

Sennett Town Board Regular Monthly Meeting

August 21, 2025

Minutes of the Town of Sennett Town Board Meeting Held on Thursday, August 21, 2025, at 6:00 PM at the Sennett Town Office Building.

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

Also Present: Cheri Major, Bookkeeper
Kris LaPointe, Water & Sewer Superintendent
Harold Gilfus, Code Enforcement Officer
Kathleen Salisbury, Town Clerk
Brandon La Sagna, Highway Superintendent
Shaun Logue, MRB

Residents: Amy Rose

Remotely: Emilio Moran, MRB, Tom Gray

Call to Order

The regular monthly meeting of the Town of Sennett Town Board was called to order at 6:05 p.m. on Thursday, August 21, 2025, at the Sennett Town Hall.

Pledge of Allegiance

The board and attendees recited the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by Supervisor Blair offering a prayer asking for wisdom and guidance in conducting the affairs of the Town of Sennett and blessings for residents and those serving in the military and as first responders.

Roll Call

Town Clerk conducted the roll call. Present were: Supervisor Blair, Councilor Wellauer, Councilor Vivenzio, Councilor Rizzo, and Councilor LaPointe.

Approval of Minutes

The Board reviewed the minutes from the July 17th meeting.

Motion to approve the minutes as submitted was made by Councilor Wellauer, seconded by Councilor Rizzo. Councilor LaPointe abstained. Motion carried 4 ayes 0 nays 1 abstain.

Public Hearing(s) - Subdivision Regulations Amendment 2025

Supervisor Blair opened the discussion regarding the amendment of the subdivision law, noting this has been a year-long process undertaken by parts of the Planning Board. He explained the board had a large packet with the drafted local law and various resolutions including an enactment resolution, SEQR designation, and Part 2 EAF (Environmental Assessment Form). The Cayuga County Department of Planning and Economic Development determined the action appears to have no intermunicipal concerns.

Motion to continue the public hearing was made by Councilor LaPointe, seconded by Councilor Vivenzio at 6:07 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Supervisor Blair opened the floor for public comment on the proposed Local Law B of 2025 to amend subdivision of land regulations. No comments were received from the public or those joining remotely.

Motion to close the public hearing was made by Councilor Vivenzio, seconded by Councilor LaPointe at 6:10 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

The Board decided they would like more time to review the regulations before enactment. Supervisor Blair suggested scheduling a mini work session with Mr. Logue from MRB to discuss the final changes.

The Board proceeded with SEQR resolutions:

Motion to confirm and designate the Town Board as lead agency for the SEQR review was made by Councilor Wellauer, seconded by Councilor LaPointe. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion to make a Determination of Environmental Non-Significance for the SEQR review was made by Councilor Wellauer, seconded by Councilor Vivenzio. Motion carried unanimously.

The Board then reviewed and discussed the full environmental assessment form Part 2, going through each potential impact area. MRB had recommended "No" for all impact categories, and the Board agreed with these recommendations.

Motion to adopt the resolution determining that the action will not result in any significant adverse environmental impacts was made by Councilor Wellauer, seconded by Councilor Vivenzio. Motion carried unanimously.

Scheduled Speakers: MRB – Engineering items

Emilio Moran from MRB Group reported on several ongoing projects:

- *Water Rate Study:* No updates were available as they haven't received much information from the city or GDH on the multi-municipal study.
- *Ambulance District Formation:* They are in a holding pattern waiting for more detailed information from emergency services personnel. The basic report is nearly complete but requires additional data.
- *Local Records Management Grant:* The town is now working with their vendor for the first year setup. Emilio noted that this initial year involves setting up logistics, and in subsequent years the town can reapply to continue digitizing more records.
- *GIS Water Supply System Mapping:* This ongoing project involves marking out hydrants, valves, and water service with Chris. They are creating a base map customized to the town's needs and will continue this steady work.
- *Water District #8 (formerly Hospitality Water District):* Emilio reported the town did not receive the NBRC grant but could apply next year. He recommended the town proceed with the WIIA program application, which he believes has a good chance despite being competitive. The earmark grant was also submitted earlier this year. Additionally, Cayuga County has a new infrastructure grant project that could provide up to \$1 million with a 50% match. Emilio had prepared an application that could be submitted immediately.

Following Emilio's presentation, the Board reviewed the resolution for the Water Infrastructure Improvement Act (WIIA) grant application.

Motion to approve the resolution authorizing the supervisor to sign and submit the WIIA grant application was made by Councilor LaPointe, seconded by Councilor Rizzo. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Be Heard

Motion to open Public Be Heard was made by Councilor Rizzo, seconded by Councilor Vivenzio at 6:29 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

A resident from 15 Wegman Street addressed the Board regarding drainage issues. She recounted that in 2023, it was discussed that drains were necessary on both sides of her driveway, but the work was not completed. In 2024, it was discussed that the drains would be placed prior to Highland Street extension being paved, but this also did not occur. She noted that on May 12, 2025, Mr. LaPointe did engineering work and determined there was an issue, and on May 21, Mr. LaPointe and Mr. La Sagna determined where the drains would be placed. She stated that Mr. La Sagna indicated the work would be completed within two months, but it has now been three months and the issue remains unaddressed.

