



# Town of Somerset

Volume 37, Issue 2

Summer 2022

## From Your Town Clerk



Dear Residents,

On February 8, 2023, the Town of Somerset will be turning 200 years old! To mark this momentous occasion, we have a committee that has been meeting to plan a celebration that will take place in July, 2023, so be sure to watch for details in future newsletters.

Here are a couple of dates that many of you look for each year: our Town-Wide Yard Sale is taking place on August 6th from 9am-5pm; and our Tire Drop Off will take place the week of September 12th-16th from 7am-3:30pm, and Saturday, September 17th from 9am-noon. Also, the Historical Society's Old Fashion Farm Days is taking place on September 18th from 10AM - 3PM. And new this year, the Barker Corn Festival is returning. It will take place on August 13th. Check our website for details.

I hope everyone has a fantastic summer!

*Tracy L. Carmer, RMC*

### TOWN TIDBITS

- ⇒ Per NYS law, all dogs that will reside at your home for 30 days or more must be licensed in Somerset. The Village has an additional law that specifies that you can harbor a maximum of 2 dogs per household.
- ⇒ Section 171 of Town Code states that any parcel in the Town of Somerset that is being divided must go before the Planning Board for approval. This requirement is waived if you are selling the land to the adjoining property owner.
- ⇒ Water/Sewer bill payments are considered timely based on the post-mark. If you use a bill pay service, their envelopes do not get post-marked so those payments are considered on time if they are received by the day after the due date, but are late if received after that. Many times they wait up to a week to mail them so do not wait until the last minute when utilizing that service. The Town offers automatic payments for free if you'd like.
- ⇒ The Town's code is on our website and you can search by keyword to find what you are looking for quickly.
- ⇒ If your trash or recycling is not picked up, contact Modern at 716-754-8226.

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## A Word From Your Supervisor

Jeffrey M. Dewart - 716-795-3575, ext. 3 jeffdewart@gmail.com



I hope everyone is enjoying the warmer weather that we are having with summer picnics. If you are looking for something to do, come to our Town Park and watch some youth baseball and softball, then take a walk through our nature trails.

On August 13th there is going to be a bike ride through Somerset for a fundraising event for Multiple Sclerosis. It will take place between 8:30AM to 4:00PM, and the Town Park is being used as a rest stop.

Our 200 Year Committee met last week. We had a number of people from different town groups join us and we talked about a lot of great ideas. The dates for the celebration are July 21 - 23, 2023.

I would like to congratulate the Barker Lions Club on their 75 years of helping our community with loaning medical equipment, getting eye glasses, and hosting a Halloween party for our kids. Thank you for all that you do.

Lastly I would like to wish everyone a safe and healthy summer.

**The Barker Fire Department is in URGENT NEED of volunteers.** If you are interested, stop by the Fire Hall any Thursday evening after 6:30PM.



## Barker Corn Festival

We are delighted to invite you to participate in the 2022 Barker Corn Festival at the Barker Village Park on Main Street on August 13<sup>th</sup>! A foot race over a certified 5K course, farmer's market and vendor fair, corn roast, dunk tank, bouncy house, and live music under the stars will be among the features at this year's Corn Festival (just to name a few)- hosted by local community members and sponsored by many homegrown companies. This local Corn Festival was initially created to celebrate our local farmers and summer prosperity, and it is a tradition that we wish to rekindle. At this event, we will celebrate the region, from local artisans and corn harvested at our own Harris Farms, to bike night highlighting local brews, grub and live music. Details can be found on our website.

**We cannot make this event happen without the help of local volunteers.** Would you consider becoming involved in our event? By volunteering at the Barker Corn Festival, you'll be able to help us inject a piece of what makes Barker great back into the town. Please give us a call!

We hope that we can count on your help to make this year's event great and that you will join us at the Village Park on Main St. - Saturday, August 13th!

Sincerely,

**Heidi Dergel**

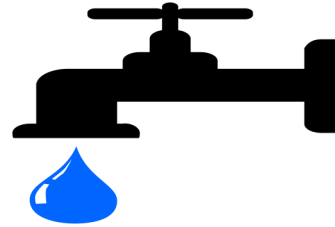
Community Member & Event Organizer

(704) 898-2891



## Water/Sewer Department News

Jonathan Dewart, Water/Sewer/Grounds Superintendent  
716-795-9919



**Before you Dig** – Remember to call 811 before you do any digging. It is the law that you must call at least 2 full business days in advance so that the underground utilities have a chance to mark out their lines.

