

Town of Porter organizes for 2022

Town announces water/sewer rates, announces budget contracts

STAFF REPORTS

The Town of Porter set the stage for business 2022, with a number of procedural appointments, designations, contract approvals, committee approvals and more at its annual organizational meeting earlier this month.

Leading off, Town Hall operating hours are from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. each Friday. The town's holiday schedule for the balance of 2022 includes: President's Day, Monday, Feb. 21; Good Friday, Friday, April 15; Memorial Day (observed), Monday, May 30; Independ-

dence Day, Monday, July 4; Labor Day, Monday, Sept. 5; Columbus Day/Indigenous Peoples Day (observed), Monday, Oct. 10; Veterans Day, Friday, Nov. 11; Thanksgiving break, Thursday and Friday, Nov. 24 and 25; Christmas, Monday Dec. 26; floating holiday (determined by employee) and New Years Day, Monday, Jan. 2, 2023.

Meeting schedules for Porter's various boards were set. Town Board meetings are scheduled at 7 p.m. on the second Monday of each month at Town Hall. Board meetings for the balance of 2022 include: Feb. 14, March 14, April

11, May 9, June 13, July 11, Aug. 8, Sept. 12, Oct. 11, Nov. 14 and Dec. 12.

Meetings for the town's Planning Board are at 7 p.m. on the first Thursday of each month, and sessions for the town's Zoning Board of Appeals are at 7 p.m. on the fourth Thursday of each month. Both meetings are held at Town Hall and open to the public.

Moving to appointments, the Town Board reappointed Michael J. Dowd as attorney at an annual salary of \$21,930. Broken down, this includes \$10,914 as town attorney; and \$5,508 apiece for his work as attorney for the town's Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals. In addition, Dowd was reappointed as town prosecutor for 2022 at a salary of \$8,760.

Town Board liaison appointments include: CWM (Citizens Advisory Committee) - Supervisor John "Duffy" Johnston, Jeff Baker and J. Anthony Collard; Village of Youngstown - Johnston; Recreation Department - Larry White; Niagara Falls Area Chamber of Commerce - Baker; fire companies - Dave Truesdale, Youngstown, and Jeff Baker, Ransomville; human relations - Johnston, Kimberli Boyer and Dowd; and highways - Dave Burmaster, Tim Adamson and White.

Also, buildings - Truesdale, Johnston and Peter Jeffery; Planning Board - Jipp Ortiz; Zoning Board - Baker and White; historical societies - Jipp Ortiz; Niagara River Region Chamber of Commerce - Johnston and Baker; and Lake Ontario Ordinance Works

(Restoration Advisory Board) - Town Board.

The board approved miscellaneous appointments for 2022, including: G&G Municipal Consulting and Grant Writing at a cost of \$650 per month (for unlimited grant writing/administration work); Johnston as budget officer; Glen M. Calvery, storm management officer; and Kathy M. Zasucha as recreation commissioner for a five year term, Jan. 1, 2022, to Dec. 31, 2026.

Additional appointments include: Jeff Schulze, Planning Board chair for 2022; Collard, Planning Board for a five-year term; and Scott Szarejko, Zoning Board of Appeals for a five year-term. Reappointments include: Jackie Robinson, ZBA chair for 2022; Amy Freiermuth, Planning Board secretary for 2022; and Nancy Smithson, ZBA secretary for 2022.

Moving to water/sewer adjustments for 2022, the town announced its water/sewer rate schedule will remain the same as in 2021. Water rates per gallon are 0-7,000 gallons - \$20.50 minimum; 7,000-20,000 gallons - \$3.13 per thousand; 20,000-100,000 gallons - \$2.87 per thousand and over 100,000 gallons - \$2.37 per thousand (irrigation rate).

Water rates for New York State Parks (minimum charge) are 0-193,240 gallons - \$395.84; and 193,240-999,999 gallons - \$1.80. Rates for the Village of Youngstown are \$2 per thousand.

Sewer rates as per the schedule are Village of Youngstown, .65 per thousand; Fort Niagara State Park,

\$5.25; Town of Porter, 0-7,000 gallons, \$40.25; over 7,000 gallons, \$5.75 per thousand.

The town announced the treatment rate to the Town of Lewiston Wastewater Plant is \$3.60 per thousand gallons. Further, the town announced all water bills would be charged an additional 10% surcharge, applied to build up the water reserve account for anticipated water structure work.

Wrapping up, the town announced approved contacts as budgeted for 2022 to area organizations/interests. They include: Care-N-Share, \$1,000; Industrial Development (NICAP), \$4,000; American Legion, O. Leo Curtis Post 830, Ransomville (maintenance), \$2,500; VFW Lake Ontario Post 313, Youngstown, \$2,500; Niagara River Region Chamber of Commerce (annual contract), \$5,000; Youngstown Free Library, \$70,000; William J. McLaughlin Free Library, Ransomville, \$70,000; Ransomville Historical Project, \$2,000; Town of Porter Historical Society (program maintenance), \$2,000; Ransomville Country Faire (Ransomville Historical Project), \$1,000; Ransomville Business and Professional Association (community beautification), \$1,500; Youngstown Business and Professional Association (community beautification), \$1,500; Ransomville Garden Club (flowers), \$700; Niagara Pioneer Soccer League, \$500; Wilson Youth Baseball, \$500; Ransomville Rural Retirees (services for aging), \$700; and Ransomville Rural Retirees (activity programs) \$3,000.

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Higgins: Free, at-home COVID-19 tests available

Congressman Brian Higgins announced the federal government launched a new website for Americans to request at-home COVID-19 test kits delivered to their homes free of charge. The website, www.covidtests.gov, officially launched on Wednesday.

"Access to tests makes it easier for people to protect their families, friends, co-workers, and limits community spread," Higgins said. "Making tests free and widely

available gives people important health information from which to make informed decisions."

Through the website, each household in the country is eligible to receive four free at-home coronavirus tests. Residents visiting the website will be asked to fill out a simple form that includes their name and address. Those requesting the tests also have the option of including an email address if they would like delivery updates. Shipments made in coordination with the United States Postal Service are scheduled to begin in late January and be delivered around seven to 12 days after placing an order. A toll-free number will also be made available for those who do not have access to the website.

The federal government also

recently launched a program that requires health insurance plans to cover or reimburse at-home COVID-19 tests kits at no cost. Plans must cover up to eight at-home tests per person each month. Residents should check with their insurance carrier for additional details on the process for reimbursement.

New York state is currently operating free COVID-19 testing sites locally at UB North Campus, Buffalo State College, Northwest Buffalo Community Center, and Niagara County Community College. Free testing is also available through pharmacies and health centers across the U.S. Find a test site at: <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/find-test-site-near-you>.

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I also love the Dispatch because it keeps me up to date on Grand Island News. I especially enjoy the Town Board updates, sports section, opinions and Alice Gerard's articles. Thank you guys for putting together 2 great papers that do a great job of keeping us informed of Grand Island news!

- Lou F.

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