



TOWN OF BERGEN NEWSLETTER

December 2020, January and February 2021



Michele M. Smith, Editor

TOWN NEWS ... FROM THE DESK OF TOWN SUPERVISOR *Ernest Haywood*

The Bergen Town Board adopted the 2021 Budget on October 27 cutting spending by \$179,189. Those savings were overshadowed by estimated reductions of \$240,000 in revenue from Genesee County and \$16,775 in state aid. The net result is a tax levy increase of \$12,497 (exclusive of fire and water districts).

In other parts of the budget, the Fire District tax levy was reduced by \$6,295; the tax rate will remain the same for Water District No. 2; and the Peachey Road Water District rate will drop by about \$50 per full EDU. Residents of the new water district will see their first water district tax. It will be \$322 in 2021 and will increase to the expected \$550 in 2022.

A ribbon cutting for the completion of the renovations to the library and town offices at 13 South Lake Street occurred on September 26th. As in person attendance was limited do to COVID-19 restrictions, the event was live streamed on face book. Senator Michael Ranzenhofer, Assemblymen Steven Hawley as well as representatives from the Town, Village, Library and the NIOGA library system joined me in the ribbon cutting ceremony.

Work on the new water district continues. During the first week of November, the highway department dug more than 40 test pits. Soil samples were taken and sent to a lab for testing. We secured permission from CSX for crossing under the railroad and we are working on collecting easements from property owners. The COVID-19 Pandemic has slowed the approval process, but we expect to be out to bid early in 2021 with the entire project complete in 2022.

We are all weary of the Pandemic but we must try to remain vigilant during the coming months when we will be spending more time indoors and in closer proximity to others. Locally COVID numbers are rising. Please remember to wear a mask when in public, sanitize your hands frequently and avoid large gatherings. New York State has enacted heavy fines for those host large gatherings or travel across state lines without following COVID guidelines. Some COVID resources include: hotline 1-888-364-3065 or visit <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/find-test-site-near-you>.

Getting a flu shot is especially important this year for two reasons. Having the flu and COVID-19 at the same time is extremely dangerous. In addition, reducing the number of serious flu illnesses will help preserve medical resources for COVID patients. Visit <https://vaccinefinder.org> or call your physician to schedule a flu shot. Maintaining your mental health is important during this time. If you or someone you know is struggling, call the Genesee Mental Health Department at 585-344-1421.

While 2020 has not been the year that any of us dreamed of or planned for, there are still many things for which to be thankful. I am especially thankful for all the Town of Bergen employees who are making sure that we continue to deliver all vital services.

Happy Holidays! Be safe and be well!





As we approach the holiday season, we all reflect back on 2020 and how so many aspects of our world Has changed around us. From the County government perspective, much time and effort has been put Into the 2021 budget process which was certainly a challenge considering all of unknowns as we look towards next year.

Our County Manager, Matt Landers and his team worked closely with his department heads and legislature to come up with a budget that would have to stay under the tax cap. This was a major challenge due to a host of reasons. Department heads were tasked with reducing or holding County support flat while health care costs are rising for the County by 17.5% and the average retirement rate increase will be 16%. All departments also had to deal with the ongoing and projected 20% reimbursement cuts from New York State, while of course maintaining all of the mandated services that we are required to provide. In addition, sales tax revenue has suffered due to the pandemic as well as interest earnings. Fortunately, the County was able maintain the current level of funding for outside agencies as well Genesee Community College.

The County took several measures in 2020 in anticipation of the tight financial situation we would be in by initiating a strategic hiring freeze, furloughing 50 employees and deferring capital projects and asset acquisitions. For 2021 the County's response to the budget challenges was to increase the fund balance usage to the tune of \$2.3 million, eliminate and restructure several positions and reduce the revenue sharing to the Towns and Villages. This decision was not taken lightly. With the limitation of the tax cap, reduced revenue from most sources and reduced reimbursement from New York, it was a necessary step. This however has allowed the County to re-allocate \$1.0 million towards roads and bridges which will directly benefit the Towns and Villages. The County is falling behind in maintaining our bridges as they continue to be downgraded and red flagged. While the amount shared with T/V's was less than originally planned, the County will continue to share total revenue in the greatest amount possible. All said and done through the increase in assessed value while staying under the cap, the County was able to reduce its tax rate from \$10.10 to \$9.80/ 1000 or 3.06%.

Factors that we will be monitoring closely in 2021 that may have some potential budgetary impacts include; sales tax revenue, a possible federal stimulus, NYS aid reductions, Covid-19 impacts and a hopeful vaccine, effects of bail reform and jail population and the State allowing a possible joint jail with Orleans County.

