



# CITY OF ONEIDA COMMON COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

<b>Date:</b>	June 16, 2026	<b>Presiding:</b>	Rick Rossi, Mayor
<b>Time:</b>	6:30pm	<b>Clerk:</b>	Sandy LaPera, City Clerk
<b>Location:</b>	Common Council Chambers	<b>Meeting Type:</b>	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

	<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>	<b>Arrived Late</b>
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 type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> :6:31
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 type="checkbox"/>	Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
Police Chief Lowell	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Resident Randy Jones provided written comments which are being provided as an attachment.

**OLD BUSINESS:** Councilor Jones relayed a concern from a resident regarding the hanging flower baskets. The resident noted that only 56 baskets were displayed, despite 72 being purchased, and questioned the whereabouts of the remaining baskets and whether a refund could be obtained for any unused baskets.

**MAYOR'S REMARKS:** Mayor Rossi announced that the ADA YMCA Celebration will be held at the Madison County Courthouse on Thursday, July 23, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. He noted that it is a great event and encouraged everyone to attend.

**SUPERVISOR'S REMARKS:** None

**CITY MANAGER'S REPORT:** City Manager Kyle Lovell provided an update on the demolition project, noting that staff have begun working with the Finance team on financing options. He reported that three demolition quotes have been received and staff is currently reviewing the associated costs and financing requirements before presenting a formal recommendation to the Common Council.

Mr. Lovell also provided an update on the Hotel Oneida redevelopment project, stating that the developer, Ed Riley, and his team have completed the specialized foundation work and that interior demolition is approximately 90% complete. He noted that the continued progress represents a significant milestone for one of the City's key downtown redevelopment projects and expressed appreciation to Mr. Riley, his team, City staff, support staff, construction crews, and all others involved in advancing the project and Mayor Rossi for his steady oversight and continued leadership and all the attention paid to get this milestone across the finish line.

City Manager Kyle Lovell advised that the City would be kicking off the 2027 budget season next month and that a budget meeting would be scheduled to begin the budget development process.

Mr. Lovell concluded his remarks by reminding motorists to slow down and exercise caution when traveling through construction areas to help ensure the safety of workers as roadwork and infrastructure work continues throughout the city. He thanked the DPW, Water, Wastewater and City Hall staff for all they are doing to get the work done.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion by Councilor Simchik  
Seconded by Councilor Jones

**RESOLVED**, that the minutes of the meeting held on June 2, 2026, are approved as presented.

Ayes: 7  
Nays: 0  
Absent: 0

**MOTION RESULT:** Passed Failed

**APPROVAL OF WARRANT**

Motion by Councilor Jones  
Seconded by Councilor Smith

**RESOLVED**, that Warrant No. 12, including checks and ACH payments totaling \$1,709,610.77, 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

DISCUSSION: Councilor Simchik advised that \$1.4M of the warrant was for the Reservoir.

**APPROVING THE ADDITION OF NORTHEASTERN ELECTRICAL INSPECTION SERVICE TO THE CITY OF ONEIDA'S LIST OF APPROVED ELECTRICAL INSPECTION AGENCIES**

**RESOLUTION 26-92**

Motion by Councilor Simchik  
Seconded by Councilor McHugh

**WHEREAS**, the City of Oneida maintains a list of approved electrical inspection agencies authorized to conduct electrical inspections within the City and provide certificates of compliance as required by the City's codes and regulations; and

**WHEREAS**, Northeastern Electrical Inspection Service, located at 174 Chestnut Street, Oneonta, New York 13820, has submitted the necessary information for consideration and inclusion on the City's list of approved electrical inspection agencies; and

**WHEREAS**, the Common Council has reviewed the request and finds it to be in the best interest of the City to add Northeastern Electrical Inspection Service to the list of approved electrical inspection agencies;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Common Council of the City of Oneida hereby approves Northeastern Electrical Inspection Service, 174 Chestnut Street, Oneonta, New York 13820, as an authorized electrical inspection agency for the City of Oneida; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that Northeastern Electrical Inspection Service shall be added to the City's list of approved electrical inspection agencies and shall be authorized to perform electrical inspections and issue certificates of compliance in accordance with all applicable laws, regulations, and City requirements.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Absent: 0

**MOTION RESULT:**  Passed  Failed

### **ANNUAL COURT CLEANING CONTRACT**

#### **RESOLUTION 26-93**

Moved by Councilor Smith

Seconded by Councilor Cimpi

**RESOLVED**, to authorize the City Manager to sign the Court Cleaning and Minor Repairs Recapitulation and Claim Form by and between the New York State Unified Court System, Sixth Judicial District, the Kilmer Building, 31 Lewis Street, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, Binghamton, NY 13901 and the City of Oneida for cleaning services for the interior of the City of Oneida Justice Center, as well as minor and emergency repairs, and preventative building and property Maintenance of said facility.

