

September 17, 2024  
6:30 p.m.  
2354 State Route 434  
Apalachin, New York

Regular Meeting of the Owego Town Board

A. Call to order, roll call and the Pledge of Allegiance -

Supervisor Donald Castellucci called the meeting to order, the Clerk called the Roll, and Jim Raftis led all in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Council:

Present: Supervisor Castellucci, Dean Morgan, Craig Jochum, Gary Hellmers, and Jonathan Marks

Absent: None

Department Heads:

Present: Phil Baker, Parks Maintenance Supervisor  
Bill Carrigg, Planning & Zoning Administrator  
Peter Gordon, Town Historian  
Tyson Stiles, Director of Utilities  
Rick Pedro, Sole Assessor  
Irene Graven, Town Attorney  
Michael Roberts, Highway Superintendent  
Mary Kennedy, Town Clerk & Tax Receiver

Absent: None

B. Minutes of the previous meetings -

The minutes of the September 3, 2024 Regular Meeting will stand as submitted.

C. Consideration of bids – none

D. Public Hearings – none

E. Reports of Department Heads –

Rick Pedro, Sole Assessor – no report

Phil Baker, Parks Maintenance Supervisor – reported that although the campground is still open, peak camping season is over. He also stated that his crew is still busy with projects that were delayed due to the busy summer season.

Bill Carrigg, Planning & Zoning Administrator – reported that recently they had to force a family to leave their home as the structure was uninhabitable. He thanked Brenda and Tina for their professionalism during that difficult time. Next, he stated that there are 2 training opportunities in the near future. **Councilmember Hellmers made a motion to authorize Bill Carrigg and any of his Board members to attend a training session in Corning on October 7, 2024 and for Bill Carrigg to attend Emergency Management School in Maryland next spring with all reasonable expenses paid. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Marks and unanimously carried.** Lastly, he reported that the application for the Town to become a Storm Ready Community is ready to be submitted to the State after many months of work.

Tyson Stiles, Director of Utilities – reported that his crew put in the holes for the pickleball courts in Tioga Park. Next, he submitted a proposal for a portable sampler. **A motion was made by Councilmember Morgan to purchase a portable sampler from CPE Service Systems Solutions for \$6,264. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Marks and unanimously carried.** Lastly, he requested Attorney/Client Privilege after the meeting.

Mike Roberts, Highway Superintendent – reported that his crew has multiple paving projects currently underway including: Green, Dutchtown and Long Creek Roads and that the “Train” process is proving to make a great surface. Lastly, he stated his budget is still tracking well.

Peter Gordon, Town Historian – reported that the Harris Diner will be celebrating its 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on September 24<sup>th</sup> and will have selected items from their menu with prices from the 1940s.

Mary Kennedy, Town Clerk – reported that hunting license sales are well underway with doe permits only available until October 1<sup>st</sup>. Lastly, she stated that they have already sold over 100 marriage licenses this year (which is much sooner than usual).

Irene Graven, Town Attorney – no report

Supervisor Castellucci – reported that the Town Clerk’s Monthly Report is on file in his office. Next, he stated that the FEMA money for repairs to the Dog Park fence in 2018 has finally come in. He then reported that the 9/11 Ceremony went very well. Next, he stated there was a progress report phone conversation with CPL regarding the Generators Project. Lastly, he asked for the Board members to try to be available October 9<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> for Budget meetings.

F. Privilege of the Floor –

**\*\*\*At this time the Board decided to act on Agenda Items K4 and K5\*\*\***

**Supervisor Castellucci read the following proclamation honoring Jim Raftis and moved for its adoption. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Morgan and unanimously carried.** Jim Raftis thanked the Board and spoke about his deep affection for our community.

