

Town of Dix Newsletter

Town Hall – 304 Seventh Street, Watkins Glen, NY 14891
Telephone: (607) 535-7973 Fax: (607) 535-2590

Happy New Year!

The Town of Dix has many activities going on that affect the Town Taxpayers. We don't get much newspaper time, there isn't an FM Radio station that is Schuyler County focused, and it seems the Town Board struggles to get the information out to you in a timely manner. Eventually, we intend to issue newsletters quarterly; however, if there is an urgent issue we will attempt to get a quick letter out. The newsletter will be available through the Town of Dix web site (www.townofdix.com); distributed to the Odessa File, Watkins Review & Express, Elmira Star Gazette, Corning Leader, and the Hi-Lites; and sent out with water & sewer bills and a special mailing to all residents.

Water District

Perhaps some of you have heard there is a movement to form a County Water District. The proposal will join the Towns of Dix & Reading, and the Villages of Watkins Glen & Montour Falls into a single operated water system. It will not be a department of Schuyler County. The term County District is a term used under NY State Health Dept. (NYSDOH) description of joining multiple districts into one. The communities will consider naming the District something like the Southern Seneca Lake Water District, or the Northern Catherine Valley Water District to help avoid confusion. Under municipal law, however, the Schuyler County Legislators will review and have oversight of the budget, rates and board appointments to protect the taxpayers in the event the Board of Directors was struggling.

At the same time, the Water District has been struggling with meeting NYS DOH limits for Disinfection By-Product (DBP) levels as determined by the concentration of Trihalomethanes (THM's). SCOPED is working with the Village of Watkins Glen to study removing more nutrients from the Seneca Lake water intake to reduce the amount of Chlorine needed to maintain safe drinking water standards, thereby reducing the amount of DBP's created. It is hopeful the Village will incorporate the recommended system improvements as they develop their new Seneca Lake Water Intake system either on their own or as part of the new District discussed above.

Sewer District

Not much to report right now except discussions with the Village of Watkins Glen on rates going into the future. SCOPED also has a study on combining the districts of the two towns and two villages similar to the water district. However, the driving force there is a central Waste Water Treatment Facility which is estimated to cost \$20 Million. Until there is a realistic method to finance such an undertaking, it will remain a consideration for the future.

Town of Dix Newsletter

Town Hall – 304 Seventh Street, Watkins Glen, NY 14891
Telephone: (607) 535-7973 Fax: (607) 535-2590

Property Revaluation

The Town of Dix equalization rate is at 70% of real property values according to a calculation by the NYS Office of Taxation. As part of the Town's intermunicipal agreement to provide County Wide Property Tax Assessment, the Towns of Dix and Reading are going through property revaluation or re-assessment. The goal is to get all the municipalities in Schuyler County at the 100% value. How does that affect you? When the Town of Dix sets our property tax for the new year budget, it has no effect on your individual property unless you are under or over assessed. In other words, the Town needs to raise X Dollars to maintain our budget, and we distribute that tax according to your assessed value. If you are over assessed, you are paying more share than you deserve, if you are under assessed, you are getting a break. However, when the County or your school district sets their respective budgets, the equalization rate hits you harder than other Towns that have 100% values. Your tax bill is now increased by the 30% difference by a higher tax per \$1000 of value.

You will be invited to an informational meeting to discuss the revaluation process. You may have seen the County's Real Tax Office representatives around your property recently reviewing your property with the existing records. As soon as we have a firm date on the meeting, the Town will make an attempt to notify all Townspeople. Keep one thing in mind, just because the value of your property may increase during this process doesn't mean your overall tax bills will go up. It may, depending on whether you are grossly under assessed. However, the amount of money to be raised by local government and the school districts is the same. All properties in the Town will now be treated evenly with the Towns currently at full assessment, that 30% premium will no longer be applied. Also, the Town's budget is the same based upon need to provide you with good roads, property tax assessment and collection, licensing sales, etc. Just because we increase our tax role, doesn't mean we will increase our spending. Please keep up with the information that will be coming to you. Everyone will have an opportunity to get their questions addressed.

Well that is enough for this first letter. Please contact the Town Office if you have questions or you want to see a certain topic discussed in this document.

I want to take a minute to thank all the Town Officers for a productive year in 2008 and know they will work hard to face the challenges of a weak world economy in 2009. We are likely to see reductions in NYS assistance to the Town including CHIPS road construction funding. The Town budgeted for CHIPS but will not spend those funds unless they are approved in the NY State budget in the spring.

Good luck everyone in 2009!

Chuck Franzese, Supervisor