



Supervisor Chris Burdick's Report – November 6, 2015



2016 Budget

Comptroller Ed Ritter, whom I appointed as Budget Officer for the 2016 budget, filed the tentative budget on October 30 with the Town Clerk who presented it to the Town Board at its November 5 meeting. The Town Board will consider taking action on it at the November 17 meeting and the tentative budget, together with any changes, then will become the Preliminary Budget. The Board scheduled a public hearing for December 1 for consideration of the budget. The tax cap is 2.28% and the tentative budget at 1.81% is comfortably below the cap. The tentative budget may be viewed at <http://www.bedfordny.gov/departments/finance/>.

Agreement with Police Benevolent Association (PBA)

At its November 5 meeting the Town Board approved a Memorandum of Agreement with the PBA. The employees in the PBA of Bedford had been out of contract since December 31, 2012. The agreement the Board approved covers six years, January 1, 2013 – December 31, 2018. There is a salary increase as well as increases in stipend areas such as EMT trained officers, Officer Welfare Fund and uniform allowance. There is, for the first time, a health care contribution from the PBA. The Agreement, which is posted on the website at <http://www.bedfordny.gov/union-contracts/>, which Comptroller Ed Ritter, in his presentation to the Town Board, summarized as follows

Salary increases are as follows:

2013	2%	(\$80,980)
2014	2%	(\$82,599)
2015	2.5%	(\$105,314)
2016	3%	(\$129,536)
2017	2.5%	(\$111,185)

2018 2.5% (\$113,965) (Total Cost \$623,579 without factoring health care contributions)

Average increase is 2.42% without factoring the health care contribution.

Longevity:	Increases \$50 per year per member
Welfare Fund:	Increases \$50 per year per member
Uniform Allowance	Increases \$50 per year per member
EMT/CFR Certification:	Increases \$25 per year per member
Out of Title pay:	Shift differential from patrolman to Sergeant pay

The employee health insurance contribution for existing active employees is 2% of First Grade salary for family health insurance; and 1% of First Grade salary for single coverage; for new employees it will be 13% of the health care premium (for active as well as in retirement). The cost of increases for the six years is \$854,497, which is offset by a healthcare contribution of \$271,544 for a net total cost of \$582,953. The Town and Police department will also benefit by new work rules regarding sick leave; switching/swapping tours of duty and flexibility in the SRO (school resource officer) position scheduling.

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

Bedford Hills Museum and Bedford Hills LIVE Shared Use of Train Station

At its October 20 meeting the Town Board adopted a resolution to authorize the shared use of the train station by the museum and Bedford Hills LIVE. The museum recently showcased "The Haunted Train Station" and Bedford Hills LIVE plans for events and an indoor farmer's market in the main station room. The Town's lease from the MTA expired on September 30. The MTA is allowing the Town to remain in a possession under a verbal understanding on a month to month basis while it is working on a renewal lease, which the Town requested two years ago.

Veterans Advisory Committee

At its November 5 meeting, the Town Board adopted a resolution for the formation of a Veterans Advisory Committee. The mission of the committee is to “focus on awareness, recognition, advisory and overall support of military veterans and family members who are residents of the Town of Bedford. Also act as a central point of contact and liaison for the Town in coordinating support from other County, State or Federal military-associated organizations. Provide a forum for members of the Committee to coordinate with residents throughout the Town to support community initiatives and volunteerism that benefits veterans, and their families and at the same time are consistent with the Town’s strategic visions of an inclusive and supportive environment. It will also increase awareness and understanding among Town residents of the unique challenges faced by current and former members of the military and their families; and assist wherever and whenever possible.”

The Committee will meet and report periodically to the Town Board. If you are interested in serving on the committee, 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.

Noted Briefly

Appointments to Town Boards

At the Board’s October 20 meeting, we appointed Michael Messinger to the Planning Board, Rose Goldfine to the board of the Blue Mountain Housing Development Corporation and David Beckett to the Conservation Board. Unfortunately, due to increased professional obligations, Mr. Messinger apologetically declined the appointment. The Board expects to make an appointment at its November 17 meeting.

Vacancy on Board of Assessment Review and new Veterans Advisory Committee

The Town Board will be interviewing candidates for appointment to a vacancy on the Board of Assessment Review (which hears tax assessment grievances). As noted above, the Board is seeking applicants to the new Veterans Advisory Committee. Interested individuals should send a cover letter or e-mail together with resume to Supervisor@bedfordny.gov.

Property Maintenance Code Amendments

As earlier noted, the Town Board is considering new laws to take action against not only long vacant, neglected houses in disrepair (often referred to as zombie houses), but also other properties in violation of state or Town building or property maintenance laws. We expect to take action shortly on a proposed law to provide new tools to the Building Inspector. After notice and opportunity to cure violations, if a property owner fails to act, the Town will have the authority to carry out the work and impose a lien on the property which will appear in the tax bill. This would act to spur action and if the owner fails to act will make the taxpayers whole if the Town acts.

