The Seneca Falls Town Board held a Public Hearing and Meeting on Tuesday, December 5, 2023 in the Town Hall Meeting Room, 130 Ovid Street, Seneca Falls.

Present were Supervisor Michael Ferrara; Councilpersons Dawn Dyson, Kaitlyn Laskoski, Frank Sinicropi and Steven Churchill. Also present were Patrick Morrell, Attorney for the Town; Peter Porcelli, Zoning Officer; Deborah VonWald, Assessor; Jeremy Wendt, Highway Superintendent; Joseph Tullo, Chief WWTP Operator; Timothy Snyder, Police Chief and Lesen Gleason, Town Engineer.

Public Hearing – Proposed Local Law – Override Tax Levy: A motion was made to open the Public Hearing at 6:00 P.M. by Kaitlyn Laskoski and seconded by Dawn Dyson. Motion carried 5 ayes, 0 nayes.

Mr. Ferrara stated this is a formality in case the Town, in their current Budget, exceeds the Tax Law of the State. He noted the Budget did not exceed the Tax Law, but a Public Hearing was scheduled. He asked if anyone would like to speak regarding this proposed local law.

Since there were no comments from the public, a motion was made to close the Public Hearing by Steve Churchill and seconded by Dawn Dyson. Motion carried 5 ayes, 0 nayes.

Mr. Ferrara called the regular monthly Meeting to order at 6:05 P.M. A roll call of Board Members was taken and all were present; the Pledge of Allegiance followed.

SFPD – Retirement of Sergeant/Investigator Michael Petrocci: Mr. Ferrara read the following from Chief of Police Timothy Snyder relative to Sergeant/Investigator Michael Petrocci:
Police Sergeant/Investigator Michael L. Petrocci has been an integral part of our law enforcement team since 1998. Throughout his career, he has exhibited exemplary professionalism, leadership and commitment to upholding the values and standards of our organization.
We express our sincere gratitude to Police Sergeant/Investigator Michael L. Petrocci for his unwavering dedication, sacrifice and tireless service in ensuring the safety and well-being of our community.
We extend our best wishes to Police Sergeant/Investigator Michael L. Petrocci for a fulfilling and well-deserved retirement. May this new chapter be filled with joy, relaxation and the satisfaction of a career well-spent in the service of others.

A motion was made by Michael Ferrara and seconded by Dawn Dyson to formally accept the retirement of Sergeant/Investigator Michael L. Petrocci, with regret. Motion carried 5 ayes, 0 nayes.

Mr. Ferrara, on behalf of the Town Board and the people of Seneca Falls, congratulated Sergeant/Investigator Petrocci and thanked him for his years of dedication and service to the Community.

SFPD Resolution – Police Investigator Appointment: A motion was made by Michael Ferrara and seconded by Frank Sinicropi to adopt the following resolution:
WHEREAS, with the retirement of Investigator Michael Petrocci, the Seneca Falls Police Department has a need to fill a vacant Investigator position with a current full-time Police Sergeant; and
WJEREAS, it is the recommendation of the Police Chief and Public Safety Committee to backfill this position with a qualified candidate; and
WHEREAS, Sergeant Martin Rotz is currently on an active Seneca County Civil Service list for Police Investigator.
THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Board approves the appointment of Sergeant Martin Rotz to Police Investigator.
Motion carried 5 ayes, 0 nayes.

SFPD Resolution – Sergeant Appointment: A motion was made by Kaitlyn Laskoski and seconded by Dawn Dyson to adopt the following resolution:
WHEREAS, with the appointment of Sergeant Martin Rotz to Investigator, the Seneca Falls Police Department has a need to fill a vacant supervisory position with a current full-time Police Officer; and
WHEREAS, it is the recommendation of the Police Chief and Public Safety Committee to backfill these positions with qualified candidates; and
WHEREAS, Officer Andrew Hilker is currently on an active Seneca County Civil Service list for Police Sergeant.
THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Board approves promoting Officer Andrew Hilker to Police Sergeant.
Motion carried 5 ayes, 0 nayes.

