

The Seneca Falls Town Board held a Year-End Meeting on Wednesday, December 30, 2015 in the Town Hall Meeting Room, 81 W. Bayard Street.

Present were Supervisor Donald Earle; Councilmen Emil Bove, David DeLelys and Duane Moore. Also present were Patrick Morrell, Attorney for the Town and Donald Wood, Highway Superintendent.

Supervisor Earle called the Meeting to order at 5:00 P.M. A roll call was taken of the Board Members, and Councilman Sanderson was absent from the Meeting; the Pledge of Allegiance followed.

Petitioners:

Donald Wood: Mr. Wood stated he will be retiring with almost 30 years of public service for the people of Seneca Falls. As Highway Superintendent, he worked hard to bring all 25 miles of Town roads up to high standards with only himself and two men – a task he worked very hard at. He mentioned that he became the “go to” guy to get things done around Town, some of which are build parking lots, extra waterlines and putting in sidewalks on Balsley Road. He installed over 20 miles of waterlines throughout the Town, saving the Town about a couple of million dollars if it was contracted out.

Mr. Wood said with the dissolution of the Village, he inherited another 25 miles of deteriorating roads, four additional employees, outdated equipment, maintenance of cemeteries, storm sewers and drainage problems. He said with all of this, he never requested additional money; all he requested was to keep his salary the same. What he got was a \$7,500 salary reduction – this was done at a Meeting he did not attend, and done in such a way that other Board Members didn’t realize what was happening. Mr. Wood approached Board Members and was told they would look into it.

Mr. Wood said he took the Water Department Supervisor’s job and agreed to a wage given to him by the Town Supervisor. Three months later, they decided on a wage that was \$2,500 less than what was agreed on. He approached the Board Members and was told to wait, and he is still waiting.

Mr. Wood said being a Highway Superintendent is no easy task, as there are countless things he does that the Board is not aware of. He has done everything that was expected of him and more without hesitation, and all he got was promises. Mr. Wood stated all he is requesting from the Board is to give him what he has coming, and fix what should have been taken care of a long time ago - don’t let another Board deal with an issue that should have been resolved.

Mr. Wood concluded by saying he has had many years with the Town, and he leaves with many happy memories. He worked hard with many sacrifices for the people of Seneca Falls. He leaves it up to the Board as to how his final days will be.

Approval of Minutes:

A motion was made to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of November 12, 2015 by Dave DeLelys and seconded by Emil Bove. No questions. Motion carried 4 ayes, 0 naves.

Old Business:

SF App and Signage: Mr. DeLelys stated the signs are going to be \$100.00 each (5 signs); the monthly fee to FL1 is \$80.00 a month or \$960.00 a year for the App.

A motion was made to approve the payment for five signs at a cost of \$100.00 each and a monthly fee to FL1 of \$80.00 a month for the SF App by Dave DeLelys and seconded by Duane Moore. No questions. Motion carried 4 ayes, 0 naves.

Donald Wood: Mr. Moore referred to Mr. Wood’s request and said he doesn’t know how this all came about, and he has been here for eight years. He stated if a man says the Town Board owes him money and he can justify it, he doesn’t want to let it go. This is the last Meeting of the year, and he thinks a conclusion should be made tonight, one way or another. Mr. Moore said he knows Mr. Wood has saved the taxpayers hundreds of thousands of dollars – the Board is aware of that. His dealings with the Supervisors have not been made clear to the Board Members on what has transpired over the last few years. Mr. Moore stated he doesn’t know the figures that Mr. Wood is talking about, but he must be able to justify it or he wouldn’t be bringing this to the public. He asked Mr. Earle if he knows how much and where it is coming from. Mr. Earle replied that he didn’t know the exact number, but he thinks Mr. Wood outlined it at one of the last Board Meetings. Mr. Wood said yes, he did. Mr. Moore asked what the figure was; Mr. Wood replied with everything involved, it was \$30,000 – it is justified, but he is not asking for that. He added this is what it amounts to for what was taken out of his salary over the years and what was promised to him. He is not asking for \$30,000 – he would settle for \$20,000.

