

Minutes of the Town of Sennett Town Board Meeting Held on Thursday, January 16, 2025, at 6:00 PM at the Sennett Town Office Building.

Members Present: Thomas Blair, Supervisor
James Vivenzio, Councilman
Michael Wellauer, Councilman
Edward Rizzo, Councilman
Kristopher LaPointe, Councilman

Also Present: Cheri Major, Bookkeeper
Harold Gilfus, Code Enforcement Officer
Kris LaPointe, Water & Sewer Superintendent
Kathy Gray, Sennett Seniors Chair
Kathleen Salisbury, Town Clerk
Town Justice Richard Timian
Brandon La Sagna, Highway Superintendent
Seth Jenkins, City of Auburn
Emilio Moran, MRB

Residents: Bill Feocco, Kate & Steve Sholar, Amy Rose, Ed Magdziak

Others: Giovanni Procopio & John Joyce

Remotely: Emilio Moran, MRB
Tom
Jake
315-604-0935

CALL TO ORDER - The meeting is called to Order at 6:00 p.m. by Supervisor Blair.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE - The meeting is opened with the pledge to the flag, followed by a prayer by Supervisor Blair.

ROLL CALL - Town Clerk Salisbury opens the meeting with a Roll Call, Councilman Vivenzio, Councilman Wellauer, Councilman Rizzo, and Councilman LaPointe and Supervisor Blair are present.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES - Meeting Minutes for December 19, 2024 are reviewed by the Board. A motion to approve the minutes is made by Councilman LaPointe and seconded by Councilman Vivenzio. 5 ayes 0 nays 0 absent. Carried.

PUBLIC HEARING - None.

SCHEDULED SPEAKERS

1. MRB - Engineering items - (Possible water district 8 updates; GIS mapping; infrastructure studies, wholesale water agr., Grant writing, Subdivision Law). The report from MRB was in the Board's packet. Emilio read over the report. Emilio went over the proposal for the 2025 Northern Border Regional Commission Grant Application relative to grant opportunities that may be available for the possible WD#8.

After discussion, a motion is made by Councilman Wellauer, seconded by Councilman LaPointe to authorize the Supervisor to sign the proposal with MRB dated January 10, 2025 titled "Proposal for Professional Services - 2025 Northern Border Regional Commission Grant Application" in the amount of \$5,500.

With no further discussion, a roll call vote is taken:

Roll call vote:

Councilman Vivenzio	Yes
Councilman Wellauer	Yes
Councilman Rizzo	Yes
Councilman LaPointe	Yes
Supervisor Blair	Yes

Motion carried. 5 ayes 0 nays 0 absent

PUBLIC BE HEARD - Motion is made by Councilman LaPointe to open the Public Be Heard Period, seconded by Councilman Vivenzio at 6:21 pm. All in favor. 5 ayes 0 nays 0 absent, carried.

With no public comments, a motion to close is made by Councilman LaPointe and seconded by Councilman Rizzo at 6:22 pm. All in favor. 5 ayes 0 nays 0 absent, carried.

NEW BUSINESS Judicial resignation and possible Appointment

Honorable Richard Timian, presiding Town Justice has submitted his letter of resignation/retirement and was received by the Town Clerk on 1/06/2025. Said notice was given to the Office of Court Administration on 1/10/2025. Supervisor Blair reads the letter into the record (attached at end of minutes).

After discussion, a motion is made by Councilman LaPointe to accept the resignation of Honorable Richard Timian effective January 31, 2025, close of business, seconded by Councilman Wellauer.

With no further discussion, a roll call vote is taken:

Roll call vote:

Councilman Vivenzio	Yes
Councilman Wellauer	Yes
Councilman Rizzo	Yes
Councilman LaPointe	Yes
Supervisor Blair	Yes

Motion carried. 5 ayes 0 nays 0 absent

Thank you, Judge Timian.

Judge Timian addresses the Board and advises he has chosen a successor, Katherine Sholar, and asks the Board to appoint her as such. Mrs. Sholar addresses the Board, advising she is a Sennett resident, an attorney and thanks the Board for the opportunity to serve the Town. Supervisor Blair advised the Board that he has been communicating with her over the last six months, she has been working with Judge Timian and the Court Clerks.

With no further discussion, Supervisor Blair makes a motions to appoint Katherine Sholar as the new Judge fulfilling the term of Richard Timian effective the close of business on January 31, 2025 and will reach out to the Board of Elections to gain their advice and counsel as to When an elective ballot needs to be petitioned for to fulfill the remainder of that term.

