

TOWN OF WILLSBORO NEWSLETTER



*An outdoor lover's dream on the banks of the
Boquet River nestled between Lake Champlain
and the Adirondack Mountains.*

December 2022

SUPERVISOR

I hope everyone had a joyous Thanksgiving feast. It is hard to believe that it is the beginning of December already, 2022 seems to have flown by. We seem to have been blessed with a very mild autumn, and hopefully that continues into the coming winter. We just took down our Hometown Heroes banners and put up the Christmas decorations. As you can see, this year Willsboro is commencing a new holiday tradition: Christmas in the 'Boro. This year the activities will be on the 9th and 10th, including activities throughout town, a parade, fireworks, and much more. Come out to see and enjoy. The Christmas in the 'Boro committee has been working arduously on putting this really special event on; it is going to be a very memorable holiday tradition.

Our town's community food shelf is moving. The Town in cooperation with the Community Housing Assistance Taskforce (CHAT) is moving the food shelf operation from Clarence Oliver Drive to the Willsborough Visitors Center. We would like to offer our heartfelt thanks to Mountain Lakes Services for providing diligent management of the program for the last several years.

The food shelf will have an open house on December 10th from 10 AM to 2 PM at the Visitors Center. Everyone is invited to see the new operation and meet the volunteers. The food shelf will open for regular operation (pickups, donations, etc.) on December 12 and will have regular hours Mondays and Thursdays 5-7 PM and Tuesdays 11 AM-1 PM.

We continue to have favorable results with grants. Last year, we won grants for a new Highway Salt & Sand storage facility, a new critical backup primary mechanical screening system at the wastewater treatment facility, among others. Just recently, we received news that we have won a five million dollar grant for a new water system treatment and production plant. We will proceed with both the wastewater plant screening system and the construction of the sand/salt storage facility in 2023. The sand/salt storage is critically needed to prevent salt runoff into the ground and waterways and to keep the supply of salt and sand out of the weather and ready to apply to winter roads at all times.

The mechanical screening system is critical to the wastewater plant's ability to operate in the event of a failure of the primary screen. This particular facet of the plant would require us to shut down plant operations if it went down. The backup system would provide the resiliency required to ensure continuous operational readiness.

This last billing quarter, the town went live with sewer billing based upon water usage recorded on water meters. The system seems to be working well, and the water/sewer department has been able to track water usage in the sewer district. If there is excessive water usage, an alert is sent, and they can investigate and contact the homeowner. We plan to proceed with installations and bring the water meters online in the entire water district within the next few months.

Many water customers have called and signed up for meters, and I encourage more to do so while supplies last. Once we go live with metered water billing, the rates for water customers without meters will go up considerably. There are still resources available for homeowners to receive water meters at no cost. Please call town hall to sign up for one. Shortly, we will reach out to those who have signed up to pick up their meter. We have a list of plumbers who can install them, or a homeowner may install a meter themselves. Before a meter can go online, it must be inspected after installation and approved by a member of the town's water department.

For 2023 Independence Day will be in Willsboro! We are scheduled for fireworks on the 3rd of July and a parade on the 4th. We are looking for volunteers for organizing and executing our parade and Independence Day activities. Please let us know that you are interested. Also mark your calendars for the 16 of September for Constitution Day at the Willsboro Fish & Game Club. This will be the 3rd year of the town celebration of our Constitution, and it's a unique event in our area.

In closing, I would like to wish all the people of Willsboro a very Merry Christmas, and a Happy Hanukkah. I feel so blessed to live in and serve this wonderful community. I appreciate it each and every day.

-Shaun

TOWN CLERK

Can you believe we are already in December? It is hard for me to believe that in less than a month, 2022 will be behind us. I have enjoyed being your Town Clerk this past year and have learned so many things about our wonderful little town. I have gone to several Town Clerk training sessions and hope to be able to go to more in 2023, each session is very informative. I am very excited to say that within the next week our long-awaited new phone system will be installed. This

phone system has been a challenge for all of us, and I am sure it will allow you to contact the Town Hall a lot easier. Thank you for being so patient.

