

MINUTES OF THE COMMON COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
MAY 6, 2025

A meeting of the Common Council of the City of Oneida, NY was held on the sixth day of May 2025 at 6:30 pm at the City of Oneida Common Council Chambers, 109 N. Main Street, Oneida NY 13421.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Rick Rossi.

<u>Attendees</u>	Present	Absent	Arrived Late
Mayor Rossi	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
Kyle Lovell, CM	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
Councilor Szczerba	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
Councilor Laureti	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
Councilor Hitchings	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
Councilor Winchell	<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 Nadine Bell	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Public Safety Comm. Dave Jones	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
City Clerk Sandy LaPera	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Supervisor Mary Cavanagh	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Fire Chief Scott Jones	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Former Mayor Helen Acker	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Police Chief Steve Lowell	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>

Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance/Roll Call

PRESENTATION: Ellen Bowe, Workforce Development Supervisor
Madison County Workforce Development-Working Solutions

Ellen Bowe, Workforce Development Supervisor for Madison County's Working Solutions, gave a presentation on the organization's community offerings and employment-related programs. These include:

- Career Counseling
- Resume writing assistance and interviewing tips
- Job Search Assistance
- Assistance with overcoming barriers to employment

- Civil Service information
- Training opportunities
- Job Fair recruitments
- Use of computers, printers, phones and fax machines

They also offer on-the-job training programs, educational and certification opportunities, supportive services, and free resources for employers. The full presentation is included as Attachment A. Informational materials are also available in the City Clerk's Office lobby and on their website at www.working-solutions.org.

PRESENTATION: Potential collaboration with the city and MRB Group on an Economic Development Strategy-Tracy Verrier, Deputy Director of Economic Development

City Manager Lovell introduced Tracy Verrier, noting their prior collaboration through the MRB Group, a municipal consulting team he praised for their effectiveness. He suggested that the firm could assist the city with economic development planning and strategy, and hoped the presentation would prompt further discussion. Lovell also observed that the City's Comprehensive Plan is outdated and stated his intent to identify updated priorities and create a new economic development strategy.

Ms. Verrier explained that while MRB Group is an engineering firm, they also assist municipalities with economic development and operational planning. These projects typically take up to six months and serve as a practical alternative to a full Comprehensive Plan update. She emphasized that the firm focuses on developing actionable strategies, identifying available community resources and partners, and crafting a targeted economic development action plan.

Ms. Verrier stated that MRB Group's scope is flexible and tailored to the needs of each municipality but typically begins with a kickoff meeting and baseline assessment to align stakeholders. The first step involves evaluating existing conditions, including market, industry, demographic, and real estate data, as well as reviewing current plans and identifying priorities.

Participants in the process typically include the City Council, City Manager, Mayor, department heads, staff representatives, key community partners such as Working Solutions, and developers. The resulting findings are used to create an Action Plan Matrix centered on four to five strategic focus areas. Each area includes specific activities, potential partners, and funding sources to support implementation, making it easier for the City to act on the recommendations. The overall goal is to build upon existing conditions and leverage current opportunities for development.

City Manager Lovell asked Ms. Verrier to explain the difference between a Comprehensive Plan and an Economic Development Strategy. Ms. Verrier responded that an Economic Development Strategy is more focused and specific, emphasizing that it is not a land use plan. While the topics addressed may be broad, the strategy does not delve into land use patterns or citywide planning for land use. In contrast, a Comprehensive Plan typically outlines overarching goals but often lacks specific actions or a defined implementation plan.

