



# TOWN OF BERGEN NEWSLETTER

MARCH, APRIL, MAY 2020



Editor: Michele Smith

## Town News ... From the Desk of Town Supervisor *Ernest Haywood*

As we move into spring, several building improvement projects have been completed or are near completion. First is the new flooring at the Town Hall. The old vinyl flooring in the lobby, main hall and restrooms was removed due to wear and discoloration. The Town offices were closed for two days, after tax collection season ended, to allow the contractor to remove the restroom stalls and fixtures. The Town Hall is certainly much brighter with the new flooring!

At the historian's office, all of the windows have been replaced. The work qualified for an energy rebate from the Village of Bergen. We have sent out requests for proposals to replace and improve the lighting in the Town Hall. Once that work is complete, we will be eligible for another village energy rebate.

Finally, the renovation of the library is getting close to being done. This was an extensive project including the renovation of restrooms and kitchenette; new carpeting; new electric and fire alarm system; accessible doors; new entryway; new circulation desk; new lighting; and the renovation of offices, multi-purpose and storage rooms. The total cost of the renovations was covered by grants secured by the town and the Library.

We are planning a ribbon cutting ceremony for Saturday, April 25<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 am at the library. Although the library will re-open several weeks before the ribbon-cutting, our celebration appropriately occurs during National Public Libraries Week. More details will be announced as we finalize our celebration plans. We are sure residents will be very pleased with our "new" library.

For property owners in our proposed new Water District, we received approval from the New York State Comptroller's Office at the end of January and proceeded to officially form the district on February 11. We also approved a Bond Resolution which authorizes the Town to borrow the necessary funds. Please see a separate article in this newsletter for more details on Water District WIBA #2.

Residents should be aware that we have moved our second meeting in April to Monday, April 27 in order to accommodate the primary election. I would like to remind residents that early voting is available for all elections now (primary and general). Please contact the Genesee County Board of Elections for details.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank former Supervisor Don Cunningham for serving as my deputy supervisor for the first two years of my term. His efforts certainly helped insure a smooth transition. I would also like to thank Councilperson Belinda Grant for stepping up to be the new deputy supervisor. I am thankful for the hard work and support of our entire Town of Bergen team! Happy Spring!



2020 has started with most discussions dealing with some of the new legislation that has come from this past year, as well as watching the Governor deal with the \$6 billion shortfall in his initial budget proposal.

Unfortunately, much of this will have a trickle down affect that will greatly impact us locally. The first which most of you have seen and heard about is bail reform. Under the legislation that was passed, bail is not required, except for the most serious crimes and for individuals with previous arrests. The law, as presently written, restricts the Judges' ability to set bail in only the most violent cases, not based on their past criminal history, flight risk or their potential to commit additional crimes when released on an appearance ticket. For example, Harassment 2, a domestic violence offense/arrest is now a mandatory appearance ticket which the offender can skip multiple times with no repercussion. Besides the public safety risk of this new initiative, the compliance and expedited discovery process that our Police and District Attorneys' office has to deal with is a dramatic cost that has been shifted to the County. In 2020, we budgeted \$225,000 minimally in new positions/compliance to deal with this.

We also are very concerned with the exploding costs of Medicaid in New York. The State has long acknowledged that requiring counties to pay for a share of Medicaid, along with a wide variety of other social services programs, increases local taxes to levels that far exceed the norm in other States. The Governor's current budget is scary! He is proposing to increase local Medicaid share to counties by \$123 million, cutting early voting state funding, cutting VLT funding, cutting Community College funding just to name a few. We will be hard pressed to stay under the tax cap if his budget passes in the form that it is presently. We have many advocates in Albany working on our behalf as well as leaders from our county working to modify much of what is in the State budget. We will do our part to voice our concern.