Motion to close Public Be Heard was made by Councilor Rizzo, seconded by Councilor Wellauer at 6:32 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Department Reports

Attorney

Supervisor Blair reported that it has been quiet from the attorney. He mentioned that there are two Article 78 certiorari cases with commercial property owners who have sued on their assessments - one from the plaza owner who owns parts of the tractor plaza, and the second from Lowe's. Attorney Jeff Eaton is handling these cases and will be providing answers within the next week.

Regarding the ambulance district, the attorney is waiting for the map plan report to be finalized, but they are lacking information. Supervisor Blair explained he has made attempts to contact the Department of Health for certificates of need information but has had difficulty getting responses. Jason Green has offered assistance and recently sent an email about the matter. The current delay involves gathering detailed information about territories and negotiating with different CON (Certificate of Need) holders to ensure they won't challenge the district formation.

Bookkeeper

Cheri reported she had completed the quarterly report for the capital project that goes to USDA. She announced that budget sheets are printed and ready to be distributed to board members, requesting they be returned by the 15th so they can be presented at the next board meeting, after which workshops can be scheduled.

Regarding sales tax revenue, Cheri reported they are down about 4% from the same quarter last year, but still approximately \$21,000 above budgeted income. She noted this may be related to the DMV closure, as many people either completed transactions by mail or went to a different location.

Cheri mentioned that highway department staff had approached her about purchasing a new mower for \$6,300 from Maine and Pinkney, with the cost to be split 80% for highway and 20% for water/sewer. Board members requested a cut sheet with specifications and details on what equipment it would replace before making a decision.

Regarding audits, Cheri stated that the 2021 AUD is being finalized and will be sent soon, after which work on the 2022 AUD can begin. She expects the 2022 AUD could be completed within a 30-day period once they start. She is still waiting for the auditors' report for 2023.

Cheri also mentioned a meeting with the Supervisor and Kris regarding water contracts, as the Mayor of Weedsport has requested to renegotiate their contract which expires December 31. Rick Blafield, a former controller's office consultant and Sennett resident, will be assisting with some complex financial questions, including how to handle excess funds in certain water districts and funds left from construction projects.

Planning Board

Councilman Rizzo reported that the Planning Board approved the Vitale Robinson batch plant, which will involve building a new facility before decommissioning the old one. He also noted that site preparation for the Pizza Hut is ongoing.

Codes/Fire Marshall

Harold Gilfus reported that in July he issued 6 permits with fees totaling \$1,734 and structure value of \$751,784. Year-to-date increase in value was \$3,262,010. He closed out 10 permits, issued 2 CFOs and 8 CFCs.

Mr. Gilfus provided updates on several construction projects:

- Pizza Hut site work has started
- New Hyundai showroom is approximately 60% complete
- Subaru (in the old Honda building) has received its permit for a complete renovation including reskinning and expansion
- The new Honda building is close to completion, having conducted fire alarm testing recently
- Vitale has received his permit for the new batch plant
- Several large residential homes are nearing completion on County Line Road, Broadway, and Genesee Street

Supervisor Blair asked Mr. Gilfus to investigate whether the dealership's site plan authorized them to display vehicles on the west side of the road by the tracks, as it appears customers are being attracted to view vehicles there, creating potential safety concerns with people crossing the busy road.

Zoning Enforcement Officer

Jerry Vevone was not present but sent an email reporting he has received calls about possible uses for different buildings, including Mr. Mazzio's building and vacant lands along Route 20, though nothing solid with no contracts to report.

Assessor

Councilor LaPointe read Mr. Lowe's report, which stated that during July and August, he worked with the water department to update special district information on several properties. STAR exemptions were verified by New York State and some exemptions were removed from the final roll at the state's direction. New subdivision properties information was reviewed and new assessments calculated and applied. New building permit information was entered into the RPS software.

Fire Department

Mr. La Sagna reported that the fire department had 55 calls last month, bringing the year-to-date total to 435. He noted they are on track to exceed 600 calls again this year, significantly higher than the 150 calls they averaged ten years ago. He reported that approximately 63-65% of their call volume is EMS-related. He also mentioned that two incidents were reported to code enforcement - one for Hillside Children's Center and one for Sennett Meadows, both involving nuisance alarms that are being addressed.

Highway Department

Mr. La Sagna reported that despite the lack of rain, the department has been busy with various projects. He secured an extended warranty contract for the wheel loader at \$2,700 for 4 years or 2,000 hours, whichever comes first, noting that one computer issue would cost more than the warranty price.

