

Town of Hammond Newsletter

Spring / Summer 2011

~ YEAR IN REVIEW, FROM THE DESK OF SUPERVISOR BERTRAM ~



To the Hammond Community:

It has been my sincere pleasure to serve as Hammond's Town Supervisor these past 17 months. It has been an extremely rewarding and challenging experience and I thank you for this opportunity. As promised during my campaign, an informational newsletter to the public would be issued in an effort to keep folks updated on issues and events that transpire & confront our Township. Please enjoy the following Newsletter and feel free to contact me with any questions.

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NEW MESSAGE BOARD & WEBSITE LAUNCHED ~

The Town Hall has a new electronic message board located directly over the main doors. Town meetings, upcoming events and important messages are all entered for public viewing and interest. A new Town web site has also been launched in an effort to also keep our citizens up to date 24/7 with upcoming Town Board & Planning Board meetings, agendas, important notices and events, as well as ready access to Town Board minutes, Town forms, department heads, personnel and contact information, etc. Please visit: www.townofhammondny.com

EFFECTIVE ACCOUNTING SERVICES ~

In January of 2010, the Town employed Sherry Furgison's CPA firm to oversee the general bookkeeping responsibilities for the Town. Her firm's accounting services include compiling all necessary monthly, quarterly, and yearly reports as well as issuing checks for invoicing and payrolls. All of the firm's services are conducted under official Town auspices and reviewed, as well as approved, at each monthly board meeting by the complete Town Board. Many municipalities across NY State utilize & benefit from such accounting services. The \$8700 yearly cost for this service comes directly out of my supervisor salary. As a result, no additional expenses are incurred to the Town budget or to the taxpayers.

INCREASED FUND BALANCE ~

I am very proud to announce that from last year our Town's fund balance as of May 1st, 2011 has increased by \$56,690. Our Town Board's continued cautious, frugal and concerted effort to keep expenses down as well as freezing Town officials' and employees' salaries has produced the surplus in the fund balance over the past year.





“Comprehension and compliance of important New York State guidelines, rules and regulations for municipal government are absolute musts in serving effectively and efficiently today.”

2011 TAX RATE REMAINS STABLE ~

Hammond property taxpayers saw a nearly identical tax rate in January of 2011 of .44 cents per \$1000 assessed property value. **Once again there will be no need for a Town-wide property re-values this year**, as the total assessed valuation for Hammond is at 98% full value; which is in compliance with New York State suggested guidelines. This is terrific news in lieu of what many municipalities are facing across our state and nation during these difficult economic times.

ASSOCIATION OF TOWNS COURSES FOR BOARD MEMBERS ~

Over the last 17 months, Town Councilman Douglas Delosh and I have attended several Association of Towns higher education classes. Comprehension and compliance of important New York State guidelines, rules and regulations for municipal government are absolute musts in serving effectively and efficiently today. To date the seminars and classes have covered the following: open meetings laws, procedures for passing laws, procedures for conducting meetings, auditing monthly bills, auditing court records, purchasing procedures, obtaining and managing grants, shared services, host community agreements and land use topics. Recently, in May, I attended a series of financial seminars that emphasized budgets, investments and resource management. The advantages of attending these classes are truly a benefit to the Town and citizens of Hammond.

NEW CODE OF ETHICS ~

A special Task Force was assembled to update our Town Ethics Code. Councilman James Pitcher and Councilman James Tague worked arduously on updating our Code of Ethics, along with legal consultation from Hammond Town Attorney, Joseph Russell. The Code will be proudly posted in all Town offices and Town buildings, as well as on our website.



PLANNING FOR SALT & SAND STORAGE BUILDING ~

Currently, the Town is planning for the construction of a salt & sand storage building located at the Town barn. This is a necessary project and an environmental must. Hammond is one of the last of the St. Lawrence County communities to establish such a storage facility, which has been neglected for too long.

WIND ADVISORY COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATIONS ~

This March, the 10 member wind advisory panel successfully returned to the Town Board a 50 page document of recommendations regarding industrial wind development in the Town of Hammond. The panel was composed of Hammond residents who represent various walks of life, as well as an array of educational and employment backgrounds. Their task was to investigate, discern and document the multiple aspects that an industrial wind farm in Hammond would consequentially pose to our community. Topics of significance were residential property values, health and safety, noise levels and concerns, decommissioning, compliant resolution, economic concerns and more. Detailed minutes are available for the public viewing at the Town office. Presently, the Town Board is reviewing and evaluating the committee's recommendations. A public hearing will be held soon on proposed changes.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ~

Looking into the future, the Town Board is currently searching for ideas and options in regards to economic development. By working in conjunction with St. Lawrence County Housing Council officials / housing rehabilitation and new home purchasing, there is a block grant program for housing rehabilitation for eligible Hammond homeowners. Information will be posted on the Town website as it becomes available. The Town Board is also beginning to work on the initial phases of developing a Comprehensive Economic Plan and will be applying for a Grant to develop the plan in the very near future. This would enable our Town to receive grant funding for economic development suitable for our area. Mark Scott has completed a Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Waddington and George Blatchley from Macomb is working on their plan. These two contacts will be beneficial for our Town to reach out to; I plan on contacting both Supervisors for guidance & ideas.



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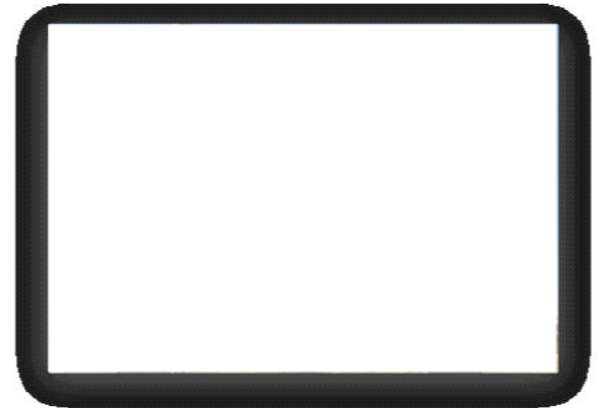
FINAL THOUGHTS ~

In closing, it is my hope and sincere intent to periodically compose a Town newsletter to better serve the Hammond community. I encourage all residents & taxpayers to visit our new website for up to date knowledge of events and matters affecting Hammond. Additionally, please feel free to contact me with any questions or ideas to improve our Town.

With Best Regards,

Ron Bertram

Ron Bertram
Town Supervisor



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**Paid for by Ron Bertram*

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Visit the Town's New & Improved Website!

WWW.TOWNOFHAMMONDNY.COM