

Monthly Updates – from the Mayor – November 2022

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).

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. 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 again verify that a contract with Onondaga County DOT for the purchase of fuel from Onondaga County DOT for the Village of Marcellus vehicles through December 31, 2024, has been previously approved.

Baltimore Ridge - Letter of Credit - MRB Group, the Village Engineer, has reviewed a request by the Baltimore Ridge developer, to release Letter Of Credit monies for all completed construction items shown on the previously approved estimate with the exception of the top course of asphalt. This would leave \$57,024.00 remaining for completion of the asphalt top course as well as a contingency of \$42,976.00 for a total remaining LOC value of \$100,000.00. I make a motion to approve MRB's recommendation to release \$526,226.12 from the original Letter of Credit, with \$100,000.00 remaining to complete the project.

Police Appointment - a motion to approve the appointment of Officer Glen Wintermute, as a School Resource Officer at Tully Central School District. This appointment will be effective as of November 28, 2022, and his salary and benefits will be the responsibility of the Tully central School District. The Board is pleased to make this appointment and wishes Officer Wintermute continued success as a member of the Marcellus Police Department.

Utility Account Adjustment - the owner of 3 Wilson Drive has submitted a written request to the Village Board to remove late penalties applied to his account due to non-payment of the 2nd quarter utility bill. The property owner is new to the Village and a member of the US Army stationed on the West Coast for several months while his wife and young child have been settling in. The property owner did not realize that wastewater and refuse was not included on the Village tax bill, therefore did not remit payment. Upon receipt of the 3rd quarter bill, the property owner contacted the Village Clerk and has

been informed of the billing policy. It was also discovered that the new property owner paid the 2022-2023 Village tax bill, which included \$375.60 of unpaid sewer and refuse charges for the 1st quarter of 2022 that were re-levied due to non-payment. The re-levied charges are the responsibility of the previous owner. The current owner is working with his real estate attorney to correct this error. The property owner respectfully requests the penalties, which total \$21.16, be removed, and has committed to timely remittance in the future. A motion was made to approve the request of the property owner's request to remove the penalties.

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.

Announcement – Christmas Tree Lighting – we would like to announce that the annual Marcellus Tree Lighting Ceremony will take place on Friday, December 2, 2022, 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, by Town and Village workers. Having a Christmas tree at the Point is a tradition dating back to the first community tree installed in 1916 and the Board is very pleased that this tradition continues, in time for the Thanksgiving Day holiday this year, decorated again this year by Village and Town employees.

Announcement – Planning Board – members of the Planning Board and Village Board met on November 16, 2022, to discuss the controversy surrounding the color selection of the building at 14-18 West Main Street in the Village and to present an opportunity for the Planning Board and the Village Board to comment and provide feedback on the debate. Also, a Community Information Meeting has been scheduled for Wednesday, November 30, 2022, at the Marcellus Free Library at which time representatives from Christopher Community and AccessCNY will present updated plans for the project, including an updated project narrative to add a preference for 9 supportive housing units for individuals with a serious mental illness, and will 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 23, 2022, to December 16, 2022, and the regular Board meeting from December 26, 2022, to December 19, 2022, because of the Christmas holiday.

Announce Village Meetings for December 2022 – the Village Clerk has printed copies of future meeting dates for the Village for the benefit of residents. The Village Office was closed on November 24th and 25th for the Thanksgiving Day holidays. Again, the Village Tree Lighting Ceremony will take place and we encourage residents of the community 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 19th because of holiday preparations. The Village Office will be closed on Monday, December 26th for the Christmas holiday and the Village Office will be closed on Monday, January 2nd for the New Years' Holiday.

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, 2022, 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, 2023. 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 3rd 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 11th to November 13th. After November 14th 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 14th. Residents may also drop off brush and leaves anytime at the Village compost site, located next to the Highway Department garage. With snowstorms that will 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. Town and Village employees have also put up and have decorated the 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 Village DPW and Town Highway Department 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% for health coverage and 3% for dental coverage, beginning in January 2022. Coverage is similar to last year, with some increase in premiums, and some changes in benefits offered.

Pension Costs - at this time, there appears to be no increase in pension costs because the State Pension fund is almost fully funded, and this has allowed the State to lower pension contribution rates significantly.

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 November 16, 2022, to discuss the controversy surrounding the color selection of the building at 14-18 West Main Street in the Village and to present an opportunity for the Planning Board and the Village Board to comment and provide feedback on the debate. A community Information meeting has been scheduled for Wednesday, November 30, 2022, at the Marcellus Free Library at which time representatives from Christopher Community and AccessCNY will present updated plans for the project, including an updated project narrative to add a preference for 9 supportive housing units for individuals with a serious mental illness, and will listen to any concerns that residents of the community may have.

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, and as of this date, all permits have been issued, and development of the site began 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, have been met and the installation of utilities (water, sewer, cable, telephone, electric and gas) is complete. Construction of two houses has also begun. The utilities, roads and sewer infrastructure have not yet been turned over to the Village, and probably not until the spring will this take place.

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 St. Grant Project - The Village Board is again 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.

Marcellus Chamber of Commerce – it has been over a decade since Marcellus has had an operating Chamber of Commerce, but thanks to the efforts of businessman, Chad Clark, a Chamber has been re-established. 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 as of October 31, 2012, including penalties, totaled about \$15,954.27 from 7 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 were able to pay unpaid taxes to the Village until October 31, 2012, but they will have now turned over to the County for reimbursement.

New Business in the Village – an ice cream and deli shop is expected to open soon at #2 East Main. We welcome this new business to the Village and encourage our residents to patronize them. We also lament the loss of the Main Street Pharmacy and Boise's Café.

Other – we would like to again thank the Christoff family of Schuyler Road for its 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.