Paving was completed on Parkwood Lane, Foxcroft Circle, and South Hunter Ave. Oil and stone treatment was applied to Swamp Road, Parcell Road, and Carrie Court.

Mr. La Sagna reported that most staff attended annual OSHA training and sexual harassment training through the Highway Superintendent's Association.

Regarding the millings pile from Avenue Milling, Mr. La Sagna explained it had been on Auctions International for about a month and closed with a high bid of \$6,500. He noted that alternatively, they could trade the material

to Seneca Stone at \$6 per ton for various stone products, but calculated this would be less advantageous due to transportation costs and wear on town equipment.

Motion to accept the high bid of \$6,500 for the millings was made by Councilor LaPointe, seconded by Councilor Rizzo. Roll call vote: Councilor LaPointe - Aye, Supervisor Blair - Aye, Councilor Rizzo - Aye, Councilor Wellauer - Yes, Councilor Vivenzio - Aye. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. La Sagna mentioned increased usage of the town park, but noted problems with garbage being left behind despite the carry-in/carry-out policy. He reported that maintenance staff recently collected 2.5 contractor bags of trash from the park.

The Board discussed potentially creating a local law regarding park regulations to give enforcement authority to law enforcement. Supervisor Blair offered to draft a basic law for the Board's review, possibly including provisions for other town properties as well.

Water Department

Mr. LaPointe reported that he worked with the assessor to update information for customers on Mutton Hill Road who now have water service besides the private line, adjusting O&M rates accordingly. He installed and inspected a new meter for Fox Honda and met with a contractor for the Pizza Hut site, where the water department will perform the tap and he will order the meter.

He reported installing 27 meters, locating a sewer lateral at 38 Wegman Street, and sending out two letters for underestimated water usage. His department weeded around all hydrants and guard valves in all districts, installed a new fire hydrant on Wegman Street to replace a leaking 1953 model, and flushed dead-end hydrants.

Regarding GIS mapping, Mr. LaPointe is working with Greg to schedule a visit in October to map District 2, which includes the Wegman Street area. He estimated approximately 132 meters still need to be replaced, including larger commercial meters which require coordination with businesses, such as BJ's which requires early morning installation.

Mr. LaPointe also reported that the data flowchart at Franklin Street pump station had failed. A temporary unit is in place while waiting for a replacement, which has a 5-week lead time. He explained that while the \$5,600 cost for a spare would be significant, the existing chart had operated without issues since 2006 or 2008.

Town Clerk

Kate reported that in July, the town received \$7,665.70, with \$2,388 for the general fund, \$2,362 for decals, \$19 for animal population control, and 19 dog licenses with one decal.

She noted that the town now provides paper printouts for fishing and hunting licenses rather than plastic, which requires keeping the documentation dry.

Kate also mentioned that proposals from notification service providers were included in the board packets for review, which could help notify residents quickly during emergencies.

Animal Control

The report for July 2025 showed 2 complaints, 0 dogs seized and sheltered, 0 dogs redeemed, 0 euthanized, 0 license offenses, 1 notice to comply issued, 0 appearance tickets issued, and 1 lost/found match. The animal control officer attended the Cornell Shelter and Medicine Conference in July. There was also a note requesting an update to the dog law, which is based on a 1982 nuisance dog law.

Committees

Historian

Councilor Vivenzio reported that he received a message from Senate Rural Cemetery about Chris Spengler (Norm Riley's daughter) who lives in Dayton, Ohio and has written a book about the area. He plans to follow up and hopefully acquire a copy for the town's collection.

He mentioned he will be painting the remaining 3 signs of the historical markers and provided an update on the Harriet Tubman Highway project, which has been divided into two phases. Phase 1 covers Auburn to Niagara Falls, while Phase 2 (which includes Sennett) will be addressed later.

Parks

Councilor Rizzo reported that the committee met with architect Brian Manthey to go over final details for the park pavilion project so it could be put out to bid. Some changes were needed for plumbing details. The architect had promised completed documents by August 15th but has not yet delivered them despite follow-up.

Regarding the water line for the pavilion, Kris is investigating options that might eliminate the need for the previously discussed approach. The plans currently specify a 2-inch water service, but Mr. LaPointe suggested a 1-inch line would be sufficient, noting that households with 6 people typically run on 3/4-inch water lines.

Veterans Affairs

Supervisor Blair reported that thanks to the highway department, the memorial park project is complete with the pouring of a slab and moving the rock into place. They are now planning a ribbon cutting and flag-raising ceremony. He is looking for an appropriate date, noting that the next significant military-related date would be 9/11, though many people are involved in ceremonies that morning. He mentioned that Jerry Fitzgerald, a local resident who is active reserve army and directs military ceremonies for a large region, could potentially assist with the event.

