



CITY OF ONEIDA COMMON COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Date:	June 2, 2026	Presiding:	Rick Rossi, Mayor
Time:	6:30pm	Clerk:	Sandy LaPera, City Clerk
Location:	Common Council Chambers	Meeting Type:	Regular <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Special <input type="checkbox"/>

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Rick Rossi, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and roll call.

<u>Attendees</u>	Present	Absent	Arrived Late
Mayor Rossi	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> : _____
City Manager Lovell	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> : _____
Councilor McHugh	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> : _____
Councilor Cimpi	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> : _____
Councilor Smith	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> : _____
Councilor Jones	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> : _____
Councilor Pagano	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> : _____
Councilor Simchik	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> : _____

Also Present

City Attorney Bell	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Supervisor Mary Cavanagh	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Attorney (Other)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Supervisor: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fire Chief Jones	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Planning Dir. Steve Vonderweidt	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Police Chief Lowell	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>

PUBLIC HEARING: A Local Law amending the Code of the City of Oneida Chapter 190 regarding the use of storage trailers and other containers

OPEN PUBLIC HEARING

A LOCAL LAW AMENDING THE CODE OF THE CITY OF ONEIDA CHAPTER 190 REGARDING THE USE OF STORAGE TRAILERS AND OTHER CONTAINERS

RESOLUTION 26-85

Moved by Councilor Jones
Seconded by Councilor McHugh

RESOLVED, that the Public Hearing on a Local Law amending the Code of the City of Oneida Chapter 190 regarding the use of storage trailers and other containers is hereby opened at 6:31pm.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Absent: 0

MOTION RESULT: Passed Failed

[Presentation on Proposed Local Law Amending Chapter 190 Regarding Storage Trailers and Other Containers](#)

Police Chief Steve Lowell and Planning Director Steve Vonderweidt explained that the proposed local law originated from discussions held during the City's bi-weekly codes enforcement meetings involving the Police Department, Fire Department, and Code Enforcement Office. These meetings were established to address issues that cross departmental lines and require coordinated enforcement.

The proposal was prompted by concerns at a local business where approximately 20 trailers were being used for long-term storage of plastic containers. The trailers were visible from the Rail Trail and generated public complaints regarding their appearance and whether they constituted junk, storage units, or a code enforcement issue.

Chief Lowell noted that the situation also raised public safety concerns. Large quantities of plastic materials can create significant fire hazards, and many of the repurposed containers were not properly placarded, making it difficult for emergency responders to identify any previous content or potential hazards in the event of a fire.

Upon reviewing the City's existing code provisions related to junk vehicles, staff determined that current regulations did not adequately address the use of trailers and similar containers for long-term storage. Existing code provisions and recent City Court rulings have limited enforcement options, particularly when trailers display a valid license plate or are covered by a tarp or other covering.

As a result, City staff developed the proposed storage container regulations to provide clearer standards and enforcement mechanisms. Chief Lowell emphasized that without clearly defined laws, the City lacks the authority and tools necessary to address situations that may affect public safety, property maintenance, and community appearance.

The proposed amendment is intended to establish clear regulations governing the use of storage trailers and other containers and to provide guidance on how such issues can be addressed in the future.

Planning Director Steve Vonderweidt stated that one of the most common concerns he has heard from residents during his first year with the City is the appearance and maintenance of properties throughout Oneida. He noted that the City's Comprehensive Plan identifies community aesthetics as an important goal and emphasized that the proposed local law is intended to address concerns about storage trailers, containers, and similar items that negatively impact neighborhood appearance and property values.

Director Vonderweidt explained that the proposal is an attempt to provide the City with enforcement tools where none currently exist. Residents frequently complain about trailers, containers, and stored materials on private property, but City staff are often unable to take action, because existing code provisions do not clearly address these situations. He also noted that some businesses properly obtain permits and construct permanent additions for storage needs, while others utilize trailers and containers without oversight, creating what he described as an unfair advantage for those who do not follow established processes.

