



## *Supervisor Chris Burdick's Report – September 30, 2016*



### **2017 BUDGET**

We expect that the tentative 2017 budget will come in under the cap while providing improvements in services and renovations to facilities such as the police station renovation, upgrade to Adams Street Highway Yard, a modest increase in the paving budget. It remains a very tight budget. Fortunately, the Town remains in a strong financial position with the highest credit rating available and solid fund balances or reserves..

**UPDATE ON THE SEWER PLAN** – one of the key developments is that as a result of favorable negotiations nearly concluded with New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), we will have \$12.8 million for the project costs. The DEP would provide \$12.8 million in funding and Westchester County would provide additional funding under the Water Quality Improvement Program. The capital costs of the project are estimated at \$22 million. We will have a modest increase in certain project costs to provide upgrades in wastewater treatment for certain DEP priority sites in Bedford, however, the additional funds will enable the Town to avoid the need to issue sewer debt thereby substantially decreasing the anticipated sewer rents to the property owners in the proposed sewer district. Based on increased funding from the New York City Department of Environmental Protection and a decrease in project costs, we have projected that no sewer bonds will need to be issued. It should also be mentioned that no one outside of the district would be paying any sewer charges – they only would be charged to property owners within the district, all of whom would be serviced by the system. As part of the funding arrangement with DEP, the sewer system would also serve Katonah Elementary School, St. Mary's of the Assumption Church and the Bedford Park Apartments, as well as the Katonah Fire Department, the Katonah Village Library, the Town's highway garage on Adams Street and the Bedford Hills Community House. Once all the pieces are in place the proposal would be subject to a referendum among the property owners in the proposed sewer district. We will be keeping the community posted via this e-news, dedicated emails, the Town's website, and the press. There is a dedicated Sewer Project page on the

Town's website, <http://www.bedfordny.gov/departments/planning/sewer-plan/>  
Please let us know what you think: *call me at 666-6530 or e-mail [supervisor@bedfordny.gov](mailto:supervisor@bedfordny.gov)*

I also should mention that the Town Board will schedule ample opportunity to hear from the community prior to taking any final action to move ahead.

**NEW PARKING ENFORCEMENT TECHNOLOGY IN USE** The Town has been working to improve parking availability in the hamlets – this for convenience of shoppers and also because parking is the lifeblood of our businesses. Given the highly limited opportunities of increasing the number of spaces, turn over in spaces is key. As such, we have been focusing on ensuring that the posted parking time limits are observed. Working with the Police Department and the service which handles the processing of parking tickets, we recently put in place new technology to help our parking enforcement bureau. The Bedford Police will no longer be utilizing the traditional "chalking of tires" method to monitor overtime parking. Gone are those chalk sticks (maybe we should offer them to the Smithsonian). New License Plate Reader (LPR) technology is now in use. Vehicles are now monitored through state of the art Global Positioning System (GPS) technology which alerts our parking enforcement officers to vehicles that are in violation of our overtime restrictions. In addition, this new technology identifies scofflaw vehicles as well.

**POLICE STATION RENOVATION** The project is proceeding well and is on schedule. This \$7 million project should get underway during the winter. The project is a complete renovation of the existing police station with additions. It is significantly less expensive than alternative plans for a two story building or an entirely new building which exceeded \$12 million. The Town will be putting out to bid in October the construction plans developed by the Town's architects for the project, Lothrop Associates. We anticipate that the project will be completed in January 2018.

**HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT/PUBLIC WORKS** Those driving by the Town's Highway Yard on Adams Street may have noticed the substantial work underway. It's part of a \$2.5 million project to improve the facility. With the relocation of the recycling center to its new home on Railroad Avenue (the site is at no expense to the Town thanks to the NYS Department of Transportation, the owner of the property), work now is underway to expand the highway garage, install a salt shed for improved, environmentally friend storage of salt and provide better facilities. While not an entirely new building, it is substantially less than the \$14 to \$15 million estimated under earlier plans (at a time when the economy was healthier and the Town's budget might have been able to accommodate it). The plan will meet department needs for decades to come.

**UPDATE ON KATONAH RAILROAD CROSSING** - Director of Planning Jeff Osterman and Commissioner of Public Works Kevin Winn discussed a report recently received from CTC, Inc., consultants for Metro North Railroad, regarding proposed improvements to the railroad grade crossing at Jay Street in Katonah. Mr. Osterman explained that one of the key recommendations of the report is to implement the design plan created by the Town and Hahn Engineering ten years ago that would create a more defined pedestrian crossing and move the entrance to commuter parking lot #1 to the east to permit a left turn lane entering this parking lot. Mr. Winn discussed the other recommendations involving signs and pavement markings and stated that many of the suggestions have already been implemented. The report will be reviewed by the Town's Traffic Safety Working Group who will transmit their observations to Metro North

**THE RECYCLING CENTER HAS RELOCATED!**

Effective September 1, 2016 it has moved to its new location, 343 Railroad Avenue. The new location is less than a mile from the current location. It is located on Railroad Avenue ¼ mile south of Harris Road. When leaving our Adams Street location, make a right out of the driveway, take a left at the traffic light onto Harris Road, and take the first left on Railroad Avenue. The new Recycling Center is ¼ mile down on the left. Although the location is new, the services are the same. Thank you for using our recycling center, and we look forward to seeing you on Railroad Avenue.

**RIBBON CUTTING** Please join Supervisor Chris Burdick, members of the Town Board and Public Works Commissioner Kevin Winn on Saturday, October 29 at 10:00 AM for a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for the Town of Bedford’s New and Relocated Recycling Center at 343 Railroad Avenue in Katonah a ¼ mile south of Harris Road. Light refreshments will be served. We look forward to seeing you.

**REPAVING OF 684** we’re not there yet! It was very good news as reported previously that working collaboratively with the community and Assemblyman David Buchwald, we’ve secured a \$6 million appropriation for paving *a portion* of the Bedford stretch of I-684. We need to get the *entire* stretch paved including the portion from Harris Road through the Exit 5/6 interchange. I ask your help again. Please pitch in to have your voices heard:

- 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 Westhuis: 845-431-5750
- If you send an e-mail, please consider copying me and our legislators:
- State Senator Latimer: [latimer@nysenate.gov](mailto:latimer@nysenate.gov), 914-934-5350
- State Assemblyman Buchwald: [buchwaldd@assembly.state.ny.us](mailto:buchwaldd@assembly.state.ny.us), 914-244-4450

**BUDGET SEASON UNDERWAY**

Comptroller Abe Zambrano met with the Board in a work session to discuss non-property tax revenue and expense reduction proposals. The Comptroller explained that several fees for services have not kept pace with increasing costs to provide such services, have not been raised in a number of years and recommended increases. The Board expressed the view that any increase in fees should be modest and gradual – best to have smaller increases on an annual basis to keep up with expenses than a single, large increase which is more difficult for those affected. On the expense side, the Comptroller identified areas (including telephone, electricity and court prosecutors) where economies might be achieved. Below is the schedule for upcoming budget work sessions, which also will address the ten year 2016 through 2025 Capital Plan to ensure that the Town’s municipal facilities and equipment are maintained properly.

Here’s the full schedule of Town Board work sessions (including those already held). Come on by, tune in, send in an e-mail with any comments.

**Schedule of Town Board Work Session and Meetings  
2017 Budget and 2016-2025 Capital Plan (see Note)**

Town Board Work Sessions/Meetings	Department/Comments
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August 16 (6:30 PM)	Overview & Discussion of Comptroller's suggestions on possible expense reductions and non-tax revenue sources
September 6 (6:30 PM)	Town Board review of proposed 2017 budget and 2016-2025 Capital Plan for Police, Recreation & Parks Departments
September 20 (7:15 PM)	Town Board review of proposed 2017 budget and 2016-2025 Capital Plan for Department of Public Works, Lighting and Water Districts and Building Department
October 6 (6:00 PM)	Town Board review of proposed 2017 budget and 2016-2025 Capital Plan for all other Departments; discussion of tentative 2017 budget and 2016-2025 Capital Plan
October 18 (6:00 PM)	Town Board further review of tentative 2017 budget; note that Budget Officer is to finalize tentative budget and file tentative budget in office of the Town Clerk and the Town Clerk is to formally present tentative budget to the Town Board prior to October 30; Town Board adoption of 2016-2025 Capital Plan
November 1 (7:00 PM)	Town Board consideration of revisions in tentative 2017 budget - holding of a public hearing is optional before adoption of preliminary 2017 budget
November 15	Adoption of preliminary 2017 budget based on any revisions in the tentative 2017 budget
December 6	Town Board to hold public hearing and adopt the final 2017 budget (must be done prior to December 10)

Note: At its meeting of February 16, 2016 the Town Board adopted a Capital Plan to cover the Town's capital needs for 2016 and 2017. The ten year 2016-2025 Capital Plan is to incorporate the 2016 and 2017 plan.

[Schedule of TB Meetings - 2017 Budget Capital Plan 7-19-16](#)

**The Town's 2015 Financial Statements and Supplementary Information – PKF O'Brien Davies, LLP** (the Town's auditors) is available [Click here](#)  
**2015 Annual Report of Town of Bedford** is available. [Click here](#)

**PARKING IN THE HAMLET BUSINESS Districts**

**Bedford Village**

- a. Court Road Parking – 11 New Spaces At the request of the Bedford Village Business Association, Bedford Playhouse and local businesses, the Town Board adopted a change in the parking law on June 21 which creates 11 on street parking spaces on Court Road. Public Works Commissioner Kevin Winn developed the plan following discussions with the BVBA, the Bedford Village Elementary School, the Bedford Fire Department, residents of the road and other community members.
- b. Off Street Parking – Bedford Playhouse Building The Town is continuing discussions with Alchemy Partners and their counsel about the possibility of increasing parking on its premises and dedicating certain of the parking to municipal parking.
- c. Off Street Parking – Presbyterian Church Vacant Lot The Town also is in discussions with the Church about the possibility of acquiring vacant land the Church owns off of Court Road for creation of a municipal parking lot. The land is subject to a deed restriction which prevents the use of the property for such purposes. The Church is approaching the individual who deeded the property to remove the deed restriction.

Upon removal of the deed restriction, the Town will proceed with the plan (the Town's Capital Plan includes funds for design and engineering to proceed).

### **All Hamlets**

Because there are limited opportunities to increase capacity, enforcement of parking limits is important to ensure turnover and space availability. Parking is the lifeblood of our businesses in the hamlets which depend upon customers and clients finding parking within reasonable distance. In that connection we have been working closely with Complus, the firm which handles the hardware and software related to our parking enforcement. Under a contract amendment with Complus, Complus has provided our parking enforcement unit new license plate readers significantly improving efficiency. By improving Parking Enforcement capability, we are able encourage more turn-over in parking spots (people don't overstay the time limits as much) due to the deterrent effect of the ticketing.

### **COMPTROLLER REPORT**

As of July 31<sup>st</sup>, \$11,784,939 out of the \$16,662,310 in revenues represents collection of current and prior year taxes. The total collected is 82.52% of the total Tax and Non-Tax revenues budgeted for the year. Additional information on major revenue sources is included below. Based on projections, we are anticipating being able to meet budgeted revenue amounts in most instances. General Fund expenditures as of July 31 total \$11,223,306 or 54% of the overall budget.

#### **Highlights of Major Non-Tax Revenues:**

**Mortgage Tax.** Mortgage tax payments are received by the Town bi-annually; June and December of each year. The first installment recorded by the Town on June 30, 2016 was \$533,617 an amount that represents 51.31% of the budgeted \$1,040,000 revenue in 2016. At this time, we have strong indicators that the second installment, due in December, will allow us to exceed our budgeted amount by a few thousand dollars.

**Sales Tax.** The Westchester County Finance Department remitted the second quarter share of sales tax revenues on August 4 in the amount of \$630,903; an amount consistent with projections through June 30<sup>th</sup>. Based on projections provided by County and our historical financial data, we are anticipating that the total Sales Tax Revenues for 2016 will exceed our budgeted amount by over \$100,000.

**Parking.** Recorded parking revenue through July 31 total \$705,445 or 76% of the amount budgeted in 2016. Collected revenues year-to-date are below projected amounts at this time of the year, but we will continue to monitor the account as the summer ends. At this point we are projecting not meeting the amount budgeted.

**Fines and Forfeited Bail.** Through the period ended June 30, 2016, \$346,436 out of the \$655,000 budgeted for Fines and Forfeited Bail has been collected. That amount represents 52.89% of the annual budget.

**Safety Inspections.** Due to the fact that a building permit for a sizable project was filed and issued in July, the amount budgeted this year for Safety Inspections will be met. As of July 31, we have collected \$550,430 out of the \$740,000 budgeted or 74% of the projected revenues.

**TEMPORARY POLICE HEADQUARTERS IS OPEN** the Police Department has moved to its temporary quarters in the lower level of the Town House building at 321 Bedford Road. Using our own Town forces has significantly reduced costs while producing an excellent product in good time. They are up and running and the transition has been a smooth.



