

Monthly Updates – from the Mayor – March 2017

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 (673-3112) or email (marboard@twcny.rr.com) the Village Office.

Local Law #1 of 2017 – following a Public Hearing, the Board approved Local Law #1 of 2017 to override a property tax cap that is in excess of the tax levy limit of 2%, mandated by the State of New York. The property tax cap of 2%, which is another State mandate, complicates our budget and at a recent workshop, the Board decided to override the tax cap. We expect to stay under the property tax cap but the tax cap complicates the Village budget process and we might not be able to abide the formula devised by the State for a tax cap. Having learned from the experience of several towns, it is best to override, if only to protect the Village from penalty. Should the adopted budget vary from the actual budget, resulting in a tax hike of more than 2 percent, the Village would be responsible for a host of fines for violating the tax cap. The public might think that the Village, by overriding the cap, is just ignoring the law and not in support of a tax cap, when in actuality the Village is very much in favor of it. However, with the Village continuing to receive unfunded mandates from the state, coupled with a cap on its ability to raise revenue, it is very difficult for the Village to plan or even survive. There are too many variables in the tax cap and therefore, the Village Board has proposed this local law to vote to override the tax cap, just to protect the Village from penalty.

Local Law #2 of 2017 – following another Public Hearing, the Board also approved Local Law #2 of 2017 approving a repeal and replacement of Chapter 106-Section 2, Health and Sanitation-Cans and Containers. The background information on the need for this change in Chapter 106 is the concern the Village and its Code Enforcement Officer has regarding the outdoor storage of garbage by some residents, and the fact that on occasion the outdoor garbage is not properly contained and is often overflowing trash cans, presenting both a health and a pollution problem for neighbors and the community at large. Therefore, outdoor storage of garbage containing waste materials, rubbish and all types of refuse containers shall be separated from all adjoining lots or rights-of-way by a screening device not less than four feet in height or otherwise contained within an enclosed structure, except during such times as are designated for the removal of contents. No unpleasant or noxious odors are permitted beyond lot lines. In addition, outdoor storage shall not be located within a front yard nor within 5' of a side property line.

Local Law #3 – following a third Public Hearing, as well as approving a SEQR resolution determining that Local Law #3 will not result in any significant adverse impact on the environment, requiring no further environmental review, the Village assumed the role of lead agency, and prepared a negative declaration with respect to the local law. The Board then approved, pending review by the Onondaga County Planning Agency, Local Law #3 of 2017, Chapter 250-34 – Zoning, approving a change in the zoning code so as to promote pedestrian interest and continuity on Main Street in the Village of Marcellus. The background information on the need for this proposed change is to promote pedestrian interest and continuity as envisioned by the Village Comprehensive Plan, which involves land use planning. This is the art of balancing individual rights with the collective rights of the community. Property owners should be able to develop and use their land according to their desires as long as there are no significant adverse effects on their neighbors. In keeping with its vision statement as stated in the Comprehensive Plan, the land use plan for the Village of Marcellus reflects its vision for future development and largely continues existing development patterns. All land use in the Village of Marcellus will be consistent with the adopted comprehensive plan, particularly that which seeks to protect and enhance Village property values in the commercial areas of the Village by developing and adopting design guidelines for redevelopment of existing structures and the future development of new housing and commercial buildings. This law proposes

that the street-levels of buildings fronting East and West Main Street within the Village Center Zone shall contain urban retail and other active uses including retail sales and services, banks, galleries, personal service establishments, restaurants or the like; and upper levels may contain any street-level use plus office and other non-active uses such as dwelling units, business and professional offices, medical offices, etc. Any building regulated under this section, which has dwelling units or other un-allowed uses on the street level existing at the time of adoption of this section shall be exempted from its application.