Councilor Jones questioned whether existing code provisions regarding junk vehicles, improperly stored trash, or junk storage might already address some of the concerns. She cited examples in her neighborhood where code enforcement had previously responded to abandoned vehicles and improperly stored garbage.

Chief Lowell responded that the current proposal is intended to address situations that do not meet the legal definitions of junk, trash, refuse, or debris. He provided the example of a boat lift stored on a trailer that had remained in place for an extended period. While such items may not be considered junk under the existing code, they can still create aesthetic concerns and generate complaints from neighboring property owners. He emphasized that without a clearly defined law, the City has limited options when property owners refuse voluntary compliance.

Councilor Jones also expressed concern that the draft language appeared overly broad and could potentially apply to common situations, such as kayaks stored on a trailer between recreational uses. In response, Chief Lowell acknowledged that the draft may require refinement and indicated that staff had already received substantial public feedback. He stated that the intent is not to prohibit normal seasonal or temporary recreational use, but rather to address long-term storage situations that a reasonable person would view as permanent or detrimental to neighborhood appearance.

Both officials emphasized that the proposal remains a draft and that revisions are being considered based on public input and legal review. The overall goal is to establish reasonable

standards that balance property rights with community expectations for appearance, safety, and property maintenance while providing a clear and enforceable mechanism for addressing complaints.

Planning Director Steve Vonderweidt explained that, based on public comments received since the draft was released, staff is already preparing revisions to the proposed law. He outlined several exemptions that are expected to be included in a revised version, including:

- Temporary carports and portable garage-type structures.
- Trailers used for temporary storage during active construction projects.
- Emergency or disaster recovery situations.
- Utility trailers used for normal residential purposes.
- Campers and recreational vehicles actively used for travel and recreation.
- Seasonal loading and unloading of trailers for camping, boating, and other recreational activities.
- Similar temporary storage structures that serve legitimate short-term purposes.

Director Vonderweidt emphasized that public feedback has been valuable and is helping staff refine the proposal. He stated that the intent of the public hearing process is to identify concerns and improve the legislation before adoption.

He reiterated that the purpose of the proposed law is to address a gap in the City's current code. According to Vonderweidt, City staff, including the Police Chief, City Manager, Corporation Counsel, and Code Enforcement officials, have reviewed the issue and concluded that existing regulations do not provide a clear legal basis to address certain long-term storage situations involving trailers and containers.

While acknowledging that previous enforcement actions may have occurred under different interpretations of the code, Director Vonderweidt stated that current staff do not feel comfortable pursuing enforcement in these situations without clearer legal authority. He emphasized that the proposed amendment is intended to establish that authority and provide a defensible enforcement mechanism when voluntary compliance cannot be achieved.

The discussion concluded with Director Vonderweidt stressing that the goal is not to regulate normal residential activities, but rather to address situations that currently fall outside the City's ability to enforce property maintenance and aesthetic standards.

City Attorney Bell explained that the City's reluctance to enforce certain storage trailers and container situations stems from the legal standards required for code enforcement. She noted that code violations are typically enforced through one of two methods:

1. **Criminal Enforcement** – The most common approach, where a notice of violation or order to remedy is issued first. If the violation is not corrected, the City may issue an appearance ticket and pursue the matter in City Court. Because this process is criminal in nature, the City must meet a higher burden of proof.

2. **Civil Enforcement** – The City may also seek enforcement through a civil lawsuit in Supreme Court. However, City Attorney Bell stated that this approach is costly and impractical for routine code enforcement matters, making it an uncommon option for municipalities.

Attorney Bell emphasized that because enforcement actions often end up in court and some property owners actively challenge violations, it is important that local laws contain clear, specific, and legally defensible language. Strongly defined regulations help ensure that enforcement actions can withstand legal scrutiny.

Regarding the proposed local law, she clarified that the version initially introduced has already undergone revisions based on public feedback, and additional changes are anticipated following the current public hearing. Because some of the revisions are substantive rather than merely grammatical, state law requires that the public have an opportunity to review and comment on the revised language.

