



Supervisor Chris Burdick's Report – February 27, 2015

Another Challenging Winter

Our Highway, Water, Recreation and Parks, and Building Department staff have done an excellent job clearing snow and ice and maintaining the roads throughout this challenging winter. Some have asked me about sidewalks. For our crews, roads come first, then sidewalks. Our crews have been strained to the limit with one storm after the other – with a forecast of another this weekend. We are certainly concerned about pedestrians using our sidewalks and do try to get to them as quickly as we can following the road clearing. We prioritize the sidewalk clearing starting first with school areas and heavy pedestrian/commuter areas. Of course, please do contact me if you have a specific problem and thank you for your patience and understanding.

Update on the Government Efficiency Plan – Meeting the Tax Freeze

As I mentioned last month, the Town has been working to ensure compliance with the Property Tax Freeze Law. To ensure that eligible homeowners qualify for the Freeze Credit, the Town adopted a tax cap compliant budget and is preparing a Government Efficiency Plan providing a sustained 1% reduction in the tax levy (base year 2014). Comptroller Ed Ritter and I recommending to the Town Board and the Board approved partnering with Westchester County in the development of the Government Efficiency Plan, as there are decided efficiencies and benefits in doing so. Comptroller Ritter and I also are recommending to the Board that we approve the three fire districts joining with the Town in the Plan to be submitted to the County Budget Office by March 31. We are confident that our Government Efficiency Plan will result in savings to Bedford taxpayers and comfortably meet the NYS requirements.

Town Comprehensive Plan

On February 3 the Town Board discussed the process for updating the Town's 2003 Comprehensive Plan and also issues related to chain stores. As to chain stores, there may be concerns regarding hours of operation, signage, traffic, drive throughs and other issues which the Planning Board frequently encounters. As the Comprehensive Plan, we are asking the Planning Board to take the lead on it and make recommendations to the Board on any revisions and updates it considers appropriate. There will be ample opportunity for the public to participate in the process – which is essential – as this is the community's documents. As to chain stores, we're also asking the Planning Board to evaluate the planning tools employed now and consider what supplementary measures, if any, may be appropriate.

Comptroller's Report

Comptroller Ed Ritter reported on February 19 as follows:

We are in the process of closing the town's books for 2014. Departments have a cut-off point of January 30, 2015 to submit any remaining invoices chargeable to 2014. A preliminary projection for the General Fund shows a potential surplus mostly attributed to additional revenue from the Building Department and a substantial grant realized in 2014 from prior years. The Highway fund looks to be within their 2014 budget, using less of the fund balance originally budgeted for the fund.

We processed our final payroll on December 26, 2014. All year end accruals have been captured from the January 9, 2015 payroll. We have processed W-2 forms for all employees and will distribute them no later than January 30, 2015.

Beginning in 2012 we have been required to report all employer contributions for health care on employee W-2 forms. Our software has been updated to properly reflect this information.

With the tax cap law, we were required to report our prior levy and a total of our 2014 budget. This was reported prior to the adoption of the budget as required. The State Comptroller's Office audited my 2015 submission. They determined that it was calculated and filed correctly. The Comptroller's office actually complimented our efficiency in this matter.

REVENUE AREAS OF NOTE

Mortgage Tax has actual data from October through September 2014. The actual percentage over 2013 is a 8.43% decrease. This is the final for the year. Mortgage tax is \$1,101,935, which is \$151,935 over budget.

Sales Tax has actual data from January through December 2014. County sales tax shows a 3.51% increase over 2013. This is the final for 2014. The revenue is \$2,524,134 which is \$124,134 over our budget of \$2,400,000.

Parking has actual data from January through December 2014. The actual percentage over 2013 is a 1.00% decrease. This is the final for 2014. Revenue for the year is \$868,445 which is a decrease of \$8,792 from last year at this time. The revenue for the year is \$868,445 which is \$61,555 under budget.

Fines and forfeited bail has actual data for January through December 2014. Revenue is \$686,730 which is \$42 over last year's revenue at this time. This is the final for 2014. This revenue is \$686,730 which is \$136,730 over budget.

