

Monthly Updates – from the Mayor – October 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 the Village Office (clerk@villageofmarcellus.com).

Resolution – Expanding the NYS Returnable Container Act – motion was made to approve a resolution strongly urging the New York State Legislature to expand the bottle bill to include wine, liquor and other glass containers as a means to reduce litter, increase recycling, create new recycling jobs, as well as reduce the significant financial burden such containers place on local municipalities as part of curbside recycling collection programs, an entire copy of which resolution is on file in the Village Office for public inspection.

Re-levy of Unpaid Village Taxes – a motion was made to re-levy all unpaid Village Taxes, as of November 1, 2020, to the County of Onondaga for payment.

Laundry Contracts – Bids – having requested proposals seeking a qualified company to provide weekly garment rental of Wrangler jeans and polo shirts, as well as laundry for four (4) DPW employees, and having received three such proposals, a motion was made to accept the low bid of UniFirst Company, the total weekly total cost for which is \$35.00, said 36 month contract taking effect on November 1, 2020 and terminating on October 31, 2023.

Budget Modifications – a motion was made to approve budget modifications requested by the Village Treasurer transferring revenues and appropriations in the General and Sewer Funds.

Reminder – Closing of First Street for Halloween – a motion was made to again close First Street between the hours of 5:30 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. on Halloween for trick-or-treating, subject to conditions on October 31st, which is a Saturday. We might also note that the Marcellus Fire Department which used to sponsor cider, donuts, apples and coffee at the Marcellus Police Department as well as a Halloween Costume Parade, with prizes, will NOT take place this year because of Covid-19 precautions.

Reminder – No Parking – November 1st to April 1st – the public should be aware of the fact that as of November 1, 2020, 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, 2021.

Reminder – Village Polling Places – Please note that polling places in Marcellus changed several years ago. In 2012, the Board of Elections redrew the Town of Marcellus election district lines to create two districts entirely within the Village. Those two districts (ED3 and ED4) will vote at the high school auditorium. Residents living outside the Village will vote at the Fire House. All residents were notified by mail by the Board of Elections, but some may not realize the change is now permanent. Election Day is November 3, 2020 from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m., and we urge all residents to vote. Early voting has already begun, and the nearest polling station for that is at the Camillus Fire Station on Newport Road in Camillus.

Announce Village Meetings for November 2020 – the Village Clerk has printed copies of future meeting dates for the Village for the benefit of residents. Please make note that First Street will be closed to traffic on Halloween, October 31st, from 5:30 pm to 8:30 pm, that the Village Office will be closed on Wednesday, November 11th in honor of Veterans' Day and that the Veterans Day ceremonies will take place on Wednesday, November 11th, at 11:00 a.m. at the Point. In addition, the Village Office will be closed on November 26th

and 27th for the Thanksgiving Day holidays. Also, the Village Tree Lighting Ceremony will probably NOT take place in the Village this year, due to coronavirus restrictions. We would also announce that a town wide vote will be held for the approval of the proposed new Town Hall on December 8, 2020 from 9 :00 AM to 8:00 PM at the Marcellus Fire Department 4242 Slate Hill Road, Marcellus NY 13108 and all registered voters are eligible to vote Absentee ballots may be requested by calling the Town Clerk at 315-673-3269 Ext. 1 or emailing clerk@marcellusny.com. As with the national elections, Covid-19 is a valid reason for requesting an absentee ballot. You must request your ballot by 12/1/2020 and ballots must be received by the Town Clerk or posted marked by 12/8/2020 to be valid. Finally, the December meeting of the Village Board will be changed from the 4th Monday of the month, December 28th, to the 3rd Monday of the month, December 21st because of holiday preparations.