Councilor Szczerba inquired about the cost of the service, referencing an email from the City Manager that mentioned a figure of half a million dollars. City Manager Lovell clarified that the amount referred to a complete Comprehensive Plan from a different company. He explained that the current proposal

pertains to an Economic Development and Operational Plan. While acknowledging that the City's Comprehensive Plan will eventually need updating, he emphasized that the immediate priority should be developing an economic development strategy. Ms. Verrier noted that the estimated cost for this service is approximately \$25,000.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

OLD BUSINESS: None

REPORTS:

- Mayor's Report

Mayor Rossi thanked all involved with the 3rd annual Public Safety Week (May 6-May 8) and encouraged all to attend any remaining events. He highlighted the following:

Tuesday, May 6

- Ready to Read – Storytime & crafts with Oneida PD at 10 a.m. at the Oneida Public Library
- Jump With a First Responder – Bounce houses & meet-and-greet at 11:30 a.m. at the Rec Center
- Internet Safety for Parents & Caregivers – Learn how to protect your family online at 6 p.m. at the Library

Wednesday, May 7

- Scam Prevention Talk – Oneida PD shares how to stay safe from current scams, 6 p.m. at the Library

Thursday, May 8

- Community Services Fair – 5–7 p.m. at Clinch Park

Enjoy free ice cream, giveaways, and learn about youth programs, mental health services, employment resources, and more!

(Rain location: Kallet Civic Center)

Chief Lowell contributed to the discussion by encouraging public participation in upcoming events. He also provided an update on the City's partnership with St. John Fisher University, noting that the fully executed contract—signed earlier in the day by City Manager Lovell—supports research into mental health services and community development strategies. As part of the initiative, a crisis worker position will be implemented, fully reimbursed by the federal government. The role is intended to offer extended support beyond regular hours, including nights and weekends.

- City Manager's Report

City Manager Lovell highlighted recent community events, including the Park Cleaning Day and the Flag Garden Ceremony, expressing his gratitude to all who participated. He noted the strong turnout and commended the level of community involvement. He also announced an upcoming Arbor Day celebration, to be held on Friday at 10:00 a.m. at Allen Park. The event will include a proclamation recognizing Oneida as a Tree City USA, and he encouraged the public to attend.

City Manager Lovell announced that New Leaf Energy has officially withdrawn its application for the proposed windmills on Brewer Road. He thanked the Oneida team for their continued efforts and persistence, noting that their hard work ultimately paid off.

It was noted that over 300 flags were placed for the Flag Garden Ceremony. The Boy Scouts were commended for their outstanding work, along with a talented Taps performer, the OSMS string club, and the afternoon chorus, all of whom contributed meaningfully to the event.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Moved by Councilor Hitchings
Seconded by Councilor Simchik

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the regular meeting of April 15, 2025, are hereby approved as presented.

Ayes: 6
Nays: 0
Absent: 1 (Laureti)
MOTION CARRIED

APPROVAL OF WARRANT

Moved by Councilor Hitchings
Seconded by Councilor Winchell

RESOLVED, that Warrant No. 9, checks and ACH payments in the amount of \$879,223.86 as audited by the Voucher Committee are hereby approved for payment in the usual manner at the discretion of the Comptroller or a third party duly retained by the City of Oneida to perform such services.

Ayes: 6
Nays: 0
Absent: 1 (Laureti)
MOTION CARRIED

CNY WATER WORKS SUMMER MEETING & PRODUCT DISPLAY

RESOLUTION 25-87

Moved by Councilor Hitchings
Seconded by Councilor Simchik

RESOLVED, that the Water Department employees and Water Board Commissioners are hereby authorized to attend the Central New York Water Works Summer Meeting & Product Display held at the Spinning Wheel-7384 Thompson Rd., North Syracuse, NY 13212 on June 4, 2025, with the expenses to be paid by the Water Department.

Ayes: 6
Nays: 0
Absent: 1 (Laureti)
MOTION CARRIED

GLENMORE DAM IMPROVEMENTS-DECLARE TO BE A TYPE II ACTION

RESOLUTION 25-88

Moved by Councilor Hitchings
Seconded by Councilor Pagano

WHEREAS, the City of Oneida owns and operates the Oneida City Reservoir Dam, DEC Dam ID # 102-0447 (“Glenmore Dam Reservoir” or “Glenmore Dam”) which is located on Glenmore Road in the Town of Annsville, Oneida County, New York 13471; and