We continue to move forward with planning for the jail. With the help of our consultant, SMRT who specializes in prison and jail design, Pike Construction of Rochester, the construction manager, our Jail committee, the NYS Commission of Correction officials and many others we continue to work on dialing in the size and scope of the jail. Some recent positive news is that there have been some serious conversations with Orleans County in regards to their future needs for a jail or jail services as well. There may be some incentives or loosening of the State laws to allow a possible shared jail or a long term contractual agreement to house Orleans county inmates. This is great news for the tax payers of both Orleans and Genesee County to be able to potentially share in the cost and future operating expenses of a new jail system. There will be more news about this in the future. Both Counties will be seeking public input as well.

Phase 2 of the water project has continued to progress nicely through the winter months. They have been busy on the East side of the County upgrading lines and pumping stations. Phase 3 planning continues with the Master Plan due this Fall. The goal continues to be to extend water to as much of the County as possible with adequate capacity for existing and future development and to eventually close the City water plant.

County Manager Jay Gsell took me on a County wide tour to every County department over the course of 3 days. I had the opportunity to meet every department head and many of the key individuals across the County and discuss their functions, needs and opportunities. We are blessed to have so many talented and dedicated staff members in our County. Enjoy the rest of the winter; spring will be here in no time!



The Library is still under renovations- we hope to have the book drop open in March with a soft opening the first or second week of March. We look forward to a Ribbon Cutting ceremony on Saturday, April 25<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 am during National Library week to celebrate our completion of the project. -More information to follow.

Did you know?

- The Library is Bigger than it Looks-The Byron-Bergen's interlibrary loan service gives you access to collections at other libraries! Being part of the Nioga Library system gives you opportunities to inter loan books from Niagara, Orleans, and Genesee County Libraries. Just check out our online catalog with your valid Library card unlock millions of books, audio books, music CD's, and DVD's available to you! Can't wait for delivery to the Library? Take your card to other libraries in the system and check it out yourself!
- The Library has several free options for online and downloadable books you can read on your computer, smart phone, dedicated eBook reader, or tablet. Just go to the Byron-bergenpubliclibrary.org website and click on OverDrive/Libby or Hoopla to find out more!
- That you have access to over 80 downloadable magazines that you can read on your computer, smart phone, dedicated e-Book reader, or tablet? Check us out on the RB Digital button at the Library website. You can catch up on past months of your favorite magazine too!
- The Library is more than just books – there are movies and music, programs for all ages, book sales, and much more. Check us out at [www.Byron-BergenPublicLibrary.org](http://www.Byron-BergenPublicLibrary.org) or “Friend” us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter.

We have New York tax forms available here! You also can go to the website at [www.nystax.gov](http://www.nystax.gov) and go to forms to print from home. If you need Federal tax forms, they are available at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov)

Library has Pre-K/Toddler story time for children at 10:30 am on Fridays until April 3<sup>rd</sup> for the winter session and will begin the spring session on April 17<sup>th</sup>. We enjoy a different themed story each week with a related craft and a snack! Registration is recommended by calling or stopping by the Library.

Book discussion group meets on the 2nd Thursday of each month at 7pm. March 12<sup>th</sup> we are reading Southernmost by Sials House come join this fun group and see what your neighbors are reading!!! We enjoy lively conversation about the book and refreshments too! Call or stop by the Library to reserve your copy of our current book.

## **Spring Break Happenings!! April 6<sup>th</sup> - April 10<sup>th</sup>**

Babysitting workshop will be held on Monday April 6<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm. This workshop is open to anyone 11yrs old and up. Cost \$25- includes a book to take home to reference. Registration and payment (cash only) is needed by Tuesday March 31<sup>st</sup> - Space is limited so sign up soon!

Movie Day Wednesday April 8<sup>th</sup> at 2:30pm – Join us for the movie ***Doolittle*** Rated PG-102 minutes long. Refreshments too!

Spring/Easter Make & Take Craft – April 10<sup>th</sup> from 3pm- 6pm- Come anytime between 10am and 12am to create a fun colorful craft. No Registration necessary.

***National Library week is April 20<sup>th</sup> -25<sup>th</sup>--Stop in and take out 3 or more books and have a chance to win a prize!! Everyone invited to participate!***

Save the date of April 22<sup>nd</sup> for our annual pre-school concert! Join our smaller patrons at the Bergen Evangelical Presbyterian Church at 9:30 am for music and fun with Buffalo and Brandy's "Magical Storytelling Show"! Children will be swept into an imaginary "storybook world" with songs, dancing and play! No Registration required! Just come join the fun!