Petitioners:

Mark Pitifer: Mark Pitifer stated he is speaking as a private citizen and as a representative of Waterloo

Container. He thanked Mr. Ferrara for his four years public service and commitment to the people of Seneca Falls, and wished him nothing but good health and happiness in the future. He thanked the Town Clerk for a lifetime of service – 39 years with the Town. Mr. Pitifer mentioned that this is also Mr. Churchill's last Board Meeting, and he encouraged the newly incoming Board Members to reflect the drive and passion that Mr. Churchill would bring to each Meeting. Mr. Churchill has given 12 years of service to the County and Town and we owe him a debt of gratitude. In closing, Mr. Pitifer stated - to Mr. Ferrara, Mr. Churchill and Mrs. Greer, may God bless you with good fortune and health as you move on to the next chapters of your lives.

Mr. Ferrara gave the following updates:

- There are new steps going down from Water Street to Cowing Street, and new sidewalk on Water Street. The arch has been restored and is back up.
- He did some research on the Bayard Street culvert which the Canal Corps wanted the Town to take ownership. In 1980, the Department of Transportation took over the culvert on Bayard Street, the part north of Bayard Street to the Canal. He has all the documents and maps, and they are on alert. They own the culvert on the north side to the Canal.
- Mr. Ferrara mentioned the It's a Wonderful Life event, and thanked all the volunteers, including all the Town employees who put so much time into it.

Wendy Crane: Wendy Crane of Eisenhower Drive asked if all Town Board Members have to reside in the Town of Seneca Falls. Mr. Ferrara replied it's not just Town Board Members – it's New York State Law that all elected officials live in the Community that they serve. They have to be able to vote in Seneca Falls. Ms. Crane stated if someone clearly doesn't live in their house anymore, but is on the Town Board and didn't change their address yet, how would you go about that. She asked Mrs. Laskoski if she wanted to answer that question because she knows exactly what she is talking about. Mrs. Laskoski replied her legal address is 59 Cayuga Street. Ms. Crane said there is no property inside that house. Mr. Churchill asked what her point is; Ms. Crane replied she doesn't live in Seneca Falls. Mr. Churchill said t doesn't matter if she has furniture in there or not – that is her legal address. Ms. Crane said she would like it looked into – in talking with her children, they don't live there.

Valerie Sandlas: Valerie Sandlas stated being in public office and dealing with the public regularly is a challenge to say the least, and probably in many ways a thankless job. She said being the last Meeting of the year, she would like to thank all the Board whether they agree or disagree – she understands it's a thankless job. Mrs. Sandlas congratulated the Town Clerk on her long career. It's been wonderful working with her, and she has been a part of a wonderful life in Seneca Falls. She also wished Mr. Ferrara a great retirement. She mentioned Mr. Churchill and said she spent years working with him on the County Board and now. She thanked Mr. Churchill for his fight without very much support – he will be missed. Mrs. Sandlas directed her remarks to the rest of the Board and said we don't always agree; she would like to plant the seed that instead of a white Christmas, we have a green New Year and we focus on fresh air, water and a healthy environment.

Mr. Ferrara stated there is nothing they can do as a Board or as a community to thank Nicki enough for being the person (historian) for our Town and Village at times, and who kept things going even though there were elections every other year. He presented her with her parking sign, a plaque honoring her 39 years of dedicated public service as the longest serving Town Clerk and elected official in the birthplace of Women's Rights. Mr. Ferrara also presented Nicki with a Proclamation expressing appreciation for her loyalty, outstanding career and dedication to service in Seneca Falls.

Brennan Backus: Brennan Backus stated he wanted to bring it to the Board's attention the trees on State Street. He did a job at 28 State Street and the door doesn't open all the way because of the tree pushing up the sidewalk. He said it's happening all the way down State Street and some on Fall Street. Mr. Backus said it is definitely a safety issue. Mr. Ferrara stated the Board is aware of this and is in the process of getting some estimates to fix some of the very bad spots. He said the State owns the sidewalks; the property owner is in charge of maintaining the sidewalk. The problem is 40 years ago when they put the trees in, they put the wrong trees. Mr. Backus said he would rather not go through litigation, but it has to be fixed at some point. Mr. Ferrara suggested that Mr. Backus come to the February Meeting and remind the Board.

