

Mayor's Message for September 2018

September is here, the Dutchess County Fair is over, and kids are heading back to school. As the children travel back and forth every day, please, as always, take care and watch for them on your travels. Their safety is our concern. In our ongoing efforts to make our streets as safe as possible, we will soon have three new solar powered Speed Monitors. These signs have proved effective at warning motorists and protecting pedestrians. They will be installed on Montgomery Street and on Knollwood.

On my morning bike rides, I am seeing another sign of the changing seasons, as the first leaves begin to fall. The good news is that this year, our leaf pickup services will be faster and more efficient, thanks to a new Leaf Vac truck. It will not only improve service and efficiency, but will cut costs.

The Village Board approved the purchase of both the speed monitors and the truck at a special meeting on August 28th. Also at the meeting, we reviewed the status of our grant applications, (and how to best allocate extra funds that were above our fund balance level). We also gave the go-ahead for the removal of our buried oil tank, which is installed to the left of the entrance to the village building entrance. Once it is removed, new safer, cleaner tanks will be installed in the basement.

And behind Village Hall, our Electric vehicle chargers are up and running, we still need to install a light, pave and paint the spots, but they are seeing heavy usage already.

Another important issue the Board is addressing is the reclassification of our Waste Water Plant. We need to be in compliance with the Department of Environmental Conservation rules and regulations. Currently, we are being held to a higher standard than is required for our Waste Water Treatment Plant, so we are applying to have our classification changed.

Earlier in August at the meeting of the Village Board on the 14th, Treasurer Karen McLaughlin released her report on the financial state of the Village for the 2017-18 fiscal year. I hope you took time to read this important message on our finances. We also made a motion to proceed on the installation of LED lights with the study and proposal. Plus, Trustee Lewit discussed purchasing new crash barriers that are made of plastic and filled with water. We decided to buy four as a trial. If they work out, they will save on the use of trucks and manpower at both events, as well as protecting workers during highway repairs.

You can now find our updated Village Code online at <https://ecode360.com/RH1002>. As part of the 2018-19 budget we approved the update to both our "hard copy books" and the online village code. This was last done in 2012, so the new version includes any and all changes made since that time and should be a useful tool for everyone.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is considering several options for coastal storm protections in our region, and some of these options would have catastrophic consequences for the Hudson River. Specifically, storm surge barriers – giant ocean gates – would choke off tidal flow and the migration of fish – damaging the life of the Hudson River Estuary forever. We submitted a resolution to request an extension of the scoping comment period with additional public information and scoping meetings, for the NY/NJ Harbor & Tributaries (NYNJHAT) Coastal Storm Risk Management Feasibility Study. We are asking for complete specific studies before any of the alternatives is advanced. If you want to weigh in on this proposal as well, you can do so before September 20th at <http://www.riverkeeper.org/barriers>

A thank you to our two summer hires, Sam Fallon and Norman Dupont, who did so much for us this summer. You can enjoy the fruits of their labors with the newly painted benches, fire hydrants, and all the work they did assisting the Highway Department and John Raimondo on many tasks.

Upcoming for this fall season, the outdoor Farmers Market for the first time will be open for business in the Municipal Parking Lot until the end of the year. Based on popular demand, we approved this extension.

And, we hope the beautiful new flagpole will be installed at the Veterans Park on East Market Street in time for Veterans Day. This is one of the first projects of the Veterans Committee, which I formed to commemorate the Year of the Veteran. I will keep you posted on the progress as the project moves forward.

As always, please reach out to me with any questions or comments! You can find me at Village Hall or via email at 845-876-7015 ext. 2 or MayorBassett@VillageofRhinebeckny.gov or come to see me during open hours from 1pm to 2pm daily.

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