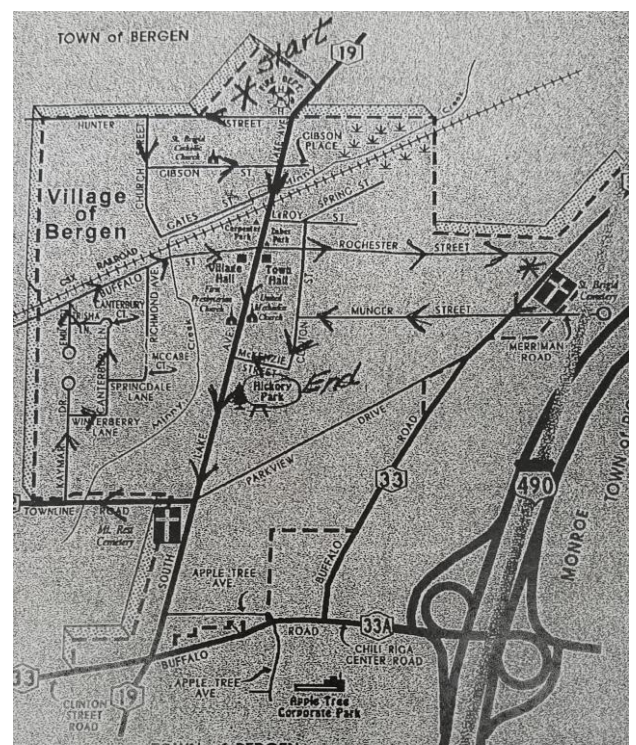
Please feel free to reach out anytime if you have any questions, concerns or ideas. I hope you all enjoy a safe and happy holiday season.

Village of Bergen Tree Lighting

Our Annual Tree Lighting Celebration will be a little different This year, but we will still welcome the holiday season into the Village!!

Santa and Mrs. Claus will be visiting the Village of Bergen on Thursday, December 3rd beginning at 6:30pm. They will leave the Fire hall escorted through the village by decorated fire trucks and will distribute Christmas treat bags to the children waving along the parade route. The trees in Ward Park (across from the Rose Garden) will be lit as the Clauses pass by, the decorations at Hickory Park will be list as well.

Please keep everyone sage by distancing yourselves along the route, Wearing a mask, staying off the roads and not congregating in groups.



For more information on the program please contact the American Legion Sacket Merrill Post Wednesday - Friday 494-2232 after 4:00 pm

2021 Hometown Hero Banner Program Guidelines



Purpose - To honor and recognize Bergen, NY servicemen and servicewomen who are serving our county in the United States Armed Forces.

Banner Information – Each banner will be 30” by 60”, double-sided photo, vinyl material, and will include the following: photograph of the serviceman/woman, name, and branch of service. Banners will be displayed on poles located on Main Street, Rochester Street, and Buffalo Street beginning Memorial Day weekend through Veterans Day. Banners will be stored by the village and be displayed the following year (2022) not necessarily on the same pole/street locations.

Application Requirements – All servicemen/women **must** have the following qualifications:

- A) current resident of Bergen, NY and/or graduate of Byron-Bergen High School
- B) currently serving our country in one of the U.S. Armed Forces (Army, Air Force, Coast Guard, National Guard, Marines, Navy).

Banner Pricing – Each banner will cost the family/sponsor a total of \$200.00. This price includes the double-sided vinyl banner, hardware for hanging the banner, and banner storage. Banners ordered during the year will be stored until when they will be displayed. Any family can request the return of their banner immediately following Veteran’s Day.

Sponsorship – Anyone may become a sponsor of this program by making a personal monetary donation. Individuals and businesses are welcome to sponsor by completing and submitting the Sponsor Form. All donations will be used for expenses beyond the cost of banners and hardware.

**Deadline for submitting Hometown Hero Banner Forms is:
February 12, 2021**

Happy Holidays!! During your holiday rush of activities don't forget to enjoy the many holiday books and movies available at your Library! We have cookbooks for meals on the go as well as baking cookbooks for the perfect Christmas cookie! Stop by when the children are on vacation for boredom buster books and craft books to inspire their imaginations. Don't forget your audio books for the long car rides to Grandma's house! Search our website at www.byron-bergenpubliclibrary.org and check out Library happenings as well as our on-line catalog or join us on Facebook and Twitter too!

The Holiday Library hours will be:

Tuesday Dec. 22nd 10-1 & 2-7
 Wednesday Dec. 23rd 10-1 & 2-7
 Thursday De. 24th 10-3
 Friday & Saturday Dec. 25th & 26th -Closed
 Merry Christmas!
 Tuesday De. 29th 10-1 & 2-7
 Wednesday Dec. 30th 10-1 & 2-7
 Thursday De. 31st 10-3
 Friday and Saturday Jan. 1st & Jan. 2nd -Closed
 Happy Healthy 2021!



