

**Town Board Meeting**  
**December 2, 2019**  
**6:30 p.m.**

**Present:** Supervisor Aaron, Councilor Badami, Councilor McCormack, Councilor Coville, Councilor Tucker, Attorney Smith.

**Also, Present:** Courtney Alexander, Sue Murphy, Bridgett Winkelman, Beth Battle, Jason Gabak (Skaneateles Press), Martin Dillon, Steve Datz, John Rooney, Lynn Palmer, Scott Palmer, Michael Byrne.

Supervisor Aaron asked for a moment of silence for three people who had served the Town for many years who had passed away in the past week. Penny Allyn, Marion Lear and Karl Eldredge. Supervisor Aaron read the following statement:

*“When I began my employment with the Town in 1983 three very impressive people helped guide me in understanding the operation of the Town. These three people were Penny Allyn, Marion Lear and Karl Eldredge. Sadly, this last week the community lost these three people who will be missed but not forgotten.*

*I first got to know Penny when she hired me to babysit Scott and Eric when they lived on W. Elizabeth Street. I’m definitely aging myself. When I was hired as Johnnie Newell’s Deputy Town Clerk in 1983 Penny was on the Town Board. She served on the Board for 14 years from 1976 to 1989. Her youngest son Mark was a friend to my son Steve and through the hockey years we spent a lot of time together. She was an effective Town Board member advocating for our recreation program and making many tough decisions as all Board members do; the proposal for a shopping center east of the Village, zoning updates, decisions at the Transfer Station, and all the lawsuits with Roger Scott. One of the last resolutions she authorized with purchasing what is now the Mandana Parking lot for parking Mandana Boat Launch.*

*Marion Lear was elected Tax Collector from 1968 to 1993 and Clerk to the Assessor from 1980 to 1993 when she decided to retire. Not really! Her daughter Lori then was elected Tax Collector and Marion served as her deputy from 1994 to 2011. She was 82 years old when she finally did retire from the Town having served for 42 years. Marion was amazing because she came to this job before computers. She would memorize not only everyone’s tax records but their house numbers and their license plate numbers. In the early days the Assessor’s Office and the Tax Collector’s Office was very busy because there was no such thing as going “online”. You had to stop into the Town Hall to get your information. Marion always had a smile on her face and a bounce in her step.*

*Karl Eldredge was one of the original members of the Zoning Board of Appeals that was established in 1967 after the Town enacted their first zoning in 1966. In 1978 Karl was appointed Chair of the ZBA and served as Chair through 1979 when he was elected as Town Councilor, a position he held for 12 years winning elections 3 more times. During his tenure as Town Councilor he always had an interest in the maintenance of our cemeteries so when he retired from*

*the Town Board, he continued his service to the Town by taking on the position of Cemetery Superintendent from 1994 to present. In 2013 his son, Dick was hired to help his dad in this position. Karl didn't just maintain the cemeteries, he recreated the records for each person buried there because these past records kept by cemetery neighborhood associations were either lost or nonexistent. He did this by hand, not on the computer outlining each stone, names and any history he could find. He went to Vermont to be trained how to fix broken cemetery stones and to find the correct epoxy to use and the correct cleaning solutions for the stones. He then outfitted his truck with a water tank and sprayer so that he could clean stones that you could no longer tell who was buried there. He just did the job, an excellent job with no expectations of being recognized. Something so hard to find today. This last year Karl was still working in the cemeteries. He was 92 years old."*

#### Moment of Silence

**Highway, Water, Transfer Station:** Highway Superintendent Allan Wellington reported the plows had been out 7 times since the last Town Board meeting making that 15 times for the season, they replaced a driveway pipe on VanCamp Road, made equipment repairs and cut and removed brush around the Highway garage. He reported in the Water Department they repaired 3 water meters, degreased sewer #6, finished winterizing all fire hydrants, 177 in total and winterized the 3 drinking fountains in Austin Park. He reported at the Transfer Station they replaced the 2 broken windows in the office building, repaired equipment and started selling 2020 hang tags.

