



Supervisor Chris Burdick's Report – October 1, 2015



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.

Please review the following and provide comments on the following which I've drafted for my monthly update:

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.

For Your Fall Checklist...

If you haven't had your septic system cleaned and inspected within the past four years, you should put that task on your fall checklist. 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. Help is available if your septic company finds a problem and the County Health Department advises you that you need to repair or replace your system – see the news item below “County Approves Funding for Bedford’s Septic System Repair & Replacement Program”

Noted Briefly

Street Light Improvements – Energy Efficiencies

The Town of Bedford plans to replace the thirty street lights that we own with new, energy efficient LED street lights. The lights are located in Bedford Hills on Route 117, Edna Street, Plainfield Avenue, Woodland Ave, South Beechwood Road, and Valerio Court. We have been awarded a Con Ed LED Lighting Commercial and Industrial Energy Efficiency Program grant for \$6,000. The project is expected to pay for itself through energy savings in less than five years. The Town also is looking into the possibility of a NYSERDA grant to help with the project.

In addition we are considering a phased program for replacing street lights in Bedford Village with which are coming to the end of their useful lights with cast iron poles and luminaires which are historically appropriate. The Town would be working with the Bedford Village Historic District Review Commission (BVHDC) to provide the new lighting with energy efficient LED bulbs, whose light casts downward (more energy efficient and “dark sky” sensitive).

2016 Budget Preparations

As earlier noted, we face a tough challenge for our 2016 budget. Comptroller Ed Ritter estimates the property tax cap for 2016 to be under 2.0%. The Board has held budget work sessions with the Police Department, Department of Public Works, Building Department, Recreation & Parks Department and will be hearing from the remaining departments at a work session on October 6. We invite and welcome community input and comment.

County Approves Funding for Bedford’s Septic System Repair & Replacement Program

Wending its way through the County approval process, the County Board of Acquisition and Contract approved Bedford’s proposal to establish a \$3.5 million septic system repair and replacement fund for Bedford properties within the New York City watershed to be funded by East of Hudson Water Quality Improvement Program funds over which the County is custodian. This action followed the Board of Legislators approval late last month. As mentioned previously, the program will 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. We believe that this program is important to residents of the watershed as well as the vitality of the business districts of the Town's hamlet centers, Bedford Hills and Katonah, located in the Croton Watershed, with Katonah's commercial district immediately adjoining the reservoir. The next step is having the County transfer to the Town the first \$750,000 of the \$3.5 million fund. The Town's Planning Department soon will have application forms available. Remember that only septic repairs/replacements which the County Department of Health requires and carried out in accordance with approved plans will be eligible.

Vacancy on Conservation Board and Board of Assessment Review

The Town Board will be interviewing candidates for appointment to a vacancy on the Conservation Board and for a vacancy on the Board of Assessment Review (which hears tax assessment grievances). Interested individuals should send a cover letter or e-mail together with resume to Supervisor@bedfordny.gov.

For those who applied to the vacancy on the Planning Board or Blue Mountain Housing Development Corporation: the Town Board has concluded its interviews and will be making its decision shortly.

Town Board Action and Proposals

Bedford Village Parking and Hamlet Improvements

The Town Board held a special meeting with the Bedford community on September 29.

1. Public Works Commissioner Kevin Winn and I reviewed cost estimates and other considerations with regard to the BVHDRC's "Historic Bedford Village Preservation Plan", which include proposals regarding safety and traffic, gateway signs, traffic signs, lighting/fixtures, trees and planting and power lines.
2. The Board approved a proposal from Leggett, Brashears & Graham ("LBG"), hydrologists, for soil borings of the "wet meadow" to help determine feasibility and cost of constructing a parking lot at that site. LBG will act as a subcontractor to Evans Associates, which the Town previously engaged to carry out a parking study (wetlands/engineering) of parking opportunities in the business district.
3. Beth Evans of Evans Associates presented an updated concept parking plan which now includes parking opportunities at the rear of the Bedford Playhouse building (owned by Alchemy Properties).

Bedford Hills Hamlet

Following Bedford Hills LIVE presentation at the September 1 Town Board meeting, the Town's Recreation & Parks Department and Department of Public Works went to work in weeding, fall plantings, painting light poles and other simple beautification ahead of Bedford

Hills LIVE's Harvest Dinner on September 26. The Town will continue to with Bedford Hills LIVE as its committees present proposals to us.