For that reason, she advised that the public hearing would remain open rather than being closed that evening. The revised draft will be republished and made available to the public through the City's normal notification channels, allowing residents to review the updated language and provide additional input before any final action is considered.

Attorney Bell concluded by explaining that keeping the hearing open ensures compliance with procedural requirements and provides transparency throughout the legislative process.

APPEARANCES

GREGG MYERS

Mr. Myers expressed support for the City's efforts to address the long-term storage of trailers and containers, describing the proposal as a positive starting point. He commended City staff for soliciting public input and for their willingness to revise the draft legislation. Mr. Myers noted that he had researched similar ordinances in other municipalities and encouraged the City to continue refining the language to provide greater clarity regarding permitted uses, exemptions, and time limitations. He emphasized the importance of developing well-defined and practical regulations that are both enforceable and fair to property owners.

DAN JONES

Mr. Jones expressed support for the intent of the proposed local law and acknowledged concerns regarding the visual impact of long-term trailer storage within the community. While supporting efforts to improve property maintenance and aesthetics, he encouraged the City to ensure that

the law is clearly written so that ordinary residential uses are not unintentionally affected. Mr. Jones also noted that voluntary compliance and communication with property owners can often be effective in resolving concerns, while recognizing the need for enforceable regulations when cooperation is not achieved. He encouraged the City to strike an appropriate balance between effective enforcement and reasonable accommodation of legitimate property uses.

MARY ELLEN SOFINSKI

Ms. Sofinski inquired about the enforcement provisions of the proposed local law, specifically questioning how violations would ultimately be resolved and whether the City would have the authority to remove trailers or other stored items from private property. In response, City Manager Lovell explained the code enforcement process, noting that violations are generally addressed through notices, appearance tickets, and court proceedings. City Attorney Bell further clarified that City Court remedies are limited to fines and other penalties authorized by law, and that the City does not have the authority to unilaterally remove property from private land under this proposed legislation. The discussion also included an explanation of the complaint process for abandoned vehicles, which would be handled through the Police Department upon the completion of a required formal complaint.

PUBLIC HEARING WILL REMAIN OPEN

PUBLIC HEARING: Continuation of Wireless Communication Facilities and Towers

On May 19, 2026, Resolution 26-79 (Close Public Hearing) was tabled to continue discussion on a proposed local law amending Chapter 190 (Zoning) of the Code of the City of Oneida regarding Wireless Communication Facilities and Towers within the City of Oneida and allow for any comments or recommendations from the PCZBA and the Madison County Planning Department.

APPEARANCES

None

PUBLIC HEARING WILL REMAIN OPEN

PUBLIC COMMENT

DAN JONES-ONEIDA

Mr. Jones commended the City on the Memorial Day Parade, noting that downtown was well attended and presented favorably. He expressed appreciation to elected officials, City staff, and

volunteers for their efforts in organizing the event. Mr. Jones also recognized the contributions of the OC3 Committee, particularly Sarah Marshall and Dr. John Costello, Jr., for coordinating the placement of decorative planters throughout downtown. He stated that the planters, combined with the City's hanging flower baskets, enhanced the appearance of the downtown district and contributed to a positive experience for residents and visitors alike. He concluded by expressing his appreciation for everyone involved in making the event successful.

OLD BUSINESS

Councilor Cimpi stated that his comments and questions regarding City operations and departmental expenditures are not intended as criticism of City staff or any particular department. He expressed appreciation for the work performed by City departments, including the Police and Fire Departments, and acknowledged their importance to the community. Councilor Cimpi emphasized that part of the Council's responsibility is to exercise fiscal oversight and monitor municipal spending to ensure the City remains financially responsible and avoids unnecessary expenses. He noted that his concerns are focused on budgetary considerations and stewardship of taxpayer dollars rather than personnel matters.

The Council discussed the condition of several unsafe structures, including properties located at 136 Madison Street, 138 Madison Street, and 210 Sconodoa Street, and the need to proceed with demolition. City Manager Lovell advised that the estimated cost for demolishing the identified structures is approximately \$750,000 and that bonding would likely be required to finance the work. Discussion included the possibility of grouping multiple demolition projects together to achieve cost efficiencies, while remaining mindful of bonding thresholds and public approval requirements.

