



# Town Times

ISSUE

**01** Quarter 4  
2019

## Town of Geneva Meeting Times:

**Town Board** - meets the second Tuesday of the month. Board members and department heads are available for informal discussion at 6:00 pm and the formal meeting starts at 6:30 pm.

**Planning Board** - meets the third Tuesday of the month at 7:00 pm.

**Zoning Board of Appeals** - meets the fourth Tuesday of the month at 6:30 pm.

**Town Committees** - meet at various times. Posted at the Town Hall and on the Town's website.



## this issue

- Read updates from the committees and departments of the Town of Geneva
- Get winter tips from our Highway Department!

## Our First Newsletter!

We're excited to bring you the first issue of Town Times! We will be releasing a new issue at the end of each quarter. For our first issue we wanted to introduce you to the committees and departments in the Town and provide updates from the year. We also have included some snow tips from our Highway Department. If you would like to receive the newsletter electronically, please sign up for our email list! You will also receive ongoing updates from the Town. Visit our "Contact Us" page on the website ([townofgeneva.com](http://townofgeneva.com)) to sign up now! If you have any suggestions for upcoming newsletters, they can be submitted there as well. Happy Holidays!

## Communications Committee

Did you know that the Town of Geneva has a Communications Committee? We are a group of about 10 town residents, whose main goal is to get information about the town out to its residents. We meet the first Tuesday every other month, at 6:30 at Town Hall.

One of our first tasks as a committee this year has been to create a "[Welcome Packet](#)" for new residents. It contains information about town municipal offices and services, emergency services, education, healthcare, recreation, annual events, and more. You can find it on our website under the "Contact Us" page. In the coming year, we plan to create a similar "Welcome Packet" for new businesses, together with the Economic Development Committee and Code Enforcement Office. We are currently working on making our town website more user friendly. We are also the committee behind this newsletter!

If you have any recommendations for our committee, or would like to get involved, please let me know: [Kimaliperti@townofgeneva.com](mailto:Kimaliperti@townofgeneva.com) If you would like to get information directly from Town Hall, please sign up for our mailing list on our website or email [supervisor@townofgeneva.com](mailto:supervisor@townofgeneva.com). You can also follow us on Facebook at [facebook.com/townofgeneva](https://facebook.com/townofgeneva)

## Town Clerk's Office

The Town Clerk's Office is open Monday – Friday, 8:00 am to 4:00 pm.

**2020 Recycling Stickers:** The 2020 vehicle recycling sticker is on sale now and will be needed on vehicles to use the Recycling & Disposal Station at 32 White Springs Road in 2020; they are \$10.00 each.

**Credit Card Payments:** Town bills like water, sewer, dog licenses, even property taxes, can now be paid by credit card and debit card account at the Town Hall. A service fee of 2.65%, minimum \$1.00, is charged to the user of the service by GovPayNet so the Town receives the payment in full.

There is a drop box by the flag pole at the Town Hall where payments by check can be deposited when the Town Hall is closed.

The office processes a lot of town business. For example, by mid-December of 2019, 543 Recycling Permits and 235 Trash Cards have been issued; there have been 129 invoices collected for residents disposing of home construction debris and large items at the Station; 369 dog licenses have been issued; payments were collected for 148 building permit applications and 9 zoning appeal applications; and the Town Board has passed 5 Local Laws and 105 Resolutions.

## Supervisor Mark Venuti

It's been a busy year for the town and Ontario County. At the County, Mark sits on the Board of Supervisors, which oversees county operations, and also on the County Planning and Environmental Quality Committee, which oversees the county landfill, and the Public Safety Committee, which oversees the Sheriff's department and other law enforcement functions. Mark has been pushing for changes in landfill operations to reduce off-site odor, and for the county to commit to and be ready for closing the landfill at the end of 2028 when the agreement with operator Casella expires. Mark is also on the board of the Ontario County Soil and Water Conservation District, which assisted this year with several storm-water control projects in the town, as a representative of the Board of Supervisors. The Board of Supervisors recently approved the 2020 county budget with essentially no property tax increase.

