

Mayor's Message for September 2017

In reflecting on hurricane Harvey, and now Irma, I am reminded once again of the importance of community when hard times hit. So many of us have responded with compassion and concern, it makes me proud to be a part of our Village of Rhinebeck family.

I hope you've enjoyed the summer. Every year, for me, the Dutchess County Fair marks the end of the season. And, Labor day symbolizes the many contributions of all workers who contribute so much to America.

As one season ends, and another one starts, we continue to be busy completing projects, and planning for the future.

Trustee Lewit reports that the paving of Astor Drive and Montgomery Street is completed. This was a significant shared service undertaking by Village and Town highway workers. Now they have begun work on building the sidewalk that leads to the Library.

Trustee Traudt, our parks liaison, notes that the construction of the Pavilion at the Thompson Mazzarella Park has begun and should be finished this December. Also, engineers are now busy working on improving access to Crystal Lake Park.

At the next board meeting we will be holding a public hearing on a change to the parking at the corner of South Street and Montgomery, allowing for 15 minutes to drop off or pick up children attending the Rhinebeck Community Nursery School.

Trustee Neuneker, liaison to the Short-Term Vacation Rental Committee, reports that the committee is making progress. The most challenging issue, which is how to treat un-hosted rental properties, is currently under discussion.

We have proposed developing an ADA crosswalk at the intersection of East Market and Parsonage Streets. The crosswalk would provide a visual and audible notification for pedestrians and oncoming cars at the intersection. This would provide a link between the north and south sides of the Village, and greatly improve safety for children going to and from school. To pay for the crosswalk, we are applying for a grant from Dutchess County's Community Development Block Grants.

At my recommendation, the Village Treasurer and CFO Karen McLaughlin, has drafted a Fund Balance Policy for the Village. The maintenance of a fund balance is essential to the preservation of the financial integrity of the Village of Rhinebeck and is fiscally advantageous for both the Village and the taxpayer. This policy, if adopted, would establish goals and provide guidance for the desired level of fund balance maintained by the Village. That way we can mitigate financial risk due to unforeseen revenue fluctuations, unanticipated expenditures, or any unexpected events. The fund balance is a measurement of available financial resources and is the difference between total assets and total liabilities in each fund.

And in Village Hall we now have additional volunteers from the Anderson Center for Autism, helping us in many ways like cleaning and office tasks.

Our Village Clerk, Pat Coon, requested a Defensive Driving course to be held at the Village Hall. The course will be open to everyone. The cost is \$23/person, paid directly to the instructor. Please watch for notices on our website and Facebook pages soon.

As always, 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