



Town of Somerset

Volume 33, Issue 2

Summer 2018



From Your Town Clerk

Dear Residents,

It's summer time in Somerset, the busiest (and I think prettiest) time of the year! Our organizations have many things planned so make sure you find our calendar later in the newsletter. It is also time for our Annual Town-Wide Yard sale! This year the sale is being held on August 4th from 9am - 5pm. Please call my office at 716-795-3575, ext. 2 if you would like your address placed on the map. To increase your sales it is helpful for shoppers to find you if you hang balloons from your mailbox that day.

Many of our residents have had issues with their garbage/recycling pickup lately. If yours is missed or if you have any other problems with it, please call my office so that we can report it. If they need to come back they will ask that you leave it out and they will return within 24 hours.

Have an enjoyable summer!

Tracy L. Carmer, RMC

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2018 Niagara County Free Rabies Clinics

- Saturday, July 28th 9AM - 11AM - Town of Lewiston Highway Garage
- Saturday, September 15th 2PM - 4PM - Town of Lockport Highway Department
- Saturday, December 1st 2PM - 4PM - City of North Tonawanda Public Works Department

A Word From Your Supervisor

Daniel Engert 716-795-3575, ext. 3



Greetings, friends and neighbors! Summer is upon us and we've had some pretty spectacular weather as we enjoy the outdoor activities that we so long for all winter! Let's hope it continues! It's been a very busy year thus far and so briefly, let me get everyone up to speed.

As the town enters into the fourth (yes, 4th) year with an out of state developer (Apex) promising/threatening yet not actually filing an application for an industrial wind project that will unimaginably transform our town into a massive industrialized zone, there was actually some public activity from Apex in late February. As I described in the spring newsletter, Apex filed a series of proposed "stipulations" in order to limit the review of their project's environmental, economic and public health impacts on Somerset. The town has taken the position that it will defend all local ordinances designed to protect the health, safety and general welfare of our citizens including, but not limited to their property values. The town has no intention of signing into stipulated agreements that will limit or prevent entirely, a full review of all impacts that any massive industrial project will have upon the town. I am also very pleased and encouraged to report that to date, none of the state agencies have signed any stipulations with the developer either.

I am also pleased to report that after a series of meetings with officials in the town of Yates and Niagara County, I have successfully secured partners who are now sharing costs to reduce the financial impact upon the town of Somerset. I recently signed an agreement with the town of Yates to share mutual legal and technical expert expenses equally (50%) moving forward. Also, the Niagara County legislature, at the urging of our legislator (Dr. John Syracuse) has committed \$15,000 to offset costs this year and further discussions to ensue for 2019 and beyond if necessary, but we truly hope that this ordeal will end soon. Unfortunately, significant expenses have been incurred to retain legal and technical experts since 2015. While unavoidable as a result of this developer descending upon our town, the resources are absolutely necessary as the town endeavors to defend the will of the overwhelming majority of Somerset taxpayers who are adamantly opposed to an industrial wind project being sited near and surrounding their homes.

Moving on to another important topic, the taxing jurisdictions and the Somerset power plant recently came to an agreement on a PILOT extension with the Niagara County Industrial Development Agency (IDA). I have reported on this previously, but Governor Cuomo made good on his promise to eliminate coal power plants in New York State by regulation. He recently announced that the DEC, at his urging, revised emission standards making it impossible for any coal-fired generation to meet. These regulations are effective on December 31, 2020 so the future of the plant is clearly in jeopardy and its true value has diminished greatly. The taxing jurisdictions have recognized this fact over the past several years as we have tried to be fair about PILOT agreements. The \$3 million payment for each year of the two year agreement through 2020 will be the lowest in the plant's history but is reflective of the current reality. We remain hopeful that the plant will find a path forward to continue operating in the future for the benefit of the hard-working employees who are employed there. Also, the town is re-submitting again this year for a grant to study the feasibility of creating a recreational park and waterfront access for the public on the power plant property otherwise referred to as the "multiple use site". This area was designated for this purpose during the original siting of the power plant from 1979. I recently toured an official from the Department of State who is reviewing our Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) and we are optimistic that NYS will provide funding for this study. I will share more on this as we monitor the application process.

Finally, the 2019 budget will be a difficult one as we complete the transition away from the substantial reliance on revenue from the power plant. I would encourage everyone to come out and participate in the budget process. Help the Board to make important decisions about services and the priorities that you care about as we work hard to keep our tax rate as low as possible. Public meeting notices will be announced this fall. We have among the lowest tax rate of any municipality in Niagara County and we are committed to maintaining that distinction while continuing to deliver the exceptional services that you expect and deserve. Have a great summer, everyone!