Ayes: 7  
Nays: 0  
Absent: 0

**MOTION RESULT:** Passed Failed

DISCUSSION: Councilor Jones stated that the prior council had approved the contract and the amount that the city is allowed to get reimbursed for and that this resolution is to approve the reimbursement.

**BUDGET TRANSFERS/AMENDMENTS**

**RESOLUTION 26-94**

Moved by Councilor Simchik  
Seconded by Councilor Cimpi

**RESOLVED,** to approve the budget transfers and amendments as outlined by the Comptroller or a third party duly retained to perform such services.

		<u>To</u>	<u>From</u>	
<b>2026 Budget Adjustments</b>				
\$	1,500.00	001.7140.0409.0000	001.7140.0232.0000	
		Parks Equip Repair & Maint	Replacement Pool Pump	
<b>To Re-allocate funds to cover expenses associated with repairing &amp; maintaining parks &amp; rec equipment</b>				

Ayes: 7  
Nays: 0  
Absent: 0

**MOTION RESULT:** Passed Failed

DISCUSSION: City Manager Lovell advised that this transfer is to cover the purchase of specialty seals for the pool pumps.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**COUNCILOR SMITH**

Councilor Smith stated that he would like to explore implementing a residency requirement for future City of Oneida employees, noting that the requirement would not apply to current employees but would instead apply to new hires. He stated that he believes such a requirement

would help strengthen the community and foster a greater sense of Oneida pride among employees.

Mayor Rossi asked which positions he was referring to, and Councilor Smith responded that he was considering all positions across the board, including department heads, police, and fire personnel, while noting that police and fire employees are currently subject to collective bargaining agreements. He reiterated that the proposal would apply prospectively to future hires.

Mayor Rossi stated that, while he understood the intent of implementing a residency requirement, there may not always be a sufficient pool of qualified candidates to choose from. Councilor Smith clarified that he was not opposed to hiring individuals from outside the area but rather would support allowing new employees a designated period of time to relocate to the City.

Mayor Rossi added that housing availability could also present a challenge, citing his own experience of searching for eight months before finding a suitable home within the City and ultimately purchasing a home sight unseen. Mayor Rossi stated that it was hard for him to fathom making someone move to the city when there might not be available housing or suitable housing.

Chief Lowell added that he would like to have a discussion separate from the council meeting to address his concerns about residency requirements.

#### **COUNCILOR JONES**

Councilor Jones stated that she had noticed a reference in the Comptroller's Monthly Report indicating that all policies needed to be updated and emphasized that she did not want the matter to be overlooked. It was noted, however, that clarification was needed regarding which policies the Comptroller was referring to.

City Attorney Bell advised that, from a legal perspective, updating policies would not require a resolution. She recommended that someone contact the Comptroller to clarify which policies were being referenced, as policies can vary in scope and purpose. Depending on the Comptroller's response, Attorney Bell further recommended consulting with the City's insurance carrier, as they often have specific required language for certain policies.

Councilor Jones then referenced another comment included in the Comptroller's report regarding the implementation of a Fixed Asset Program. She stated that, while she was unfamiliar with the program, she believed it should be considered if the Comptroller was recommending its implementation.

City Manager Lovell explained that a Fixed Asset Program is an internal tracking system used to monitor assets such as IT software, computers, equipment, supplies, and vehicles. He noted that implementing such a program would require the purchase of software and the designation of personnel to manage and maintain it. He further advised that the City currently does not have a standardized fixed asset program due to the associated costs and that individual departments are presently responsible for tracking their own assets.

Councilor Jones asked City Manager Lovell to discuss this with the Comptroller and determine what her vision is for this program. Based on the recommendation, council action may or may not be needed according to City Attorney Bell.

## **MAYOR ROSSI**

Mayor Rossi suggested postponing the scheduling of the budget meeting until July due to the City Clerk being on vacation through the end of June. Discussion followed regarding whether to hold a separate special meeting or to conduct the discussion following the July 7 meeting. It was ultimately determined that a separate special meeting would be held, with the date and time to be determined.

## **COUNCILOR CIMPI**

Councilor Cimpi requested that Monthly Reports once again be included as a separate agenda item, noting that this had previously been the practice. He stated that doing so would allow for discussion of the reports without having to address them under Old Business or New Business.

The City Clerk advised that in the past they were an agenda item; however, the City Manager had wanted to go in a different direction at the beginning of the year, to include them in his City Manager's Report. At the request of the council, they were added back in separately, but as an attachment.

Councilor Cimpi requested that a special meeting be held with the City Planner, Parks and Recreation Director, and any other pertinent staff members present to review all existing Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) projects. He stated that the meeting would provide an opportunity for the public and council members to offer comments, ask questions, and help move the projects forward. All agreed to have this scheduled as a separate meeting as soon as possible.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn by Councilor Simchik

Seconded by Councilor Jones

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Absent: 0

**MOTION RESULT:**  Passed  Failed

The meeting adjourned at 6:53 p.m.

CITY OF ONEIDA

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Sandra LaPera, City Clerk