**Planning & Zoning:** Councilor Tucker reported there were currently 6 open projects. He reviewed the status of existing projects still open; Hidden Estates, Zechman Subdivision, Steve Datz and Chris Graham. He reviewed the Planning Departments other activities which included; the draft Zoning Code, conducted 8 pre-application meetings with prospective applicants and provided historical information on two properties, and negotiated free training on the IPS (Codes and Zoning) software for Codes, Zoning and Planning and participated in the four hour IPS training with Owen Barnes from Business Automation Services.

**Codes:** Councilor Badami reported the Codes Office had the expired permits down to 12 and he said Codes Officer Robert Herrmann reported they are working on fire inspections. Councilor Badami reported there were 6 new permits issued totaling a valuation of \$449,400.00 and 10 Certificates of Completion and 3 Occupancy Inspections.

**Budget:** Budget Officer Winkelman reported Water District #1 had been billed and she was preparing for the preliminary audit that will begin next week. Budget Officer Winkelman also announced there will be a change in payroll for the year 2020. There will be 27 pay periods rather than 26. This will affect paycheck amounts of the salaried employees not the hourly. The salaried employees will receive the budgeted salary, but it will be divided into 27 pay periods rather than 26.

**Historian:** Town Historian Beth Battle gave a report on the "Christmas Traditions in Skaneateles".  
\*report attached

Resolution # 19-208

**Minutes of November 18, 2019:** On a motion of Councilor Tucker, seconded by Councilor McCormack, and with a (5-0) affirmation of the Town Board the minutes of December 2, 2019

were accepted as presented.

*Resolution # 19-209*

**Talcott Water District:** Supervisor Aaron stated the Board was in receipt of the Talcott Water District Map Plan and Report as prepared by C&S Engineering. Supervisor Aaron asked Talcott Water District resident, Steve Datz to report their progress to the Board.

Mr. Datz reviewed some history of the Talcott Water District. He stated the residents had been receiving water for about eighty years. 12 residents of the town were permitted by the Village to tap into and draw water from the Village water system on a private line. This was the Talcott Water Association. All those years they paid water bills to the Village while privately maintaining the line among the members. He stated they are the only residents outside the Village boundaries that pay water bills to the Village. The water line serves the first seven houses south from the Village line on the east side of East Lake Rd (NY Rt 41t). The remaining five homes are on the west side of the road, three on the lake front and two on the west side of the road itself. Since the creation of the Association and within its reaches north, south, east and west there are twenty other properties located on Fire Lanes G, H, and I. Nineteen of those properties have dwellings and there is one buildable lot. Two have wells. Two have independent systems drawing water from the lake and the remaining dwellings draw from multi-home systems from the lake. The buildable lot has no water on site.

Mr. Datz stated they have a preexisting private waterline that until now was unknown to the Onondaga County Health Department; a water table that is unsuitable for drilling 18 new wells; several multi house systems which the health department discourages due to potential cross contamination; and a few direct draw services which the health department is no longer recommending for primary drinking water.

For many years many properties have requested to add on to the Talcott line. In the past there has never been enough flow to add more homes to the 2" main which has served more than adequately. With the increased flow made in the upgrade of the village system, there is an opportunity to offer more water to the residents within the associations current boundaries.

He stated the Village, Town and the Onondaga County Health Department want this District to be formalized. The new members of the water district will pay the majority of the cost of the new line. This is still being negotiated with the residents. Once the district is formed and funded by the members it will be turned over to the Town, billed and maintained by the Town's Water Department. With formalizing this district privately rather than through the municipality it can be done quicker, more efficiently and for less money. The County Health Department has asked for the district not to be expanded outside the current boundaries.

