

VILLAGE VOICES

Number 123

Editor, Jenna Utter, Village Clerk

February 2022

News from the Mayor's Office

I hope you have had a wonderful and healthy start to the New Year! While it may seem that “things” slow down in the winter months, in fact your Village Board stays very busy.

As reported in local news, the Village voted in December to opt out of on-site cannabis lounges in the Village and did not take any action on adult-use retail dispensaries prior to the December 31st deadline. Therefore, retail establishments will be able to be located in the Village once the New York State Office of Cannabis Management begins issuing licenses, which is expected to occur in early 2023. Villages are permitted to pass local laws and regulations governing the time, place and manner of dispensaries, and later this spring we will begin working on updating our local zoning laws to ensure that we have regulations in place.

A tentative Village Budget for the June 1, 2022-May 31, 2023 fiscal year, needs to be in place by March 20th. Over the next several weeks we have scheduled four Zoom meetings to work on a Tentative Budget. In the budget process we review programs such as paid parking, trolley service and bond service to ensure that we are stewarding Village finances well. All our meetings are recorded and streamed to our YouTube channel – Village of Cooperstown. Find the “Stream Now” link by clicking on the “government” and then “Board of Trustees” tabs on our website: www.cooperstownny.org.

In January I was asked to present State of the Village talks to several organizations. In summarizing our progress and our goals, it became abundantly clear – that despite economic losses suffered during the pandemic, careful budgeting has ensured a solid path forward. The state of our Village is strong! We thank you for your support!

-Ellen Tillapaugh, Mayor

Village Elections - 2022

Election Day for the village will be Tuesday, March 15, 2022. Voting will take place at the Cooperstown Fire Hall, 24 Chestnut Street, from noon until 9 p.m.

The following offices are up for re-election:

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

The Democratic Caucus was held on January 19, 2022 and nominations were made as follows: Ellen Tillapaugh for Mayor, Sydney Sheehan for Trustee and Richard Sternberg for Trustee.

The deadline for the Village Clerk to receive Independent Nominating Petitions is February 8, 2022; 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 2021. 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 3, from 6 PM – 8 PM and Saturday, February 5, from 9 AM – 1 PM or by appointment by calling 607-547-6057.

The Board of Assessment Review will meet on Tuesday, February 15, 2022 in the Village Meeting Room, 22 Main Street, Cooperstown, NY between the hours of 4 PM and 8 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, 22 Main Street or by calling (607) 547-2411.

Hemlock Woolly Adelgid

Hemlock woolly adelgid (HWA) is an invasive insect that has recently been found on property owned by the Village of Cooperstown at Fairy Spring Park on the east side of Otsego Lake. This highly destructive pest feeds on and kills eastern hemlock, a beautiful and critical component of our forests.

The Village is working with the New York State Hemlock Initiative, OCCA, the Clark Foundation, and others to identify the extent of the problem and determine the best course of action for HWA management. Stay tuned for more information including opportunities to volunteer as HWA spotters.

Snow Emergencies

A snow emergency, or other emergency, is declared by the Mayor or the DWP superintendent. An emergency will be announced via media outlets including TV, radio, and the Village website. Parking is prohibited on all Village streets during a declared emergency. Cars that remain on the street during an emergency may be towed.

Parking is available in the Doubleday Field Parking Lot whenever an emergency prevents parking on the streets. Please continue to support local businesses during the winter, even if that requires a little extra walking.

Removing Snow and Ice from the Public Sidewalk

This winter season, please remember that according to local law:

- Owners are responsible for clearing snow and ice from public sidewalks adjoining their properties within 24 hours after a snowfall.
- The use of sodium chloride (rock salt) is not permitted on public sidewalks. Look for deicers labeled as safe for concrete.
- In the business district it is not necessary to remove snow and ice from the pavers, but the pavers can be carefully cleared and deiced if desired.
- 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.

If the public sidewalk adjacent to your property is not cleared, the Village will clear it and charge you a fee of \$100 per instance. You will be notified of

the need to clear the sidewalk via a paper notice placed at your entrance door before the sidewalk is cleared by Village employees. The Village does not make phone calls or send emails to property owners who have neglected this duty.

We ask that you remain diligent in clearing snow and ice from the sidewalk and make alternative arrangements if you are out of town. We would prefer not to have to issue notices, shovel sidewalks, or fine property owners—we do this to promote pedestrian safety.



Support Our Firefighters – Clear A Hydrant

The Village of Cooperstown offers an opportunity for its residents, businesses, organizations, and others to get involved in helping to keep the Village safer. There are 127 fire hydrants in and around the Village. A map with numbered hydrants is available on the Village website at <http://cooperstownny.org/volunteers/>.

Clearing a hydrant means shoveling 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.

