



Supervisor Chris Burdick's Report – April 4, 2016



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Welcome New Town Board Member MaryAnn Carr - The Westchester County Board of Elections on March 25 certified MaryAnn as the winner of the March 15 Special Town Board Election to fill the vacancy created when Francis Corcoran was elected as our representative to the County Board of Legislators. We thank Francis for his significant service to the Town and welcome MaryAnn to the Board. .

Will Funds for Paving I-684 Paving Become a Reality? Your Voice Will be Helpful
Our thanks to Governor Andrew Cuomo, Assemblyman David Buchwald and State Senator George Latimer for increases in funding for the Department of Transportation. The just adopted State Budget includes significant increases in DOT's capital funding. We now need to urge the DOT and Governor Cuomo's Office to apply a portion of that increased funding level to pave the portion of the 684 running through Bedford, most of which is the original roadbed. Here is some contact information:

Governor Cuomo: <https://www.governor.ny.gov/contact>; also try <http://www.writethegovernorofnewyork.com/>; also 1-518-474-8390

DOT Albany office: 518-457-6195

DOT Region 8 Acting Regional Director Todd Westhuse: 845-431-5750

If you send an e-mail, please consider copying me and our legislators:

State Senator Latimer: latimer@nysenate.gov, 914-934-5350

Thank you!

Community Choice Aggregation (“CCA”) – It’s Here and You’ll Receive Notices Shortly

First, the bottom line. For those who have heard about the “Green Option” for electricity and like it, if you get your electricity from either Con Edison or NYSEG, you don’t have to do a thing. You’ll automatically be placed in that program. If you’d prefer a different option, the choice is yours and you’ll receive complete, clear information on how to exercise the choice.

Now, a few words on how this works. In my previous issue, I reported that the Town of Bedford was the first to move ahead with a CCA agreement with Sustainable Westchester with 20 other municipalities have following our lead. As you may know, the program leverages the aggregated purchasing power of residential and small business electricity customers in the participating municipalities to yield competitive pricing. The bidding process was very successful. Sustainable Westchester and the 20 Westchester County municipalities that comprise the CCA program selected the winners of a \$150 million contract bid. Sustainable Westchester secured from both ConEdison Solutions and Constellation pricing lower than the respective utility’s average supply rate in 2015, the benchmark rate, a CCA bidding requirement. The bids from each of these suppliers include two “compliant” power options of a fixed price contract rate: ConEdison Solutions for two years, Constellation for three years. Both rate options are lower priced than the benchmark rate. One option is a “clean green” option of a 100% renewable energy supply, as verified through Green-e Energy, a nationally recognized firm which certifies renewable energy products sold to residential, commercial and other customers. The second option is a slightly lower priced “brown” option of an energy supply that includes a standard mix of traditional sources, such as of fossil fuel, nuclear, and some renewable generation. The price difference between the two new fixed rate options is very small (\$0.003/kilowatt-hour for ConEdison Solutions and \$0.001 for Constellation). For Bedford customers currently served by Con Edison, it is estimated that the Brown Option would save the average family \$112 per year, compared to the benchmark. The Green Option would save the average family an estimated \$65 per year, compared to the benchmark. In annual terms, customers currently served by NYSEG, the Brown Option would save the average family an estimated \$127 per year, compared to the benchmark. The Green Option would save the average family an estimated \$106 per year. The difference in savings between the two contracts is attributable to the fact that NYSEG customers, on average, have higher electricity usage.

With such a small difference in price, at our March 17 meeting, the Town Board selected the “Green Option” to serve as Bedford’s “default option”. It’s a win-win for electricity customers with guaranteed rates and also for the environment in promoting renewable energy. And, remember, you can choose a different energy supplier and pricing at any time with no cost and minimal effort. You should be receiving notifications shortly regarding your options.

Coming Up at the Town Board’s April 5 Meeting

Possible Sewer Project for Katonah and Bedford Hills Business Districts I will be discussing with the Town Board the possibility of funding for a sewer project which only would serve the business districts of Bedford Hills and Katonah (Bedford Village would not be covered because it is not in the NYC watershed).

The Northern Westchester Watershed Committee, a consortium of 12 municipalities, is about to make recommendations to the County regarding the application of Water Quality Improvement Program funds which the County oversees. With strong encouragement from the DEP (which originally provided the WQIP several years ago), the NWWC is developing a package of sewage treatment programs to utilize the remaining funds. I am confident that Bedford would have support in the NWWC for funding for a significantly scaled back version of the Malcolm Pirnie project of some 10-15 years ago. That project at that time was estimated at \$55 million. It was an ambitious project which would sewer large swatches of Bedford Hills and Katonah. The scaled back plan, as mentioned, only would serve the business districts. It would still tie into the prison system, but would not entail an expansion of that system's capacity. Rather it would rely upon excess capacity of that system – of which there is a fair amount. In addition rather than requesting \$10 MM from WQIP for the project, it'd be more on the order of \$15 to 18MM. As previously, I would expect that the Department of Corrections would convey the system to us for \$1.). Under this approach, it is hoped that nearly all the capital costs would come from WQIP. The prison would become a customer of this micro sewer district and, as the major customer, would bear the majority of the operating costs (fees), though some of the operating costs would come from DEP under its agreement with DOCCs when DEP carried out an upgrade of the prison system a few years ago.

