

**CITY OF ONEIDA
MINUTES OF THE TRAFFIC SAFETY BOARD**

July 15, 2025

2:00 p.m.

MEMBERS:

IN ATTENDANCE

Chairman Bruce Burke	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Vice-Chairman Donald White	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Barbara Buehner	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kathy Malinowski	<input type="checkbox"/>
James Sweet	<input type="checkbox"/>
Erwin Smith	<input 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:

Public Safety Commissioner Dave Jones	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Police Chief Steven Lowell	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fire Department Chief Scott Jones	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
City Engineer Jeff Rowe	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Traffic Advisor Robert Anderson	<input type="checkbox"/>
Traffic Advisor Shawn Palmer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

OTHER PRESENT:

City Manager Kyle Lovell
Assistant Chief of Police Willam Clark
Gregg Meyers
Tom O’Herien

The regular meeting was called to order at 2:04 p.m. by Chairman Bruce Burke.

Approval of April 15, 2024 Meeting Minutes Distributed for Review Prior to July 15, 2025 Meeting

Moved by: Dave Jones

Seconded by: Brian Bortree

RESOLVED that the minutes of the regular meeting of October 15, 2024 are hereby approved as presented.

Ayes: 5

Nays: 0

Abstain: 0

Absent: 5 (Buehner, Laureti, Malinowski, Smith, Sweet)

MOTION CARRIED

OLD BUSINESS

1. Parking on East Railroad Street

Discussion: Commissioner Dave Jones noted that the previously discussed parking issue appears to have resolved itself. The concern had been related to food truck parking, and was no longer a problem following a change in ownership. City Manager Lovell stated that no additional complaints had been received regarding the spot.

Moved by: Dave Jones

Seconded by: Brian Bortree

RESOLVED, to take no further action at this time.

Ayes: 5

Nays: 0

Abstain: 0

Absent: 5 (Buehner, Laureti, Malinowski, Smith, Sweet)

MOTION CARRIED

AGENDA ITEMS

1. Board Appointments for 2026 (City Clerk Sandy LaPera)

Discussion: Chairman Burke noted that Kathy Malinowski and Barb Buehner have declined reappointment. Board Member Brian Bortree mentioned that his wife expressed interest in serving. Several terms are set to expire at the end of 2025, including those of Mike Geer, Brahim Zogby, and James Sweet. Future appointment recommendations will be forwarded to the City Manager for consideration.

Moved by: Dave Jones

Seconded by: Brian Bortree

RESOLVED, to recommend reappointment of current eligible members for another term.

Ayes: 3

Nays: 0

Abstain: 2 (Bortree, Geer)

Absent: 5 (Buehner, Laureti, Malinowski, Smith, Sweet)

MOTION CARRIED

2. Citizen Complaint – Request to install more 2-hour parking signs and handicap parking spot on Madison Street (Samuel Getman)

Discussion: Traffic Advisor Shawn Palmer reported that Madison Street currently has five two-hour parking spaces on one side and four on the other, with no designated handicap parking spot. A handicap space could be installed near 146 Madison Street utilizing an existing driveway area. The board discussed whether signage and enforcement were adequate. Assistant Chief of Police William Clark noted that parking issues on Madison Street are typically due to enforcement rather than lack of signage. Chairman Burke raised concerns about unauthorized use of any new handicap space, while members discussed whether one or two-hour parking limits would better serve nearby businesses. City Manager Kyle Lovell suggested exploring modern parking meters with business validation options to improve turnover and enforcement, noting their success in comparable cities. He will contact vendors for estimates and report back at a future meeting.

Moved by: Brian Bortree

Seconded by: Michael Geer

MOTION, to install a handicap parking sign and corresponding pavement markings on Madison Street and to further investigate metered or self-serve parking options for future implementation.

Ayes: 5

Nays: 0

Abstain: 0

Absent: 5 (Buehner, Laureti, Malinowski, Smith, Sweet)

MOTION CARRIED

3. Citizen Complaint – Traffic safety sign malfunction on Upper Lenox Ave (City Clerk Sandy LaPera)

Discussion: William Clark reported that the malfunctioning traffic sign belongs to the Police Department and operates on battery power. The units are approximately 6–8 years old, and replacement batteries and servicing are estimated at \$1,300 per sign. Clark confirmed that the signs are still functioning, but the batteries may require more frequent replacement as they near the end of their service life. To assist with ongoing maintenance, Clark stated that night patrol officers will be tasked with changing batteries more often to extend usability until replacement can be scheduled. Clark noted that one solar-powered unit on Middle Road has performed well with minimal maintenance. He explained that it is too late to consider for 2026, but he intends to explore options for solar-powered replacements in 2027. City Manager Lovell suggested purchasing extra batteries to rotate during recharging to minimize downtime. No formal action taken at this time.

