



CITY OF ONEIDA COMMON COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Date:	March 3, 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.

Attendees

	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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attorney (Other)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Supervisor: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fire Chief Jones	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
Police Chief Lowell	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>

PROCLAMATION: National Red Cross Month (Lisa Smith and Patrick Powers)

Proclamation

City of Oneida - Office of the Mayor

WHEREAS, for 145 years, the American Red Cross has provided hope, compassion, and vital assistance to individuals and communities during times of crisis; and

WHEREAS, through the dedication of its volunteers and the generosity of its donors, the American Red Cross responds to disasters, supports military families, provides life-saving training, collects blood donations, and promotes community preparedness; and

WHEREAS, the selfless service of Red Cross volunteers and donors embodies the spirit of resilience and inspires others to help alleviate human suffering; and

WHEREAS, the American Red Cross plays a critical role in ensuring a safe and stable blood supply and equipping individuals with skills that save lives every day; and

WHEREAS, communities across the nation recognize the month of March as a time to celebrate the invaluable contributions of the American Red Cross;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Rick Rossi, Mayor of the City of Oneida, do hereby proclaim March 2026 as

NATIONAL RED CROSS MONTH in the City of Oneida

I encourage all residents to support the mission of the American Red Cross through volunteering, donating, learning life-saving skills, and recognizing the impact of its work in strengthening our community.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affix the official seal of the City of Oneida on this 3rd day of March 2026.

Rick Rossi, Mayor

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

OLD BUSINESS: Councilor McHugh requested confirmation that the investigation would proceed. City Attorney Bell, followed by Mayor Rossi, confirmed that it would. It was noted that a public announcement will be made once the matter is finalized.

CITY MANAGER'S REMARKS: See Attachment A

MAYOR'S REMARKS: Mayor Rossi commented on the upcoming 10-day forecast, noting that the weather looks favorable. He thanked the DPW for their work throughout the difficult winter and reminded residents to be cautious as snow begins to melt and rain is expected, which could create wet conditions. He encouraged everyone to enjoy the improving weather.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Councilor McHugh
Seconded by Councilor Smith

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the meeting held on February 17, 2026, are approved as presented.

Ayes: 5

Nays: 0

Absent: 2 (Cimpi/Pagano)

MOTION RESULT: Passed Failed

APPROVAL OF WARRANT

Motion by Councilor McHugh
Seconded by Councilor Jones

RESOLVED, that Warrant No. 5, including checks and ACH payments totaling \$707,459.55, as audited by the Voucher Committee, is hereby approved for payment in the usual manner at the discretion of the Comptroller.

Ayes: 5

Nays: 0

Absent: 2 (Cimpi/Pagano)

MOTION RESULT: Passed Failed

ADOPT A LOCAL LAW AMENDING THE ONEIDA CITY CHARTER AND THE CODE OF THE CITY OF ONEIDA TO ABOLISH THE POSITION OF THE COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND TRANSFER THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC SAFETY TO THE CITY MANAGER

RESOLUTION 26-43

Moved by Councilor Simchik

Seconded by Councilor McHugh

WHEREAS, pursuant to the provisions of the Municipal Home Rule Law, a proposed local law titled "A Local Law Amending the Oneida City Charter and the Code of the City of Oneida to Abolish the Position of the Commissioner of Public Safety and Transfer the Responsibilities of the Commissioner of Public Safety to the City Manager," was presented and introduced at a regular meeting of the Common Council of the City of Oneida held on February 3, 2026; and

WHEREAS, a public hearing was held on such proposed local law on February 17, 2026 and by the Common Council of the City of Oneida and proof of publication of notice of such public hearing, as required by law, having been submitted and filed, and all persons desiring to be heard in connection with said proposed local law having been heard, and said proposed local law having been in the possession of the members of the Common Council of the City of Oneida in its final form in the manner required by Section 20 of the Municipal Home Rule of the State of New York; and

WHEREAS, the enactment of the Proposed Local Law has previously been determined to be an unlisted action for purposes of the State Environmental Quality Review Act and the Common Council has determined that a short environmental assessment form ("EAF") was required in connection with this matter; and

WHEREAS, said EAF has been prepared and has been reviewed by the Common Council and the Common Council has considered the adoption of said Local Law, has considered the criteria contained in 6 N.Y.C.R.R. Part 617.7 and has compared the impacts which may be reasonably expected to result from the adoption of said Local Law against said criteria; and

WHEREAS, it is in the public interest to enact said Proposed Local Law.

