

Monthly Updates – from the Mayor – May 2023

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).

Re-levy of Unpaid Sewer and Refuse Charges – a motion was approved to have the outstanding utility bills (refuse and sewage) re-levied to the Village of Marcellus property tax bills. The amount being re-levied to the taxes is **\$54,303.23** (refuse = \$11,155.00 and sewer = \$43,148.23) less than last year's total of **\$57,050.29**. In 2019, there was a computer glitch and in 2020, the ongoing health Covid crisis delayed a re-levy. The amount re-levied in 2018, by contrast, was \$61,485.74, and in 2017 was \$62,899.08.

OCWA Invoice Adjustments – a motion was approved to adjust two invoices from OCWA as follows: (1) WWTP Adjustment - due to a water line break, the water usage associated with the WWTP for the 4th quarter of 2022 and 1st quarter of 2023 was significantly higher than usual. The Village submitted a request for adjustment on the bills associated with this increased usage and was given a credit of \$1,698.70 towards the balance owed by the Village. (2) 34 North Street Adjustment - the Village clerk received notice from the property management at 34 North Street regarding a broken meter that was replaced by OCWA and generated an inaccurate consumption reading. This motion is to approve an adjustment to account 1160 in the amount of \$214.40, the amount overpaid based on average consumption reported for the previous 12 months. The 1st quarter bill for this account was \$314.40 based on the meter reading, and based on the 2022 consumption, which is 4,000 gallons, the correct amount for this unit should have been \$100.00.

Review Driving Policy – because the safety and well-being of our employees, as well as that of our residents is very important to the Village, the Board of Trustees desires to protect employees and community members while on the road and reviews the driving policy each year. Trustee _____ - a motion to require all employees of the Village who drive Village-owned vehicles to follow the Village of Marcellus Driving Policy, which was updated this year, a copy of which is on file in the Village Office.

Annual Storm Water Report - a motion was approved to review the first draft of the Annual Storm Water Report, which should be finalized by the June Board Meeting, following a final review by W-M Engineering.

Updated List of Fees, Deposits and Penalties – a motion was made to approve the 2023 Schedule of Fees, Deposits and Penalties as submitted by the Codes Officer to the Board, a copy of which is on file in the Village Office.

Acceptance of OCPB Resolution - a motion was made to approve the action by the Onondaga County Planning Board's "No Position" on Local Law No. 3 of 2023 regarding a moratorium on building permits in the Village Center.

Intermunicipal Agreements with Onondaga County – a motion was made to table the Intermunicipal Agreements with Onondaga County regarding both the Sanitary Sewer Pump Station Operation and Maintenance Charges and the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System

Williamson Software Contract – a motion was made to approve annual software support contracts with Williamson Law Book Company for municipal accounting (\$1,366.00), refuse/sewer billing (\$1,274.00), and payroll (\$1,274.00), totaling \$3,914.00, a 15% increase over last year. Another thing to note is that the Village continues to save money from having shared services with Onondaga County, relative to tax collection, which software the Village used to have to purchase from Williamson.

Planning Board Appointment – a motion was made to appoint Percy Clarke, recently retired from the NYS Police, as an alternate member of the Village Planning Board, following the resignation of Hugh White, whose employment has necessitated that notification. We thank Hugh very much for his service and welcome Percy to this position in which he will serve until March 31, 2025.

School Resource Officer Contracts – a motion was made to table until the next Board meeting the School Resource Officer Agreements between the Village of Marcellus, the Marcellus Central School District, the Lyncourt Union Free School District, the Onondaga Central School District, and the Tully Central School District.

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.

Announce Village Meetings for June 2023 – the Village Clerk has printed copies of future meeting dates for the Village for the benefit of residents. I would make special notification that the Marcellus Olde Home Days are back again, sponsored by both the Marcellus Rotary, and scheduled for June 2nd, 3rd, and 4th, 2023. In addition, the Village Office will be closed for the Memorial Day Holiday on May 29th, and June 19th, which is now a State holiday in observance of Juneteenth. Also, the Memorial Day Parade and Ceremony will take place on May 29th, in the Village and at the Village Point. The parade will start at 10 a.m. and the Ceremony at 11:00 a.m. The Village Office will also be closed for the Independence Day Celebration on Tuesday, July 4th and the Village-wide garage sale has been planned for Saturday, July 8, 2023.