Mr. Bove stated he is very sympathetic to Mr. Wood because he thinks he has done a wonderful job. After further discussion, Mr. Moore said he doesn't think this should be carried over to a new Board and Supervisor – it's this Board's problem. He asked if there was any possible way this could be cleared up.

Mr. Morrell stated he gave the Board an opinion last month in a letter to Mr. Wood's Attorney and the Town Clerk. He said in that letter, he outlined various reasons, all based on Comptroller's opinions as well as State Court cases, that say any payment at this time for work that has already been performed would be improper. He added Mr. Wood seems to want to build his case based on assurances he was given by various Board Members and Supervisors over the years. As the Board Members should know, no single person on the Board has the authority to bind the Board all by themselves – the only way the Board can take action is through a vote of the five Board Members and at least three Members to have the majority of the Board. Mr. Morrell stated it is unfortunate that it has come to this that the Board is discussing the end of career with the Town where he has served the Town Residents for many years to a very higher level than most Highway Superintendents. He said for what he is seeing, he doesn't see a valid claim, and he doesn't see a way for the Board to legitimately pay the claim at this time.

Mr. Lazzaro stated Mr. Wood made a compassionate statement. He thinks that when a citizen or a long-term employee makes a compassionate statement, it should be discussed. He thinks it comes under the purview of Executive Sessions. He would say any further discussions should be done in Executive Session. Mr. Morrell indicated that this would be an appropriate topic for Executive Session discussion. He added this was previously discussed in Executive Session in October, and a response was made by Mr. Wood's Attorney that came in November. Mr. Earle suggested that this be discussed further in Executive Session.

New Business:

Set Reorganizational Meeting Date: A motion was made to hold a Reorganizational Meeting at 7:00 P.M. before the regular monthly Meeting on January 5, 2016 by Emil Bove and seconded by Dave DeLelys. No questions. Motion carried 4 ayes, 0 nays.

Purchase Account Support for Postage Meter: The Town Clerk stated when the postage meter was purchased, she was not informed that it would not separate the different accounts of the Town; in order to separate accounts, a software account support is needed. Mr. Bove asked if this was on the old machine; the Town Clerk replied yes – it came with the old machine when it was purchased.

A motion was made to purchase the software account support for the Postage Meter at a cost of \$365.00 by Duane Moore and seconded by Emil Bove. No questions. Motion carried 4 ayes, 0 nays.

Payment of Bills:

A motion was made by Emil Bove and seconded by Duane Moore to approve and order paid the following bills:

General Fund - \$340,161.35 (Abstract #13)	Water Fund - \$32,774.22 (Abstract #13)
Miscellaneous Fund - \$23,673.78 (Abstract #13)	Sewer Fund - \$44,815.68 (Abstract #13)
Highway Fund - \$30,850.43 (Abstract #13)	Vince's Park Fund - \$1,577.68 (Abstract #13)
Recreation Fund – 29,908.16 (Abstract #13)	

No questions. Motion carried 4 ayes, 0 nays.

At 5:25 P.M., a motion was made to go into Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter involving a specific employee by Emil Bove and seconded by Duane Moore. No questions. Motion carried 4 ayes, 0 nays.

A motion was made to reconvene the Meeting at 6:00 P.M. by Dave DeLelys and seconded by Duane Moore. No questions. Motion carried 4 ayes, 0 nays.

Mr. Earle stated as a result of the Executive Session, no further action will be taken this Evening.

Being there was no further business, a motion was made to adjourn the Meeting by Emil Bove and seconded by Duane Moore. No questions. Motion carried 4 ayes, 0 nays.

Meeting adjourned at 6:01 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

NICALETTA J. GREER
Town Clerk

