

Public Hearing

Proposed Local Law #2 Amending Chapter 300, Chapter XIV (Solar Energy Systems) and Add Chapter 159 (Erosion Control & Stormwater Management)

Town Supervisor Frank Schmitter opened the public hearing on the proposed local law regarding solar energy systems and erosion control. He explained that the planning board had tidied up the system for people coming to the area, including rules and regulations for erosion.

Town Clerk Melissa Brown noted that a motion was needed to open the public hearing.

Motion to open the public hearing made by Councilwoman Laskoski, seconded by Councilman Puylara. All in favor.

With no public comments, Supervisor Schmitter closed the public hearing.

Motion to close the public hearing made by Councilwoman Laskoski, seconded by Councilwoman Dyson. All in favor.

The Seneca Falls Town Board held a special meeting on Tuesday, June 3, 2025, at the Seneca Falls Municipal Building, 130 Ovid Street Seneca Falls.

Supervisor Schmitter called the special meeting to order at 6:03 pm.
A roll call was taken of board members the following members of the board were present:

TOWN OFFICER	Present	Absent
Supervisor Frank Schmitter	X	
Councilman Frank Sinicropi	X	
Councilman Jackson Puylara	X	
Councilwoman Dawn Dyson	X	
Councilwoman Kaitlyn Laskoski	X	

Also present were:

Town Manager Peter Soscia		X
Town Attorney Patrick Morell	X	
Director of Parks & Recreation Missy Jones	X	
Town Assessor Deborah VonWald	X	
Zoning Officer Peter Porcelli	X	
Highway Superintendent Jeremy Wendt	X	
Police Chief Timothy Snyder	X	
Chief of Water & Sewer Joseph Tullo		X
Department of Public Works Peter Messmer		X

Pledge of Allegiance

Petitioners/Privilege of the Floor

Petitioner- Charlie Cappellino

Charlie Cappellino, a 45-year resident of Seneca Falls, presented on behalf of the comprehensive plan implementation committee. He provided an overview of the committee's progress, including:

- Meeting with various organizations to understand ongoing processes
- Assessing the action plan and identifying owners for each action
- Holding meetings with community leaders involved in grant writing
- Launching a housing committee and a fiscal responsibility committee
- Discussing potential communication strategies, including a monthly newsletter and an annual town hall meeting

Cappellino emphasized the committee's dedication to implementing the comprehensive plan and welcomed feedback from the board.

Petitioner - Diana Smith

Diana Smith and Adrinne Emmo presented plans for Convention Days. They outlined their vision for the event, including:

- Collaboration with various local organizations
- A procession from the Staten home to the women's rights park
- Speakers, music, and a market on Fall Street

- Food trucks and activities
- A special presentation with the mayor of Tenaflly, their sister city
- Girl Scout tours of historical locations

They encouraged board members and the community to participate and volunteer for the event.

Petitioner - Jake Edelen - Not Present

Chief Timothy Snyder presented on behalf of Jake Edelen from Axon, who was unable to attend. He discussed a proposed 10-year package for body cameras and related technology, including:

- Updated body cameras and tasers
- AI-powered report writing capabilities
- Real-time translation features
- Virtual reality training
- Interview room systems

The total cost of the package was \$995,000 over 10 years, or \$99,000 per year. Chief Snyder highlighted potential savings and benefits of the technology.

District Attorney Nabinger expressed support for the technology, particularly the translation capabilities and their potential use in court proceedings.

Supervisor's Comments

Supervisor Schmitter made several announcements:

- The town is transitioning to a .gov domain for its website, with the new address being senecafalls.gov.
- A new monthly newsletter created by the SFDC will be distributed to inform residents about local events.
- The library has launched a new program called Tech Talk to boost digital literacy.
- A drone show will replace traditional fireworks for the July 4th celebration.
- The supervisor addressed issues with load securement for town vehicles and the dumpster program.
- He responded to negative social media posts about the town, highlighting positive accomplishments and ongoing projects.

Departmental Reports

Motion to accept departmental reports made by Councilwoman Laskoski, seconded by Councilwoman Dyson. All in favor. Departmental reports approved.

