

Monthly Updates – from the Mayor – March 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.

ANNOUNCEMENT

As of March 17, 2020, all Village meetings are closed to public attendance for the safety of all concerned. Authority to make the adjustment was provided by Governor Cuomo's March 13, 2020 Executive Order to temporarily suspend Open Meetings Law to allow for public bodies to hold public meetings without public attendance. However, If any one wishes to listen to what transpires at public board meetings, check the website calendar for dates and call the Village Office at 315-329-1330 just prior to 7 pm and you will be connected to a conference call. The minutes of Village meetings are always recorded and summaries of the meetings are available on the website under News, Mayor's Updates, for public inspection for those so interested. Amid the COVID-19 Pandemic, Governor Cuomo has issued an Executive Order delaying Village elections statewide until the April 28 Primary. The Executive Order also calls for any elected official holding such position to remain in office until such time as a new election is held. We have already posted a letter of information on the Village website, to keep you informed of matters related to the operation of the Village during this health crisis, a hard copy of which will also be sent by mail to our residents early this week along with the Village newsletter.

Public Hearing – Local Law #2 of 2020 – Override Property Tax Cap – since our meetings are closed to the public, by order of the Governor, and since the public hearing is about overriding the tax cap, and we will probably not go over the mandated cap (there is no tax increase) according to the Treasurer, the public hearing was tabled, in anticipation of dismissal.

Local Law #2 of 2020 – Override Tax Cap Resolution – a motion was made and approved to table Local Law #2 of 2020 authorizing a property tax levy in excess of the limit established in General Municipal Law Section 3-c.

Consent Agenda – a motion was made and accepted to approve the Consent Agenda, which consists of the following items:

- 3.1) Minutes of the Special Meeting and the last Regular Board meeting for February 2020
- 3.2) Audit of Bills on Abstract Sheets #010
- 3.3) Police Report for February 2020
- 3.4) Building Inspectors Report for February 2020
- 3.5) Town Board Minutes for February 2020
- 3.6) Financial Statements for February 2020

Short Environmental Form For 28 ½ B East Main – the Board, having previously reviewed Part 1 of the Short Environmental Assessment Form also approved Part 2, the Impact Assessment, of the Short Environmental Assessment Form.

SEQR Resolution and Negative Declaration For 28 ½ B East Main – a motion was made and accepted to approve a resolution determining that the proposed conversion/renovation of the property at

28 ½ East Main Street in the Village of Marcellus, from two apartments and a dentist office to four apartments, 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.

Spring Brush Pickup and Spring Trash Dates – the Village Board and DPW are going to continue the policy from last year for the 2020 Brush Pickup. A motion was made and accepted to allow brush to be placed at the curb on Saturdays and Sundays for pickup on Mondays from April 6th to May 11th. In addition, during the summer months (June, July and August), brush may also be placed at the curb on Saturdays and Sundays for pickup on the first Monday of each month during those summer months. In addition, the Town of Marcellus has announced the 2020 dates for the Trash Transfer Stations and they are: Fridays, April 24th and May 2nd, and May 8th, from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Saturdays, April 25th, May 3rd, and May 9th, from 8 a.m. to Noon. Permits are required and are issued through the Town of Marcellus Clerk’s Office. The rates are \$20 for a passenger vehicle, \$35 for a pickup truck, \$45 for a trailer, \$10 for a one-time passenger car, \$3 for tires and \$15 for anything with Freon (such as refrigerators, freezers, air conditioners or dehumidifiers). The Town Board agreed to also have a shred day during the Spring Trash Days. The cost to the Town is \$600 for four (4) hours and the Village will share in that cost. There will be no cost to the residents for the shredding. There will also be an Electronics Waste Disposal Day included with the trash days this year and that will require a special fee. The cost will be \$40 for televisions and monitors over 27”, \$20 for televisions and monitors less than 27” and a \$5 fee per load for all other electronics. This year there will be a charge for flat screen televisions. Some items are not accepted including garbage, OCRRA recyclables, liquids or hazardous waste including paint, oil tanks, fuel tanks, motor vehicles, and contractor debris (home projects only), All items must be secured and covered when transporting to the Town Transfer Station.

