

Host Communities Standing Committee provides grants for parks in NT, Pendleton

BY MICHAEL DEPIETRO
Interim Tribune Editor

On Tuesday, the Host Communities Standing Committee (HCSC) approved a pair of grants for \$200,000 in Greenway funding for parks located in North Tonawanda and Pendleton.

North Tonawanda Director of Community Development Michael Zimmerman was on hand to discuss the plans slated for Charles Fleischmann Park, which he described as “a small, under an acre, triangle-shaped park located at the north end of downtown where Webster and Main Street come together.”

Zimmerman said the park project is ultimately another piece in the city’s ongoing downtown revitalization efforts.

“As part of this construction process, this park has been expanded to almost double in size to make it much more accessible, reroute traffic a little bit to make it safer without losing any parking in the area, and also redesigned to be more functional for the community. Hopefully, it can be kind of a downtown meeting space,” Zimmerman said.

On June 16, the project was approved for funding in the amount of \$200,000. However, when the project was bid out, certain elements, including a clock tower centerpiece and certain bicycle/pedestrian amenities, came in well over budget and were removed from that proposal.

With the initial construction phase of the project nearing its

end, Zimmerman said the city was looking for additional funds to help complete the project as initially envisioned. He went on to say that Charles Fleischmann Park would become the “jewel of downtown.”

Per Greenway’s request, the proposal includes additional signage and wayfinding measurements, as well as new bike racks to help keep it in alignment with the commission’s goals.

According to the project’s January proposal, “The City of North Tonawanda expects the total cost of the Charles Fleischmann Park improvements to be \$657,000.”

Greenway funds were also awarded for the construction of the Pendleton Park Community Center to be located at the Pend-

leton Town Park, a 23-acre park centrally located in the town that surrounds Pendleton’s municipal facilities. The total cost of the project is \$575,000, with the remaining costs to be incurred by the town.

According to the town’s Greenway application, the center “will be connected to the existing Pendleton Historical Society Museum and will act as a physical gateway to all features that the park offers.” Additionally the center will serve as an “all-season community center to be utilized by residents, visitors, community groups.”

The project was deemed consistent with Greenway’s goals as it “increases access to, and connections between the Town of

Pendleton’s natural and scenic resources, historical and cultural facilities, and recreational destinations through the construction of a public meeting and gathering space.”

Elsewhere in the teleconference, the HCSC voted to name Town of Niagara Supervisor Lee Wallace as the committee chairman and Niagara Falls Mayor Bob Restaino as vice-chair. The pair had previously been selected to fill the respective roles on an interim basis in April.

The HCSC, comprised of the seven members of the Niagara Power Coalition and the New York Power Authority, administers and oversees projects financed by the Greenway Recreation/Tourism Fund in Niagara County.

Lewiston Dance Center makes most out of ‘new normal’

Lewiston Dance Center’s competition and ensemble teams performed at the Lewiston Farmers Market on Sept. 5. The teams showcased various styles of dance routines that they worked on throughout the year. Scheduled performances both at competition and at the annual recital were canceled due to COVID-19. The studio is making the most of its new normal by entertaining audiences outdoors.

“This was a really great opportunity for our teams to show their dances to their friends and family in a safe environment,” dance team coach Lauren Rogers said. “We are proud of the hard work our dancers put in this year even though it was cut short. We are look-

ing forward to the start of a new dance season!”

Lewiston Dance Center has made changes at its studio for the safety of staff and students, which include social distancing, sanitizing stations and small class sizes. There are virtual dance class options offered for those who may not be able to attend class at the studio. Ballet, tap, jazz, acro, hip-hop, modern, lyrical, pointe, cheer dance, and toddler classes are available. Instruction starts from age 2 through adult. Classes begin Sept. 19. To register for classes or view the full list of COVID-19 protocols and procedures, visit www.lewiston-dance.com.



Niagara County DMV to host Saturday event for driver’s license renewals

Outside drop boxes now in place in North Tonawanda, Niagara Falls – for transactions, as well

Niagara County Clerk Joseph A. Jastrzemski on Friday announced the Niagara County Department of Motor Vehicles will hold special office hours on Saturday, Sept. 19, for driver’s license renewals. No appointment is necessary.

“Our Saturday event last month for commercial driver’s licenses was a huge success and we recognize the backlog for regular driver’s license renewals is even greater, with somewhere around 8,000 Niagara County residents already overdue,” Jastrzemski said. “Although Gov. Cuomo issued an executive order back

in March extending expiration dates on driver’s licenses indefinitely, we know many people want to just get their renewal done, so they are not scrambling if and when the governor rescinds that order.”

Jastrzemski said the events will be held from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., at the Lockport DMV, 111 Main St., and the North Tonawanda DMV, 500 Wheatfield St. One must be in line no later than 12:30 p.m.

More than a dozen DMV staffers will be on hand to process the paperwork.

Jastrzemski reiterated this is for license transactions only,

such a renewals, switching to an enhanced license or Real ID, upgrading to commercial driver’s licenses and so on. Residents must bring original documentation, not copies, and are strongly encouraged to visit <https://dmv.ny.gov/driver-license> for a complete list of acceptable forms of Identification. Residents should also bring their own pen.

In addition, Jastrzemski also announced his office has installed red drop boxes outside of the DMV locations in Niagara Falls and North Tonawanda to help process transactions more quickly for the public without the need

to schedule an appointment. The Lockport location already has a drop box slot.

“New York state is still limiting our office operations because of the pandemic, necessitating people to schedule an appointment; and we know getting that appointment is not easy,” Jastrzemski said. “Since many of the transactions are very routine, we are trying to expand the use of the drop box system, which has worked well.”

Jastrzemski said the drop boxes can be used for things like turning in plates, registering a vehicle and making amendments to one’s pistol permit. With the recent issues related to postal service delivery, his office said the boxes

are the quickest, most efficient way to process your transaction.

“If people drop off their paperwork, our goal is to process the transaction in 48 hours or less and give you the option to come back to our office and pick up your completed transactions without having to wait in line,” Jastrzemski said. “It is fast, efficient and safe.”

Instructions for registration of a vehicle utilizing the drop box can be found by visiting <https://www.niagaracounty.com/Departments/Motor-Vehicles-Department>. Instructions for amendments to pistol permits can be found at <https://www.niagaracounty.com/Departments/Pistol-Permit-Office>.

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