



Supervisor Chris Burdick's Report – July 31, 2015



Vacancy on Planning Board and Blue Mountain Board

The Town Board will be interviewing candidates for appointment to a vacancy on the Planning Board and for a vacancy on the Blue Mountain Housing Development Corporation, Bedford's affordable housing affiliate. An architect or an engineer experienced in reviewing plans would be the preferred appointee for the Planning Board position. A property manager or owner experienced with maintenance, repairs, construction estimates would be the preferred appointee for the Blue Mountain position.

2015 Bond Issuance – Favorable Interest Rate Received

Comptroller Ed Ritter reports on the bond issuance which closed today:

The Town issued a bond offering which received active interest with eight firms bidding. This resulted in very favorable interest rates for the Town. For the series 2015A bonds in the aggregate principal amount of \$8,577,016 (20 year traditional debt), the interest rate is 2.33% and for the series 2015B in the aggregate principal amount of \$977,611 (30 year level debt), the interest rate is 3.64%. The Town's Financial Advisors have told us that our triple AAA bond rating and strong financial planning were key to the favorable rates

The Town of Bedford uses bond proceeds to finance various capital expenses approved by the town board to include road work, building renovations, drainage projects and equipment purchases. Each project has a specific Period of Probable Usefulness (PPU) or years allowed to be financed over. This information is available in Local Finance Law §11, typically from five to twenty years. Larger projects or water projects can go as far as thirty to forty years. Recently, the town issued two bonds for such

projects. The first, Series 2015A, is for a variety of projects and the second, Series 2015B, is specific to a water extension project within the town.

The process for bonding requires the town board to approve bond resolutions that describe the projects, their PPU. Once approved by the town board, these resolutions are advertised in the official town newspaper and must wait a specified period of time for the public to comment. Once the designated time expires, they can be financed.

To finance or bond these approved projects, an Official Statement (OS) is prepared for the sale. This gives details of the projects, an overview of the town itself and the town's most recent financial statements. The OS requires the town to disclose its bond rating. To receive a bond rating a review of all finance and management is performed by the rating agency. Standard and Poor's (S&P) rated the town AAA/Stable.

The OS is part of the advertisement for the sale of the bonds. These bonds were advertised in the Bondbuyer newspaper and Bondbuyer.com. Bids were received on a designated date and reviewed. The best possible rate submitted is the winner. A revised OS is then issued revealing the purchaser of the bonds, the amount of the bond and the rate received.

Triple A Bond Rating Re-Affirmed

As mentioned above, Standards & Poor's reaffirmed the Town's AAA bond rating. Fewer than 5% of municipalities have the coveted rating. Comptroller Ritter also reports that year to date revenues are at or above budgeted figures and expenses are within budget limits. S&P's letter and related information are posted to the Town's website at <http://www.bedfordny.gov/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/AAABondingLtrRational.pdf>.

2016 Budget Preparations

The Town Board has set budget work sessions, each of which will be at 6:30 PM before regularly scheduled Town Board meetings and held in the Court Room at the Town House at 321 Bedford Road. We will be meeting with department heads to review each proposed 2016 budget.

September 1 to cover Police Department and Recreation and Parks Department
September 15 to cover Department of Public Works and Building Department
October 6 to cover Assessor, Clerk, Planning, Tax Departments.

We invite and welcome community input and comment.

Town Board Action and Proposals

Action Taken on Zoning Code, Sign Ordinance, Community Choice Aggregation

The Town Board at its July 7 meeting adopted an amendment to the Zoning Code related to the hamlet business districts to reduce, except for emergency service providers, to 4,000 square feet the maximum square footage on the first floor of any building for a single permitted use; an amendment to the sign ordinance for the central business districts regarding dimensions,

illumination and related items; and a local law to implement Community Choice Aggregation to provide reduced energy bills for residents and small businesses.

