



The Village Report

Volume 20 Issue 1

Spring/Summer 2020

Contact Information

www.villageofvoorheesville.com

Village Office Hours

Monday - Friday

9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Notary Services available

Phone: (518) 765-2692

Fax: (518) 765-2967

Mailing address: 29 Voorheesville Ave.

Mayor

Bob Conway 765-0036
mayor@villageofvoorheesville.com

Deputy Mayor

Dick Berger 765-2674

Trustees

Jack Stevens 765-4350

Rich Straut 765-2068

Sarita Winchell 765-2133

Village Clerk/Treasurer

Linda Pasquali
clerk@villageofvoorheesville.com

Deputy Clerk/Treasurer

Karen Finessey
deputyclerk@villageofvoorheesville.com

Building Inspector

Steve Mason 765-2698
building@villageofvoorheesville.com

Superintendent, Public Works

Brett Hotaling 765-4512
DPW@villageofvoorheesville.com

Stormwater Officer

Frank Fazio 765-2692 ex 14
stormwater@villageofvoorheesville.com

Board Meetings

Village Board:

4th Tuesday of the month at 7:00 PM
at Village Hall

Zoning Board of Appeals:

1st Thursday of the month at 7:00 PM
at Village Hall

Planning Commission:

2nd Tuesday of the month at 7:00 PM
at Village Hall

ZBA and Planning meet only when applications have been submitted. Call the Village Office or check the Public Notices and the website calendar to confirm meetings.

Public Notices for the Village of Voorheesville can be found in The Enterprise's advertisement section and are posted at: Village Hall; US Post Office, and the Library

From the Mayor

Hello Neighbors,

We are certainly living during a challenging period. At a time that we would normally be getting ready to gather to celebrate Memorial Day with the parade and festivities, we are now instead keeping our distance and trying to stay healthy. But even during this unprecedented time we can witness our community continuing to support and care for each other. We saw a community supporting a food drive with overwhelming generosity. There were schoolteachers and staff parading through the Village and beyond maintaining that bond with their students and showing that education is more than formal studies. A young child experienced the love and encouragement of his school, friends and neighbors as he faces medical challenges. The current crisis may be restricting our ability to socialize in the way that we are accustomed to, but it has done nothing to diminish the connection we have to our community and each other.

Please keep in mind that there are numerous community resources available to anyone that is struggling in anyway; do not hesitate to reach out for assistance if needed. Better days are coming, and it is our mutual support and commitment to each other that will sustain us until then.

Stay well!



Community Choice Aggregation Moves Forward Program will stabilize electricity rates, provide access to renewable electricity, and protect consumers from predatory marketers

The Village of Voorheesville has joined with 12 other communities in the Capital Region to establish Community Choice Aggregation (CCA). CCA is a bulk electricity buying program for Village residents and small businesses. Voorheesville completed 60 days of public education and outreach this past winter and enacted local legislation enabling the program. The next steps in the CCA process will include issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP), selecting the winning electricity supplier, and providing additional public education and outreach. Once the supplier is chosen, the Village will provide information about the program, including pricing and renewable electricity options, as well as details about the opt-out process. As our community, and others across our region continue to deal with COVID-19, the CCA program will continue to provide public information and education opportunities, and encourage residents to learn about CCA, and prepare for the program in our community.

The Municipal Electric and Gas Alliance (MEGA) is working with Voorheesville as CCA Administrator. MEGA, a non-profit, oversees the creation, development, and implementation of the program for the 13 participating municipalities. MEGA also engages in education and outreach to residents and businesses on behalf of the Village of Voorheesville. No taxpayer or government funds are used in the creation or operation of the program.

Information on CCA, including recorded presentations, are available at: www.megaacca.org/resources. You can also follow MEGA on Facebook at www.facebook.com/MEGAEnergyNY. Check in regularly for updates and news about CCA in the coming months.

Questions? Contact the MEGA CCA Team at 518.533.5399 or CCAteam@megaenergy.org.

DPW Notes

Spring is a busy time for your Village DPW. As they work to get the Village in shape after winter wear and tear, your help with the following items is appreciated.

- Loose debris must be in brown biodegradable bags and placed at the curb for pick-up. We require bagging at this time of year because of an increase in stones and rock and larger debris that can damage our chipper.
- Brush should be placed in piles at the curb (do not block sidewalks or place on roadway) with the cut side facing the street. REMINDER: If you hire a contractor to cut your limbs or a tree, the contractor is responsible for hauling away the debris.
- Moveable basketball hoops are an obstacle if placed in, or along the side of, any street or cul de sac. These hoops make it difficult to maneuver DPW equipment, emergency vehicles and the garbage/recycling trucks.
- Be advised that DPW is aware that snowplowing has caused damage to some lawns. Repair of these areas are on the schedule for the crew and will be taken care of as time allows.