WHEREAS, under the authority of Environmental Conservation Law (“ECL”) Article 15, Title 15, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (the “Department”) issued the City Water Withdrawal Permit ID 6-3020-00081/00003 (“Water Withdrawal Permit”) to allow the withdrawal of water from the Glenmore Dam Reservoir for use in City’s existing public water distribution system and to serve interconnected communities; and

WHEREAS, subsequent to the issuance of the Water Withdrawal Permit, the Department documented violations of ECL Section 15-0507 and 6 NYCRR Part 673 and issued a Consent Order, Case Number R6-20241009-37, on or about December 2024, requiring the City to perform certain improvements to the Glenmore Dam in a timely manner; and

WHEREAS, the City has undertaken measures to timely effectuate the improvements necessary to correct the violations observed and has secured financing for same.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, due to the issuance of the Consent Order by the Department, the City of Oneida Common Council, as Lead Agency, does hereby declare the improvements to be undertaken at the Glenmore Dam (the “Project”) to be a Type II action for purposes of compliance with the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act; thus, completing the City’s environmental review process.

Ayes: 6
Nays: 0
Absent: 1 (Laureti)
MOTION CARRIED

WATER SUPPLY AGREEMENTS

RESOLUTION 25-89

Moved by Councilor Hitchings
Seconded by Councilor Winchell

RESOLVED, to authorize the City Manager to sign the Water Supply Agreements with the Village of Vernon, Town of Stockbridge (Stockbridge Water District), and the Town of Vernon (Prospect Street Water District for the period of 2025-2032.

Ayes: 6
Nays: 0
Absent: 1 (Laureti)
MOTION CARRIED

APPROVE BID-WATER METERS

RESOLUTION 25-90

Moved by Councilor Winchell
Seconded by Councilor Pagano

RESOLVED, to approve the lowest bidder meeting specifications for Water Meters to TI Sales Inc., 36 Hudson Rd., Sudbury, MA 01776.

Ayes: 6
Nays: 0
Absent: 1 (Laureti)
MOTION CARRIED

ADVERTISE FOR BIDS-SIDEWALK REPLACEMENT

RESOLUTION 25-91

Moved by Councilor Hitchings
Seconded by Councilor Winchell

RESOLVED, to authorize the Purchasing Agent to advertise for bids for sidewalk replacements.

Ayes: 6
Nays: 0
Absent: 1 (Laureti)
MOTION CARRIED

APPROVE BID-HYDRANTS

RESOLUTION 25-92

Moved by Councilor Hitchings
Seconded by Councilor Pagano

RESOLVED, to approve the lowest bid meeting specifications for Hydrants to Core & Main, 2220 State Route 5, Utica, NY 13502.

Ayes: 6
Nays: 0
Absent: 1 (Laureti)
MOTION CARRIED

BUDGET TRANSFERS/AMENDMENTS

RESOLUTION 25-93

Moved by Councilor Hitchings
Seconded by Councilor Simchik

		<u>To</u>	<u>From</u>				
2025 Budget Adjustments							
\$	10,000.00	001.8020.0400.0000	001.8020.0101.0000				
		Planning Contracts	Planning Salaries				
To re-allocate funds for contract approved on 4/15/25 Res# 25-86.							
Expected donation will be recorded upon receipt as a revenue to offset this expense							
\$	92.00	007.8111.0300.0000	007.0007.0912.0000				
		Hydrant Materials & Supplies	Hydrant Fund Balance				
To allocate funds to cover the lowest bidder contract award expenses							
\$	24,500.00	001.3410.0101.0000	001.8664.0101.0000				
		Fire Salaries	Codes Salaries				
To re-allocate funds to cover MOU agreement signed 4/1/24 for completion of Paramedic Bridge Training program							
\$	7,224.77	001.1620.0405.0000	001.0001.0912.0000				
		Building Maint & Repairs	General Fund Balance				
To allocate funds to replace the failed compressor for the Fire Dept bunkhouse							
2024 Budget Adjustments							
\$	23,561.69	001.3410.0101.0000	001.0001.0912.0000				
		Fire Salaries	General Fund Balance				
To re-allocate funds to cover MOU agreement signed 4/1/24 for hours of training in the Paramedic Bridge Training program							

