

VILLAGE VOICES

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Editor, Jennifer Truax, Deputy Village Clerk

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News from the Mayor's Office

The start of 2016 brought Cooperstown great news. Ken Griffey Jr. and Mike Piazza were elected to the Hall of Fame and Induction Weekend is sure to be huge. Griffey was the face of baseball in the 1990's and is one of those rare players loved by everyone. It's been a good few months for Mets' fans – their first World Series appearance in 29 years followed by one of their all-time favorites elected to Cooperstown. Piazza's Induction is cause for celebration and will bring in hordes of Mets' fans to Main St.

The Village began the 2016-17 budget process in January. While the budget has never been healthier due to increased revenues and cost-cutting, we still have many challenges ahead. Paid parking has provided a huge boost to our annual budget, but, with multiple projects in street, water, sewer and buildings needed over the next 10 years, how to balance the monies we have at hand with the need to update our aging infrastructure, providing services and keeping a lid on taxes, still takes much work and tough decisions. The Board of Trustees and I are dedicated to doing all we can to bring our infrastructure up to the level we all deserve.

- Jeff Katz, Mayor

Is a Dog Park Desired?

On the Village Parks survey completed last spring by the Parks Board, there were a few responses in support of creating a dog park.

So in order to access just how much interest there is by Village residents to have some sort of dog walk or dog park located in Badger Park in the Village, please shoot an email to Ellen Tillapaugh at ellentillapaugh@gmail.com. Specifically, we are looking for input on:

- How often (times a week) you feel you would use it
- Type of park you would envision - wooded path with your dog on a leash **or** a fenced area where your dog could exercise off leash
- Have you used a dog park elsewhere, and if yes what was successful about it
- Do you know of grant funds available for construction of a dog park

Thank you!

Village Elections - 2016

Election Day for the Village will be Tuesday, March 15, 2016. The election will be held at the Cooperstown Fire Hall, 26 Chestnut Street. The following offices are up for re-election:

- ❖ Mayor – Two year term
- ❖ Trustee (2) – Three year term

At the Democratic Caucus held on January 26, 2016, the following individuals were nominated as candidates for the office indicated next to their name:

- ❖ Jeff Katz – Mayor (2 Yrs)
- ❖ Bruce Maxson – Village Trustee (3 Yrs)
- ❖ Richard Sternberg – Village Trustee (3 Yrs)

The deadline for the Village Clerk to receive Independent Nominating Petitions is not until February 9, 2016; therefore, additional candidates and/or parties may be added to the ballot at that time.

Absentee ballot applications are available at the Village Office during regular office hours, Monday-Friday between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. or by calling 547-2411.



Grievance Night

The tentative assessment roll has been completed for 2016. Notices have been sent to the owners of properties that have changed values.

The Assessor, Al Keck, is available weekdays, 8 AM – 2 PM in his office at 22 Main Street. He will also hold special office hours for those unable to meet during regular office hours on Thursday, February 4, from 6 PM – 8 PM and Saturday, February 6, from 9 AM – 1 PM or by appointment by calling 607-547-6057.

The Board of Assessment Review will meet on Tuesday, February 16th, 2016 in the Village Meeting Room, 22 Main Street, Cooperstown, NY between the hours of 6 PM and 10 PM, for the purpose of hearing and determining complaints in relation to assessments on the application of any person believing himself to be aggrieved.

Complaints with respect to assessments must be filed with the Village Clerk on or before the day of the meeting on a form prescribed by the State. These forms are available at the Village Office.

Badger Park Ice Skating Rink

Our staff works diligently to maintain the best possible skating conditions. Ice making has begun and hopefully you have enjoyed the rink by the time you are reading this.

You can find updates on the rink status on the Park's page of the Village's website (www.cooperstownny.org) or on the Facebook page of Friends of the Parks (Cooperstown Friends of the Parks).

When ice conditions prevail please remember:

- The rink will not always be staffed by a skating rink attendant
- Use of the facility is at your own risk
- Helmets are required for anyone playing hockey and encouraged for all skaters, other protective gear is also recommended
- Hockey pucks are not to elevate off the ice
- Except for times specifically listed for Hockey, sticks and pucks are not permitted when there are any public skaters on the ice
- Mixed Use skating (1/3 of rink, hockey use & 2/3 of rink, family skate) is scheduled for M, W, F from 3-7 PM; T, Th from 3-6 PM; and weekends from 12:30-6:30 PM
- Hockey is scheduled for T, Th from 6:30-9 PM; and weekends from 10 AM – 12 PM
- Family/Open Skating is scheduled for weekends 12:30-3:30 PM

Here's hoping for cooperative weather which will allow for a high quality ice and good skating.

