

Monthly Updates – from the Mayor – November 2021

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).

Award 36-Month Hauler Contract – bids for this contract were received by the Village Board on November 16, 2021 and opened on that date, at 11 a.m. in the Village Board Room. Copies of the specifications and the contract, which shall be for 36 months (from December 1, 2021 to November 30, 2024), are available for public viewing in the Village office. A motion was made to authorize the Mayor to sign a 36-month contract, beginning December 1, 2021 and ending November 30, 2024, with Superior Waste Removal for refuse and recycling pickup with in the Village of Marcellus, subject to review and approval of the insurance requirement. The three-year cost of this contract was bid at \$370,872.00.

Employee Drug Testing – a motion was made to approve a contract with Lakeshore Employee Testing Services, to perform drug and alcohol testing for commercial drivers who are employed in the Village Highway Department at a cost of \$65.00 per employee, an increase of \$10.00. This motion also authorizes the Mayor to sign said contract.

Annual Maintenance Permit with NYSDOT – a motion was made to authorize the DPW Superintendent (and/or his designee) to complete and sign the appropriate forms in order to acquire the annual maintenance permit with the NYSDOT.

Onondaga County DOT Fuel Purchase Contract Renewal – Municipal Resolution – a motion was made to table a contract amendment extension for three years with Onondaga County DOT for the purchase of fuel from Onondaga County DOT for the Village of Marcellus vehicles.

Announcement – Christmas Tree Lighting – we would like to announce that the annual Marcellus Tree Lighting Ceremony will take place on Friday, December 3, 2021 beginning at 6 p.m. in the Village, at the Point. This is a change from previous years when the tree lighting took place on a Thursday. There are many different activities and participants in this year's ceremony and a flyer has been prepared for residents who wish to pick one up. A Christmas Tree has again been generously donated by the Christoff family and installed at the Point as usual, with much help from Town and Village workers. Having a tree at the Point is a tradition dating back to the first community tree installed in 1916 and while there was be no celebration last year, the Board is very pleased that this tradition continues, in time for the Thanksgiving Day holiday this year, decorated again this year by Village employees.

Announcement – Planning Board – members of the Planning Board and Village Board met on October 20, 2021 and again on November 11, 2021 to discuss a proposed development of 8 Paul Street, currently an old lumberyard. Representatives from the Christopher Community presented their concept for a senior housing project at the site on Paul Street and also toured the site with Board members. A Public Hearing has also been scheduled for Wednesday, December 15, 2021 at the Marcellus Free Library at which time representatives from Christopher Community will present updated plans for the project, as well as listen to any concerns that residents of the community may have.

Change December Board Meeting – a motion was made to change the December Agenda Workshop from December 24, 2021 to December 17, 2021 and the regular Board meeting from December 27, 2021 to December 20, 2021, because of the Christmas holiday.

Announce Village Meetings for December 2021 – the Village Clerk has printed copies of future meeting dates for the Village for the benefit of residents. The Village Office will be closed on November 25th and 26th for the Thanksgiving Day holidays. Again, the Village Tree Lighting Ceremony will take place and we encourage residents of the community to attend. The Village Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing on December 15, 2021 at the Marcellus Library at 7 p.m. and residents of the community are welcome to attend. The December meeting of the Village Board is changed from the 4th Monday of the month, to the 3rd Monday of the month, December 20th because of holiday preparations. The Village Office will be closed on Friday, December 24th for the Christmas holiday and the Village Office will be closed on Friday, December 31st for the New Years' Holiday.

2021-Lady Mustangs Girls Volleyball Resolution – a motion was made and a Resolution was read, to recognize the Lady Mustangs Girls Volleyball Team and Coach Joe Schettine for having advanced to the NYS Class B Varsity Volleyball Final Four for the year 2021, a copy of which resolution is on file in the Village Office for public inspection.

Updates – Mayor and Board

Reminder – No Parking – November 1st to April 1st – the public should be aware of the fact that as of November 1, 2021, 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, 2022. 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.

Leaf and Brush Pickup – brush pickup ended on October 4th and if any residents have missed the deadline, they are welcome to utilize the Village composting site behind the Village Hall. Leaf pickup extended from October 12th to November 15th. After November 16th, 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 16th. 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. With snowstorms that may occur, any leaves that are still in the Village right-of-way, between the sidewalk and the road, will remain there until the snow melts and the DPW has an opportunity to remove them. That might not be until the spring of 2022. Residents are welcome to bag their leaves and bring bags to the compost site at the rear of the Village Hall.

Other DPW Work – in recent weeks, the DPW has been very diligent in picking up leaves, long beyond the cut-off period. We have received some very nice compliments from residents for their efforts and we appreciate the response. With the coming of the winter snows, some of the memorial benches and pedestrian signs have been removed until spring by the department. The Department employees have also put up and will decorate the Village Christmas Tree at the Point, ready for lighting just after Thanksgiving. The new Christmas decorations have been put up as well. The Board would like to thank members of the DPW for all of their efforts as we prepare for the winter months, knowing how especially dedicated they are with the removal of snow and ice.

Health Care Costs – continue to rise, and both the Village and its employees will be required to pay, on average, an increase of about 7.5% for health coverage and 3% for dental coverage, beginning in January 2021. Coverage is similar to last year, with some increase in premiums, and some changes in benefits offered.

Pension Costs – for next year have been projected by the Village Treasurer to be slightly more than the allotted budget amounts. At this time, there appears to be an increase of 10%, because of decreased investment returns as a result of COVID.

