

Monthly Updates – from the Mayor – September 2018

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 (marboard@twcny.rr.com) the Village Office.

Leaf and Brush Pickup – a motion was made to approve the fall brush and leaf pickup dates – brush pickup for 2018 will extend from Monday, September 24th to Monday, October 8th and residents may put our leaves from Monday, October 15th to Sunday, November 18th. After November 19th, leaf pickup will end, and residents may collect leaves into large brown paper leaf bags and place the bags at the curb for pickup, weather permitting. Only these leaf bags will be picked up after November 19th. Residents may also drop off brush and leaves anytime at the Village compost site, located next to the Highway Department garage.

Methodist Church Nursery School Emergency Off-Site Shelter – a motion was approved to table the Emergency Off-Site Shelter proposal for this year because the Methodist Church Nursery School did not open for operation this year (or approve a request by the director of the Marcellus Church Nursery School to designate the Village Hall as its emergency off-site shelter, should the need arise).

GML 239 Report of Final Action – a motion was approved to accept the proposed action with regard to the Onondaga County Planning Board's Approval of Chrysler Street improvements in the Village of Marcellus, with comment that the OCPB supports the Village of Marcellus in working to implement multiple community planning goals to increase safety, access and mobility options, reinforce its traditional community character, and add value to its village through contextual improvements within the public realm.

Closing of First Street for Halloween – a motion was approved to again close First Street between the hours of 5:00 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. on Halloween for trick-or-treating, subject to conditions on October 31st, which is a Wednesday this year.

Request to Adjust Utility Bills – the Board has received another request from the property owner at 32-34 East Main Street (Account #1044), with concerns over utility bills received from the village that included a drastic increase in water consumption over the last 12 months. After addressing the issue with OCWA, it was determined that the water meters were faulty, causing the property owner to be significantly overcharged for both water and sewer usage. OCWA provided evidence to the Village Clerk via email that the readings were incorrect and they have issued a credit. By using previous utility billings, it was determined that the average sewer bill would be approximately \$160.00, a figure that was verified by averaging utility charges from June of 2016 through July of 2017, prior to the increased bills starting in October of 2017. Upon applying this adjustment to the property owner's utility bills, it has been determined that the property owner is entitled to a credit of \$1,160.00, a figure that will be used for future utility payments until it is disbursed in full.

The same property owner also had concerns with a bill received from the Village of Marcellus for sewer use of his property at 22 West Main Street (Account #551). The property owner stated that the meter has been disconnected from that residence, and that there is no sewer usage at all for that property, and therefore, there should not be any charge related to sewer for that address. Utility charges for 22 West Main, for sewer and refuse, from this point forward should be \$0.00.

A motion was approved that the Board accept the findings of the Village Clerk and adjusts the sewer charges at 32-34 East Main as well as at 22 West Main to reflect the foregoing.

Updates – Mayor and Board

Creekwalk – a year later, and Fred’s Trail has had a number of walkers and the Village has received a number of compliments. If some residents are not familiar with the now-completed project, we urge them to click on the Village website <http://villageofmarcellus.com/> and then on News, then Village News, then Creek Walk News.

Street repairs – acting upon the D.P.W. chief’s recommendations, asphalt repairs to Wilson Drive and Dunlap Avenue have been made, as well as fiber micro paving to Reed Street, Bradley Street and Park Street. Budgetary constraints have limited the desire of the Village Board to add other street repairs in this year’s budget.

Sidewalks – per the D.P.W. Chief’s recommendations, repairs have been made to selected areas on South Street, and East Main Street and perhaps to Chrysler Street if pending budgetary concerns do not prevent this.

Trees – some tree removals have been or will be done on South Street and Kelly Ave and perhaps another on Chrysler and Reed Streets, along with some trimming. Some tree plantings are expected to take place in late summer or early fall, but the locations have not yet been determined.

Parking - as we approach the winter months, we remind residents that there is no overnight parking (from 2:00 a.m. to 7:00 a.m.) on Village streets from November 1st to April 1st. 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.

School In Session – and we urge residents to be aware of the fact that there will be students walking to school, particularly on First Street. Also, the State DOT has begun operation of the flashing lights on North Street and the Village Police Department will be even more vigilant in their enforcement of the traffic laws on that street – 20 mph.

Highland Flooding – following our public information meeting in June, regarding the drainage on Highland Drive and related streets, the Village’s first step will be that recommended by MRB Group – this week, the Village D.P.W. and the Town Highway Department, in a coordinated Intermunicipal activity, will begin opening the ditches and replacing the driveway culverts along the west side of Highland Drive. This will, hopefully, prevent storm water from jumping the ditches and flooding those properties below and allow storm water to move quickly to the 24” catch basin at Reed Parkway. Property owners should be aware that the ditches must absolutely remain open to allow the water to move north to Reed Parkway. At this time, unfortunately, we are unable to address the storm water and natural springs that overflow into the drainage area behind Meadow Street. Much of this water comes from an area beyond the Village limits and will require a joint effort involving the Village and the Town and town property owners. The Village Board has authorized the posting of notices at each of the residences on the southern part of Highland Drive so that those residents will be aware of the pending construction.

Clean Energy Community – as was mentioned at an earlier Board meeting, the Village of Marcellus has been designated a Clean Energy Community by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA). A \$100,000 grant has been reserved for the Village of Marcellus to implement clean energy projects. Beginning in October, and for duration of about five weeks, this will involve a retrofitting of several existing Village lights, including the historic lights on Main, North and South Streets as well as the coach lights on Kinderwood Drive to direct wire LED type fixtures. Other LED lighting retrofits have already or will occur in the Village Hall, the Village

garage and the Water Pollution Control Plant. The Village continues to be most appreciative of the NYSERDA award as well as the efforts of our Village employees in helping to both secure this funding and coordinate the construction project itself. The average annual energy savings for the Village as a result of this project is estimated to be in excess of \$20,000.