WHEREAS, James R. Raftis, Sr. has dedicated a lifetime of service to the Owego community which benefitted area schools, sports leagues, service organizations and veterans and has received many local awards over the course of his career; and

WHEREAS, James R. Raftis Sr., the “Voice of Owego,” has held that title for decades and he was heard on the radio at local youth sporting events as well as Radio Mass for Shut-Ins at St. Patrick’s Church; and

WHEREAS, James R. Rafts Sr., who is an Army veteran of the Korean War, is well known for his volunteer efforts at many veteran related ceremonies and special events such as Founder of the Roll Call of Veterans buried in Tioga County cemeteries, being the local organizer for Wreaths Across America, and Master of Ceremonies for tribute days for Memorial Day, Veterans Day, Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day and Town of Owego 9-11 Ceremonies; and

AND IN RECOGNITION OF James R. Raftis, Sr. recently being honored as Grand Marshall of the 2024 Strawberry Festival Parade;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that the members of the Owego Town Board, on behalf of the Town of Owego and all its residents, wish to express their sincere appreciation for James R. Raftis, Sr. and thank him for all that he has contributed to the community; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Owego Town Board declares Tuesday September 17, 2024 as James R. Raftis, Sr. Day in the Town of Owego.

**Supervisor Castellucci read the following proclamation honoring Dick Franz and moved for its adoption. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Morgan and unanimously carried.** Dick Franz thanked the Board and spoke about the importance of volunteering to help the community.

WHEREAS, Richard L. Franz has dedicated a lifetime of service to the Owego community; and

WHEREAS, Richard L. Franz has been instrumental in the Owego Fire Department, particularly Croton Hose Company No. 3 and the OFD Emergency Squad where he has actively volunteered in various lifesaving and leadership roles for nearly 75 years; and

WHEREAS, Richard L. Franz has also been a key volunteer contributor and leader since earliest days of the Tioga County Rural Ministry, the Tioga County Boys & Girls Club, the Owego Little League, youth football programs, and many other community service organizations; and

AND IN RECOGNITION OF Richard L. Franz recently being honored as a Grand Marshall of the 2024 Strawberry Festival parade;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that the members of the Owego Town Board, on behalf of the Town of Owego and all its residents, wish to express their sincere appreciation for Richard L. Franz and thank him for all that he has contributed to the community; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Owego Town Board declares Tuesday September 17, 2024 as Richard L. Franz Day in the Town of Owego.

Supervisor Castellucci thanked both Jim and Dick for the friendship and everything they did for the Town and Village of Owego. Councilmember Morgan shared a fond memory as well.

F. Privilege of the Floor (continued) -

Jennifer Minnich, Gardner Road, spoke about problems on her property caused by water runoff from the road and across the street. She requested the Town rectify the situation. Mike Roberts, Highway Superintendent, stated that it is already on his schedule to be addressed as soon as paving projects are complete.

Daniel Dunn, Belknap Road, thanked the Board for expediting the removal of the very large dead ash tree near his house.

Else Deuber, Blodgett Road, shared that the tractor trailers and others speeding on her road continues to be a problem although the State lowered the speed limit a few years ago. The Supervisor stated he will look into the possibility of a weight limit being applied to reduce the number of trucks.

Will Wilhelm, Pembroke Drive, asked for an update on the paving in the Crestview Heights neighborhood. He was told the new target date is October 14<sup>th</sup>.

Rose Howard, Sequoia Lane, thanked the Board for carefully looking into the Highway Department's budget and for resurfacing some of the roads in Tioga Terrace that had the mat finish.

G. Presentation of Petitions, Communications, Notices and Transfers –

1. Monthly Report of the Supervisor

This report is on file in the Town Clerk's office.

H. Abstracts-

**Councilmember Morgan made a motion to approve the following abstracts as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Hellmers and unanimously carried on a Roll Call Vote.**

A0 - General Fund	28,234.36
B0 - General Fund-Town Outside	4,572.57
DB - Highway-Town Outside	18,347.47
F0 - Water Districts	6,557.40
FA - Route 38 Water	261.81
G0- Sewer Districts	21,806.58
GA – Route 38 Sewer	<u>98.22</u>
	<b>\$79,878.41</b>

I. Unfinished Business - none

J. Reports of Standing Committees –

Councilmember Hellmers – no report

Councilmember Morgan – reported that there has been progress in trying to find a replacement bridge for Youngs Road and it will be a Spring project. He also spoke about the 9/11 Ceremony and thanked everyone for their support.

Councilmember Jochum- also commended those involved with the 9/11 Ceremony.

