

TOWN BOARD
Regular Meeting
March 13, 2019

A regular meeting of the Oneonta Town Board was held on March 13, 2019 with the following members present:

Councilman: Randy Mowers
Councilwoman: Patricia Riddell Kent
Councilman: Brett Holleran
Councilwoman: Patricia Jacob
Supervisor: Robert Wood
Town Clerk: Cheryl L. Shackelton

Others present: Rob Panasci, Town Attorney; Steve Kent; Molly Swain; Walter Schmitt; Dave Rowley; Tom Armao; Arley Lau; Richard & Prue Stelling; Steve & Katharine Paranya; Mindi Wappat; Peter Exton, Katherine O'Donnell, Art Rorick; Kevin Kelly; Michael Stolzer; Rachel Soper; and Dick Breunniger.

PETITIONERS

David Rowley – Surprised that the Town Clerk is retiring; an endless loss for the Town of Oneonta.

Molly Swain – Do not need a decompressor plant; would like to see a ‘solar field’ in the railroad yard.

Steve Kent – Because fossil fuels are contributing to climate change, the town should use renewable energy heating for the new highway garage; attended the recent energy summit where they pointed out the advantages of geo-thermal; supports the CCA (Community Choice Aggregation) for a fixed electric rate and the option of renewable electricity.

Peter Exton – In favor of geo-thermal; the president of Sidney Federal Credit Union oversaw the construction of their new offices using many green options.

Rich Stelling – Supports non-fossil fuel for new highway garage.

Mindi Wappat – In agreement with green energy.

Katharine Paranya – Town’s chance to move into the 21st century.

Katherine O'Donnell – Great opportunity for the town; geo-thermal gives heating, cooling and hot water at 65% savings.

Patricia Riddell Kent – Is focused on heating and cooling the new garage in a sustainable, cost effective manner; geothermal will provide a payback that natural gas alone cannot; this is in line with the Town’s Comprehensive Plan; agrees that the town needs to explore geothermal in conjunction with the Southside Water project.

Randy Mowers – How many people drove here in an electric car? One person responded they have a hybrid car.

Rachel Soper – Understand Mower’s point, however it doesn’t mean that in moving forward we shouldn’t address the use of less carbon.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Plains at Parish O&M charges – Motion was made by Riddell Kent, seconded by Jacob to set the following water charges for the Plains at Parish Homestead Water District for 2019:

Operations and Maintenance Charge: \$10.30/1000 gal Residential

\$16.50/1000 gal Other

Date of Billing: April 1, 2019

VOTE – Ayes 5, Nays 0 Motion Carried

Surplus Truck – Motion was made by Mowers, seconded by Jacob to surplus the 2013 Ford 250 pickup (#TO1).

truck.

VOTE – Ayes 5, Nays 0 Motion Carried

Highway garage design change – Supervisor Wood explained the following design change option after speaking with several engineers: 50% geothermal heat would likely save \$100,000 or half the cost of the system; an alternate heat source would likely be needed due to the major heat loss when doors are opened for trucks; using the current ceiling mounted furnace with an additional one or two more at a cost of \$4,000 each, we would still be way ahead and likely shorten the payback period to about 10 years or so; could also see additional savings by having the geothermal provide hot water and air-conditioning also shortening the payback time. Need to consider a Heating Recovery Unit to vent moisture out of the building; plain fans cost about \$5,000; a 77% efficient recovery unit would cost about \$20,000; payback would be difficult to determine but we would save on heat loss; a recovery unit would be the best way to proceed. These design changes would cost about \$5,000.

David Rowley – Heat recovery is incredible with trucks going in and out.

Councilwoman Riddell Kent – Geothermal designers and installers must be NYSERDA approved.

Councilman Holleran - asked if wood could be used as a secondary source if it's considered a clean alternative.

Supervisor Wood – Town has a law regulating wood burning furnaces; this would be an expensive option; we need to get a bid out; delays are costing money; in favor of the blended design.

Councilwoman Jacob – Originally discussed a 100% geothermal system, but after investigating all factors with the engineering experts, a blended system is more suitable initially.

Michael Stolzer – Asked about payback time and bonding.

Supervisor Wood - said a bank loan would save money versus bonding; and extending the term of a loan would cost more in interest; trying hard to minimize tax increases.

Katharine Paranya – Suggested an electric/solar option for the recovery system.

Attorney Panasci – Can always add the solar later on because of the tax burden.

David Rowley – Solar is not answer because December through March, when energy is needed most, are the worse months for solar; difficult to not use some natural gas.

Rachel Soper – Would like Jay Egg to consult with the Town Board on the Southside Water project regarding geothermal; need to look into grants; volunteered to help.

Supervisor Wood – Very complicated to use geothermal for large projects like Southside Water, but Energy Services companies will do this.

Michael Stolzer – Would like the town board to investigate geothermal for homes on Southside; submitted an article “Mayor Announces Plan to Offer Geothermal to Homes in Village of Rhinebeck through Dandelion Energy”.

Motion was made by Holleran, seconded by Mowers to approve Lamont Engineers additional

costs up to \$5,000 to write specifications for a heating system that would combine geothermal with one or two alternate natural gas furnaces at a cost of \$4,000 each.