Police Resignation – Officer Shawn Broton, employed by the Marcellus Police Department and as an SRO by the Onondaga Central School District has submitted his resignation from both positions as of March 10, 2020. Officer Broton’s resignation was accepted with regret and we thank him for his outstanding service.

Police Appointments – the Mayor made a motion which the Board accepted to make two appointments to the Marcellus Police Department including:

a. Bernie Podsiedlik, now a Captain in the MPD, was appointed as the Interim Chief of the Marcellus Police Department. We would also convey our thanks to Robert Pitman, presently the Chief of Police in Homer, NY, who agreed to oversee police operations in the Village of Marcellus for these past several months while the Board conducted a search for a new Chief of Police.

b. Darren McLaughlin was appointed to the Marcellus Police Department and as a School Resource Officer by Onondaga Central School District. Officer McLaughlin recently retired from the Onondaga County Sheriffs Department after a distinguished career in law enforcement and was initially appointed to his new position at a budget meeting of the Village Board on March 10, 2020. Today’s appointment is a confirmation of that earlier appointment.

Annual Storm Water Report – a motion was made and accepted to table the Annual Storm Water Report until the next regular meeting of the Village Board in April.

Charter Communications Cable Franchise Agreement – a motion was made and accepted to again table the Charter Communications Cable Franchise Agreement until the Village Attorney has been able to negotiate successfully, the terms of the agreement, with Time Warner Cable.

Authorize Windstream Contract – a motion was made to table a contract with Windstream Company wherein Windstream Company would provide Internet and phone service to all departments (including the Office, Police and WWTP) in the Village of Marcellus. The contract is on file for public inspection in the Village Office, until such time as the Village Attorney has been able to negotiate successfully, the terms of the agreement, with Windstream Company.

Announce Date and Time for Annual Meeting and Tentative Budget Hearing – the Annual Meeting will take place on April 6, 2020 and includes the appointment of non-elected officials, establishing regular meeting dates, as well as designating official newspapers and depositories. A Public Hearing will also take place on April 6, 2020 to consider the tentative budget for the Village for the next fiscal year. Approval of the final budget will take place at the next regular Board meeting, on April 27, 2020.

Village Meetings for April 2020 – a list of those meetings scheduled for April 2020, is provided for those so interested, including the fourth meeting of the 2020 OHD Rotary will be held on Thursday, April 2, 2020 at the Welcome Center in the Park, beginning at 6:30 p.m. Please note also that the Worksheet Agenda Meeting will take place on Friday, April 3rd at 9:30 a.m. and the Annual Meeting will take place on Monday, April 6, 2020 in the Board Room, beginning at 7 p.m. The next Regular Board meeting will take place on Monday, April 27th, at which time the Board will adopt the 2020-2021 Budget and set Tax Rate. In addition, the Village Office will be closed on Good Friday, April 10th, and the Village-wide Earth Day Cleanup we hope will take place on Thursday, April 23rd, with a rain date of April 24th. Don't forget to check the Spring Brush Pick-up Dates and the Spring Trash Days. The latter includes a Community Shred Day and an Electronics Waste Day as well.

Updates – Mayor

Local Government Response to COVID-19 – The following letter from the Mayor, on behalf of the Village Board, has already been posted on the Village website. The letter will also be mailed to all Village residents this week, along with the Village Newsletter, and it provides our Local Village Government Response to COVID-19

March 25, 2020

Dear Village Resident,

With the novel coronavirus (“COVID-19”) impacting everyone’s day-to-day lives, the Board of Trustees wants to express its concern for your well-being, the well-being of our employees as well as our businesses in the Village. On behalf of the Board, I want to take this opportunity to keep you informed as to what has transpired in the Village, what directives and orders from the County and State that we are expected to follow, as well as keep you informed of matters related to the operation of the Village. Much of what is related below, is already posted on the Village website, and because the news of the coronavirus is changing so often and so rapidly, the website (<https://www.villageofmarcellus.com>) will provide the most up-to-date information, as we know it.

