
CAYUGA HEIGHTS NEWSLETTER

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Report of the Mayor

As I write, fall is definitely here with hints that winter is not too far away. The sunny days are great, and rain has brightened up lawns and late gardens. All the applications of seed to the islands on North Triphammer sprouted, and a thick cover of green grass lends color to the north entry to the Village. Leaf collection by vacuum pick-up is in full swing, with two units operational. The Cayuga Nature Center is interested in receiving a large quantity of leaves to use in their food-composting venture, and it will help us with an additional place to unload.

A new garbage truck, side loading to facilitate one man operation was purchased this fall. Matt Cooper, that man, suggests that the use of large garbage bags inside the cans would greatly improve the efficiency of tossing garbage into the loading area as opposed to loose garbage or even several smaller plastic bags in each can. A reminder-household garbage is required to be in covered cans to keep crows, raccoons, and the occasional loose dog from “feasting” on the debris.

The Tompkins-Tioga Counties Electric and Gas Alliance working with NYSEG Solutions offers residential customers a somewhat lower rate on utilities. Industrial and municipal users are receiving more substantial savings. The Village is participating, with the municipal buildings, the wastewater treatment plant, and our share of Bolton Point as beneficiaries. This fall the STAR program was helpful in reducing school taxes. Bell Atlantic is installing fiber optics capabilities to its station off Pleasant Grove Road. The connections to the East Upland – Parkway area have been disruptive to traffic, but new sidewalks and landscaping are being provided at their expense.

Improvements and added facilities to the Cayuga Heights Fire Station continue with the architectural consultant authorized to proceed with detailed plans. Brent Cross will serve as the civil engineer. Many of the new features reflect the need to meet OSHA and New York Fire Safety Codes that currently apply, as well as added training facilities, Department offices, and space for additional volunteer bunkers. Chief Robert Day has resigned that position, due to other commitments though he stays on as an Assistant chief. The new Chief is Mike DiVenti, formerly first Assistant Chief.

Intermunicipal cooperation on several fronts continues toward agreement, with regional approaches to water and sewer projects in the forefront. The municipalities involved have formed a Regional Planning Group, primarily to consider environmental concerns. The DEC has shown strong support for added measures to reduce phosphorus levels in the effluent at both the Ithaca and Cayuga Heights plants. The Cayuga Lake Watershed Intermunicipal group is also looking at various upstream sources of pollutants reaching the lake, and supporting projects which will reduce them.

The Northeast Subarea Transportation Study Working Group recommendations are now being considered by the County Transportation Council. These policy recommendations include land use planning and plan review criteria, livability principles in neighborhoods, discouraging suburban sprawl, protecting farm land and open space, promoting public transit use, improved bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and approving

the reserving of rights-of-way for proposed new roads in anticipation of future needs. A county-wide freight movement study will be vital to some of these recommendations.

The Deer Study Committee has made recommendations as to the next step to control the growing numbers of deer in the Village. The Board of Trustees has been asked to fund a study of the feasibility of control by both contraception and culling. The study should also give a better estimate of deer population, their migration habits, and areas of highest activity. Estimated cost of the study from January through December is about \$11,000.

Ronald Anderson, Mayor

Report of the Clerk

The Village elections will be held Tuesday, March 21, 2000 at the Village Hall. This year there will be three Trustee positions open as well as the Mayor's position. There are a total of 6 Trustees on the Village Board of Trustees and each serves a two-year term. The Board members are unpaid and meet monthly. The Mayor also serves a two-year term and receives a salary of \$9,000. I would like to encourage any resident to run for the various offices and to participate in our local government. Please call the Board of Elections at 274-5522 with your questions about procedures to follow for nomination and election.

The Cayuga Lake Watershed Network will hold public participation meetings concerning the Cayuga Lake Watershed Management Plan in January 2000. The first phase of this project funded by the New York Department of State and through the cooperation of 28 municipalities is complete and available for review (copies in the Village Office). The Watershed Characterization Report describes the current state of the watershed and lays a foundation for a management plan aimed at its protection. There will be a public meeting to discuss the report and to give comments on Wed, January 19, 2000, 7-9 PM at Boynton Middle School, 1601 North Cayuga St. Please call Sharon Anderson at Cornell Cooperative Extension, (607-272-2292, e-mail ska2@cornell.edu), for further information.