City Manager Lovell also reported that grant opportunities are being explored to assist with demolition costs, including discussions with other municipalities that have successfully obtained funding for similar projects. However, available grant cycles may not align with the City's immediate needs.

Mayor Rossi further noted that one of the properties had previously been considered for rehabilitation through a New York State Restore grant project; however, that redevelopment effort is no longer moving forward, requiring the City to shift its focus to demolition. Council members discussed the importance of determining a course of action in a timely manner given the deteriorating condition of the structures and the need to address ongoing public safety concerns.

Council members also discussed the long-term impacts of demolition on downtown redevelopment. It was noted that the removal of multiple structures would create a significant vacant area within the downtown corridor, requiring future planning for redevelopment and reuse. Concerns were raised regarding the challenges of new construction, current development costs, and the financial burden associated with recovering demolition expenses from property owners. City Attorney Bell explained that demolition costs would become a lien against properties, which could create additional obstacles for future redevelopment efforts.

The Council continued its discussion regarding the demolition of several unsafe structures, including 136 Madison Street, 138 Madison Street, and 210 Sconondoa. Staff advised that these properties present unique challenges and significant demolition costs, particularly 210 Sconondoa Street, where environmental and site conditions, including an aqueduct located beneath the property, increase the complexity and expense of the project.

City Manager Lovell acknowledged the historic character and architectural significance of some of the affected buildings and expressed regret that demolition may be necessary. Mayor Rossi noted that the removal of structures at 136 and 138 Madison Street would create a significant vacant area within the downtown corridor and emphasized the importance of planning for future redevelopment of the site. While recognizing the loss of historic architecture, the Council agreed that the deteriorated condition of the structures presents ongoing safety concerns that must be addressed. The discussion emphasized the need to balance public safety, fiscal responsibility, historic preservation, and future redevelopment opportunities as the City determines how best to proceed.

Apartment Rental Regulations Update

City Manager Lovell provided an update on the development of proposed apartment rental regulations in response to a request from Councilor Jones, noting that he and Planning Director Vonderweidt have been reviewing ordinances from other municipalities, including Utica, Syracuse, and Oswego, to identify best practices and potential challenges. He explained that drafting the legislation has proven complex, particularly with respect to defining key terms and establishing clear standards. While some municipalities utilize broad language, staff are working toward a framework that provides greater clarity and enforceability. Chief Lowell stated that he anticipates presenting a draft proposal to the Council for review by July, emphasizing that the document will remain a work in progress and that Council feedback will be important in refining the legislation.

During the discussion, Council members noted the importance of clear definitions within the City Code, particularly regarding terms that involve discretion in enforcement. The conversation highlighted the need to ensure that proposed regulations are both practical to administer and legally defensible.

Discussion of City Court Revenue and Traffic Citations

The Council also discussed the distribution of fines and revenues associated with traffic citations and local code enforcement. Police Chief Lowell explained that fines issued under state law are generally shared with the county, whereas fines issued under local City Code provisions may be retained by the City. However, it was noted that enforcing violations through local ordinances can involve additional administrative responsibilities and costs.

Further discussion addressed the processes associated with traffic citations, court administration, and diversion programs. Staff explained that certain enforcement and licensing actions are governed by state law and court procedures, while traffic diversion programs are administered through the District Attorney's Office. Council members sought clarification regarding the financial and operational implications of utilizing local versus state enforcement mechanisms.

City Manager Lovell reported that he reviewed court revenue data from 2023 through 2025 and found that the City's share of the revenue was generally consistent with the approximately \$20,000 amount previously projected. He noted that the distribution appears to have remained relatively unchanged over several years. Mr. Lovell further advised that he had contacted the Madison County Treasurer seeking clarification regarding the formula used to calculate the City's share of the revenue. Although a response had not yet been received, he stated that he would continue to follow up in order to obtain additional information regarding the calculation methodology.

