



# Village of Oakfield Newsletter

Winter 2018



## GREETINGS FROM THE MAYOR

Autumn has faded all too quickly and Winter is upon us! Many great things are happening in our Village and the staff has put together this Winter update to tell of many accomplishments.

Probably the best news is Labor Daze returned to Triangle Park. It was a tremendous effort by the Oakfield Betterment Committee. Behind the scenes, the Committee was supported by many volunteers, the Village and the Town. The Village completed some very necessary renovations at Triangle Park including repair of our Gazebo and upgrading of the electrical service. We updated some street signage and the Village DPW chipped in to help where ever needed. The Town took charge of street safety including

signage and barriers among other contributions.

Most recently, The Lions Club and the Oakfield Betterment Committee, with the help of the Oakfield Fire Department, welcomed Santa and Mrs. Claus to Triangle Park for the 21<sup>st</sup> "Christmas in Oakfield Celebration". We kept the Village Office open and were very pleased to have about 60 visitors of all ages stop in. The evening prior, Triangle Park was a glow as the Town hosted its annual "Majestic Lights in the Park" lighting over 75 trees.

Our Waste Water Treatment Plant Upgrade Project bids are accepted, and work has begun on phase one of the capital project. Phase two of the project will be awarded at a later time and will focus on maintaining efficiency at the Plant. As usual with capital projects, the list of possible work that can be done is more than the amount of available money, so choices will need to be made. Health and Safety are our number one priority. For example, we already know we will be adding grounding to the electrical circuits. With all that power and water, everyone agrees its priority one!

The items above required individuals in Village and Town employment, Consultants, Fire Department, Lions Club, Betterment Committee, Oakfield Historical Society and a whole host of individual volunteers to come together as a Team. The progress has been wonderful. I have been truly appreciative that so many lend a hand, take ownership and work through what needs to be done in a cooperative manner.

"Thank you" to all for making my first months as Mayor productive and rewarding. On behalf of the Village Board and Village staff we wish you a safe and enjoyable Holiday Season!

Sincerely,  
Mayor, Dave Boyle



## GOOD DEEDS IN THE VILLAGE



"Pay It Forward" seems to be on the upspring in our Village. For instance, our Historical Society led a large group of our youth on a walking tour of our Village. "Thank you volunteers for doing that!" It was a wonderful educational experience and a wonderful way to build pride in our Village. The three "Welcome to Oakfield" signs are also weeded and mulched by volunteers. This May, as the grass grew fast, quite a few residents were helping elderly or vacationing neighbors with lawn mowing. With our first snow many helped neighbors snow blow---appreciated by all of us! Join the Movement. If you have an idea that involves property owned by the Village, please speak with the Village Office about the process before starting.

## FIRE DEPARTMENT RESTRUCTURING UPDATE

The volunteers of our Fire Department deserve constant encouragement for the service they provide. Each year they respond to over 350 calls and this year they are on track to exceed 350 calls again. Most of the calls they receive are for Emergency Medical Service, but the range from Motor Vehicle accidents, Structure fires, service calls (such as pumping out basements), check the welfare calls, and even some false alarms. The Fire Department is called when they do not know who else to call. Factor in training, meetings and responsibility for equipment maintenance and you see why our Firefighters are so busy. They are dedicated and service-minded individuals who take pride in what they do.



You are also probably aware that there has been much study and discussion concerning the Department's organization... Should the Fire Department remain a Village operation or become independent with its own Board of Directors? That is an important question. At this point the reorganization of the Fire Department will not take place. However, we are in agreement on several items in preparing to move forward. We realize that Fire Protection is expensive, will continue to be, and very likely become even more expensive in the foreseeable future. Secondly, The Fire Department has asked that a committee of Village Trustees, Town Councilmen and Fire Department members be created to establish an acceptable budget and to form a plan for financing the coming years. This idea is not new but the timing and importance for forming the committee makes this request important.

In our discussions each person's opinion was heard. Each person argued passionately with insight and respect. We all agree that funding needs to be increased and be consistent with a plan for going from year to year. We will work to insure the Fire Department continues into the foreseeable future. We truly value our Fire Department and recognize the huge commitment of time and involvement that our volunteer Firemen (and families) make.