Household and Hazardous Waste – Do not pour hazardous waste or grease down the drain. Household hazardous waste products (such as paints, cleaners, oils, and pesticides) dumped down the drain are most often not removed by the wastewater treatment process. Harmful chemicals from these wastes end up in rivers, creeks, and lakes where they can eventually enter the natural food chain. Additionally, pouring hazardous waste down the drain can endanger the health of municipal workers, disrupt the treatment process, and accumulate pollutants in aquatic ecosystems. Residential users can rid their homes of dangerous chemicals lurking around by dropping off such waste at four locations in the County, 6:30 am to 6:00 pm, WITH AN APPOINTMENT. Appointments must be made (315-453-2866) five days in advance of your drop-off date. We also remind residents to cover garbage cans since those uncovered often attract crows and other pests. Washing out garbage cans and recyclable bins every so often, also helps promote a healthier environment.

Fall Trash Days – for Town and Village of Marcellus residents has begun, last weekend, and will continue next weekend, September 28th from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. and September 29th, from 8 a.m. to noon. A permit, available by purchase from the Town Hall, is required for this service. Please check the Village and Town websites for more detailed information.

Repair Plans - owning a home has its challenges and dealing with emergency repairs is definitely one of them. Not knowing who to call or how much the repair will cost can be overwhelming and frustrating. Home-Serve USA is a company that offers Emergency Repair Service Plans that protect the property owner from expensive repairs that are not typically covered by basic homeowners insurance, a local utility or a municipality. As your home ages, so does the exterior water service line that brings fresh water to your house and to the drainage system that removes sewage from your house to the Village sewer main in the street. If these lines fail, repair or replacement can be expensive and most basic homeowners insurance doesn't cover repairs to the water and sewer lines on your property. Home-Serve offers an exterior Water Service Line coverage as well as an exterior sewer line repair plan. If you are interested, we urge you to contact Home-Serve at 1-888-752-6740 or info@homeserveusa.com

Striping of Crosswalks – on some Village streets (by the Village) has taken place, along with parking spots on Main Street. Road striping on Main Street (by the County) has not taken place, nor has that on North Street (by the State).

Village Taxes – most have been paid, while the amount of unpaid taxes at present, including penalties, totaling almost \$33,000 from 25 property owners, a figure somewhat similar to previous years. Of the almost \$33,000 in taxes yet to be paid, about 26% or \$8,537.00 is from one property owner and another from a second owner totals \$3,268.00. Property owners may continue to pay unpaid taxes to the Village until October 31, 2018, when they will be turned over to the County for reimbursement.

Update on WWTP Upgrades – the \$7.7 million treatment plant upgrades mandated by NYSDEC to remove phosphorus from the plant's effluent continues to be well underway. Construction of two new clarifiers, a new UV tank, a new head works building and modifications to the control building are in progress and on schedule. The financing package includes a \$5,202,600 short term (30 year), interest-free hardship loan and a \$1,379,900 WIIA Grant (formerly called a NYS Water Grant) along with an \$80,000 WQIP #11 grant, a \$1,000,000 WQIP #14 Grant and an anticipated \$250,000 SAM Grant. In anticipation of this expense, the Village Board has increased the sewer rents significantly within the last two years. Having raised sewer rents to offset the cost of design and construction will

enable the Village to meet the mandated requirements for phosphorus removal. However, in January 2019, we anticipate another sewer rent increase of approximately 30%. This will mean a minimum quarterly sewer rate, for Village sewer users, of \$98.25 (from \$75.00) and an annual cost of \$541.39 (from \$413.13). The annual cost for outside users is anticipated to be \$676.74 (from \$516.41). In order to prepare our Treatment Plant for operation well into the 21st century, these increases, while hefty, are unavoidable.

Utility Bills – the Board realizes that residents of the community, particularly its sewer users, are very concerned about the potential for increased sewer bills. We have received a number of comments regarding the increases in sewer rates and the concern that they will continue to rise. We have explained the reasons for these rate increases, attributable mostly to the unfunded phosphorus removal mandate imposed by the NYSDEC. Our hope had been that additional funding would not be necessary, but we have determined that a substantial rise in sewer rates will be forthcoming in January 2019.

Thank You To Our Employees – the Village would like to thank all who participated in the work they did on the flower boxes this year, particularly Village employee Kathy Welsh, and our highway crew, whose attention to their care all summer was exceptional and enabled all in the community to enjoy their beauty. In addition, we call your attention to the green space on the corner of Scotch Hill and North Street. Village treatment plant employees continue to address landscaping there and provide another advertisement of the benefits that natural fertilizer can bring. Compost is mixed in with the plantings in the flowerbeds and broadcasted over the lawn area – showcasing the use of compost to the residents of Marcellus.

Planning Board – met recently to discuss and vote favorably on site plan approval for driveway, parking and dumpsters installation for the apartments at 34 North Street.

Announce Village Meetings for October 2018 – the Village Clerk has printed copies of future meeting dates for the Village for the benefit of residents. Please note that the Village Office will be closed for Columbus Day, October 8th, BUT that there will be NO delay in trash pickup that week. The brush and leaf pickup dates are also listed on the handout, and there is another reminder that First Street will be closed from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. on Halloween, Wednesday, October 31st.