Did you get a new Gadget for Christmas? Do you need help getting Library books, movies and music on you gadget? Set up an appointment any Wednesday during regular Library hours to get the help you need. There are more free materials for our patrons that have E-readers, smart phones, laptops and tablets using your Library card. Call 494-1120 or email byrbgn@nioga.org

Did you know that the Library has free digital magazines? Check it out on our website at www.byron-bergenpubliclibrary.org. All you need is a valid Library card. Click on RBdigital – sign in with your Library Card and you are on your way!



Getting a new E-Reader for Christmas or have one now.....Check out our catalog for downloadable e-books free with a valid Nioga Library card. We have Digital movies- music- eBooks- and audio books through HOOPLA and OverDrive/Libby apps! All you have to do is stop at our website www.byron-bergenpubliclibrary.org to sign up with your Library Card!



If you don't find what you are looking for at the Library, we can order it for you from the NIOGA Library System. The website is www.byron-bergenpubliclibrary.org and click on catalog to see if our system has the book you are looking for. You then can order online, call the Library at 494-1120 or stop in with your request.

The Library has copy /fax service for a small cost, Spectrum Internet on three computers, Wi-Fi and interlibrary loans from any Library in the NIOGA Library system. Check us out on the web at www.byron-bergenpubliclibrary.org or stop in and we will assist you! You can also friend us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter to keep up with the latest events. For more information on our services or programs, please call the Library at 494-1120.

Happy Holiday Reading -Nancy Bailey Library Manager

Town Highway by *Mike Johnson*



Please be reminded that during a “normal” snow event, it will take plow trucks 2 ½ to 3 hours to complete one pass on all roads. As such, it is very possible that everyone will encounter less than pleasant driving conditions at times. Late evenings and early mornings, with very light traffic volumes, will receive lower levels of service. Every attempt will be made to maintain open and passable roadways, both for normal and emergency traffic. At times, lanes may narrow and accumulate snow. The Town is responsible for snow and ice removal on all Town and County roadways in Bergen as well as State routes. This winter, as in the past, we will strive to provide the same level of the safest possible roadways at all times, within reason and budget constraints.

Also remember to use caution on snow covered roads. Here are a few safety tips: Slow Down, make safe lane changes, pump your brakes on slick roads, and lastly don’t tailgate, especially the plow truck. If you can’t see him in his side mirror there is a good chance he can’t see you! For a First Aid rule: Carbon Monoxide is called “the silent Killer” if you go off the road keep your exhaust clear of snow.

Two additional reminders: Mailboxes, if damaged by our plows will be repaired or replaced, within Town Board adopted limits, as soon as weather, time permit. PLEASE, when installing or repairing your mailbox, remember that our trucks require a minimum 17 ½ feet from center of the roadway. Also, take into account the excessive force of the exhausted snow as it strikes your mailbox assembly.

Please don’t hesitate to call me at 494-1362 if I may be of service. Highway Department hours are 7:00 am – 3:30 pm Monday thru Friday. However, you may leave a message 24 hours a day on our answering machine, and I will return your call as soon as possible. In closing, the entire highway department would like to wish everyone a healthy and happy holiday season, and a safe winter.

Town of Bergen Transfer Station Recycling Guidelines:

Plastic & Glass container: Only #1 & #2 plastics & all Glass accepted

Cardboard container: no bigger than 18” x 24”

Newspaper wagon (recycled for bedding by local farmer): newspaper, magazines, phonebooks & copy paper.

Not Excepted

NO OIL of any kind

Styrofoam (considered construction debris)



FEE SCHEDULE FOR THE TOWN OF BERGEN TRANSFER STATION

EFFECTIVE – July 1, 2018

Individuals will place all household trash (light purple bags), recyclables and/or construction and demolition materials in the respective containers provided and must pick up their own dropped or spilled materials.

No hazardous wastes, empty drum, barrels, aerosol cans, pesticide containers, paint cans, etc. will be accepted.

Items and quantities not specifically mentioned in the following fee schedule will be accepted and priced at the discretion of the Attendant.

Persons not following these rules will not be issued further permits.

WEEKLY HOUSEHOLD GARBAGE AND TRASH

\$5.00 per bag (light purple) which are only available from the Town Clerk during normal business hours.