Our new Food Shelf will have its grand opening on December 10th and be able to serve our community much better. The convenience of having it at the Visitors Center and having hours of operation posted will make it much easier for people making donations as well as for those in need. A reminder that this time of year and winter are always difficult for people, but especially this year with fuel and food prices at all-time highs. When you go shopping, you can purchase a few items for our Food Shelf. They are also looking for volunteers.

Town and County taxes will be going out at the end of December. We have tried to update addresses to the best of our ability throughout the year. However, sometimes forwarding addresses can be a challenge if the "correct" name is not listed as the 1st name on the tax bill. If you do not receive your taxes by January 10th, 2023, please do not hesitate to contact me at 518-963-8668 or townclerk@townofwillsborony.gov.

Wishing you and your family a Merry Christmas and a safe, healthy, and happy New Year!!

-Sue

ASSESSOR

IF YOU HAVE A BASIC STAR EXEMPTION, ARE 64 YEARS OLD and will turn 65 between now and December 31, 2023 please sign up for the Enhanced STAR exemption before March 1, 2023. Your adjusted gross income must be 93,200 or less. Enhanced STAR reduces your school tax assessment by up to 87,300. (*About a \$920 tax savings*)

NEW STAR Exemption: Property owners may apply for STAR online at www.tax.ny.gov or by calling (518) 457-2036. Anyone currently having a

Basic STAR exemption may still upgrade to the Enhanced STAR with the assessment office.

Veterans: Make sure your assessor has your most recent disability rating. Are both owners' veterans? If so you can receive 2 exemptions.

Seniors: If your 2021 income has dropped below 33,400 you may be eligible for the Aged exemption. Check your 2022 or 2023 January land tax bill to see if it shows an Aged exemption. If it does not, and your income is under 33,400 please contact the assessor at 518-963-8668 x6.

The ongoing pandemic which resulted in home value increases is continuing. The market increased 14% through July 1, 2021. The market through July 1, 2022 is up another 10%. As of this letter it appears the surge is slowing. The bad news is the market remains hot and a reassessment is likely to happen again for 2023. High-end properties are seeing the most appreciation. Low-end properties are seeing little, if any, increase.

If you have questions, concerns, or need explanations about any assessment or tax-related item please contact the assessment office or stop in on a Monday or Tuesday.

We are in need of two community members for the Board of Assessment Review (BAR). If you are interested, please call the Town Hall at 518-963-8668.

Note: Seniors should be aware of phone scams. DO NOT provide personal information over the phone regarding your social security account, number, passwords, or bank accounts.

-David Galarneau

CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER

My name is Robert (Bobby) Sturgess III. I am originally from the Hudson Valley region of

New York. I have been in code enforcement for around six years with a national certification through the International Code Council (ICC) for property maintenance and building and housing inspections. I was nominated and elected to the state board of directors for code enforcement in Georgia as the Sergeant at arms title for one term as well as the chair of the legislative committee for the Georgia Association of Code Enforcement. I was also nominated and served as a representative for code enforcement at the Department of Community Affairs. Tasked to review and make amendments and changes as needed to the 2018 International Property Maintenance Code and the 2018 International Existing Building Codes through the ICC. I achieved a level two state certification through the University of Georgia and the Carl Vinson Institute for Government Training and am currently taking courses for my New York State Code Enforcement Certification. I am extremely happy to further my career and education in my home state of New York, and I am looking forward to meeting as many people as possible! I have been busy in the office catching up and learning all of my new roles for the Town of Willsboro and getting these permits reviewed and issued. We have a lot going on still given this unusually warm weather, and I'm happy to be here to keep the progress moving forward while things begin to slow down here at Town Hall as we get ready for my first New York winter in about 9 years. I am looking forward to working for the Town of Willsboro and meeting everyone here. Please feel free to stop by or reach out to me to introduce yourself or if you have any questions for me regarding codes and building.

-Bobby

TOWN OF WILLSBORO
5 FARRELL ROAD
WILLSBORO, NY 12996

POSTAL PATRON