In your service,

Daniel M. Engert – Town Supervisor

Councilwoman's Corner



July is here and school is out. Please take extra care in looking out for motorcycles and bikes, runners and walkers, and children playing near the road and make sure your dogs are properly restrained. Dog bites are painful and frightening for people of all ages but especially children. The Town of Somerset has a leash law and all dogs are to be either leashed or fenced in. Please be considerate of your neighbors and people enjoying the summer outdoors and make sure your dog is leashed. Let's make this summer a safe one. Look twice, save a life.

~Councilwoman Robin Jansen



NIAGARA COUNTY DIVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL / SOLID WASTE **RETHINK YOUR WASTE**

ELIGIBILITY AND EXCLUSIONS:

Must be a resident of Niagara County.
Only waste generated from homes is accepted.
Not-for-profits, and businesses are excluded.
Latex Paint cans must be full (please dry out and dispose of partially full cans).
There is a limit of 150-lbs per vehicle.
Alkaline Batteries, Motor Oil, Electronics and Explosives are NOT ACCEPTED.
All residents are required to pre-register online.

Go <https://www.rethinkyourwaste.com/events>
to schedule your appointment

Fire Extinguishers, Smoke Detectors and Propane Tanks are subject to additional fees.

ACCEPTABLE ITEMS:

Full Latex Paint Cans (no partial cans will be accepted)
Oil-based Paint
Wood Stains and Preservatives
Automotive Fluids (Antifreeze, Brake, Power Steering and Transmission Fluids)
Pesticides and Fertilizers (both Solid and Liquid)
Flammable Products (Gasoline, Kerosene, Thinners, Strippers, Solvents, Glues, etc.)
Household Cleaners (Soaps, Waxes, Drain Cleaners, etc.)
Driveway and Roof Sealer
Pool and Photo Chemicals
Mercury (Thermometers, Thermostats)
Fluorescent Bulbs

HHW & Pharmaceuticals Drop-off + Paper Shredding Event Saturday, September 22, 2018 from 10am-2pm
6560 Dysinger Rd. Lockport, NY This drop-off location is the Town of Lockport Highway Department.
Participation by appointment only. **Please book appointments starting August 27th.

HHW & Pharmaceuticals Drop- Off Event Saturday, October 6, 2018 from 10am to 2pm
758 Erie Ave Tonawanda, NY This drop-off location is the North Tonawanda DPW.
Participation by appointment only. **Please book appointments starting September 7th.





FOR RELEASE: June 22, 2018

CONTACT: Andrew Dugan | (518) 852-1282

ETHICS REFORMS FALL BY WAYSIDE. AGAIN.

A column from Senator Rob Ortt (R,C,I,Ref-North Tonawanda)

Once again, the Governor has said no to ethics reforms aimed at cleaning up Albany and holding those corrupt career politicians accountable for their gross misuse of taxpayer dollars. While I may sound like a broken record, it is important I continue to inform my constituents of each time ethics reforms fall at the feet of Governor Cuomo. For a man who indirectly professes his devotion to law and justice by seemingly suing the Trump administration each day, he is undoubtedly anemic to any legislation that would hold New York's government programs to a higher standard of law and transparency.

This year, my colleagues and I in the Senate were able to pass a historic package of ethics legislation, which included a publicly searchable subsidy database, the reforming of Gov. Cuomo's notorious START-UP Program, and the prohibiting of certain political contributions by government employees. We were also able to pass legislation that would place an eight-year limit on legislative leadership positions. Surprisingly, however, not even one of these 'good governance' bills have made it to the Assembly floor for a vote.

While I do not doubt there are plenty of Assembly members who support government transparency and ethics reforms, I do question the lack of concern for accountability from those few who are in power. The only way that legislation (which has proven wildly popular judging by countless public polls) can continue to go unacted upon is closed-door political interference. It's clear that the Governor and Assembly Democrat leadership simply do not wish to act upon public demands for accountability and transparency.

Another massively popular and overwhelmingly supported ethical reform we continually push is the institution of term limits among all elected leaders. I recently had the opportunity to join my colleagues at a press conference in which I advocated and pushed for term limits. Due to the disappointing history New York State has with government corruption, it's important we send a loud and clear message to the residents of New York State that we're serious about reforming our state's government. Unfortunately, like so many good governance ideas, the Assembly Democrat leadership ignored this legislation.

Ethics reforms are necessary if we are to give the residents of this state the government they deserve, and these reforms will continue to be a priority of mine year in and year out until we accomplish them.



