

Mayor's Column
January 31, 2017

The following is a compilation of inquiries Village staffer have received over the last few months, divided by area of responsibility.

Department of Public Works

- For a typical winter season, the Village budgets \$110,000 for snow removal/ice storms. As of today we have spent \$42,000.
- During the same cold months, we only do emergency pothole repairs, waiting until spring for the lion's share of the work. A major factor is the significant cost differential of the "cold patch" mix that must be used in freezing temperatures vs the cost of general mix.
- When a snow or ice event occurs, sidewalks in the business districts must be cleared by 9am and 4pm of each day whether or not precipitation is still falling. All residential sidewalks must be cleared of ice and snow within 12 hours of the cessation of the storm.
- The Village has no Westchester County roadways and only one State road – Route 22 which was incredulously built with no drainage outlets. All paving and improvements on Route 22 are under the control of the State Department of Transportation (DOT).
- A similar jurisdictional issue exists at Scout Field. The baseball field is in the City of Mount Vernon, the Soccer Field/Cabin area is in the City of Yonkers and the wooded area is owned by the County of Westchester. As a result our police department has no jurisdiction over activities undertaken on these properties.
- There are 192 fire hydrants throughout the Village maintained by Suez Water at a cost of almost \$100,000 annually.
- Special pick-ups of large items are retrieved on the second day of your weekly garbage cycle and should be requested 48 hours in advance prior to the desired Thursday or Friday pick-up.
- If you need additional new recycling bins, they can be purchases by mailing in or stopping by Village Hall with the \$10 fee. We do not keep a large quantity on hand at Village Hall so we deliver to your home after purchase.

Police

- New York State sets a minimum vehicular speed of 30mph for villages. The only exclusions are school zones (20mph), and exceptional circumstances that must be documented with evidence of a history of multiple serious mishaps.
- Our Police Department headquarters added a 24/7 secure “mailbox” for the disposal of expired/unused medications. Sometimes a temptation when left in cabinets, flushing them into the water system also causes chemical pollution of our fresh water sources.
- In addition to their customary police duties, upon request, our department will also:
 - Perform free security surveys of your home or business to assess vulnerabilities and suggest security precautions.
 - Check infant seats for proper installation; do vacant house checks if you are traveling and keep a house key at headquarters for emergency situations.
- Our police cars are routinely turned over when they reach 100,000 miles because experience has demonstrated that due to heavy usage, major repairs including new transmissions and engines are needed at this juncture, making their retention not cost effective. Our patrol cars average 100 miles per day, are used 24/7, act as the office and the dining room for our officers, and as a prison transport vehicle. The cars often go from a normal patrolling speed into pursuit mode, increasing the wear on the component parts. Every police car that you see is equipped with flares, first aid kit, defibrillators and oxygen.
- Our officers are required to wear bullet proof vests at all times while in uniform. The vests need to be replaced every five years as the resistant material (Kevlar) deteriorates with age.

Administration

- If you missed the tax payment deadline of January 3, 2017, the resulting penalty is not a local decision, rather New York State imposed. The same is true for the lien sale for unpaid taxes that takes place before March 9th. The Village, by choice, does not print the names of the delinquent taxpayers but

per statute must identify the parcels by section, block and lot number in the newspaper of record.

- With the exception of Kiryas Joel, a Hasidic Village in Orange County, Bronxville is the only other New York State community that is co-terminus with their school district and thus collects school taxes as well.
- Most communities collect taxes once yearly. The Village divides the payment into two parts with one mailing containing two tax payment stubs.
- Just over twenty percent of the property in the Village is tax exempt.
- Taxes can be paid by credit card as can birth and death certificate fees, vehicle tickets and special pick-ups. At present, no bank will waive the 2 to 4 percent transaction fee, making it too costly for the Village to absorb that cost, so the card holder must pay for this convenience by covering the transaction cost. Credit card numbers, if used, cannot be taken over the phone.
- Handicap parking permits can be issued to Village residents only.
- Marriage licenses are issued either in the Town of Eastchester or the Village of Scarsdale. The Village does not have this service.
- The Village is responsible for the production of birth certificates for babies born at New York Presbyterian Lawrence Hospital. In 1934, 301 babies were born at Lawrence. The total now is approximately 1500 and climbing.

Finally, if you anticipate doing any work on your home as the weather improves, start by calling the Building Department at (914) 337-7338. The staff can guide you as to whether permits or variances are required. The consequence of undertaking work without permits results in a doubling of fees.