Updates – Mayor

Leaf and Brush Pickup – brush pickup ended on October 5th and if any residents have missed the deadline, they are welcome to utilize the Village composting site behind the Village Hall. Leaf pickup extends from October 13th to November 16th. After November 17th, residents may collect leaves into large brown paper leaf bags and place the bags at the curb for pickup, weather permitting – please note that only these leaf bags will be picked up after November 17th. Residents may also drop off brush and leaves anytime at the Village compost site, located next to the Highway Department garage. Please remember to keep leaves in the Village right of way, between the sidewalk and the road, and out of the street where they might end up clogging the catch basins and lead to flooding.

Compost Project – continues to be very successful and please remember that composting continues all year round even though the demand obviously lulls through the fall and winter. Some residents might want to secure compost this fall, since it can be stored outside, without cover, through the fall and winter for its intended use next spring.

Green Gateway Project – is one 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. Printed copies of a project summary are provided for the benefit of residents and are available in the Village office, as well as on the Village website (click on <http://villageofmarcellus.com> and then on News, then Village News. While the coronavirus has recently interrupted and delayed our plans for the Village and the students at MCS to continue working on the site, it is hoped that conditions will soon improve so that the project will begin anew in the months ahead.

New Business in the Village – as we mentioned last month, a new business has opened on the site of the former florist shop at 1 North Street, called Field’s Antique Maps and Frames, a business that specializes in original, local, regional, United States and World Mid 19th Century Maps. We encourage residents to patronize this newest business in the Village. In addition, another business is expected to open on November 1st on the site of the former North Street Diner called Dusty’s Diner, and we anxiously await this new business opening in the Village.

Trees – some tree removals and plantings are planned, per the DPW Superintendent’s schedule, and pending budgetary considerations on First Street, Paul Street and in back of the Village DPW barn.

School’s Open – we continue to ask residents to please watch for school children walking and remember that there are pedestrian crossings on Main Street, as well as 20 mph speed limits in school zones and a 25 mph speed limit on First Street, a route that is heavily traveled by schoolchildren. Please slow down. Tickets will be issued for speeders.

Call 911 – Chief Podsiedlik again reminds residents, especially at a time of year when mischief makers are more active, that it is essential that they report incidents of crime or vandalism in their neighborhoods by calling 911. Sometimes, residents are not making these calls because they feel that an issue might not warrant it. Some might be calling the Police Department and will often listen to an answering machine because the officer is out on patrol. Residents must call 911. If you are still not satisfied, please contact the Village Office during business hours, at 673-3112, and express your concern. Residents should also realize that First Street will be closed to traffic on Halloween, October 31st, from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. and a number of officers will be on patrol at that time.

Police Report – we would like to compliment our department and its officers for the fine work that they do on behalf of our residents and non-residents. In addition, the Chief continues to encourage residents to call the Police Department if they have any concerns about solicitors or contractors they may employ. The Police Department would be happy to do background checks so as to alleviate these concerns.

Veterans' Day – commemoration will take place at 11 a.m. on November 11th, at the Village Point, and we ask residents to take time out and offer thanks to all veterans for the service they have and continue to provide us. Also, there will be no trash delay because of the Veterans' Day holiday. Also the American Legion Poppy sale, delayed since last May, is now being planned for Monday, November 9th.

Platt Road Pump Station – a major upgrade to the Platt Road Pump Station was conducted by the Village WWTP operators who recently spent a number of hours working on this part of the sewer infrastructure that directly affects a number of town residents. The control panel at the pump station, which was approximately 40 years old, was replaced at a cost of \$12,500. The Platt Road Pump Station services homes on Parson Drive, Hall Ave, South St. Road, Amidon Drive, and Bishop Hill Road. With the upgrade, operations and maintenance will be more efficient and cost effective for residents. It is expected that next year a similar upgrade will take place at the Park Pump Station.

Phosphorus Levels at the Treatment Plant – continue to drop dramatically, further evidence of the successful upgrades to the plant. In addition, one of our MCS students, Ms. Bronte Stahl, whose independent study project on phosphorus removal last spring, was welcomed and applauded by the Board at an earlier meeting, has continued to monitor and update sample data regarding phosphorus both upstream and downstream in Nine Mile Creek. We again commend Ms. Stahl for the time and efforts she has extended in updating her independent study and welcome her continued interest in the phosphorus removal issue.

