

**Town Board Meeting**

**October 19, 2020**

**6:30 p.m.**

**Remote Meeting via [www.zoom.com](http://www.zoom.com) (id#: 828 8122 8894 password 568154)**

**Present:** Supervisor Aaron, Councilor Tucker, Councilor McCormack, Councilor Alexander, Councilor Legg, Attorney Smith.

**Also, Present:** Bridgett Winkelman, Sue Murphy, Allan Wellington, Miranda Robinson, Jason Gabak (Skaneateles Press), Kim Benda, Paula Powell, Dessa Bergan, Sally Cunningham, Chris Buff, Jill Marshall, Holly Karker.

**Highway, Water, Transfer Station:** Highway Superintendent Allan Wellington reported the Highway Department had replaced 80' of culvert under Heifer Road which took 2 days to install. The State Department of Transportation was milling on Route 38A and allowed the Town Highway to take 200 tons of millings for fill at no cost. They repaired blacktop on Phillips and School Streets, picked up fallen trees due to high winds, and began to install plows, wings, and sanders to trucks for the winter. In the Water Department they repaired a water service leak on Route 20, repaired a ruptured water main along route 321, submitted water samples to be tested for asbestos. This test is taken every 9 years and maintenance was done on the pressure reducing valves. At the Transfer Station two loads of scrap steel were picked up and a truck load of baled cardboard is scheduled to be picked up on Wednesday.

Councilor Legg stated during the 2021 budget process Highway Superintendent Wellington and the Board are working on a new structure for the Transfer Station. To allow for residential refuse only.

**Parks:** Parks Manager Sue Murphy reported the Farmers Market had ended for the season and it was a wonderful season. She especially thanked Hal Brown for his volunteering to help with parking and the safety of the customers each week. She also thanked the Parks staff especially Gene Laforte for all their work supporting the Market. They had been working on fees for the Parks as well as updating the website and calendar. The Sims building will close soon as the temperatures drop to the freezing mark. Worked with the Health Department on the 2021 Day Camp and Waterfront protocols. New trees were planted in the Park. She also thanked Budget Officer Winkelman for all her help with preparing the Parks 2021 budget.

Supervisor Aaron stated she is meeting at the Sims Building with the Fire Department to discuss the physical address of the building. 911 had requested a new street number, since it is all under the Austin Pavilion address of 1 East Austin.

**Staff Engineer:** Staff Engineer Robinson reported on the LED Street Lighting Project, the project should be at substantial completion next week. The Soldiers and Sailors Monument repair project had started, she will have pictures and an update at the next meeting. The water department completed the hydrant flow testing on the East side of the Town. Councilor Tucker asked if the pressure had increased. Engineer Robinson stated the test was completed today and a confirmed report will be received by C&S Engineering by the end of the week.

Councilor Legg asked if was possible to change the throw of the streetlights, he had a complaint from a resident and the direction the new light shines on their house. Engineer Robinson stated, yes that could be change, she would contact the resident.

**Dog Control:** Supervisor Aaron reviewed the September Dog Control Report. There were 13 calls for the month, 7 dogs, 3 cats, 2 racoons and 1 skunk.

**Fire Department:** Supervisor Aaron reviewed the September 2020 report. There was 1 meeting and 8 drills. Year to date there were a total of 264 calls. The Town Board toured the Fire Department this week and it was quite impressive.

**Staying Safe for Halloween During COVID:** Supervisor Aaron stated that at the last Village Board meeting their Board had made a statement regarding Halloween during COVID and she suggested that the Town Board endorse what the Village had said adding the Town to the statement. She read the revised statement:

“The Town and Village of Skaneateles are typically very busy on Halloween night. This year, with it falling on a Saturday, we recognize that there may be many people planning to travel into the Town and Village for trick-or-treating.

There has been no trick-or-treating ban issued from New York State or Onondaga County for Halloween this year, but we would encourage all residents and visitors to read the CDC guidelines regarding safe Halloween celebrations. These guidelines categorize trick-or-treating as a high-risk activity, but they also include suggestions for less risky ways to enjoy the holiday, without going door to door. We strongly urge residents to consider these alternatives.