Approval of Minutes:

A motion was made to approve the minutes of the October 26, 2023 Budget Workshop, and the Public Hearings and Meeting of November 8, 2023 by Frank Sinicropi and seconded by Dawn Dyson. Motion carried 5 ayes, 0 nayes.

Communications:

Mr. Ferrara noted there are four Communications in the Board's packets which consist of results of Special Election of the Bridgeport Fire District, Minutes of the Zoning Board of Appeals and Heritage Preservation Commission and report of repairs to the cemeteries and mausoleum from Kay IIrland, Sexton.

Old Business*:*
Sale of Town Property: Nothing to report.

New Business:

Approval of Special Events: A motion was made by Dawn Dyson and seconded by Steve Churchill to approve the It's a Wonderful Run 5K event on December 9, 2023, and New Year's Eve Ball Drop event at the Gould, as they are a benefit to the Community. Motion carried 5 ayes, 0 nayes.

Proposed Local Law – Override Tax Levy: Mr. Ferrara stated there was a notice placed in the paper and the Public Hearing was held this evening. Mr. Morrell noted no action needs to be taken as the Budget was adopted.

Authorize Newly Elected Officials to Attend Training: A motion was made authorizing the newly elected Officials to attend training on January 10-12, 2024 at a cost of $200.00 per Official plus mileage by Frank Sinicropi and seconded by Dawn Dyson. Motion carried 5 ayes, 0 nayes.

W/S Resolution: A motion was made by Frank Sinicropi and seconded by Dawn Dyson to adopt the following resolution:
WHEREAS, the Town of Seneca Falls is engaged in a project to replace more than 4,000 water meters and transmission radios; and
WHEREAS, the Town Board approved the project with financing primarily coming from NYS Grants; and
WHEREAS, the project will require significant volumes of outbound mail notifying residents of upcoming appointments and installation status; and
WHEREAS, the Town has no current technology to perform the physical construction of these outbound communications.
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Seneca Falls Town Board hereby approves the utilization of excess grant funds received from this project to purchase a Canon Fpi 700 folder inserter for the price of $5,808.75 that can be utilized by all departments of the Town to create mass communications mailings.
Motion carried 5 ayes, 0 nayes.

Authorize Temporary Clerk Position to Train New Town Clerk: The Town Clerk said this if for her to train the new Town Clerk as she has no knowledge of the duties of a Town Clerk. She added she would stay on part-time as a temporary Clerk. Mr. Ferrara asked how many hours; the Clerk replied no certain hours – on an as needed basis, part-time, as long as the new Clerk wants her there. Mr. Ferrara asked about the salary; the Clerk replied the hourly rate she is now getting. Mr. Sinicropi asked if this should be discussed in Executive Session as it is a personnel matter. After brief discussion, it was decided the Board would discuss this in Executive Session.

Set Year-End Meeting Date to Pay Bills: The Board agreed to hold the Year-End Meeting to pay bills at 12:00 Noon on Thursday, December 28, 2023 in the Town Hall Meeting Room.

Set Reorganizational and Regular Monthly Meeting Date: A motion was made by Frank Sinicropi and seconded by Dawn Dyson to schedule the Reorganizational and regular monthly Meeting at 6:00 P.M. on Monday, January 8, 2023 in the Town Hall Meeting Room. Motion carried 3 ayes, 0 nayes, 2 abstentions; Supervisor Ferrara and Councilman Churchill abstained from voting.

