

Monthly Updates – from the Mayor – January 2020

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 (315-673-3112) or email (clerk@villageofmarcellus.com) the Village Office.

Another Police Update – the Prescription/Drug Drop-Off Box as well as the drop-off box for needle and syringe disposal, both located in the lobby of the Village Hall, continue to be a welcome addition to the Village. Any numbers of individuals continue to take advantage of using the drop-off boxes to dispose of any prescription or other drugs, as well as needles and syringes anonymously. We would also announce that complimentary containers, specifically designed for the disposal of used needles and syringes, are available from the Village Clerk, while supplies last.

F.O.G. (Fats, Oils, Grease) – in the wastewater is a topic that had been much discussed and will continue to be on the WPCP’s agenda in the months ahead. We continue to provide a flyer that emphasizes the need to keep Fats, Oils and Grease out of the sanitary sewer system.

No Parking – November 1st to April 1st – the public should be aware of the fact that as of November 1, 2019, there is no parking allowed on any street in the Village of Marcellus from 2 a.m. to 7 a.m. so that the Highway Department can plow snow. This no parking ban will remain in effect until April 1, 2020. If ticketed by Village Police, the fee will be \$35.00. We urge residents to use the Village parking lots for any overnight parking situations.

Snow Plowing – as in the past, we would like to alert independent snow plow operators that it is illegal to plow or shovel snow or ice during snow removal operations upon a village sidewalk or other public way. While most of the independent snow plow operators in the Village comply as much as possible with the law, there are some who need to be reminded that if a driveway is being plowed, that snow **CAN NOT** be plowed into the street. **NOR** can the snow be plowed out of a driveway, across the street and into the village right-of-way across from the plowed driveway. Some drivers have claimed that they have no place to put the snow. That, however, is not an excuse to put the snow into the street, nor across the street when plowing. The Village is not responsible for snow that accumulates on a resident’s property and the Village is not responsible for removing snow that has been plowed onto the Village right-of-way. We ask that independent snowplow drivers take this into consideration when they are plowing residential properties in the village. No snow should be plowed onto a village street or sidewalk, and any that has been, accidentally, must be removed before finishing the job.

Notes on the Governor’s Budget – while we await the release of the Governor 2020-21 Executive Budget for the fiscal year beginning April 1, 2020, NYCOM noted that Number One appears to be fixing the criminal justice reforms that went into effect on January 1st. In particular, NYCOM

objects to some of the drastic and far-reaching changes in the laws pertaining to discovery. The dramatic acceleration in the timing of providing evidence and the broadening of the types of charges to which the expedited discovery applies have significant cost and justice implications for cities and villages with police departments, justice courts, or code/parking enforcement departments. The local expense of delivering this state-imposed mandate will be significant and result in property tax increases throughout New York. In many villages, expenses related to purchasing new technology, hiring additional personnel, increasing police resources, and adding monthly court dates will rise by \$millions of dollars, the equivalent of a major property tax increase. On a statewide basis, it is estimated that it will cost cities, villages, counties and towns approximately \$750 million in additional spending to provide local district attorneys with suitable evidence in time for them to comply with the new 15-day discovery mandate. On top of all this, municipalities are still trying to live within the 2% tax cap and have not received an increase in general purpose state aid in 11 years. NYCOM has been loud and clear on this issue and momentum is starting to build to fix the criminal justice reforms. But we must continue to fight these unfunded mandates. To that end, please contact your State Senator (518-455-2800), Member of Assembly (518-455-4100) and Governor Cuomo (518-474-8390) ASAP and tell them to Fix the Reforms Now! NYCOM has offered a series of reasonable amendments to the discovery reforms that are consistent with the law's intent but which will allow for more affordable and equitable implementation.

Update on WWTP Upgrades – the \$7.7 million treatment plant upgrades mandated by NYSDEC to remove phosphorus from the plant's effluent continues to be underway with an expected substantial completion date of February 28, 2020. There will be some site restoration as well as paving and sidewalk construction that will not be completed until the spring of 2020. The financing package which the Village has been able to secure includes a \$5,202,600 short term (30 year), interest-free hardship loan and a \$1,379,900 WIA Grant (formerly called a NYS Water Grant) along with an \$80,000 WQIP #11 grant, a \$1,000,000 WQIP #14 Grant and a \$250,000 SAM (DANSY) Grant. In anticipation of WWTP upgrades, the Village Board has increased the sewer rents significantly within the last three years. This has meant a minimum quarterly sewer rate, for Village sewer users, of \$100.00 (from \$75.00) and a minimum annual cost of \$400 (from \$300) and an average annual cost of about \$541.39 (from \$413.13). The annual cost for outside users is anticipated to be \$676.74 (from \$516.41). In order to prepare our Treatment Plant for operation well into the 21st century, these increases, while hefty, are unavoidable.