Councilman Sinicropi inquired about the assessor's report regarding grievances, seeking clarification on the 20 industrial grievances mentioned.

- Assessor's Report
- Water & Sewer Department Report

Communications

Motion to accept communications A through D made by Councilwoman Laskoski, seconded by Councilwoman Dyson. All in favor. Communications approved.

Councilman Sinicropi expressed concern about the delayed installation of a generator at the water treatment plant, which had been an issue for over a year.

- Barton & Loguidice Report - May 2025
- Email from Director of Seneca Falls Library, re: Enhance Digital Skills with Tech Talk!
- HPC Minutes
- Letter, US Dept. of Interior, 5/15/25 (Approval for Federal tax Incentives for Historic Preservation)

Special Events

Flotsam River Circus 8-14-25

Motion to approve the Flotsam River Circus event on August 14, 2025, made by Councilwoman Dyson, seconded by Councilman Puylara. All in favor. Event approved.

Cycle the Erie Canal

Motion to approve the Cycle the Erie Canal event on July 15, 2025, made by Councilman Sinicropi, seconded by Councilman Puylara. All in favor. Event approved.

Girl Scouts of NYPENN Pathways 2026 Annual Meeting

Motion to approve the Girl Scouts of NYPENN Pathways Annual Meeting from May 1-3, 2026, made by Councilwoman Dyson, seconded by Councilwoman Laskoski. All in favor. Event approved.

Scouting America Summer Kickoff

Motion to approve the Scouting America Summer Kickoff on June 10, 2025, made by Councilwoman Dyson, seconded by Councilwoman Laskoski. All in favor. Event approved.

Old Business

New Business

Lift Hiring Freeze Due to Critical Vacancies

Motion to lift the hiring freeze due to critical vacancies made by Councilman Puylara, seconded by Councilwoman Laskoski.

Councilwoman Laskoski expressed concern about lifting the hiring freeze before completing union negotiations. Supervisor Schmitter explained that the union encouraged hiring and did not recommend maintaining the freeze.

WHEREAS, three months ago, the Town Board voted to postpone filling vacant positions pending the completion of CSEA negotiations and the approval of matrix adjustments and updates; and

WHEREAS, while CSEA negotiations are still in progress, the Town is currently facing several vacancies that are vital to emergency response and the maintenance of essential operations; and

WHEREAS, discussions with the CSEA representative have resulted in her strong recommendation to lift the hiring freeze; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the hiring freeze is hereby lifted, authorizing the Town to immediately recruit and hire personnel necessary to support emergency response, critical functions, and essential operations.

AYES - Jackson Puylara, Frank Sinicropi, Frank Schmitter

NAYES - Kaitlyn Laskoski, Dawn Dyson

The motion carried with a 3-2 vote.

Convention Days Designation as an Official Town of Seneca Falls Event

Motion to declare Convention Days as an official Town of Seneca Falls event made by Councilman Sinicropi, seconded by Councilwoman Laskoski.

WHEREAS, *Convention Days is an annual event to commemorate the history of the Community as the birthplace of women's rights, a unique characteristic of Seneca Falls; and*

WHEREAS, *the event is held annually in July on the weekend closest to the July 19, the date of the first Women's Rights Convention which was originated by Seneca Falls resident, Elizabeth Cady Stanton; and*

WHEREAS, *the Town of Seneca Falls Comprehensive Plan recognizes the importance of placing a focus on the Women's Right's history of the Community; and*

WHEREAS, *Convention Days, Inc., a non-profit organization, has held the Convention Days event in Seneca Falls for the past 50+ years, which in 2005, was declared an official event of the former Village of Seneca Falls; and*

WHEREAS, *this year's event will be held July 18, 19 and 20, 2025; and*

WHEREAS, *a Town of Seneca Falls Convention Days' Committee will be appointed by the Town Supervisor to plan the annual celebration working in concert with Convention Days, Inc.; and*

WHEREAS, *fundraising for activities are now and will continue to take place by that Committee; and*

WHEREAS, *declaring this an official event of the Town of Seneca Falls requires official designation by the Town Board.*

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Town of Seneca Falls hereby declares Convention Days as an official event of the Town of Seneca Falls.

