



Supervisor Chris Burdick's Report – December 31, 2015



Happy New Year and Thank You!

As 2015 draws to an end and I complete my second year as Supervisor, I'd first like to thank the people of Bedford for re-electing to a second term. I also wish to thank the men and women who work for the Town. They are a conscientious and proficient group who are devoted to serving our community well. Though the following is my last monthly report for the year, we are planning our second Annual Report for the Town which we hope to have available early in 2016. I wish you and yours a happy, healthy and safe New Year.

Community Choice Aggregation – Implementation is Drawing Near

Community Choice Aggregation is the most significant, game-changing environmental measure which Westchester County has considered in many years. CCA offers residents and small businesses the benefit of aggregated purchasing power for their electricity. It is entirely voluntary. If you wish to stay with your present electricity provider, you simply “opt out” of the program – a process which will be simple and straightforward and one which you can do at any time with no cost or penalty. CCA also will offer a 100% renewable energy option to help us move away from fossil fuels. The Town Board will be considering at its January 5 meeting entering into agreements with Sustainable Westchester, Inc., the Westchester not-for-profit corporation which has spearheaded the initiative in New York State. Stay tuned!

What's Your Vision for Bedford? Let Us Know!

The Town of Bedford wants your input in updating the Town Comprehensive Plan. **January 13th** - Bedford Presbyterian Church & **February 3rd** - Katonah Library, each from 7:00 pm-9:00 pm. Come join your neighbors and friends in a facilitated workshop asking residents for input and advice regarding

the Town's priority issues, assets, and challenges, as it begins planning for the future. Pace University's Land Use Law Center will organize people into small groups to collect input and facilitate the dialogue. This is a great way to voice your opinion regarding the things that matter to you. The Town will be updating its Comprehensive Plan, which describes the community's current conditions and provides guidance for future growth and preservation. [Click here](#) for the flyer – the topics listed are examples only and discussion is by no means limited to them. This is a great opportunity to learn more and get involved with the future of the community.

Traffic Safety Working Group

The next meeting of the TSWG will be held on Tuesday, January 12 at 8:00 AM in the courtroom of the Town House. The meeting is open to the public and you're invited to attend. We'll be considering requests and recommendations made to the Town. Please call or e-mail me with any comments or suggestions.

Property Tax Credit Reimbursement Checks

You've probably heard about New York State's Property Tax Freeze program. Under the program, the State will send reimbursement checks to eligible homeowners, if the school district, local government, fire district or other taxing jurisdiction complies with the Property Tax Freeze. Westchester County and all taxing jurisdictions in Bedford are tax freeze compliant. Eligible homeowners do not need to take any action. Each eligible homeowner will receive a reimbursement check from the New York State Department of Taxation and Finance (DTF) equal to the greater of the actual increase in the homeowner's tax bill, or the previous year's tax bill multiplied by an inflation factor. For each of the Tax Freeze program's three years (2014, 2015, 2016), DTF will mail eligible taxpayers a reimbursement check. The reimbursement check related to the Town taxes should be in homes by the end of January. For further information regarding the Program, including homeowner eligibility requirements, contact DTF at (518)-453-8146 or at https://www.tax.ny.gov/pit/property/property_tax_freeze.htm

Click here <http://www.bedfordny.gov/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/2015TaxReimbursementFacts.pdf> for facts and information regarding New York State's Tax Reimbursement program.

Click here <http://www.bedfordny.gov/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/2015VeteransTaxExemptionFacts.pdf> regarding the Veterans Tax Exemption.

Separate Recyclables to Be Sure Your Trash is Collected

Recycling has never been easier, now that single stream recycling is in place and most residents and businesses are separating recyclables from their household trash for collection. As mentioned previously, under County and Town law haulers are prohibited from collecting trash from anyone not in compliance with the recycling laws.

Starting in February 2016, to comply with the laws, all haulers will leave yellow notification stickers that say: "OOPS, We Found Recyclables Mixed With Your Garbage" on the trash containers of any customers not properly separating recyclables. Following the notification stickers, those who fail to separate recyclables risk their trash collection being suspended.

