

# VILLAGE VOICES

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## News from the Mayor's Office Tentative Budget

The Village's tentative budget has been submitted, and there is a lot of good news contained in it. Once again, we have seen no need to raise taxes, a result of higher expected revenues from paid parking and permits (\$405,000 budgeted) and an increased collection of past parking tickets (an increase in budget from \$100,000 to \$150,000), as well as many cost-cutting decisions (fewer full time employees and more seasonal and part-time employees, the removal of the library from the village budget and other shared services).

As a result, the tentative budget will allow us to:

1. Repave/preserve 8 village streets (Church, Pine, Hoffman Lane, and parts of Beaver, Delaware, River, and Main, as well as preservation treatment (oil and stone) on the newly paved Linden Ave.)
2. Put away reserves (General Fund - \$319,000, Water Fund - \$234,570, Sewer Fund-\$138,103) for work we know is coming in the near future
3. Begin to upgrade our docks by replacing one dock in the spring of 2016
4. Begin a long process of renovating while preserving 22 Main St. (rewiring, acquiring a generator to create an emergency center, addressing the leaking skylight, adding storm windows)
5. Continue work and planning to upgrade pedestrian and other amenities in the business district

Still, we have many challenges ahead. Over the next ten years we have nearly \$20 million dollars of infrastructure work to do, and we will continue to seek new sources of revenues, more grants, further efficiencies, and economic development to increase the tax base.

If anyone is interested in understanding how monies are spent, please go to our website and read through the 2015-16 tentative budget. It is a comprehensive, easy to follow, thoroughly itemized document that should answer most questions. Of course, if anyone needs further information, please call the office or contact me directly.

Even more importantly, Spring is here!

-Jeff Katz, Mayor

## Main Street

Spring has finally come to Cooperstown and with its arrival work has resumed on the Main Street project. Work this spring concentrates on the section of Main Street sidewalk from Pioneer Alley to Fair Street on the southern side. That section will be completed by Memorial Day, bringing the first phase of the project to a near finished state.

While phase 1, funded largely by a Green Innovation Program Grant (GIGP) from the Environmental Facilities Corporation, is wrapping up, planning has already begun for phase 2. Work for that project is funded through the Transportation Enhancement Program (TEP). Aimed to improve amenities for pedestrians and cyclists, it will focus on the intersection at Main and Chestnut Street, as well as Pioneer Street in the business district and areas on Main Street west of Chestnut and east of Hoffman Lane. New features will include additional sidewalk work, crosswalks, upgrades to signaling including pedestrian signals, bump outs to facilitate street crossing, interpretive and wayfinding signage, bike racks, benches, a new lighted flagpole, and the restoration of additional lampposts.

In conjunction with this work, the Village is also planning a major infrastructure project on Pioneer Street between Church and Lake to improve water, sewer, storm water, and street surfacing. This will avoid having to dig up portions of Pioneer Street twice and will save money in the long run.

A public information session about the TEP project will be held at the Fire Hall at 25 Chestnut Street on Monday, May 11 at 7 p.m. All are invited to hear and comment on plans for this next exciting phase to improve the downtown experience.

## Assessment Re-Evals

Recently notices were sent out to Village property owners as part on the on-going revaluation for the Town of Otsego. These notices listed the estimated tax impacts on the multiple taxing jurisdictions within the county.

The "village" was the second jurisdiction listed in that notice. This was in error; the figure actually represents the estimated increase or decrease within the Town. We apologize for any confusion caused by this error in the town's notice.

### **Final Reads & Reacts for Water/Sewer Accounts**

The fee for final reads and reactivations for water and sewer accounts will be \$50.00. This increase will go into effect on June 1, 2015.

### **2% Penalty Fee on Water & Sewer Bills**

All Water and Sewer Consumers are reminded that there is a monthly 2.00% Penalty for all amounts unpaid for any billing period. Your new bill should make the penalties easier to recognize. Also please note that the penalties reflected for late payment are only accurate for one month, new penalties are added each month.

### **Property Taxes**

Village property tax bills will be mailed on or about May 29, 2015. If for any reason you or your escrow company does not receive a tax bill, please call the Treasurer's Office at 547-8558, for a duplicate. The first installment is due without penalty no later than Tuesday, June 30, 2015 and the second installment is due without penalty no later than Monday, August 31, 2015. If you have any further questions, please call the Village Treasurer's Office at 547-8558.

### **Downtown Parking Permits**

Downtown parking permits provide an alternative to using Pay and Display machines for parking in the paid parking area on Main, Pioneer, Chestnut, and Fair Streets. Anyone—locals and tourists—can buy a permit. By law, permits are not limited to village residents. Permit holders can park for up to two hours daily in an on-street paid parking space without purchasing a ticket from a Pay and Display machine. After the first two hours, additional time can be purchased at a machine.