The town is seeing a fair amount of new development and will certainly see a growth in population when the 2020 census numbers come in. The town is in good shape financially, with the latest report from the NYS Comptroller concluding the town is not under nor susceptible to fiscal or environmental stress. The 2020 town budget continues the support of town operations without a general fund property tax. We're always on the lookout for ways to save operating expenses, and 2020 will see town street lights converted to LED that will drastically reduce the annual cost. We also look for new revenue sources, and recently signed an agreement for lease of the cell tower site behind the town hall that doubles the income we've been receiving under the existing lease.

Mark is the chair of the Seneca Watershed Intermunicipal Organization, composed of the municipalities in the watershed - there are 5 counties and 40 towns and villages. This group works on improving water quality flows to benefit Seneca Lake. This year the town was the recipient of two grants, one that allowed the hiring of our first Seneca Watershed Steward, Ian Smith, and the other that supports work on a Nine-Element Watershed Plan for Seneca. Ian will be leading the watershed plan work over the next two years. The plan will help us prioritize where we need to intervene to improve water quality, and it will open the door to state and federal funding for intervention projects.

## Economic Development Committee

The Town of Geneva Economic Development Committee holds its meeting at Town Hall on the 4th Wednesday of every other month beginning in February.

Some of our 2019 Committee highlights include the completion of the first phase of the Town's Economic Development Comprehensive Plan. The Committee engaged in a SWOT process identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to the Town's Economic Development. From the compilation of this list, we picked the top 5 in each category and chose 4 strategies that capitalize on the Town's strengths, address its weaknesses, leverage its opportunities, and defuse threats, highlighted here: 1) Start a quarterly newsletter in conjunction with the Town's Communication Committee. **Present Status:** Implemented; 2) Strengthen the relationship between the Town and the Geneva Area Chamber of Commerce by more active engagement. In November of 2019 the Town hosted its first Business After Hours. **Present Status:** Implemented; 3) Work with the Communication Committee to establish a "Welcome Wagon" of information for Town businesses. **Present Status:** In Progress; 4) Hire an Economic Development Coordinator for the Town. **Present Status:** Due to fiscal constraints, an assistant for Code Enforcement Office Kofahl was hired, freeing up Floyd to do more marketing for the Town. The success of this modification will be assessed at the end of 2020.

Additionally, the Committee investigated the concept of establishing a room occupancy tax, supported the new design standards implemented by the Town, monitored the activities of the various business projects launched in the Town, and supported the start by Code Enforcement Office Floyd Kofahl of the ambitious project of listing the inventory portfolio of vacant commercial properties in Town.

If you have any questions for the Economic Development Committee or suggestions as to how they can be more effective, please contact Chairman Bob McCarthy at: [RobertMcCarthy@townofgeneva.com](mailto:RobertMcCarthy@townofgeneva.com)

## Building Department

Floyd Kofahl was hired as the Town of Geneva Code Enforcement Officer in January of 2017. He has been a Code Enforcement Officer for over 30 years and has lived in Geneva for 26 years. Our Building Department Clerk is new hire Amy Naegele.

In 2019 the Building Department had over 150 permits issued, which generated over \$5 million in construction cost in the Town of Geneva. We have finalized two major projects this year. They are: Town Side @ Pre-Emption, which is a 3-story apartment building with 44 units for senior housing and another 44 townhomes in the 7 other buildings, and Geneva Crossing, which includes a new Medical Office Building completed a little south of the corner of State Route 5 & 20 and County Road 6. This is a new OBGYN office for the Thompson Health and University of Rochester Medical Group.

This year we were able to have all the Building Permit applications added to our Town of Geneva website for residents to download if they need to apply for a permit for things like a shed, swimming pool, finished basement or a fence.

Please contact Floyd Kofahl at [codeenforcement1@townofgeneva.com](mailto:codeenforcement1@townofgeneva.com) or 315-789-3922 x 303 if you have any questions or concern you would like to address.