Councilmember Marks – no report

K. Presentation of Resolutions, Motions and New Business –

1. Proclamation - Olmstead

Supervisor Castellucci read the proclamation and thanked Charlie for his service to the Town. **Councilmember Marks made a motion to adopt the following proclamation honoring Charles Olmstead. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Morgan and unanimously carried.**

WHEREAS, Charles H. Olmstead, HEO II for the Town of Owego Highway Department, retired on June 8, 2024, after 31 years of commendable service to the Town of Owego; and

WHEREAS, Charles H. Olmstead began his career with the Town of Owego on June 14, 1993, as a Laborer for the Highway Department; and

WHEREAS, Charles H. Olmstead was promoted to MEO III on January 13, 2003;  
and

WHEREAS, Charles H. Olmstead was promoted to HEO I on January 1, 2011;  
and

WHEREAS, Charles H. Olmstead was promoted to HEO II on December 20,  
2021; and

WHEREAS, Charles H. Olmstead performed his duties in a workmanlike manner  
and was always reliable and professional;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that the Owego Town Board, on behalf of the Town of Owego and  
all its residents, does hereby extend its sincere and grateful appreciation for the dedicated  
service that Charles H. Olmstead has provided to the Town of Owego and offers its  
congratulations on his retirement.

2. Merit raise - Court

Supervisor Castellucci reviewed the reasons for this raise. **A motion was made by  
Councilmember Jochum to approve the following resolution authorizing a merit raise for  
BreAnna Spires. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Hellmers and unanimously  
carried.**

WHEREAS, during this past year Town of Owego Court Clerk BreAnna Spires  
has handled an increased work load due to staffing issues in the court office; and

WHEREAS, it is the recommendation of the Town of Owego Justices Patrick  
Hogan and Donna J. Bennett, that BreAnna Spires warrants an increase in her hourly  
wage from \$19.30 per hour to \$21.00 per hour, based on the above;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that Breanna Spires, Clerk at the Town of Owego Court, will  
receive an increase in her hourly wage from \$19.30 per hour to \$21.00 per hour, effective  
September 2, 2024.

3. Grant application - Court

Supervisor Castellucci reviewed that the Town Justices would like to use this grant  
money to purchase much needed office furniture. **Councilmember Hellmers made a motion to  
adopt the following resolution authorizing the Owego Town Court to apply for a JCAP  
grant.**

WHEREAS, the Town Court of the Town of Owego wishes to apply for funding from the Justice Court Assistance Program (JCAP) during the 2024-25 grant cycle; and

WHEREAS, this funding will be used to purchase needed office furniture;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that the Town Board of the Town of Owego hereby authorizes the Town of Owego Town Court to apply for a JCAP grant in the 2024-25 grant cycle up to \$30,000; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this funding will not be used to compensate justices or non-judicial court staff, nor shall it be used as a means of reducing funding provided by the Town of Owego to its Justice Court.

4. Proclamation – Raftis

This was acted on during Privilege of the Floor

5. Proclamation – Franz

This was acted on during Privilege of the Floor

6. Budget modification – Griffin Drive

**A motion was made by Councilmember Morgan to adopt the following resolution authorizing a budget transfer to pay for the emergency work done to fix a sink hole in Griffin Drive. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Hellmers and unanimously carried.**

WHEREAS, at the Town Board meeting held on March 19, 2024, the Owego Town Board unanimously adopted a resolution declaring the condition of Griffin Drive as an emergency, due to deterioration of the storm sewer pipe running under the east side of Griffin Drive which had caused a sinkhole to develop; and

WHEREAS, as a result, 383 linear feet of liner was installed into the existing storm sewer pipe on Griffin Drive; and

WHEREAS, it appears necessary for the Town of Owego Highway Department to increase the Town of Owego Highway Repairs – Town Outside Pipe fund to cover the cost of installation of the liner;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED that pursuant to Town Law Section 112, the Town Board of the Town of Owego does hereby approve the following budget transfer as follows:

<b>From</b>	<b>To</b>	<b>Amount</b>
A0.0000.4089 Federal Aid - ARPA	A0.9901-9000 Interfund Transfer	\$220,225.00
DB.5031.000 Interfund Transfer	DB.5110.4835 Highway Repairs TO- Pipe	\$220,225.00

L. Second Privilege of the floor –

There was no one wishing to speak at this time.

M. Executive Session – none

N. Adjournment -

**Motion by Councilmember Morgan, the meeting was adjourned at 7:29 PM.**

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Kennedy, Town Clerk