Resolution – Award Water Intake Cleaning Project: A motion was made by Frank Sinicropi and seconded by Dawn Dyson to adopt the following resolution:
WHEREAS, the Town of Seneca Falls (Town) is the owner of the Water Intake Structure Cleaning Project (Project); and
WHEREAS, pursuant to New York State Municipal Law, bids for Contract 1 – General Construction were received publicly opened and read aloud on November 9, 2023 at the Town Hall, 130 Ovid Street, Seneca Falls NY; and
WHEREAS, the Town Engineering Consultant, Barton & Loguidice, D.P.C. (B&L) tabulated and analyzed the bids received, and by letter dated November 28, 2023, has recommended award of the Town of Seneca Falls Water Intake Structure Cleaning Project as follows:

1. Contract No. 1 – General Construction.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that based on the recommendation of B&L, the Town of Seneca Falls Town Board hereby awards the Town of Seneca Falls Water Intake Structure Cleaning Project as follows: Contract No. 1 – General Construction, to Bidco Marine Group, Inc. for the bid in the amount of $33,220.00; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Resolution shall take effect immediately.

Mr. Sinicropi stated he has been opposed to this right from the start, but after talking to the Engineer and talking to other municipalities, we are probably not going to get a better price. He added the Engineers told him they will be on site the whole time they are doing the cleaning. Mr. Churchill asked if it is budgeted; Mr. Ferrara replied yes. Mr. Sinicropi said there is $250,000 for the job and $75,000+ from Contingency. He said he has faith that the Engineers will be there and do it right. Mr. Churchill asked how long would it take; Mrs. Gleason replied if all goes well, it will be one week.

The above motion made by Frank Sinicropi and seconded by Dawn Dyson to award the bid for the Water Intake Cleaning Project was carried 5 ayes, 0 nayes.

W/S Resolution – Purchase 2022 Ford F250 Truck: A motion was made by Steve Churchill and seconded by Dawn Dyson to adopt the following resolution:
WHEREAS, the Water and Sewer Department needs to replace an aging truck; and
WHEREAS, Autosaver Ford in Comstock, New York has a truck in stock ready for purchase; and
WHEREAS, the truck is budgeted in the 2024 Town Budget.
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Seneca Falls Town Board authorizes the purchase of a new 2022 Ford F250 truck not to be invoiced until January 1, 2024 from Autosaver Ford, Comstock, New York for the price of $64,743 on NYS Bid; and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the truck being replaced will be passed down with its plow to Parks and Recreation Department once the new truck is delivered.
Motion carried 5 ayes, 0 nays.

P&R Resolution – Surplus Ford 350 with Snowplow: A motion was made by Frank Sinicropi and seconded by Dawn Dyson to adopt the following resolution:
WHEREAS, the Town of Seneca Falls Recreation Department owns a 2008 Ford F350 with attached snowplow, VIN#1FDWF31508EC78752, which is aging and requires substantial mechanical repairs; and
WHEREAS, the recommendation of local auto repair mechanics is to scrap the 2008 Ford 350 as the current necessary repairs required are at a minimal expense of over $3,000.
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Seneca Falls Town Board authorizes the Parks and Recreation Department to arrange for the sale or disposal of the 2008 Ford 350 and snowplow through Auctions International.
Motion carried 5 ayes, 0 nayes.

Resolution – Approve Creation of Budget Analysis/Finance Committee: A motion was made by Frank Sinicropi and seconded by Kaitlyn Laskoski to adopt the following resolution:
WHEREAS, the recently adopted Town of Seneca Falls Comprehensive Plan recommends that a Budget/Finance Committee be created to oversee the Town's finances on a monthly basis; and
WHEREAS, the Committee should consist of the Senior Account Clerk, Town Manager, the assigned Accountant, the Town Supervisor and one (1) Town Board Member assigned by the Town Supervisor; and
WHEREAS, the Committee will provide checks and balances for the Town's finances and help establish proper financial procedures as recommended by the State Comptroller's Office.
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Town Board of Seneca Falls approves for the creation of a Budget Analysis/Finance Committee to begin January 2024.

Mr. Churchill stated creation of a committee is up to the Board, but the appointment to the committee is up to the Supervisor. He added it's up to the upcoming Supervisor to appoint that committee – all the Board can do is create the committee. Mr. Ferrara said that's correct. He feels that the Senior Account Clerk should be on the committee because she does the finances, and certainly the Town Manager and Town Supervisor should be involved.