CONSTRUCTION & DEMOLITION (C & D) MATERIALS AND BULK ITEMS

The Town will make every effort to have a container at the Transfer Site every Saturday, during the summer months, for C & D materials. At the discretion of the Town Officials, the container may be on-site for extended periods.

The following items will be accepted when C & D container is available:

\$40.00 per level COMPACT pickup truck, minivan or station wagon

\$50.00 per level FULL-SIZE pickup, or equivalent sized box trailer or van

\$70.00 for loads that are filled over the top of the standard sides of the truck

NO LARGER QUANTITIES WILL BE ACCEPTED

\$10.00 per item tied and bundled no larger than 3 feet long by 2 feet high and 2 feet wide

\$15.00 per non-stuffed chair (kitchen, dining, etc.)

\$25.00 per stuffed chair, mattress or bed springs

\$35.00 per car load, sofa or equivalent size rolled carpet

TELEVISION SETS \$5

CEE EQUIPMENT - FREE OF CHARGE

All **METALS** will be accepted for recycling at no cost – including CLEAN food cans.

APPLIANCES must have motors removed, but the motors will be accepted separately.

REFRIGERATORS, AIR CONDITIONERS, FREEZERS, DEHUMIDIFIERS, ETC. will be assessed a \$20.00 charge for Freon removal and collection to the person disposing of the unit. The fee will be charged whether or not the freon has been removed.

PLEASE! Do not cut the tubing and release the freon into the air! A much better alternative is to insist that the store selling you the new unit takes your old unit when delivering the new one.

TIRES: We accept up to 2 tires per family per week at a cost of \$5.00 per tire up to 15 inch, \$10.00 per small truck tire (16-19 inch) or \$20.00 per large truck tire.

TRANSFER STATION HOURS – SATURDAY 9:00 AM UNTIL 3:00 PM

The Transfer Station is located on Townline Road (Route 262). Bags and Punch cards for C & D items must be purchased at the Town Clerk's office. **THE TRANSFER STATION DOES NOT FOLLOW THE HOLIDAY OFFICE CLOSINGS OF THE TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE.**



Town & County Taxes

For your safety in person tax payments will be limited, to avoid this please use the drop box at the main door or please mail payments to P.O. Box 249, sorry for any inconvenience during these difficult times. Please call the office 494-1121 x21 for more information.

If you pay your own taxes, you will receive your tax bill shortly after January 1, 2021. If you should receive a tax bill that an escrow company or someone else is supposed to pay, please call me right away. Don't put it aside and assume that it will be paid. Also, if you have paid off your mortgage and did not receive a tax bill, you should call me. No matter what the situation is, you are responsible for your taxes and penalties, if it is not paid. If you are leaving town for the winter please leave your "winter" address with me so late fees can be avoided. Credit cards (Visa, MasterCard, Discover and American Express) are accepted for payment with a convenience fee.

Tax payments cannot be received before January 1, 2021 per the County Treasurers office, all payments will be stamped after that date. Taxes are due penalty free by January 31st, all taxes have to be paid to me by March 31st. After **March 31st**, the unpaid taxes are returned to the County Treasurer. If you are going to pay them to the County Treasurer by mail, you will need to call his office in Batavia at 344-2550, ext. 2211 as there will be additional penalties.



Dog License News:

I hate to "hound" you, but if your dog's license renewal is due or past due, please take care of it so we don't have to send you a reminder notice or eventually a court appearance ticket. All dogs, four months of age need to be licensed even those in apartments. Proof of a rabies vaccination and proof of neutering or spaying must be presented at the time of licensing. If you receive an appearance ticket, you will have to pay a fee of \$25.00 plus also pay for your dog's renewal. If there is a problem getting an appointment for a rabies vaccination, etc., please call me. I have an answering machine so you can call anytime day or night.

Office Closing

December 24rd & 25th – Christmas Holiday

January 1st – New Year's

January 18, 2021 – Martin Luther King Jr. Day

February 15, 2021 – Presidents Day

Office Hours

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday

8:00 am – noon & 1:00 – 4:00

Saturday 9:00 am - noon

Closed on Thursdays



ATTENTION SNOW BIRDS

If you are leaving town for the winter please leave your winter address with the Town Clerk/Tax Collector to mail your Town & County Tax Bill to avoid any late fees. All Tax Bills are mailed on December 31st and are due by January 31st without penalty.

Michele Smith, Town Clerk/Tax Collector
494-1121 Ext. 21



HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM THE TOWN OF BERGEN



**TOWN of BERGEN
10 HUNTER STREET
BERGEN, NY 14416
bergenny.org**

"This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer. If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html or at any USDA office, or call (866)632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S.D.A., Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave., S.W. Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202)690-7442 or email at program.intake@usda.gov"