With no further discussion, a roll call vote is taken:

Roll call vote:

Councilman Vivenzio	Yes
Councilman Wellauer	Yes
Councilman Rizzo	Yes
Councilman LaPointe	Yes
Supervisor Blair	Yes

Motion carried. 5 ayes 0 nays 0 absent

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

- a. **Attorney** - (ambulance district) - Supervisor Blair advised he spoke with Attorney Andino regarding the ambulance district. Waiting on the status of the MPR.
- b. **Bookkeeper** - (Time/benefits system; budget adjustments, audits) - Bookkeeper Major advises interest received on accounts in the amount of \$281,123.31. The Judges, Court Clerks and two 7th District members reviewed the Court's accounts in preparation of the upcoming retirement of Judge Timian. Bookkeeper Major advised the Board that some budget adjustments were needed and requested authorization from the Board relative to wages based on new hires in highway and court clerk. After discussion, a motion is made by Councilman Wellauer to authorize Bookkeeper Major to make the budget adjustments as presented on the sheet provided as follows: DA \$25,941.50 and A \$39,068.37, seconded by Councilman Vivenzio.

With no further discussion, a roll call vote is taken:

Roll call vote:

Councilman Vivenzio	Yes
Councilman Wellauer	Yes
Councilman Rizzo	Yes
Councilman LaPointe	Yes
Supervisor Blair	Yes

Motion carried. 5 ayes 0 nays 0 absent

The percentage for billing for one Auburn water meter that bills three accounts needs to be adjusted. The dollar amounts on the bill do not change, just the percentages. There are no overcharges, just allocation to accounts. Bookkeeper Major will follow up next month for the budget adjustment.

Online payroll system - The employees are using the system, however, additional items need to be resolved relative to call in time and comp time. Councilman Wellauer will follow up with the payroll company to try to resolve the issues. Additional training will be held in the near future.

- c. **Planning Board** - Councilman Rizzo advised, on behalf of Chairman Edmunds, that the Schooley subdivision has been referred to the ZBA for a variance. There are three openings on the Planning Board, one full member and two alternates.
- d. **Codes/Fire Marshal** - Code Enforcement Officer Gilfus advised his report was in the Board's packet. Issued 2 permits, 75 year to date through end of December. 3 inquiries, 2 Certificates of Occupancy, 4 Certificates of Compliance, 6 final inspections. He has been following up on previously issued permits. Has done 20 site visit inspections, 1 fire/safety inspection.
- e. **Zoning Enforcement Officer** - Councilman Wellauer advised on behalf of Zoning Officer VeVone that he has been working on a variety of matters regarding sign application, zoning application and subdivisions.

- f. **Assessor** – Councilman LaPointe read the report of Assessor Lowe who advised that Mr. Lowe has been reviewing property transfer forms and comparing sale listings and local inventory for accuracy, entering permits into the RPS software, meeting with owners regarding new and renewal exemption forms, tax bills, new construction was reviewed and valued.
- g. **Fire Dept.** – Supervisor Blair read the report of the Fire Department provided by Assistant Chief Holmes. The Department responded to 52 alarms in December and 635 this year. The Department’s annual report was also provided and will be put on the Town’s website.
- h. **Highway Dept.** – Highway Superintendent Brandon La Sagna advised his report was in the Board’s packet. The department has been busy with snow plowing and salting. The blue pickup truck transmission is not working. Took to transmission repair shop to fix. In addition to the transmission, it needs tires.

A discussion his held. With no further discussion, a motion is made by Supervisor Blair to authorize the Highway Superintendent to have the blue pickup truck transmission fixed by Smith Transmission and put back in service in an amount not to exceed \$4,500, seconded by Councilman Wellauer.

Superintendent La Sagna advised the Board that the red pickup truck does not have a plow. With the blue truck out of commission, a plow on the red truck is needed. He provided the Board with estimates to purchase a plow for the red truck. He further advised that the blue pickup truck needs tires and an inspection.

Motion is amended to include new tires under state bid.

An amended motion is made by Councilman LaPointe to authorize the Highway Superintendent to have the blue pickup truck transmission fixed by Smith Transmission and put back in service in an amount not to exceed \$4,500, and to purchase new tires at state bid, seconded by Councilman Vivenzio.

With no further discussion, a roll call vote is taken:

Roll call vote:

Councilman Vivenzio	Yes
Councilman Wellauer	Yes
Councilman Rizzo	Yes
Councilman LaPointe	Yes
Supervisor Blair	Yes

Motion carried. 5 ayes 0 nays 0 absent

After discussion, it was decided to wait on getting a plow for the red pickup. The blue pickup transmission will be fixed and put back into service.

Brandon further advised that Bill Perkins helped out the water department for an extensive period of time with a water break. A heater in the shop broke and it was repaired.

He received a call from a resident who inquired about snow removal on Parcell near Calemad. No special treatment is given to any road for any reason.

- i. **Water Dept.** – (Wholesale IMA) – Water Superintendent LaPointe advised his report was in the Board’s packet. Roughly 200 remain to be changed out.