As always, if you need to contact the Public Works Department we can be reached at 518-765-4512 Monday - Friday from 7:00 AM to 3:30 PM or by email at DPW@villageofvoorheesville.com



A Reminder to Those on Our Sewer System

The treatment plant is experiencing an increase in the number of wipes and other non-flushable debris, which can wreak havoc on our system. **PLEASE DO NOT FLUSH** any type of household/personal/ baby wipes, paper towels, facial tissue, cleaning rags or plastic packaging. Grease is also an issue of concern. DPW clears the system of a lot of non-flushable material several times each day. A concerted effort by those using the system will go a long way in helping to keep repair costs and annual user fees down.

Grease and non-digestible items like household wipes can cling to the walls of our sewer lines creating "fatbergs". Grease passing through the system ends up in balls like these that get caught in the screening process.



Rail Trail Amenities Added

Thank You Voorheesville DPW for creating additional parking space for the ever-popular Rail Trail. An 8-space parking area was created this winter and is located on Grove Street in front of the Village's water building about mid-way down the street.



Trash/Recycling Reminder

If your trash or recycling bin are not completely full and you feel you could hold off another week before filling it – please considering doing so. Only placing your bins out for pick-up when they are completely full helps to save fuel for our trash contractor – in turn saving us money on our contract.

Fire Department News

Members of the Fire Dept. are observing the “stay at home order” to do their part to flatten the curve.

Chief Cascone and his officers have implemented the current COVID-19 guidelines to help ensure the health and safety of the firefighters and residents. Normal activities are being postponed at this time except for essential or emergency duties. Firefighters of limited numbers, practicing social distancing, are performing routine checks and inspections of the equipment and trucks to ensure readiness for emergency calls.

If you would like information on becoming a firefighter call (518) 765-4048 and leave a message or talk to any member. The firehouse also has a Junior Firefighter Program for 16 and 17-year olds who would like to join.



Thank You, QUICK RESPONSE

On Monday, April 14, 2020 the Quick Response Restoration Company, located in Round Lake, came to the Voorheesville Fire House to perform a rigorous cleaning and sanitizing of our facility to help our members stay safe from the COVID-19 outbreak.

They did a super job of disinfecting surfaces throughout the building, as well as the interiors of our fire-fighting apparatus. AND – it was completed as a complimentary service to the Department and Village.

Information on this and other services offered by Quick Response can be found on their website.

Budgeting in Uncertain Times

By Sarita Winchell

The Village of Voorheesville basically conducts business with three separately taxing governmental funds: Water Fund, Sewer Fund, and the General Fund. Water and Sewer user fees support the water and sewer systems' expenses. Other than interest earnings or minor miscellaneous fees, there is no other outside budgeted revenue sources for them. The General Fund revenue stream is much more complicated.

The General Fund supports local services for residents: streetlights; village parks; sidewalks; garbage, brush & leaves pickup; snow removal and paving of village streets; the Voorheesville Volunteer Fire Department; ambulance services; code enforcement; compliance with environmental regulations; and the administrative costs associated with these services. Much of the revenue used to pay for these services comes from sources other than local Village of Voorheesville taxes. Here is a breakdown of revenue sources the General Fund received in 2018-2019:

Local taxes and penalties	\$ 294,781
County Sales tax	\$1,013,483
State Aid	\$ 156,006
Gross Receipt taxes & Franchises	\$ 96,618
Interest & Penalties	\$ 108,366
Refund of Prior Year expense	\$ 49,109
All Other revenues	<u>\$ 22,105</u>
Total	\$1,740,468

Local taxes were only 16.9% of revenue, whereas County Sales Tax and State Aid were 67.2% of total revenue. This is a situation common to many municipalities. The current stay at home situation we are experiencing is having a huge impact on sales tax revenue. It is making it very difficult to project 2020-2021 revenue, and how the rest of 2019-2020 will play out. New York State is also experiencing a financial crisis, and, at this time, it is unclear what impact this will have on the distribution of State Aid to local municipalities.

The Village Trustees made five key decisions in developing the 2020-2021 General Fund budget to help manage the current financial situation:

1. Out of respect for everyone dealing with financial uncertainty, NO Tax Rate Increase
2. NO salary increases for employees
3. The sales tax revenue estimate is CUT by 26% from 2018-2019 revenue level which forces the reduction in the expense budget. We must live within our means. Given the current situation, the only prediction for sales tax is less, less, less.
4. The 2020-2021 expense budget is decreased from the 2019-2020 total by \$133,314
5. Money from reserves plus unreserved fund balance (rainy day fund) will be used to support services and balance the budget.