Bedford Village Parking

The Board on July 7 adopted and provided funding for a proposal of Evans Associates, a consultancy firm for the Town for over 25 years, to conduct an engineering/wetlands study to determine how best to maximize parking on property to be leased from the Presbyterian Church. There also may be the possibility of additional spaces at the rear of the Bedford Playhouse building. Both the Church and the owners of the Bedford Playhouse building have advised the Town of its support for these efforts. Evans has done field work for a portion of the study area and is expected to have concept plans shortly. The Town also is working with Alchemy Properties, the owner of the building, on an access agreement to allow for the study related to its property. Assuming Town Board approval, the Town would pay the cost of the construction of the parking. In developing the plans and implementing them, the Town will seek the input of the community and obtain all approvals, which at the town level would include the Bedford Village Historic District Review Commission and the Wetlands Control Commission. The intention is to ensure that parking is in place in 2016 for use by patrons of existing stores and businesses as well as the Bedford Playhouse (renovation work is anticipated to be completed mid 2016).

Town Wide Parking Enhancements

The Board on July 7 approved recommendations of Police Chief Mel Padilla and Comptroller Ed Ritter to improve parking enforcement (and therefore turnover of parking spaces), maximize parking availability and otherwise relieve insufficient parking in our hamlets. These include making available to business owners parking permits that can be issued to the business name and not a specific license plate number; acquiring at no additional cost under through an existing service provider, new upgraded handheld ticket enforcement devices to replace the “chalk sticks” and which “sync” with each other to allow for simultaneous enforcement; as a means of creating additional parking and improving safety, pursue plans to place cones as a temporary measure to close off the “U-Turn” portion of the median located in the northern end of Katonah Avenue to observe effects on traffic patterns; and install new signage for commuter and municipal parking lots to discourage unauthorized parking.

Unwanted Circulars

At its July 21 meeting, the Town Board discussed a proposed local law to restrict the non-mailed distribution of unsolicited printed publications consisting of commercial advertisements or classified ads, such as circulars we find on our front lawns. The law would enable Town residents to be put on a do not distribute list to avoid such unwanted items. The Board has asked Building Department head Steve Fraietta and Town Attorney Joel Sachs to research enforcement questions and will report back to the Town Board at its August 18 meeting.

Dangerous Dogs

Also at the July 21 meeting, the Town Board discussed an amendment to our Town code to provide further protections to the public (and pets) from dogs with a history of attacking humans or other animals. It would impose additional penalties on dogs found to be dangerous under Town law or New York State law. We expect to resume discussion at the August 18 meeting.

Permit Fees

Also at the July 21 meeting Steve Fraietta presented a recommendation to amend the permit fee for work performed without a permit. Presently it's \$1,000 regardless of the size and scope of the work. He suggests doubling the fee which would apply if the work were performed with a valid permit. He will do further research and report back on August 18.

Co-Sponsorship of the Katonah Halloween Parade

Applying the Town Board's recently adopted guidelines for co-sponsorship of community events, the Town Board approved at its July 21 meeting KVIS's request for co-sponsorship. This resulted in reducing by about \$750 the charge to KVIS for the Town's overtime expenses for the event. *See below "Community Organizations Take Note"*

Affordable Housing Possibilities

As I reported earlier, the Town is working with the Antioch Baptist Church Property on its plans for providing affordable house on property it owns on Railroad Avenue (presently comprised of a church building, a single family house and a four family house). Blue Mountain Housing Corporation Chairman Tom McGrath explained that the Corporation has provided seed funds for engineering and other pre-construction consultancy work. The Town Board authorized the engineering firm of Bibbo Associates to dig test holes on the land mentioned previously for the purpose of perc tests and septic design. Bibbo subsequently has completed its work, met with the Westchester County Board of Health and is planning to meet with Antioch's architect, as soon as selected. There is significant work ahead including zoning code text change, easement or conveyance of unused Town property abutting Metro North's right of way (for siting a septic system), review of the Historic Building Preservation Commission, review of the Planning Board, just to cite a few.

Digitizing Town Records Pays Dividends

Over the past year, we've been accelerating our efforts to scan and digitize the Town's records – including building plans and permits, assessor's and Clerk's records. Utilizing funding approved last year and a grant for the Assessor's records, the Clerk's Office has completed over 50,000 images of vital records, union contracts, insurance issues, leases, easements, vendor/consultancy agreements and other records; the assessor's office has scanned all the assessment and historic manual property records cards; the Building Department has scanned a large portion of its historical records. Why is this important and how does it help? Access to public records is easier, faster and cheaper both for residents coming to Town Hall as well as for Town operations. As an example, our Assessor has been able to more quickly and efficiently update assessor cards with property improvements thereby providing for fairer and more complete assessment.