Updates – Mayor and Board

Code Officer and Fire Inspection – fire inspections and rental inspections continue, along with vacant house registrations, code violations being issued for litter and rubbish piles, along with change of occupancy at several sites and several building permits.

Pedestrian Signs, Benches, Banners, and new Flags – have been re-installed on Main Street and elsewhere by the Highway Department. Many thanks to our Department of Public Works employees for doing in time for the Memorial Day holiday.

Compost at the Treatment Plant – will be available on a first-come, first-serve basis. However, residents are able pick-up compost, and it would be best for residents to call the treatment plant ahead of time (315-673-4491) to determine when it would be most convenient to pick up compost.

Olde Home Days Celebration – as mentioned before, is back and we encourage residents to attend.

New Business in the Village – we welcome new businesses to the Village and encourage our residents to patronize them, including Holy Cow Restaurant at 3 North Street, Stack Construction & Design at 6 West Main Street as well as The Ice Cream Sandwich at #2 East Main Street.

Creek Walk – Fred’s Trail has reopened officially for the public, and our highway department had to do some limited repair to the trail – it appears to have wintered well. We welcome the spring as well as those who will take advantage of this gem in our community. If some residents are not familiar with the project, we urge them to click on the home page of the Village website <http://villageofmarcellus.com/> and then on Village News.

Streets, Sidewalks, Trees – monies have already been set aside from the budget to complete some highway resurfacing, particularly Old North Street and Bradley Street, as well as to share in the cost of brush and tree removal and street sweeping with the Town of Marcellus. The DPW budget also calls for sidewalk repairs along First Street and South Street and other various locations in the Village, a continuation of street sweeping and assisting MCS students in the development of the Green Gateway Project and working with students on a design for Flower Lane improvements. Also, tree and stump removals are planned, per the DPW Superintendent’s schedule, pending budgetary considerations

Village Parking Improvements – last year, the changeover of the parking situation in front of 2-6 East Main Street (Reagan Building and Village Tavern) from a perpendicular to a parallel configuration proved to be most successful. Earlier in this year, the DPW along with a contractor removed the brick pavers on the corner of South and Main Streets and installed stamp-crete, a project that not only dressed up the area but removed several trip pedestrian hazards. Last year, several of the businesses in this area applied for and received special permits to operate a sidewalk café for outdoor seating in front of their establishments. The recent nice weather has enabled residents to enjoy outdoor seating once again and to patronize our local businesses.

SRO Contracts – with the Marcellus Central School District, the Lyncourt Union Free School District, the Onondaga Central School District, and the Tully Central School District have been tabled until a future Board meeting

Memorial Day – Olde Home Days – American Legion Post 297 is planning to resume a public Memorial Day Parade and Commemoration in the Village on Monday, May 29, 2023, with the Parade beginning at 10:00 a.m. and the Ceremony at 11 a.m. at The Point. A tradition unbroken since 1926, prior to 2020, the pandemic year, we welcome the return of this great tradition. Olde home Days will also return on June 2nd, June 3rd, and 4th and we welcome that great celebration as well.

Village Web Site – Village Clerk Charnley Abbott regularly updates our website, and she has been most accommodating to our Village and its residents. If there are any items that residents might feel should be included on the site, please contact her at the Village Office (315-673-3112) with your requests.

Spring Brush Pickup – the Village Board and DPW are going to continue the policy from last year for the 2023 Brush Pickup. Brush may be placed at the curb on Saturdays and Sundays for pickup on Mondays from April 3rd thru May 8th. Also, during the summer months brush may also be placed at the curb on the first Saturday and Sunday for pickup on the following Mondays of each month – June 5th, July 3rd, and August 7th.

Baltimore Ridge Development – continues to move along quite well, and as of this date, all permits have been issued, and more development at the site has begun with building construction on five lots, with one homeowner having already moved in. In addition, sight distance conditions on South Street Road, as required by Onondaga County DOT, have been met while utilities, roads and sewer infrastructure have not yet been turned over to the Village, and probably not until late summer will this take place.