**Park Pavilions** – If you are a Somerset resident and would like to use the pavilions in the Somerset Park this season, you can make a reservation by calling the Town Hall at 716-795-3575 ext. 2 for the Clerk's Office. There is no charge for using them.

**Electronic Recycling** – This is an ongoing program and items can be dropped off at the Sewer Plant, 8500 Lower Lake Rd, on garbage days from 7am to 3pm.

**Backflow Preventers** – These are *required* on all new homes, and homes that are being sold. It is your responsibility to install a preventer. Your water/sewer account will not be transferred without this requirement being met.

**Tire Drop-off** – This year the drop-off will take place September 12-16 from 7am – 3:30pm, and September 17 from 9am – noon at the Highway Garage.

The Somerset Police will be at the Pratt Elementary parking lot on Haight Road on Wednesday, August 17th from 4pm - 8pm to perform car seat inspections and they will have Children's Identification Kits available.

### COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- ◇ Conservation Club Spring Raffle - July 27th
- ◇ **Town-Wide Yard Sale** - August 6th 9:00AM - 5:00PM
- ◇ Barker Corn Festival - August 13th Noon - 10:00PM, 5kRun/Walk at 9:00AM
- ◇ **Tire Drop Off** - September 12th - 16th 7AM - 3:30PM, September 17th 9AM - Noon
- ◇ Historical Society Old Fashion Farm Festival - September 18th 10AM - 3PM
- ◇ American Legion Annual Raffle - October 11th

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## COUNCILMAN'S CORNER

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*Deputy Supervisor Robin Jansen*

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I am sure by now many of our residents have heard about Niagara County's effort to update the New York State Hazard Mitigation Plan. The Plan is required to be reviewed and updated every 5 years. The Town of Somerset has a committee of members from various Town departments along with County resources working on this requirement and I wanted to provide you with the background on the plan and what we are working on.

In hazard mitigation planning, the first step is a capability assessment. A capability assessment requires us to **INVENTORY** a wide range of capabilities. It is important for us as Town of Somerset government to identify existing plans, reports, and information and interview local departments and agencies to understand relevant programs, regulations, resources, and practices the Town has adopted that are currently used or could be used in the future to reduce losses associated with disasters, and consider those capabilities related to land use planning and zoning, economic and/or community development, emergency management resources, etc. This can help us to develop a mitigation strategy that is realistic and implementable by identifying goals, objectives, and actions that are politically, technically, administratively, and fiscally feasible. By developing this mitigation strategy and providing the updated plan to the state, it helps the town secure funding when grants are made available.

There are multiple sections of the capability assessment inventory which include:

**Planning and Regulatory** capabilities are plans, policies, ordinances, local laws and state statutes related to guiding and managing growth and development.

**Administrative and Technical** capabilities are staff resources (time, expertise, technical skill, etc.) that can be used to plan for and implement mitigation. It also refers to a community's ability to access and coordinate these resources effectively. Administrative and Technical Resources are available through local, state and federal government entities. For example, a small town may turn to county planners, engineers, or a regional planning agency to support its mitigation planning efforts and provide assistance.

**Education and Outreach** capabilities are programs and methods already in place that can be used to implement mitigation activities and communicate hazard-related information.

**Financial** capabilities are the resources a jurisdiction has access to or is eligible to use for funding mitigation actions. The costs associated with implementing mitigation activities vary. Some mitigation actions, such as building assessment or outreach efforts, require little to no costs other than staff time and existing operating budgets. Other actions, such as the acquisition of flood-prone properties, could require a substantial monetary commitment from local, state, and federal funding sources.

As we worked through the process of defining these items for inventory there are additional areas that we are reviewing that focus on areas of greatest risks to limit the impact of disasters, assess risks, develop mitigations strategies, adopt and implement a plan focusing on those areas of greatest risks. As part of the process, we are reviewing problem areas and prioritizing new mitigation actions, **identifying critical facilities to protect in case of 500 year flood** and developing a plan to implement mitigation strategies over the next 5 years. We chose 3 areas to focus on:

Golden Hill Creek. The creek has seen an increase in flooding and in ditches surrounding the creek that runs along the town/village border. The creek runs behind the Fire Hall and Golden Hill Creek eventually dumps into Lake Ontario at Golden Hill State Park boat launch and is crossed by many bridges with the potential to wash out from debris slamming against the foundation of bridges and culverts. The creek has not been cleared out in many years and we listed this as our primary concern. We listed this as a climate change issue and hope that the State provides funding to mitigate the flooding risk by clearing out the creek.