The motion carried unanimously.

Support Grant Application for Intermunicipal Water Quality Demo Network

Motion to support the grant application for the Intermunicipal Water Quality Demo Network made by Councilwoman Dyson, seconded by Councilman Puylara.

Supervisor Schmitter explained that the project would not cost the town any money, as the 25% match would be covered by labor from Hobart.

WHEREAS The Cayuga Lake Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) prioritizes reducing the frequency and scale of stormwater runoff from multiple sectors as a means of addressing negative water quality impacts in the watershed; and

WHEREAS the TMDL provides significant guidance on what best management practices can be done and their benefits towards achieving water quality goals; and

WHEREAS the implementation of such practices on public municipal properties offers an opportunity to both implement such practices while also serving as a publicly accessible space to promote further voluntary adoption on private property; and

WHEREAS Cayuga Watershed Intermunicipal Organization (CWIO) and Seneca Watershed Intermunicipal Organization (SWIO) are collaboratively willing and able to lead an effort identifying opportunities to design and promote these practices throughout both the Seneca and Cayuga Lake watersheds; and

WHEREAS the New York State Department of State has funding available for such projects that will cover 75% of the total project cost; and

WHEREAS the remaining 25% local match can be provided as In-Kind staff-time from CWIO/SWIO staff members and will result in no out-of-pocket expense to the applicant; and

WHEREAS a municipality needs to be the applicant for such a grant; and

WHEREAS the Town of Seneca Falls, municipal member of CWIO, is willing and able to assist the 10-partnership group with successful execution of the project if awarded funding.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Town of Seneca Falls may be the applicant for grant funding for this project, and the Supervisor or other officially designated member of the Town Board, is authorized to sign the application and all other documents in the furtherance of it and, if awarded, grant administration.

The motion carried unanimously.

Town Application to Greater Tompkins County Municipal Health Insurance Consortium

Motion to approve the Town's application to the Greater Tompkins County Municipal Health Insurance Consortium made by Councilman Sinicropi, seconded by Councilwoman Laskoski.

Councilwoman Laskoski expressed concerns about the potential health insurance plans and communication with employees. Supervisor Schmitter assured that they were prioritizing employee benefits and would discuss details in executive session.

WHEREAS, the Town of Seneca Falls (hereinafter "local government") is a municipality that provides health insurance to its employees; and

WHEREAS, the local government purchases said health insurance in the competitive marketplace; and

WHEREAS, it is possible to purchase health insurance from Greater Tompkins County Municipal Health Insurance Consortium (consortium) for a lesser cost.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED the Town of Seneca Falls will submit an application for membership to the Consortium to establish eligibility to purchase insurance in 2026; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Human Resources Committee of the Board will select the plans to be offered to employees and retirees when they are provided to the Town from the consortium.

The motion carried with some opposition.

Determination of SEQRA Non-Applicability for Painting IAWL Bridge

Motion to determine SEQRA non-applicability for painting the It's a Wonderful Life Bridge made by Councilwoman Laskoski, seconded by Councilman Puylara.

Town Attorney Patrick Morrell explained that the project was considered maintenance work and did not require further environmental review.

WHEREAS, the Town of Seneca Falls Town Board (the “Town Board”) is proposing the following Scope of Work to be completed as part of the “It’s a Wonderful Life” Bridge Painting Project (the “Project”):

The proposed project scope includes painting the “It’s a Wonderful Life” bridge a darker shade of green than what currently exists on the bridge. The painting is proposed for the portion of the bridge above the sidewalk level of the bridge; nothing below that will be repainted. The painting will follow the New York State (NYS) Department of Transportation (DOT) regulations for scraping, sandblasting, and preparation, as well as the painting itself. No ground disturbance is proposed.

