

Mayor's Message for August 2017

This past month, our community said goodbye to two members of the Rhinebeck Fire Department, John McGuire, and Henry Campbell. Henry also served as the Village and Town Emergency Response coordinator. Each of these men will forever be in our hearts for giving so much to us. In mourning their loss, I am reminded of the value of public service and the fine people like John and Henry who are willing to give their time and energy to serve the community.

Our new Trustee, John Rossi, was sworn in on July 14th. John is the Liaison to the Planning and Zoning Boards, and a welcome addition to our Board.

The Rhinebeck Village Ethics Committee is now up and running. I am happy to announce that Carol Urban, Walter Cotter and Gina Fox have agreed to serve. The committee will be charged with the review of the ethical conduct of public officers and employees with the aim of ensuring a high degree of public confidence in the moral conduct of all of us who serve in local government.

The Village and Town Joint Environmental Committee held its first meeting in July. Among its tasks will be developing a sustainability action plan for the Village and Town. This plan would focus on environmental issues including water, energy, waste, and transportation. We recently met with the 7 Hudson Valley municipalities who get drinking water from the Hudson, and are joining together to protect our drinking water source.

Some parts of our water distribution system have pipes which are one hundred years old, and residents can see the results in lack of capacity and water pressure. This can also cause issues due to low flow from some fire hydrants. The project to replace and upgrade the water system was engineered by SANTEC Engineering and a project overview was presented last month. The areas that would be replaced are the water mains that run along Montgomery Street from South Street to Spring Brook, and Platt, Chestnut and Livingston between Rt 9 and Mulberry. To support the project and a requirement for grant application a bond resolution was passed for \$3.7 million for the reconstruction.

You will soon be seeing work crews on the streets preparing to repave Montgomery Street, and Astor and Mill Road. The Village awarded the bid to the Town of Rhinebeck Highway Department which is working jointly with the Village Highway Department. Prep days will be August 9 and 10, the actual paving will be done on August 14 and 15. The new street surfaces will be a great improvement once they are finished. Please forgive any traffic delays caused by the work, it should be well worth it once it's done.

But, even with improved street surfaces, I don't need to tell you that Rhinebeck continues to face a growing parking problem. Along with the Chamber of

Commerce and Rhinebeck PD, Trustees Howie Traudt and Brant Neuneker are developing possible plans to improve the situation.

And, from now on people requesting a “Peddler's Permit” in the Village will need to provide more information and a background check. The Village Board also decided to issue permitted trucks with an ID badge, to be displayed where people can see it.

It's a mouthful to say, but The County Wide Shared Service Tax Savings Plan is actually going to going to save us some money! The plan is now finalized and will save a projected \$25 million on 35 Dutchess County projects. Among those things the Village of Rhinebeck will be part of: salt purchasing, equipment rental, procurement, and motor vehicle repair.

And, it should be a bit easier to reach your Village officials soon. We are upgrading the phone system. New technology will allow faster, more efficient communication inside Village Hall and with the public. Among other things, it will remove the need to list everyone's personal phone number.

Speaking of communication, please feel free to reach out to me. I can always be reached at MayorBassett@VillageofRhinebeckny.gov or come to see me during open hours from 1pm to 2pm daily.

Sincerely,
Gary Bassett
Mayor, Village of Rhinebeck

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