NOW, THEREFORE, it is

RESOLVED, that the Common Council has determined this action shall have no significant adverse impact on the environment; that, accordingly, an environmental impact

statement (“EIS”) shall not be required; and that this resolution shall constitute a negative declaration under SEQRA; and it is further

RESOLVED, that the Common Council of the City of Oneida, Madison County, New York, does hereby enact a Local Law as follows:

CITY OF ONEIDA

A LOCAL LAW AMENDING THE ONEIDA CITY CHARTER AND THE CODE OF THE CITY OF ONEIDA TO ABOLISH THE POSITION OF THE COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND TRANSFER THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC SAFETY TO THE CITY MANAGER

Be it enacted by the Common Council of the City of Oneida as follows:

Section 1. AUTHORITY.

This local law is enacted pursuant to the New York State Constitution and New York Municipal Home Rule Law §10.

Section 2. PURPOSE.

The City Manager serves as the Chief Executive Officer of the City and is charged with the administration of public services and managing departments. The Common Council has determined that it is appropriate to abolish the position of the Commissioner of Public Safety and transfer the duties and responsibilities of the Commissioner to be handled by the City Manager.

Section 3. AMENDMENT OF THE ONEIDA CITY CHARTER SECTION 10.1

So that the position of Commissioner of Public Safety is hereby abolished and the Department of Public Safety shall be headed by the Oneida City Manager, such that Section 10.1 of the Oneida City Charter, titled “Department of Public Safety,” is hereby amended such that the reference to “Commissioner of Public Safety” is to be replaced with the term “City Manager.”

Section 4. AMENDMENT OF THE ONEIDA CITY CHARTER SECTION 10.2

So that Section 10.2 of the Oneida City Charter, titled “Bureau of Police,” is hereby amended such that references to “Commissioner of Public Safety”, and “Commissioner” are replaced with the term “City Manager.”

Section 5. AMENDMENT OF THE ONEIDA CITY CHARTER SECTION 10.3

So that Section 10.3 of the Oneida City Charter, titled “Chief of Police,” is hereby amended such that references to “Commissioner of Public Safety”, and “Commissioner” are replaced with the term “City Manager.”

Section 6. AMENDMENT OF THE ONEIDA CITY CHARTER SECTION 10.4

So that Section 10.4 of the Oneida City Charter, titled "Appointment of members of the Bureau of Police," is hereby amended such that the reference to "Commissioner of Public Safety" is to be replaced with the term "City Manager."

Section 7. AMENDMENT OF THE ONEIDA CITY CHARTER SECTION 10.5

So that Section 10.5 of the Oneida City Charter, titled "Bureau of Fire," is hereby amended such that references to "Commissioner of Public Safety" are replaced with the term "City Manager."

Section 8. AMENDMENT OF THE ONEIDA CITY CHARTER SECTION 10.6

So that Section 10.6 of the Oneida City Charter, titled "Fire Chief," is hereby amended such that references to "Commissioner of Public Safety" and "Commissioner" are replaced with the term "City Manager."

Section 9. AMENDMENT OF THE ONEIDA CITY CHARTER SECTION 10.7

So that Section 10.7 of the Oneida City Charter, titled "Appointment of members of the Bureau of Fire," is hereby amended such that the reference to "Commissioner of Public Safety" is to be replaced with the term "City Manager."

Section 10. AMENDMENT OF CODE OF THE CITY OF ONEIDA CHAPTER 5

So that Chapter 5 of the Code of the City of Oneida, titled "Alarms," is hereby amended such that the references to "Commissioner of Public Safety" are to be replaced with the term "City Manager."