Engineer John Camp stated the existing set up of infrastructure in this water district would not be allowed by Onondaga County therefore this is an opportunity to correct the situation. The State of New York and Onondaga County both have regulations stating a water system serving more than one person is required to be serviced on a line maintained by a municipality or water authority.

He also stated that the existing service is undersized and does not meet the material requirements for modern construction. Mr. Camp stated this is definitely a good plan, to formalize and reconstruct to modern standards and dedicate to the Town.

John Camp reviewed the map of the current district and the proposed new services. This system would consist of an 8" public water main and installed parallel to East Lake Road and each customer would have their dedicated line run off that main. The public lines would run down the fire lanes. Mr. Datz stated this design makes it simpler for the Town to service and maintain. The project would become much more complicated if public lines went down the fire lanes.

Supervisor Aaron asked if all the residents within the district boundary have agreed. Mr. Datz stated they were working with the residents. The residents agree to the concept, but they are working on the financial commitment. All the original members (12) of the Talcott line have signed on and 17 of the 20 additional members currently have signed on. The other three are concerned about the cost and they are working on it.

Supervisor Aaron asked if there is a project cost at this point. Mr. Datz stated the current budget for the entire project is approximately \$200,000. Engineer John Camp stated the financial arrangements of this project are solely the responsibility of the applicants not the Town.

Supervisor Aaron asked what would happen if there is not total agreement. John Camp stated the map could be drawn to not include those who do not opt in. But this is the most opportune time since the cost will be fair and the Village is agreeing to the extension. It has been difficult in the past to get the Village to agree to water extensions.

Supervisor Aaron stated the next step would be to refer to the Village and hold a public hearing. Attorney Smith stated his recommendation to the Board would be to review the Map Plan and Report and he would prepare a resolution to accept the report for the next meeting and schedule the public hearing at that time. He stated in order to continue there should be a final mapping of the properties that are agreeing to be part of the district before the Board can accept the plan and schedule a public hearing. How the residents work out the financial aspect is their responsibility not the Town's.

Supervisor Aaron asked Mr. Datz to come back to the Board when the final map is complete with all the residents who are going to be in the district.

Highway Superintendent Wellington asked if there will be individual meter pits for the services and if that would be an additional cost to the residents. John Camp stated yes, there would be individual meter pits that the residents would pay as part of the installation.

Councilor Tucker stated there are some fairly large lots that the district lines runs through; can it be expanded to include more homes? John Camp stated the boundary is 100 feet off the road therefore any lot with road frontage on East Lake Road would have water outside that, no, water would not be available.

Supervisor Aaron stated if it requires a subdivision, the district would have to be extended. John Camp stated if it was a strip type subdivision along East Lake Road, water would be available but not if it extended off the road. He stated the road frontage on the parcels in question did not have enough road frontage to allow for a subdivision of more than one lot within the Town's zoning or with a variance. It would be very unlikely for a large subdivision to happen.

Steve Datz stated these parcels also are very wet and part might even be considered wetlands which has very restrictive building options and would not be suitable to be developed.

Supervisor Aaron stated the Board would review the report presented tonight and in the meantime the Board asked Mr. Datz to come to an agreement with the property owners on who were going to be part of the Talcott District. When this is finalized, and the map is complete he could then come back to the Board and at that time if the Board agrees, they would accept the Talcott Water District Map Plan and Report, refer to the Village and schedule the Public Hearing.

Scott Palmer, resident within the proposed district, stated they are in favor of this district, but the property owners are still negotiating the division of financial responsibility.

*Resolution # 19-210*

**Employee Handbook Update:** Supervisor Aaron reviewed the following proposed update to the Employee handbook:

**Unpaid Leave of Absence:**

**Policy Statement** – Subject to the approval of the Department Head or Town Supervisor, unpaid leaves of absence other than under the Family and Medical Leave Policy may be available to an employee for personal reasons including, but not limited to, family responsibilities and education.