Planning Board – the Board does not plan to meet on February 19, 2020 since no items of concern have developed, as yet, for the Board to review.

Highland Drive Drainage – the construction work completed on Highland Drive last fall, which included deepening the ditches and installed new culvert pipes under designated driveways, appear to have been somewhat successful. While we wait what the spring rains will bring, we are cautiously optimistic that our efforts in helping to address the flooding in this area will have been met with some success.

Main Street Beautification Grant- As mentioned in a previous meeting, the Onondaga County Community Development Division has reached out to the Village to apply for the Onondaga County Village Main Street Revitalization and Beautification Grant Program. This program is an initiative for elected officials to work with local business owners to develop a proposal that will positively impact Main Street and Village Center areas. This revitalization would involve aesthetic improvements, business creation/retention and beautification that will lead to healthier and more economically vibrant communities. Proposals had to be completed by any interested business owners in sufficient detail, particularly the project description and estimated costs, and returned to the Village by January 10, 2020. To date, we have received 14 proposals and these have been evaluated and combined into one application and submitted to the County. The reason for this is that we were told that such an application would have a better chance of approval than multiple single applications. Also bear in mind, that the limit for the five villages chosen is \$300,000 each, with a 25% match by the business owner. While some projects might be rather costly in scope, others might be small, but together the application's chance of success will look better. If some of the projects are large, and would utilize a significant amount of the total to be awarded, that business owner might be asked to provide more than the 25% match, which would increase our chances of having all of the projects funded. The Board continues to be excited about the potential of this grant opportunity and we thank those who completed the application. We expect that by the end of February, announcement of the awards will be made.

Olde Home Days, 2020 (June 5, June 6 and 7) – the second meeting of the 2020 OHD Committee will be held on Thursday, February 6, 2020 at the Welcome Center in the Park, beginning at 6:30 p.m.

Green Gateway Project – despite the winter weather, we are continuing to work the Green Gateway Project – a project that we hope will result in an environmentally positive gateway entrance to our Village – at the site of the former woolen mill on North Street. We have recently had the property resurveyed and the STEAM teachers and students at Marcellus Central are now working on the design for the parking lot at the site, as well as Nine Mile creek stabilization using the plans for the previous creek vanes in Marcellus Park and working on the arboretum aspect of the project, referencing a list of trees suitable for the site as well as their location. We are also investigating Public Fishing Rights for the creek, which essentially are a permanent deed restriction that simply allows people to access and fish the stream regardless of who the land may be sold to in the future.

West Main Street Drainage Project – last fall, the Board approved a Resolution, authorizing the Village of Marcellus DPW to immediately cause the removal and/or replacement of the storm water drainage pipes on a portion of the southern side of this road (also known as County Rt. 41), from #15 West Main (the Grange) west to the Village line. The Board also declared this action to be a public emergency permitting the Village to immediately retain a contractor to remove and/or replace the storm water drainage pipes without conducting competitive bidding, bypassing the usual procurement policy of the Village. Subsequently, the Village Board of Trustees awarded the bid for removal and/or replacement of the storm water drainage pipes to North Country Contractors at a cost of \$100,000.00. The Board also approved a resolution determining that the removal and/or

replacement of storm water drainage pipes on West Main Street in the Village of Marcellus constitutes a Type II action under the New York State Environmental Review Act and will not have a significant effect on the environment and require no further environmental review. The Board also approved a Bond Resolution authorizing the issuance of \$100,000 serial bonds to finance removal and/or replacement of Storm Water Drainage Pipes on West Main Street. In addition, the public should know that the bond resolution is not subject to permissive referendum because the length of borrowing will not exceed five years. Plans were finalized by the Village engineer, MRB, and submitted to the County DOT for its comments. While we thought that the drainage project might begin by the fall of 2019, we were at the mercy of construction schedules until recently. We are now pleased to announce that the West Main Street Drainage Project is now complete, with 1,000 feet of 18" storm pipe and four large drainage structures installed on the south side of County Route 41. North Country, working through some very mild and then some very dreadful winter conditions did a yeoman's service, completing the task most efficiently and on budget. We thank the company and its workers for their diligence and reliability. While some site restoration will be necessary in the spring, the Village and its residents should no longer be affected by the storm surges and flooding that has often occurred in the past.