WHEREAS, the Town Board has reviewed the scope of the project and has further received and considered the advice of its architects, engineers, and environmental specialists with respect to classification of the action in accordance with the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA); and

WHEREAS, the Town Board has reviewed the Proposed Action with respect to the Type II criteria set forth in 6 NYCRR part 617.5(c), which reads as follows:

(1) maintenance or repair involving no substantial changes in an existing structure or facility; and

WHEREAS, the proposed project is a Type II action meeting the aforementioned Type II criteria; and

WHEREAS, Type II actions have been determined not to have a significant impact on the environment and are not subject to review under SEQRA.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, no further action is required by the Town Board with regard to SEQRA for this Type II action.

The motion carried unanimously.

Per Diem Reimbursement – Detective Denny

Motion to approve per diem reimbursement for Detective Christopher Denny for attending a child safety training conference made by Councilwoman Laskoski, seconded by Councilwoman Dyson.

WHEREAS, it has been requested by Detective Denny to attend the 2025 Child Passenger Safety Training Conference, held on May 6, 7, 8, 2025, in Lake Placid, NY.

WHEREAS, Chief Snyder feels that this training will benefit the Town of Seneca Falls.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Board pay Detective Denny a total of \$165.00 to be paid from line item A3120.408 Education for meals & incidental expenses.

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Detective Denny receives his meals & incidental expense based on the US General Services Administration (GSA) and the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).

The motion carried unanimously.

New Erin Tech Evidence Room

Motion to approve the purchase of evidence property room software and supporting equipment for the Police Department at a cost of \$4,724 made by Councilwoman Dyson, seconded by Councilwoman Laskoski.

WHEREAS, the Police Department seeks approval of the Town Board to purchase Evidence/Property software for logging and tracking evidence and property in the Police Department; and

WHEREAS, it is the recommendation of Chief Snyder to contract with “Erin Technology” for this service; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Board Authorize the purchase of “Erin Technology” for the Police Department at a cost of \$4,724.00 total; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, "The new 'Erin Technology' shall be purchased using funds from the Police Department's Vehicle & Equipment Reserve Fund, line A230PE. These funds shall be transferred into the Police Department's Equipment line item, A3120.200 by the towns finance department on July 3, 2025."

The motion carried unanimously.

Approval to Hire an MEO

Motion to hire a Motor Equipment Operator for the Department of Public Works at a rate of \$23.45 per hour (Grade 7), pending background check and drug screening, made by Councilman Sinicropi, seconded by Councilman Puylara.

Discussion ensued regarding the proper grade and pay rate for the position, as well as the need for background checks and drug screening. The motion was amended to include these requirements.

WHEREAS Mr. Albert Kemp has applied for the position of Motor Equipment Operator through the Seneca County Personnel Department; and

WHEREAS Mr. Albert Kemp has been approved by the Seneca County Personnel Department as a qualified candidate for the position of Motor Equipment Operator; and

WHEREAS the Town of Seneca Falls Department of Public Works has four positions including three Motor Equipment Operator Light (MEO Light) positions and one regular Motor Equipment Operator position; and

WHEREAS two of the MEO Light positions are currently vacant; and

WHEREAS one of the MEO Light positions is currently occupied by an employee who is no longer available to work and is in the process of applying for disability benefits; and

WHEREAS the only position currently filled is the regular MEO position.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Mr. Albert Kemp be hired on a probationary basis, to serve as an MEO with the Town of Seneca Falls Department of Public Works at an hourly rate of \$23.45 (grade 7) pending a background check performed by the Seneca Falls Police Department and a drug screening.

AYES - Jackson Puylara, Frank Sinicropi, Frank Schmitter

NAYES - Kaitlyn Laskoski, Dawn Dyson

The amended motion carried with some opposition.

Approve Contracting with McGhan Inc for Drainage and Ditch Cleaning Operations on As-Needed Basis

Motion to approve contracting with McGhan Inc. for drainage and ditch cleaning operations on an as-needed basis made by Councilwoman Laskoski, seconded by Councilman Puylara.

Councilwoman Laskoski raised concerns about the bidding process and compliance with municipal law. Town Attorney Morrell assured that the process was legal as long as expenditures remained under \$35,000.