I have been working closely with your Supervisor Dan Engert as it relates to the proposed Apex Industrial Wind Turbine project. I am happy to report that at my legislative meeting of 6/19/18, I was able to secure \$15,000 from Niagara County to help defray some of the costs associated with defending the Article 10 process. My Resolution, IL-026-18 was unanimously supported. It is clear to most that research concerning the health hazards related to wind turbines is far from settled. As I noted in my resolution, Dr. Alec Salt, a Cochlear Physiologist at the department of Otolaryngology at the Washington School of Medicine in St. Louis, Missouri, who has studied low frequency noise (LFN) since the 1970's has gone on record stating "the idea that there is no problem with infrasound (<20hz) couldn't be more wrong, the responses of the human ear to LFN are just enormous, bigger than anything in the audible range." My resolution goes on further to also address the potential affects these wind turbines can have on radar at the Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station (NFARS). I could not help but notice events surrounding the wind turbine project at Fort Drum and its controversies. Captain Patrick Phillipi of the Air Force's 18th Weather Squadron, Detachment 1 had this to say about the impact of turbines on radar: "it looks like rain, but it's just the turbines moving, the data will be seriously contaminated by the time we get it back." These comments were published in the Watertown Daily Times 11/3/17. If you would like a copy of my resolution, you can call the Legislative Clerk's office at 439-7001, or me at 778-5064.

In other DPW news, the County will be hosting 2 more Household Hazardous Waste drop off events; one in Lockport on 9/22 at 6560 Dysinger Rd, and another 10/6 in North Tonawanda at their DPW office located on 758 Erie Ave. Times for these collection dates are from 10am-2pm. Each event will also feature pharmaceutical waste collection from the local Police and/or Sheriff's office. See page 3 of this newsletter for more information. Niagara County DPW has also launched a more comprehensive version of their solid waste/recycling website: www.rethinkyourwaste.com. Residents are encouraged to visit this website to find out about upcoming events, join the mailing list or inquire about their community's program.

Finally, I have been getting a number of calls as it relates to road conditions in our area, most notably West Somerset and Carmen Roads. I have taken these concerns to our Commissioner of Public Works, Garret Meal. I have asked him for a report on the status of road work in our area. *Please see page 7 of this newsletter for his letter and more information.*

HISTORIAN'S CORNER

By: Peter Devereaux 795-3575, ext. 7

The Somerset Historical Society

The Somerset Historical Society was formed at a meeting of original signers in 1974 at Faith United Methodist Church. The first official meeting was held at the home of Lon and Marie McAdam on Jan. 10, 1975. There are still a few of those original signers that are active.

Meetings and special events were held at The Yorker House Museum until 1987 when they moved to the Babcock House on Lake Rd.

In 1982 New York State Electric + Gas Corp. acquired the Babcock House as part of the property for the power plant and in 1983 extensive restoration work began. In May of 1987 an agreement was made between NYSEG and the Somerset Historical Society. The Society has maintained and furnished the house since that time. In 1999 AES Somerset purchased the power plant and the Babcock House and has continued this agreement. The property was sold to Somerset Operating Company and the Society now has a lease with them.

The Historical Society holds its Farm Festival each year on the third Sunday in September and the Babcock House is opened for guided tours on Sundays from June until October from 1-4 pm.

The Victorian Christmas at the Babcock House is a great time to enjoy the old fashion Christmas tradition.

There are many other activities throughout the year such as a square dance in the barn and programs with guest speakers who present programs on Historical people and places. New members are always welcome.

Check out their web site : www.somersetnyhistoricalsociety.org

Highway Department
Michael M. Flint, Superintendent
(716) 795-3866



Now that spring is here roadside mowing is underway.

Please be aware of the men working on the roadsides.

Lonnon Road is still closed due to a culvert collapse and the town is waiting for permits to repair from the DEC and Army Corps of Engineers.

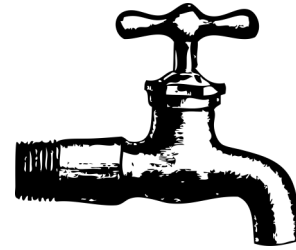
Also, work will begin on the replacement of all cross culverts on Coleman Road from Johnson Creek to Carmen Road. As this is going to be a large project, we ask for patience from the residents on that road as we replace them.

Have a safe and enjoyable summer!



Water/Sewer Department News

Mel Denny, Water/Sewer/Grounds Superintendent
716-795-9919



Summer is here and projects are underway.

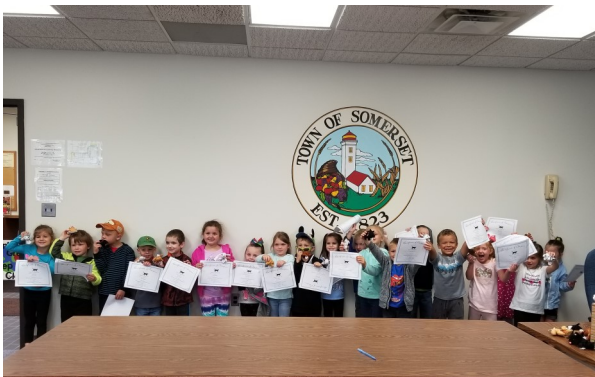
Before you Dig - Remember to call 811 before you do any digging. It is the law that you must call at least two (2) full business days in advance so the underground utilities have a chance to mark out their lines.