Police Department Overtime Discussion

Chief Lowell addressed concerns regarding Police Department overtime expenditures and emphasized that managing personnel costs remains a priority. He explained that departmental budgets are reviewed regularly and that staffing levels, operational needs, historical trends, and anticipated service demands are carefully considered when budget recommendations are prepared.

Chief Lowell reported that police services continue to experience increased demand. Compared to the same period last year, calls for service have increased by approximately 29 percent, adult arrests by approximately 62 percent, and traffic enforcement activity by more than 50 percent. He stated that, while the Department continues to work to control overtime expenses, some overtime is unavoidable in order to meet operational and public safety needs.

Chief Lowell further explained that during the 2026 budget preparation process, he submitted an overtime budget request based on his experience, operational knowledge, historical trends, and anticipated staffing and service demands. He noted that the request was significantly reduced during the budget adoption process and stated that, had the department's recommendation—or something closer to it—been approved, there would be considerably less concern regarding current overtime expenditures. He explained that while budget reductions can lower the amount appropriated, they do not reduce the workload, service expectations, emergency responses, investigations, court obligations, special events, or minimum staffing requirements that the Department must continue to meet.

Chief Lowell welcomed the opportunity to work with City officials to provide a more detailed explanation of how police overtime is generated, managed, and controlled. He emphasized that overtime is not used casually or indiscriminately and stated that supervisors and employees throughout the Department are mindful of the City's fiscal challenges and make every effort to limit overtime whenever reasonably possible. He noted that many employees routinely adjust or flex their schedules to avoid generating overtime costs. This is particularly true of personnel assigned to administrative and investigative functions, who often have greater flexibility in their work hours and regularly modify their schedules to meet operational needs while minimizing overtime expenditures. According to Chief Lowell, these efforts have helped keep overtime costs lower than they otherwise would be.

Chief Lowell also stated that there are many circumstances in which overtime remains necessary to maintain public safety, meet legal obligations, ensure adequate staffing, conduct investigations, attend court proceedings, and provide the level of service expected by the

community. He noted that these obligations do not disappear simply because funding levels are reduced.

Chief Lowell concluded by stating that the Department remains committed to being responsible stewards of public funds while continuing to fulfill its mission of protecting the community and responding to the demands placed upon it. He expressed his desire to continue a constructive dialogue regarding overtime management and to identify opportunities to balance fiscal responsibility with the operational realities of modern policing.

During the discussion, Councilor Cimpi suggested forming a committee consisting of Council members, the City Manager, and public safety leadership to review overtime expenditures and explore strategies for future budget planning. The goal would be to develop a better understanding of operational needs and identify potential approaches to managing overtime before the upcoming budget process. Chief Lowell expressed support for further discussion, noting the complexity of balancing fiscal considerations with the operational demands placed upon police and fire services. Mayor Rossi stated that he did not believe a committee was necessary and suggested that the matter could instead be addressed through open discussion at a future meeting.

Budget Planning Discussion

The Council continued its discussion regarding long-term budget planning, overtime expenditures, and fiscal sustainability. City Manager Lovell noted the challenges associated with balancing operational needs and public safety services against rising costs and taxpayer affordability. Discussion focused on the importance of developing realistic budget projections that accurately reflect anticipated expenditures, particularly in areas such as personnel, overtime, healthcare, and other employee benefits.

City Manager Lovell explained that when expenditure is budgeted below actual operational needs, funding shortfalls may ultimately require transfers from fund balance during the fiscal year. It was noted that approximately \$1.3 million was utilized from fund balance in 2025 to support operations, highlighting the need for future budgets to more accurately reflect actual costs. Officials emphasized the importance of identifying sustainable funding levels and determining what level of tax increase may be necessary to maintain services while preserving the City's financial stability.

Councilor Jones suggested potential strategies for improving fiscal sustainability, such as evaluating employee benefit structures during future contract negotiations, reviewing municipal operations for efficiencies, and identifying opportunities for service consolidation. She suggested examining how other municipalities are addressing similar financial challenges and considering whether certain services could be modified, consolidated, reduced, or eliminated in order to control costs.

