was in attendance to give an update on the ambulance process and will keep in touch with Supervisor Wickham with any updates.

SUPERVISOR'S REPORT

HOUSING STUDY UPDATE: Supervisor Wickham gave an update on a housing study that is being done in Ontario County. He shared that the vacancy rating for housing in Ontario County is 3.4% and that anything below 5% needs improvement. There are some ways to improve that. One way is to bring businesses toward Ontario County and right now, bringing business to the county would also require more housing. He explained that if you're thinking about doing anything on a housing level, you'd really need sewer capacity to do so. Currently, the only area that has sewer in the Town of Seneca is the ½ - ¾ mile on Route 5 & 20 where the businesses are. Supervisor Wickham explained that if there's a chance of adding more housing in, there would need to be more than just septic as an option. This is not in motion at this time and there will be updates if and when this unfolds.

WATER RATE STUDY: Supervisor Wickham explained that the board had a copy of the water rate study in their folders. At this time, the only thing that we have been able to do is read it. We have not discussed this report at this time. Supervisor Wickham will give updates as this project unfolds.

POTENTIAL AGRICULTURAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENTS:

1. For quite some time there has been talk at Seedway in Hall that they're running out of space. Supervisor Wickham has been talking with Seedway and Ontario County to try and find something that would meet their needs. Seedway has interest in possibly wanting to build just outside of Hall on their property. Supervisor Wickham explained that in an effort to keep Seedway here, they are looking at options for Zoning to see if they can work their way through this. It is very much in the beginning stages, and we will keep all updated when anything is discussed.

TOWN OF SENECA
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
June 20th, 2023

2. There is a group of local Dairymen that are looking to work together on what they would call a Community Digester. A digester is something that manure is put in to make methane, the methane gets harvested off to produce energy. It's not economically feasible for a single Dairy Farmer to just put their own Digester in on their farm anymore, which is why there's a group of multiple looking to do this as a shared project.

EVENT CENTER/SHORT TERM TENTAL MORATORIUM: This was mentioned at a couple of our last meetings mainly because of a couple of developments that are happening within the Town. We are committed to looking at our Zoning and Comprehensive plan, we're just waiting for Hopewell and Gorham to get theirs buttoned up so that we can get some time with the County planner to come out and get us going. Supervisor Wickham is estimating a September or October timeframe for that. Once the process starts, there would be a 6-9 month lag time before we would see anything come before the board. This leads us to the need or want to put a moratorium on Event Venues and Short Term Rentals.

Supervisor Wickham looked for thoughts from the board on this. Councilman Orbaker asked if there was anyone trying to start any other projects like this. Supervisor Wickham said that he isn't aware of anyone, yet. Councilman Keeney asked if there was an occupancy tax that is incurred. Supervisor Wickham explained that the Occupancy Tax would have to be legislated. Councilman Keeney thought that the county had already done that, but Supervisor Wickham corrected that it would be at a state level.

Councilman Mosher wanted to bring CEO Hoover into the discussion as he oversees these activities on a day to day basis. While we never know when something may come up, CEO Hoover stated that he has had one call about another Event Center on a different parcel in the Town. Due to the living situation, this couldn't be processed at this time.

Supervisor Wickham asked CEO Hoover if any of the short term rentals that are currently in the town have come through his office. CEO Hoover said that none of them have besides this one they're currently working on. He said there is no application process at this time. Councilman Mosher said that he was okay continuing to wait on having a Moratorium. He wants to be very careful of people's rights. He explained that he wants to be mindful of it but being that there aren't a ton of applications or attempts at this time he is comfortable waiting as long as something will be done within the year.

Councilman Orbaker added that he would like to see some type of structure so that CEO Hoover can enforce if need be. Councilman Mosher asked CEO Hoover if there have been any issues with these two projects yet. CEO Hoover explained that neither of them are ready to host anyone or any events at this time. The Air BnB is projecting advertisement to start after July 4th and the Event Venue won't be ready to have an event for about two months.

Supervisor Wickham asked CEO Hoover if there had been any stipulations or check points during the process. CEO Hoover explained that the boards did look at some similar venues in the neighboring communities and they tried to put conditions in that were similar to what future regulations would look like. CEO Hoover explained that the wedding venue is definitely going to be an adjustment for the town. While some people may say that it's not that close to neighbors, CEO Hoover explained that it will seem a lot closer than it is.

Councilman Mosher asked if CEO Hoover has ever attended and event at a place like this one. He explained that he had been to a couple of events at similar facilities. So much of this depends on who is managing these facilities. If this is managed well, it shouldn't be an issue. CEO Hoover made mention of the sound limits placed on this venue by the board; however, he'll be the one that has to police that all summer long. He went on to explain that if it is a nice, calm, summer night there will be many other people who will be able to hear it other than just the neighbors.

