



**Town of Oneonta
TOWN BOARD
Regular Town Board Meeting
February 11, 2026
07:00 PM**

CALL TO ORDER ~ ROLL CALL ~ PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The regular meeting of the Oneonta Town Board was held on February 11, 2026, with the following members present:

Town Supervisor:	William Rivera Jr.	(WRJ)
Town Board Member:	Brett D. Holleran	(BDH)
Town Board Member:	Patricia Riddell Kent	(PRK)
Town Board Member:	Teresa DeSantis	(TD)
Town Board Member:	Joseph M. Camarata	(JMC)

Others present: Ryan F. Pereira, Town Clerk; Chris McIlveen, Coughlin & Gerhart LLP, Attorneys for the Town; Steve Kent; Dale Webster; Liz Cramer; Jerome Blechman; Greg Harlem; Melissa Jervis; Caroline Williams, SUNY Oneonta; Rich Harlem; Theresa & David Cyzeski; Trista Lueclan; David Koehn; Mike Forster Rothbart; Eamon Hinchey.

Supervisors Report:

Recognition of Black History Month and appreciation for highway department's snow removal efforts.

Acknowledgment of board members' community support and website updates for transparency.

Mohawk Valley Economic Development to visit Town Hall on February 19th for site projects, and tour. West End development project progressing with public outreach and grant applications. Appreciation for individuals' contributions to town projects and committee participation.

Approval of vouchers totaling \$498,51.41 and \$72,559. Two debt payments approved: highway garage interest and South Side Water District bond.

Privilege of the floor: (07:08)

Georgia Smith stated objections to the Eco-Yotta Inc. zone change proposal for 357 County Highway 9. Ms. Smith expressed distrust in Eco-Yotta Inc.'s transparency and shifting narratives. Raised concerns about the companies energy usage claims and contradiction regarding their New Jersey data center.

Presentation: (07:11)

Habitat for Humanity's Fair Taxation Law Advocacy: Terry Blackman of Habitat for Humanity presented on a new state law, Section 457-a, for low-income homebuyer tax exemptions.

The law requires local government opt-in to provide tax exemptions ranging from 25% to 75%. Habitat for Humanity asks the Town Board to opt into this law to prevent foreclosures due to rising taxes.

Habitat for Humanity builds and sells homes, not gives them away, with no profit. Partner families pay no more than 30% of income on monthly mortgage, insurance, and taxes. A 'shadow mortgage' system forgives the second mortgage over time, preventing house flipping.

Committee Reports:

Highway, Water, Sewer

- Approval of standard mailbox policy.
- Discussion and approval of updated water and sewer rates for the Plains District.

The 2026 Water and Sewer Rates for the Plains Water District will increase slightly:

Residential

The minimum Water Amount for 37,000 gallons will increase from \$387 to \$405, which results in an annual \$18 increase in the minimum. With an overall rate increase from .0115 to .0121, .0006 cents per gallon.

Commercial – Heritage Building

The minimum Water Amount for 37,000 gallons will increase from \$1,158 to \$1,273, which results in an annual \$115 increase in the minimum. With an overall rate increase from .0313 to .0344, .0031 cents per gallon.

The minimum Sewer amount for 37,000 gallons will remain at \$318, with a very slight increase in the overall sewer rate from \$.0086 to \$.0090, .0004 cents per gallon.

The Town is working diligently to try and keep the Rates as low as possible, however enough revenue needs to be generated to cover the Annual City Water Bill and Plains District Expenses.

- Updates on Woodland and Hemlock water projects, including a \$4.2 million congressional award for pipe replacement. Supervisor Rivera indicated some difficulty accessing information on the congressional award due to Federal HUD website issues.
- Need for a request for qualifications (RFQ) for engineering firms to manage the water projects discussed.
- Discussion about a potential Town Hall meeting for residents to address concerns about water projects and bond payments.
- Approval of the revised 2026 highway employee Memorandum of Understanding (MOU):

Revised Memorandum of Understanding / Compensatory Time Option

Effective: January 29, 2026, through December 31, 2026 (Trial basis for 2026)

2026 Adopted Budget Allowed for Personal Time to Be Increased to 30 hours / No Fuel Stipend or Longevity, this will now be included in hourly pay rates.

Compensatory Time may be accrued as an alternate for receiving overtime pay. One hour of overtime accrued as Compensatory Time will be equivalent to 1.5 Hours of Paid Time off, paid at Straight Rate.