As we move forward, be assured that we will be monitoring the situation closely and will adjust the spending plan as more information becomes available.



Summer Park Program Up in the Air



Our Village Summer Park Program is currently scheduled for July 14 – August 13, keeping to the 5-week, 9am – 12 noon Tues, Wed, Thurs program with registration fees remaining at \$50 per child for Village residents.

Please keep in mind this plan is subject to change due to COVID-19 directives. Updated information on the program will be posted on the Village website and our Facebook page.



Online Payment Now Available

The Village has begun taking Village bill payments

online through our website villageofvoorheesville.com

A third-party charge is added for use of this service



New Water Transmitters

The Village has begun using upgraded technology for our water meters. New wireless transmitters will replace the original transmitters on the meter heads found in most homes in the Village. The new transmitters can read daily (even hourly) via a cellular transmitter.

Replacements are being made at this time on an as-needed basis but eventually, over the next few years, all homes served by the Village's water system will be moved to these new transmitters.

A phone APP is available that allows a homeowner to monitor their use and set up alerts should a leak begin. Once the transmitter is installed, please call the Village Office for your account number, which allows you set up "EyeOnWater" from your mobile device. This is most helpful to those residents who travel often or are away from their home for extended periods of time.

Beginning in June 2020 a \$20 transmitter fee will be added to all Village water system bills to defray costs associated with these upgrades. Additionally, the annual minimum water rate will increase \$10 to \$210 for the first 20,000 gallons of water used.

Building Department Information

What do I need to do before installing a fence in the Village?

Contact the Building Department!

- All fences require the issuance of a Building Permit.
- The cost of the permit is based on the value of the fence.
- Fences are permitted to be installed with no setback from the property line. We strongly recommend that a survey is used to determine the location of property lines.
- If a fence is proposed to be installed over a utility or municipal easement a permit will not be issued without permission from the affected agency to encroach into the easement.
- Fences in rear and side yards are permitted up to 6 feet in height and may be of any approved material or style and finished side must face outward.
- Fences in front yards are limited to 4 feet in height, shall be constructed from a decorative material, may not be solid privacy style, and must be approved by the Planning Commission.
- Corner lots are considered to have 2 front yards.
- Fences installed as part of a swimming pool barrier must comply with the Building Code for such purpose.

Recreational Vehicle Storage

A reminder about storage of recreational type vehicles in front yards. Between April 1 and November 1 recreational vehicles may be kept in a driveway provided they are 10-feet from the edge of the road to provide adequate site distances. At other times during the year they must be stored in a side or rear yard and shall meet the requirements of an accessory structure. Vehicles in question include mobile homes, motor homes, recreational vehicles, boats, trailers or trucks.

Over the winter months property owners found to be in violation were notified and asked to make appropriate accommodations. Enforcement has begun on this issue. If you have questions regarding any vehicle kept on your property, contact the Village Building Department at 518-765-2698 for clarification.



Stormwater Corner

By Frank Fazio

Spring Rains: While the spring rains are helpful for the growth of trees, lawns and gardens, they can also cause erosion of soils that are not protected by vegetation due to the impact of winter. When rainfall hits unprotected soil, it can lead to erosion and the sediment is then carried to the storm sewer system. The runoff eventually discharges to streams, resulting in sediment deposits and pollution. So, if you have areas of bare soils, please try to establish vegetation or protect the area so that the soils do not go into the roads.

Car washing: This is the time of year we all try to get vehicles clean from the effects of winter. When washing your car, use phosphate free soap, or try boat soap as there are no polluting chemicals in it. Also, try to wash your car on the lawn if possible, to keep the soap from entering the waterways. The use of car wash facilities is an excellent alternative as these facilities use less water and typically recycle the water used.

Stormwater Coalition of Albany County: The Village joined the Stormwater Coalition last year and is now a member along with 11 other municipalities. It allows for great collaboration among the members to discuss stormwater related issues. They perform a great service for the Village and the website contains a lot of useful information. You can access the website is at <https://stormwateralbanycounty.org/>

MS4 Annual Report: The draft Joint Annual Report for stormwater management of the Village was posted on the Stormwater Coalition website and the Village stormwater website on May 1, 2020. If you have any comments or concerns, there is a comment response form in the Coalition and Village stormwater website.

New Sidewalks Installed

By now most of you have seen and enjoyed using the new sidewalks installed along Voorheesville Avenue and Altamont Road and the upcoming improvements to be made to those on Maple Avenue. School Road should be completed in the near future.