Two reminders - our office is on the second floor of Marcham Hall and for those residents that have difficulty with the stairs, there is a telephone at the bottom of the stairs. Please dial the number listed by the phone, and we will be happy to come down and help you. Also please note that the Village observes Christmas Day on Friday, Dec. 24, and New Year's Day will be observed on Friday, Dec. 31. Our offices will be closed on those days and there will be no Bulky Trash pick-up on Dec. 24. however Tompkins County Solid Waste will pick-up recycling on Dec. 31.

Elizabeth Kord, Clerk

Report of the Superintendent of Public Works

The FY2000-01 budget preparation is coming up at the beginning of the year. Two of the largest budget items are Street maintenance and Capital Improvements. The Village utilizes a program known as Road Surface Management Survey (RSMS) to assist in the budgeting, planning and scheduling of roadwork. This program was developed by the Cornell Local Roads Program Department and is widely used throughout our area and New York State. Some of the features of the program are as follows:

- physical condition inspection and inventory survey.

- considers factors such as traffic volume, pavement condition, overall condition (width, drainage, etc.), and importance.
- ranks individual street segments based on weighted averages of above inputs.
- includes various strategies such as: maintenance, overlays, and full reconstruction.
- provides a 5 year plan for implementation.

The Village has been using RSMS since 1994, and has just updated the physical inspection/inventory survey and come up with a new prioritized ranking of streets. The number of streets which can be worked on each year is determined by how much money can be budgeted for the Capital Improvement item.

The Village DPW has the personnel and equipment to do most of the work necessary to rebuild a street. Specialty contractors are used to complete the tasks that the DPW is not equipped to do, such as paving and granite curbing. Therefore, the Village is able to get the most amount of work out of the budget dollars using the existing staff, instead of having to pay the high cost of hiring a General Contractor.

Brent Cross, Engineer

Report from the Police Department

With the holiday season fast approaching I would like to take this opportunity to remind everyone to contact the Police Department if you are going to be leaving town for an extended period of time. This will ensure that routine property checks will be done of your residence while you are away. When calling the Police Department after hours listen to the entire message and choose an option that will best assist your needs. We are finding that some individuals are hanging up before listening to the entire message and selecting an option. Those residences with residential alarms should update their emergency contact lists. Make the necessary changes to phone numbers, addresses as well as taking person(s) off of the list if they are no longer an Emergency Contact for your residence.

We at the Cayuga Heights Police Department are proud to announce the promotion of Thomas L. Boyce from Patrol Officer to Sergeant. Sgt. Boyce has been with the Police Department for 13 years and is an outstanding patrol officer. I have every confidence that Tom will do a fine job within the Sergeant's position. There has been an addition to the department as well. Michael St. Angelo was hired to fill a vacant part-time position. Officer St. Angelo works full-time with the Tompkins County Sheriff Department as a road deputy. Please join us in welcoming Mike to the department. There is also a new patrol vehicle, with a new color scheme, that has been added to the department line up as well.

I would like to take a moment to thank the residents of the Village of Cayuga Heights. I have been Chief of Police here in the Village for a little over a year and I have thoroughly enjoyed the challenges that the new position has presented to me. The entire community has been very supportive and understanding during my first year here as Chief. I would also like to thank the wonderful staff at the Police Department for making my transition into the Chief's position a very smooth one. I hope to continue to provide the residences of the Village with the same service that they have come to expect from

the Police Department. The staff at the Cayuga Heights Police Department would like to wish everyone a very safe and happy holiday season.

Kenneth Lansing, Chief of Police

Report from the Fire Department

It has been a busy fall around the Cayuga Heights Fire Station. In early October Our Firefighters went out into the schools to teach Elementary school children the importance of fire safety during National Fire Prevention Week. To culminate the week of Fire Safety Tips we hosted over 200 residents at our annual Open House. Guests were treated to Fire Safety Demonstrations, Informational Booths, Fire Truck Rides and even free food.

We continue to make preparations for the renovation and addition to the fire station. Once completed the station will have room for more live in Firefighter/EMT's, increased office space, better storage capacity and increased training and meeting space to accommodate the many community organizations that currently use our facility. If you having any questions about the fire station please give us a call.

With winter approaching I feel it would be wise to take a minute to remind everyone of the importance of having your Wood Stoves and Fireplaces cleaned and serviced at least once a year. Proper maintenance can avoid dangerous Carbon Monoxide problems and chimney fires.

