

Town of Wheatfield

Town Board holds first Town Hall meeting since March

BY MICHAEL DEPIETRO
Interim Tribune Editor

On July 6, the Wheatfield Town Board held its first public meeting at the Town Hall since it was shuttered in March due to COVID-19 restrictions. The Town Hall reopened on June 15 with a slew of new safety precautions. Rows of seats in the courtroom have been taped off to ensure social distancing and board members are spaced widely apart.

Prior to Monday's meeting, the town released a statement featuring a number of new procedures for meeting attendees:

- √ Preregistration is required as to not exceed the restricted occupant load.
- √ All entering must wear an approved face mask.
- √ All entering will be asked to fill out a brief contact tracing questionnaire.
- √ Those who wish to speak at the meeting should state their business when registering.

√ Any organization or large group may be represented by no more than two attendees.

√ Attendees will be placed in their seats BY constables to maintain social distancing.

√ Social distance of 6 feet must be maintained throughout the meeting.

√ Registration confirmation must be obtained by calling the supervisor's office at 694-6680.

Additionally, the Wheatfield Town Hall's regular hours of operation for residents are 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. weekdays. All entering the facility must have an appointment with the department they wish to visit. When entering the facility, you will be greeted by a constable for a brief screening and then directed to the department where your appointment was scheduled. The doors are locked otherwise. All entering the facility must wear a mask. T-shirts worn over the nose and open scarfs are not acceptable.

The overall agenda for Monday's meeting was rather light. Notably, the town gave negative environmental declarations and scheduled public hearing dates for a pair of prospective projects, as presented by Wendel, the town's engineering firm.

The first agenda item involved the installation of a new, 10-inch waterline, and four new fire hydrants and appurtenances, along Shawnee Road. The project would replace nearly 1,600 linear feet of 8-inch waterline currently installed in the area, which is said to be in deteriorated condition. Wendel estimates the project will cost \$910,000.

A public hearing on the project will take place on 7 p.m. Aug. 3.

The second agenda item involved a subdivision application from DJC Land Inc. to subdivide a 53-acre parcel of land located between Shawnee Road and Townline Road, north of Slusaric Road into 73 single-family residential

lots – referred to as Wheatfield Crossing.

Per the motion, the Wheatfield Planning Board has reviewed the project, and although they are not ready to make a recommendation on the subdivision, members requested that the Town Board complete the SEQR process to receive input from other agencies.

The public hearing will take place at 6:30 p.m. on Aug. 3.

One noteworthy update came about near the end of the meeting. Supervisor Don MacSwan announced that sales tax in the town was down approximately \$237,000 over two months.

"It just shows you how the economy took a hit, and (the virus) affects everyone. That's a two month hit for a municipality that doesn't have a town tax," MacSwan said.

Elsewhere, in the department head statements, Highway Superintendent Paul Siegman urged patience from residents as pav-

ing is being done on town roads. He says the department tries to notify residents allocated in the pavement sites by the day before.

He also discussed complaints from residents regarding wood-chipping.

"I have two chippers on the road right now, which is ridiculous for July," Siegman said. "Part of our problem is everybody's home with nothing to do so they're all trimming their trees and cutting their bushes and we're buried in this stuff. Once we (begin paving), I use all my guys. So the chipper comes off the road for a week."

"So if you put brush out you don't want to sit there for a couple weeks – don't put brush out."

The next Town Board meeting will be at 6:30 p.m. July 20. Pre-registration is required for attendees. For more information, call the Town Hall at 694-6680.

DiNapoli urges New Yorkers to fill out 2020 census forms

More than 40% of New Yorkers have not yet responded; congressional representation & crucial funding on the line

New York lags behind most other states in responding to the 2020 census, ranking 38th in the country, New York State Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli said Wednesday. Only 57.6% of New York households have responded compared to the national average of 62%. He urged New Yorkers to be counted and respond to the census.

"New York is in danger of being undercounted. The stakes are high and New York could not only lose congressional representation, but critical funding for education, public transit, housing and more," DiNapoli said. "New Yorkers already pay more to Washington than we get back,

but let's not make it worse by not getting counted. I urge the more than 40% of New York households that have not yet replied to take a few minutes and complete this critical action."