Spring Brush Pickup Dates – the Village Board and DPW are going to try something new for the 2017 Brush Pickup. The Board approved a motion to allow brush to be placed at the curb on Saturdays and Sundays for pickup on Mondays from April 3rd to May 8th. In addition, during the summer months (June, July and August), brush may also be placed at the curb on Saturdays and Sundays for pickup on the first Monday of each month during those summer months. In addition, the Town of Marcellus has announced dates for the Trash Transfer Stations and they are: Fridays, April 28^h and May 5th, and May 12th, from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Saturdays, April 29th, May 6th, and May 13th, from 8 a.m. to Noon. Permits are required and are issued through the Town of Marcellus Clerk's Office. Tires require an additional permit, as well as items that contain Freon, such as refrigerators, freezers, air conditioners or dehumidifiers - these require another permit. Some items are not accepted including garbage, OCRRA recyclables, liquids or hazardous waste including paint, oil tanks, fuel tanks, motor vehicles, roofing shingles and brush over 6 inches in diameter. Also, there will be an Electronics Waste Disposal Day included with the trash days this year and that will require a special permit. A shredder truck will also be scheduled for one morning – May 6, 2017 – from 9 to Noon and the shredder truck will be at the Town Hall, not at the dumpsite on Lee Mulroy Road. Times and dates will also be posted on the town's website.

Proposal of Eagle Scout Project to Replace Village Flower Boxes – the Mayor introduced Kyle Denka who, for his Eagle Scout Service Project, has offered to replace Village flower boxes and stands that presently serve as street name markers and community flower gardens. Having composed a list of materials, and acquiring quotes from three different suppliers, Kyle offered, with material funding provided by the Village, to pick up materials, cut and assemble the flower boxes and stands, remove and dispose of old flower boxes/stands and install the new flower boxes and stands. He would be able to do this over two weekends in April, dispose of the old boxes and stands during the Town Trash Days, and start installation at the beginning of May, with an end date prior to flower planting on the weekend of May 20th and 21st. Following his presentation, the Board approved a motion to support and fund the project at a cost estimated to be approximately \$900, and to thank Kyle for his gracious offer to the community.

Annual Storm Water Report – the Annual Storm Water Report was tabled until the next regular meeting of the Village Board in April.

Benchmarking Resolution – Clean Energy Communities – the Board accepted a motion to approve a resolution establishing energy benchmarking requirements for certain Village of Marcellus Municipal Buildings. This resolution is part of the Clean Energy Communities program, a \$16-million statewide initiative to help local governments across the state reduce energy consumption and drive clean energy use in their communities. Approving such a resolution will help the Village earn a Clean Energy Community designation and access to additional grant funding, with no local cost share, to implement additional clean energy projects. Details of the resolution are on file in the Village Office.

B & L Proposal – Paul Street Sidewalk Improvements – the Board also approved the design proposal submitted by B & L Engineering for the Paul Street Sidewalk Improvement Project, at a cost not to exceed \$8,800. This project, funded largely through the NYSDOT Multi-Modal Program and the endorsement of NYS Senator John DeFrancisco, calls for the construction of approximately 450 lf of new concrete sidewalk along the north side of

Paul Street, between North Street (NYS 174) and Austindale Avenue, as well as the cleaning of approximately 200 feet of existing drainage structures and pipes.

Annual Meeting and Tentative Budget Hearing – the Annual Meeting will take place on April 3, 2017 and includes the appointment of non-elected officials, establishing regular meeting dates, as well as designating official newspapers and depositories. In addition, a Public Hearing will take place on April 3, 2017 to consider the tentative budget for the Village for the next fiscal year. Approval of the final budget will probably take place at the next regular Board meeting, on April 24, 2017.

No Parking – regulations during the winter months, which calls for no parking on any Village streets from 2 a.m. to 7 a.m., ends on April Fools Day, April 1st

Sign Placement – soon the Highway Department will re-install pedestrian crossing signs on Main Street in the Village. The signs are placed in the road, near the crosswalks, warning motorists that all vehicles must yield to pedestrians who are walking the crosswalk – a New York State law. It is hoped that the signs will make it easier for pedestrians, particularly schoolchildren, to cross Main Street safely as well as cause motorists to slow down as they approach these crosswalks.

Flag Replacement – the American flags that line several of our main streets in the Village are, because of wear and tear, usually replaced every five years. This spring, 48 flags along with 6 poles and 6 brackets will be replaced in time for the Memorial Day and Old Home Days celebrations. We are very pleased to announce and to thank American Legion Post #297 and its members for a generous donation of over \$700 to purchase these flags, poles and brackets. The contribution is most appreciated and is another excellent example of how committed the American Legion is to our Village and its residents. Thank you.

Village Earth Day Participation – the Board would also like to announce that the Village will again participate in an Earth Day clean up on Thursday, April 27, 2017, with a rain day of Friday, April 28, 2017. Second grade students from Heffernan Elementary School will participate in this event and we welcome any individuals or groups to join us in helping clean the Village of any litter lying along the roadside and village rights of way. We will meet in front of the Village Hall to distribute bags and gloves. If you're interested in participating, as a group or an individual, please show up about 1:30 p.m. and contact the Village Clerk at 673-3112 for more information.

