

Minutes of the Town of Sennett monthly Town Board Meeting held on Thursday, January 15, 2026, at 6:00 PM at the Sennett Town Office Building.

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

Also Present: Cheri Major, Bookkeeper
Hayden Hares, Highway Superintendent
Kris LaPointe, Water & Sewer Superintendent
Kate Sholar, Judge
Kathleen Salisbury, Town Clerk

Others Present:

Call to Order

Supervisor called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited, followed by a prayer by Supervisor Blair.

Roll Call

Town Clerk conducted roll call: Council member Vivencio: Present; Council member Rizzo: Present; Council member Wellauer: Present; Council member LaPointe: Present; Supervisor Blair: Present.

Approval of Minutes

The Town Board reviewed the December 2025 minutes.

Motion to approve the December 2025 minutes made by Mr. LaPointe, seconded by Mr. Wellauer. Motion passed unanimously.

Public Hearing(s)

None scheduled.

Scheduled Speakers

1. MRB - Engineering items

Emilio from MRB Group provided an update on ongoing engineering projects:

- Water Rate Study: The study is ongoing. The town signed an MOU with several other towns to review local rates. Initial evidence has been presented, with more meetings expected in early 2026.

- Ambulance District: MRB met with town representatives and SAVES last week. They will revise the map plan and report for the ambulance district. SAVES is updating their numbers and determining if budget amounts for overnight accommodations at the firehouse will be needed.
- Water Master Plan: MRB provided a proposal for a water master plan. Emilio explained the difference between a full water master plan (more in-depth analysis) and the existing 2012 Capital Improvement Plan prepared by Chatfield Engineers. A future meeting will be scheduled to discuss these options in detail.
- Records Management: The planning department continues to assist the planning board with the Local Government Records Management Improvement Fund (digitization fund) from 2025.
- Water District #8: The town did not receive WIA funding. Emilio noted that many funding options are "longer shots" but reapplying for WIA in 2026 would be relatively easy since much of the groundwork has already been done. The Supervisor suggested obtaining more support letters from commercial property owners, the IDA, and county planning board to strengthen future applications.
- GIS Water System Mapping: Work continues but has slowed during winter months.
- Parks Grants: Parks grants are starting to cycle around again. These are highly competitive, and MRB can discuss strategic approaches with the town.

The Board requested MRB provide proposals for:

- Parks grants applications (including SAM grant)
- Water District #8 reapplication

A meeting with MRB representatives will be scheduled to discuss the differences between the Capital Improvement Plan and Water Master Plan options.

Public Be Heard

A motion to open Public Be Heard was made by Mr. Wellauer and seconded by Mr. Rizzo. Motion passed unanimously.

No members of the public spoke.

A motion to close Public Be Heard was made by Mr. Vivenzio and seconded by Mr. Rizzo. Motion passed unanimously.

Department Reports

a. Attorney

The attorney reported on the ambulance district progress:

- A joint call was held last week between town representatives, MRB, and two members of SAVES
- SAVES is updating their numbers and investigating Department of Health requirements for overnight accommodations
- MRB needs to update the map plan and report

A motion is made by Councilman Wellauer, seconded by Councilman Rizzo to hold a public information session on February 3, 2026, at 6:00 PM.

The attorney noted that AMR is expanding their certificate of need into neighboring towns (Throop, Owasco, and Fleming) but not Sennett, likely because Sennett is already negotiating with a different provider (SAVES).

b. Bookkeeper

The bookkeeper presented three documents for review:

- Audit information from Insero Associates regarding required audits for the Town Justice Court and Town Clerk.

Motion to hire Insero Associates to perform Town Justice Court audit and Town Clerk audit for 2024 and 2025 for a not to exceed amount of \$13,500 starting as soon as possible, made by the Supervisor, seconded by Mr. Wellauer. After a Roll call vote - Motion passed unanimously.