Comptroller's Report

I met with Standards & Poors rating committee on Monday, July 6, 2015. We reviewed the Town's finances, audits and projections as well as our Capital Plan. S&P has reaffirmed the Town's AAA/Stable bond rating.

The summer payroll has reached over 300 active people. We have successfully paid all persons to date.

Work on the 2016 budget has begun. All departments have been asked to have their numbers ready for a first review by the first week of August.

A kick off meeting was held with CPI-HR and we are underway towards keeping the town in compliance with the Affordable Care Act (ACA). Much more to come on this issue.

REVENUE AREAS OF NOTE

Mortgage Tax has actual data from October through June 2015. The actual percentage over 2014 is a 13.97% decrease. This amount has been used as a basis for projecting the remainder of the year (through September). Mortgage tax is projected to be \$1,000,401, which is \$401 over budget.

Sales Tax has actual data from January through May 2015. County sales tax shows a 2.20% decrease over 2014. This revenue is projected to be \$2,468,445 which is \$68,445 over our budget of \$2,400,000.

Parking has actual data from January through May 2015. The actual percentage over 2014 is a 5.86% increase. Revenue to date is \$427,833 which is an increase of \$23,666 from last year at this time. The revenue for the year is projected to be \$930,520 which is \$520 over budget.

Fines and forfeited bail has actual data for January through May 2015. Revenue is \$260,609 which is \$26,917 under last year's revenue at this time. The revenue is projected to be \$767,442 which is \$117,442 over budget.

Safety Inspection Fees has actual data for January through June 2015. Revenue is \$429,820 which is 39,015 over last year's revenue at this time. This revenue is projected to be \$796,878 which is \$56,878 over budget.

EXPENDITURES: 2015 expenditures are within budget limits at this time

Report from our Recreation and Parks Department

On August 3rd renovations to the Bedford Village Memorial Park tennis courts and fencing are scheduled to start. The project includes resurfacing of the playing surface using the *Premier* tennis

surface system and the installation of new fence mesh and bottom rails. Weather permitting the project should be completed with the courts reopened for play in mid to late September. Project updates will be announced through the Town website. While the Bedford Village courts are closed the Bedford Hills and Katonah tennis court facilities will remain open for use by Town of Bedford residents.

Community Family Camp Out September 12th at Katonah Memorial Park – with the registration deadline of August 28th fast approaching residents interested in this new family event are encouraged to register. There are a limited number of “campsites” left. For additional information please visit the Town website under Recreation and Parks or contact the Recreation Office at 666-7004.

The 2015 Fall Recreation and Parks program brochure will be available online by visiting www.Bedfordny.gov starting Friday August 7th. Printed copies should be available starting August 24th

Report from the Department of Public Works

In addition to our routine maintenance and operations tasks throughout the Town, DPW has been busy with the following items:

Highway Division:

DPW crews are busy preparing roads for paving in August. Drainage upgrades are being installed on Sunrise Avenue in Katonah. In order to stretch the paving budget, DPW rented a milling machine and our crews are performing shoulder milling and roadway key cuts.

Paving is scheduled to begin on August 3 and will take several weeks. Roads include:

- Deer Park Road
- Woods Bridge Road from Park to Lot 3
- Valley Road
- Sunrise Avenue
- Railroad Avenue (from #307 to #339)
- Oak Road (Cherry Street side)
- The Terrace
- Woodfield Road
- McLain Street (from Barker to Rt 172)
- Court Road
- Portions of Chestnut Ridge Road
- Lakeside and Stanwood Roads
- Girdle Ridge Road/Pea Pond Road
- Dwight Lane, Howe Circle and Monroe Drive

Schedule will depend on weather and equipment status. Some roads on the list may be paved this fall. Affected residents will be notified by a flyer left at their house.

Water Division:

Our crews will be starting a program to replace valves in the Consolidated Water District to improve reliability and reduce the impact of shutdowns for main breaks or other repairs.

Recycling Center:

Construction of the new recycling center on Railroad Avenue has been delayed due to stormwater improvements required by NYCDEP. Although initial project review by NYCDEP indicated that no special improvements would be necessary, a subsequent review during construction in fall 2014 determined that stormwater treatment will be necessary to meet NYCDEP's stormwater regulations. The engineering and regulatory review process is ongoing. It is anticipated that the regulatory permit will be obtained and construction will be completed by spring 2016, and the facility will move from Adams Street to Railroad Avenue at that time. The new location will accept the same recyclables as the current facility, and will offer more parking. More information on recycling can be found at <http://www.bedfordny.gov/departments/dpw/recycling/>. As a reminder, your carter is required to provide single stream recycling at your residence. More information can be found at <http://bedford2020.org/single-stream-recycling/> <http://bedford2020.org/waste-and-recycling-task-force>.