Utility Bills – the utility bill that residents receive this month is the last bill for our fiscal year. Residents should note that if not paid by April 28, 2017, the bill will be re-levied to the tax bill for June 1, 2017. If those bills for tenants who pay their own utilities are not paid by April 28, 2017, these too will be re-levied onto the owner's taxes for June 1, 2017. Please note that, unlike previous utility bills, payment for this final bill for the year must be made within the month.

Creek Walk Under Construction – there remains an eight-foot wide section of the trail to be constructed behind the McClurg Building on Main Street. This will require a retaining wall to be built, along with asphalt paving, concrete work and pavement striping and will be competitively bid. We have received permission from NYSDOT to advertise in the local paper as well as in selected journals. This began earlier in March and will continue for three weeks. The bids for the project are due in to the Village Office on April 12, 2017, by 11:00 a.m. B & L Engineering will review the bids and make recommendation to award the construction bid for the Creekwalk. It is expected that construction of the Creekwalk Project will be able to start in April or May, depending on the weather.

Budget – the Village Board is working to finalize the 2017-18 Village Budget in preparation for the Annual Meeting. In January, Village residents received their County and Town tax bill and that bill reflected a tax reduction for Village residents. Similar to last six years, this tax reduction was made possible by the County, having slashed by more than half the sales tax revenue that used to go to the Village, was then able to pass on those tax savings to Village property owners in the form of reduced County taxes. Ever since, the Village has had to make up for the revenue taken by the County. Our budget remains far short of what the Board needs to provide adequate services but we do not anticipate a tax increase this year. Pending further review, the Board is hoping to propose that last year's Village tax of \$6.85/1000 of assessed value remain the same, falling within the state-mandated tax cap.

Flushable Wipes Are NOT Flushable!!! – We continue to urge residents to avoid using what are called flushable wipes – they are NOT flushable – nor are dental floss, cotton swabs, hygiene products, kitty litter, facial tissue, fats, oils, and grease. All of these should be put in the trash and only human waste and toilet paper should be flushed. To avoid plumbing problems, which will most likely occur on residential property, not in the Village main, please be aware of this concern. We also reference an Internet video that explains the problems associated with flushable wipes, which is posted on the Village website. We also urge residents to review the "Trash NOT Sewer" flyer that accompanied a previous newsletter. The information is invaluable and will help residents understand the importance of putting items in the trash, and not into the sewer.

Homeowner Responsibility for Sewers – property owners should be aware that they are required to maintain the sewer laterals that extend from their homes to the sewer main – typically located in the middle of the road. Sewer laterals are entirely owned by the private property owner, who is responsible for the entire length of the lateral, to the sewer main. At the sewer main, the Village assumes responsibility.

Area Code Overlay Approved for 315 Area Code – residents should be aware of the need to change the way they dial their phone call. To complete calls within the 315 area code region, the new dialing procedure requires calls to dial **area code + telephone number**. This means that all calls in the 315 area code that are currently dialed with seven digits will need to be dialed using **ten digits – area code + telephone number**. There will also be a new area code, **680**, assigned to the same geographic region as the existing area code – 315, and the same dialing procedure will apply to telephone numbers assigned to the new 680 area code – **680 + telephone number**. The new dialing procedures are now in effect and if you do not use the new procedure, your calls will not be completed and a recording will instruct you to hang up and dial again.

Increase in the sewer rates – unless the Village is able to secure additional funding to upgrade the treatment plant, the DEC will probably issue a consent order. This will probably mean that the Village will have to go to court, and the likelihood that the court will order the upgrade. This upgrade of over \$5.5 million can **only** come from sewer rate increases and the increase will be massive. Village, Town and School sewer users should be aware of this very distinct possibility.

Village Meetings for April 2017 – a list of those meetings scheduled for April 2017 has been prepared for those so interested – please note also that the Village Office was closed on Good Friday, April 14th, and on Memorial Day, May 29th. Also, Olde Home Days 2017 is scheduled for June 2nd, 3rd, and 4th and the Committee continues to meet the first Thursday of every month, in the Village Board Room. The next such meeting is planned for April 6, 2017.