Ayes: 6
Nays: 0
Absent: 1 (Laureti)
MOTION CARRIED

**RECEIVE AND PLACE ON FILE THE STANDARDIZED NOTICE FORMS FOR ON-PREMISES ALCOHOLIC
BEVERAGE LICENSES (NEW APPLICATIONS) AND WAIVE THE 30-DAY NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENT
SAY I DO EVENTS LLC**

RESOLUTION 25-94

Moved by Councilor Hitchings
Seconded by Councilor Winchell

WHEREAS, the City of Oneida Common Council has received Standardized Notice Forms (2) pursuant to the requirements for providing thirty (30) day advanced notice to a local municipality or community board for a new license application for an on-premises alcoholic beverage license; and

WHEREAS, Say I Do Events LLC has submitted such notifications regarding its intent to apply for new liquor licenses for the following locations:

- Jadie & June's, 130 Broad Street, Oneida, NY 13421
- Dunn's Grille, 137 Phelps Street, Oneida, NY 13421; and

WHEREAS, the submission of this Notice Form is a procedural requirement under the New York State Alcoholic Beverage Control Law and provides the City with an opportunity to review and comment, if necessary, on the proposed license applications; and

WHEREAS, the City of Oneida has no objection to the filing of the said applications and wishes to expedite the process for Say I Do Events LLC.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City of Oneida Common Council hereby acknowledges receipt of the standardized Notice Forms for Say I Do Events LLC, places the same on file with the City Clerk's Office, and does hereby waive the thirty (30) day notification requirement as provided under the New York State Alcoholic Beverage Control Law.

Ayes: 6
Nays: 0
Absent: 1 (Laureti)
MOTION CARRIED

APPROVE THE PURCHASE OF REAL PROPERTY-138 MADISON ST. (30.72-1-65)

RESOLUTION 25-95

Moved by Councilor Winchell
Seconded by Councilor Pagano

WHEREAS, the City Manager has been engaged in negotiations with the owners of real property located in the City's Downtown District, an area identified for revitalization, at 138 Madison

Street, in the City of Oneida, known as Tax Map Parcel No. 30.72-1-65 (the "Property"), to purchase the Property; and

WHEREAS, the City Manager and the owners have reached agreed upon terms for the City's acquisition, and the City of Oneida Common Council does desire to purchase the Property owned by George R. Wright, Sr. and Keith D. Simpson for the agreed upon terms.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that the City of Oneida Common Council does hereby approve the purchase of real property located at 138 Madison Street, in the City of Oneida, known as Tax Map Parcel No. 30.72-1-65, in the amount of \$30,000.00, with the costs of any taxes owed to be paid by the City of Oneida, the total cost of which purchase shall not exceed \$40,000.00; be it further

RESOLVED, that the Common Council does hereby authorize the Oneida City Mayor to execute any and all documents to effectuate such purchase.

Ayes: 6
Nays: 0
Absent: 1 (Laureti)
MOTION CARRIED

WAIVE RULE TO ACCEPT AGENDA ITEMS

RESOLUTION 25-96

Moved by Councilor Hitchings
Seconded by Councilor Pagano

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: 6
Nays: 0
Absent: 1 (Laureti)
MOTION CARRIED

**WAIVE THE FIREWORKS PERMIT APPLICATION FEE AND INSURANCE REQUIREMENT FOR THE 2025
MEMORIAL DAY PARADE**

RESOLUTION 25-97

Moved by Councilor Hitchings
Seconded by Councilor Pagano

WHEREAS, the City of Oneida is an approved co-sponsor of the 2025 Memorial Day Parade, as

authorized by Resolution 25-25 adopted on January 21, 2025; and

WHEREAS, the 2025 Memorial Day Parade, including a public fireworks display provided by American Fireworks, is scheduled to take place on May 23, 2025; and

WHEREAS, this annual event honors the sacrifices of our nation's veterans and promotes civic pride and community engagement; and

WHEREAS, in continued support of this important event and consistent with the City's co-sponsorship, the Common Council wishes to waive the fireworks permit application fee and the standard insurance requirements associated with the display;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Common Council of the City of Oneida hereby waives the fireworks permit application fee for the Memorial Day Parade fireworks display scheduled for May 23, 2025, to be conducted by American Fireworks; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the insurance requirements typically required for a fireworks permit be waived for this event, with the understanding that all applicable safety protocols and public safety oversight will be managed by the City's Fire and Police Departments.