Adams Street Highway Facility Upgrade:

In 2014 the Town Board approved funds for upgrades to the Adams Street Highway Facility in order to provide for storage of adequate volumes of winter road maintenance materials, improved mechanical maintenance facilities to better maintain our fleet, and improved vehicle washing and storage facilities to improve the longevity of our fleet. The first step of this process is to relocate the Recycling Center, as described above, in order to make the necessary land available. It is anticipated that construction at the Adams Street Yard will begin in 2017. It is important to stage construction such that it does not interfere with the ongoing operation of the yard, particularly during winter months.

Update on Securing Paving for I-684

On July 29 the Town hosted a meeting among community representative Mara Glassel, representatives of NYS Department of Transportation, State Assemblyman David Buchwald and representatives for Congressman Maloney, State Senator George Latimer. Town Board member Francis Corcoran and I participated in the meeting. Our objective is to develop a path for securing funding for paving the portions of I-684 which run through Bedford and for other possible noise reduction measures. As a point of reference, the cost of paving and related work on I-684 from Exit 6 to Hardscrabble Road is \$40 million. It was agreed that DOT will work on cost estimates for a planning study. We also discussed enforcement measures through the State Police against the very loud practice of truck engine braking. Our thanks again to Ms. Glassel, who has been organizing residents, and devoting her time and energy to this effort. Please note her petition, which you can access at www.change.org, then enter into search field "684" reads as follows:

1. Efforts have been made all over Westchester County and NY State to reduce noise pollution, while Bedford and Katonah have been ignored.
2. Increasing the speed limit to 65 mph and ever increasing truck traffic has increased the road noise substantially over the last few years.

3. Neighbors are measuring noise levels as high as 85 dBs - which has been medically proven harmful - both physically and mentally.
4. I684 has been neglected for decades and needs to be repaved for safety reasons.
5. Funds are being appropriated to neighboring towns (i.e. exit 8) - while residents off of exits 4 - 6 continue to be treated unfairly.

Our thanks as well to Assemblyman David Buchwald and his office for organizing the meeting and continuing to help move these efforts forward.

Community Organizations Take Note – Town Co-Sponsorship of Community Events

Following Town Board action at its June 16 meeting, Town Clerk Boo Fumagalli has prepared an application form, at the Town Board's request, for community organizations requesting Town co-sponsorship of community events. This means that there may be the possibility of the Town Board relieving the organization from a portion of overtime expenses for Town personnel (e.g., police and public works) assisting with the event. Please note that funds are limited and Town co-sponsorship is subject to Town Board approval. The application form and the guidelines which the Board adopted are available from the Clerk's office. The Clerk will review applications as received for completeness and compliance with the guidelines and forward them to the Town Board for action. You can contact the Clerk at 666-4534 or by e-mail at clerk at townclerk@bedfordny.gov.

Update on Proposed Septic System Repair & Replacement Fund Advances

We're moving ahead. We're pleased that the Westchester County Planning Department announce at the July meeting of the Northern Westchester Watershed Committee that it expects to submit to the Board of Legislators the legislative proposal for the Bedford plan. As earlier reported, Bedford has proposed the establishment of a \$3.5 million septic system repair and replacement fund for Bedford properties within the New York City watershed is wending its way through the approval process, which we are hopeful will be concluded in the next couple of months. If established, the program would provide up to 50% of approved eligible expenses for construction of repair remediation or replacement of a septic system, as well as design engineering costs not to exceed 20% of total construction costs. An enhanced treatment unit (utilizing more advanced technology) would be permitted, provided the County Board of Health and, if applicable, DEC and DEP, approves it. As mentioned previously, two of the Town's hamlet centers, Bedford Hills and Katonah, are located in the Croton Watershed, with Katonah's commercial district immediately adjoining the reservoir. We believe that it is important to balance continued protection of the reservoir system with the economic vitality of these central business areas and their surrounding residential neighborhoods.

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