SENECA FALLS TOWN BOARD REGULAR MEETING OF FEBRUARY 3, 2026

Public Hearing:

A. The Seneca Falls Town Board held a regular meeting on Tuesday March 3, 2026, at the Seneca Falls Town Office, 130 Ovid Street Seneca Falls NY 13148.
Supervisor Schmitter called the regular meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

B. A roll call was taken of board members the following members of the board were present:

TOWN OFFICER	Present	Absent
Supervisor Frank Schmitter	X	
Councilwoman Gabby Cosentino	X	
Councilman Jackson Puylara	X	
Councilwoman Dawn Dyson	X	
Councilwoman Wendy Crane	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		
Highway Superintendent Jeremy Wendt	X	
Police Chief Timothy Snyder	X	
Chief of Water & Sewer Joseph Tullo	X	
Dept. Public Works Peter Messmer	X	

C. The Pledge of Allegiance followed by a moment of silence.

D. Awards – SF Police Dept.

Chief Snyder presented several awards to members of the Seneca Falls Police Department. The first awards went to Sergeant Kidd and Officer Darling for their lifesaving efforts on August 21, 2025, when they responded to a 911 call about an unconscious female who was not breathing. Both officers immediately began CPR and utilized an AED while awaiting EMS arrival. Their swift response and teamwork were critical in saving the woman's life. Chief Snyder noted this was Sergeant Kidd's third lifesaving award since joining the department.

Officer Rumfelt received the Excellence in Police Service Award for 2025. Chief Snyder explained that Officer Rumfeldt, who came as a lateral transfer from Allegheny County four years ago, distinguished himself through multiple assignments including serving as school resource officer while Sergeant Poole was out for surgery, completing undercover work for the criminal investigation division, and becoming certified as a taser instructor.

Officer Dustin Hathaway received a Commendation Award for his response to an active shooter incident in Waterloo on April 1, 2025. Despite being a rookie with only two years on the job, Chief Snyder explained that Officer Hathaway responded without hesitation to assist fellow officers from multiple agencies and strategically positioned himself to contain the threat.

The highest award presented was the Combat Valor Award, given to Sergeant Bergdorf for the same April 1, 2025, incident in Waterloo. Chief Snyder described how Sergeant Bergdorf moved toward the danger while being fired upon by the suspect, returned fire, and prevented further harm to the community. Chief Snyder noted this was likely the first time a Seneca Falls officer was actually shot at and returned fire.

The department also recognized Chief Snyder for his 25 years of service with the Seneca Falls Police Department. Sergeant Bergdorf presented the recognition, describing Chief Snyder's career progression from dispatcher to police officer through the ranks to chief, highlighting his role in achieving state accreditation and his ongoing leadership.

E. Petitioners/Privilege of the Floor

Randy Shepherd and Keeley Hynes from Bonadio, the town's auditing firm, addressed the board regarding the status of the town's financial audits. Shepherd explained their role as auditors who provide opinions on the town's financial statements for grant purposes and credit agencies. He reported they have completed the 2022 audit but have not yet begun substantive work on 2023 and 2024 audits. The delay is due to waiting for the town's books to be completely reconciled by the third party that assists with bookkeeping. They had started working on 2023 but had to step away when

certain bookkeeping components were not complete. The firm made a decision to skip 2023 and audit both 2023 and 2024 together once the 2024 numbers are finalized.

Jerry Goodenough from the Seneca Falls Development Corporation provided an extensive update on the corporation's activities. He began by asking who knew the town had a development corporation and what it does, noting the lack of awareness. The nine-person board includes Executive Director Greg Sellers and members Doug Avery, Jim Fitzgerald, Jim Depolis, Jessica Lorenzetti, Dave Goldberg, and Judy Wentzell.

Goodenough detailed the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI), explaining they won $10 million after applying for three years, though COVID impacted the original 13 projects. Eight projects continued, with reinvestment in It's a Wonderful Life, North Canal work, the Huntington building, and Seneca Falls Performing Arts. The corporation managed a $600,000 building improvement fund with 12 total projects including windows, doors, painting, and flooring improvements.

He praised Judy Wentzell's work with the Bonfiglio Family Foundation, combining their funding ability with the corporation's non-profit status for a $700,000 program benefiting eight businesses. The corporation also managed a micro-enterprise program for new businesses with eight projects, which was so successful the state asked them to repeat it.

The corporation manages the farmer's market, which moved locations due to town park work and saw increased vendor participation and attendance. They now publish monthly event calendars and newsletters distributed to businesses and on their website. Lorenzetti promoted their website senecafalls.info as a central information hub.