Zombie Houses & Property Maintenance

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. The Town previously has taken action against derelict structures which the Building Department has determined pose a danger and has required demolition. We will consider taking action against a couple of zombie houses. In considering amendments to the property maintenance law, the Town Board may add a provision that if, after notice and opportunity to cure violations, 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.

Antioch Baptist Church Affordable Housing Proposal Advances

The Town has taken the following action to help Antioch Baptist Church proceed with its proposal:

1. Following a public hearing on September 17 and positive recommendations from the County Planning Board and the Town Planning Board, the Town Board approved a text change in the Zoning Code to allow residential housing in light industrial zoning districts. The Church's property is among 22 lots which have pre-existing, non-conforming housing, which under the amendment no longer would be non-conforming to the zoning code.
2. The Planning Board approved the concept of the site plan for 12 affordable housing units prepared by Steven Helmes of The Helmes Group, the Church's architect for the project.
3. The Town Board authorized the submission of an application for East of Hudson Water Equality Improvement Program funds in the amount of \$117,465.
4. The Historic Building Preservation Commission adopted two resolutions which enable the proposal to proceed.
5. The Town Board scheduled a public hearing for 7:45 PM on October 6 in connection with the Town's plan to submit a Community Development Block Grant application to the New York State Office of Community Renewal for infrastructure funds.

The County also is moving ahead with providing acquisition and rehabilitation funding for the project.

Comptroller's Report

On September 9 Comptroller Ed Ritter reported as follows:

Budget meetings have begun with the town board. The Police, Recreation and Parks department have presented their requested budgets. The combined tax levy increase of 0.73% and the property growth rate 0.84% yield a 1.57% tax levy increase. The Tax Cap platform is not yet available for the full calculation which will include our P.I.L.O.T. Two of our largest drivers in the budget are employee retirement and health care contributions. These have been estimated for budget projection purposes.

The five year projection has been updated to include the 2016 budget as known at this time. Since tax levy rates have not been over 2% in a few years, the analysis is done with an assumed 1.5% tax rate increase for the next 5 years. The projections are used as a tool to guide the town along and point out all possible areas of concern. They are not intended to be considered actual numbers.

REVENUE AREAS OF NOTE

Mortgage Tax has actual data from October through July 2015. The actual percentage over 2014 is a 14.61% decrease. This amount has been used as a basis for projecting the remainder of the year (through September). Mortgage tax is projected to be \$1,000,391, which is \$391 over budget.

Sales Tax has actual data from January through July 2015. County sales tax shows a 2.94% decrease over 2014. This revenue is projected to be \$2,449,824 which is \$49,824 over our budget of \$2,400,000.

Parking has actual data from January through July 2015. The actual percentage over 2014 is a 4.22% decrease. Revenue to date is \$717,931 which is an decrease of \$31,597 from last year at this time. The revenue for the year is projected to be \$901,490 which is \$28,510 under budget.

Fines and forfeited bail has actual data for January through July 2015. Revenue is \$401,283 which is \$1,074 over last year's revenue at this time. The revenue is projected to be \$688,574 which is \$38,574 over budget.

Safety Inspection Fees has actual data for January through August 2015. Revenue is \$482,145 which is 12,015 over last year's revenue at this time. This revenue is projected to be \$743,062 which is \$3,062 over budget.

EXPENDITURES: 2015 expenditures are within budget limits at this time

Report from the Department of Public Works

Work since my last monthly report included pothole patching, installation and maintenance of drainage systems, and dirt road grading. We are still catching up from winter damage with numerous catch basin repairs, and are preparing roads for paving.

Drainage upgrades have been 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. Roads paved to date include:

- Deer Park Road
- Woods Bridge Road from Park to Lot 3
- Valley Road
- Railroad Avenue (from #307 to #339)
- Oak Road (Cherry Street side)
- The Terrace
- Woodfield Road
- McLain Street (from Barker to Rt 172)

- Court Road
- Girdle Ridge Road/Pea Pond Road
- Dwight Lane, Howe Circle and Monroe Drive
- Sunrise Avenue
- North Street
- Stanwood Road
- Lakeside Road

The remaining roads on our paving list (Sunrise Avenue, portions of Chestnut Ridge Road, and Lakeside and Stanwood Roads) are scheduled for paving in mid-September. Affected residents will be notified by a flyer left at their house.

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.

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