Tefft Meadows Senior Apartments at 8 Paul St in the Village of Marcellus – The Village has recently been informed by Christopher Community, Inc. that the Tefft Meadows Project has not been awarded funding from the State of New York and, as a result, will not be moving forward with another resubmission of the project. Please note the following email sent by Justin Rudgick, President of Christopher Community to the Mayor. Also, please note the Mayor’s response which follows.

April 8, 2023

Hi Mayor,

I wanted to let you know that we recently found out that Tefft Meadows was not awarded funding from the State. We will be scheduling an official debriefing from the State related to the circumstances to the project. It is has come into my awareness that the project was perceived to not have strong municipal support for this project as a senior housing project including supportive services provided by PACE CNY for seniors 55+ including frail elderly. Christopher Community, Inc. has invested tremendous resources in the pre-development stage of this project to prepare a funding application in two separate funding rounds. We will not be moving forward in a potential resubmission with the Village of Marcellus. I’ve notified Scott McClurg of our decision as well.

Sincerely,

Justin Rudgick | President & CEO

May 1, 2023

Good morning, Justin,

I too am disappointed that Christopher Community was unable to secure State funding for the Tefft Meadows Project. Many of us felt that with the Governor's emphasis in her budget on additional housing in the State, that the Tefft Meadows Project would be a natural addition to that budget.

As to the lack of strong municipal support for this project as a senior housing project, I take exception. The Village has also invested tremendous time and effort in the development stage of this project. I refer you, in particular, to the Village website and that part which specifies the Tefft Meadows Project (<https://www.villageofmarcellus.com/tefft-meadows.html>). It details just how very involved and supportive the Village has been.

Beginning in October 2021 and continuing through 2022 and beyond into 2023, the Village Planning Board and Board of Trustees have participated in numerous meetings and planning sessions, and worked with Christopher Community to approve what was felt to be a most positive and workable project that addressed not only the need for senior housing in the community, but affordable housing, as well as one that would allow residents to age in place.

In addition, this project would not only be beneficial for older residents of the community, but it would also remove what has long been an eyesore for the Village – a veritable junkyard would be eliminated. Village interest was also piqued because this might lead to the construction of a village pedestrian pathway (or sidewalks) connecting the site with the Marcellus Library, the Marcellus Historical Museum and Main Street businesses, etc. as well help to extend the creek walk from the Library to Paul Street and North Street.

On behalf of the Village, I am sorry that you have decided not to move forward with a resubmission of the project but can understand your reluctance to do so.

I have also spoken with Scott McClurg and know that he is stunned that the project was rejected. Thank you for your efforts as well as those who worked so very hard in the development of the project. I also wish you the best in your future endeavors with Christopher Community.

Sincerely,

John P. Curtin, mayor@villageofmarcellus.com

Planning Board – the Planning Board and Village Board met on Wednesday, May 17, 2023, to review and discuss the Design Standards proposal developed by MRB, a proposal that would assess the current codes from a standpoint of alignment with best practices and desired outcomes, work with Village leadership to identify issues with current guidelines and identify opportunities for codification. MRB developed language to address gaps between current guidelines and community expectations, and update language to ensure alignment with current best practices, and potential future needs and New York State law. The proposal will update the design guidelines as well as prepare the required SEQR documentation to adopt these updates.

The 2022 Main St Grant Program – the Village Board is again pleased to announce that the Village was awarded almost \$500,000 for the 2022-2023 Main St Grant Program. There are 11 projects included in the Village Center and this 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 in previous years under the County Main Street Façade Grant program.

From the Marcellus Police Department: Please be advised that there is a nationwide trend where scammers contact the elderly via disposable cellphones and attempt to trick people into giving out their personal information (D.O.B., SS#, etc.). Sometimes, they tell people that they are potentially the victim of fraud and attempt to persuade them to purchase gift cards from stores such as Target or Walmart and provide them with the activation codes. Unfortunately, there have been several recent cases of this type of fraud in Onondaga County. Please speak to your elderly family members and neighbors to warn them of this scam. If anyone has any questions, feel free to contact the Marcellus Police Department at (315) 673-2079.