Regarding the comprehensive plan, Goodenough noted the Development Corporation is listed as the lead for 41 items. They plan to hire an agency for town marketing and will present a discrete plan and cost estimate to the board in August for budget consideration.

Judy Wentzell then spoke about the Women's Right to Run 5K, explaining she's now on the board for the tenth annual event after it was passed from Menso Case and Generations Bank. The race is scheduled for Saturday, May 9th on Mother's Day weekend. She detailed weekend festivities including a Friday evening guest speaker Tiffany Schlain at the Wesleyan Chapel from 6-7 PM, followed by an 1848 block party on Minder Street from 7-9 PM with food, beverages, and live entertainment. Saturday post-race events include a women's arts festival on the Lodovico Sculpture Trail. She clarified they will no longer use People's Park and will keep activities near the hall and foundation property.

Stephanie Engster, CSEA labor relations specialist, updated the board on contract negotiations that have been ongoing for almost a year since April 9, 2025. The last mediation session was December 9th, and no additional mediation sessions were scheduled as they would not be productive. She requested scheduling another negotiation session with a board member present to close the agreement, which Supervisor Schmitter agreed to arrange.

Jean Gilroy asked that two letters under communications be read aloud - the DEC letter and correspondence on odor issues worsening in Seneca Falls. He also asked when the pump station by Kenny Drugs would be fixed, noting it has had auxiliary pumping for about three years and questioning whether odors attributed to Seneca Meadows might be coming from the town's own sewer system.

Dr. Andrew Olden, Executive Director of the Seneca Falls Museum and Tourism Center, provided an update on their DRI renovations. The facility has been almost entirely renovated with new exhibits including a giant tugboat exhibit and a second-floor conference room. They are waiting for warmer weather to install signage before reopening with a grand reopening planned with the Seneca County Chamber of Commerce. He promoted their Music in the Park concert series running Thursdays from June through August and a new "25 in 250" speaker series commemorating the United States' 250th anniversary.

Brad Jones addressed the board with several concerns regarding town finances and governance. He emphasized "truth matters" and questioned accountability for the 18% tax increase, which he called the highest ever in Seneca Falls. Through FOIL requests, he discovered the town spent $150,000 on outsourced accounting services to a Rochester firm, charging $120-140 per hour, which he felt was hidden from the board and public. He noted 28 town employees make over $75,000, with 9 making over $100,000, and criticized overtime as becoming a "new way of life." Jones also questioned whether the town clerk should be responsible for meeting agendas according to town code and New York state law, rather than the supervisor's secretary.

F. Approval of Minutes
Reorganizational & Regular Town Board Meeting Minutes 1-6-2026
Town Board Meeting 2-3-2026
Motion to approve the minutes from both mentioned meetings made by Councilwoman Dyson and seconded by Councilman Puylara. All in favor. Motion carried.

G. Supervisor's Report

Supervisor Schmitter provided several announcements and updates. He highlighted the Huntington building being selected for the Preservation League of New York State's "Five to Revive" program, which identifies historic properties facing threats but holding strong potential for rehabilitation.
He promoted the swap cycle scheduled for April 17-19, encouraging residents to list unwanted items online rather than taking them to landfills, with pickup occurring in front of homes and cleanup afterward.
Supervisor Schmitter announced "Advancing Together," a comprehensive plan committee event scheduled for Monday, April 13 from 6-8 PM at the Seneca Falls Community Center. The event will provide opportunities for residents and groups to communicate, share priorities, and engage in town initiatives, with light refreshments provided.

H. Department Reports
a. Highway Depart. Report – January 2026
b. Parks & Recreation Report – March 2026
c. Water & Sewer Report – February 2026
d. Assessor’s Report – March 2026
e. DPW Report – February 2026
f. SFPD Monthly Report – January 2026
Motion to approve departmental reports made by Councilwoman Dyson and seconded by Councilwoman Crane.

I. Communications
a. Bond Counsel Engagement Ltr-2-20-2026
b. DEC Letter, 2/2/2026, re. SMI
c. Barton & Loguidice March 2026 Report
d. Correspondence on Odor Issues Worsening in SF from Mark Pitifer
e. Annual Personnel Report 1203
Motion to approve the communications made by Councilwoman Dyson and seconded by Councilman Puylara.