The above motion made by Frank Sinicropi and seconded by Kaitlyn Laskoski to create a Budget Analysis/ Finance Committee was carried 5 ayes, 0 nayes.

SFPD Resolution – Order New Police Vehicles: A motion was made by Frank Sinicropi and seconded by Steve Churchill to adopt the following resolution:
WHEREAS, the Police Department seeks approval from the Town Board to authorize Enterprise Fleet Management to order one 2025 Ford Utility marked vehicle and two 2025 Ford XLT unmarked vehicles; and
WHEREAS, the one marked vehicle will replace one current marked vehicle, the two unmarked vehicles will replace two current unmarked vehicles that have met their life expectancy and is to bring the most cost-effective return to the Town once sold by Enterprise.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the agreement between Enterprise and the Town of Seneca Falls will be a lease of one marked patrol vehicle and two unmarked vehicles, and does not require initial vehicle payment until the vehicles are received. Once ordered from the Ford Dealer, the estimated time for these vehicles will be July or August of 2024; and be it
FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Seneca Falls Police Department sign an agreement with Enterprise to order one marked 2025 Ford Utility and two 2025Ford Explorer XLT vehicles to replace aging vehicles in the current fleet.

Mr. Sinicropi made a motion to table action on the above resolution until the February Board Meeting, seconded by Steve Churchill.

Mr. Churchill stated the reason he seconded the motion is because although the money has been budgeted, he feels it's up to the upcoming Board to decide how to spend that money. Chief Snyder stated the reason this is on the table now is because the window to order these vehicles comes out within the next week or two. Once it opens up, it will be only for a week or less. The Chief said if we don't place an order for these vehicles, we will miss out for the entire year. He added we have done this every year. Further discussion followed.

The above motion made by Frank Sinicropi and seconded by Steve Churchill to table action on the purchase of Police vehicles did not carry, as the vote was 2 ayes, 3 nayes; Supervisor Ferrara and Councilpersons Dyson and Laskoski with the dissenting votes.

A motion was made by Dawn Dyson and seconded by Kaitlyn Laskoski to adopt the above resolution authorizing the SFPD to order three new vehicles. Motion carried 3 ayes, 1 nay and 1 abstention; Mr. Sinicropi voted no and Councilman Churchill abstained from voting.

SFPD Resolution – Axon Enterprise in-car Camera Contract: A motion was made by Dawn Dyson and seconded by Kaitlyn Laskoski to adopt the following resolution:
WHEREAS, the Seneca Falls Police Department recognizes the importance of ensuring transparency, accountability and public trust in law enforcement operations; and
WHEREAS, the use of in-car cameras in police vehicles has been proven to enhance officer safety, improve evidence collection and strengthen community-police relations.
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, it has been determined and reviewed by the Police Chief and the Public Safety Committee to enter into a new contract with Axon Enterprise; and be it
FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town of Seneca Falls Town Board authorizes the Seneca Falls Police Department to enter into a new five-year contract with Axon Enterprise in the amount of $20,294.10 for 2024; $21,105.87 for 2025; $21,950.10 for 2026; $22,828.10 for 2027; $23,741.23 for 2028; and
Axon In-Car Camera payments will come from the Seneca Falls Police Department's Maintenance Agreement line A3120.413.

Mr. Churchill said he will be abstaining because this should be discussed and determined how this money is spent by the new Board.

The above motion made by Dawn Dyson and seconded by Kaitlyn Laskoski to enter into a new in-car Camera Contract with Axon Enterprise was carried 4 ayes, 0 nayes and 1 abstention; Councilman Churchill abstained from voting.

Resolution – Approve Engagement Letter for Accounting Services: A motion was made by Frank Sinicropi and seconded by Dawn Dyson to adopt the following resolution:
WHEREAS, the Town of Seneca Falls has been working with ProNexus, LLC Consultants on the Town's finance and accounting operations; and
WHEREAS, ProNexus recommends that the Town engage the services of an accountant to oversee the systems that they have put in place for the Town; and
WHEREAS, ProNexus has provided a proposal to the Town to perform these services at a rate of $150.00 per hour; and
WHEREAS, the Town has received a proposal from a Town resident accounting services at a lower rate of $100.00 per hour.
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Town Board of Seneca Falls approves the attached Agreement to engage Nick Sciotti for accounting professional services to oversee the financial and accounting operations of the Town under the terms contained therein.