Movie Day at 1:00 pm will be Friday May 22<sup>nd</sup> with the movie to be announced soon! So check out our website for more information.

The Library has Spectrum/Time Warner Internet service available. The Library has copy /fax service for a small cost. Interlibrary loans from any Library in the NIOGA Library system at our catalog [www.byronbergenpubliclibrary.org](http://www.byronbergenpubliclibrary.org). If you can't find it, please ask! For more information on our services or programs, please call the Library at 494-1120. Happy Reading! – Nancy Bailey, Manager



# Water District WIBA #2 Update, including property tax information



The New York State Comptroller approved our Water District Petition at the end of January. The Town took the next steps of forming the district and passing a bond resolution on February 11.

The Town Engineer has completed the base mapping for the entire project and is reviewing underground utility maps. The project going to be broken down into two projects for public bidding. The two contracts will be bid one to two weeks apart (late fall) and construction will take place fairly concurrently on both parts. Although the exact division of the project is not final, the basic two parts will be: everything north of the old railroad tracks (West Shore) and Pocock and Swamp Roads; and everything else south of the old railroad tracks. Construction is slated to begin by January 2021.

We are tentatively planning to borrow on a short-term financing in late spring/early summer. The tax bills that go out in January 2021 will have the first water district charges.

There are approximately 435 Economic Development Units (EDUs)(users)in this project. The amount that each EDU will be charged on the January town and county tax bill is approximately \$557.04 for debt service plus \$20 for a repair reserve. For a vacant lot the EDU will be \$278.52 for debt service plus \$20 for a repair reserve. The repair reserve is set up to cover the cost of replacement of pipes, if needed in the future. The exact amount will depend on the finance terms the Town receives for the Bond Anticipation Note and the total final cost of the project. The exact amount per EDU will also change as the number of EDUs change. It is normal for the total EDU count to change as parcels are split or merged over time.

How do you know what your EDU count is for your property? Single family homes are equivalent to 1 EDU. Multi-family homes are assessed 2 EDUs for a two-family and 3 EDUs for a three-family. Most vacant land carries .5 (half) an EDU. Commercial properties carry 1 EDU as a base and additional EDUs based on units (apartments, mobile home parks, etc.) or water usage (restaurants, gas stations, etc.). To confirm an EDU count on a property for this water district, please contact Assessor Rhonda Saulsbury at 494-1484 or 343-1720 x 207.

As our town engineer finalizes the layout of the water pipes and supporting structures, he will determine where easements and right of ways are needed. That will be the Town's next major task, securing the necessary easements and right of ways. If you have questions regarding the progress of the water district, please email Supervisor Ernest Haywood at [supervisor@bergenny.org](mailto:supervisor@bergenny.org)

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## Town Clerk News *by Michele Smith*



**Dog License:** Please make sure your dogs are licensed and their rabies information is up to date.

**ANTI-RABIES CLINICS:** May 7th – Pembroke Highway Garage 1145 Main Rd. (Rt. 5) Pembroke 4:00 – 7:00 pm

**2020 Town & County Tax Payment** - Last day to pay Town & County taxes is Tuesday, March 31<sup>th</sup> with 2% penalty, any taxes not paid by that date will be turned over to Genesee County Treasurer, any payments can be left in the drop box after hours. .

### Office Closings

April 10<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup> – Easter

May 23<sup>rd</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup> – Memorial Day



### Office Hours

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday

8:00 am – Noon & 1:00 – 4:00

Saturday 9:00 am - Noon

Closed on Thursday





**EASTER EGG HUNT SATURDAY, APRIL 4<sup>TH</sup> AT 1:00 PM  
THE BERGEN BUSINESS & CIVIC ASSOCIATION SPONSORS**

**THIS ANNUAL EVENT AT THE HICKORY PARK IN  
THE VILLAGE OF BERGEN.**



**BERGEN NEWSLETTER  
10 HUNTER STREET  
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