If everyone pitches in, we can ensure that access to fire hydrants is more continuous, especially following a large snow storm. The ultimate goal is to help ensure a safer Village for all who live, work, and visit here.

2022 Boat Dock and Rack Rental

We will begin to accept names for the boat dock & canoe/kayak rack [waiting list](#) on March 7th. To be put on the waiting list, you must come to the Village office on or after Monday, March 7th, 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.

Because exterior slips (1-W dock) are best able to accommodate larger boats, and they tend to be the most desirable slips due to their accessibility, we have adjusted our slip fee schedule to reflect this. **Boats longer than 24' cannot be accommodated on Village docks.**

On 1-W with exterior slips, rates are \$800.00 for Cooperstown Village residents (**those who actually reside in the Village of Cooperstown as their primary, legal residence**) and \$1,750.00 for non-residents. For interior slips on 1-E, 2-E and 2-W rates remain at the prior rates of \$600 for Village residents and \$1350 for non-residents. If you are currently on 1-W, and do not wish to pay the increased rate and have a boat no longer than 20', you may request to move to an interior slip.

Boat Permits are valid from May 1st through November 1st.

Reminder: The slip applicant must be the registered boat owner and in order to receive in Village rates, your primary, legal residence must be located within the Village.

Overnight Parking

Between November 1 and April 1 overnight parking is prohibited on all Village streets to ensure snow and ice can be promptly removed. Free overnight parking is available in the Fowler Way Parking Lot and the Doubleday Field Parking Lot in designated areas. Look for signs indicating where overnight parking is allowed in these lots and don't make snow removal harder for our road crew by parking overnight on the street.

Spring Clean-Up

To facilitate spring clean-up, the Village of Cooperstown will be picking up green yard waste Monday – Friday beginning at 7 a.m. during the month of April, weather permitting. After April, pickup will be the last Thursday of each month.

Compostable Waste and Brush Curbside Pickup Procedures:

- 1) The Village will pick up compostable yard waste and brush separately. There will be two pickups per street, one for soft green waste and a second for brush. These may occur over a period of several days depending on demand.
- 2) Place any soft green waste such as grass clippings, leaves, and other soft garden waste in compostable bags or in reusable hard plastic containers.

Place containers between the sidewalk and the curb.

- Do not use plastic bags.
 - Do not include non-compostable materials like plastic flower pots.
 - Do not assume that we can lift containers that you cannot lift. Containers that are too heavy will be left at the curb.
- 3) Place brush in a pile between the curb and sidewalk.
 - Do not put brush in containers.
 - Keep brush separated from green waste.
 - Root balls, stumps, and large tree limbs will not be picked up. We can only take material that will go through our shredder.
 - 4) We do not pick up any kind of construction debris or processed lumber.
 - 5) For the initial clean up in the spring and the final clean up in the fall, leaves and green waste do not have to be bagged. Leave them in a pile between the curb and sidewalk. We will pick them up with our leaf vacuum.
 - Make sure there are no stones or bricks in the leaf pile.
 - Keep brush in its own pile that will be picked up separately.
 - Check the Village web site for fall and spring cleanup dates.
 - These pickups will continue over several days until all eligible items have been picked up.
 - 6) Residents may also bring green waste at any time to the Village Street Garage on Linden Avenue and deposit it themselves in the appropriate area. Commercial dumping is prohibited.

If you have any questions please call Mitch Hotaling, DPW Superintendent, 547-2411.

Village Parks Update

The ice rink is open!!

The Village crew has been hard at work preparing the rink at Badger Park for skating. Despite a late start due to an unseasonably warm December (again!) the ice is currently in great shape and the rink is now open daily, weather permitting. Skating is a fun way to enjoy the great outdoors in the winter—come check it out!!

The rink is divided so that half may be set up for hockey and half is designated for open skating. The hours are as follows, weather permitting:

M/W/F 3pm-7pm mixed-use; T/Th 3pm-6pm mixed use, 6:30pm-9pm Hockey; Weekends and Holidays 10am-12noon Family skate; 12:30pm-6:30pm mixed use.

The warming hut will be open to allow skaters to borrow skates for daily use this season.

Please be sure to remind your kids to put their skates back neatly. Skates should not leave the park for any reason.

Also, please mask up inside the skate shack. We want to have a happy and healthy skating season for everyone!



Commercial Projects

The Village of Cooperstown is pleased to announce two property tax abatement programs for commercial and mixed-use buildings. These programs do not affect current tax assessments, but they do allow for the gradual phase-in of increased value when improvements are made. As a result, increases in property taxes are incurred more slowly, allowing building owners to better prepare and recoup some of their costs without a dramatic spike in assessed value.