Section 11. AMENDMENT OF CODE OF THE CITY OF ONEIDA CHAPTER 33

So that Chapter 33 of the Code of the City of Oneida, titled "Building Code Administration and Enforcement," is hereby amended such that the references to "Commissioner of Public Safety" are to be replaced with the term "City Manager."

Section 12. AMENDMENT OF CODE OF THE CITY OF ONEIDA CHAPTER 61

So that Chapter 61 of the Code of the City of Oneida, titled "Fire Prevention," is hereby amended such that the references to "Commissioner of Public Safety" are to be replaced with the term "City Manager."

Section 13. AMENDMENT OF CODE OF THE CITY OF ONEIDA CHAPTER 85

So that Chapter 85 of the Code of the City of Oneida, titled "Junkyards," is hereby amended such that the references to "Commissioner of Public Safety" are to be replaced with the term "City Manager."

Section 14. AMENDMENT OF CODE OF THE CITY OF ONEIDA CHAPTER 110

So that Chapter 110 of the Code of the City of Oneida, titled "Parades," is hereby amended such that the references to "Commissioner of Public Safety" are to be replaced with the term "City Manager."

Section 15. AMENDMENT OF CODE OF THE CITY OF ONEIDA CHAPTER 112

So that Chapter 112 of the Code of the City of Oneida, titled "Special Events," is hereby amended such that the references to "Commissioner of Public Safety" are to be replaced with the term "City Manager."

Section 16. AMENDMENT OF CODE OF THE CITY OF ONEIDA CHAPTER 169

So that Chapter 169 of the Code of the City of Oneida, titled "Taxicabs," is hereby amended such that the references to "Commissioner of Public Safety" are to be replaced with the term "City Manager."

Section 17. AMENDMENT OF CODE OF THE CITY OF ONEIDA CHAPTER 172

So that Chapter 172 of the Code of the City of Oneida, titled "Traffic Safety Board," is hereby amended such that the references to "Public Safety Commissioner" is to be replaced with the term "City Manager."

Section 18. AMENDMENT OF CODE OF THE CITY OF ONEIDA CHAPTER 180

So that Chapter 180 of the Code of the City of Oneida, titled "Vehicles and Traffic," is hereby amended such that the references to "Commissioner of Public Safety" are to be replaced with the term "City Manager."

Section 19. CONFLICT WITH THE ONEIDA CITY CHARTER OR CODE OF THE CITY OF ONIEDA.

- A. To the extent the Oneida City Charter or Code of the City of Oneida are inconsistent with or conflict with any of the provisions of this Local Law, the terms of this Local Law shall control.
- B. Wherever the terms "Commissioner of Public Safety," "Public Safety Commissioner" or "Commissioner", appear in the Oneida City Charter or Code of the City of Oneida, said terms shall hereafter mean and refer to the City Manager as established by this Local Law.

Section 20. SEVERABILITY.

If any clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision, or part of this Local Law shall be adjudged by a court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, such judgment shall not affect, impair, or invalidate the remainder thereof, but shall be confined in its operation to the clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision, or part thereof directly involved in the controversy.

Section 21. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This Local Law shall take effect immediately upon filing with the Secretary of State in accordance with the provisions of the New York State Municipal Home Rule Law.

Councilor McHugh	YES
Councilor Cimpi	ABSENT
Councilor Smith	YES
Councilor Jones	YES
Councilor Pagano	ABSENT

Councilor Simchik YES
Mayor Rossi YES
MOTION RESULT: Passed Failed

2024 AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

RESOLUTION 26-44

Moved by Councilor Jones
Seconded by Councilor Simchik

RESOLVED, to receive and place on file the 2024 Audited Financial Statements.

Ayes: 5
Nays: 0
Absent: 2 (Cimpi/Pagano)
MOTION RESULT: Passed Failed

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT-ONEIDA CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

RESOLUTION 26-45

Moved by Councilor Simchik
Seconded by Councilor McHugh

RESOLVED, to authorize the Chief of Police to execute and sign updated agreements, amendments, extensions, or successor agreements with the Oneida City School District for the reimbursement of crossing guard services provided by the Police Department.