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

Planning Board – members of the Planning Board and Village Board met on October 20, 2021 and again on November 11, 2021 to discuss a proposed development of 8 Paul Street, currently an old lumberyard. Representatives from the Christopher Community presented their concept for a senior housing project at the site on Paul Street and also toured the site. A Public Hearing has also been scheduled for Wednesday, December 15, 2021 at the Marcellus Free Library at which time representatives from Christopher Community will present updated plans for the project, as well as listen to any concerns that residents of the community may have.

Village Parking Improvements – the reconstruction of parking in front of 2-6 East Main Street from a perpendicular to a parallel configuration has been completed and the Board would like to recognize the efforts of the contractor, Hanson Aggregates, whose workers labored so conscientiously on the project, as well as the businesses who had to deal with some construction interruption. We have had a number of compliments from residents of the community who felt that the parking change was long overdue and the finished design has added to a much enhanced village center.

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.

Police – within the past month, there have been several thefts from cars parked in the Village and Marcellus Park. The Chief continues to warn residents that cars should always be locked, even in ones driveway, and anything in the car's interior that might attract the attention of a thief should not be visible. If thieves view something in a car is worthwhile taking, they will and have smashed car windows. So, please lock your car doors. 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. Also, if there are any snowbirds that would like to have their properties checked while they are out of town, please notify the Police Department.

Baltimore Ridge Development – continues to move along quite well, and as of this date, all permits have been issued, and development of the site has begun with the construction of an entrance road, the clearing of a number of trees, and the building of the required storm water detention pond. In addition, sight distance conditions on South Street Road, as required by Onondaga County DOT, are being met and the installation of utilities (water, sewer, cable, telephone, electric and gas) forthcoming. A target of early December has been set for asphalt installation.

Grease Traps – as the holiday season approaches, our Treatment Plant Operators continue to urge our residents to become more aware of the problems with grease in our sewer system. Grease will stick to household and sewer pipes, and over time, grease buildup can block pipes and cause sewage backups. Home garbage disposals do not keep grease out of the plumbing system – they only shred solid material into smaller pieces. The operators urge you to scrape grease and food scraps from cooking surfaces into a container and put in the trash or compost them. Do not put grease, fats or oils of any type down your drain or garbage disposal. Do use baskets or strainers in sink drains to catch food scraps and other solids and then empty them in the trash for disposal. During the holidays, there always seems to be an increase of calls from residents who have had sewer backups, and these have been attributable, for the most part, to grease buildup and blockage.

Main Street Grant Program – the Village Board is pleased to announce that the Village was awarded almost \$500,000 for the 2021 Main St Grant Program. There are 18 projects included in the Village Center and it is sure to make a significant impact on the community. These projects will have to follow all normal application and permitting requirements, and some may be referred to the Planning Board as the process unfolds. The Village is most grateful to County Executive Ryan McMahon and the Office of Community Development as well as the Onondaga County Legislature for providing funds to help revitalize and beautify many parts of the Village of Marcellus, as they did last year when 14 Village properties were awarded almost \$300,000 under the County Main Street Façade Grant program.

Christmas Decoration Project – on behalf of our Board and our residents, we once again express much gratitude and thanks to former Trustee Bob Wilson for organizing and leading the Village Christmas Decoration Project. Bob's last Village function, before he passed away, was contacting a number of businesses, organizations and individuals in the community, asking for donations to help fund the purchase of 30 new Christmas decorations with LED lights. While some were major gifts from businesses and individuals, there were also a number of smaller gifts, and we wish to express many thanks to everyone who was so generous to the Village and to Bob's appeal. Installed on the telephone poles by our DPW department last week, we invite you to take notice of them when you are Main, North and South Streets. We are sure that you will agree they provide much community pride and create a mood that makes people feel good about how our Village looks. As many often realized, if you wanted a job done and done well, give it to Bob Wilson. Bob was so very instrumental throughout his long civic involvement with the community. The Village and all residents of Marcellus, while grateful for his service, are much poorer with his absence.

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.

Meadow Street – this major project, to provide storm water drainage and road improvements to the Meadow Street area, is now complete. Mapping and design have been completed and both NYSEG and OCWA have replaced gas mains and installed new hydrants and replaced the water main prior to repair of the sanitary sewer line, with cured-in-place relining, and improvements to roadside swales and road re-paving. Improvements have also extended north onto Second Street. Hanson Aggregates NY LLC was awarded the contract, and the Board feels that the work performed by the contractor was excellent. It has been a summer of much inconvenience for the residents, but we expect that the disruption will have been worth it.

Marcellus Chamber of Commerce – it has been over a decade since Marcellus has had an operating Chamber of Commerce. Thanks to the efforts of businessman, Chad Clark, an attempt is being made to re-establish the Chamber, starting with a get-together at the Marcellus Free library to share ideas, thoughts and see what sort of interest the business community has in making this happen. The Chamber of Commerce only functions with local support and involvement and the Village Board enthusiastically supports this effort.

Village Taxes – most have been paid, while the amount of unpaid taxes at present, including penalties, totaling about \$33,594.21 from 11 property owners, a figure which represents 4.44% of total Village taxes assessed. 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 no longer pay unpaid taxes to the Village, since they have been turned over to the County for reimbursement.

New Business in the Village – a Nano Brewery has opened up on a limited weekend basis at #4 East Main Street and an ice cream and deli shop is expected to open soon at #2 East Main. We welcome these new businesses to the Village and encourage our residents to patronize them.

Other – we would like to again thank the Christoff family of Schuyler Road for their very generous donation of this year's community Christmas Tree. Like last year's donation by the family, this large and perfectly shaped tree was installed by Village and Town workers and decorated with new LED lights. We thank all who helped to brighten the point again this year.