While the sidewalks provide a safe place to travel for our many walkers, they do come with a few added household chores for some homeowners. As per Local Law # 1 of 2006 homeowners who share their property with a sidewalk are required to maintain the sidewalk. This includes keeping it in good repair and free from debris, snow and ice, as well as cutting any grassy area between the sidewalk and roadway. If any major defect or repair becomes apparent, please contact Village Hall with your concerns.



Village Hall Landscaping

We would like to thank and acknowledge Elemental Landscapes, Inc. for maintaining the garden in front of Village Hall – which they designed and planted several years ago.



Household Hazardous Waste Collection 2020 Canceled

This year's Town of New Scotland annual household hazardous waste collection has been canceled.



Auxiliary Bottle Drive to be Rescheduled

The annual spring Bottle Drive was postponed due to the COVID-19 social distancing mandates. A new date has not been determined at the time of this printing.

Please watch for more information on this event.

Annual Parade Canceled for 2020

The American Legion has decided to cancel this year's Memorial Day Parade due to COVID-19 pandemic social distancing guidelines. Associated Village activities have been canceled as well. Rescheduling is being considered but no additional information is available at this time.

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VFBD

The 5th

Annual Voorheesville Family Bicycling Day (VFBD) is scheduled for Sunday, June 7th. As the COVID-19 directive for this date is unknown at the time of this newsletter printing, this event cannot be confirmed. Look for updates on the Village's website and Facebook page, or the VFBD Facebook page.

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Garden Club



By Bev MacMillen

The Helderview Garden Club would like to welcome new people to come and join in with us.

Meetings are held the months Feb. - May, as well as Sept. - Nov. A Holiday get-together is typically held in Dec. Some of our events are Nov. Holiday in the Park (Tree Lighting), Dec. at Ten Broeck Mansion in Albany (decorate an assigned room), Voorheesville Memorial Day parade, Annual Plant Sale, June Social with plant exchange, and others as planned.

Come and enjoy the fun and good times as we learn some new ideas about gardens and plants.

For more information, contact Paula Handen, President at 518-765-3236.

Village Communication

Your office staff is collecting phone numbers and emails to help us more easily contact you if an issue arises. Please call or email either of us with any contact information you are comfortable sharing. Thank you for helping us to serve you more efficiently.

Just a reminder that the NOTIFY ME service is easily accessible for Village residents who want to be informed about Village issues. Opting in for NOTIFY ME enables you to receive text and/or email notifications on Village news and emergencies. To participate, log on to the website, www.villageofvoorheesville.com click on the NOTIFY ME tab, and follow the instructions.

The Village uses Facebook (homepage **The Village of Voorheesville**) to post information of interest to our residents. For those not connected to the internet, an old-fashioned phone call to Village Hall will help you get the information you need.

Employment Opportunity

Seeking Village Residents interested in current or future openings for office assistance (filing, answering phones, and computer entry).

As the position is part time (1-2 days a week depending on budget restraints), there is potential for full time in 1-2 years as retirements occur.

Accounting knowledge and experience is required for the full time position.

Please submit a letter of interest with a brief bio to the Village Clerk (clerk@villageofvoorheesville.com) to be kept on file as openings occur.

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United States[®] Census 2020

Welcome to the 2020 Census

It is quick and easy. The 2020 Census questionnaire will take about 10 minutes to complete. It's safe, secure, and confidential. Your information and privacy are protected. Your response helps to direct billions of dollars in federal funds to local communities for schools, roads, and other public services.

Results from the 2020 Census will be used to determine the number of seats each state has in Congress and your political representation at all levels of government. Getting started:

- You must complete your questionnaire once you begin. If you leave the questionnaire and return later, you will have to start over.
- Do not use the web browser buttons (back, forward, or close browser). Use the buttons within the questionnaire to navigate.
- For best results, use the latest version of Chrome, Firefox, Internet Explorer, or Safari. Enable cookies.

The Village's response rate is currently at about 63%. If you have not yet completed the questionnaire, please do so soon.



The recently established Voorheesville Community Assistance for Covid-19 Coalition is a partnership that includes the Voorheesville School District, community support groups, religious organizations, the library, Kiwanis, and others.

As we continue to navigate the Coronavirus pandemic, please know that your community is here to assist you. Please contact us if you or someone you know needs assistance in any way! Community volunteers can help with shopping, prescription pick-up, mail, accessing technology, fellowship and spiritual support, and more!

Call us at 518-288-8910 or contact us by email at voorheesvillecares@gmail.com

Village of Voorheesville
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Voorheesville, NY 12186