**Town Liaison Report for October 2020**

**Town of Tuxedo 2021 Budget and Moody’s bond rating upgrade**

The Town of Tuxedo released the preliminary budget for 2021 which is posted on the Town’s website [www.tuxedogov.org](http://www.tuxedogov.org/)  A Public Hearing will be held via Webex on Monday October 26 at 7:00 PM. You can join the meeting by going to the Town’s website and clicking on the Webex icon at the top of the page. Please sign up for future email notifications.

The Town budget contains Townwide “A” funds and Town Outside Village “B” funds. Village taxpayers pay into the A fund. Town taxes comprise approximately 34% of your tax bill. Other taxes collected by the Town are for the County - 49% of your bill; Fire District - 10%; and Library - 7%.

The Town Board has been conservative in anticipating the COVID-19 impact on Sales Tax, State Aid and Mortgage Transfer tax revenue. Our goal is to keep Tuxedo affordable for residents and businesses and to continue improving our Moody’s bond rating. In April the Town was recognized for its strict expenditure controls and was given an upgrade to Baa2, from the previous below-investment grade rating, with a positive outlook that indicates Moody’s “expectations that management will continue to maintain reserves and liquidity at a level commensurate with higher rating categories”.

·       Through careful management of the budget we are able to make long-term capital improvements for the Highway trucks, equipment and police cars that will reduce maintenance costs.

·       We are investing in an effort to reduce taxpayers’ burden by contracting with Beckmann Appraisals to give us an appraisal of New York State lands in Tuxedo. They were successful in appraising State lands (including Harriman State Park) in Stony Point that resulted in a fairer distribution of the tax levy among all taxpayers in that town.

·       The Town Board continues to seek grants and state funds for infrastructure improvements. We are currently working on ADA bathrooms and accessibility at Town Hall with a $225,000 federal grant and replacement of the Town Hall roof with a $100,000 state grant.

·       The Town has invested in LED streetlights that will reduce costs by an expected $35,000 annually.

On the appropriation side, a large expense is remediation of the contaminated dirt pile on the Highway Department property on Long Meadow Road. In 2020 the Town Board complied with the DEC consent order for remediation by allotting $250,000 from the A Fund Balance in order for the Highway Dept to rent equipment for Highway employees to sort the good dirt from contaminated material. We will continue to allot $250,000 in 2021 and for as long as it takes to meet DEC requirements.

**Update on the Town Sewer District (which includes 20+ Village homes)**

The Tuxedo Farms Local Development Corporation owns the new sewer plant that was built with portions of the $30,000,000 bond issued in 2015. The LDC Board held its annual meeting on September 10 and passed a resolution to finally complete the nearly finished plant for operation by July 1, 2021. Excerpts from the resolution explain the urgency for our action:

“Whereas the Town of Tuxedo's existing Hamlet Waste Water treatment plant is beyond its useful lifespan, its failure may be imminent without the infusion of large capital investment, and according to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, it needs to be replaced as was contemplated and provided for within the framework of the 2015 Agreements between and among the Tuxedo Farms Local Development Corporation, the Wilmington Trust, National Association, As Trustee, the Town of Tuxedo on behalf of itself and on behalf of the Hamlet of Tuxedo Sewer District, The Tuxedo Reserve Owner, LLC and the Tuxedo Sewage Works Corp; and

..Whereas since the construction of the new Waste Water Treatment Plant constructed on the Town property has, according to Tuxedo Reserve Owner, LLC, been substantially completed and can be brought on-line and made operational within a relatively short period of time, it is economically and environmentally preferable to make that plant operational rather than prolong the use of the Hamlet WWTP...”

 Further communications will be sent to the Village residents who are in the Hamlet Sewer District.

**Jehovah Witness film studio project**

The Town Board and the Planning Board have submitted questions for the Scoping portion of the review by the Town of Ramapo for construction of the new project on Sterling Mine Road opposite Eagle Valley Road. Our concerns are primarily impacts on traffic, viewshed and construction noise/scheduling. Since 7 acres of the property are in Tuxedo, the Planning Board will need to issue a Wetlands permit and the Highway Supervisor will need to issue a Driveway permit for access.

**Other ongoing projects**

·   Zoning code review

·   Economic Development projects

·   Climate Smart Community projects

·   Parks, Outdoor Recreation and Events projects

Respectfully submitted,

Michele Lindsay

Deputy Supervisor

Town of Tuxedo