We ask all of our residents to remain vigilant in following the social distancing protocols set out by New York State, both on Halloween and any time you are out in public. If you do choose to hand out candy, please wear a mask and avoid large gatherings. The CDC guidelines state that a costume mask is not a substitute for a cloth face covering. It continues to be our collective responsibility to each other to keep our community healthy and safe.

We also ask any visitors coming to our Town and Village streets on Halloween night to be respectful of the people who reside here. Please keep in mind that many houses will not be participating in traditional trick-or-treating festivities. If you choose to trick-or-treat in the Village, please keep a safe social distance from those around you, and wear a face covering whenever you are in close contact with others.

As parents and grandparents of young children ourselves, we know that navigating the COVID-19 restrictions is not easy, but it is temporary. We appreciate everyone’s help in making this a safe and enjoyable holiday during these uncertain times.”

Link to CDC Guidelines during the holidays:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/holidays.html?fbclid=IwAR2n-4Ycbctnmo3Af5mzyRcTLqO7uwtBZQ417VOaiMkXivz5Vzwgs1qtiM#halloween>

**Minutes of October 5, 2020 and October 8, 2020:** On a motion of Councilor Alexander, seconded by Councilor Tucker, and with a (5-0) affirmation of the Town Board the minutes of October 5, 2020 and October 8, 2020 were accepted as presented.

**Skaneateles Library Plumley Engineering Contract:** Supervisor Aaron announced the Library had approached the Town and inquired about building a new Library on the Town property at 75 Fennell Street, she reviewed the following:

“With the announcement by the Skaneateles Library Board at their October 16<sup>th</sup> meeting that their first choice for considering the new library was our 75 Fennell Street property, the Town Board has agreed to work with the Library to discuss the feasibility of obtaining our Fennell Street site to build their new library.

In 1924 the Town purchased 75 Fennell Street from and established their Highway Department at this site. In 2001 the Town and the School District worked together to purchase the old Pennysaver Building behind Hilltop Restaurant. The Highway Department was moved off Fennell Street to the Transportation Center followed by the Food Pantry and our Outreach Office. In 2002 the Town allowed Laker Limo to house their vehicles in one of our buildings on Fennell Street. In 2010 the Fire Departments Women’s Auxiliary determined that they could not continue to operate the loan closet at the Fire Department with the closing of the Dispatch Center and this service was taken over by the Town’s Outreach Office. The medical equipment that was loaned out then became housed at one of the buildings on Fennell Street. The Parks Department Equipment needed a place to house their equipment and these buildings also served that purpose.

In 2000 we swapped part of the Fennell Street property with the SAVES property to the north so that SAVES had enough land to build their current building.

A few years ago, the Town established a committee to consider building a new Town Hall at 75 Fennell Street. The main theme from their report to the Town was the neighborhood wanted this property to look better and to be improved and some parking and expansion issues at the current Town Hall. Last year the Town, with the encouragement from our employees agreed that the Town Hall should stay in our current location. When COVID19 hit we were glad to be in our current Town Hall and the options here have served us well during this Pandemic and we believe our current needs can be met in this building. Still, improvements to the Fennell Street property was at the top of our list to decide what would be best for this property.

In 2018 the Village turned over ownership of the Austin Park to the Town of Skaneateles so that future improvements could be made to the buildings and property that would not be paid solely by Village residents but by our community as a whole. This prompted the Town Board to move forward with improvements. First up was building new bathrooms at Austin Park. This was completed this year. We also started working with a team of architectural and engineering firms consisting of members that grew up here, live here and want the best for our community and parks. They were brought in to help us with strategic planning at the Park including moving the Parks

Department equipment off of Fennell Street to Austin Park to make for a more efficient operation and to look at forming a committee look at options for the Austin Pavilion. We also started looking at other options for the Loan Closet and Laker Limo.

Then COVID19 happened and things came to a halt with this project.