- j. **Town Clerk** - Town Clerk Salisbury advised the December 2024 monthly report was in the Board's meeting packet for their review. Fees received of \$810.25 for 9 dog licenses, 4 building permits, 31 death certificates, 1 marriage license, 1 genealogy search and 1 decal, with the amounts disbursed to the Supervisor in the amount of \$765.03, \$18.00 to the NYS Animal Population Control Program, \$4.72 for decals and \$22.50 to the NYS Dept of Health. Taxes and water payments by credit card/e-check are up and running.
- k. **Dog Control Officer** - The new dog control officer, Canine Cove, will provide their report and voucher the first of the month for the previous month. That will start February 1st.
- l. **Committees**
 - *Parks & Rec* - Councilman Rizzo advised he spoke with Emilio from MRB regarding an RFP for bathrooms. Connor Fence will be installing the dog park fence in the next few weeks, weather dependent. Water and electric service will be installed in the spring.
 - *Veteran Affairs* - A new contractor has been hired to finish the memorial park.
 - *Sennett Seniors* - The senior program is on hiatus until April.
 - *Historians* - Jim Vivencio advised he and Scott would like to have the history digitized at some point.

OLD BUSINESS

- Town Records Project grant award and status - Received final approval, will get in touch with vendor to begin process.
- Handbook updates (Underway) - Supervisor Blair will be following up on this.
- E-Code 360 codification project status - local laws from the State have been received. Will notify rep from E-Code 360 to move forward.
- Water & Sewer Rate studies - these will be done by GHD through MRB.
- Town Hall capital needs - sidewalks, etc. - sidewalks will be discussed after Veterans area completed.
- Town branding & marketing project (Jim Vivencio) - on hold
- Vehicle and Traffic Safety Signs status & results - Deputy Highway Superintendent Perkins and Clerk Kate will be working with the sign company to fix the issues of not reading the vehicles.
- AED purchases/replacements (MWellauer +BLaSagna) - Need to follow up
- Employee positions to fill - water department position still open
- Water & sewer ACH/Credit card status (by district) - up and running

SUPERVISOR CORRESPONDENCE/REPORT - Mr. Vitale sent a letter regarding the deposit made last year in connection with the Out of District Water and Sewer Agreements. The Board will review.

EXECUTIVE SESSION (IF NECESSARY) - A motion is made by Councilman Rizzo to enter into executive session at 8:24 p.m., seconded by Councilman LaPointe.

A motion is made by Councilman LaPointe to return from executive session at 9:25 p.m., seconded by Councilman Rizzo.

Supervisor Blair advised no action was taken in executive session.

PAYMENT OF MONTHLY BILLS - Vouchers - Motion by Councilman Wellauer, seconded by Councilman Rizzo to pay the vouchers with three or more signatures. With no further discussion, a roll call vote is taken:

Roll call vote:

Councilman Vivenzio	Yes
Councilman Wellauer	Yes
Councilman Rizzo	Yes
Councilman LaPointe	Yes
Supervisor Blair	Yes

Motion carried. 5 ayes 0 nays 0 absent

MOTION TO ADJOURN MEETING - Motion to adjourn was made by Councilman LaPointe, seconded by Councilman Wellauer. All in favor. 9:26 p.m.

Next regular meeting: February 20, 2025

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Salisbury, Town Clerk
Town of Sennett

January 2, 2025

Honorable Tom Blair
Supervisor, Town of Sennett

Dear Tom (and Members of the Board),

As we have discussed on many occasions, I have made the difficult decision to retire from my position as Town Justice. Please accept this letter as my formal notification that I will retire as of January 31, 2025 (close of business).

When I was first appointed to this position 18 years ago, I never expected that I would serve for such a long time. However, from the earliest moments, I felt immediately accepted and welcomed by everyone at the Town offices, and that has continued, without exception, to this day. I would like to thank everyone at the Town for their friendliness and helpfulness.

During my 18 years, the role and responsibilities of Town Justice have changed appreciably. Our criminal caseload has increased significantly (I believe we have, by far, the greatest caseload of any Town in the County, trailing only City Court in the number of criminal cases, and only trailing the Town of Brutus [which has the Thruway] in the number of vehicle and traffic matters). In addition to these increasing caseloads, the reporting requirements (now handled electronically) require additional details and frequent updates, increasing significantly the time commitments and responsibilities of our Court staff.

In addition, we have instituted mandated audio recordings of all Court proceedings, witnessed a profound change in Court arraignments through the CAP Program, and have experienced profound changes to Bail Requirements and Procedures.

There have been significant changes in substantive law as well, particularly in Landlord/Tenant matters.

In sum, Justice Court is no longer a minor role in Town Administration (as we used to envision it), but rather a Court that requires day-to-day attention, with many time-driven responsibilities imposed by the State, that all require immediate attention. I applaud the Town in its acceptance of these responsibilities, evidenced by its decision to hire two full-time Court Clerks (who I firmly believe will serve the Town with great distinction over the next several years).

Finally, I want to express my thanks and gratitude to you and the members of the Town Board, who have provided me (and the entire Court staff) with their support and guidance through my years of service. It has been much appreciated!

Thank you for the opportunity to have served these many years as Town Justice. I will remain available, if requested, to assist in any way possible in the transition to my successor.

Respectfully,



Richard F. Timian

RECEIVED

JAN - 6 2025

**TOWN OF SENNETT
TOWN CLERK**