Upon resignation, accumulated Compensatory Time will not be paid out. Accrued Compensatory time must be used by October 31, 2026, and any unused portion will be forfeited. Regarding the 3-hour minimum call-in, employee decides if the entire 3 hours will be paid as 3 hours of overtime or accrued as 4.5 hours Compensatory Time.

Accrued Compensatory Time will be capped at 53 1/3 Hours Earned, which is the equivalent of 80 hours paid time off. Upon Adoption of the Annual Budget, all hourly rates become effective 1/1 of the upcoming calendar year. All Compensatory Time will be calculated based upon these approved pay rates.

- Discussion on engineering for Butler Street sidewalks.
- Discussion on a retainer for professional engineering services, left some members feeling it would stifle development. Concerns raised about potential impact on smaller projects and community investment. The board seeks to refine the language to include specific triggers and thresholds for requiring professional consultation.



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- Concerns about tree trimming on private property to clear road canopies and the status of culvert water quality improvement grants.

Public Safety

- Update on a court-ordered eviction at a problem house in Angel Heights after six years.
- Discussion on the hazardous mitigation plan meeting and the need to complete it to ensure FEMA fund eligibility.

Technology, Facilities and Parks

- Submission of a grant application for the Parks and Recreation grant to continue work on the Plains Pool and Park project.
- An engineering proposal for \$6,000 was received for the replacement of the Grove Pavilion in Fortin Park, Alex Hermann.
- Consideration of replacing aged town phones and addressing a freezing issue in the record room's radiant heating system.

Legislative

- Efforts are being made to update the town website and eCode with laws dating back to 1998 and organize town policies and procedures.
- Recommendation to adopt a model code of ethics for local governments.
- Review of requests for real property tax exemptions for Veterans and Habitat for Humanity.

Clerk's Report

- First month of tax collection concluded successfully, with all budgeted line items funded.
- Two applications for alcohol sales were presented, one with a request to waive the 30-day notice period. The board decided against waiving the 30-day notice to allow for thorough review of the application.

County Representative's Report

- County representative discussed rising electricity and natural gas costs and a local resolution expressing anger.
- Reported high flu levels and spiking COVID cases, urging flu shots and well-checks for vulnerable residents.
- Highlighted a state septic program to help fund failing septic systems near water bodies.
- An initiative to establish an indoor recreational facility in the town of Oneonta is being pursued. Plans to visit a multi-use facility in Canajoharie for inspiration and explore grant opportunities. The facility aims to serve various community needs, including walking tracks and sports teams.

Other items of discussion:

West End Development and Electricity Costs

Awaiting state award notice to kick off focus groups for the West End development project. This project aims to create a West End development zone to apply for the New York State Downtown Revitalization Initiative. Caroline Williams, SUNY Oneonta, is working on drafting a letter to property owners.

Also, a proclamation is being drafted to urge review of electric delivery/supply charges and demand improved cost controls from NYSEG.

RESOLUTION 2026-0035 (07:28) Motion by WRJ, seconded by PRK;

Whereas the Town Board votes to adopt mailbox policy; and
Whereupon the resolution was put to a vote and recorded as follows:

		AYE	NAY	
Brett D. Holleran	Board Member	<u> X </u>	_____	
Patricia Riddell Kent	Board Member	<u> X </u>	_____	
Teresa DeSantis	Board Member	<u> X </u>	_____	
Joseph M. Camarata	Board Member	<u> X </u>	_____	
William Rivera Jr.	Supervisor	<u> X </u>	_____	
VOTE	AYES (5)			MOTION CARRIED

RESOLUTION 2026-0036 (07:30) Motion by PRK, seconded by JMC;

Whereas the Town Board votes to approve 2026 Water and Sewer Rates for the Plains Water District; and
Whereas the residential minimum Water Amount for 37,000 gallons will increase from \$387 to \$405, which results in an annual \$18 increase in the minimum. With an overall rate increase from .0115 to .0121, .0006 cents per gallon; and

Whereas the commercial (Heritage Building) minimum Water Amount for 37,000 gallons will increase from \$1,158 to \$1,273, which results in an annual \$115 increase in the minimum. With an overall rate increase from .0313 to .0344, .0031 cents per gallon; and

Whereas the minimum Sewer amount for 37,000 gallons will remain at \$318, with a very slight increase in the overall sewer rate from \$.0086 to \$.0090, .0004 cents per gallon;