Safety Inspection Fees has actual data for January through December 2014. Revenue is \$724,545 which is \$30,115 under last year's revenue at this time. This is the final for 2014. This revenue is \$724,545 which is \$184,545 over budget.

EXPENDITURES

2014 expenditures are within budget limits for 2014 with the following exceptions:

POLICE DEPARTMENT OVERTIME – 001.3120.0101 has exceeded their budget of \$525,000 by \$246,861.

LEGAL COUNSEL – 001.1420.422 has exceeded its budget by \$35,990.

ENGINEER CONSULTANT – 001.1440.0405 has exceeded its budget by \$29,660

Traffic Safety Measures

At its March 3 meeting, the Town Board will consider recommendations of the Traffic Safety Working Group related to the VHB Engineering report on Cherry Street, and sight distance at the Jay Street/ Route 22 triangle and Jay Street/Barrett Road intersections.

Regarding Cherry Street:

The Traffic Safety Working Group (TSWG) recommends that the Town Board proceed with the following items, per the VHB report:

- Stripe lane widths to 10.5 feet using white shoulder striping along all of Cherry Street in order to create more narrow lanes, reduce vehicle speeds, and create more of a buffer between vehicles and pedestrians on the sidewalks. Currently white shoulder striping is only used north of Whitlockville. Striping can be accommodated in the highway operations budget as part of the annual line striping. It is recommended that the Board authorize Kevin Winn to proceed with this work.

- The VHB report pointed out that the functional classification of Cherry Street as a minor arterial appears to be a misclassification, and that it should be classified as a collector street. A less stringent classification would allow flexibility for the Town to consider vertical and horizontal deflection traffic calming measures, should the measures currently being considered prove unsatisfactory. The TSWG concurs with VHB's recommendation that the Town seek a reclassification from the New York State Department of Transportation. We emphasize, however, that this does not mean that the TSWG recommends at this time any additional traffic calming measures beyond those identified in this memo. The TSWG will evaluate the impact of any these measures which are implemented before considering further measures. It is recommended that the Board authorize Supervisor Burdick to request that NYSDOT evaluate reducing the functional classification of Cherry Street.

- The VHB report recommended a permanent speed indicator sign on southbound Cherry Street north of Quicks Lane. The TSWG recommends stationing a portable speed indicator sign in this location for a period of two months, and notifying residents of this in advance. This will give residents the opportunity to see it, react and respond and to provide enough data to evaluate efficacy.

Regarding Jay Street/ Route 22 triangle and Jay Street/Barrett Road intersections:

Sight distance looking west at the end of the triangle after making a left onto Jay Street from northbound Route 22 is quite limited. Sight distance looking west from Barrett Road when turning onto Jay Street is also quite limited. Installation of a stop sign on Jay Street in the eastbound direction at Barrett Road would mitigate both of these issues.

The Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, which regulates signs, states that stop signs may be considered at locations where a road user, after stopping, cannot see conflicting traffic and is not able to negotiate the intersection unless conflicting cross traffic is also required to stop. The TSWG recommends that the Town Board schedule a public hearing to consider this proposed stop sign. The location is shown on the attached figure.

Possible Police Station Renovations – Progress Report on Feasibility Study

The Town Board will hear a progress report on March 3 from Lothrop Associates, an architectural firm which is conducting a feasibility study of the Police Station (last renovated in the 1970s), to determine whether and what renovations may enable the facility to serve the Police Department's mission. As earlier noted, we are keenly aware of our intent to stay within the property tax cap and to maintain the Town's strong financial position.

Bedford Hills Post Office Lease

Earlier this month the Town Board approved a Letter of Intent with the U.S. Postal Service and authorized me to sign it on behalf of the Town. The Letter of Intent provides rent for the initial term beginning November 1, 2015 at \$35 square foot or \$125,440.00 per year. The rent to the Town under the expiring lease is \$79,544.81 per year. We are pleased that the post office will remain and that the hamlet of Bedford Hills will continue to be served by its own post office.

Reminder: Emergency Information from NYSEG and Con Edison

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