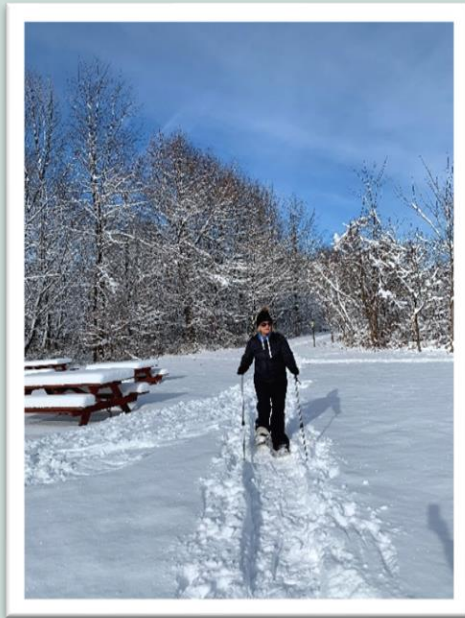


## Kashong Conservation Area Committee

If you leave Geneva, drive 9 miles south on Route 14, turn right onto Kashong Road for about a mile, you will come to the Kashong Conservation Area (KCA). The 84 acres of land were owned and managed by Polly Spedding and her husband for over 50 years. With the goal of creating a public conservation area, Polly and her children worked with the Finger Lakes Land Trust to donate the land to the town of Geneva in 2008. In cooperation with the Land Trust, the town of Geneva created the public park to promote education and recreation. Hobart and William Smith Colleges and Cornell University have used the site for studies. The KCA has also been the site for Boy and Girl Scout projects. The Land Trust holds and monitors legal restrictions on the property that require the land be managed solely as a public conservation area.



Pictures of the water retention ponds



Resident snowshoeing at the Kashong Preserve

The Conservation Area is a mix of hardwood forests, brush lands, fields and a tributary to Seneca Lake. There are 2.75 miles of trails perfect for hiking, running, bird watching, snow shoeing, and skiing, and the higher elevation provides views of Seneca. There is also a deep gully fed by a seasonal creek and natural springs running through the property down to Seneca Lake. Recently, water retention ponds have been established to help mitigate runoff issues to the lake.

The KCA Committee has recently added footbridges, a doggie station and trail markers. Future plans include updated trails, markers, maps and brochures, an informational KIOSK and a pavilion. If you're interested in joining the KCA Committee contact Mark Palmieri at [markpalmieri@townofgeneva.com](mailto:markpalmieri@townofgeneva.com) or 585-451-2474.

## Agricultural Enhancement Committee

Agriculture is the largest land use in the town, and the Agricultural Enhancement Committee works on issues important to farmers and others.

On March 18th we held a presentation on Conservation Easement Programs by Max Heitner, Finger Lakes Land Trust Land Protection Specialist. The presentation prompted a good dialogue between members of the committee, the attending public, and the presenter on issues and programs pertaining to the conservation of agricultural land and other open spaces. The meeting led to a May survey of the Town's landowners of their interest in such easements and Purchase of Development Rights programs.

The Committee continues to be involved at the intersection of water quality issues and agricultural operations. Committee member and Councilman Bob McCarthy made several presentations to interested groups on the Town's Lake Friendly Farm [LFF] program, a campaign for public awareness of landowners' participation in New York's Agricultural Environmental Management program. Bob also made a poster presentation on LFF at the October 23rd Water Quality Forum convened by the Seneca Lake Pure Water Association held at Hobart & William Smith Colleges.

Finally, we are conducting a pilot project on the impact of agricultural operations on carbon management in the environment. Committee member Dr. Gary Harmon leads a team researching the baseline data of the carbon content of various soil types in the Town and the effect of agricultural practices on those levels of the element. The project is considering whether a model can be developed that would support funding agricultural carbon capture in a "cap-and-trade" market for reducing atmospheric carbon dioxide.

Anyone interested in joining the Agricultural Enhancement Committee should contact Mitch Wilber at: [WilberM@helenaagri.com](mailto:WilberM@helenaagri.com)

## Town Assessor

The revaluation of all town properties was completed in 2019, so the town's equalization rate, back to 100%, should be good for the next few years. Applications for property tax exemptions are due in the assessor's office by March 1, 2020. The assessor holds office hours at the town hall on Mondays and Thursdays.

## Parks and Recreation Committee

Under this committee is the community garden behind the town hall, completing its second year. This year about 15 residents had 10 by 12 plots for vegetables and flowers. The area is fenced in to keep out the deer and has water. If you're interested in a plot for next year, contact bookkeeper Eric Reuscher at the town hall.

We've been working on a bike park behind the town hall, and made significant progress on a work day this summer with the help of town staff and equipment. We hope to complete the course in 2020. We have to build some wooden bridges and banked turns and move more dirt around. If you'd like to help with this project, let Supervisor Mark Venuti know.

The town also is getting ready to accept a donation of about 20 acres off Carter Road that may be developed into a park or left undeveloped for residents to use.