Now, therefore be it resolved;

Whereupon the resolution was put to a vote and recorded as follows:

		AYE	NAY	
Brett D. Holleran	Board Member	<u> X </u>	_____	
Patricia Riddell Kent	Board Member	<u> X </u>	_____	
Teresa DeSantis	Board Member	<u> X </u>	_____	
Joseph M. Camarata	Board Member	<u> X </u>	_____	
William Rivera Jr.	Supervisor	<u> X </u>	_____	
VOTE	AYES (5)			MOTION CARRIED

RESOLUTION 2026-0037 (07:44) Motion by PRK, seconded by JMC;

Whereas the Town Board votes to approve the revised 2026 MOU for Highway Dept. personnel;

Whereupon the resolution was put to a vote and recorded as follows:

		AYE	NAY	
Brett D. Holleran	Board Member	<u> X </u>	_____	
Patricia Riddell Kent	Board Member	<u> X </u>	_____	
Teresa DeSantis	Board Member	<u> X </u>	_____	
Joseph M. Camarata	Board Member	<u> X </u>	_____	



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William Rivera Jr. Supervisor
VOTE AYES (5)

 X

MOTION CARRIED

RESOLUTION 2026-0038 (08:17) Motion by WRJ, seconded by PRK;

Whereas the Town Board votes to proceed with local law; and
Whereas a local law entitled "A LOCAL LAW AFFECTING A TEMPORARY MORATORIUM ON THE DEVELOPMENT, CONSTRUCTION, AND OPERATION OF DATA CENTERS WITHIN THE TOWN OF ONEONTA" was introduced at this meeting; and
Whereas the Town Board desires to hold a public hearing with respect to the adoption of said Local Law.
Whereupon the resolution was put to a vote and recorded as follows:

		AYE	NAY
Brett D. Holleran	Board Member	<u> </u>	<u> X </u>
Patricia Riddell Kent	Board Member	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>
Teresa DeSantis	Board Member	<u> </u>	<u> X </u>
Joseph M. Camarata	Board Member	<u> </u>	<u> X </u>
William Rivera Jr.	Supervisor	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>
VOTE	AYES (2) NAYS (3) (BDH, JCM, TD)		

MOTION FAILED

The resolution was proposed to introduce a local law for a temporary one-year moratorium on data center development. The moratorium aims to allow time to study zoning codes and tailor legislation for community benefit. The motion to introduce the resolution received a second but failed to pass due to insufficient votes. Some members were not comfortable advancing the resolution due to inadequate review period having just received the proposal at the meeting.

RESOLUTION 2026-0039 (09:06) Motion by PRK; seconded by JMC;

Whereas the Town Board votes to authorize the payment of bills and transfer payments;
VOUCHER AMOUNTS ABSTRACT #2 (attached)
Whereupon the resolution was put to a vote and recorded as follows:

		AYE	NAY
Brett D. Holleran	Board Member	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>
Patricia Riddell Kent	Board Member	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>
Teresa DeSantis	Board Member	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>
Joseph M. Camarata	Board Member	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>
William Rivera Jr.	Supervisor	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>
VOTE	AYES (5)		

MOTION CARRIED

Privilege of the floor: (09:10)

Elizabeth Cramer expressed frustration over the delayed review of a zoning amendment application for her property located at 4377 NY 7. Supervisor Rivera explained the application is being reviewed by counsel, requiring time as new members are now involved in the review process.

Melissa Jervis asked about a questionnaire for the new short-term rental committee task force and was informed that one will be forthcoming, available on the website. Applications for community members to join the short-term rental committee are open until March 15th.

David Koehn voiced concerns about the retention of citizen-submitted documents to boards; discovering past submissions reportedly disappearing, this having asked the Clerk for Planning and Zoning. Mr. Koehn advocated the review of established procedures for retaining materials with appropriate importance.