As a guide for the amount of materials that should be recycled from a typical household, approximately two-thirds of household trash consists of recyclable materials. That means that your recycling bin typically will have twice as much material as your trash bin. Please read the complete list of recyclable materials at <http://www.bedfordny.gov/resources/recycling-sustainable-programs/>

Item 3. Ask a neighbor or friend who can help, or call Bedford 2020 at 914-620-2411. Our system can recycle many more materials than were traditionally recycled. Almost everything in the house except food and heavily soiled paper is now recyclable.

The Town Board and I are very pleased that recycling rates have increased over the past two years as our new Single Stream program has come into effect, but in accordance with New York State planning goals, we have much further to go to reach our goal of 40 percent recycling by 2020 and 75 percent by 2030. Please help us reach these goals. We appreciate your efforts and thank you for your cooperation. Please call me at 666-6530 or supervisor@bedfordny.gov with any questions.

Continuing to Move Ahead for the Repair or Demolition of Derelict Zombie House

The Town is continuing with a systematic approach of identifying vacant and neglected houses in disrepair. Where the degree of disrepair is significant, the Building Inspector has issued notices of violation to the property owners to take action. In instances in which the Building Inspector determines that any structure on the property is unsafe and the owner has disregarded the Town's efforts to bring the properties into compliance with New York State and local property maintenance code, the Town is taking further action under Town Code. Chapter 42 of the Town Code "Unsafe Buildings" enables the Town to commence a proceeding to repair or demolish a derelict and unsafe house. Recently we have taken action regarding a house at 53 Jay Street in Katonah. It is unsafe and neglected. The Building Inspector determined that the house should be demolished.

Bedford Hills Train Station

We understand from former Councilman Francis Corcoran, now our representative in the County Legislature, that the MTA will be providing the Town in January a draft lease for municipal purposes with an option to convert the lease to other than municipal purposes at market rate. As earlier reported, at the December 1 meeting, the Town Board approved a three month extension until March 30, 2016 of the sublease of the train station to the Bedford Hills Historical Museum. The sublease provides that the Museum work cooperatively with community groups (Bedford Hills Live, the Bedford Hills Free Library and Bedford Hills Neighborhood Association) on the shared use of the station building. Be sure to come by on Saturday mornings from 10 AM to 2 PM for the Farmer's Market and on January 17 for the Bedford Hills Model Train Show. Learn more about what's happening at the train station by checking out our [Community Calendar](#). Our thanks to the Museum, Bedford Hills Live, BHNA and the Library for injecting new life and energy into the station which the Board applauds.

January Deadline for Applications for Vacancies on Boards and Committees

The Town Board is accepting applications through January 15 for vacancies on the following:

- 1) Board of Assessment Review
- 2) Conservation Board
- 3) Tree Advisory Board
- 4) Veterans Advisory Committee
- 5) Committee on Seniors

If you'd like more information on any Board or Committee, please check on the Town's website. If you are interested in serving, please e-mail your resume with a cover letter to supervisor@bedfordny.gov. You also may mail it to me at Supervisor, 321 Bedford Road, Bedford Hills, New York 10507.

Septic Law on Cleaning and Inspection: Septic System Program – Open for Business

State regulation requires that you have septic system cleaned and inspected within the past four years. Septic inspections are required by New York State law as incorporated in town law. You don't want to encounter septic system problems in the middle of the winter.

If you have a failing septic system, help is here. Bedford's Septic System Repair and Replacement program is open for business. If you are in the New York City watershed, you may be eligible for reimbursement up to 50% of approved eligible expenses for repair or replacement of a septic system, as well as design engineering costs not to exceed 20% of total construction costs. If you received a letter from me about the septic law, you're in the watershed. Almost all the properties in Bedford Hills and Katonah and many in Bedford Village are in the watershed. We now have a number of items posted on our website at <http://www.bedfordny.gov/departments/planning/septic/> . **Westchester County does not permit us to reimburse you for repair or replacement before October 6.** If your septic collector or contractor reports that your system is in failure, and you wish to benefit from the reimbursement program, go onto the website and download the application form which provides the simple steps you should take. Still have questions? Please call me at 666-6530 or e-mail me at supervisor@bedfordny.gov

Public Works Department Update

Highway

Work during the month of November included pothole patching, installation and maintenance of drainage systems, and dirt road grading. Bulk leaf collection began as well. We are still catching up from winter damage with numerous catch basin repairs.