It was also suggested that department heads be asked to evaluate and prioritize the services provided by their departments and identify areas where efficiencies may be achieved. Discussion included the possibility of consolidating certain municipal functions and utilizing shared staffing resources where appropriate.

Councilor Jones noted that municipalities throughout the region are facing similar budget pressures and are being forced to consider service reductions, staffing changes, and tax increases. The discussion emphasized the need to develop a sustainable long-term financial strategy that addresses rising operational costs while maintaining essential public services and addressing significant capital needs, including the demolition of unsafe structures and other unfunded obligations.

MAYOR'S REMARKS

Mayor Rossi expressed appreciation to everyone who participated in and attended the Memorial Day Parade. He noted that the event was well attended and benefited from favorable weather conditions. Mayor Rossi thanked the Memorial Day Association and all those involved in organizing the parade and related activities, recognizing their efforts in making the event a success for the community.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

City Manager Lovell thanked everyone who contributed to the success of the Memorial Day Parade and recognized Dan Jones for serving as Master of Ceremonies. He also expressed appreciation to the Common Council for participating in the parade and noted the positive feedback received from the community regarding their involvement.

Mr. Lovell reported that seasonal public works activities are underway throughout the City. He advised that road improvement projects, including resurfacing and related work, will begin in the coming weeks and encouraged motorists to exercise caution and reduce speeds when traveling through work zones to ensure the safety of City employees and contractors.

He further reported that landscaping and beautification efforts are ongoing, including mulching, mowing, and the installation of flowers in the City's hanging baskets. Mr. Lovell commended the Department of Public Works and Parks and Recreation staff for their efforts in maintaining and enhancing the appearance of the community.

Mr. Lovell also recognized City employees who have assisted with lawn maintenance operations during recent staffing shortages. He noted that the City has begun implementing efforts to coordinate mowing operations across departments and expressed optimism that these efforts will lead to a more standardized and efficient approach to ground maintenance in the future.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Councilor McHugh
Seconded by Councilor Simchik

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the meeting held on May 19, 2026, are approved as presented.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Absent: 0

MOTION RESULT: Passed Failed

APPROVAL OF WARRANT

Motion by Councilor Simchik

Seconded by Councilor Cimpi

RESOLVED, that Warrant No. 11, including checks and ACH payments totaling \$1,156,861.12, as audited by the Voucher Committee, is hereby approved for payment in the usual manner at the discretion of the Comptroller.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Absent: 0

MOTION RESULT: Passed Failed

APPROVAL OF ALTERNATE APPOINTMENT TO VOUCHER COMMITTEE

RESOLUTION 26-86

Moved by Councilor Jones

Seconded by Councilor Smith

RESOLVED, to approve the designation of Ward 2 council member Dave Cimpi as an alternate to the Voucher Committee established on January 6, 2026, by Resolution 26-2, pursuant to Section 5.22(B) of the City Charter

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

Absent: 0

Abstain: 1 (Cimpi)

MOTION RESULT: Passed Failed

SPECIAL EVENT APPLICATION-JESSICA'S HEROES FOUNDATION 5K WALK/RUN

RESOLUTION 26-87

Moved by Councilor Simchik
Seconded by Councilor McHugh

RESOLVED, to approve the Special Event application from Jessica's Heroes Foundation for the annual 5K Walk/Run on September 19, 2026, from 8:00am to 1:00pm.

Ayes: 7
Nays: 0
Absent: 0

MOTION RESULT: Passed Failed

SPECIAL EVENT APPLICATION-ST. PATRICK'S SCHOOL

RESOLUTION 26-88

Moved by Councilor Jones
Seconded by Councilor Smith

RESOLVED, to approve the Special Event application from St. Patrick's School for their annual Fun Day on June 18, 2026, from 9:00am to 2:30pm.

Ayes: 7
Nays: 0
Absent: 0

MOTION RESULT: Passed Failed

AGREEMENT-PROPERTYROOM.COM

RESOLUTION 26-89

Moved by Councilor Jones
Seconded by Councilor Pagano

RESOLVED, to authorize the Oneida Police Department to enter into a service agreement with PropertyRoom.com, an auction provider, for the disposition and public auction of surplus equipment and other eligible property in the custody of the Police Department and authorize the Police Chief or City Manager to sign any documents related to said agreement.