The same permit can be used to park in the permit-only Fowler Way parking lot (located behind the batting cages, formerly the Chestnut Street lot) if an all-day option is needed. Please remember that the purchase and display of a parking permit does not guarantee a parking space.

This year parking permits can be purchased in person from the Village Clerk's office at 22 Main Street or by mail. Applications can be accessed on the village website [www.cooperstownny.org](http://www.cooperstownny.org) or at the Clerk's office. A completed application must be accompanied by a copy of the vehicle's registration and appropriate fee, payable by cash or check. Permit fees were adjusted in 2014 to reduce the cost for homes with multiple cars. The cost is \$25 for the first permit, \$15 for additional permits at the same address.

### **Annual Drinking Water Quality Report**

The Village of Cooperstown has prepared its annual Drinking Water Quality Report to comply with State regulations. The purpose of the report is to raise your understanding of drinking water and awareness of the need to protect our drinking water sources.

Last year, your tap water met all State drinking water health standards. We are proud to report that our system did not violate maximum contaminant levels or any other water quality standard.

You may access a complete report at the Village website [www.cooperstownny.org](http://www.cooperstownny.org), pick up a copy at the Village Office, 22 Main Street, or call 607-547-2411 to request a copy be mailed to you. The report will provide you with an overview of last year's water quality. Included are details about where your water comes from, what it contains, and how it compares to State standards.

### **Taking Action in the Parks**

In April 2014 The Parks Board assembled an Opinion Survey for the Village's six parks: Three Mile Point, Lakefront Park, Council Rock, Pioneer Park, Badger Park and Fairy Spring. The survey was available online on the Village's website, included with the newsletter, *Village Voices* and available at the Village Office. We thank everyone who took the time to respond with thoughtful and very helpful suggestions.

Board members created an excel document of all the responses to the survey, as well as created a two page, Parks Survey Summary and Action Plan. A hard copy of that Summary is available in the Village Office, in the Village Library and on the Village's website.

In general, respondents expressed great enjoyment of our municipal park system, with three predominant recommendations: continue overall maintenance and repairs, improve/construct additional boat docks and canoe/kayak racks and remedy Lakefront Park drainage.

Along with action steps for each individual park, the above recommendations will be the focus of the Parks Board. Improvements are already underway at Lakefront Park including complete re-pointing of the bandstand, installing a new railing on the three flights of steps, and building a vertical storage rack for canoes and kayaks. In addition, the drainage near the buffer strip and Fish Road will be addressed with a French drain and most exciting of all, funding is in place in the 2015-16 Village budget to replace the first of our two boat docks. The boat dock construction is slated for spring 2016. We hope you will use and enjoy your parks this summer!

### Village Parks

Looking for an inexpensive family outing? Fairy Spring and Three Mile Point parks are free for Village residents. Take the opportunity, enjoy the sights and sounds, stroll around the park, bring your canoe or kayak and paddle the lake, have a picnic or just sit on the beach. Both parks will open for weekends beginning Saturday, May 23<sup>rd</sup>. Upon the completion of High School graduation, June 26<sup>th</sup> the parks will be open seven days a week. Three Mile Point Park opens at 10 AM and Fairy Spring Park opens at 11 AM both remain open until dusk with swimming as staffing permits. *(The staff works diligently to ensure lifeguards are on duty at both parks whenever possible however there are times when one or both parks shut down the swimming areas due to lack of staff.)*

Village residents may get their free park pass at either park or the Village Office with just their identification which includes their village address. This pass will allow you and your immediate family (i.e. 2 adults and their children, living within the same household), access to either Fairy Spring or Three Mile Point Park ***(If your family chooses to bring guests they will either need to purchase their own pass or pay \$5.00 per person admission price at the park.)***

To ensure a family friendly environment and the safety of all patrons we remind you:

- Alcoholic beverages are not permitted;
- Pets must be leashed at all times and owners must clean up after their pets;
- Charcoal grills and picnic tables are available for your enjoyment;
- Pavilions are available on a first come first serve basis unless rented to a group or organization;
- To carryout whatever you bring in (i.e. food, garbage, bottles, cans, etc.);
- Parking is limited, please car pool if possible

### Furniture Wanted!!

The Caretaker's quarters at Three Mile Point Park is in need of some additional storage units for the bedrooms. If you have a dresser or storage cubicles you would like to donate to the Park, please give a call 547-2411 and we would be happy to pick it up.

### Need Space for a Meeting?

The former Village Court office located on the lower floor of the Village Hall has been converted to a meeting/conference/tutoring room for groups up to 10 people. Community groups as well as Village committees and boards are welcome to schedule this room by contacting the Village Clerk at 547-2411.