Finally, the town is looking for funding to assess the development of a trail on an abandoned railroad bed mostly on Cornell AgTech Park land running from Carter Road westerly to the town border with the Town of Seneca.

This year the town board approved a Park and Recreation fee for new development that will support these efforts.



## Comprehensive Plan Committee

We've been busy. After about two years of work by the Comprehensive Plan Committee and consultant George Frantz, in 2015 the town board approved a new Comprehensive Plan.

Part of the plan designated an area around the intersection of PreEmption Road and Routes 5&20 the "Town Center," allowing for a mix of residential and commercial activities in this area. The Committee next spent two years working on a revision of the town's zoning code to implement the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan, which the town board approved in 2018. The fruit of this work is now seen in the 88-unit apartment complex constructed this year on PreEmption Road, called "Townside at PreEmption," and the medical office building near the corner of PreEmption and 5&20, called "Geneva Crossing," with an 80-unit apartment building to come next.

The Committee also worked on Design Standards for the town, which the town board approved this year. These let developers know what the town expects in their plans. This committee is chaired by Supervisor Mark Venuti but is not currently meeting. Contact Mark with any questions or to get involved in future activities.

## Highway Department

The Highway Department has had a busy year. In May it was discovered that the edge of the road on Cornwall Drive was collapsing. After further investigation, the bottom of a 36" steel cross culvert had rotted out, allowing the pipe to collapse and the road to start washing out. An excavator from another town was borrowed and, with the help of their operator and Town of Geneva equipment and manpower, we dug out the old pipe that was 12 feet down and replaced it with a new 36" plastic smooth wall pipe. This was successfully completed within two days. Villager Construction replaced the binder and top coat of black top when they came to do other work in the Town, which consisted of the milling and paving of Orchard Park Drive, Parkway Drive, and Blossom Lane.

In June, the Town rented an excavator to fix a cross culvert on North Genesee Street that had collapsed in December of 2018. With the help of the excavator operator and our own equipment and manpower, we were able to replace the cross culvert with a new 42" smooth wall plastic pipe, backfill, and compact in about three days. Thankfully the road was only closed for about a week and the County came in later to finish the paving. Also completed in 2019 were the paving of Hastings Road and Dwyer Drive.

Plans for 2020 include the milling and paving of Ansley Road, Slosson Lane, and Lincoln Way, and oil and stone will be applied to White Springs Drive, Lomar Drive, Kashong Switch Road, Brian Drive, Cynthia Drive, and Rosewood Drive.

## Water & Sewer Department

The Town of Geneva completed its portion of the four-town water project in 2019. This project is a joint effort to provide Town of Waterloo water to residents and businesses of the Towns of Waterloo, Junius, Phelps and Geneva. The Geneva section was from Gамbee Road north on NYS Route 14 to the town line. Customers in the Town of Geneva can connect to the water shutoff in their yard without a hook-up fee until July of 2020; after that date, current hook-up fees will apply.

The Town has also started its water system improvement project at the Kashong wellfield. The drilling of new water well #4 has been done, and testing of the capacity began on December 3rd and was a success; the well performed as hoped and will greatly increase the Town's capacity to provide water from its plant. Next will be the design of other components of the system and the bid process, which include construction of the well house, new pumps and controllers, and a new storage tank in the Town of Seneca, as well as restoration of the existing storage tank in Seneca. This \$5 million project, assisted with a \$3 million NYS grant, will allow the Town's water plant to meet growing water needs for many years to come.

## Winter is upon us!

As the snow is already here, we thought our residents might like to know how our Highway Department responds to the snowfall. If we are expecting 1-2 inches of snow, the roads are salted. If there is more than this already on the roads, the roads are plowed and then salted. If it is a heavy snowfall and we are expecting more to come, the Highway Department will salt hills, curves, and intersections. The roads are then plowed.

Of course, there are a few things Town Residents can do to help snowplowing crews perform their jobs. Below are tips from the Ontario County Highway Superintendents Association, the Ontario County Office of Sheriff, and the Town of Geneva Highway Department.

