

**CITY OF ONEIDA**  
**MINUTES OF THE TRAFFIC SAFETY BOARD**  
January 20, 2026  
2:00 p.m.

MEMBERS:

IN ATTENDANCE

Chairman Bruce Burke	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Vice-Chairman Donald White	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cindy Bortree	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Jennifer Bailey	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Erwin Smith	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Brahim Zogby	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Michael Geer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Brian Bortree	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Gary Laureti	<input type="checkbox"/>

ADVISORS:

Police Chief Steven Lowell	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Fire Department Chief Scott Jones	<input type="checkbox"/>
City Engineer Jeff Rowe	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Traffic Advisor Shawn Palmer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Police Lieutenant Ryan Warner	<input type="checkbox"/>

OTHERS PRESENT:

City Manager Kyle Lovell  
Assistant Chief of Police Willam Clark  
Fire Department Assistant Chief Dennis Relyea  
Community Service Officer Paul Kodya

The regular meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m. by Chairman Bruce Burke.

Approval of October 21, 2025 Meeting Minutes Distributed for Review Prior to January 20, 2026 Meeting.

Discussion: Board member Michael Geer noted a correction to the October 21, 2025 minutes. He was present at that meeting but had been recorded as absent. The correction was acknowledged by the Secretary to be amended.

Moved by: Bruce Burke  
Seconded by: Brian Bortree

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the regular meeting of October 21, 2025 are hereby approved as amended to reflect that Michael Geer was in attendance.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Abstain: 0

Absent: 2 (White, Laureti)

## **MOTION CARRIED**

### **OLD BUSINESS**

#### **1. Seneca Street Elementary School Lights and Signs**

Discussion: Traffic Advisor Shawn Palmer reported that two quotes had been previously circulated via email for flashing school zone beacons: approximately \$27,000 for a solar-powered unit and \$49,000 for a hardwired unit. The City is exploring potential cost-sharing with the Oneida City School District.

Discussion noted that lower-cost flashing beacon signs (approximately \$179 each, as used by other municipalities) are not compliant with federal traffic codes regarding flash frequency, and therefore cannot be installed. The possibility of photo/speed enforcement cameras was briefly raised; the City of Syracuse's arrangement with a vendor — where the vendor fronted costs and shared revenue — was referenced as a potential model, though no direct cost or grant information is available at this time.

City Manager Kyle Lovell indicated he will reach out to Assemblyman Brian Miller and Senator Joseph Griffo to inquire about the availability of Congressionally Delegated Spending (CDS) funds or other state funding for the school zone beacon project. Lovell will also contact Superintendent Matt Carpenter regarding the school district's participation and cost-sharing.

Police Chief Steve Lowell noted that a crossing guard is stationed at Seneca Street Elementary and that cones have been placed in nearby parking spots to maintain crosswalk visibility, which has been effective. This item will be carried to the next meeting pending outreach results.

### **AGENDA ITEMS**

#### **1. Cleveland Avenue – Removal of Speed Tracker Caused Increase in Speeding**

Discussion: Board member Jennifer Bailey, who lives in the area, reported ongoing speeding issues in the morning hours, particularly around 7:00 a.m. It was noted that a radar speed trailer had previously been deployed on Cleveland Avenue for several months but was removed for winter storage due to battery sensitivity to cold temperatures.

Chief Lowell shared that data collected from the radar trailer indicated that speeding, while present, may be less frequent than visually perceived — vehicles often appear to be traveling faster than they are. He noted that speeding citations in 2024–2025 were up approximately 30% over the prior year and offered to share the full data report with the Board via email.

Various traffic calming measures were discussed, including stop signs (noted as ineffective based on observed non-compliance), traffic signals (costly), speed bumps (concerns raised regarding plowing, liability, and displacement of traffic to adjacent streets), and speed divots (a reverse-profile pavement treatment observed at Hudson Valley Community College, to be researched further). Portable rubber speed bumps were also discussed as a seasonal option (installed spring through fall), to be explored for cost.