**Request for Unpaid Leave** – The employee must submit a request and the reasons for the leave, in writing, to the Department Head or Town Supervisor at least thirty calendar days prior to planned commencement of the requested leave. Shorter notification may be permitted in cases of emergency. The Department Head or Town Supervisor has sole discretion in approving such leave.

**Conditions of Leave** – The Department Head or Town Supervisor will specify the duration of an unpaid leave of absence and may impose such other terms, conditions and restrictions on the employee as deemed appropriate. The maximum duration of an unpaid leave of absence may not exceed ten (10) workdays in a calendar year.

**Continuation of Benefits** – Benefits will not be diminished during an unpaid leave period under this policy.

**Return to Work** – An employee who fails to return from an unpaid leave of absence at the scheduled expiration date without giving proper notice or receiving proper authorization shall be conclusively presumed to have voluntarily resigned from employment.

**Change in Status** – If the reason for the unpaid leave of absence changes, the employee must return to work.

The Board agreed to distribute this update to all employees and ask for any concerns or comments before the next meeting. At that time the Board would review and comments.

On a motion of Councilor Tucker, seconded by Councilor McCormack, and with a (5-0) affirmation of the Town Board the Board authorized the employee handbook update “Unpaid Leave of Absence” to be distributed to all Town employees for their review.

*Resolution # 19-211*

**January and February Meeting Schedule:** Supervisor Aaron stated during the months of January and February there are two scheduled Town Board meetings on designated Holidays, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day and Presidents Day. She stated the new Board would review the meeting schedule; therefore the Board would table this decision until the meeting of December 16<sup>th</sup>.

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

- *Comprehensive Plan Update:* Supervisor Aaron stated the draft updated Comprehensive Plan and Zoning was in the final review and should be submitted to the Town Board soon. At that time, it will be referred to the Planning and Zoning Boards for their final review and then public information sessions will be scheduled.
- *Gretchen Messer Letter:* Supervisor Aaron announced a letter was received from Gretchen Messer regarding the Skaneateles Aerodrome project. This letter will be referred to the Planning Board.
- *Swap Shop Winter Equipment Swap Event December 7<sup>th</sup> – 9:00a.m. – 2:00 p.m. at the Austin Pavilion.* Supervisor Aaron announced the Swap Shop Committee is holding a winter equipment and accessory swap event for the community Saturday December 7<sup>th</sup>.
- *2019 Skaneateles Lake Watershed Agricultural Program Annual Meeting – December 11<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 am. Location: Skaneateles United Methodist Church :* Supervisor Aaron encouraged the Board’s attendance at this program.
- *Onondaga County Industrial Development Agency Public Hearing – Abundant Solar, December 3<sup>rd</sup> at 9:00 a.m. at the Town Hall:* Supervisor Aaron announced this public hearing will be held at the Town Hall regarding the Town’s Solar Project located at the Transfer Station.
- *Salvation Army Bell Ringers Needed for Dickens Christmas:* Supervisor Aaron announced a letter was received the Skaneateles Chamber of Commerce looking for volunteers to ring the Salvation Army Donation Bell during Dicken’s Christmas. If anyone is interested, please contact Hilary Fenner at the Chamber.
- *Town Hall closed December 24<sup>th</sup> at noon and December 25<sup>th</sup>. Transfer Station closed December 25<sup>th</sup>.*
- *2020 Transfer Station Permits available starting December 2, 2019*

**Public Comment:** No one commented

*Resolution # 19-212*

**Budget Amendments:** On a motion of Councilor Coville, seconded by Councilor Badami and with unanimous (5-0) affirmation of the Town Board the following budget amendment was approved:

General Fund

\$ 1,750.00	Increase	081604.01.004.00	Refuse / Garbage – C/E
\$ 1,750.00	Decrease	019904.01.004.00	Contingency

Additional costs associated with 2019 contract

Part Town

\$ 8,620.00	Increase	080204.02.004.59	Planning – C/E - Legal
\$ 8,620.00	Decrease	000909.02.000.00	Fund Balance - PT