Lithium-Ion Industrial Scale Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS). There is a concern that potential Lithium Batteries for Battery Energy Storage will need special attention for location and safety as they are highly susceptible to fires. We recommended that the State offer education and training to towns around the state to help develop mitigation strategies based on best practices.

Adverse Weather Events in the Town. Post warning signage at local parks, fairs, and other outdoor venues describing emergency evacuation plans in the event of an adverse weather event. Vulnerable populations, children and seniors, should have access to instructions on what to do in case of an extreme weather event that causes adverse weather so they know what to do and where to go and what facilities are available. We are working on getting signage to put up around the area regarding what to do in the event of an adverse weather event.

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## Barker Lions Celebrate 75 years of service

Friday night over 100 people gathered to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the Barker Lions Club. Using the theme From the Past into the Future, guests enjoyed a power point presentation of pictures from throughout the years. Pictures included those from Chicken Barbecues, Corn fests, Halloween, Monthly Meetings, Wheelchair ramp and lift installations and many other events.



Lion Vice President Philip Russell was Toastmaster for the evening. He recognized a number of Lions members including the Legacy Members, Past Presidents and various guests. Alex Quinn representing Senator Rob Ortt, Assemblyman Mike Norris and Somerset Town Supervisor Jeff Dewart all presented resolutions recognizing the Lions work in the community. That was followed by a synopsis of the Club's history by Secretary Margo Sue Bittner.

During the Award presentations, a number of Lions were recognized for their efforts. The Lion of the Year and Distinguished Lion were given to two members who aided the club in many ways during the past year. Past President Kevin Bittner and Board Member Scott Reiner received these respective awards.

Life membership may be given to a Lion who has maintained active membership for at least 20 years or at least 15 years if the member has reached the age of 70. It can only be given after a vote by the Lions International Board of Directors approving the status. Lion Past President Matt Costello and Lion Past President Art Harris were honored with these.

Established in 1993, the Robert J. Uplinger award honors Lions and non-Lions or organizations who perform exemplary service to a club, district, or community. The honorees possess the highest examples of Lionistic characteristics, ideals, purpose and service. The award cannot be purchased by an individual; it must be presented as a recognition of the recipient's service. Past President Jim Dickinson was recognized for his work with the Barker Lions, serving on various Somerset Committees, leadership with various food production organizations and the Medina Railroad. Jim Cantella, a retired teacher from Barker, was recognized for his years encouraging students as a coach, mentor and Boy Scout Leader.

Melvin Jones, the founder of Lions Clubs International, award is given to those Lions who demonstrate the highest ideals of Lionism. It can only be given to individuals, who receive a pin, plaque and commemorative letter. Past President Chris Czelusta was honored with this award.

At the end of the Awards, District Governor Spencer Vail inducted the new officers. They are Lion tamer: Tina Linderman, Tail Twister: Salvador Pagan-Roman, Membership Chair and committee: Scott Reiner, Tom Ware, Chris Czelusta, 1 year Board members: Kurt Lutz, Karen Corwin, 2 year Board Members: Tom Mallon, Tom Harris, Treasurer: Jim Bittner, Secretary: Margo Sue Bittner, 3rd Vice President: Wayne Rider, 2nd Vice President: Abe Sullivan, 1st Vice President: Phil Russell, President: Dale Corwin and Past President: Scott Ecker.



## REFUSE AND RECYCLING TIPS

Residents are allowed to set out 3 items on Bulk Item Day. Some common bulk items include, but are not limited to:

- ◇ Carpet (bound 18" diameter x 24" length)
- ◇ Garden hose and reels
- ◇ Gardening Tools (shovels, rakes)
- ◇ Hot water tank
- ◇ Pool covers (folded and bound)
- ◇ Toilet/Sink
- ◇ Windows/Doors/Screens

Some bulk items that are NOT accepted include, but are not limited to:

- ◇ Construction and demolition waste
- ◇ Electronics (we have a weekly drop-off for this)
- ◇ Fencing
- ◇ Lumber
- ◇ Sliding Doors/Windows
- ◇ Swing sets

Many residents have a large amount of cardboard to recycle. Modern will accept additional cardboard if it is bundled in a manner that the employee can lift the bundle and place it in the recycling container to be emptied into the truck. Set the bundles neatly next to your recycling container.