<u>Day</u>	<u>Use</u>	<u>Time</u>
Monday	Mixed Use	3 – 7 PM
Tuesday	Mixed Use Hockey	3 – 6 PM 6:30 – 9 PM
Wednesday	Mixed Use	3 – 7 PM
Thursday	Mixed Use Hockey	3 – 6 PM 6:30 – 9 PM
Friday	Mixed Use	3 – 7 PM
Weekends & Holidays	Hockey Family Skate Mixed Use	10 AM – 12 PM 12:30 – 3:30 PM 3:30 – 6:30 PM

All Night Parking

An all-night parking ban is in effect from November 1 – April 1. Vehicles are NOT permitted to be parked overnight on any Village street. All night parking is permitted only as indicated in Doubleday Parking lot and the Fowler Way Parking lot.

Adopt-A-Fire Hydrant

Looking for a community-oriented project? Why not adopt a fire hydrant to clear it of snow? Modeled after the successful NYS Department of Transportation's Adopt-A-Highway program, the Village of Cooperstown announces a Village-wide Adopt-a-Fire Hydrant program and invites residents, business owners, organizations, and others to help out.

Those who sign up to Adopt-A-Fire Hydrant will commit, initially for the 2016 winter season, to shovel the snow 3 feet around the hydrant on all sides. This will ensure that in the event of a fire, firefighters can quickly access water to extinguish it. For the safety of drivers and pedestrians, snow should be piled on the tree lawn and not deposited in the street or on the sidewalk. More serious hydrant issues should be reported to the Village at 547-2411.

To join the team and adopt a fire hydrant contact Rich McCaffery by email at ctownadoptahydrantdrain@gmail.com or call 547-5256. A map with numbered hydrants to adopt is available on the Village website at <http://cooperstownny.org/volunteers/>. Your time and energy has the potential to benefit you and your neighbors in an emergency.

Solar Project

The Village continues to work toward a solar electricity project in coordination with the Cooperstown Central School, several surrounding towns, private schools and non-profit organizations. If successful, the project will reduce electricity costs for all of these organizations. After several delays caused by changes in rules by the New York State Public Service Commission and the need to locate suitable land for the project is moving forward again. We now have a few potential sites including one located within the school district. Bids are due by the end of January and decisions on whether to proceed by each of the individual participants are expected in March. The project has been structured so that none of the participants has had to make any payments or financial commitments to date and if the project goes forward, there will be no up-front payments by the participants. The developers would cover all of the project engineering, construction and maintenance costs and the participants would pay a lower cost in their electric bills. This project cannot accept additional participants, but the State has announced that similar projects will be available to individuals, businesses and municipalities in the near future.

Building Improvement Projects

For many years, budgetary constraints have prevented adequate maintenance on most Village assets, including some critical systems and infrastructure in our buildings. Increased funds from paid parking, grants, and generous contributions from the Scriven Foundation have allowed us to complete a number of repairs and upgrades, many of which are not visible but critical to the ongoing use of our buildings.

At the Village Hall these projects include: completing the installation of new roofing and installing a translucent protective cover over the skylight in the ball room; installing valves that allow the boilers to operate independently; replacing asbestos boiler insulation with fiberglass; emergency replacement of the main sewer pipe; repositioning and replenishing attic insulation to conserve heat; conversion of the old court office to a multi-purpose conference/tutoring room; and emergency replacement of the water damaged ceiling in the Library reading room and repointing exterior stonework to prevent recurrence. The Library has funded most of the replacement of the flooring in the main hallway with additional financial contributions from the Village and Friends of the Library.

At the firehouse: deteriorating windows have been replaced; the sidewalk to the entrance has been replaced; and a new heat pump has been installed in the meeting room for both heating and cooling. Currently, work is underway to save heat and electricity by insulating the meeting room ceiling and installing LED lighting in the meeting room.

Single-Use Plastic Bags

The Board of Trustees has recently been approached by citizens concerned about the environmental effects of thin-film, single-use plastic bags. The Village is sensitive to the global impacts of the bags, which are not biodegradable, can easily blow out of trash receptacles, and are known to pollute waterways, where animals may mistake them for food. The Village encourages everyone to carefully consider their choices when it comes to packaging. Choosing reusable carriers, like cloth bags or baskets, reduces the number of plastic bags used. Additionally, the Village recommends the vigilant recycling of all materials, including plastic bags. As a consumer, please help reduce solid waste and increase environmental awareness. If you sell goods, consider offering customers an alternative to polyethylene bags.

Caring for your Sidewalk

Last year the Village adopted a new law for sidewalk maintenance and use.

- Trees and shrubs must be trimmed so as not to impede pedestrian use of public sidewalks.
- Parking is prohibited on public sidewalks.
- Driving on public sidewalks is prohibited except where a portion of the sidewalk is part of an established driveway.
- Owners are responsible for clearing snow and ice from public sidewalks adjoining their properties. If this duty is neglected, the expenses incurred by the Village in removing ice and snow will be charged to the property owner.
- The use of sodium chloride (rock salt) is prohibited on public sidewalks. Look for deicers labeled as safe for concrete.
- In the business district it is not required that snow be removed from the new pavers, but business and property owners may choose to do so.
- Snow or ice you clear must not be deposited on streets or sidewalks.
- Snow or ice must not be deposited on someone else's property without express permission.