Personal Conduct – the current goal of addressing COVID-19, as articulated by the CDC and the NYS Department of Health, is to mitigate against the spread of the virus and reduce its rate of transmission. The current advice from the CDC and the NYS Department of Health is as follows:

1. Individuals should frequently wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, individuals should use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

2. Individuals should avoid touching their eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
3. Individuals should avoid close contact with people who are sick.
4. Individuals should stay home when they are sick.
5. Individuals should cover their cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
6. Touched objects and surfaces should be frequently cleaned and disinfected.

Village Office – due to the current health risks and cautions that are being put into place, the Village Office will be closed to the public until further notice. Please call (315) 673-3112 to make an appointment.

Village Staff – we have reduced our staff as directed by the Governor – The Village Clerk and Village Treasurer are alternating days off and the four people in the DPW are also doing alternate days on and off. We have to keep the Treatment Plant covered as much as possible, and fortunately we have three certified operators who can do this. The Police Department is part time and a reduction in staff in this department would not be relevant. Governor Cuomo issued an Executive Order directing non-essential businesses to implement Work-From-Home Policies. This we have implemented by having our employees to remain employed notwithstanding where they may be physically located or assigned.

Board Meetings – please take notice that all Village meetings are closed to public attendance for the safety of all concerned, as of March 17, 2020. Authority to make the adjustment was provided by Governor Cuomo's March 13, 2020 Executive Order to temporarily suspend Open Meetings Law to allow for public bodies to hold public meetings without public attendance. If any one wishes to listen to what transpires at public board meetings, check the website calendar for dates and call the Village Office at 315-329-1330 just prior to 7 pm and you will be connected to a conference call. The minutes of Village meetings are always recorded and summaries of the meetings are available on the website under News, Mayor's Updates, for public inspection.

IMA With The Town of Marcellus – in August of 2018, an Intermunicipal Agreement with the Town of Marcellus was approved, whereby the Village of Marcellus shall, following prior authorization from the Mayor, authorize its D.P.W. Superintendent to make a positive or a negative determination, on a case by case basis, a request made by the Town Highway Superintendent, to offer assistance in the form of Village personnel, materials and/or equipment. The Town having approved this same agreement shall, following prior authorization from the Supervisor, authorize its Highway Superintendent to make a positive or a negative determination, on a case by case basis, a request made by the Village DPW Superintendent, to offer assistance in the form of Town personnel, materials and/or equipment. Therefore if the municipal workforce of either entity is reduced because of the virus, and because the Village and Town have worked together in the past to supplement the workforce on an as-needed basis and in an informal way, both the Village and Town of Marcellus will continue to share services and resources and workforce, while the virus continues to be a threat to the functioning of government in the Town and Village of Marcellus.

For Village Police Emergencies – Call 911

For Village Sewer or Highway Emergencies – Call 315-506-9253

Village Election – Governor Cuomo has issued an Executive Order delaying Village Elections statewide until the April 28th Primary. The Executive Order also calls for any elected official holding

such position to remain in office until such time as a new election is held. Therefore, Trustee Tallman and Trustee Manahan will remain in office until such time as a new election takes place.

Emergency Operations Center – County Executive Ryan McMahon has opened the Emergency Operations Center. It is now active and operational.

Child Care – if you know of families that are having concerns obtaining childcare, contact Child Care Solutions at (315) 446-1220. www.childcaresolutionsny.org

Help For Seniors – If you know of any seniors who are looking for a trustworthy source to sign-up for meals and nutritional information, CALL (315) 218-1987.

From the Police Chief – the Marcellus Police Department is attempting to facilitate and coordinate resources for the purpose of assisting those persons in our community who are most vulnerable to COVID-19. The purpose is to identify elderly community members or persons who may be vulnerable or susceptible and may need assistance. If you know of any such persons, please contact the Marcellus Police Department (315-673-2079) or the Village Clerk (315-673-3112). Please be patient if you reach a recording, since Governor Cuomo’s Executive Orders have restricted Village work hours. If you have an emergency, please call 911. The Village of Marcellus is a strong, connected and close community. We need to take care of each other and when we get through this health crisis, we will be only stronger.

Thank you for reading this letter, and in these days of uncertainty, please do not hesitate to call the Village Office at 315-673-3112 if you have any concerns that we might be able to address.

