

Mayor's Report – October 2021

We have officially entered the 2021/2022 fiscal year, the way that our town properly documents all financials and keeps our budget. We are all hopeful that the changes that have been made within the office over the last 6 to 9 months will pave the way for a successful year and audit season. The Town has made great strides and anticipates meeting the audit schedule this year and are striving to make the corrections requested this summer. Regarding our finances, the Town is seeking two volunteers for our Finance Committee. If this is an area that you feel you can assist, or perhaps you know a neighbor that would be a great candidate, please let us know. Many of our Town's functions are run by volunteers, we cannot succeed without you! On that note, I am happy to report that the Charter Review Committee has kicked off and as a resident, I am excited to see this process through. We have a great team of residents, and our Town Attorney has also graciously offered to volunteer his time to answer any questions and provide resources to help them succeed.

Work has continued along Canal Road with crews coming in to tie the exposed pipes and bury them beneath the ground. Following the last bit of work, crews will continue to be in our town intermittently as they run tests on the system. Work is estimated to be fully completed by February 2022.

Public Works anticipates beginning a large tree trimming effort as we step into November. They will be utilizing a lift and doing tree work throughout the Town to shape and encourage growth in a safe manner. Most of our streets have limbs that while they create a beautiful canopy, are dangerous to large vehicles that use our roads including garbage and delivery trucks, emergency vehicles and even residents' personal recreation vehicles. Many of these limbs become even lower after heavy rains. As stated earlier this summer, our Public Works department will often spend hours each week especially in the growing season, trimming branches back off the roadway and clearing lines of site. By moving forward with a yearly or once every two-year major trimming effort, the goal is to better utilize town resources, encourage our trees to grow in a way that makes commuting through the Village safe for all, and eliminating potential hazards for storm season. Rest assured that they will be taking every precaution to shape our roadways in a way that is still inviting and beautiful while also bringing our streets up to the needed 14' clearance.

Finally, today, October 26th, marks one week until our next election. I want to encourage you all to please take the time to vote. The only issue on our ballot this year is to fill vacancies for 4 Commissioner seats. This is important to you as residents as it is the Commission who sets your Town budget, policies, ordinances, and more. As our Commission is comprised of only 7 seats, to have over half our positions available is notable. Polls will be open from 7am-7pm on Tuesday, November 2, here at the AHF Hall. As a reminder, your candidates this year are: Valerie Calenda, Johnathan Cronkhite, Susan Ditty, Chris Haley, Gary Ingram, Perter McCharles, and Gerda Murphy. We hope to see a great turnout next week!

As always, thank you for the privilege to serve. Wishing you all health and safety.

Tabitha Niemann, Mayor

Mayor's Report – November 2021

I want to start this monthly report by thanking the residents who took the time to submit all the forms and volunteered to run for a seat on the Commission. They spent time in the community talking with neighbors and have reached out and inquired about issues that are currently affecting our Town. As I stated last meeting, this town runs on volunteers and without them, we would cease to exist. It is this type of involvement and citizenship that sets us apart. Congratulations to the four who won a seat this year, Valerie Calenda, Sue Ditty, and Gary Ingram for a two-year term, and Gerda Murphy for a one-year term. Thank you to Peter McCharles, who volunteered last year and stepped in when we had a vacancy, we appreciate your dedication and hope that you, and all the other candidates, stay involved and help keep our town thriving.

On Saturday, October 30th, the Town, in conjunction with the AHF, hosted a fall event. The AHF provided a bounce house, games, and treats, while the town set up a trunk-or-treat in the parking lot and a photo booth. We were happy to see lot of children and families take part in the event. It is my hope that a few times a year, the town and AHF can come together for the betterment of the entire town to host family friendly events for all residents.

The Town continues to move ahead with establishing clear guidance on the rules for using the funds for the Rescue Act. If permitted, the funds could be used to fix our failing and damaged culverts in the town, alleviating the burden in the immediate future. Our Town Superintendent recently completed a survey with an engineer regarding the health of a handful previously identified culverts and they have placed priority on which will need replacement or repair and within what kind of time frame. Public Works also recently had a paving company come out and assess the health of our asphalt and they have identified key areas that need to be fixed. We look forward to creating a comprehensive list and timeline of future projects to better prepare as a town for what lies ahead.

The town office continues to strive towards cleaning up the records room, streamlining processes, and seeking a higher quality of work. The number of responsibilities for the position of Town Clerk are growing and this may be an area that needs to be addressed later with some of the roles and responsibilities shifting to the Deputy Clerk and potentially other department heads.

As we move into the final weeks of the year, we will begin undertaking a few projects. Public Works will be handling the minor work at the intersection of Sheridan and West Pine as well as South Drive and Dayton. This is the plan that has been previously surveyed and approved by the commission that will create a more defined intersection, with more visible lines of sight for all vehicles/ pedestrians at these locations. Most of the work will be minimal with the use of paint and reflectors. Secondly, the Commission will begin updating our Employee Handbook. This document is out of date and there are key areas that need to be addressed. Finally, we are in the beginning stages of updating our website. We will be soliciting formal quotes with the goal of creating a website that is easy to navigate for users and simple to update for staff.

As always, thank you for the privilege to serve. I hope that you all have a great Thanksgiving.

Tabitha Niemann, Mayor

Mayor's Report – December 2021

December is here and it is a great time to reflect on where we started in January and to where we are now. It is safe to say that it has been eventful. We have welcomed a handful of new staff in all departments and with that brought many opportunities for learning and growth. We have also seen others depart and in that change, hopefully learned how to better manage and create a work environment that is welcoming.

As it relates to the town office, we have seen some of the greatest change. We are continuing to find and correct errors that have been overlooked or unrecognized for years in some cases. We are continuing to improve processes and organize the office. Though our audit this last year was not highly favorable, we have made great strides to correct many of those errors. In fact, we will be submitting the trial balance this month, nearly six months earlier than done in the recent past. This will hopefully set us up for success over the next few months as the auditor begins her work. Our office staff, especially our town clerk, has been putting in a great deal of time and hours to help bring our town to where it needs to be. And while we know there is still work to be done, I want to take this opportunity to thank them and to just recognize what has been accomplished. We only have one full time staff and two part time staff to do what many towns do with many more.

Our police and public works have continued to produce work that we as a town should be proud of. The police have brought in additional grants and donations this year, allowing them to have better equipment and vehicles that otherwise would not be afforded them. They also provide a level of service to residents that we have all come to appreciate while living in the Village. Public Works has made the biggest impact on the profitability of the Hester Wagner Community House with their work and overseeing of the updates this past year. They are continuing to streamline their work and be more resourceful with their budget and time.

There are also a number of volunteers who continually serve our town and keep us moving forward. There are a few committees that meet regularly and handle aspects of the town that we simply could not do with our limited staff. Finance, at the leading of Ross Whitely, has helped in so many ways. They are the extra eyes that we need on the numbers and help keep us in line to succeed as a town. TRB and Beautification have also been busy this year as we have seen an uptick in permits and the install of the pedestrian bridge was finalized. It is the volunteers that keep us moving and allow the staff to focus on the details.

And lastly, a thank you to the commissioners who serve along side me. You all have a passion for this town that is evident. Thank you for taking the time to meet formally each month, but also taking the time to reach out and speak with your neighbors and care for them. It is in the friendships that are formed between neighbors that makes this a truly wonderful place to live.

As always, thank you for the privilege to serve. Wishing you all a wonderful holiday and a new year of health and blessings.

Tabitha Niemann, Mayor