4. Citizen Complaint – Request for no parking signs on East side of South Willow
(Common Councilor Andrea Hitchings)

Discussion: Resident Gregg Meyers addressed the board to express safety concerns regarding congestion on South Willow Street. Meyers explained that the roadway is only 21–24 feet wide, and with vehicles parked on both sides of the street, emergency vehicles cannot safely pass. He reported that the street serves a nearby daycare facility that now operates year-round, with multiple school buses and parent drop-offs throughout the day, creating additional congestion and safety hazard. Meyers stated that he owns property from Lincoln Avenue up approximately 500 feet toward Grant Avenue and would have no objection to the City placing “No Parking” signage on his property if it improves safety. He recommended designating “No Parking” on both sides of the street from Lincoln Avenue to Grant Avenue, noting that similar restrictions already exist between Cleveland and Lincoln Avenues due to the narrow width. Clark referenced a note from Police Chief Steve Lowell, who suggested continuing restrictions along the existing side, but the board discussed that maintaining two-sided restrictions would provide clearer and safer access. Bortree agreed that both sides should be restricted, emphasizing the risk of blocked lanes and limited access for fire, police, or ambulance vehicles. Dave Jones asked whether the proposed restriction would impact the daycare’s drop-off or pickup routine. Meyers stated that vehicles typically park only momentarily to drop children off and that all homes in the area have driveways, so parking demand on the street is minimal. Shawn Palmer estimated the cost of signage and installation at \$1,200–\$1,500. Dave Jones proposed moving forward immediately to have the City Attorney review the language and authorize the work order in advance of the upcoming school season. City Manager Lovell added that letters will be sent to all affected residents notifying them of the pending change once the legal review is complete.

Moved by: Dave Jones

Seconded by: Brian Bortree

MOTION, subject to approval by the city attorney, to establish “No Parking” signs on both sides of South Willow Street from Lincoln Avenue to Grant Avenue, citing safety and emergency access concerns. Letters will be issued to notify residents following attorney review.

Ayes: 5

Nays: 0

Abstain: 0

Absent: 5 (Buehner, Laureti, Malinowski, Smith, Sweet)

MOTION CARRIED

5. Oneida City School District – Traffic patterns outside of Seneca Elementary School (Superintendent Matthew Carpenter)

Discussion: The board reviewed correspondence from the Oneida City School District regarding traffic and pedestrian safety concerns in front of Seneca Street Elementary School. Superintendent Matthew Carpenter inquired about the potential installation of flashing school zone signs and the possible expansion of the existing crosswalk area to improve safety during student arrival and dismissal times. City Manager Kyle Lovell reported that both he and Mayor Rick Rossi had emailed Superintendent Carpenter offering to meet to discuss options, but had not yet received a response. Members acknowledged that he may currently be addressing other issues caused by the recent flood, but agreed continued collaboration will be important to determine the district's needs and any cost-sharing opportunities. Palmer noted that the existing crosswalk is 9 feet 6 inches wide and meets required standards, but could be widened up to 20 feet if desired. He also confirmed that the site currently has crosswalk warning signs posted in each direction, along with yield arrows painted on the pavement. The board discussed possible improvements, including "SLOW" lettering on the roadway, or the installation of flashing signage that was requested. Clark mentioned that costs for flashing signage or crosswalk enhancements could potentially be shared between the city and the school district, as both would benefit from improved safety. Chairman Burke requested that outreach to Superintendent Carpenter continue to determine specific needs and whether the district is willing to contribute toward project funding. City Manager Lovell and Clark will follow up with Superintendent Carpenter before the next meeting to obtain further input and cost information. No motion made at this time.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Pearl Street Closure (City Engineer Jeff Rowe)

Discussion: Burke inquired about the two occupied residences on Pearl Street, specifically whether they have driveway access to the street. Palmer confirmed that each residence has a driveway located just before where the barricades would be, with one residence on each end of the section under discussion. The middle section of the street consists of six vacant, city-owned properties. Geer asked whether the street should simply be barricaded or fully eliminated. Palmer and others agreed that the street should be eliminated entirely, converting the section to permanent green space, as the vacant lots are unusable for building purposes. Bortree noted that if future access were needed, the roadway could be restored without significant issues. Members discussed practical considerations, including driveway access for the two occupied residences. Dave Jones raised concern about vehicles parking along the street, which could obstruct access for residents and maintenance vehicles, particularly during winter plowing. Shawn Palmer clarified that the driveways on each end of the closure are accessible from Lexington Avenue and Stephen Street, and any remaining section of the street would be closed with approximately 25–50 feet of roadway preserved at each end for access. It was also noted that a "No Parking" sign will be installed to prevent residents from using the closed section as parking. Infrastructure considerations were addressed: the section contains an 8-inch water main and a 10-inch sewer main, but these would remain accessible even after the street is removed. The roadway, originally constructed in 2005, has deteriorated significantly and has seen minimal use, making this an opportune time for permanent closure.

Moved by: Brahim Zogby

Seconded by: Michael Geer

RESOLVED, to eliminate the unused section of Pearl Street, convert it to permanent green space, install “No Parking” signage near the driveways on each end, and maintain access to existing water and sewer infrastructure. Restoration of the roadway remains an option if future access is required.

Ayes: 5

Nays: 0

Abstain: 0

Absent: 5 (Buehner, Laureti, Malinowski, Smith, Sweet)

MOTION CARRIED

Next Meeting Tuesday October 21, 2025, at 2:00pm

Motion to adjourn by: Bruce Burke

Seconded by: Brian Bortree

The meeting is hereby adjourned at 2:56 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Jaime Feith-Mallory
Traffic Safety Board Secretary