For the Village Board

John P. Curtin, Mayor

cc: Sara N. Tallman, Trustee
Timothy P. Manahan, Trustee
Charnley A. Abbott, Clerk
Antonino J. Provvidenti, Treasurer
Jeffrey D. Brown, Attorney

No Parking – regulations during the winter months, which calls for no parking on any Village streets from 2 a.m. to 7 a.m., ends on April Fools Day, April 1st - no fooling!

Sign Placement – soon the Highway Department will re-install pedestrian crossing signs on Main Street in the Village. The signs are placed in the road, near the crosswalks, warning motorists that all vehicles must yield to pedestrians who are walking the crosswalk – a New York State law. It is hoped that the signs will make it easier for pedestrians, particularly schoolchildren, to cross Main Street safely as well as cause motorists to slow down as they approach these crosswalks.

Flag Replacement – the American flags that line several of our streets in the Village will soon be in place. We thank the American Legion for its efforts in helping to keep these flags in good condition – an excellent example of how committed the Legion is to our Village and its residents. Thank you.

Village Earth Day Participation – the Board would also like to announce that the Village will again participate in an Earth Day clean up on Thursday, April 23, 2020, with a rain day of Friday, April

24, 2020. We hope that students from Heffernan Elementary School will help to participate in this event and we welcome any individuals or groups to join us in helping clean the Village of any litter lying along the roadside and village rights of way. We will meet in front of the Village Hall to distribute bags and gloves. If you're interested in participating, as a group or an individual, please show up about 1:30 p.m. and contact the Village Clerk at 315-673-3112 for more information. This event is subject to cancellation, pending the current health risks and cautions that are being put into place throughout the community.

Utility Bills – the utility bill that residents receive this month is the last bill for our fiscal year. Residents should note that if not paid by April 30, 2020, the bill will be re-levied to the tax bill for June 1, 2020. If those bills for tenants who pay their own utilities are not paid by April 30, 2020, these too will be re-levied onto the owner's taxes for June 1, 2020. Please note that, unlike previous utility bills, payment for this final bill for the year must be made within the month.

Creek Walk – At first glance, it appears that the winter weather has not caused much damage to Fred's Trail. There were some hardy people who braved the elements to walk the trail this winter, although it was not officially open. We welcome the spring as well as those who will take advantage of this gem in our community.

Budget – the Village Board is working to finalize the 2020-21 Village Budget in preparation for the Annual Meeting. We expect to maintain the Village tax rate at \$6.85 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation, a tax levy that will not exceed the NYS Tax Cap Limit. Due to increased costs to the Village, however, this proposed budget continues to include a trash collection rate of \$50 per unit, which rate became effective January 1, 2019. The news about the financial assistance received by the Village from NYS and from Onondaga County is also mixed. The NYS Governor's Executive Budget for the coming fiscal year eliminates the Village's allocation of State Aid to Municipalities, and also freezes the Village's allocation of State Transportation Aid at current year levels. The good news is that the Village Infrastructure Improvement Program (VIIP) agreement between Onondaga County and the Village has been now been extended for another ten years and includes multiple increases in the amount of financial assistance to the Village over the next ten years. Our budget continues to remain short of what the Board needs to provide adequate services but we do not anticipate a tax increase this year. This makes the fifth year in a row that the tax rate has remained unchanged.

Update on WWTP Upgrades – the \$7.7 million treatment plant upgrades mandated by NYSDEC to remove phosphorus from the plant's effluent is virtually complete. 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 WIIA 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.

Increase In Sewer Rates – In trying to offset excessive sewer rates, the Village has been successful in securing some major funding and the Village Board has also 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 \$547.47 (from \$413.13). Keep in mind that this is an average estimate, since sewer rates are based on water usage in the Village and that fluctuates. The annual cost for outside users (Town and School District) is anticipated to be \$686.84 (from \$516.41), given that outside users pay an additional

25% over that of the average Village sewer user – an increase of about \$160.00 per year, beginning in 2019. In order to prepare our Treatment Plant for operation well into the 21st century, these increases, while hefty, are unavoidable.