- Motorists are encouraged to operate their vehicles at a reduced speed reasonable to the road conditions and poorer visibility due to blowing and drifting snow. Always drive defensively, keeping in mind that you could encounter black ice, a slow-moving snowplow, or other vehicles entering the highway. Brake in a safe and efficient manner.
- Do not follow snowplows too closely. Keep in mind a snowplow driver may back up at intersections to facilitate turning around.
- Remember bridges and overpasses freeze first. Also, check your tires. Do you have snow tires, or at the very least all-season tires? Are they in good condition? Always bring gloves, a coat, and boots in case your vehicle breaks down or gets stuck. Check the weather forecast and plan accordingly.
- When plowing out your driveway, the snow should be plowed from the road to the sides of the driveway. It is best to pile snow on the right side of your driveway as you face the highway. This will help prevent snow from being plowed back into your driveway by snowplow crews.  
**SNOW SHOULD NOT BE PLOWED FROM DRIVEWAYS ACROSS THE HIGHWAY. THIS IS NOT ONLY ILLEGAL, BUT SNOW THAT IS LEFT BEHIND IN THE HIGHWAY PRESENTS A HAZARD TO DRIVERS ON THE ROAD.**
- To ease the job of the snowplow crew, homeowners should shovel away the snow from around their mailbox. Not only does this allow for mail to be delivered, it also improves the visibility of the mailbox to snowplow operators. Unfortunately, mailboxes may be damaged during snow removal. The majority of damage done to mailboxes is from the snow coming off the plow wing. Often the mailbox post is old/rotten and in disrepair. Homeowners should check that their mailbox and post are in good condition and if not, replace them during the warmer months. The Town of Geneva Highway Department is not responsible for damage to mailboxes and repair is the responsibility of the owner.
- Do not park along the highway, in snowplow turn-arounds, or school bus turn-arounds. This is hazardous and can prevent the proper removal of snow. If your vehicle becomes disabled, first notify the Sheriff's Office, then try to remove the vehicle as soon as possible. If the vehicle is not removed, the vehicle may be towed at the owner's expense.

Be safe out there!

## Renewable Energy

The town established two renewable energy programs in 2019 that have most town residents receiving electricity from 100% NY renewable sources. Geneva Community Power provides the opportunity to register with a solar farm and receive about 10% off your electric supply charge. This program starts when the farm is completed around the first of the year. Open to any NYSEG customer in the Finger Lakes region, contact Supervisor Mark Venuti if you would like to sign up.

The other program is called Finger Lakes Community Choice, and is the default electricity supplier for most town residents. A two-year fixed rate for electricity was negotiated with Direct Energy, with the supply coming from NY wind and hydroelectric sources. The rate is below the NYSEG average for 2018, but is not guaranteed to be below NYSEG every month because the NYSEG rates floats with the market, although we expect that over the duration of the contract it will be competitive with NYSEG or below. You can opt-out of the program at any time without penalty (same for Geneva Community Power).

## Sustainability Committee

The Town, with assistance and guidance from the Sustainability Committee, has been working to reduce waste, protect water quality, and promote alternative transportation by improving biking and walking access and safety. In this issue, we focus on waste reduction opportunities for town residents.

The Ontario County landfill will be closing at the end of 2028, and we have to be ready. The town has initiated several programs aimed at reducing waste that would otherwise go in the trash. For food waste we offer residents the option of back yard composting with a box provided by the town, or food waste can be brought to the town's Recycling and Disposal Station and put in a container that goes to a compost facility. For either choice we will provide a free kitchen bucket for collecting food waste.

To recycle at our Station you need a sticker that costs \$10 per vehicle per year for unlimited recycling. We take normal zero-sort recycling and also metal and, during the summer months, home construction debris and large items at 10 cents per pound. For trash disposal a card with 52 punches costs \$50, and you can dispose of two 30-gallon bags worth of trash per punch.

The town holds Fix-it Clinics in the spring and fall in the highway garage, where volunteer fixers put life back into broken lamps, vacuum cleaners, weed trimmers, furniture and clothes. We also hold Spring Clean-up days, taking usable items for the Salvation Army, and mattresses and electronic waste for recyclers. This year we pioneered a Senior Citizen Clean-Out day where town staff went to the homes of seniors who registered and picked up items for the Salvation Army, recyclers and disposal.

If you would like to get involved with the committee or any of these events, contact the town's Climate Smart Coordinator, Jacob Fox, or committee chair Jennifer Grant, or join regular meetings the first Wednesday of every month at 5:30 at Town Hall.

### Contact Us

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