

Seasons Greetings from the Lyme Town Board and its employees. As usual, it has been a very busy year with lots of activity in our town and with your local town government.

Improvements have been made in infrastructure and buildings, which hopefully will create better services and safety practices for our employees as well as town residents.

Renovations have been made to the town office with the old carpeting being removed and new flooring installed. The highway employees did their usual fine work in rearranging file cabinets and repairing and painting the walls. Additionally, a storage shed was purchased for the storage of older files that needed to be kept according to law, but not necessarily needed for present everyday use. This has allowed for the review and minimizing of files that need to be kept in the clerks office, thereby making for an even more efficient operation. Many thanks to the highway employees for their help in all of these improvements.

As you may know, in April 2015, a Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management Plan was instituted to address the health and welfare of our residents and to be prepared in the event of any major emergency. To complete this plan, I am pleased to announce that a new generator has been purchased and installed at the Town Offices to provide power to the command center from which emergency operations will be managed."

The 2017 budget has been finalized. Once again, the Board worked to keep costs to the minimum and still provide the same services you are used to receiving. Using slightly more fund balance than last year, we were able to keep the Amount To Be Raised By Taxes the same as the 2016 budget (\$374,630.00). With the Taxable Assessed Value slightly increased, in theory, the amount you pay should go down by a very minimal amount. The Implied Tax Rate per Thousand for the General A and Highway A accounts amount to a total of \$0.53. The Tax Rate per Thousand for the Fire Protection Fund totals \$0.44. Since the amount to be raised by taxes did not increase (0%) from the previous year, we stayed under the State recommended Tax Cap of 0.68%. Please remember, when you receive your Town/County Tax Bill, there is a breakdown of four Levy Descriptions (three if you live in the Village of Chaumont) for County, Town, Consolidated Health and Fire Protection. When looking at your total bill, please compare the Town line to the County line for a detailed cost breakdown.

For those residents in Three Mile Bay, as you may remember, the Board changed the current assessment method for the Three Mile Bay Street Lighting Fund from *ad valorem* to that of a benefit basis assessment, whereby all parcels within the district, determined to benefit from the street lighting, would share the cost equally, with the following exceptions: those parcels determined to be "vacant" (8), together with those designated "exempt" (8), would not be assessed the lighting district fee. The statutory rate for the utilities (4), located within the district is set at 4%. Thus, the remaining tally of typical properties to share equally the cost of the district is 110, resulting in an annual assessment/payment of approximately \$54 per typical property. This amount will vary annually, commensurate with fluctuations in the energy market, and will be recalculated each year.

There are currently 2 vacant positions in the Town of Lyme; Cemetery Supervisor and Transfer Site Attendant. The Cemetery Supervisor, at an annual salary of \$1,200, is the contact person for burial requests and performs numerous functions related to the cemeteries including, but not limited to overseeing burial arrangements, the purchase of grave plots, lawn care and headstone repairs, maintaining all records and assisting families

and monument companies with grave identification and location. The part-time Transfer Site Attendant is responsible for the operation of the Transfer Station facility in accordance with State and local requirements, the maintenance of all operational records, assisting in the practical work at the station, assisting residents with recycling compliance and interacting with waste disposal services. This position requires weekend hours at the hourly rate of \$13.02. At present, this position is limited to Saturday hours with occasional shift coverage when necessary. For a complete list of duties, please visit the Town of Lyme website.

In other news, the Town of Lyme announces opportunities for community members to participate in their local government by serving on decision-making boards affecting the residents and community. At present, there are vacancies for one permanent member to join the Municipal Water Board as well as openings for Alternates to serve on the Zoning Board of Appeals and the Planning Board.

The Municipal Water Board meets at 6:30 p.m. on the 4th Wednesday each month and is charged with oversight of all water districts and the water facility, as well as the review of applications for new water service and new districts.

The ZBA meets on the first Wednesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. This Board is charged with hearing and deciding requests for area and use variances, issuing special permits and providing interpretations of the Town Zoning Law.

The Planning Board meets on the first Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. This Board is a five-member citizen advisory body to the Town Board, responsible for reviewing and updating the zoning laws, preparing draft revisions to the law when directed by the Town Board and advising the Board on planning issues.

Town Board meetings are held the second Wednesday of every month starting at 6:30 pm at the Town Office located behind the Lyme Free Library. We welcome your attendance and interest in the decision making process of your local town government.

From everyone at the Town of Lyme, to each of you, we wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year.