As always the Cayuga Heights Fire Department is looking for residents who are interested in serving their community. If you are interested in volunteering or would like some more information please call the Fire Department at 266-7454.

Michael DiVenti, Fire Chief

Report of the Treasurer

I'd like to make a prediction of what my thoughts will be upon waking up on January 1, 2000:

- The first is that so far, Y2K hasn't been as bad as people thought. Although problems occurred here and there, the preparation in the United States was thorough and resulted in an uneventful transition.
- The second is that we still have another year to go before we complete the 20th century and the millennium. For, as any chronologist will remind you, there was no year 0 in our calendar.
- Finally, I'll realize that it is time to begin the FY2001 budget development process for the Village of Cayuga Heights.

Cayuga Heights, like most villages in the state, has a fiscal year that begins on June 1. The budget framework, and deadlines, are defined in Article 5, Section 5 of Village Law of the State of New York. The law requires that on or before the 8th day of February, that the budget officer (for Cayuga Heights, the Village Treasurer) solicit **Budget Requests** and estimates from each department head. This is usually done mid-January. By law these estimates must be returned no later than March 1, and we usually require them to be returned by mid February.

The budget officer takes the requests, estimates, and other materials and prepares a **Tentative Budget**. Due no later than March 20, this budget is distributed to the Board

of Trustees, made available to the public, and filed with the Village Clerk. The Village Clerk presents the budget to the Board of Trustees at a regular or special meeting prior to March 31. At such meeting the board reviews and modifies the budget within parameters established in the law. Both the submission of the tentative budget and presentation to the Board of Trustees typically occurs at the regularly scheduled March meeting.

A **Public Hearing** on the budget must be scheduled prior to April 15. This is usually done on the first Monday in April, which is the date of the Village's Annual Organizational Meeting. This hearing must be completed no later than April 20. Following the Public Hearing. After the completion of the hearing, the Board of Trustees reviews the budget further, and after any necessary modifications, adopts it. The budget must be adopted by May 1, or the Tentative Budget as modified shall become official budget.

After the budget is adopted, a certified copy of the **Adopted Budget** is filed with the **Office of State Comptroller**, and final copies are printed. Copies of the final budget are available from the Village Clerk. On June 1, roughly one and one-half months after the budget is adopted (or five months after the development has begun) the new fiscal year starts, and we prepare to enter our budget calendar anew.

Jeffrey Silber, Treasurer

Report of the Village Justice

I will save a discussion of an annual review of the Court's caseload for the next newsletter once we have the full figures for 1999. In this issue, I will pass on a reminder about the nature and hours of the Court and present a few practical bits of information related to New York Vehicle and Traffic Law.

Village Court Open to the Public

I remind the readers that the Village Court is open almost every Tuesday evening starting at 6:00 PM and the public is invited to attend. In fact, the Court often receives visitors from high school and college classes interested in the justice system at the level where the vast majority of New York citizens experience it – in justice courts.

We also have court proceedings on the first Thursday of each month, again starting at 6:00 PM. This is when I generally schedule cases which are more complicated and/or involve the Assistant District Attorney or defense counsel.

Some Useful Vehicle and Traffic Law Facts

- Most speeding tickets convictions result in 4 points – for driving 11 to 20 miles over the speed limit (depending on the speed, the range in points can be as low as 3 and as high as 11).
- If during an 18 month span, a person receives either 11 points or three speeding convictions, the Department of Motor Vehicles will suspend the person's New York driver's license or New York driving privileges.
- A driver can have up to four points removed from her/his driving record by taking a Defensive Driving Course. In addition, any New York licensed and insured driver completing the course, who is also the primary driver of the vehicle, is entitled to a 10% reduction of her/his insurance premiums for three years. The cost of the course is usually recovered the first year.

- If a person receives a traffic ticket and fails to mail in her/his plea or appear in court, or after conviction fails to send in his “record of conviction” stub or pay the fine or surcharge, then the Court is required to “scofflaw” the defendant. That is, the defendant is reported to the Department of Motor Vehicles and her/his New York driver’s license or New York driving privileges are suspended. It is a very effective incentive to secure the attention and cooperation of defendants who neglect their traffic tickets.

Glenn G. Galbreath, Village Justice

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