RESOLUTION 2026-0040 (09:17) Motion by TD; seconded by PRK;

Whereas the Town Board votes to enter executive session to discuss employment history of town official;
Whereupon the resolution was put to a vote and recorded as follows:

		AYE	NAY	
Brett D. Holleran	Board Member	<u> X </u>	_____	
Patricia Riddell Kent	Board Member	<u> X </u>	_____	
Teresa DeSantis	Board Member	<u> X </u>	_____	
Joseph M. Camarata	Board Member	<u> X </u>	_____	
William Rivera Jr.	Supervisor	<u> X </u>	_____	
VOTE	AYES (5)			MOTION CARRIED

RESOLUTION 2026-0041 (10:01) Motion by BDH; seconded by WRJ;

Whereas the Town Board votes to exit executive session to discuss employment history of town official;
Whereupon the resolution was put to a vote and recorded as follows:

		AYE	NAY	
Brett D. Holleran	Board Member	<u> X </u>	_____	
Patricia Riddell Kent	Board Member	<u> X </u>	_____	
Teresa DeSantis	Board Member	<u> X </u>	_____	
Joseph M. Camarata	Board Member	<u> X </u>	_____	
William Rivera Jr.	Supervisor	<u> X </u>	_____	
VOTE	AYES (5)			MOTION CARRIED

RESOLUTION 2026-0042 (10:02) Motion by JMC; seconded by BH;

Whereas the Town Board votes to adjourn;
Whereupon the resolution was put to a vote and recorded as follows:

		AYE	NAY	
Brett D. Holleran	Board Member	<u> X </u>	_____	
Patricia Riddell Kent	Board Member	<u> X </u>	_____	
Teresa DeSantis	Board Member	<u> X </u>	_____	
Joseph M. Camarata	Board Member	<u> X </u>	_____	
William Rivera Jr.	Supervisor	<u> X </u>	_____	
VOTE	AYES (5)			MOTION CARRIED

Respectfully submitted,

Ryan F. Pereira
Town Clerk

Abstract #	2	Dates 1/16/26-2/11/26			
		12/30 & 12/30 (2025)			
		Friday - Wednesday			
General Checking					
			2025	2026	
Fund		PrePaid	To Be Paid	To Be Paid	Total PrePaid/To Be Paid
General	1	\$ -	\$ 13,095.65	\$ 28,723.09	\$ 41,818.74
Highway	3	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 28,286.42	\$ 28,286.42
St Lights #1	7	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,826.99	\$ 2,826.99
St Lights #2	14	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 291.53	\$ 291.53
St Lights #3	15	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 962.08	\$ 962.08
St Lights #4	16	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 58.14	\$ 58.14
St Lights #5	17	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 270.77	\$ 270.77
Butler Creek-Blanchard Capital	28	\$ -	\$ 14,871.96	\$ -	\$ 14,871.96
Butler Creek-Winney Hill Capital	29	\$ -	\$ 18,543.57	\$ -	\$ 18,543.57
Fire Protection	25	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Subtotal		\$ -	\$ 46,511.18	\$ 61,419.02	\$ 107,930.20
District Checking					
WESD	8	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 4,875.47	\$ 4,875.47
WSSD	9	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 438.44	\$ 438.44
SSD	10	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,540.40	\$ 2,540.40
WWD	11	\$ -	\$ 973.68	\$ 481.23	\$ 1,454.91
PWD	12	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 167.90	\$ 167.90
SSWD	21	\$ -	\$ 2,366.55	\$ 2,470.27	\$ 4,836.82
District Subtotal		\$ -	\$ 3,340.23	\$ 10,973.71	\$ 14,313.94
Trust and Agency Checking					
T & A	99	\$ 61.24	\$ -	\$ 166.27	\$ 227.51
		\$ 61.24	\$ -	\$ 166.27	\$ 227.51
CDBG					
CDBG Grants	26	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Totals		\$ 61.24	\$ 49,851.41	\$ 72,559.00	\$ 122,471.65
Clerk:	Approved Expenses / Voucher #		2025-792 to 2025-797/2026-39 to 2026-101		
	General	\$	41,818.74		
	Highway	\$	28,286.42		
	St Lighting	\$	4,409.51		
	Butler Creek-Blanchard Capital	\$	14,871.96		
	Butler Creek-Winney Hill Capital	\$	18,543.57		
	Fire Protection	\$	-		
	WESD	\$	4,875.47		
	WSSD	\$	438.44		
	SSD	\$	2,540.40		
	WWD	\$	1,454.91		
	PWD	\$	167.90		
	SSWD	\$	4,836.82		
	T&A	\$	227.51		
	CDBG	\$	-		
		\$	122,471.65		
		\$	122,471.65		
		\$	-		
	I have reviewed/audited the PrePaid Invoices.				
	I have reviewed/audited and approve for payment the invoices to be paid				
	Town Supervisor			Date	
	Town Board Member			Date	
	Town Board Member			Date	