Ayes: 7
Nays: 0
Absent: 0

MOTION RESULT: Passed Failed

DISCUSSION:

Councilor McHugh asked whether the authority to dispose of surplus property through public auction could potentially be expanded beyond Police Department property. Questions were raised regarding situations in which the City acquires ownership of properties and whether personal property or other items remaining on those properties could be eligible for disposal or sale through a future auction process.

It was noted that such situations would involve legal considerations regarding ownership and disposition of property and that the matter would require additional review. City Attorney Bell noted that the resolution under consideration was limited to Police Department property and did not address personal property or items acquired through other City operations. Council members discussed the potential for future consideration of broader auction procedures and the possibility of generating additional revenue through the disposition of surplus or abandoned property, while recognizing the need for clear policies and legal guidance regarding eligible items and administrative procedures.

WAIVE RULE TO ACCEPT AGENDA ITEMS

RESOLUTION 26-90

Moved by Councilor Cimpi
Seconded by Councilor Simchik

RESOLVED, that per Resolution 08-180 adopted by the Common Council on August 19, 2008, the provisions of the procedure to accept agenda items are hereby waived.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Absent: 0

MOTION RESULT: Passed Failed

RESOLUTION APPOINTING ACTING ASSESSOR

RESOLUTION 26-91

Moved by Councilor Simchik
Seconded by Councilor Pagano

WHEREAS, the position of Assessor for the City of Oneida is currently vacant; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 314 of the New York State Real Property Tax Law, the appointing authority may designate or appoint an Acting Assessor by resolution; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Common Council of the City of Oneida hereby appoints Heather Garner as Acting Assessor for the City of Oneida, effective June 2, 2026; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Acting Assessor shall perform all duties and responsibilities of the Office of Assessor until a replacement Assessor is appointed; and be it further

RESOLVED, that compensation for the Acting Assessor shall be consistent with and shall not exceed the amount budgeted for the Assessor position in the City of Oneida's adopted budget; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the City Clerk is hereby authorized and directed to notify the New York State Office of Real Property Tax Services of this appointment in accordance with Section 314 of the Real Property Tax Law; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this Resolution shall take effect immediately.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Absent: 0

MOTION RESULT: Passed Failed

DISCUSSION:

City Manager Lovell discussed the appointment of an Acting Assessor to assist the City during the assessment roll filing and grievance process. He explained that the individual selected currently serves as assessor for multiple municipalities and will be working on a limited, temporary basis for the City of Oneida. Her responsibilities will include reviewing and validating the assessment roll, ensuring statutory filing requirements are met, and participating in Grievance Day proceedings.

It was noted that compensation for the appointment was structured to remain within the amount budgeted for the Assessor position and is intended to cover a limited period sufficient to complete the immediate assessment-related responsibilities. City Manager Lovell further explained that the Acting Assessor is currently working evenings and weekends due to commitments with other municipalities.

Councilor Jones discussed the possibility of shared assessor services as a long-term option, noting that many municipalities utilize part-time or shared assessors. City Manager Lovell confirmed that there are no legal restrictions preventing the City from pursuing a shared services arrangement in the future and advised that outreach to other municipalities and assessment professionals is ongoing as the City evaluates longer-term staffing solutions.

NEW BUSINESS

Councilor McHugh inquired about opportunities for members of the public to submit written comments regarding the proposed storage trailer and container regulations while the public hearing remains open. She noted that residents may have additional feedback and suggestions after reviewing the proposed legislation. City Manager Lovell advised that written comments may be submitted to the City Clerk for inclusion in the official record and encouraged continued public participation as revisions to the proposed local law are considered.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn by Councilor Simchik

Seconded by Councilor Pagano

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Absent: 0

MOTION RESULT: Passed Failed

The meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

CITY OF ONEIDA

Sandra LaPera, City Clerk