It is important to emphasize the cost impacts on proposed district customers which must be determined. Cost goes to the heart of feasibility, as the voters in the proposed district must approve the plan. Larger plans have been defeated three times in the past. A detailed engineering study and cost estimate will need to be developed.

Stepping Stones – The Town Board will be considering the request of Stepping Stones Foundation for a 10 year renewal of its special use permit for the operation of Stepping Stones, the home of Bill and Lois Wilson (Bill Wilson was the found of Alcoholics Anonymous). At its April 5 meeting the Board will consider whether to consider renewal of the permit, and so the term of the renewal and whether to transfer the responsibility for the permit (following any renewal of the permit) to the Planning Board.

Bedford Hills Train Station – The Town Board will be hearing a presentation from Bedford Hills LIVE on proposals for future programs and activities which to be considered including a continuation into the spring and summer of the Farmers Market and a community café. The Town's sub-sublease to the Bedford Hills Historical Museum expired on March 31. The Board also will hear an update from Bill Heidepriem, Superintendent of Parks and Recreation on his handling the scheduling of the train station. The Town awaits a draft of a new sublease from the MTA, as agent for Metro North Commuter Railroad, for municipal use at nominal or no consideration with an option to convert sub-sublease the station at fair market rent all of which would be passed through to the MTA. The Board will consider how best to handle the near term operation and maintenance of the station, particularly in light of the limitations that the sublease will impose on the Town. These include that the Town may not sub-sublease the premises without forfeiting the municipal use status.

Committee on Seniors – The Town Board will be making the first resident appointments to this newly created committee, which will focus on promoting policies and programs

designed to help keep Bedford's senior citizens healthy, vital and active. The Committee will consider existing services and programs provided to seniors, such as transportation, nutritional programs, recreational programs, housing needs and other community support programs. The Committee will consult with the Recreation and Parks Department, the Recreation Parks Advisory Committee and cooperating agencies, both private and public.

Snow Storm – well, we thought we were over with winter, but it came again over the April 1 weekend and with the heavy winds bringing down trees and with it lines, some 1400 residences lost power at peak, primarily in the NYSEG service area. Our thanks to NYSEG for acting so quickly to restore power.

New Recycling Center – thanks to the DPW crew for their efforts on their work on the new recycling center. We expect to open the new center this spring. DPW is moving ahead with its work on the Adams Street facility – with initial focus on improving salt storage.

Temporary Police Headquarters – The work is nearly done! We just opened bids for HVAC work for the temporary location of the Police Department in the lower level of the Town House building at 321 Bedford Road. We still plan to have the work completed well before construction is scheduled to start on the renovations to the police station. Our thanks again to our Town employees, George Graniero, Peter Welch and Jim McHugh, and our architect George Rosamond of Lothrop Associates for their excellent work. Using our own Town forces for carpentry and other work is holding down costs significantly while producing an excellent product in good time.

Historic Building Preservation Commission – Public Information Sessions

Our thanks to those who attended and spoke at the public information sessions regarding the draft Survey of Historic Properties and accompanying proposals for handling permit requests. We also thank the Commission for its enormous effort and study over three years. My colleagues on the Town Board and I attended the public information sessions and listened attentively. We intend to be responsive to the concerns raised. Much work is needed to revise the law and the proposals to ensure a reasonable balance between preserving and protecting the Town's historic properties and private property rights. Many valid concerns were raised with regard to the law's potential effect on property values, the need to minimize subjectivity, the need for certainty, the number of properties subject to regulation and the cost and time involved in the process – just to name a few. The Town Board has asked the HBPC to consider the comments from the public information sessions as well as those received through letters, e-mails and calls. The Board will be meeting with the HBPC in a work session in the near future to provide feedback and guidance. Please e-mail your comments to planning@bedfordny.gov or to the Board at TownBoardMembers@bedfordny.gov. Also please feel free to call me at 666-6530 or send me an e-mail at supervisor@bedfordny.gov.

Property Tax Credit Reimbursement Checks

Eligible property owners in late January received Tax Freeze reimbursement or refund checks which resulted from all the taxing jurisdictions in Bedford being under the property tax cap and adopting a government efficiency plan. 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.

Applications for Vacancies on Boards and Committees

The Town Board is accepting applications for vacancies:

- 1) Planning Board (applications close on April 8)
- 2) Tree Advisory Board

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

Under Bedford's Septic System Repair and Replacement Program, the Town now has reimbursed approximately \$25,000 in eligible costs. As you've probably read, you need to have your septic system cleaned and inspected once every five 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. As mentioned, if you have a failing septic system, help is here. Bedford's 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/>. 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

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