Proceeding to Demolish Derelict Zombie House

At its October 20 meeting, the Board initiated a proceeding under Chapter 42 of the Town Code to demolish the derelict house at 53 Jay Street which has been abandoned and unattended for a number of years. The Town is serving notice on any person with an interest in the property. We anticipate taking action with respect to one or two other derelict structures at other locations.

Antioch Homes Affordable Housing Proposal – Further Progress

The Town met the tight timetable for key funding for the twelve unit Antioch Homes proposal. We submitted by the October 23 deadline an 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 church building is one of the three buildings making up the development. The Westchester County Board of Legislature unanimously approved two other funding components: (1) East of Hudson Water Equality Improvement Program funds; and (2) acquisition and rehabilitation funding. We are advised that the grant decision will be made in December. If approved, we anticipate that the work will be commenced in the first half of 2016.

Comptroller's Report

On October 15 Comptroller Ed Ritter reported as follows:

The final department heads have met with the Town Board to review their budgets. The next step will be to file the Tentative Budget with the Town Clerk on or before October 30, 2015. The Clerk will present this to the Town Board on or before November 10, 2015. The budget will be a public document and available to the public for review. At present the total tax levy for the entire budget is 1.93%. This is below the tax cap. At this time we do not have any final numbers from our healthcare provider. This has been estimated for budget projection purposes.

REVENUE AREAS OF NOTE

Mortgage Tax has actual data from October through August 2015. The actual percentage over 2014 is a 11.99% decrease. This amount has been used as a basis for projecting the remainder of the year (through September). Mortgage tax is projected to be \$1,000,741, which is \$50,741 over budget.

Sales Tax has actual data from January through August 2015. County sales tax shows a 2.59% decrease over 2014. This revenue is projected to be \$2,458,801 which is \$58,801 over our budget of \$2,400,000.

Parking has actual data from January through August 2015. The actual percentage over 2014 is a 0.99% increase. Revenue to date is \$788,201 which is an increase of \$7,727 from last year at this time. The revenue for the year is projected to be \$880,484 which is \$49,516 under budget.

Fines and forfeited bail has actual data for January through August 2015. Revenue is \$455,610 which is \$1,251 under last year's revenue at this time. The revenue is projected to be \$684,851 which is \$34,851 over budget.

Safety Inspection Fees has actual data for January through September 2015. Revenue is \$488,034 which is 44,517 under last year's revenue at this time. This revenue is projected to be \$703,979 which is \$36,021 under budget.

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

Insurance

001.1910.421 this amount will be allocated to all other funds and therefore not over budget

Taxes on Town Property

001.1950.421 this is due to additional, one time taxation for the Post Office. The current Assessment Roll reflects the tax exempt status going forward.

Fall Clean Up Season

The Department of Public Works Highway Division picks up loose leaves in designated hamlet areas, typically properties of one acre or less, between October 1 and November 15 each year. The estimated collection schedule and designated hamlet areas are listed on a leaf schedule which is posted on the Highway web site each fall. At all other times, leaves must be bagged for pickup. The DPW Highway Division also picks up bundled brush less than 3' long and less than fifty pounds. In order to have bagged leaves or bundled brush picked up, please contact the Highway Division at 666-7669. Pick up typically occurs within two weeks.

Please be aware that only leaves and small twigs should be put into bags. Bags filled with dirt, rocks, grass clipping and branches will not be accepted since they make composting very difficult and, due to the weight of each bag, require more labor and equipment. We encourage residents to mow or compost leaves whenever possible. Literature on mowing leaves is available at <http://www.leaveleavesalone.org>.

In addition, residents may drop off tree debris at our Beaver Dam Compost Facility, 115 Beaver Dam Road, next to the Dog Park. It is open for residents to dispose of recyclable wood waste (logs and branches up to 6" diameter, brush, and leaves), as well as pick up wood mulch and leaf compost. This service is free to Town of Bedford residents between 7:30 AM and 3:00 PM Monday to Friday, excluding Town holidays.

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.

About the Road Paving, and Patching

So you paint one room. It looks great, but then what about the room next to it? It's something like that with our 97 miles of Town roads. We significantly boosted the paving budget from about \$800,000 a year to \$1.1 million. It's certainly made a difference. Fewer potholes (yes,

there still are too many following horrific winters) dot the asphalt landscape. Better drainage. Easier and less stressful driving conditions. But we've got more to do. And we're working on it. We have in place a fair and equitable system that's based on the condition of the roads with those in the worst condition being paved first. Our Highway Department each year updates its assessment of road conditions, ranked 1 to 5, with 1 being the best (newly paved) and 5 the worst (you don't want to drive on that road). The good news is that we've taken care of the 4s and 5s. We're chipping away at the 3.5s. This year we made a dent in that longish list. We truly are trying to get to the roads as quickly as we can. One important point: before winter sets in our road crews will be patching again, so do let us know if you feel we've got some patching to do. Please call our pothole hotline at 666-7669 or send an e-mail to supervisor@bedfordny.gov. Please identify as best you can the area that needs attention. Thanks for your patience.

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