The Board agreed that the most immediate and effective approach is targeted enforcement. Chief Lowell confirmed police will deploy in that area during morning hours. A courtesy letter to be sent to residents on Cleveland Avenue will include a request for community members to report speeding vehicles to police with vehicle description and plate number when possible. The Board also discussed the possibility of reinstalling the radar speed trailer if battery conditions permit, however this is not a viable option for the winter season.

Moved by: Brian Bortree  
Seconded by: Erwin Smith

**RESOLVED** that the Police Department will increase enforcement presence on Cleveland Avenue, and that a courtesy letter to residents include a request for community reporting of speeding vehicles.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Abstain: 0

Absent: 2 (White, Laureti)

### **MOTION CARRIED**

#### **2. Cleveland Avenue – DPW Requests Installation of “No Parking November-April” Signs on Both Sides of Cleveland Avenue, from Seneca Street to South Willow Street**

Discussion: DPW forwarded a request to consider installing seasonal no parking signs on both sides of Cleveland Avenue from Seneca Street to South Willow Street (November through April). The request originated following an incident in which a plow struck a parked vehicle on Cleveland Avenue during normal daytime hours.

Discussion acknowledged the difficulty of plowing Cleveland Avenue, a narrow and divided street, when vehicles are parked along the street. Concerns were raised that installing signs on Cleveland specifically could prompt similar requests citywide, which would involve significant cost (approximately \$100 per sign; approximately 23 signs estimated for Cleveland Avenue alone). Board members noted that overnight parking restrictions (2:00 a.m. to 6:00 a.m.) already exist city-wide by ordinance, and that the Cleveland Avenue incident occurred during daylight hours, outside those hours.

The concept of snow towing — as practiced in smaller surrounding villages — was discussed as a potential tool, though concerns about storage capacity and manpower were noted. Assistant Police Chief Clark indicated that written warnings and tickets are currently placed on vehicles observed violating overnight parking rules, but no towing program currently exists. The Board

agreed that education and community outreach was the most appropriate immediate step.

City Manager Lovell summarized the proposed action: a courtesy letter will be sent to all residents of Cleveland Avenue reminding them of the existing overnight parking ordinance (no parking 2:00 a.m. – 6:00 a.m.) and requesting their cooperation in moving vehicles during snow events to allow plows to pass safely. The letter will also reference the need for emergency vehicle access.

Moved by: Brian Bortree  
Seconded by: Michael Geer

**RESOLVED** that a courtesy letter be sent to residents of Cleveland Avenue reminding them of the overnight parking ordinance and requesting cooperation in removing vehicles from the street during snow events.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Abstain: 0

Absent: 2 (White, Laureti)

**MOTION CARRIED**

**3. Oneida Street – Request for “No Parking in Driveway” Signs for Rear Delivery Access at the Owl’s Nest on Oneida Street.**

Discussion: Paul Kodya, Representative of the Owl's Nest Club and Community Service Officer for Oneida City Police Department, appeared before the Board to request installation of "No Parking" signs in the rear delivery access area of the Owl's Nest on Oneida Street. He explained that on court days (Tuesdays and Thursdays), when snow covers the pavement markings, individuals park in the truck access area, preventing delivery vehicles from backing in safely and potentially creating a traffic hazard on Broad Street.

Discussion noted that installing permanent signs could invite a large number of similar requests from other private properties citywide, and that New York State and federal guidance cautions against sign overuse. Traffic Advisor Palmer noted the area has public parking maintained by the City on Oneida Street.

The Board recommended a trial use of traffic cones, to be placed by Owl's Nest staff on delivery days (Tuesdays and Thursdays) prior to expected deliveries, and removed once deliveries are complete. Paul Kodya agreed to try this approach. City Manager Lovell suggested tabling the item to allow the cone approach to be evaluated, with a report back at the next Traffic Safety Board meeting.