Property Tax Cap – as was mentioned, our Budget is complicated by the property tax cap of 2%, which is another State mandate and at our recent workshop meeting, the Board decided to override the tax cap. However, since a Public Hearing is required to override the cap, and the Governor’s Order prohibits public attendance at our public meetings, and since we will probably not go over the mandated cap (there is no tax increase) according to the Treasurer, the Board has decided to table the Public Hearing at this time. We might note that there seems to be no meaningful relief from continuous unfunded State mandates and these mandates, coupled with a cap on the Board’s ability to raise revenue, it is very difficult to plan or even survive.

Flushable Wipes Are NOT Flushable!!! – We continue to urge residents to avoid using what are called flushable wipes – they are NOT flushable – nor are dental floss, cotton swabs, hygiene products, kitty litter, facial tissue, fats, oils, and grease. All of these should be put in the trash and only human waste and toilet paper should be flushed. To avoid plumbing problems, which will most likely occur on residential property, not in the Village main, please be aware of this concern. We also reference an Internet video that explains the problems associated with flushable wipes. Please view the following: www.youtube.com/watch?v=SLTVqkXVvNk which is also posted on the Village website. We also urge residents to review the “Trash NOT Sewer” flyer that accompanied a previous newsletter. The information is invaluable and will help residents understand the importance of putting items in the trash, and not into the sewer.

Homeowner Responsibility for Sewers – property owners should be aware that they are required to maintain the sewer laterals that extend from their homes to the sewer main – typically located in the middle of the road. Sewer laterals are entirely owned by the private property owner, who is responsible for the entire length of the lateral, to the sewer main. At the sewer main, the Village assumes responsibility.

New Business in the Village – Look for an early summer opening of a new business in the Village at 4 E. Main St. called Gretchen’s Confections, specializing in handcrafted chocolates, baked goods, coffees and soups. It will offer a chocolate shop and café, and will also feature a production kitchen. We welcome this new Village business, a long vacant site on Main Street.

Olde Home Days, 2020 (June 5, June 6 and 7) – the fourth meeting of the 2020 OHD Rotary will be held on Thursday, April 2, 2020 at the Welcome Center in the Park, beginning at 6:30 p.m.. Please support Marcellus Olde Home Days. A fun filled weekend is being planned.

Election 2020 – amid the COVID-19 Pandemic, Governor Cuomo has issued an Executive Order delaying Village elections statewide until the April 28th Primary. The Executive Order also calls for any elected official holding such position to remain in office until such time as a new election is held. Therefore Trustee Tallman and Trustee Manahan will remain in office until such time as a new election takes place.

Other – at the request of the Marcellus Police Chief and the Village Attorney, the Board was advised that, in light of the on-going health crisis, an Emergency Declaration for the Village of Marcellus be considered and enacted. Following discussion regarding the issue among members of the

Board of Trustees, a unanimous decision was reached authorizing the Mayor to exercise the authority given to him under the New York State Executive Law, Article 28, to preserve the public safety, health and welfare and hereby render all required and available assistance vital to the security, well-being and health of the citizens of the Village, to direct all departments to take whatever steps necessary to protect life and property, public infrastructure and other such emergency assistance as deemed necessary.

To that end, the Board authorized the Mayor to issue the following:

**VILLAGE OF MARCELLUS
EMERGENCY ORDER**

WHEREAS, at 7:30 P.M., on March 23, 2020. A Local State of Emergency has been declared pursuant to Section 24 of the New York State Executive Law, Article 2B, and current Executive Orders of the New York State Governor’s Office in response to the COVID-19 virus outbreak in and around the Village of Marcellus; and

WHEREAS, due to the potential danger to the health, safety and welfare of the general public in the Village of Marcellus and to Village of Marcellus personnel as a result of the COVID-19 virus outbreak, it is prudent to establish the following restrictions:

Effective immediately, the physical facilities of the Village of Marcellus shall be closed to the public until April 3, 2020. The closure extends to all physical facilities owned by the Village of Marcellus including the Village Hall, Water Treatment Plant, and Village Highway Garage.

NOW, THEREFORE, pursuant to Section 24 of the New York State Executive Law, I, John Curtin, Mayor of the Village of Marcellus, do hereby establish these restrictions as identified in this Order, effective at 7:30 P.M. on March 23, 2020.

John Curtin