2016 Boat Dock & Rack Rental

We will begin to accept names for the boat dock & canoe/kayak rack waiting list on March 1st. To be put on the waiting list, you must come to the Village office on or after Tuesday, March 1st, during regular business hours. Spaces are assigned on a first come first assigned basis.

Last year's renters will automatically be assigned a slip/rack space and will have until March 31st to renew for the season. Slips that are not renewed will become available for those on the waiting list.

The village is currently bidding for the replacement of one dock. The current plan will facilitate the replacement of one dock prior to opening for the 2016 season. We will keep you updated as information becomes available.

Village Holiday Schedule

The Village Offices will be closed:

- ❖ February 16 (in observance of President's Day)

Village Now accepting Credit Cards

Villagers may now pay using credit or debit card at the Clerk's counter, Treasurer's office or by telephone for the following: real estate taxes, water and sewer bills, vital statistics records, boat slips & kayak rentals, Doubleday rental, Doubleday PA, Doubleday banners, Doubleday electric, fire department use fee, park pass, park rental, downtown paid parking permit, zoning permit, park use permit, curb cut permit, vending permit and trolley passes. Our payment processing company MuniPAY charges a convenience fee of 2.45% (\$3.00 minimum) per transaction. Note that this fee does not represent revenue to the village, and the amounts received (net of the convenience fee) by the village are the same regardless of payment method.

In addition, villagers may pay real estate taxes and water and sewer payments online at www.cooperstown.org by credit or debit card or e-check by clicking the payments tab, selecting the appropriate drop-down menu and following the payment link. The same 2.45% (\$3.00 minimum) convenience fee applies for credit and debit card payments and is kept by MuniPAY as their compensation for providing the service. For e-checks you will need to enter your bank account number and 9-digit routing number which appear on the face of your personal checks. MuniPAY charges a \$1.50 convenience fee for e-check payments making this the cheaper of the two online payment options.

Note that for all electronic payments made in person, by telephone or online, the total amount with the convenience fee broken out separately will be presented to you before payment is processed, affording you the opportunity to opt out of the convenience fee and revert to traditional payment methods.

Reminders from the Water Department

- Meters will be read again April.
- Remember to leave an opening for operators to access the water touch pad at your residence or business. For instance, if you have fencing around your shrubs, please leave an opening for them to access the touch pad.
- Even slight drafts during winter weather may cause your water meter to freeze and break. To avoid the expense and inconvenience, please ensure that your water meter is draft free.
- Leaving for the winter? Don't forget to drain your household water pipes and water meter to prevent the pipes from freezing while you're away.
- If you have any questions, please call the Water Department at 547-5591.

Tax Credits

Did you know that you might qualify for a state income tax credit for work you do on your historic house or business property? New York State offers tax credits for homeowners in qualifying census tracts (of which ours is one) who do more than \$5,000 of approved work on their historic house. The house must be listed on the National Register of Historic Places or as contributing in a National Register historic district. Fortunately, most homes built before 1949 in the Village of Cooperstown are contributing in the Glimmerglass Historic District. At least 5% must be spent on the exterior of the home, and all work must be approved by the State Historic Preservation Office before it begins. The credit is equal to 20% of approved qualifying expenses up to \$50,000.

Businesses can take advantage of both state and federal income tax credits. Owners of income producing real properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places, including those contributing in the Glimmerglass Historic District, may be eligible for a 20% federal income tax credit for the substantial rehabilitation of historic properties. The work performed (both interior and exterior) must meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and be approved by the National Park Service. Owners who qualify for the federal credit can also take advantage of a 20% state income tax credit.

For more information, contact the State Historic Preservation Office. Home owners should call Larry Moss at (518) 268-2187. Business owners call Laurie E. Klenkel at (518) 268-2170.

Village Committees & Boards Seek Volunteers

The Village of Cooperstown is looking for people interested in volunteering on Village committees and boards. Every month, Village Committees and Boards meet for thorough discussion of all relevant issues. Zoning law administration is under the purview of the Zoning Board of Appeals, Historic Preservation and Architectural Review Board and the Planning Board. Over 50 volunteers serve on 16 committees & boards. Committee meetings are where the most extensive conversations take place on all village matters and are open to the public.

Presently there are vacancies on the Parks Board, and positions as alternates on the Planning, Zoning and HPARB. However, many committees are in need of additional members. If interested, please contact Teri Barown, Village Clerk at vcooperstown@snty.rr.com or call the Village office at 547-2411. Appointments to committees/boards are made by the Mayor and approved by the Board of Trustees.