**Note:** bundled material cannot exceed 4' length and 18" diameter, cannot exceed 60 pounds, and must be easily managed by 2 employees.



## Niagara County Sheriff's Office Community Outreach Programs Sheriff Michael J. Filicetti

### Wearable GPS wristwatch program/Silver Alert

The sheriff's office has these devices available to be loaned, but there is a fee of \$49.99/month to activate the device.

### Sex Offender Management

Residents may download an app to their phone to map nearby offenders, track your children, get alerts if your child is near an offender's residence, etc. The app is called Offender-Watch.

### Niagara County Animal Abuse Registry

Anyone convicted of animal cruelty and resides in Niagara County is required to submit information to the Sheriff's office. Giving, selling or adopting an animal to a person on this registry is a violation. Visit [www.niagarasheriff.com](http://www.niagarasheriff.com) for more information.

### Domestic Violence/Victim Services Units

The unit provides direct services to all crime victims within Niagara County. Victims are given referrals for food, clothing, shelter or counseling, as well as being accompanied to court appearances.

### NY-Alert

You can sign up with your email address and have emergency alert notifications pushed to your cell phone or email. Visit [nyalert.gov](http://nyalert.gov) to sign up.

Search Niagara County Sheriff NY in your app store if you want to download the Sheriff's mobile app.





## THE IMPORTANCE OF NEW YORK'S ENERGY FUTURE

The trajectory of New York's energy future relies on the voices of New Yorkers.

In 2019, New York set the country's "most ambitious" climate targets through a bill passed by the State Legislature and signed into law by the Governor, called the "Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act" (CLCPA). This includes carbon-free electricity by 2040 and net-zero carbon emissions by 2050. The law created the 22-member Climate Action Council (CAC), a committee that will make known the effects of the CLCPA.

The CAC voted to release a Draft Scoping Plan for public comment, which ended July 1, 2022. During this legislative session, my colleagues in the Senate Minority Conference and I continuously encouraged New Yorkers to make their voices heard, as this plan set to be finalized by January of 2023 would affect all newly built homes and businesses.

The CAC's Draft Scoping Plan completely alters the state's energy plan, which should be a concern for all residents, especially with an increased focus on green energy projects being pushed upstate in order to meet energy demands, affecting small communities like Somerset. We have already seen a major plant closure in the town two years ago, in which the state has been indifferent – if not hostile – to repurposing the plant to maintain jobs. This is consistent with a statewide trend to shut down both renewable and non-renewable energy plants only for New York to import non-renewable energy from out-of-state and out-of-country. All to meet arbitrary political targets set by the Governor, Albany bureaucrats, and NYC politicians.

The draft scoping plans, which are absent of any definitive cost, will eventually put an end to gas services in buildings, natural gas appliances for home heating, cooking, water heating, clothes drying, and gasoline-automobile sales – among many other policies.

It's clear this plan will increase the financial burden and hardship on everyday New Yorkers. Our fellow residents are experiencing an energy affordability crisis, surging inflation, rising home heating and electric bills, and pain at the gas pumps. As conditions currently stand, the electrical grid would be severely challenged to handle any increase in electricity demand that natural gas bans would create. It may be hard to imagine in the midst of summer, but we are never far away from our brutal winter weather that will surely test unproven technology and radical policies.

Now is not the time to completely rid the state of this dependable energy source. Fortunately, more than 18,000 New Yorkers made their voices heard and submitted public comments before the deadline. I sincerely hope that the Climate Action Council takes these comments into serious consideration and, in the end, the voice of the people will steer our state.

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## **RURAL ROUTE**

### **Annual Tire Drop Off**

This year's tire drop off will be taking place Monday through Friday, September 12th - 16th from 7:00AM-3:30PM, and Saturday, September 17th from 9:00AM-Noon at the Highway Garage. The limit remains 8 tires per household, and tires with rims will NOT be accepted.

### **TOWN-WIDE YARD SALE**

It is time for our annual Town-Wide Yard Sale! This year it will take place on Saturday, August 6th from 9am - 5pm. Call the Town Clerk's office to get your address placed on our map. The day of the event catch the shoppers attention by placing balloons on your mailbox. Call by August 1st so maps can be prepared and ready for distribution on August 2nd.

Faith United Methodist Church will be selling hot dogs and have flea tables. You can rent a table to be used on their grounds for \$5 per table. Call 716-795-9945 or email [barkerfaith.jan@gmail.com](mailto:barkerfaith.jan@gmail.com) to rent the table.