J. Special Events
a. Canal Festival – July 3-5, 2026 – Motion to approve the event made by Councilwoman Dyson and seconded by Councilwoman Crane. All in favor. Motion carried.
b. Classic Car & Motorcycle Show – July 26, 2026 – Motion to approve the event made by Councilwoman Dyson and seconded by Councilwoman Crane. All in favor. Motion carried
c. Rotary Flag Project – May 18 – June 15, 2026 – Motion to approve the event made by Councilwoman Dyson and seconded by Councilwoman Cosentino. All in favor. Motion carried.
d. Women’s Right to Run 5K & Weekend Celebration – May 8-9, 2026 – Motion to approve the event made by Councilwoman Dyson and seconded by Councilwoman Crane. All in favor. Motion carried.
e. Easter Egg Hunt – April 4, 2026 – Event to be held at the recreation center.

K. New Business

a. Transfer of Funds for Master Plan

WHEREAS, the Town of Seneca Falls has been working to develop a Comprehensive Plan; and
WHEREAS, over the past twenty-two (22) months, the Town of Seneca Falls Parks and Recreation Department has been developing a Master Plan to coincide with the Town’s Comprehensive Plan, with this process facilitated with the assistance of Judy Wentzel and the Bonafiglia Foundation; and
WHEREAS, the Parks and Recreation Department has budgeted ten thousand dollars ($10,000) in the 2026 budget, Account CR7020.408, to contract with an external committee to assess the Town’s facilities and spaces as part of the final stage of the Master Plan;
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Board of the Town of Seneca Falls hereby authorizes the Parks and Recreation Department to engage an external committee to assess Town facilities and spaces in support of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan up to the ten thousand dollars ($10,000) budgeted.
Motion: Councilperson Dyson moved to approve the resolution. Councilperson Crane seconded.
Carried unanimously.

b. Transfer of Funds for Vince's Park HVAC

WHEREAS, the Town of Seneca Falls Vince’s Park requires funding for Heating, AC & Power, which is budgeted under account code CR2-7110.408; and

WHEREAS, the adopted 2026 Town of Seneca Falls budget for Vince's Park currently reflects a zero balance in account CR2-7110.408 due to an oversight during the budget process; and
WHEREAS, actual 2025 expenditures for Heating, AC & Power at Vince's Park exceeded $20,600, and projected 2026 costs are estimated at approximately $23,000;
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Board of the Town of Seneca Falls hereby authorizes the transfer of $23,000 from the Unassigned Fund Balance A917to account CR2-7110.408 to fund Heating, AC & Power expenses for Vince's Park in the 2026 budget.

Motion: Councilperson Dyson moved to approve the transfer of funds for Vince's Park heating, AC, and power. Councilperson Crane seconded. **Carried** unanimously.

c. Authorize Surplus and Disposition of PD Equipment

WHEREAS, the Seneca Falls Police Department has determined that one copier, described as a **Xerox VersaLink C605**, **Serial No. 5RB745039**, is no longer required for departmental operations; and
WHEREAS, said equipment has become surplus to the needs of the Seneca Falls Police Department; and
WHEREAS, the disposition of surplus equipment is authorized in accordance with applicable municipal policies and procedures; and
WHEREAS, it is in the best interest of the Seneca Falls Police Department that any monies received from the sale or disposition of this surplus equipment be deposited into the Police Department Surplus Vehicle and Equipment Fund;
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the **Xerox VersaLink C605 copier, Serial No. 5BR745039**, is hereby declared surplus; and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Chief of Police, or their designee, is authorized to dispose of said surplus equipment in a manner consistent with applicable law and policy; and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all monies received from the sale or disposition of this equipment shall be deposited into the **Police Department Surplus Vehicle and Equipment Fund**.

Motion: Councilperson Dyson moved to approve the resolution. Councilperson Puylara seconded. **Carried** unanimously.

d. Upgrade Nine Dept Handguns to 9MM

This item was removed from the agenda.

e. Heavy Equipment Bids

Motion: Councilperson Dyson moved to table the resolution. Councilperson Crane seconded. **Carried** 5-0.

f. Tree-Cutting Bids

WHEREAS, the following sealed bids were submitted to the Town of Seneca Falls for Tree Cutting for the year of 2026; and
WHEREAS, the following were the results:

BIDDER	WHOLE DAY	HOURLY RATE	START DATE
Davey Tree Expert Co.	$5,400.00	$850.00	3/1/2026
Lumber Mac Inc.	$2,000.00	$250.00	Current

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Lumber Mac Inc. is the lowest bidder with $2,000.00 per day and $250.00 per hour.

Motion: Councilperson Dyson moved to accept the tree cutting bid resolution. Councilperson Crane seconded. **Carried** unanimously.

g. Purchase Spare Pumps for Garden St and Bridgeport Sewer Stations

RESOLUTION NOT PROVIDED

The water department requested spare pumps for Garden Street and Bridgeport sewer pumps to keep extras on hand.