## WATER RATES TO INCREASE

The Village currently pays \$2.94 per 1000 gallons of water from Genesee County. The county will increase the water rate on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019 as they deem fit. Phase II of Genesee County's Water Initiatives will also begin then. This phase will carry an additional cost of \$.60 per 1000 gallons of water on top of the increased rate. The increased cost to us and the users is to support increasing demands for water throughout the entire County. While costs will dramatically increase beginning in 2019, most think the availability of good water makes the increase from the County acceptable.

Revenue raised from water billing will be used to support our water system and stay in the water fund. As it is said, this is "water paying for water" as opposed to paying for other things, which has not happened and will never happen. Hopefully we will be able to say "the glass is half full" instead of saying "the glass is half empty."

## WINTER PARKING

Please cooperate with our local law on street parking during this snowy time of the year and avoid getting a ticket from the Sheriff's Department! The No Parking Regulation for the Village of Oakfield is from 2 am-8 am on ALL Village Streets from November 1st thru April 30th. Your cooperation is appreciated--- especially by the plow operators.

## SALES TAX SHARING

Genesee County is under a mandate to upgrade its jail. This will be a \$50,000,000 plus (50 million dollars+) project that has been put off for years. Because of a State mandate the County has already begun the process. This is expensive and the County is struggling how to finance it. Where is the money to come from? We are fortunate that Genesee County shares sales tax revenue with the towns, villages and City of Batavia. However, one plan is to cap sales tax sharing with towns and villages for 40 years. This will be a tremendous challenge. In 2017 the Village received \$196,300 in property taxes and \$281,228 in Sales Tax revenue. That is more revenue from Sales Tax than property taxes. As costs increase over the years, the sales tax shared will have a weakening role in supporting our Village. The County is trying to have Albany approve this new sales tax agreement. It is direct in stating that this plan is necessary to finance the jail. They also point out that exceeding the tax cap is not an option for them because it would reduce funding from the State by millions of dollars. Towns and villages have almost no influence over the new sales tax plan. We can only hope that the County Legislature is open to providing some modifications that will help all municipalities involved. Needless to say, this will be a great challenge to every town and village in Genesee County.

## VILLAGE OFFICE UPDATE



Greetings from the Village Office. The Village has many excellent projects in the works and the Village Office will be an integral part of accomplishing our goals. Major parts our Waste Water Treatment Plant have been in service since the 1920's. The Village was able to secure \$2,455,000 in grant funding through three separate agencies. The total project is projected to cost around \$3,800,000. With receiving these substantial grants, the Village Office will be the hub for coordinating all the required documentation and ensure all paperwork is accurate and submitted in a timely manner to the proper agencies. The Village Office will also account for the finances of the project. The Village has also secured a \$125,000 SAM Grant, from the New York State Senate, for work to be performed on the drainage throughout the Village.

The Village Office will continue its goal of keeping up with technology and becoming more resident/user friendly. Examples of this are the Office's ability to provide water and sewer users consumption information in real-time, as well as historical data, and accepting credit card and e-check payments for those bills through our website. The Office has also upgraded the phone system to a centralized auto-receptionist to route calls to the proper departments for more efficiency. We have also increased our cyber security drastically to ensure our computer systems are safe and secure from outside threats.

The Village Office hours are 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. We are always happy to help a resident with any questions or concerns they may have to the best of our ability. Please do not hesitate to call the Village @ 585-948-5862, or stop during office hours. We hope you have a happy and safe Holiday Season!

## DPW

Friendly reminder that there is no overnight parking in the Village Parking lots. This will allow the DPW to remove the snow and debris from the parking lots while most of us are still asleep. Residents are also responsible for keeping their sidewalks free and clear of snow and ice.

## GOOD THINGS TO KNOW

**Senior Citizens:** The Genesee County Office for the Aging offers free and low-cost home updates for those who qualify.

**Weatherization Program-** The Weatherization Referral and Packaging (WRAP) Program provides home repairs to weatherize a home for energy efficiency. These repairs may include window replacement, insulation, caulking, weather stripping, broken glass repair and furnace repair or replacement.

Other home improvement loans and grants may be available to seniors to help replace roofs, siding and make handicap accessibility modifications to their homes.

**Handyman Program** This free program is funded by the Muriel H. Marshall Fund for the Aging in Genesee County. It is designed to provide seniors with minor home repairs. Minor electrical and plumbing repairs, installing safety devices or modifications, changing light bulbs, window and screen repair are just some of the types of service available.

If you want to inquire about these call the Genesee County Office for the Aging at (585) 343-1611.



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