

10.2.2020

Dear Pine Plains,

At the Budget Workshop last Monday at the Community Center, the first Town Board Meeting held publicly since we shut down for the pandemic, we looked at all the projects we are in the midst of, which have been affected by the Big Pause: the Sewer Feasibility Study, the Solar Law, the Zoning Review; and those we kept going: the Broadband Committee, the Police Reform Project. I am on the County committee which oversees distribution of the CDBG Grants, which come to us via our Census Block data. (Hint hint: fill out your Census! [www.myCensus2020.com](http://www.myCensus2020.com)) The committee is working on how to distribute the approximately \$2,000,000 given to the County, but much of it will be made available to small businesses in the form of micro-grants to help pay rents and payrolls, and to helping people meet their daycare needs as they go back to work. The rest of the money will be distributed to COVID-related projects. We are fortunate in Dutchess County to have strong leadership around tax and grant distribution among many other things.

The Tentative Budget was delivered to the Town Clerk on September 30<sup>th</sup>, and will remain in her office for public perusal. The second draft of the Budget is called the Preliminary, and that will be posted on our website. And changes to that will result in a Final draft to be voted on in November at our regular Town Board Meeting.

Tonight will be my first meeting with our police officers to go over Police Reform issues which they see in their work here. I am excited to hear their thoughts and to incorporate them into the work we are doing to create policies on Use of Force, Mental health, Implicit Bias, Restraint and Community Engagement. The Stakeholders Committee is almost complete, and they will oversee and influence the policy language we come up with.

Plan for the Presbyterian Church's Chicken BBQ October 10<sup>th</sup>. Grab and go, masks required, curbside pickup from 4-6 at 3039 Church Street. Reservations: Carol Hart at 518-398-7056

Willow Roots Food Pantry will be serving food prepared at The Stissing House this Saturday. Everyone does their part in Pine Plains to help out at this critical time. Thanks Patricia and Michell!

Hopefully by the end of today, the new directional signs will be in place courtesy of the Highway Department behind the bank in our municipal parking lot. And just as hopefully, this will prevent people from going "in" the "out" and "out" the "in" from now on! We will be painting a giant arrow at the turn as well, perhaps in the Spring.

And the dying trees that were threatening the old cemeteries in Bethel are now gone, thanks to Central Hudson, who took them down for us for free.

I hope you have registered to vote this year and are keeping up with all the changes regarding the election. Early voting starts October 24<sup>th</sup> and will only be available in certain towns. The nearest to Pine Plains is Rhinebeck, at their Town Hall. There will be drop-in boxes for mail-in ballots at polling places and our new polling place is The Stissing Center, right in the middle of town.

I continue to pursue the dream a lot of us have of bringing Town Hall back into town, on the land we just acquired adjacent to the municipal parking lot. To that end, I have been speaking to numerous Town Supervisors who have undertaken such projects, as well as our Assemblywoman,

Didi Barrett and her team. They are helping me formulate an innovative plan for building it and funding it. My personal dream is that the Town Hall be built by local people, the folks who live here and will use it. Wouldn't that be incredible? But there are numerous roadblocks to that from a legal standpoint which we would have to navigate. Stay tuned on that.

Finally, it's Yard Sale Season, so don't forget your masks as you tool around town looking for deals!

Stay well and safe, Pine Plains!

Darrah Cloud