Consolidated Water District Microfiltration Plant

Operations continue to go well, and we have received positive feedback from customers on the taste and softer quality of the new supply.

Water Operations

Report provided under separate cover. Water main replacement on Douglas Drive was completed in November. Roosevelt drive water main installation work began in November.

Recycling

On September 2, 2015 Winters Brothers began operating the Town recycling center. The Recycling Center has changed to single stream recycling. The change has been well received by our residents.

Antioch Homes Affordable Housing Proposal

We expect a decision on the Town's application to the New York State Office of Community Renewal for a \$421,050 Community Development Block Grant to defray the cost of infrastructure work and refurbishment for the adaptive re-use for affordable housing of the Antioch Baptist Church's vacant church on Railroad Avenue. The CDBG funds are the linchpin to the project, and if we have positive news on the application, we'll be moving ahead quickly with survey work, legal work and architectural plans. This will be the largest affordable housing program for Bedford in many years. We are excited and optimistic about the prospects for high quality housing, improvement in the neighborhood and most importantly, affordable accommodations. There is widespread support for the program as evidenced by the unanimous approval by the Westchester County Board of Legislature in October for two other

funding components: (1) East of Hudson Water Equality Improvement Program funds; and (2) acquisition and rehabilitation funding.

Comptroller's Report

The Town adopted the 2016 budget on December 1, 2015. The total tax levy for the entire budget is 1.93%. This is below the tax cap by 0.24%. The town's auditors were here for preliminary audit work on December 1 & 2, 2015. They will return after the close of the year for a full audit. We are working towards closing the books for 2015 and prepare for the audit.

Payroll work on Affordable Care Act (ACA) compliance continues. The town will be issuing a 1095 form to our employees along with their W-2 form. Both forms are required to complete income tax returns for 2015 in 2016.

REVENUE AREAS OF NOTE

Mortgage Tax has actual data from October through September 2015. The actual percentage over 2014 is a 13.26% decrease. This is the final for the year, subject to audit review. Mortgage tax is \$955,797, which is \$44,203 under budget.

Sales Tax has actual data from January through September 2015. County sales tax shows a 1.47% decrease over 2014. This revenue is projected to be \$2,486,991 which is \$86,991 over our budget of \$2,400,000.

Parking has actual data from January through November 2015. The actual percentage over 2014 is a 2.63% increase. Revenue to date is \$889,121 which is an increase of \$22,763 from last year at this time. The revenue for the year is projected to be \$891,265 which is \$38,735 under budget.

Fines and forfeited bail has actual data for January through October 2015. Revenue is \$568,678 which is \$8,925 under last year's revenue at this time. The revenue is projected to be \$676,120 which is \$26,120 over budget.

Safety Inspection Fees has actual data for January through October 2015. Revenue is \$558,550 which is 64,003 under last year's revenue at this time. This revenue is projected to be \$677,056 which is \$62,944 under budget.

EXPENDITURES: 2015 expenditures are within budget limits at this time except as follows:

Engineer Consultant

001.1440.405 - Is over budget by \$11,947.06. This is from additional town work by the Town Engineer.

Office of Emergency Management

With hurricane season upon us, we thought it would be helpful to update the community on what we've been doing to bolster our storm preparedness. The Police Department has established an Office of Emergency Management which I have tasked with coordinating with the Town's fire

departments and ambulance corps. We have quarterly OEM meetings with these other agencies. A fall “desk top” storm response exercise is being scheduled.

Within the Town we prepare for any potentially serious weather events. The Police Department, Department of Public Works and Recreation & Parks Department each holds emergency preparedness meetings with senior staff (and in the case of the Police Department its community relations sergeant) to discuss plans should a potential weather event actually affect our area. Among the preparations:

1. Participation in the OEM conference calls among other agencies and weather reporting services.
2. Readiness of vehicles in our fleet (which vehicles may be needed, ie 4x4's, which are actually present or whether any of them are in the shop for service. The feasibility if they are in the shop to expedite the service to get them ready in time. Availability of safety equipment such as protective helmets for operating police officers (in case the UTV had been deployed, etc.)
3. Projected staffing levels over the period for which the weather event has been projected Posting for additional manpower during periods that are forecast to be most significant. Placing restrictions on any time off requests during the projected operational periods
4. Coordinating with each of the other departments as to the readiness of generators to be used to power critical intersections within the town (such as I-684 & Route 22 and various others).
5. Schedule times for release of information to public such as updates and suggestions on how to prepare for a weather event (batteries, water, etc) Also plans for deploying our large message boards to display warning messages in the days leading up to event.
6. Plans for “reverse 911” notification in the case of a weather event with widespread power outage, property damage or other heavy impact.
7. Conduct re-familiarization training with our OEM software and testing remote connections for our laptops from Bedford Hills Fire Department Emergency Operations Center to Police Department headquarters.
8. Coordinate with Bedford Hills Fire Department to see if its EOC will be available and who will be primary contact if we want to activate the EOC at BHFD.
9. Ascertain the availability of supervisory personnel over the storm period forecast for continuity of operations if it is a prolonged event.
10. Making preparations for possible opening of the warming center to the community in the event, including checking inventory, scheduling personnel, determining availability of community volunteers to help staff.
11. Make ready the “Call and Check” program for residents (seniors, disabled or others with mobility issues) who have registered with the Town for a call to check on them.
12. Constant monitoring of weather services forecasts and adapting to changing needs as necessary, to include scaling back planned resources if threat is decreasing or scaling up planned resources if threat is increasing.
13. Report and advise the Supervisor on status of emergency preparations and recommended action.

Please be sure you and your family are prepared as well. See the following guide: http://www.fema.gov/pdf/areyouready/areyouready_full.pdf . Please also see below for emergency notifications from your utility company and NIXLE alerts.

Keep Posted!

NIXLE Alerts - for up to date notifications (weather, road closures, etc.) [Click here](#) . You can register for notifications or enter your zip code to receive local alerts.

For the *Town Calendar*, [click here](#)

Reminder: Emergency Information from NYSEG and Con Edison

Con Edison notified us that you now can *text* Con Edison about power outages. Here's the message they sent us:

“Prefer texting? No problem. Sign up by texting REG to OUTAGE (688243) and we'll text instead of calling.

But don't wait for us to contact you. The sooner we know about a power problem, the sooner we can respond. Reach us at conEd.com, by texting OUT to OUTAGE after you sign up for texting, with our My conEdison app for Droid and Apple devices, or by calling 1-800-75-CONED (1-800-752-6633).”

Both NYSEG and Con Edison encourage customers with special needs to enroll in special services for them.

“**NYSEG** is committed to providing their customers with safe, reliable energy delivery. They also offer many services for special need customers, including:

- Special Identification for households where everyone is elderly, blind or disabled
- Large print, sight-saver Bills for visually-impaired customers
- Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) grants
- NYSEG's Energy Assistance Program (EAP)
- Project SHARE emergency energy assistance program

If you or someone in your household relies on life-sustaining equipment, you should contact NYSEG immediately!

How to call NYSEG:

Electricity interruptions or emergencies: 1.800.572.1131 (24 hours a day, every day)

Customer relations center: 1.800.572.1111

Payment arrangements: 1.888.315.1755

Hearing and speech-impaired: Dial 711 (New York Relay Service)”

**“Message from Con Edison: Customer Central Special Services
Safety for Special Customers:**

It is important that we have a record of everyone who uses electrically operated life-support equipment or has medical hardships so we can contact them in an emergency. To learn more and complete the survey, please visit the link below. You can also let us know by calling 1-800-75-CONED (1-800-752-6633). Con Edison customers can enroll for this service by visiting www.conEd.com, clicking on Customer Central, and then the “special services” link. You will need your account number. To keep our records current, each year we send a letter asking you to recertify.

<http://www.coned.com/customercentral/specialservices.asp>

Customers with Special Needs:

We recognize that senior citizens and people with disabilities need special attention.

That’s why we offer a variety of services and billing and payment options that make life a little bit easier for the elderly, visually or hearing-impaired, or customers with permanent disabilities. Please visit the link below to view the *Customers With Special Needs* brochure.

<http://www.coned.com/customercentral/specialservices.asp>”

I ask you to please send me an e-mail at supervisor@bedfordny.gov should you have any questions or comments on this report or any of our work on the Town Board.



Chris Burdick
Town Supervisor