Mr. Ferrara stated there is money in the Budget for this, and we are trying to be pro-active. The Senior Account is very capable, but she is not an accountant. He said it would be up to 20 hours a month. He will be overseeing with the Committee to make sure all our financials are in place. Mr. Ferrara said this is recommended by the

Comptroller's Office.

The above motion made by Frank Sinicropi and seconded by Dawn Dyson to approve the Engagement Letter for Accounting Services was carried 5 ayes, 0 nayes.

2023 Contribution – SF Historical Society: A motion was made to release the allocated funds of $7,000 for the 2023 contribution to the Seneca Falls Historical Society by Steve Churchill and seconded by Frank Sinicropi. Motion carried 5 ayes, 0 nayes.

Resolution – Waive Increased W/S Charges for Non-Profit Organizations Participating in IAWL Festival: A motion was made by Steve Churchill and seconded by Dawn Dyson to adopt the following resolution:
WHEREAS, It's a Wonderful Life is a 1946 movie that has been selected by the Library of congress for preservation in the United States National Film Registry for being culturally, historically significant; and
WHEREAS, the It's a Wonderful Life Festival is an annual event that celebrates the 1946 movie and takes place in the Town of Seneca Falls on the second weekend of December each year; and
WHEREAS, the festival holds many events at properties owned by not-for-profit organizations and attracts many visitors to the Town; and
WHEREAS, the Town of Seneca Falls supports the efforts of the It's a Wonderful Life Festival to bring visitors to the Town of Seneca Falls and promote cultural development; and
WHEREAS, some of the not-for-profit groups that participate in the festival have experienced difficulty with increased utility expenses due to the influx of people during the festival; and
WHEREAS, the Town of Seneca Falls owns and operates water and sewer systems that service most of the properties that participate in the festival.
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Board of Seneca Falls hereby waives the increase in water and sewer charges that relate to the 2023 It's a Wonderful Life Festival for the properties owned by not-for-profit organizations that host events as part of the festival; and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the specific waiver for each property will be determined by the Water & Sewer Committee, Water & Sewer Department and the Town Manager.
Motion carried 5 ayes, 0 nayes.

Water/Sewer/Pool Credits: There were none this month.

Payment of Bills:
A motion was made by Dawn Dyson and seconded by Steve Churchill to approve and order paid the following bills:

General Fund - $753.416.55 (Abstract #12)
Miscellaneous Fund - $34,024.41 (Abstract #12)
Highway Fund - $56,961.29 (Abstract #12)
Water Fund - $40,523.12 (Abstract #12)
Recreation Fund - $19,046.87 (Abstract #12)
Vince's Park Fund - $1,316.21 (Abstract #12)
Sewer Fund - $111,942.63 (Abstract #12)

Motion carried 5 ayes, 0 nayes.

At 7:09 P.M., Michael Ferrara made a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss the proposed sale, lease or acquisition of real property where publicity could affect the fair market value of real property under Section 105H of Public Officers Law, and to discuss a particular personnel issue under 105F, seconded by Frank Sinicropi. Motion carried 5 ayes, 0 nayes.

A motion was made to reconvene the regular Meeting at 7:36 P.M. by Frank Sinicropi and seconded by Dawn Dyson. Motion carried 5 ayes, 0 nayes.

A motion was made by Michael Ferrara and seconded by Dawn Dyson to employ the services of Nicaletta Greer not to exceed 80 hours for the month of January at her hourly rate; at the end of January, the situation will be re-evaluated by the Board. Motion carried 5 ayes, 0 nayes.

Being there was no further business, a motion was made to adjourn the Meeting by Dawn Dyson and seconded by Kaitlyn Laskoski. Motion carried 5 ayes, 0 nayes.

Meeting adjourned at 7:40 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

NICALETTA J. GREER
Town Clerk