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.

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 - 3pm. See page 3 for Household Waste Drop-Off Sites.

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

*****Reminder** : Please remember to use your new water/sewer account number on all correspondence. This includes quarterly payments made through your financial institution.



Pre-K Day

2018

June 6, 2018

John Syracuse Cont'd:

The Niagara County Highway Department has been working very hard over the past few construction seasons to address the many needs of the County's infrastructure; we maintain over 565 lane miles of highways and 90 bridges. In order to better respond to these needs, the County has recently upgraded its road construction equipment include to a new road milling machine, paver and large capacity hauling equipment. Utilizing this equipment has allowed the Highway Department to construct nearly 24 lane miles of highway and another 24 miles of paved shoulders in just the past year alone at much lower costs than private contracts.

Though our list of needs is long, our capacity for building roads is now allowing us to gain significant ground on our many road concerns while remaining within our budgets. Some of our upcoming priority projects to be addressed in Eastern Niagara County include:

Phase 1 Improvements on Carmen Road which include drainage improvements to allow for a subsequent resurfacing project.

Rehabilitation of failing portions of Tonawanda Creek Road.

Engineering design is nearly complete on full reconstruction and widening of West Somerset Road, construction will start with drainage improvements on this multi-phase, multi-year project.

Construction is underway on a culvert replacement on Griswold Street; we are also near completion on engineering design of a federally funded bridge also on Griswold Street.

We also have engineering design underway for federally funded bridge replacement projects on Hosmer Road, Carmen Road and Wisterman Road as well as a federally funded road project on North Canal Road.

In addition to these projects and several others throughout the rest of the County, our highway crews are doing their best to keep up with normal maintenance activities like pot hole repair, roadside mowing, ditch cleaning, drainage, tree trimming and assisting other County Departments and municipalities.

So it is a very busy year for us and while we won't complete these priorities, we will do our best to continue to move them forward over the next few years.

Finally, the Niagara County Department of Public Works will be at the Niagara County Fair this year. Please stop by to say hello. Garret Meal, P.E., Commissioner, Niagara County DPW

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- ◆ June 24 - October 7 - Open House Tours (Sundays 1-4pm) - Cobblestone House
- ◆ July 4 - Patriotic Service starting @ 10:30am - Lighthouse Christian Camp
- ◆ July 22-27 - Keen Kamp - A camp for adults 50+ - Lighthouse Christian Camp
- ◆ August 4 - Town Wide Garage Sale 9am -5pm - Town of Somerset
- ◆ August 4 - Flea Market - Faith United Methodist Church
- ◆ August 12 - Summer Picnic - 1pm At Cobblestone Museum
- ◆ August 20 - Ice Cream Social - Faith United Methodist Church
- ◆ September 16 - Old Fashioned Farm Festival - 10am -4pm - Babcock Cobblestone Museum Barn
- ◆ October 1 - Windsong Mammogram Mobile Screening - 10am-3pm -Faith United Methodist Church
- ◆ November 5 - John Montague speaking on The Erie Canal - 7pm - Somerset Town Hall

CAMP HOPE

A free bereavement camp for any WNY child age 7-13 grieving the loss of a loved one. This is a weekend long event where grieving children interact with other children who are experiencing similar feelings.

Activities include:

- Small group grief support facilitated by trained staff
- Memorial bonfire
- Pet visits
- Arts and crafts
- Archery
- Nature hikes



Camp HOPE America

For dates and more information call the Niagara Hospice Bereavement Department at (716) 280-0777 or visit www.niagrahospice.org

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8700 Haight Road
P.O. Box 368
Barker, NY 14012-0368

U.S. Postage
Standard
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Middleport, NY 14105
Permit #21

Phone: 716-795-3575
Fax: 716-795-9041
Website: www.somersetny.org

Town Wide Garage Sale - August 4 - 9am to 5pm

Summer Reading Programs @ the Barker Public Library



Tuesday, July 10, 2018	12:30 pm	Where will the music take me?
Thursday, July 19, 2018	12:30 pm	The melody of nature.
Tuesday, July 24, 2018	12:30 pm	Dance to the music.
Thursday, August 2, 2018	12:30 pm	Move and feel the beat.
Tuesday, August 7, 2018	12:30 pm	Join the band.
Thursday, August 16, 2018	12:30 pm	Bird songs & other animal voices.