The Town Board will now begin a two-fold process of evaluating the Fennell Street property and the Library's request, and moving forward with decisions on Austin Park's further improvements and enhancements and the more efficient operation of the Parks Department by relocating their equipment to the Park.

Part of the evaluation of the Fennell Street property is to do an environmental study on the property. Previously, the Town had an inground gas tank that ruptured and had to be cleaned and mitigated under the direction of NYS Department of Environment Conversation. Also, when the Town purchased this in 1924 it did so, not knowing whether there is any contamination due to the prior use by Standard Oil. That is why tonight the Town Board is being asked to consider a contract with Plumley Engineering to provide environmental engineering services to conduct a subsurface soil investigation of the Fennell Street to determine the answer to that question. The Library has agreed to pay for half of this investigation."

Supervisor Aaron stated a proposal from Plumley Engineering was submitted. This proposal is to provide environmental engineering services related to conducting a subsurface soil investigation of the former Town Highway Garage property. In the proposal Plumley stated the purpose of the investigation is to make a preliminary assessment of the nature and extent of soil contamination and its effects on the possible redevelopment of the site at a cost not to exceed 4,500, the Town's responsibility would be not to exceed \$2,750, the Library will be responsible for the other half of the cost. The Highway Department will dig the test pits and Plumley Engineer will test the soil.

On a motion of Councilor Legg, seconded by Councilor Alexander and with unanimous (5-0) affirmation of the Town Board the Plumley Engineer proposal was accepted to conduct a subsoil soil investigation of the Former Town Highway Garage property, not to exceed \$4,500 with the Town being responsible for \$2,750.

**Eastern Gateway:** Engineer Robinson stated an application for funding was submitted to the NYS DOT and rejected. Another application was submitted, and we had been selected to enter into the energy efficiency study. This is based on the trail that is being proposed for non- motorized transportation in conjunction with the Department of Transportation 2022 plan for the mill and fill of route 20. This road work is planned from County Line Road to Route 175. The current program manager is David Roth, and he is very receptive to improving cyclist and pedestrian traffic with this project.

In September of 2022, the NYS DOT is planning on paving Route 20 from County Line Road to Route 175. The planning for this needs to be done years ahead. We would like to get in the loop of the planning and try to plan things such as a bike lane and lowering the speed limit.

Supervisor Aaron asked if the Town Board should submit a letter to the DOT in favor of this direction of the project. Yes, Engineer Robinson stated a letter from the Board with the hope and vision for this area would be of great benefit to submit to the New York State Department of Transportation.

The committee will draft a letter to the DOT it will be distributed to the Town Board, when the Board has approved the final draft Supervisor Aaron and liaison to the Eastern Gateway Committee, Councilor McCormack, would be authorized to sign the letter on behalf of the Town Board.

Councilor McCormack agreed. Supervisor Aaron stated the goal is to have the DOT pay for some of the work out of the State's Budget and not the Town's.

On a motion of Councilor Alexander, seconded by Councilor McCormack and with unanimous (5-0) affirmation of the Town Board; Supervisor Aaron and Councilor McCormack were authorized to sign the final approved letter to the New York State Department of Transportation regarding the Eastern Gateway project, asking the State to look at the Town Plan during their paving project in 2022.

