

## Monthly Updates – from the Mayor – December 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](mailto:clerk@villageofmarcellus.com)).

**Police Mutual Aid Agreement** – a motion was made to formalize the relationship between the local governments and their police departments and to enhance and define the scope of the inter-agency cooperation in the form of an agreement, the details of which are on file in the Village Office.

**Marcellus Veterinary Hospital Contract** – a motion to approve the agreement (when it is received) between the Village of Marcellus and Marcellus Veterinary Hospital whereby Marcellus Veterinary Hospital will establish a shelter to house dogs picked up by the Village Dog Control Officer, said contract to include the hospital fees for housing, vaccinating, and caring for stray dogs.

**Village Improvement Plan** – a motion was made to continue the Village Infrastructure Program, an agreement whereby the County provides financial assistance to the Village for the construction and maintenance of public improvements, and to complete the Application for Financial Assistance provided to the Village by the County of Onondaga and to submit such application by January 1, 2023.

**2023 Onondaga County Main Street Funding Program** – a motion was made to approve the participation of the Village of Marcellus in the 2023 Onondaga County Main Street Grant Program, whereby Onondaga County will again provide additional funding for local revitalization efforts in the Main Street areas in the Village in the 2023 calendar year. Details of the program are on file for public inspection in the Village Office.

**Coon's Pond Access Agreement** – a motion was made to accept for discussion the Coon's Pond Access & Maintenance Agreement as well as the proposed easement, legal description and rehabilitation plans, the details of which are on file in the Village Office for public inspection.

**Onondaga County Planning Board** – a motion was made to recognize the 2023 Onondaga County Planning Board Meeting Calendar and Reminders and to distribute same to Planning Board and Zoning Board members.

**Authorize Mayor to Sign Health Insurance Contracts** – all employees have elected to stay with their existing plans, those offered by Excellus Blue Cross/Blue Shield. The cost for all Excellus plans offered has risen this year. Overall, the cost to the Village has increased about 7.5% for major medical and 3% for dental beginning January 2023. I make a motion to authorize the Mayor to sign the Health Insurance Contracts with Excellus Blue Cross/Blue Shield for 2023. The Mayor has already signed a copy of the one document that Excellus does require to be updated annually. The Village will cover 90% of the cost of a full-time employee's benefits, while the employee will pay 10% of said cost. Copies of the new contracts and coverage are available for inspection in the Village Office.

**Update Schedule D – Health and Dental Benefits Plan** – a motion was made to again approve Schedule D, Health, and Dental Benefits for employees of the Village of Marcellus, to wit: “. . . part time employees will contribute 100% to health and dental costs EXCEPT part time employees with 30+ years of continuous service will contribute 25% of single health and single dental costs.” The actual costs for health and dental coverage will be outlined on a newly developed Schedule D form and will be available for public inspection in the Village Office when this plan goes into effect on January 1, 2023.

**Employee Health Insurance Opt-out** – a motion was made to approve a health insurance opt-out for full time Village employees who are covered under another health care program. This opt-out, the details of which are on file in the Village Office, would grant a buy-out incentive for the employee who chooses to opt-out, and would also provide a financial benefit for the Village, whose annual premium on behalf of the employee, would be eliminated.

**Budget Modifications for November 2022** – a motion was made to approve budget modifications requested by the Village Treasurer transferring revenues and appropriations in the General Fund.

**Christmas and New Year’s Holiday** – a motion was made to allow Village Employees to close the Village Offices at Noon on Friday, December 23, 2022, and at Noon on Friday, December 30, 2022, so that our employees receive time off from work. If the DPW Employees are called in to plow, they will be able to take off another half-day off from work, at the discretion of the DPW Superintendent. These will not be considered as holidays.

Village Meetings for January 2023 – I would make note the list of those meetings scheduled for the remainder of December and for January 2023, which is provided for those so interested – please note also that 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. Because these holidays fall on a Monday, there will be **NO DELAY** in trash collection each of those weeks. The Village will also be closed on January 16, 2023, to honor the memory of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. There are also several handouts that are provided – on Water, Grease in the Waste Water, and other items of concern

**Schedule Public Hearing** – a motion was made to announce that the Village Board will schedule a public hearing for its January Board meeting on January 23, 2023, for the purpose of proposing a local law updating the Code Enforcement Program in the Village of Marcellus. The proposed law will be designed to repeal the existing Code Enforcement Program within the Village of Marcellus and replace it with a Code Enforcement Program in compliance with the State’s most recent regulations.

#### **Updates – Mayor**

**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.

**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.

**Composting** – continues to move along and we would like to thank our operators as they prepare more compost for pickup in the spring.

