

Monthly Updates – from the Mayor – August 2015

Since the minutes from our regular monthly Board meeting are not formally approved and posted on the Village website until the following month, it seems that our residents might be more fully informed of Village affairs by having regular updates posted on our website sooner, rather than later. To that end, it has been decided to provide our readers with some monthly updates, and if there are any concerns or a need for more information, please call (673-3112) or email (marboard@twcnj.rr.com) the Village Office.

Public Hearing – on Local Law No. 2 of 2015 – to amend Chapter 202 of the Village Code - the Board held a public hearing at its August Board meeting and approved Local Law No 2 of 2015, which amended Chapter 202 of the Village Code. Local Law No. 2 of 2015 was passed to more clearly regulate temporary business signs, and allow such signs to be placed in front of a business during business hours only. The signs must be placed so as not to obstruct pedestrians and the vision of drivers, shall be secured against tripping and shall be on the building side of the public sidewalk. Only one such sign shall be permitted per business and during business hours only.

Transfer of Bank Deposits from KeyBank to Solvay Bank – at its Annual Meeting back in April 2015, the Board of Trustees adopted a resolution designating KeyBank as the official bank for the deposit of all Village monies. Since that time, KeyBank has decided to institute a series of fees on all Village transactions. Specifically, the Village of Marcellus has now become subject to a collateral surcharge (fee) every month. In addition KeyBank has also begun charging the Village for other services, such as wire transfer for bond payments, which had been discounted in the past. These fees total approximately \$600 per month, and the Board of Trustees has tried to convince KeyBank representatives (both local and downtown) to alter this policy – to no avail. The Board has been told, “their hands are tied by corporate decisions.” This is an unfortunate development since we enjoy the convenience of KeyBank in our Village and have always felt that KeyBank was a good neighbor, interested in the local community and its residents. However, the Board cannot justify these fees to the Village taxpayers, and it has decided to transfer all of its bank accounts to Solvay Bank. Therefore, at its August meeting, the Board approved a resolution to transfer all of the Village bank deposits from KeyBank to Solvay Bank. The resolution will become effective following federal approval, probably around September 15, 2015.

Police Officer Resignation and Reinstatement – Village Police Officer Raymond Herrick is retiring from the Sheriff’s Department effective July 24, 2015 and New York State Retirement Bureau requires that he resign from the Marcellus Police Department at the same time. The Board approved a motion to accept the resignation of Raymond Herrick as Village Police Officer, effective July 24, 2015, and to approve, at the request of Police Chief Wicks, his reinstatement as a Marcellus Police Officer as well as his appointment as a School Resource Officer, effective August 31, 2015, at the School Resource Officer rate ranging from \$25.50 to \$26.50 per hour.

Create Police Sgt. Position and Promotion – the Board also approved a motion to create another Police Sgt. position in the Marcellus Police Department and approve, at the request of Police Chief Wicks, the promotion of Detective Robert Pitman, presently an officer in the Marcellus Police Department, to the position of Sergeant in the Department. There is no change in salary since that of Police Detective and that of Police Sergeant is the same - \$19.26 per hour and this appointment and promotion will be effective on Tuesday, August 25, 2015

Codes Officer Resignation – Mark Taylor, who was appointed Code Enforcement Officer on April 27, 2015, has submitted his resignation, effective July 31, 2015, because he accepted a new job that takes too much of his time to be an effective CEO. The Board accepts, with regret, Mark’s resignation and thanks him for his service and wishes him good fortune in his new position.

Hire Codes Officer – We have been fortunate to rehire Bill Reagan as our Codes Officer. Bill had been CEO for a number of years, but in the spring felt that he needed to separate himself from some of the jobs he has been doing, and submitted his resignation. We have been able to convince Bill to come back to work for the Village, and we are most pleased that he agreed to do this. The Board approved a motion to appoint Bill Reagan as Codes Enforcement Officer, effective August 1, 2015. Because of the recently added responsibility of doing more than 200 rental inspections in the Village, as well as some of the increased workload that the position of CEO now requires, the Board has approved an annual salary of \$10,000, to be paid on a monthly basis.

EFC Grant Application – The Board approved a motion to authorize the Mayor to sign NYS Water Infrastructure Improvement Act Grant Application, through the Environmental Facilities Corporation, whereby the Village of Marcellus requests consideration of its water quality improvement project to upgrade its Water Treatment Facility and address the phosphorus removal mandate levied against the Village. The total estimated project cost of phosphorus removal is \$5,600,000, of which this grant, if awarded, will provide 25%. If awarded, however, this does not commit the Village to accept the grant monies.

Scotch Hill Sidewalk Project – we are deeply disappointed that there were not enough responses to the income questionnaire from residents of Scotch Hill. Had there been an 80% response by residents, funding for new 5-foot sidewalks on the south side of Scotch Hill might have become a reality. With the new curbing installed last year and with the road having been repaved last month, this important gateway to our Village would have been much enhanced. Unfortunately, new sidewalk on this street will not be forthcoming.