Covid-19 Wastewater Testing – at the Treatment Plant is being considered by our operators. Duplicating the testing efforts being done at Syracuse University, our operators are planning similar testing of samples in the wastewater at the Village plant, the results of which we hope to share in the coming months.

Blower Noise at the Treatment Plant – has been an issue and concern for several residents in the neighborhood of the plant. Construction upgrades at the plant brought about a number of concerns from neighbors about the noise from the blowers at the Treatment Plant and how that noise keeps them awake with a constant hum. Early on, our operators attempted to placate the neighbors by building a number of shields around the blowers, which give off no more noise than that which was usual even before the recent construction at the plant. Because this was not was not satisfactory, the following steps were taken to address the noise complaints:

a. **Control building** – with guidance from engineers and blower manufacturer, they began by using insulating tape and weather stripping to reduce vibrations, followed by building physical barriers consisting of 2x4 frames covered in insulation boards, to absorb and deflect the noise. With help from the

manufacturer, the aeration blowers were adjusted to run one at a time, once the project allowed. When two blowers are on at the same time, they run at different power levels so that they don't echo off one another.

b. **Digester building** – a sound deflector was added to absorb and deflect noise toward the school, and the blowers were adjusted to run at lower power level while meeting our dissolved oxygen requirements, and become more energy-efficient and quieter.

c. **Decibel readings** – Bill Reagan, our Code Officer, took decibel readings on several occasions, on different days and at different times and the results were submitted on the map that Bill designed. As one can tell from the map, all of the readings are below 60 decibels, except the one right next to the plant, which is 64. In addition, the one near a neighbor's house is actually quite low - 47.9. A decibel reading website (<https://soundproofingguide.com/decibels-level-comparison-chart/>) provides information regarding decibel readings and 60 decibels is believed to be somewhat normal, and anything below that, is perfectly fine. A recent follow-up by one of our operators with one of the neighbors indicates that the noise is no longer a bother and his complaint has been withdrawn.

Village Taxes – most have been paid, while the amount of unpaid taxes at present, including penalties, totaling about \$10,000 from 11 property owners, a figure significantly smaller than in previous years. The Village will eventually be reimbursed by the County for these tax evaders, but must wait a year before that reimbursement happens. In the meantime, the responsible taxpayers in the Village will continue, as they have in the past, to be responsible for the irresponsible. Property owners may continue to pay unpaid taxes to the Village until October 31, 2020, when they will be turned over to the County for reimbursement.

Parking - as we approach the winter months, we again remind residents that there is no overnight parking (from 2:00 a.m. to 7:00 a.m.) on Village streets from November 1st to April 1st. 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.

Christmas Tree Lighting – this year has been cancelled because of Covid-19 concerns. It is hoped that next year the tree lighting will take place. However, there will be a Christmas Tree at the point this year, a Marcellus tradition that dates back to 1916.

ZBA Meeting – last week, the Village Zoning Board of Appeals met to discuss a request from a resident for a use variance with regard to the housing of farm animals in the Village. The decision of the ZBA was to grant the variance to John and Sondra Bromka of 36 South Street, based largely on the fact that the property is an unusually large village parcel of 2.5 acres, that their chickens are kept within a small fenced area, an average of 100' distant from neighboring property lines, and that the chickens have been kept for the last eight (8) years, prior to the enactment of the new Village Code in 2013. This use variance, it might be noted, runs with the land.

Other – Marcellus resident Rich Aji spoke to the Board about the noise from the blowers at the Treatment Plant and how that noise keeps them awake with a constant hum. Mr. Aji noted that the workers at the plant have been most cooperative in their attempts to deal with the noise, and with some success. Not all of the blowers have been silenced, however and he asks that the Board try to provide him with some help and relief with this problem. The Board told Mr. Aji that it would do some further investigation and get back to him soon.