Additional costs associated with review of Comprehensive Plan

Water

\$ 300.00	Increase	083104.08.004.00	Water Admin - C/E
\$ 300.00	Decrease	083204.08.004.00	Source of Supply

Cost of doing business

*Resolution # 19-213*

**Abstract #19-23:** On a motion of Councilor Coville, seconded by Councilor Badami and with unanimous (5-0) affirmation of the Town Board vouchers #19-1611-19-1668 were authorized from the following funds:

General Fund:	\$ 23,044.66	Street Lgt.:	\$ 1,297.94
Highway:	\$ 5,966.42	Water:	\$ 366.17
Highway PT	\$ 226.21	Part Town	\$ 16,038.64
T & A	\$ 3,310.96	Refund – FD	\$ 698.91
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$ 50,891.68</b>		

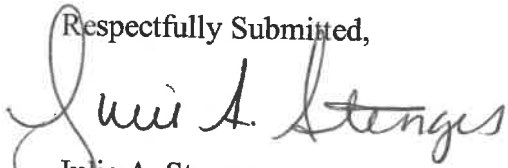
*Resolution # 19-214*

**Executive Session:** On a motion of Councilor Coville, seconded by Councilor Tucker and with unanimous (5-0) affirmation of the Town Board the meeting was adjourned to Executive Session at 7:20 p.m. to discuss contract negotiations.

On a motion of Councilor McCormack, seconded by Councilor Tucker the meeting was returned to open session at 8:20p.m. .

On a motion of Councilor McCormack, seconded by Councilor Tucker and with unanimous (5-0) affirmation of the Town Board the meeting was adjourned at 8:20 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



## Christmas Traditions In Skaneateles

By

Jorge Batlle, Village Historian

Beth Batlle, Town Historian

In spite of the on-going war, in December of 1943, the Waterbury Felt Company, at Skaneateles Falls, gave a Christmas bonus to about 190 of its employees. The newspaper stated that those who had worked for the company for 20 years received a \$35 bonus; those with 10 years or more received \$25; and those who had been with the company for more than a year received \$15.

The Lions Club began selling Christmas trees in 1952. They started on East Genesee Street just east of what is now the Sailboat Shop, then moved downtown to the spot which is now the outdoor dining area for Doug's Fish Fry. The club members continued this tradition until 2007 when competition from other sellers became too great.

In December of 1955 the members of the Garden Club presented a crèche to the people of the Town and Village of Skaneateles. The crèche was set up in front of the Skaneateles Library at 49 East Genesee Street and included 20 figures, some of which were 32 inches in height.

The Rotary Club, the Chamber of Commerce, the Lions Club and the V.I.A. (Village Improvement Assoc.) provided the shelter for the figures. The Garden Club members maintained and supervised the crèche each year.

The crèche is still placed in front of the library today. And the dedication usually takes place in the first week of December, followed by the singing of Christmas carols.

Another tradition in the Village of Skaneateles is the night-lighted Christmas tree at the end of the lake pier which began around 1986. The Skaneateles Merchants' Association sponsored the project, representatives from other clubs, such as the Lions and the Rotary, assisted in the placing of the tree and the power

was supplied by the Village Electric Department. This tradition continues today, adding cheer to the cold December nights.

Then in 1995, the merchants of the Village of Skaneateles began a celebration known as Dickens' Christmas. This was to be a step back in time to Victorian England when Charles Dickens was a popular author. It took place on weekends, starting with the weekend after Thanksgiving.

Costumed actors, such as Scrooge, Father Christmas and Mother Goose wandered the streets of the Village. Chestnuts were roasted over an open fire, and horse-drawn carriage took visitors around the decorated streets of the Village. The music of carolers and other groups added to the celebration.

This presented visitors to Skaneateles with a unique shopping experience in a small town compared to the crowded atmosphere in a huge shopping mall. And Dickens' Christmas continues to be a very popular event today.