Creekwalk – we have also had a setback with the trail. Because two trees along the proposed trail could be nesting areas for the Northern Long-eared Bat, and because the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Agency has declared this bat to be an endangered species, construction of the Creekwalk trail has been delayed, at least, until the fall of 2015.

Street Reconstruction – the first stage of reconstruction on Baker Ave and Hillside Drive has been completed, but the streets will need a one-week settling period after which asphalt will be applied. If monies are available, we hope to also resurface part of Beach Road.

School Starts – in two weeks, and we urge residents to be aware of the fact that there will be students walking to school, particularly on First Street. Also, the State DOT will begin operation of the flashing lights on North Street and the Village Police Department will be even more vigilant in their enforcement of the traffic laws on that street.

Striping of Crosswalks – on Village streets (by the Village), as well as the Village parking lots and some parking spots on North Street has taken place, fortunately before school starts. Road striping on North Street (by the State) and on Main Street (by the State) will not take place this year as this does not fit into their schedules.

Tree Removal – some tree removals have been or will be done on Orchard, South, and Bradley Street, along with some tree trimming. There is also a need to grind a number of tree stumps from last year's tree removals. About six tree plantings will take place in late summer or early fall.

Sidewalks – on South Street and some isolated spots on Bradley and First Streets will soon be completed. Additional sidewalk repair in the Village will have to wait until next year.

Village Taxes – most have been paid, while the amount of unpaid taxes at present, including penalties, totals \$30,938.14, from 28 property owners, a figure slightly less than that in 2014. Residents may continue to pay

unpaid taxes to the Village until October 31, 2015, when they will be turned over to the County for reimbursement.

V.I.P. Monies – infrastructure grant payments received by the Village of Marcellus from Onondaga County, as part of the Village Infrastructure Improvement Project have totaled \$180,450 this year, with no increase, as was the case last year. While this represents about half of what the Village used to be provided, until the County took the sales tax revenue from the Villages back in 2010, half is better than nothing.

Code Enforcement Issues – have recently involved buildings that are in need of painting and/or repair, rental inspections, and litter that needs to be removed and vehicles that appear to be abandoned or junk.

Paul Street Development Project – by McClurg and Associates appears to be on hold for the present and immediate future, but things are definitely moving along according to a McClurg associate.

NYSEG and Streetlights – we have had several complaints lately that some Village streetlights have not been operating. Both the Village and residents have conveyed their concern to NYSEG and while some problems have been corrected, others remain to be addressed.

Lead Hazard Reduction Program – Southern Hills Preservation Corporation provides outreach to communities in southern Onondaga County to let residents know of the County's Lead Hazard Reduction Program, a program to reduce lead paint hazards in privately owned, residential structures throughout Onondaga County. For additional information and assistance go to <http://www.ongov.net/cd/leadReduction.html>, or call Onondaga County Community Development Division, (315) 435-3558.

EEE Virus alert in Onondaga County – there was spraying in the Cicero Swamp to combat this threat, and we urge our own residents to be aware of this common threat that occurs every summer and take adequate precautions.

Meeting with New Superintendent – members of the Board and Police Chief Wicks recently met with Dr. Judith Pastel the new Marcellus Schools Interim Superintendent. Dr. Pastel has had much experience as a Superintendent, including a number of years in the Ithaca City School District and as an interim superintendent for Skaneateles Schools. Dr. Pastel is very supportive of the School Resource Officer Program and she is very interested in having a strong Village-Town-School relationship. We are very pleased that Dr. Pastel is reaching out to all members of the Marcellus community and has such a strong interest in learning about Marcellus. She is a good listener and will provide strong leadership as the Marcellus School District begins its search for a permanent Superintendent. The Village Board wishes Dr. Pastel much success during the coming school year.

Our New Website – is now live and we urge residents to visit the site, <http://www.villageofmarcellus.com>, which is the same link as in the past.

Village Meetings for September 2015 – the Village Clerk has printed copies of future meeting dates for the Village for the benefit of residents. Please note that the Village Office will be closed for Labor Day, September 7th, and that there will be a one-day delay in trash pickup that week. We also note that the Fall Trash Days are scheduled for the last Friday and Saturday in September (Sept 25th and 26th) and the first Friday and Saturday in October (Oct 2nd and 3rd), from 8 am to 3 pm each day. The trash transfer station is located on the Town property, across from the Town Highway Garage on the East side of Lee Mulroy Road. A user fee will be charged to offset the cost of this service. Permits may be purchased at the Town Clerk's Office, 24 East Main Street, Marcellus, NY during regular office hours, Monday – Friday 9:00 am – 4:30 pm.