#### **Announcements/Correspondence/Updates**

- *Letter – Concerned Citizen* :Supervisor Aaron announced a letter was received from an unnamed citizen. In this letter they thanked the Town for updating the streetlights, they asked about getting the corner of Mottville Road and 321 cut back for sight distance when crossing or turning at that intersection. Highway Superintendent Allan Wellington stated he would contact the State DOT. They had concerns about the employees not wearing masks at the Transfer Station. Supervisor Aaron said she would reenforce the importance of this with the employees. She stated the Board is working on the things they can do, some of the items in this letter do not fall under Town jurisdiction. She stated they encourage people to write to the Board but to sign their name so she could contact them.
- *New York State Association of Town 2021 Training School and Annual Meeting*: Supervisor Aaron announced the annual Associations of Town meeting scheduled in February of each year and held in New York City will be held virtually. This will give more Town officials the opportunity to attend the classes.
- *Owasco Lake Watershed Rules & Regulations 10/29/2020 Meeting*: Supervisor Aaron announce the Owasco Lake Watershed has sent notification of a joint Auburn City Council / Owasco Town Board Meeting scheduled for October 29, 2020 at 5:00 PM in the Council Chambers at Auburn's Memorial City Hall, 24 South Street 13021. The meeting has been scheduled to allow the respective boards, as the water purveyors sourcing and distributing public water supply from Owasco Lake, to consider support for the adoption of updated draft Watershed Rules & Regulations (WSRR) for Owasco Lake and its approximate 205-square mile watershed. Email notifications for the October 29 joint meeting are being circulated to a range of stakeholders, including affiliated agencies, elected officials and municipalities in the watershed.
- *A Distant Dickens Christmas*: Supervisor Aaron announced the Skaneateles Chamber of Commerce announced after numerous meeting in an effort to decide whether hosting Dickens Christmas this year was a responsible decision they that hosting the event this year was not a safe decision for the community and could potentially hurt our ability to host the event in the future

therefore this year they will be hosting a “Distance Dickens Christmas” . This will be done remotely on the Chamber Website, with music and activities. There will still be Christmas music played on the Village streets and there is more information on the Chamber Website.

**Budget Amendments:** No Budget Amendments

**Abstract #20-18:** On a motion of Councilor McCormack, seconded by Councilor Tucker and with unanimous (5-0) affirmation of the Town Board vouchers #20-0480 - #20-0548 were authorized from the following funds:

General Fund:	\$ 76,205.78	Highway:	\$ 3,604.18
Water:	\$ 18,158.18	Sewer.:	\$ 18,158.18
Hwy Part Town:	\$ 4,572.39	T & A:	\$ 2,042.42
Part Town:	\$ 3,628.44	Butters Farm	\$ 833.76
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$111,637.81</b>		

**Public Comment:** Dessa Bergan asked the Board about the Library’s plan for the Town property on Fennell Street. She stated the Library does not only service the Town of Skaneateles. It serves the Town of Skaneateles as well as Spafford, Niles, and Sennett. There is a line item on the Skaneateles School Tax bills and the Skaneateles School District is not only in the Town of Skaneateles. Therefore, it is not only a Town of Skaneateles Library. When the Board looks at selling 75 Fennell Street, it is the obligation of the Board to sell it for as much as can be gained on the open market for the Town of Skaneateles taxpayers. As much as we would like to facilitate the Library it is not only the Town’s library. Right now, the real estate market is very hot and this property could be sold at a high price. This would reduce the Town’s debt. As much as we all love the Library it is not the sole responsibility of the Town.

Supervisor Aaron stated if we get to that point with the Library, the money from sale will only go to the Town residents.

Ms. Bergan said it should be appraised and put on the market in order to have a fair sale, to reduce the Town debt.

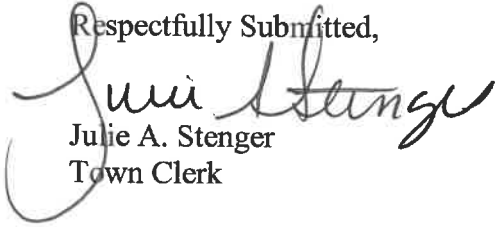
Councilor McCormack stated we are obligated under state law to sell any property at fair market value, since it is public money we cannot give away any property and we would have to get an appraisal by a reputable appraiser.

**Executive Session – Attorney Advice:** On a motion of Councilor Alexander, seconded by Councilor McCormack and with unanimous (5-0) affirmation of the Town Board the meeting was adjourned to Executive Session at 7:17 p.m.

On a motion of Councilor Tucker, seconded by Councilor Legg the meeting was returned to open session at 8:30 p.m.

On a motion of Councilor Tucker, seconded by Councilor Alexander and with unanimous (5-0) affirmation of the Town Board the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Julie A. Stenger". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned to the right of the typed name.

Julie A. Stenger  
Town Clerk