Moved by: Erwin Smith  
Seconded by: Brian Bortree

**RESOLVED** that the Owl's Nest no parking sign request be tabled to the next meeting, with the Owl's Nest to trial use of traffic cones on delivery days in the interim.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Abstain: 0

Absent: 2 (White, Laureti)

**MOTION CARRIED**

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **1. Cleveland Avenue and Seneca Street – Request for Installation of Crosswalk**

Discussion: Board member Brian Bortree raised a request brought forward by the Third Ward Councilperson to install a crosswalk at the end of Cleveland Avenue at Seneca Street. The area currently has no marked crosswalk, despite being a pedestrian crossing point for children walking to and from school. Concerns were noted that the absence of a crosswalk creates both a safety hazard and potential liability in the event of a pedestrian incident.

Traffic Advisor Palmer estimated the cost at approximately a bucket of paint (roughly \$150). The crossing point is at the end of the divided section of Cleveland Avenue, where the median does not extend to the intersection, allowing for a single uninterrupted crosswalk. No additional signage was deemed necessary.

City Manager Lovell agreed to submit a work order for the crosswalk installation. Palmer noted that crosswalk painting is performed later in the year after paving has been completed to avoid being paved over.

Moved by: Brian Bortree

Seconded by: Erwin Smith

**RESOLVED** that a crosswalk be installed at the intersection of Cleveland Avenue and Seneca Street.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Abstain: 0

Absent: 2 (White, Laureti)

**MOTION CARRIED**

### **2. Main Street – Sidewalk Snow Removal**

Discussion: Board member Michael Geer raised a concern regarding the timeliness of sidewalk snow removal on Main Street. He cited a specific instance around December 27–28, during a weekend snowstorm, when sidewalks were not cleared until the following Monday, forcing pedestrians to walk in the roadway. Given reduced daylight and vehicle traffic, Geer expressed

concern that a pedestrian injury or fatality could result. City Manager Lovell noted that property owners are responsible for clearing snow and ice from the sidewalks, and that the City only provides the sidewalk plow as a courtesy.

City Engineer Jeff Rowe noted that overtime budgets prioritize street plowing for public safety; sidewalk clearing is performed during regular work hours. City Manager Lovell acknowledged the budgetary constraint and agreed to speak with City Maintenance Supervisor Scott Babcock about prioritizing high-pedestrian-traffic areas on Main Street during major storm events. No formal motion was made; the item was noted as a safety concern to be communicated to City Maintenance.

### **3. Route 5 Entrance to Oneida – Request to Install Deer Crossing Sign**

Discussion: Board member Brian Bortree conveyed a request from the Third Ward Councilperson regarding the installation of a deer crossing sign on Route 5 as travelers enter the City of Oneida, where deer crossings have been causing near-miss incidents. Bortree correctly noted that Route 5 is a state road and that sign placement would be the jurisdiction of the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT), not the City. No action was taken; the matter would need to be directed to the State.

### **4. Communications – Board Liaison to Common Council**

Discussion: Board member Brahim Zogby raised a concern regarding the flow of communication between the Traffic Safety Board, the Common Council, department heads, and the general public. He noted that information often takes a lengthy path through intermediaries before reaching the Board, potentially delaying action on safety issues. He suggested that the Board consider actively inviting Common Council members to attend Traffic Safety Board meetings, and that meeting minutes be distributed to all Council members directly, not only to the City Clerk.

Chief Lowell suggested that the Board consider electing a liaison member to attend the bi-monthly Common Council meetings and provide a Traffic Safety Board report. City Manager Lovell agreed to reach out to Council members to encourage attendance at future Traffic Safety Board meetings, particularly for agenda items affecting their respective wards.

No formal vote was taken at this time; City Manager Lovell to contact Council members encouraging attendance; Traffic Safety Board to consider nominating a liaison at a future meeting.

Next Meeting Tuesday April 21, 2026, at 2:00pm

Motion to adjourn by: Brian Bortree

Seconded by: Erwin Smith

The meeting is hereby adjourned at 3:31 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jaime Feith-Mallory  
Traffic Safety Board Secretary