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

Absent: 1 (Laureti)

MOTION CARRIED

DiSCUSSION: Mayor Rossi thanked former Mayor Helen Acker for securing funding for the Memorial Day fireworks, noting its importance to the parade and widespread community appreciation. She extended her thanks to the co-sponsors, All Seasonings and the Oneida Savings Bank Charitable Foundation. She advised that this may be the final year at current pricing, citing the impact of tariffs on Chinese-manufactured fireworks and the uncertainty of next year's costs.

NEW BUSINESS:

Councilor Winchell inquired about the timeline for the demolition of the buildings on Madison Street. City Manager Lovell responded that the engineering report has been completed, and the asbestos survey is done. He also received a preliminary estimate of approximately \$250,000 from CCI. Once the property is paid off and Mr. Simpson vacates the premises—making it City-owned—it will become a matter of how quickly demolition can proceed. He noted that the project will be costly and will require a "hot" teardown due to the presence of asbestos, which limits the number of qualified contractors. Given the expense, City Manager Lovell stated he would recommend issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP) to solicit competitive bids for the demolition work.

Motion to adjourn by Councilor Hitchings
Seconded by Councilor Simchik

Ayes: 6
Nays: 0
Absent: 1 (Laureti)

MOTION CARRIED

The regular meeting is hereby adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

CITY OF ONEIDA

Sandra LaPera, City Clerk

ATTACHMENT A

Thank you to Supervisor Cavanaugh for providing me with the opportunity to speak to the City of Oneida Common Council this evening.

My name is Ellen Bowe, and I am the Supervisor of the Madison County Working Solutions office.

Our office is located on the County complex in Wampsville, however, we are 100% federally funded.

Due to federal tax dollars, we can assist Madison County residents with finding employment, creating resumes, etc.

In addition, we can help residents with funding to obtain training in a certificate program or their first 2 years of college. Training we assist with, include CDL Licensure, RN, LPN, most health occupations, manufacturing, etc. Due to being federally funded, restrictions apply regarding funding dollars.

I also serve as the Madison County Business Services Rep; in this role, I post job openings for Madison County employers and hold job fairs which are free to Madison County businesses. We attempt to hold job fairs throughout our county on a monthly basis.

Our office oversees the Madison County Summer Youth program which is also funded using federal TANF dollars. These dollars however are given to the State of NY and are dependent on the passage of the NYS Budget. This program is for youth 14-20 years of age. Last year, you may have seen our youth next to the Barber Shop and the Fire Department beautifying these areas; mulching, trimming, raking leaves, etc. We also had youth at the Oneida City School. We are hopeful the program will be funded under the NYS Budget which currently has not been passed.

Our office also assist youth with YWE; we place youth for 195 hours with employers for a "work try out". This offers the employer an opportunity to see if the youth would be a good fit for their employment opportunities and the youth work experience for their resume. The employer does not pay anything for the youth; they are 100% paid for by our programming. We have placed youth at Madison County Maintenance, Oneida Health, local daycares, villages, etc.

We offer on the job training to employers who hire full-time employees who work all year, in in demand occupations. We pay 50% of the cost of the training to the employer for up to 6 months; this program allows employers to use their own staff to train new employees. The expectation being, if the employee works out, they are hired on permanently by the employer with unsubsidized wages.

If you know of any resident or employer whom we can assist, please do not hesitate to have them contact our office at 315-363-2400. I will also leave some literature and my business cards for those who may be interested.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak.