



Supervisor Chris Burdick's Report – December 30, 2016



2016 ANNUAL REPORT – COMING SOON

Since becoming Supervisor, I have issued weekly, monthly and annual reports to provide transparency to the community on how your tax dollars are spent, how the Town government affects you and to provide the basis and information on which you can provide me and my colleagues on the Town Board with your views. I hope this approach has been helpful. Our department heads are working on their recap for the 2016 report which I expect to issue in late January/early February.

JANUARY 10, 2017 PUBLIC HEARING ON SEWER PLAN

At its December 6 meeting, the Town Board called a public hearing for 7:00 PM on January 10, 2017 on the proposed establishment of the Bedford Hills-Katonah Business Sewer District and the related Map, Plan & Report prepared by Arcadis, the Town's consulting engineers. Following the public hearing, should the Town Board determine it is in the public interest to establish the proposed sewer district, the Town Board then will consider resolutions to call an election among the property owners in the proposed sewer district for March 14, 2017 from 6 AM to 9 PM in the Courtroom at the Town Offices at 321 Bedford Road in Bedford Hills. We have determined with bond counsel that, based on our computation of costs, NYS Comptroller approval will not be required for the Town's plan (though Comptroller approval will be required for DOCCS actions). So if all moves ahead as planned, the Town will engage an engineer next Spring to design the sewer system, which is a lengthy process (as much as 18 months) following which construction would take place.

2017 BUDGET AND CLOSE OF FINANCIAL YEAR

As reported in my weekly newsletter earlier this month, the Town Board at its December 6 meeting and following a public hearing adopted the 2017 Annual Budget complying with the NYS tax cap and providing for all services and programs and with some increases in both areas. The budget is posted on the Town's website as is my budget message and Comptroller Abe Zambrano's budget message.

As we draw to the close of 2016, we also draw to the close of the Town's fiscal year – which is on a calendar year basis. As has been reported in this space, overall, the Town has met budget expectations. When the Town Board considers its budgetary needs, we budget conservatively to avoid unpleasant surprises. Our Comptroller provided an update to the Town Board on December 15 (see below). He anticipates that due to the cautious and conservative spending on the part of our departments, the Town will finish the year at least \$350,000 in the black in the General Fund and approximately \$200,000 in the black in the Highway Fund. This excess of revenue over expenses will go to Fund Balances for each of those Funds. Please bear in mind that these figures are estimates, which we will update next month, but also are subject to audit.

DECEMBER REPORT AND ACTIVITIES OF DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS; UPDATE ON IMPROVEMENTS TO ADAMS STREET HIGHWAY FACILITY

DPW work during the month included pothole patching, maintenance of drainage systems, and dirt road grading.

Construction of the Adams Street salt shed building is going well. The building structure is complete with the exception of a punch list. The concrete floor will be installed in the spring. Electrical work is ongoing. The building has a large roof that has the capacity to carry solar panels, potentially reducing operational costs for the department. See discussion below “Solar Installations for Town Facilities”.

A resident recently expressed misgivings over the look and the cost of the retaining wall at the Adams Street highway yard. As DPW Commissioner Kevin Winn notes both with humor and sincerity: “Beauty is in the eye of the beholder, but I am not sure that a segmented block wall is a work of art. The retaining wall is made from concrete blocks that are waste material from concrete plants, which is by far the least expensive way to construct a retaining wall. The retaining wall is necessary to retain the steep slope that surrounds the site. Excavating out the slope provided much more usable space in our undersized lot, and will provide for a more functional and safer facility. Portions of the block wall also form material storage bins, which will be used for fill. Labor to install the wall was performed by Town forces in order to dramatically reduce out of budget expense.”

In fact the great bulk of the upgrade project site work is being performed by Town forces. The cost of the entire project is approximately \$2.5 million. With the relocation of the recycling center (see item above regarding grand opening) to its new home on Railroad Avenue, work now is underway to expand the highway garage, install a salt shed for improved, environmentally friendly 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.

SNOW REMOVAL

It is the season for the white stuff and questions arise on how the Town handles it. We have prepared a Question & Answers which we hope is helpful, [click here](#).

AND DON'T FORGET THE SEPTIC SYSTEM PROGRAM – We want property owners to be aware that financial help is available for those in the NYC Watershed (about 80% of the land area) with failing septic systems. Under Bedford's Septic System Repair and Replacement Program, the Town now has reimbursed over \$130,000 in eligible costs covering 32 properties.

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. If you have a failing septic system, help is here 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. Almost all the properties in Bedford Hills and Katonah and many in Bedford Village are in the watershed. We 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

SOLAR INSTALLATIONS POSSIBLE FOR SOME TOWN FACILITIES

Bedford is one of the founding members of Sustainable Westchester's Municipal Solar Buyers Group (MSBG). MSBG is a consortium of municipalities from Yonkers up to Lewisboro that launched a program designed to streamline the process of obtaining long-term, economical, renewable energy through solar facilities designed and built on participating Member's municipal sites. The program is the culmination of two years of strenuous effort whereby the MSBG procured the services of two professional consultants (PNC Equipment Finance's Structured Finance Solutions Group and GP Energy Management) and retained attorneys (Sive, Paget & Riesel, a recognized leader in environmental law) to negotiate and draft the required legal agreements.

With the assistance of its consultants and legal counsel, Sustainable Westchester completed the required procurement involving a rigorous RFP process that resulted in the selection of a nationally recognized solar developer, NextEra Energy Resources (NextEra), and performed almost all required and necessary legal work pertaining to the negotiation and drafting of a model long-term power purchase agreement (Model PPA). The Model PPA will serve as the framework for the relationship between NextEra and each participating Member, but it will be tailored to each individual site on which a solar facility is to be constructed. NextEra, one of the largest wholesale generators of clean power in the nation with offices in White Plains, will design, construct, finance, own and maintain each solar facility. NextEra will also underwrite the cost of Sustainable Westchester's consultants and attorneys. Thus, the only financial obligation to Bedford, if we choose to move forward, would be to purchase the electricity generated on our sites.

The Town has identified a number of sites for possible rooftop, carport or ground mount solar installations. The identified sites include, among others, the Beaver Dam compost facility; the police station renovation; the salt shed for the Adams Street highway facility; the Recreation & Parks building and possibly pool house buildings. NextEra is now in the process of fully evaluating the potential savings that can be achieved from the development of solar at each of our identified sites. We expect to receive NextEra's proposal within the coming weeks. We will only pursue those sites that demonstrate savings to the Town. With respect to those sites where savings are acceptable, we will finalize the long-term PPA with NextEra. Once approved by our Board, we will authorize NextEra to move forward with the design, permitting and construction phase. We anticipate that Bedford can have solar on its municipal sites within 6 to 8 months.

COMPTROLLER'S REPORT

The Town's Comptroller, Abe Zambrano, reported on December 15 as follows:

General Fund. Revenues received through November 30th total \$18,542,866 out of the \$19,990,784 budgeted for the year, while expenditures total \$16,408,206 for the same period. These numbers represent 92.75% and 80.45% of the budget respectively. During the month of December in addition to normal expenses, substantial payments for debt service and the retirement system will add a projected \$1.83 million in expenditures. Based on revenue and expenditure projections through the end of the year, we are anticipating a surplus for the year.

Highway Fund. The Highway fund has collected \$7,278,555 of its \$7,548,848 in budgeted revenues and has spent \$5,852,614 and encumbered \$373,888 of its budgeted appropriations of \$7,698,848. Those amounts represent 96.42% and 80.88% respectively. As reported last month, based on anticipated activity through December 31, we are projecting that the Highway Fund will also be adding to its reserves in 2016.

Mortgage Tax. We have received notification from Westchester County that the second mortgage tax revenue installment for the year will be \$676,153 slightly higher than what has been projected. Based on that information, the total mortgage tax revenue received for the year will be \$1,209,770. The amount budgeted will be exceeded by \$169,770.

Sales Tax. Westchester County's remittance for the quarter ended in September 30th was in the amount of \$622,118 and based on the projections provided by the County's Department of Finance, the last quarter will generate a payment in the \$650,000 range; similar to the amount received for the same period in 2105. At this point, the total sales tax revenue being projected for 2016 will surpass the budgeted amount by approximately \$120,000.

Parking. As reported over the past three month, parking revenues for the year will not meet the amount set in the 2016 budget. Through November 30th, we have only collected \$893,000 out of the \$930,000 budgeted for 2016. Based on prior year's history, parking revenues collected in the month of December will not be enough to meet budget.

Fines and Forfeited Bail. Collection of Justice Court fines are recorded a month in arrears due to the timing of the processing by the NYS Office of Court Administration. As of October 31th, we have recorded \$570,311 in fines. Forecasts indicate that the budgeted amount of \$655,000 will be exceeded by the end of the year.

Safety Inspections. Safety Inspection fees collected through November 30th total \$745,590. Historically, December Safety Inspections revenues have ranged from \$9,600 in 2014 to \$117,000 in 2013. This year, based on the first 15 days in December, we are anticipating approximately \$50,000 for the month; thus generating revenues in excess of budget of approximately \$55,000.

Cable Franchise Fees. Collections of Cable Franchise Fees as of November total \$285,214 out to the \$300,000 budgeted for the year. We are projecting that the total payments received for the year will exceed \$350,000.

POLICE STATION RENOVATION At the Town Board's December 6 meeting, the Board approved recommendations from its Construction Manager and Architects regarding bids received for the construction of the project. As previously reported, the bids were highly competitive and it is anticipated that the project will be within \$7 million. It should be noted that the project costs include the significant renovations carried out to the lower level of the Town Offices at 321 Bedford Road, which now are the temporary headquarters for the Police Department. The project is a complete renovation of the existing police station with two additions. It is significantly less expensive than alternative plans for a two story building or an entirely new building estimates which would have exceeded \$12 million. Construction on the project is scheduled to begin next month and be completed in January 2018.

REPAVING OF 684 – PLEASE SIGN THE PETITION

We're not there yet! While it was 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 sign the petition to Stop the 684 Noise which you'll find at <https://www.change.org/search?q=Cuomo%20684>** You also might write or call:

- 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, 914-934-5350
- State Assemblyman Buchwald: buchwaldd@assembly.state.ny.us, 914-244-4450

NYSEG TREE TRIMMING ALONG A FEW STREETS IN BEDFORD VILLAGE

Several residents have contacted me regarding proposed tree cutting and trimming being carried out by contractors engaged by NYSEG. The tree cutting is part of NYSEG's routine vegetation management work within our community shortly (see list of streets below). Residents impacted by the upcoming work should have received 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.

Please note that due to winter weather, any tree trimming and cutting will resume when weather permits, so please do not assume that if you received the postcard and the NYSEG contractor hasn't carried out work at your address, they won't be coming around.

COMMUNICATIONS

Here is a brief recap of what has been accomplished in our communication efforts with our residents. In our weekly e-news "What's New" not only do I share what has been going on in the Town but whenever possible I also share links to new services available to NY State residents such as signing up for text and/or email alerts letting you know that your car registration is about to expire <http://dmv.ny.gov/more-info/get-email-andor-text-reminders> ; Providing a link to Metro North for the purchase of e-tickets [click here](#) using your smart phone; Providing links to receive text alerts from NYSEG <http://www.nyseg.com/youraccount/aboutalerts.html> and Con Ed <http://www.coned.com/mobileapp/>. I have also shared some excellent suggestions from our residents and as always invite them to participate in this partnership. The videos to the Supervisor's show as well as other videos are available by accessing the video library by [clicking here](#). My monthly reports are also archived and can be accessed by [clicking here](#). We continue with our efforts to make the Town's website more user friendly, adding topic specific pages (such as for the sewer plan), other new pages such as for the Traffic Safety Working Group, the Veterans Affairs Advisory committee and the Committee on Seniors, and providing greater transparency (for example, we post all union contracts). Also in 2017 we intend to provide more interactive capability to make it easier for residents and businesses to work with the Town.

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