**Announcement** - the Village Board is pleased to announce that the Village was awarded almost \$500,000 for the 2022 Main Street 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.

**New Business in the Village** – an ice cream and deli shop is expected to open soon at #2 East Main. We welcome new businesses to the Village and encourage our residents to patronize them.

**Flushable Wipes and FOG** - a friendly reminder what not to flush from your Village Operators: The two biggest causes of sewer clogs are “flushable” wipes and fats, oils, and grease (FOG). Unlike toilet paper, wet wipes remain intact and tangle into massive clogs that jam pumps and block pipes. When a product is labeled “flushable” it generally means that it will clear your toilet bowl. It doesn't mean it will definitely clear your pipes or break down in the sewer system or at your wastewater treatment plant. Truly flushable items are ones that break into small pieces quickly, are not buoyant, and only contain materials, which will readily degrade in a range of natural environments (like paper, not plastic). Grease cools as it travels through pipes. Over time, the accumulation of grease builds up and can block an entire pipe. Garbage disposals do not keep grease out of the pipes, they only shred it into smaller pieces. Commercial additives including detergents that claim to dissolve grease, may pass it down the line and cause problems away from the source. The results of a grease-blocked sewer pipe can be sewage overflows in your home, expensive and unpleasant cleanup that often must be paid for by the property owner, and possible contact with disease-causing organisms. It can also add to the cost of operating and maintaining your sewers and the wastewater treatment plant. Flushing wipes, grease, or other non-disposable items can impact you and your neighbor's sewer system. Thank you for considering the impact these items may have on your sanitary sewer system before you flush!

**Community Information Session** – a community Information meeting was held on Wednesday, November 30, 2022, at the Marcellus Free Library at which time representatives from Christopher Community and Access/CNY presented 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, listened to concerns and comments that residents of the community may as well as

Board members had. At the end of the session, it was decided that the original narrative and original plans to develop a 60-unit apartment building for seniors aged 55+ at the 8 Paul Street site, approved by the Planning Board and Village Board in February 2022, would be supported by the Village and that original project narrative will accompany the letter of support. We expect that Christopher Community has now re-submitted its original request for funding to the State, knowing that this too might be rejected - in which case, the site might probably be bulldozed and cleared for another development. Prior to the re-submittal, by December 5th, of its original request for funding to the State, it was expected that Christopher Community would copy the Mayor and/or the Village Board on the same, which it was.

**Christmas Tree Lighting** – on behalf of the Board, I would like to extend special thanks to our DPW crew and our office staff who were able to install, decorate and then light the Community Christmas Tree at the Point on December 2, 2022, a tradition, that goes back to 1916. Special thanks also to our Police Department for their efforts in helping to coordinate events, and to members of the Chamber of Commerce for their great support in helping this event to be one of the most successful and well-attended in recent memory.

**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.

**Police Warning** – residents should be aware of the fact that some thieves have been active in the Village and Town, following FedEx and other vehicles delivering and leaving packages unattended at various locations and then stealing such packages – so called “porch pirates.” The Marcellus Police have received reports of cars broken into overnight in the Flower Lane area and also on Reed Street. Make sure your cars are locked and that personal items, especially credit cards, cellphones and KEYS are not left in vehicles. If your car has been broken into, or if you have any information regarding these break-ins, please contact the Police Department at 315-673-2079. Chief Podseidlik urges residents to be vigilant about such activity and to notify the police if they have suspicions. The Chief reminds everyone, once again - Lock your houses and cars. The average time it takes for a thief to get inside a vehicle and get out is about 20 seconds. In less than a minute, items may be gone and it isn't until you get into your vehicle that you notice items are gone. This has been going on in other nearby communities as well. Please call the police if you have suspicions or want to report a robbery. After 2 a.m., the Marcellus Police are not on duty and the only responder would be a single Sheriff's car, whose patrol extends from Onondaga Hill to Skaneateles.

**Christmas Trees** – will be picked up by the Village Highway Department after the first of the year, probably beginning on January 3, 2023. Residents should place trees in the Village right of way between the sidewalk and the street.

**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 decorated 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.

**Olde Home Days, 2023 (June 2, June 3 and 4)** – tentatively, and depending on the pandemic, the first meeting of the 2022 OHD Committee will be held on Thursday, January 5, 2023, at the Village Hall, beginning at 6:30 p.m.

**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.

**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.

**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.

**Creekwalk** – we might note that the trail is not open nor is it plowed during the winter season. For those interested, please check the Village Website for an update, some photos as well as a video of Fred's Trail – <http://www.villageofmarcellus.com/creekwalk-news.html>.

**Other** – on behalf of the Village Board, I would extend a very Merry Christmas and wish all our Village residents the joy of family, the gift of friends and the best of everything for the New Year.