Ayes: 5
Nays: 0
Absent: 2 (Cimpi/Pagano)
MOTION RESULT: Passed Failed

A RESOLUTION APPOINTING THE CITY MANAGER AS ACTING COMPTROLLER AND CHIEF FISCAL OFFICER FOR A LIMITED PURPOSE AND LIMITED DURATION

RESOLUTION 26-46

Moved by Councilor Simchik
Seconded by Councilor Smith

WHEREAS, the City of Oneida is required to proceed with a bond and/or bond anticipation note (BAN) issuance in March 2026 in connection with the City's capital financing, including the Wastewater Treatment Plant expansion project; and

WHEREAS, the execution and certification of certain financing documents require the signature of the City's Comptroller, who serves as the City's Chief Fiscal Officer; and

WHEREAS, the Comptroller is temporarily unavailable, and it is necessary to ensure continuity of operations and avoid any delay or risk to the City's required financing; and

WHEREAS, bond counsel has advised that the Common Council may appoint an Acting Comptroller/Chief Fiscal Officer for this limited purpose;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Common Council of the City of Oneida hereby appoints the City Manager as Acting Comptroller and Chief Fiscal Officer for the limited and ministerial purpose of executing and certifying financial documents, including bond and bond anticipation note (BAN) documents, and related instruments necessary to carry out the City's financing; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that such authority shall be exercised in consultation with bond counsel and the City's fiscal advisors; and

BE IT FURTHER resolved, that this appointment and authorization shall be for a period not to exceed ninety (90) days, commencing on March 3, 2026, unless earlier terminated by the Common Council or upon the return of the Comptroller to duty.

Ayes: 5

Nays: 0

Absent: 2 (Cimpi/Pagano)

MOTION RESULT: Passed Failed

DISCUSSION: City Manager Lovell explained that the action is a temporary measure to backfill a critical staff position. He noted that because the City currently utilizes an outsourced Comptroller, the City's internal control procedures require additional authorized signatures on financial documents. As the individual who would normally perform this function is unavailable, the appointment allows him to temporarily act in that capacity and sign on behalf of the City while the matter is addressed. He also confirmed that this was temporary and not to exceed 90 days.

ADVERTISE FOR BIDS-BOILER-WATER TREATMENT PLANT

RESOLUTION 26-47

Moved by Councilor Jones
Seconded by Councilor McHugh

RESOLVED, to authorize the Purchasing Agent to advertise for bids for the replacement of the boiler at the Water Treatment Plant located at 10176 Glenmore Road, Taberg, NY 13471.

Ayes: 5

Nays: 0

Absent: 2 (Cimpi/Pagano)

MOTION RESULT: Passed Failed

BUDGET TRANSFERS AND AMENDMENTS

RESOLUTION 26-48

Moved by Councilor Simchik
Seconded by Councilor McHugh

RESOLVED, to approve the Budget transfers and amendments as outlined by the Comptroller or a third party duly retained by the City of Oneida to perform such services.

		<u>To</u>	<u>From</u>
2026 Budget Adjustments			
\$	28,430.88	001.1620.0403.0000 Buildings Contracts	001.0001.0912.0000 General Fund Balance

Ayes: 5

Nays: 0

Absent: 2 (Cimpi/Pagano)

MOTION RESULT: Passed Failed

NEW BUSINESS: Councilor McHugh asked the Council to consider holding a budget work group in March to begin discussing next year's budget. City Manager Lovell asked whether she wished to discuss the budget as a whole or focus on a particular area at this time, to which she responded that she would like to focus on overtime. It was determined that the best approach would be to hold the discussion following the next regular meeting on March 17, rather than scheduling a separate meeting, as all Councilors would already be present.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn by Councilor Jones
Seconded by Councilor McHugh

Ayes: 5

Nays: 0

Absent: 2 (Cimpi/Pagano)

MOTION RESULT: Passed Failed

The meeting adjourned at 6:44p.m.

CITY OF ONEIDA

Sandra LaPera, City Clerk