DiNapoli also released a detailed county-by-county breakdown of response rates as of July 13, as well as those of cities, towns and villages. These charts, which are updated daily, show:

√ Counties with the highest responses rates include Nassau (68.2%), Niagara (67.2%) and Erie (66.7%).

√ Counties with the lowest response rates include Essex (37.8%), Sullivan (31.9%) and Hamilton (16.5%).



√ Cities with the highest response rate include Sherrill in Oneida County (79.9%), Tonawanda in Erie County (73.6%) and North Tonawanda in Niagara County (72.7%).

√ Cities with the lowest response rates include Poughkeepsie in Dutchess County (46.6%),

Hudson in Columbia County (41.5%) and Newburgh (38.8%) in Orange County.

√ Towns and villages with the highest response rates include Town of Pendleton in Niagara County (84%), Town of Pittsford in Monroe County (81.6%) and Town of Marilla in Erie County (81.3%).

√ Towns and villages with the lowest response rates are all based in Suffolk County and include Village of Ocean Beach (7.5%), Village of West Hampton (6.9%) and Village of Saltaire (6.6%).

DiNapoli released a report back

in January that showed New York paid \$26.6 billion more in taxes to the federal government in federal fiscal year 2018 than it got back in federal spending, ranking it last among the states. For every tax dollar paid, New York receives only 90 cents – well below the national average of \$1.21. New York was one of just seven states that paid more tax dollars than it received back in spending when measured on a per person basis, with a per capita deficit of \$1,363.

Census responses are confidential and there are no questions about citizenship or social security numbers. The deadline to file has been extended to Oct. 31.

OPINIONS

Flower power in Lewiston

What makes a person feel calm and relaxed?

Flowers and plants.

We have had a strange spring and at times wished to have some normalcy. The Village of Lewiston is lucky to have people who worked hard this spring to bring the beauty and tradition of flowers to Center Street.

These volunteers and Department of Public Works workers include:

√ A Garden Club group who worked with masks and gloves to plant, weed and do social distance at Hennepin, the museum and the library.

√ Individuals who planted the small garden areas on Center Street.

√ DPW prepared areas, hung 109 baskets and put out pots.

√ Another group who planted over 150 pots.

√ Garden Club paid for the cleaning of the fountain and open-

ing the irrigation.

√ Garden Club maintains Hennepin Park during the summer.

√ Professionals and businesses who donated funds to help pay for some of the plants.

√ A group of women who have adopted Femmes en Force garden.

A Lewiston couple that takes care of the pots at the Veterans Memorial.

√ And an individual who maintains the Peace Garden.

If I forgot anyone, I apologize.

Lewiston is known for its flowers and Center Street. We thank everyone who helped this spring to bring back our "normal Lewiston."

Thank you, thank you, thank you.

Marianne Gittermann
Summer Beautification Chair

Note: The Lewiston Beautification Commission is looking for four volunteers to help maintain the Femmes en Force Garden

(next to Subway). The group is looking for help one day a week to weed and water, if needed, up to three hours one day a week. There will be two teams of two people each. Those interested can call the Village of Lewiston at 754-8271 and leave their phone number.

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Lewiston Dance

Lewiston Dance Center
781 Cayuga St., Lewiston

Monday, July 20th - Friday, July 24th

Only 10 campers per session. Instructors will be wearing masks, appropriate social distancing, hand washing and sanitizing.

9:00am - 10:00am	Toddlers
10:15am - 12:15pm	Grades K-2nd
12:30pm - 2:30pm	Grades 3rd - 5th
2:45pm - 4:45pm	Middle School

Correction

In our "Beat the Heat" story from last week, this newspaper incorrectly stated that Maid of the Mist's two new zero-emission boats are currently operating. Currently, Maid of the Mist VII

is the only vessel operating right now. A representative for the company said Maid of the Mist hopes to have the new boats in operation later this summer. We apologize for this error.