**UPDATE ON POLICE STATION RENOVATION PROJECT** With the Board having approved the design and cost estimates which now are well along, the architects and construction managers are working diligently to prepare construction drawings for bidding out the project scheduled for October. The tentative schedule places actual construction at the beginning of 2017 and completed in January 2018. We will keep you posted on the progress along the way.

### **APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMITTEES**

Thank you for all that have applied. We are very fortunate to have a talented applicant pool to choose from. Michael Weisburger was appointed to the Tree Advisory Board at the August 16 Town Board Meeting – we thank him for his willingness to serve. Please stay tuned as we will be announcing future appointments.

**PAVING ROUTE 172 – (STATE ROAD)** NYS Department of Transportation's engineer in charge of paving the stretch from Village Green up to Westchester Avenue in Pound Ridge has completed its work. Not only has the road been repaved, but catch basin work has also been completed.

### **CHANGES TO STAR PROGRAM FOR RESIDENTS NEW TO TOWN SINCE JUNE 1, 2015**

The STAR program has been amended to transition the STAR exemption to the payment of an annual STAR check from the NYS DTF-ORPTS for new property owners as of June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015. Below is a brief summary:

- Property owners who received the STAR exemption based on their own application on their 2015/2016 school tax will experience no change. As long as they remain eligible they will continue to receive the STAR exemption on their school tax bill and can go from basic to enhanced and back to basic in the same manner as in the past for as long as they remain in their current home.
- New property owners who did not receive the STAR exemption based on their own application on their 2015/2016 school tax will not be eligible for a STAR exemption but will be eligible for a STAR check from DTF-ORPTS for the 2016/2017 school tax and beyond. It constitutes new ownership or a transfer when the new owner is completely different from prior owner (I.e. transfer from husband and wife to wife only may continue to receive the STAR exemption). (Property placed into a life estate may continue to receive the exemption).
- The STAR check program will be administered by the State, therefore when a property transfers, the assessor no longer needs to send STAR application information to the buyer.
- Eligibility for the STAR check is the same as for the STAR exemption i.e. basic (primary residence, income) enhanced (primary residence, age, income). The STAR check amount will be equal to STAR saving on tax bill.
- Eligible owners must register with the State for the STAR check. Registration is not yet available. DTF-ORPTS will let us know when it is. Eligible owners who register with the State for the STAR check by July 1, 2016 and whose school taxes are levied on or

before Sept., 2016 will receive a check in September, 2016. In the future it is intended that the STAR check will be received in the month that the School tax bill is levied.

- DTF-ORPTS call number for Taxpayers 1-(518)-591-5232

You should also feel free to contact the Bedford Tax Assessor at 914-864-3831

### **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 \$70,000 in eligible costs covering 11 projects. 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](mailto:supervisor@bedfordny.gov)

### **NYSEG TREE TRIMMING ALONG A FEW STREETS IN BEDFORD VILLAGE**

NYSEG will be completing routine vegetation management work within our community shortly (see list of streets below). Residents impacted by the upcoming work will be receiving a postcard from NYSEG in the mail followed up by door to door notification closer to the actual work date. Trees are one of the leading causes of power interruptions. It's extremely important that there is proper clearance established and maintained between vegetation and the power lines to minimize power interruptions as well as reduce lengthy restoration times. Safety is the top priority; please slow down when approaching the tree crews and remember to never enter an established work zone.

- Brook Farm Lane
- Brook Farm Road
- Deep Wood Road
- East Brook Farm Road
- Loop Road
- Millertown Road
- Old Corner Road
- Peters Lane
- Plateau Lane
- Pound Ridge Road
- Stone Hill Road
- Trudy Lane

We recognize that property owners understandably are concerned about the impact that the tree trimming may have aesthetically as well as to provide shade and privacy. NYSEG tries to be

sensitive as well, however, please be sure to contact NYSEG with any concerns and, of course, feel free to contact me.

**FOR YOUR NEIGHBOR'S SAKE** – Please consider your neighbor when you go to work with your lawn blower, mower or weed whacker (or your lawn service uses them). We realize that your busy schedule makes it difficult to find time to get work done on your property. We all try to squeeze in time to do it. But please not too early and not too late. Our Town Code does not permit high noise activities, such as these, before 8 AM or after sunset.

I ask you to please send me an e-mail at [supervisor@bedfordny.gov](mailto: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