- Information about a Tax Offset CD from 2009 with a balance of approximately \$382,000. The bookkeeper has researched the history of this CD but has not been able to determine its original purpose. Board members agreed to contact former supervisors to gather more information before making any decision about transferring these funds.
- Budget adjustments for 2025 year-end, including:
 - Highway fund transfers
 - General fund adjustments
 - Sewer and water district accounts

Motion to approve 2025 year-end budget adjustments as presented by the bookkeeper made by Mr. LaPointe, seconded by Mr. Wellauer. After a Roll call vote - Motion passed unanimously.

Motion to transfer \$85,000 of unspent funds from the Cherry Street Road project in 2025 to the 2026 line for road maintenance reserves, specifically for the purpose of doing the Cherry Street Road project in 2026, made by the Supervisor, seconded by Mr. Rizzo. After a Roll call vote - Motion passed unanimously.

c. Planning Board

The Supervisor reported that two new members are joining the planning board:

- Mr. Forward (to serve as a regular member)
- Mr. Wiedor, an engineer (to serve as an alternate) Both have been put in touch with Mr. Edmunds and will receive training.

d. Codes/Fire Marshall

Mr. Wellauer presented the December activity report for the Codes/Fire Marshall:

- 2 building permits
- 3 inquiries
- 6 certificates of compliance
- 1 certificate of occupancy

- 1 plan review
- 1 notice of violation
- \$340 in fees collected for construction costs of \$460,000
- Year-to-date for 2025: \$14,005.14 in fees collected for construction costs of \$11,808,675
- 18 total inspections
- A list of vacant structures in the Town was also provided.

The Supervisor added that East Hill Medical is planning to renovate the old Tessy Plastic Building in the Tractor Supply plaza (approximately 20,000 square feet), but no permit applications have been submitted yet.

e. Zoning Enforcement Officer

Mr. Wellauer presented the report for the Zoning Enforcement Officer, which included:

- Inquiry on property at the corner of Healy and Grant
- Inquiry on a small wind generator
- Zoning compliance letter regarding Auburn Self Storage
- Zoning information on an in-law apartment (turned over to building inspector)
- Brandon Grillo subdivision (turned over to planning)

f. Assessor

Mr. LaPointe presented the Assessor's report, which indicated:

- Worked with property owners regarding tax bills, exemption renewal forms, and new exemption applications
- Entered new building permits into RPS software
- Completed continuing education and training
- Reviewed property transfer forms
- Compared sales inventory to local inventory for accuracy

g. Fire Department

Town Clerk presented the Fire Department report

- 42 alarms for December
- 3 fire calls
- 21 EMS calls
- 2 hazardous conditions
- 4 service calls
- 5 good intent calls
- 7 instances of providing mutual aid
- 24 instances of receiving mutual aid
- 27 responders for 54 calls with a total of 620 calls for the year

h. Highway Department

Highway Superintendent Hares reported:

- Ongoing salting and plowing operations
- Maintenance on shop equipment
- Windstorm cleanup of fallen trees
- Card Plumbing completed installation of the boiler, which will be operational tomorrow
- Working on road quotes from vendors to complete the 284 forms for next month
- Finger Lakes Construction will begin work next week (delayed due to materials shortages)
- Received 400 tons of salt from American Salt, but no more will be available under the current contract
- The brush pile will remain accessible to residents (gate will remain down) unless issues arise

i. Water Department

Water & Sewer Superintendent LaPointe reported:

- Read 685 meters with approximately 124 meter heads still needing replacement
- Addressing estimated water bills with more aggressive attempts to contact property owners
- Responded to a high-level alarm at the Butera pump station
- Took monthly water samples (all results were good)
- Fielded calls from residents on Mutton Hill regarding their water district designation
- Provided requested information to GHD regarding the wholesale water agreement
- Assisted Jeff from Weedsport with water location and leak detection equipment
- The master meter for Districts 1 and 3 will be paid for by the City of Auburn per their contract
- Water revenue is outpacing expenditures in both districts

Discussion ensued about the percentage markup for water sold to Weedsport. The Supervisor had informed the mayor of Weedsport that Sennett was not inclined to reduce the percentage at this time, as the wholesale water agreement is only for a one-year extension before a new system is implemented.

j. Town Clerk

The Town Clerk reported:

- Received \$626.50 in December

- \$11 to Animal Population Control for 9 dog licenses
- \$22.50 to New York State for 1 marriage license
- \$593 to the Sennett General Fund
- Collected approximately \$470,000 in taxes so far

The Board discussed a request from the cleaning staff (husband and wife team) for an increase in compensation, as they have been making \$450 since at least 2019.

