

The Quogue Village Voice

Leaf Pick-up

The Village Highway Department will begin picking up leaves during the week of November 2nd. Please do not put out leaves for pick-up earlier than October 30th. Leaves must be on the shoulder of the street by December 15th in order to be picked up. Do not pile leaves around fire hydrants or utility equipment.

DO NOT USE PLASTIC BAGS. They will not be picked up, and you will have to remove them.

No brush, such as twigs and branches, or lawn cuttings will be taken away, and mixing this debris with leaves will result in the leaves not being removed. Brush with branches up to 3" in diameter may be taken to the Westhampton recycling facility from November 15 through December 31. For more information, go to www.southamptontownny.gov.

In addition to the foregoing, property owners and landscapers who take leaves (only) from a Quogue property may make arrangements with the Quogue Highway Department to dump them at the highway yard. That will avoid having piles in front of your property waiting to be picked up and blowing back onto your lawn.

Fire Department Pancake Breakfast

If you are in Quogue over Thanksgiving weekend, please plan to bring the family to the Quogue Fire Department's annual pancake breakfast on Sunday, November 29, between 8:00 a.m. and 12:00 Noon and purchase a lot of chances to win great prizes in the Chinese auction. You will run into many of your friends and neighbors at this community event, and the volunteer men and women of the Department will appreciate your show of support.

Consent to Allow Deer Hunting

If you wish to allow licensed bow hunters to hunt on your property and have not completed a written consent, please contact Chris Osborne at 653-4498. It is necessary to complete a consent form on an annual basis.

Beach Nourishment

As many of you know, the DEC held a public hearing in Quogue on August 10th on the Village's application for a permit that would permit a beach nourishment project in Quogue. As of September 30, the DEC has not taken action on the application. If and when the permit is issued, we will take the appropriate steps to determine whether the Village should proceed with a project. In the meantime, the Beach Advisory Committee that the Board of Trustees appointed last summer has been meeting with a view toward making a recommendation to the Board of Trustees over the winter.

Referendum on New Service Award Program for Quogue Fire Department Volunteer Firefighters

New York law allows municipalities to adopt long-term, retirement-like, length of service award programs (often referred to as LOSAPs) for their volunteer firefighters. The applicable law allows for either a defined contribution program or a defined benefit program, and since 1992 the Village has had in place a defined contribution program for the members of the Quogue Fire Department. A problem is that for defined contribution programs, the law prescribes a maximum contribution of \$700 per year for each qualifying firefighter. As a consequence, the Quogue program is now a far less generous program than the defined benefit programs in place for fire department members in places like Westhampton Beach, East Quogue and other locations throughout Long Island and elsewhere in New York. A bill that was introduced in the New York legislature in 2015 would have increased the maximum annual contribution to \$2,100 per year for each qualifying firefighter, thereby significantly reducing the disparity in the relative values of defined benefit plans and Quogue's defined contribution plan. That bill failed even to make it out of committee, however. As a consequence, in an effort to treat our firefighters (many of whom do not even reside within our Village) in a manner more commensurate with their peers in other jurisdictions and help Quogue's ability to recruit firefighters, the

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Board of Trustees engaged a consultant experienced in designing and administering fire department and service award programs. In cooperation with the Board, the consultant developed a defined benefit plan that would supersede the existing defined contribution plan and would mitigate the risks on the sponsor generally associated with defined benefit plans--too rosy assumptions on investment returns and faulty mortality assumptions resulting from beneficiaries living longer than expected because of medical advances, healthier lifestyles and other factors. The proposed new program, which has been embraced by the Fire Department members and will be formally considered by the Board of Trustees at its October 16 meeting, would provide for a 10-year benefit commencing after age 60 of \$20 per month for each year of qualifying firefighter service. A firefighter who continues to be an active firefighter after age 60 would receive an annual benefit of approximately \$2,100 in addition to any benefit accrued prior to age 60. The annual cost to the Village is expected to be approximately \$75,000 per year, and that amount was included in the fiscal year 2015-2016 budget. Assuming that the Board of Trustees adopts the program in October, the approval of the program will be submitted to the voters for approval or rejection on November 3rd, as required by New York law.

Rental Laws in Quogue

Quogue has traditionally been characterized as a village with predominantly owner-occupied, one-family homes. Summer rentals have, of course, existed for many years, and for the most part houses were leased to families for the entire season or at least a month. In 1989 the Board of Trustees enacted a law governing seasonal rentals, which, among other things, required rentals to be to a "family" (as defined). As amended several times, that law appears as Chapter 149 of the Quogue Village Code. With the advent of Airbnb and similar websites, we are increasingly seeing short-term rentals of properties for which owners fail to obtain from the Village in advance of the commencement date of the lease the required seasonal rental license and also advertisements for renting rooms or other parts of properties. The latter is clearly illegal under our Village Code. Over the winter, the Board of Trustees will be looking at ways in which our existing laws can be improved and also means by which enforcement can be enhanced. Residents who see probable violations of our laws are requested to report them to the Village.

Protect Your Village Beach

The Quogue Village Beach is a wonderful amenity for the residents of our Village. There is not a summer day that passes at Village Hall on which there is not an inquiry from outsiders about using our beach. The rules we have concerning parking are restrictive and sometimes irritating to some, but they are designed to assure access and preserve the Village Beach for our residents, their family members, houseguests and other guests while at the same time avoiding overly inconvenient procedures. People who seek to thwart these aims by making their beach passes available to others who are not proper users tend to devalue the benefit of living in our wonderful village. Please do not do that and do discourage others from doing so.

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