The first program provides an incentive to make improvements to existing commercial buildings or for new commercial construction. Approved renovations or new construction by businesses may be eligible for a 50 percent exemption of real property taxes on all improvements for the first year. After the first year, assessed value would be increased by 5 percent per year until the eleventh year, when the property becomes fully taxed.

The second program is for the conversion of nonresidential real property to mixed-use property, when the cost exceeds \$10,000. Often this means the conversion of underutilized commercial upper floors to apartments. For the first eight years, increased assessed tax value as a result of an approved conversion would be 100 percent abated. In years 9 to 12, the new assessed value would be phased in, increasing 20 percent per year.

To take advantage of either of these programs, contact Village assessor Al Keck at 547-6057.

Additionally, businesses may qualify for both state and federal historic preservation income tax credits. Owners of income-producing real properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places, including those contributing in our Glimmerglass Historic District, may be eligible for a 20% federal income tax credit. 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 at (518) 237-8643 or Otsego 2000 at 547-8881.

Repairing Your Historic Home

If you live in the Village of Cooperstown and your house was built before 1949, you might qualify for a state income tax credit for work on your home. New York State offers income 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. 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 tax credit is equal to 20% of approved qualifying expenses up to \$50,000. For more information, contact the State Historic Preservation Office at (518) 237-8643 or Otsego 2000 at 547-8881.

Paid Parking

The 2022 Paid Parking season will run from the Saturday before Memorial Day through Columbus Day. The paid parking area includes portions of Main, Chestnut, Pioneer, and Fair Streets. The rate remains \$2 per hour, payable in 15-minute increments, with a \$14 all-day option at the Doubleday Field parking lot. On the streets, parking will continue to be limited to a 2-hour purchase, with the ability to buy additional time by re-upping at a Pay and Display Machine. Doubleday Field provides an all-day option.

Downtown parking permits provide an alternative to using Pay and Display machines for parking in the paid parking area. Anyone—local or tourist—can buy a permit. Permit holders can park for up to 2 hours daily in 2-hour areas without purchasing a ticket from a Pay and Display machine. The same permit can be used to park in the Doubleday Field Lot after 4 pm and all day in the permit-only Fowler Way Parking Lot (located behind the Chamber of Commerce) if an all-day option is needed. Please remember that the purchase and display of a parking permit does not guarantee a parking space.

Parking permits can be purchased in person from the Village Clerk's office at 22 Main Street or by mail or email. Applications can be accessed on the village website www.cooperstownny.org (under permits) or at the Clerk's office. A completed application must be accompanied by the appropriate fee, payable by cash or check. Credit cards can be accepted at the Village office. Permits remain a great deal at a cost of \$25 for the first permit, and \$15 for additional permits at the same address.



***Blocked Sewer Line?
Avoid unnecessary costs, call the Village First!***

Property owners are responsible for maintaining waste lines to their junctions with the Village's sewer mains. The Village is responsible for operation and maintenance of the sewer mains. In the event a blockage occurs and an owner is uncertain about the location of the blockage, please notify the Village at 607-547-2411 for both daytime and after-hours emergencies. Village staff will investigate promptly. If the blockage is in the main, the Village will bear the cost of clearing it. If the blockage is in the owner's sewer lateral leading to the village main, the owner will be responsible for the cost. We bring this to your attention because recently a resident experienced a blockage, hired a plumber, and discovered that the blockage was in the Village main, not the owner's waste line. The Village cleared the line at no cost to the property owner, but was not authorized to reimburse the property owner for the cost of the plumber's services.

Trees

The Village of Cooperstown values the positive benefits of trees on air quality, water quality, energy

bills, and aesthetics. The Village has been named a Tree City by the National Arbor Day Foundation.

In an effort to maintain the mature tree canopy in the Village, on any property not more than 30% of trees with a trunk diameter of six inches or more may be cut or drastically altered within a ten-year period. This applies to all property owners. There are exceptions for pruning or cutting of trees that are diseased or unsafe.

In addition, recognizing the importance of vegetation to prevent erosion and promote water quality, within 20 feet of the shoreline of the lake or the river, not more than 30% of the small trees or bushes may be cut or drastically altered in configuration over a ten-year period.

If you have questions about landscaping projects that involve the removal or trimming of trees on your property, contact Zoning Enforcement Officer Jackson DuBois before work begins at zoning@cooperstownny.org.

Stormwater Study

The Village of Cooperstown is pleased to have received an award through the Consolidated Funding Application for a study of stormwater issues on Hoffman Lane and Pioneer Alley. The funding is provided by the Department of Environmental Conservation. In addition to improving pedestrian and vehicular travel (many of us have tried unsuccessfully to avoid the puddles!), a primary goal is reducing pollution entering Otsego Lake and its tributary Willow Brook from these roadways.

Village Holiday Schedule

The Village Offices will be closed:
❖ February 21 (in observance of President's Day)