Councilman Mosher added that one thing he noticed with other similar places in the area was that there is almost an immediate and drastic improvement of the property, which then increases the value of neighboring

TOWN OF SENECA
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
June 20th, 2023

properties. CEO Hoover agrees that he thinks this could be great, but that we still need to be mindful of the location and the surrounding properties. Councilman Keeney asked if CEO Hoover knew about how many events they were looking to get in there and CEO Hoover explained that being that they are running a business, they would try to put as many as they could in there. Councilman Keeney feels like it's a bit intrusive on the neighbors. Councilman Orbaker explained that as the farmer in the room, he would be against a wedding venue.

Supervisor Wickham then explained that between Air BnBs and Event Venues, they're too different to group together. Councilman Mosher said that as long as we address both, he would like to focus on the Event Venue first. Supervisor Wickham said that it sounds like people would like to move forward with the moratorium on Event Centers.

Supervisor Wickham wanted to make a motion to set a public hearing and CEO Hoover spoke up and explained that he needs a Local Law drafted before scheduling a public hearing. We will be working on this and updating as it all unfolds.

Supervisor Wickham looked for a motion to approve the Minutes for the May 16th, 2023, Regular meeting Councilman Mosher made the motion and councilman Keeney seconded. Motion carried.

COMMUNICATIONS

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

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

HIGHWAY: One thing the Highway Superintendent Lawson added was a comment on the number of calls that he has received on the County Road 4 and County Road 20 intersection. A large amount of traffic is traveling at a high speed on a road that says, "No Outlet." The traffic has also been going down Buffalo Street at 55-60 miles per hour hitting the speed bumps that we just installed last week. Supervisor Wickham said that he will take notes and try to talk to Bill Wright about this.

WATER: Supervisor Wickham commented that they have hired a seasonal laborer by the name of Eric Rice. He will be starting at a rate of \$17.00/ per hour.

CEO: Supervisor Wickham commented that we are making progress at 3022 Seneca Castle Road. He wanted to advise the board to remember that "progress" is not instantaneous, but things are being done here.

CASELLA: Mr. Sanders attached a couple of maps with his report tonight. He explained where the excavation area was with one map and showed us what the sniffer picked up recently. He said that the map has drastically changed in the last couple of years as it isn't picking up nearly as much as it used to.

Supervisor Wickham looked for a motion to accept the Supervisor, Town Clerk, and CEO Financial Reports. A motion was made by Councilman Malyj and Seconded by Councilman Orbaker.

TOWN OF SENECA
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
June 20th, 2023

NEW BUSINESS

RES. NUMBER	TITLE	AYE	NAY	ABSENT	MOTION	SECOND
#66-23	Authorization to pay the 2023 Audited Vouchers	5	0	0	Councilman Keeney	Councilman Mosher
#67-23	Excess Property	5	0	0	Councilman Orbaker	Councilman Mosher
#68-23	Authorizing Commencement of Action to Obtain an Order Directing the Demolition and Removal of House at 3022 Seneca Castle Road.	5	0	0	Councilman Orbaker	Councilman Malyj

OLD BUSINESS

Councilman Orbaker inquired on where we stand with the landfill. He wanted to know more about what is currently happening at the county level. Supervisor Wickham commented that the county is hiring a consultant to help the county figure out where the trash should go at the end of the landfill.

Councilman Orbaker followed up by saying that when the county attended one of our board meetings, a couple of our board members had multiple questions for them that still have not been answered and it's been almost a year. Supervisor Wickham asked Councilman Orbaker what questions he had that he didn't feel got answered and he said he would have to go back in his notes to remember them. Supervisor Wickham explained the county cannot do anything other than focus on when this current contract is expiring. Councilman Orbaker explained that his concern is that they've already made up their mind and know what they want to do, but they're hiring a consultant for these things, and it feels like we're just kicking the can down the road.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Privilege of the Floor was offered but nobody wished to speak at that time.

ADJOURNMENT

At 8:47 pm, Supervisor Wickham looked for a motion to go into executive session regarding the medical, financial, credit or employment history of a particular person or corporation, or matters leading to the appointment, employment, promotion, demotion, discipline, suspension, dismissal, or removal of a particular person or corporation. Councilman Mosher made the motion that was seconded by Councilman Keeney.

At 9:38 pm a motion was made by Councilman Orbaker to exit executive session. That motion was seconded by Councilman Malyj.

At 9:39 pm a motion was made by Councilman Mosher to adjourn the regular monthly meeting of the Town Board and the motion was seconded by Councilman Keeney.

Respectfully,
Haley Eagley
Town Clerk