WHEREAS, the Town has identified a continuing need to clear ditches and address drainage issues; and

WHEREAS, while the Town possesses the necessary equipment to perform these tasks, it currently lacks skilled personnel to operate the equipment required for the work; and

WHEREAS, bids for the required services were solicited from five companies with only Thurston Services, McGhan, Inc., and DiGeorge Construction Services responding; and

WHEREAS, written bids for a skilled operator ranged from a high of \$230 per hour to a low bid of \$95 per hour; and

WHEREAS, after review, it was determined that McGhan, Inc., the low bidder, be selected to perform the work at an hourly rate of \$95, with services provided on an as-needed basis.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that McGhan is hereby selected as the low bidder to provide ditch clearing and drainage services for the Town, as needed.

AYES - Jackson Puylara, Frank Sinicropi, Frank Schmitter

NAYES - Kaitlyn Laskoski, Dawn Dyson

The motion carried with some opposition.

Authorize Award of Water Valve Installer

Motion to authorize the award of water valve installer made by Councilman Sinicropi, seconded by Councilman Puylara.

WHEREAS, the Town of Seneca Falls (Town) is in need of valve installation for their water distribution system; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to New York State Municipal Law, proposals for Water Valve Installer were received, publicly opened and read aloud on May 22, 2025 at the Town Hall, 130 Ovid Street, Seneca Falls, NY 13148; and

WHEREAS, the Town's Engineering Consultant, Barton & Loguidice, D.P.C. (B&L), tabulated and analyzed the proposals received, and by letter dated May 27, 2025, has recommend award of the Town of Seneca Falls Water Valve Installer.

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 Valve Installer as follows:

- Ontario Water Tap, LLC

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Resolution shall take effect immediately.

The motion carried unanimously.

Tapping Fees

Motion to adjust water service tapping fees made by Councilman Puylara, seconded by Councilwoman Dyson.

Discussion included concerns about asbestos in water lines and the need for trained personnel to handle it.

WHEREAS, the cost of materials and the need for Contractor services (Asbestos removal) on some water service taps have increased; and

WHEREAS, The Department requests increase in short side and long side taps:

1. Short side from \$850 to \$1020 (When Main is on same side of street)
2. Long side from \$1,500 to \$1,800 (When Main is on opposite side of street)

and

WHEREAS, any fees incurred for contractors' abatement of asbestos will be added to the final bill for Tapping services.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the town board authorizes raising the Tapping fees 1 and 2 above and costs incurred for asbestos abatement.

The motion carried unanimously.

Zoning Permit Extension/Renewal Application

Motion to approve the zoning permit extension/renewal application made by Councilwoman Dyson, seconded by Councilwoman Laskoski.

WHEREAS, The Town of Seneca Falls Zoning department does not have a Zoning Permit extension/Renewal Process; and

WHEREAS, Applicants must file a new application to extend their permit if the work has not commenced and the permit on file expires.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, The Town of Seneca Falls Zoning Department would like to add an extension/renewal application to the department with a \$10 fee; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, The Seneca Falls Town Board approves the Extension/ Renewal application processes and associated fee.

The motion carried unanimously.

Water Leak and Pool Credits

Motion to approve water leak and pool credits made by Councilwoman Dyson, seconded by Councilman Puylara.

WHEREAS, credits have compiled for pool fillings and leak credits for May 2025; and

WHEREAS, the total number of accounts to be credited are eleven; and

WHEREAS, the total dollar amount for the credits totals \$699.28.

BE IT RESOLVED that the following person/account is issued credit.

The motion carried unanimously.

Audit of Claims

Motion to pay the bills upon receiving the third signature made by Dawn Dyson, seconded by Jackson Puylara.

The motion carried with some opposition due to the lack of a third signature at the time of the meeting.

Executive Session

Motion to enter executive session made by Councilwoman Dyson, seconded by Councilman Puylara.

SENECA FALLS TOWN BOARD PUBLIC HEARING AND REGULAR MEETING OF JUNE 3, 2025

Supervisor Schmitter stated that the executive session would include discussion related to proposed planning of current litigations, matters related to collective negotiation, and personnel issues. No action was to be taken upon returning from executive session.

The meeting was then concluded.

Respectfully submitted,

Melissa G. Brown
Town Clerk