Sennett Seniors

Kate reported that the Sennett Seniors had lunch at the Sennett firehouse catered by Humphrey Catering. They had a speaker, Krista Malone, who owns and operates Healing Hearts, a program that works with people with disabilities using horse therapy. Their August meeting was at the lodge with a speaker from Lifespan discussing stroke identification. On September 24th, there will be a senior fair at the Finger Lakes Mall. Their trip to Cortland was successful, and the seniors will soon be cruising Canandaigua Lake and visiting the Erie Canal Village. The group currently has 125 members with 50 or more from Sennett.

Old Business

Town Records Project grant award and status

The project is ongoing with Jeana working primarily on the records management tasks. She works most days now and has been organizing documents and plans from Harold's office.

Handbook updates

The town is still looking for a provider to assist with handbook updates.

E-Code 360 codification project status

Kate reported she was working on new documents received over the last few days for review before sending them to the company so they can begin organizing the town's laws.

Town Hall capital needs – sidewalks, parking lot striping, painting, etc.

Councilor LaPointe reported he has contacted TD Sealing for quotes on sealing and striping for both the town hall and park parking lots. He is waiting for them to look up previous quotes. He has also called Scott Freeman regarding code requirements for handicap parking spaces but hasn't heard back yet.

The Board discussed the need to address the cracked sidewalks before sealing and striping. Mr. La Sagna noted that the last two concrete slabs by the highway garage entrance don't connect to anything and suggested they could potentially be removed and replaced with blacktop. He agreed to email the Board with his thoughts on timing for the sidewalk project.

Mr. La Sagna also mentioned he has contacted Finger Lakes Construction about repairing the roof line on the cold storage building, where birds are getting in and causing damage. The end channel and drip edge has blown off, causing the roof to lift. He is waiting for a price quote for the repairs.

Vehicle and Traffic Safety Signs status & results

The signs are all deployed except for one that is in storage without a trailer or post. Currently there are two permanent signs installed (one on Franklin Street and one on Route 20), three portable signs (on Franklin, Town Hall, and Weedsport Sennett Road), one standby sign that could be either permanent or portable, and one unused permanent sign. The Board discussed finding appropriate locations for the unused signs, with the town judge suggesting a permanent sign at the Weedsport Sennett intersection to reduce stop sign violations.

AED purchases/replacements

The Board discussed the need for a medical director and ambulance service agreement for the AED program. Mr. La Sagna mentioned that SAVES (ambulance service) has CON authority for the area and suggested contacting Jason Green for assistance. There was also discussion about training requirements for town staff, including the court clerks and judges. Mr. LaPointe mentioned a local resident on Franklin Street who provides various training including AED, CPR, and first aid, and agreed to share his contact information.

Water & sewer ACH/Credit card status

Kate reported that almost 100 residents from the last billing cycle are now using online payment options, out of approximately 804 total customers. Information about payment options is included on bills, in the newsletter, and on the website.

Dog Park completion

The dog park is being used regularly. There is a need for drainage work which is planned for the fall, as the area gets wet during rainy season. This will be a one-day project that will require closing half of the large dog park area temporarily.

The disc golf equipment has been delivered and is stored in the highway garage. Scott Freeman and his son, who are volunteering their time, have selected sites for the course and are ready to install the equipment once given approval.

New Business

250th celebration planning for 2026 & 200th Township Celebration for 2027

Supervisor Blair discussed planning for the 250th anniversary celebration of the nation in 2026, as well as the town's 200th anniversary in 2027. The Board agreed to put a notice in the newsletter seeking volunteers to form a committee for these celebrations.

Supervisor Correspondence/Report

Supervisor Blair reported receiving notification that the town's special franchise assessments from Verizon totaled \$8,360. He also received notice of a \$922 refund from a state program. He mentioned the county infrastructure grant project application being prepared by MRB Group, and a new agreement from Cayuga Drug and DNA Testing for the town's drug and alcohol testing program.

Executive Session

Motion to enter executive session to discuss contract negotiations was made by Councilor LaPointe, seconded by Councilor Wellauer at 7:49 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

After the executive session:

Motion to return from executive session was made by Councilor Rizzo, seconded by Councilor Wellauer at 8:25 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Supervisor Blair advised no action was taken in Executive Session.

Payment of Monthly Bills

Motion to pay the monthly bills with three or more signatures was made by Councilor Vivenzio, seconded by Councilor Rizzo. Roll call vote: Councilor Vivenzio - Aye, Councilor Wellauer - Yes, Councilor Rizzo - Yes, Supervisor Blair - Yes, Councilor LaPointe - Yes. Motion carried unanimously 5-0.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn was made by Councilor Wellauer, seconded by Councilor Rizzo. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Salisbury, Town Clerk

Town of Sennett