Motion to increase the monthly cleaning fee to \$600 made by Mr. Wellauer, seconded by Mr. LaPointe. Following a roll call vote, the Motion passed unanimously.

k. Animal Control

The Animal Control Officer reported only one complaint for December, which was resolved by finding the dog's owner.

Mr. Vivenzio presented a draft local law regarding dog licensing that includes new provisions for dogs in heat confinement and a leash law for the town. The Board agreed to review the draft and discuss it at a future meeting, with the Supervisor requesting research on state requirements and county regulations regarding leash laws.

l. Committees

Parks Department: The committee is planning for the next phase of park development following the completion of the bathrooms. This will include a second pavilion, courts, and parking lot expansion.

The Supervisor reported that AIA contracts with all four vendors for the restroom project have been reviewed and are ready for signature.

Motion to authorize the Supervisor to sign the contracts for the park restroom project made by Mr. Vivenzio, seconded by Mr. Wellauer. Motion passed unanimously.

Historian: Mr. Vivenzio reported that the Historian's office has organized materials so they can be researched and located. They discovered several articles written by previous town historians and a paper titled "The Settlement of Sennett, New York" by Douglas H. Bader from October 27, 1972. These documents are being digitized and will be posted on the town website.

Old Business

Town Records Project

An update was provided by the Town Clerk during her report.

Handbook updates

The Town Clerk is working to locate a company that can assist with updating the handbook.

E-Code 360 codification project status

The Town Clerk reported that E-Code 360 has sent materials that need to be reviewed to determine how the town wants the system set up.

Town Hall capital needs

The Board discussed plans for sidewalk repair and parking lot striping in the spring. The Highway Department will handle these tasks when weather permits.

There was also discussion about creating more storage space for town records, with various options considered including using existing office space or examining unused areas in the water department or highway department buildings.

Town branding & marketing project

The Supervisor and Mr. Vivenzio discussed plans for town signage, including a sign for the park and entrance signs. They have obtained the font from the company that does the town's trucks and have a list of recommended sign companies. The next step is to get a CAD file or JPEG of the design.

Vehicle and Traffic Safety Signs status & results

The reports were in the Board's packets for review.

AED purchases/replacements

Mr. Wellauer reported they are waiting on training information.

Employee positions to fill

The Water Department reported that the application period for open positions runs through March.

Boards in need of new members

The Supervisor reported progress in filling Planning Board positions, but noted there are still openings for one alternate on the ZBA and one active member for the Board of Assessment Review.

Water & sewer ACH/Credit card status

Bills were just sent out on 1/13/26.

Dog Park completion

The Board discussed the need to improve drainage at the dog park, as it becomes very muddy after rain or thaw. They are considering adding fill and implementing French drains to raise the level of the big dog park section.

New Business

250th celebration planning for 2026

The Board discussed potential plans for celebrating the nation's 250th anniversary in 2026. Mr. Vivenzio will research official banners and other commemoration options.

200th Township celebration for 2027

Councilman Wellauer will look into an AOT Proclamation.

Supervisor Correspondence/Report

The Supervisor presented a job description for a Town Constable position based on Cayuga County Civil Service requirements. The Board agreed to review the description and make any necessary modifications before voting on it.

Executive Session

No executive session was held.

Payment of Monthly Bills

Motion to pay the bills with three or more signatures made by Mr. Wellauer, seconded by Mr. Rizzo. After roll call vote, the Motion passed unanimously.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn made by the Supervisor, seconded by Mr. Rizzo. Motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 7:39 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Salisbury, Town Clerk

Town of Sennett