### What You Need to Know About the Pickup Procedures for Compostable Waste & Brush

- Compostable yard waste and brush will be picked up separately during the growing season, on the last Thursday of each month, starting at 7 AM.
  - Be sure your compostable waste is at curb side no later than 7 AM, on the last Thursday of each month. We will travel each street once per month but should we not be able to reach the entire village in one day we will continue pickup on the following day.
  - There will be two pickups, one for soft green waste and a second for brush.
- Place all soft compost-able green waste (lawn clippings, leaves, etc.) into easily dumped hard containers (garbage cans, large buckets, etc) or biodegradable bags.
  - Do not use plastic bags or other non-compostable one time use containers.
  - Do not assume we can lift containers that you cannot lift. If a container is too heavy to be lifted it will be left full at the curb.
- Keep all limbs and tree wood separate from the smaller compost-able items.
  - Do not place brush in containers just place them on the tree lawn.
  - Root balls, stumps and large tree limbs will not be picked up, only materials which can be chipped in our small chipper.
- Place materials to be picked up by the Village crew in the grass header between the curb and sidewalk.
  - Keep brush and soft green waste separate and in the appropriate containers.
  - Do not block sidewalks or fire hydrants.
- Dispose of construction debris including processed wood through your garbage hauler or the transfer station.
- Keep litter and other garbage out of composting materials.
- For the final clean up in the fall and initial clean up in the spring, leaves and other soft green waste does not need to be bagged or placed in dump-able containers.
  - Leave soft green waste on the tree lawn and they will be picked up with the leaf vacuum.
  - Make sure there are no stone, bricks, tree branches, or other hard objects mixed into the soft green waste.

Check the resident's page of the Village Website [www.cooperstownny.org](http://www.cooperstownny.org), for information about spring and fall cleanup dates.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the pickup and disposal of yard debris please contact Kurt Carman, Street Superintendent at 547-5521.

### **Solar Electricity**

Electricity is a significant cost for the Village. A large portion of our electric bill goes to: the water treatment system and pumping water to the storage tanks; the sewerage treatment plant and all the pumping that it entails; and the street lights, both the historic lights on Main Street and those mounted on wooden electric poles throughout the Village.

In an effort to save costs and promote sustainability now and in the future, the Village continues to investigate solar electricity. We, along with several nearby municipalities, schools, and non-profit organizations, are working with Solomon Energy to consolidate our electricity requirements into a combined project that is aimed at achieving costs lower than what we currently pay and below what we could achieve individually. The plan, if it goes forward, is for each organization to have its own separate contract for solar energy. We expect to issue a Request for Proposals to solar energy providers (SEPs), companies that specialize in constructing and financing such projects as well as providing the necessary land.

The Village will have no financial commitment until we are satisfied that the arrangement will be beneficial to the Village. At that point we would sign a power purchase agreement, at an agreed upon rate, for electricity generated by the project. We would have no investment in the facilities or maintenance responsibilities. The investment, construction, operation, and maintenance would all be carried out by the SEP. Our benefit is reduced costs for electricity and the satisfaction of knowing that we are helping to reduce our carbon footprint through the use of a renewable energy source.

### **Trolley Passes**

The trolley season will soon be underway. Season trolley passes are a bargain and great way for local residents and employees to find transportation around Cooperstown.

The trolleys run daily, from 8:30 AM – 9 PM beginning Saturday, May 23<sup>rd</sup>. Season passes are \$35 for a family; \$20 for an adult; \$15 for a senior citizen and \$10 for students under 18 years old. You can purchase season passes at the Village Office, or on the trolleys.

### **Village Holiday Schedule**

The Village Offices will be closed:

- ❖ May 25 (in observance of Memorial Day)
- ❖ July 3 (in observance of Independence Day)

### **Vending**

The Village has updated the law that regulates sales on public property during special events like Induction Weekend as well as during activities like the library book sale. The updates were necessary to bring the vending law in compliance with state law and the Americans with Disabilities Act, and to ensure the Village looks its best during special events when large numbers of people visit. The new law also has the potential to allow additional vending in our parks and certain other public spaces during the summer season with appropriate approvals.

Some of the provisions of the new law include:

- Supplies, stored vending merchandise, and equipment must be screened from public view
- Signage is limited in size and location
- Street furniture, tents, table skirts, and umbrellas must not include any advertising
- Devices that produce loud noises are prohibited
- Vendors must keep their area clean and free of trash
- Vendors must maintain at least a five-foot wide passageway for pedestrians
- Vendors may not operate within three feet of a building entrance or display windows unless the business owner has granted written permission
- During special events vending is limited to tables, which must have single-color skirts if used for merchandise display or autograph signing, and tents which must have single-color coverings

For those who wish to park cars on private property during Induction Weekend, this law contains the same provisions that were in effect in the past:

- Property owners must complete an application and pay the application fee
- No vehicle may be parked less than three feet from any property line
- No more than one two-sided sign, not greater than six square feet in area per side, is allowed

Anyone interested in additional details is encouraged to get a copy of the new vending law in its entirety at [www.cooperstownny.org](http://www.cooperstownny.org) or by contacting the Village office at 547-2411.