VOTE – Ayes 5, Nays 0 Motion Carried

Southside Sidewalks Resolution – Councilwoman Jacob has been concerned with pedestrian safety along the Route 23/28 Southside corridor for some time. She feels it is a ‘social justice’ issue and has been working on a solution to construct sidewalks for that commercial area of town. She offered the following resolution:

Whereas, the Town of Oneonta has a Complete Streets Policy in effect, stating that "the full integration of all modes of travel in the design of streets and highway will increase the capacity and efficiency of the road network, reduces traffic congestion by improving mobility options, limits greenhouse gas emissions and improves the general quality of life. Complete Streets has been recognized and adopted as policy and law at federal, state, county, town, village and city levels in the interest of improving safety and accessibility for all users" and

Whereas, both vehicular and pedestrian traffic have increased significantly in the last ten years due to new businesses locating in the Rt23/28 corridor known as Southside Oneonta, and

Whereas, much of the pedestrian traffic appears to be residents of the area without access to motor vehicles, and includes families with young children, some even in carriages, and

Whereas, the Town of Oneonta anticipates additional growth in this corridor with the construction of the Southside Water District set to begin in 2019, and

Whereas, the NYS DOT recognized the need for sidewalks in 2007 when it prepared PIN 912043 and proposed constructing them throughout the Southside area, with improvements in road traffic flow, and

Whereas, the NYS DOT was unable to fund this project in 2011 and shelved it, and

Whereas, there have been two recent accidents involving pedestrian/motor vehicle accidents, one resulting in a fatality and another with severe injuries in the area in the last six months,

Now therefore, be it resolved that the Town of Oneonta requests that NYS DOT reopen PIN 912043 and prioritize the funding for this project, especially the sidewalk portion of the project.

Motion was made by Jacob, seconded by Riddell Kent to approve the ‘Sidewalk Resolution’ and forward to: the NYS Dept. of Transportation (State DOT); regional DOT; local DOT; Senator Seward; and Assemblyman Salka.

VOTE – Ayes 5, Nays 0 Motion Carried

Peter Exton expressed his displeasure with the appearance of Lettis Highway. Would like to see some trees planted there. Supervisor Wood said the City is addressing a proposal to make Lettis Highway a ‘boulevard’ with plantings to make it more appealing.

Facilities, Technology, Parks. Councilman Holleran submitted a Request for Proposal (RFP) to remove the existing air condition units/condensers located at Town Hall and replace them (10) with comparable air conditioner units and condensers.

Motion was made by Jacob, seconded by Riddell Kent to authorize the advertising of the Air Conditioner RFP.

Discussion: It was noted that the existing units are approximately 25 years old.

VOTE – Ayes 5, Nays 0 Motion Carried

Human Resources and Public Benefit – Nothing to report

Legislative – Nothing to report

CODE ENFORCEMENT – Nothing to report

MISCELLANEOUS

CCA Pricing/Next Steps – Supervisor Wood needs to take action on whether the town would like to continue participation in the CCA (Community Choice Aggregation). He went over the price and terms offered by Constellation NewEnergy. Board members had questions after participating in MEGA’s webinar. Councilman Holleran questioned Constellation New Energy’s use of non-green energy sources; seems hypocritical, he said.

Supervisor Wood offered the following:

Motion was made by Jacob, seconded by Riddell Kent to approve the following price and terms offered by Constellation NewEnergy; and authorize the Supervisor to sign the approval sheet and return to MEGA:

\$0.05092 for 24 months

- Fixed price
- No early termination fee
- Opt-out via mail, phone, website
- 24/7, 365 customer service with calls answered domestically

100% renewable electricity: \$0.0542 for 24 months

Discussion: Councilman Mowers said the savings per year amounts to \$12.00; he does not agree with this process; and likes to make his own decisions.

VOTE – Ayes 4, Nays 1 (Mowers) Motion Carried

The town will hold more informational sessions in the next few weeks.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion was made by Jacob, seconded by Riddell Kent to approve the February 13, 2019 minutes.

VOTE – Ayes 5, Nays 0 Motion Carried

BILLS

Motion was made by Mowers, seconded by Jacob to pay bills as follows, with the addition of

\$40,940.70 for the new pick-up truck.

2018 Bills:

General	\$35,000.00	1010,1011
DISTRICTS :		
WESD	\$30,000.00	1006
SSD	\$10,000.00	1007
WWD	\$6,000.00	1008
PWD	\$9,000.00	1009

Feb. 2019 Bills:

General	\$32,474.74	102,108,110-113,118-123,128-136,138,140,141,147,158 -162, 171,172
Highway	\$21,508.52	108,140,142-144,146-152,163-170
Street Lights	\$4,109.47	135,136,145
Trust & Agency	\$2,549.69	104-106,107,115-117,173
Highway Gar.	\$3,259.40	123
DISTRICTS :		
WESD	\$6,211.40	103,109,114,125-127,137,139,153,154,156,157
WSSD	\$972.75	103,109,114,127,139,156,157
SSD	\$1,468.17	103,109,114,127,137,139,157
WWD	\$1,925.87	103,109,114,127,139,153,155-157
PWD	\$429.97	103,109,114,127,139
SS Water Dist.	\$37,660.39	124

VOTE – Ayes 5, Nays 0 Motion Carried

The meeting was adjourned at 9:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl L. Shackelton
Town Clerk