Motion: Councilperson Puylara moved to approve the purchase of spare pumps. Councilperson Cosentino seconded. **Carried** with one opposed vote.

h. Surplus Pickup & Place on Auctions International

WHEREAS, the Department has ordered a new ford F350 pickup; and

WHEREAS, we need to declare the 2019 F150 pickup and advertise it on Auctions International for sale.
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, The Town board authorizes declaring said vehicle Surplus and selling it on Auctions International.
The water and sewer department will dispose of their 2019 F-150 pickup truck that needs extensive repairs.

Motion: Councilperson Cosentino moved to approve the resolution. Councilperson Dyson seconded. **Carried** unanimously.

i. Establish a part-time Zoning & Ordinance Enforcement Officer Position

WHEREAS, the Town Board of the Town of Seneca Falls finds it necessary to provide for the enforcement of the Town Code, Zoning Law, and local ordinances; and
WHEREAS, the Town Board is authorized pursuant to **New York State Civil Service Law** to create positions of employment subject to civil service classification;
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Board of the Town of Seneca Falls hereby establishes the position of **Part-Time Town Zoning & Ordinance Enforcement Officer**, subject to classification by the **Seneca County Civil Service Commission**; and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that appointment to said position shall be made in accordance with New York State Civil Service Law and applicable civil service rules.
This resolution establishes the position to be filled later.

Motion: Councilperson Dyson moved to approve establishing the position. Councilperson Puylara seconded. **Carried** unanimously.

j. Authorize Town Clerk & Deputy to Attend NYS Town Clerks Assn Training

WHEREAS, the Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk are responsible for maintaining official Town records, administering licenses and permits, and ensuring compliance with New York State law; and
WHEREAS, continuing education and professional training are essential to ensure the Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk remain current on changes in law, best practices, records management, and statutory duties; and
WHEREAS, the New York State Town Clerks Association provides training programs, conferences, and educational opportunities specifically designed to enhance the knowledge, skills, and effectiveness of Town Clerks and their deputies; and
WHEREAS, attendance at such training is in the best interest of the Town of Seneca Falls and promotes efficient, lawful, and professional administration of Town Clerk operations; and
WHEREAS, funds have been appropriated in the Town Clerk contractual and training budget line item for such professional development expenses.
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Board of the Town of Seneca Falls hereby authorizes the Town Clerk and one Deputy Town Clerk to attend training, conferences, or educational programs offered by the New York State Town Clerks Association during the 2026 fiscal year; and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk are authorized to incur reasonable and necessary expenses related to registration, travel, meals, and lodging, in accordance with the Town of Seneca Falls Travel and Training Policy and applicable New York State Comptroller guidelines; and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all expenses shall be paid from the appropriate Town Clerk budget line item, subject to audit and approval by the Town Board.

Councilperson Dyson amended the motion to authorize only one clerk to attend training instead of both.

Motion: Councilperson Dyson moved to authorize one clerk to attend training. Councilperson Crane seconded. **Carried** 4-1, with Councilperson Cosentino opposed.

k. Authorize Town Clerk to Apply for Empire State Service Summer Corp Program

This item was removed from the agenda.

l. Purchase of Contract Hours with Integrated Systems

WHEREAS, Integrated Systems is the IT service provider that the Town of Seneca Falls has contracted with; and
WHEREAS, IT services are provided to the Town of Seneca Falls by purchasing a block of hours which are used over the course of the work being done at the town offices; and
WHEREAS, Integrated Systems has sent the time log for the previously purchased 200 hours, which describes how those hours were used.
NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Town Board of the Town of Seneca Falls purchase 200 hours at the cost of $17, 000.00.

Motion: Councilperson Crane moved to approve the purchase of contract hours. Councilperson Cosentino seconded. **Carried** unanimously.

L. Audit of Claims

Motion: Councilperson Dyson moved to approve payment of bills. Councilperson Cosentino seconded. **Carried** unanimously.

M. Executive Session

Motion: Supervisor Schmitter moved to enter executive session for discussions limited to medical, financial, credit, or employment history of particular persons or corporations relating to appointment, promotion, demotion, discipline, or removal. Councilperson Dyson seconded. **Carried** unanimously.
The executive session included the entire town board, town attorney, and invited Water Superintendent Joe Tullo for the first matter and Chief Schneider for the second matter.
Board members entered Executive session at 7:10 pm
Motion to exit executive session made by Councilperson Dyson and seconded by Councilperson Cosentino at 9:10 pm.

N. Special Order Of The Day - Adjourn

Motion to adjourn made by Councilperson Dyson and seconded by Councilperson Cosentino. Meeting concluded at 9:10 pm.