



## ***Supervisor Chris Burdick's Report – July 1, 2016***



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

**2015 Annual Report of Town of Bedford** now is available. [Click here.](#)

**Congratulations to our New Comptroller!** We are very pleased that Abraham Zambrano has joined us as our new Comptroller. He started with us on June 22 following the Town Board appointing him on June 21. He is highly experienced and fortunate to have a highly qualified and experienced as our new Comptroller and head of the Finance Department.

### **Notes from Town Board Meetings**

**Fuel Efficiency of Town Vehicles** At the Town Board's June 7 meeting the Town Board approved the request to bid three Toyota RAV4 Hybrid vehicles. While these hybrids will replace high mileage hybrids at the end of their useful lives, we are pleased that the fuel efficiency of the replacements further improves the fuel efficiency of the Town's vehicle fleet. The action also is further to the Town's Fleet Vehicle Policy to improve the overall fuel efficiency of our vehicles both saving taxpayer dollars and reducing the Town's carbon footprint.

**Renewal of Town Recycling Center Management Contract** The Town Board approved at its June 7 meeting the renewal of the existing contract with Winters Brothers which expires on August 31 with the existing price structure at an annual cost of \$52,992. Winters Brothers has been utilizing single stream recycling at the facility which will be continued with the new recycling center allowing flexibility for other possible operations.

**Approval of 2016 Paving List** The Board also approved at the June 7 meeting the list of roads to be paved this year, as recommended by the Department of Public Works. Several residents have contacted me asking why their roads are not included among those being paved this year. Due to budgetary constraints with the quite understandable expectation that the Town's budget be kept under the property tax cap, we are simply unable to carry out all of the paving that we'd like to see accomplished. The Town Board nonetheless has been able to allow some increase in appropriations for paving over the last three budgets, including 2016. Prior to my taking office as Supervisor in 2014, appropriations were approximately \$800,000 each year. In 2014, 2015 and 2016 thanks to the Board's concurrence, we have raised that figure to \$1.1 million each year. So how are the roads selected for paving? Shortly after I came onto the Town Board in 2008, the Department of Public Works instituted a fair and equitable system for identifying the roads to be paved from year to year. It is based on the condition of the road, with the roads in the worst condition to be paved first before they deteriorate further and result in far more costly paving. Each Spring the DPW updates its assessment of the condition of all 97 miles of the paved Town roads, since roads deteriorate at different rates over the winter. The condition assessment uses a rating system with 1 being in the best condition and 5 being the worst. As a result of higher appropriation levels, we have been able to pave all roads rated at 4 and 5 and now are working away at a lengthy list of roads rated at 3.5. I recognize that this explanation is disappointing to those who resident on roads which they'd like paved. If at all possible, we will continue the higher appropriation levels so that we can get to those roads sooner than otherwise.

**Update on Sewer Proposal for Katonah and Bedford Hills Business Districts** The Town is cautiously proceeding on the sewer plan. We appreciate the strong level of interest on the part of property owners, businesses and the community as voiced at the special Town Board meeting on June 28. As earlier noted, there remains a long way to go. We have been updating the page on the Town's website dedicated to the plan ([link](#)) and would invite you to visit it. I'd also like to provide the following update:

1. Possible Funds from Westchester County – The Town's request for \$9,250,000 in Water Quality Improvement Program funds (WQIP), which the County oversees, is proceeding. I noted in last month's report that the Northern Westchester Watershed Committee (NWCWC) on May 31 approved an overall plan, which I had proposed, covering all of the unexpended WQIP funds and which includes the proposed \$9,250,000 for Bedford's sewer plan. The NWCWC will be considering at its July 6 meeting a resolution specific to Bedford's request.
2. Possible Funds from New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) I have had further discussions with the DEP regarding our request that the DEP re-direct funds for three treatment plan upgrades (St. Mary's, KES and Bedford Park Apartments) to the capital costs of the proposed sewer project. The DEP understandably wants to know that our sewer plan "has legs" before they would suspend the upgrade program and move toward re-directing those funds to the project. DEP has explained that they would need to deduct from their budgets for the upgrade projects expenses already incurred (e.g., design and engineering) and any costs for decommissioning existing treatment facilities. We are hopeful for somewhat more than \$8 million after those costs are netted out.

3. Sewer Treatment Plant from NYS Department of Corrections and Community Services (DOCCs) We are continuing our discussions with DOCCs regarding our request that DOCCs consider conveying its wastewater treatment plant to the Town at no or nominal consideration, after which the Town would operate and maintain the plant and DOCCs Bedford Hills correctional facilities would be a customer.
4. Funding for Project We estimate project costs at \$21,620,000. As mentioned, we hope to receive \$17,250,000 toward those costs from the WQIP and DEP, leaving an estimated balance of \$4,370,000 which would be funded through a grant or loan from the NYS Environmental Facilities Corporation and/or proceeds from the issuance of sewer district bonds. Bear in mind that actual project costs would not be known until the construction plans had been bid out.
5. Who Pays? If it were necessary to issue sewer district bonds, the property owners in the sewer district would be responsible for paying their share of the debt service payments on the bonds, which we are considering would be based on assessed valuation of the tax parcels. There also would be a cost to operating and maintaining the system, which we are considering would be shared among all users of the system. We need to further develop the project cost and operating and maintaining cost to have a better idea of the costs, which would vary on a property by property basis.

*Please let us know what you think – call me at 666-6530 or e-mail [supervisor@bedfordny.gov](mailto:supervisor@bedfordny.gov)*

## **Parking in the Hamlet Business Districts**

1. 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).
2. Enforcement of Posted Parking Limits The Town is continuing to work on means of improving parking availability in the hamlet business districts not just for the convenience of shoppers and patrons, but because parking is the lifeblood of our the

businesses. Because there are limited opportunities to increase capacity, enforcement of parking limits is important to ensure turnover and space availability. In that connection we have been working closely with Complus, the firm which handles the hardware and software related to our parking enforcement.

## **Park Season Opens/ Recreation & Parks Department Update**

Superintendent of Recreation and Parks Superintendent Bill Heidepriem reports as follows:

### **Pools:**

The three pool facilities located in Bedford Hills, Katonah and Bedford Village now on the summer schedule. The full schedule of pool hours and pool information can be found on line by visiting [www.Bedfordny.gov](http://www.Bedfordny.gov) under Recreation – click on the Spring Summer brochure and scroll to page 39 through 45 for pool information.

### **Day Camp & Tiny Tot Camps:**

Sumer Camp are scheduled to start on Wednesday July 6<sup>th</sup>.

Information on the Camp programs can be found on pages 24 through 28 of the Spring - Summer brochure

### ***Park It in the Parks:***

**FREE Summer Entertainment** continues in July

**Friday July 8<sup>th</sup>** at the **Katonah Memorial Park** from 6:30pm until 8:30pm the ***Trashcan Poets Band*** will be playing. This concert is sponsored by the Katonah Memorial Park Association.

**Friday July 15<sup>th</sup>** at the **Bedford Village Memorial Park** the C&M Club is pleased to sponsor their annual movie night. This years' feature is The ***Minions*** and will start at **8:30pm**.

**Friday July 22<sup>nd</sup>** at the **Bedford Hills Memorial Park** the ***Blonde Ambition Band*** will be playing from 7:00pm – 8:30pm

**Friday August 5<sup>th</sup>** at the **Katonah Memorial Park** the ***Island Soul Band*** will be playing from 6:30pm – 8:30pm

### **Sizzling Sunday's at the Pools**

Sundays from 5:00pm until 7:30pm

**July 10<sup>th</sup>** at Bedford Village Memorial Park Pool

**July 24<sup>th</sup>** at Katonah Memorial Park Pool

**August 7<sup>th</sup>** at Bedford Hills Memorial Park Pool

The full schedule of the Park it in the Parks Entertainment Series can be found on page 8 of the Spring - Summer brochure

### **Bedford Hills Memorial Park Basketball Courts**

Reminder the light poles at the basketball courts are energized from dusk until 10:00pm daily.

**Please** – Basketball only on the courts – Riding of tricycles, bicycles, skateboards or rollerblading is not permitted.

## **Comptroller Report:**

Comptroller Abraham Zambrano reported on July 1 as follows:

As of June 30th the General fund has received 75% of the budgeted revenues. The tax levy of \$11,755,194 represents 59% of the \$20,190,784 budget. As of June 30<sup>th</sup>, \$3,358,241 of the \$8,435,590 of Non-Tax revenues have been collected. The major components of those revenues show trends that will result in meeting the budget amounts by year end. Overall expenditures are below the half way mark at 42% of the budgeted amount keeping in mind that there is a considerable amount in seasonal expenses that will take place this summer.

### **REVENUE AREAS OF NOTE**

**Mortgage Tax.** At the time of this report, the June projections for Mortgage Tax were not available so the attached spreadsheet remains unchanged from the previous month. Once the information is received, I will forward the information.

**Sales Tax** projections through June 30<sup>th</sup> demonstrate that the budgeted amount \$2,400,000 will be exceeded by \$142,300. We will continue to monitor and report any projected changes.

**Parking** revenues for the first 6 months of 2016 are below the amount anticipated at this point. If same trend continues over the next six months, we will end up with a shortfall of \$84,219.00.

**Fines and Forfeited Bail** recorded through May as of June 30<sup>th</sup> continue the trend that will allow the budgeted amount of \$655,000 to be exceeded by over \$20,000 by the end of the year.

**Safety Inspections** fees recorded through June 30 are below the anticipated amount at mid-year. However, a building permit for a sizeable project was just approved and generated fees of \$180,100. The budgeted amount will be met.

**Update on Police Station Renovation Project** The Police Department has moved to temporary quarters in the lower level of the Town House building. The renovation project for the police station, originally estimated to cost between \$3.5 million and \$4.0 million, now is estimated significantly higher at approximately \$7 million. Lothrop Associates, architects, and Calgi Construction Management, construction managers, will be discussing the project in a Town Board work session on Tuesday, July 5 at 6:30 PM. The discussion will include the significant change in cost estimates, whether the present plan is what should be pursued and if so, how to finance it while providing for the Town's other operating and capital needs, staying under the tax cap and maintaining sound reserve levels and prudent fiscal management. The original cost estimates from last year also included as an option, an option which the Board did not pursue, for an entirely new building at approximately \$12 million (if regulations of the Department of Health and NYC DEP regarding the septic system could be met).

### **Applications for Vacancies on Boards and Committees**

The Town Board is accepting applications for vacancies on the Tree Advisory Board – we especially are seeking an arborist. There is a second position available too. 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](mailto:supervisor@bedfordny.gov). You also may mail it to me at Supervisor, 321 Bedford Road, Bedford Hills, New York 10507. There also is a vacancy on the Film Committee.

**REMINDER TO HAVE YOUR VOICE HEARD 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 in the recently adopted State Budget. It 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 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

Thank you!

**Paving Route 172 – And for a State Road Being Paved** NYS Department of Transportation's engineer in charge of paving the stretch from Village Green up to Westchester Avenue in Pound Ridge tells me it should be done in about a week. As mentioned previously, it's a **noisy** operation which can't be avoided and results in intermittent closure of single lanes. We're certainly pleased to have the work being done.

**Temporary Police Headquarters** – As reported earlier, the Police Department will be moving to temporary quarters in the lower level of the Town House building at 321 Bedford Road. The carpentry work and finish work has been completed and 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 reduced costs significantly while producing an excellent product in good time. The Town Board awarded HVAC to Atlantic Westchester work for the temporary location of the Police Department. We remain hopeful that the department may move into the temporary quarters soon. It is uncertain, however, whether the Verizon strike will affect the move date. We now are targeting the first or second week of June, a bit later than we earlier had hoped, but still well before any construction work will begin on the renovation of the police station.

**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 later this month or in August. DPW is moving ahead with its work on the Adams Street facility – with initial focus on improving salt storage.

## **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)

**For Your Neighbor's Sake** – Please consider your neighbor when you go to work with your lawn 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