

Dear Quogue Residents,

It has been a while since I last wrote, I know. Things have been pretty busy around Village Hall lately as we get ready for our fiscal year end on May 31 and the beginning of the summer—lots of building, real estate changing hands, budgets being finalized, beach stickers being issued, Covid releases being digested and so on.

On the property taxes front, the second-half Town of Southampton taxes are due by May 31. Time to get focused, if you did not pay them already. Village of Quogue tax bills are scheduled to be mailed at the end of this week and are payable between June 1 and July 1. This year you will have new ways to pay them on-line, either by a direct payment from your bank account (with a fee of \$1.75) or via a credit card (with payment of a 2.50% fee with a \$1.95 minimum). There will be a button on the home page of the Village website (www.villageofquogueny.gov) where you will be able to access the electronic payment methods. You will also be able to pay by check, of course.

The Village tax rate for fiscal year 2021-2022 is \$1.8385 per \$1,000 of assessed value vs. \$1.8068 in the current year. Although there was an article in the Southampton Press earlier this year quoting me as saying that I anticipated that the NY State tax cap would be pierced, that statement proved to be incorrect. A carryover credit from the preceding year kept the Village below the cap.

Incidentally, some of you may have noticed an article in the Southampton Press setting out the comparative tax rates for local school districts. Quogue School District had the lowest rate at \$1.88 per \$1,000 of assessed value. Westhampton Beach School District was the next lowest at \$5.9494 per \$1,000—another benefit of living in Quogue.

The Village election is back to its usual schedule this year and will be held on Friday, June 18. Randy Cardo and Ted Necarsulmer, the incumbents, are running for two-year terms as Trustees and will only be opposed by any write-in candidates. If people doubt the importance of voting, they should consider the Quogue School Board election earlier this month, which ended in a dead heat between Debbie Diston and Holly Degan and will be decided by a runoff.

The Village Beach will open next weekend. It will be staffed with lifeguards only on weekends until near the end of June, but the locker rooms and the bathrooms will also be open during the week. Parking will not be limited to 50% capacity this year, but we will still plan to space people out using flags placed by the lifeguards. Since they need time in the morning to set up the beach, the gates to the parking lot will be closed until 10:00 a.m., as they were last year. Your 2020 beach sticker is good through May 31. After that, you must have a valid 2021 beach sticker. Rules will be posted on the Announcements page on the Village website and at the Beach. Please follow them for the safety of everyone.

There were several new laws introduced at the Board of Trustees meeting last week in which you might have some interest. If you are looking to enjoy a newly-legalized marijuana cigarette on a Village-owned property, you won't be able to do it on most of them if one of these laws is enacted. The same law will apply these non-smoking areas to tobacco smoking and e-cigarettes. Another proposed law will shorten the hours for gas-powered leaf blowers on weekdays and prohibit their use on Saturdays between May 15 and October 15. On May 15, 2022, all gas powered leaf blowers used between May 15 and October 15 would have to be rated 65dB(A) or less. A third proposed law would put some more meat behind the concept of nuisance lighting and require all outdoor lighting other than minimalist security lighting to be off at Midnight. All these laws are attached to the agenda for the May 21 Board of Trustees meeting,

which is on the Board of Trustees page on the Village website. Public hearings on them will be held at the June 18, 2021 meeting of the Board of Trustees. Comments are welcome.

This week we will be soliciting bids for the reconstruction of Jessup Avenue and some of the sidewalks between Quogue Street and the Police Station. Work would be done in the Fall. The trees on the west side of Jessup Avenue would not be affected.

Many of you may have noticed that the Post Office may now be accessed 24 hours per day to get your mail or packages from one of the new metal boxes in the lobby. Just use a bank credit card or debit card in the card reader to get in. On an unfortunate note involving the Post Office, you will observe that the convenient hamper into which we all deposited our junk mail for recycling has been removed. Why is this, you may ask. Despite signage that was plainly visible admonishing us to deposit paper only, Tom, our Postmaster, reported to me that all manner of refuse was thrown in the hamper ranging from plastic to household trash to the ubiquitous dog poop. Really, people! Let's all be responsible and respectful of others and dispose of our own waste properly.

Hampton Theatre Company returns to the Quogue Community Hall stage this week (starting on Thursday) with its production of Sylvia, by A.R. Gurney, which was supposed to have run last year. The audience will be at approximately one-third of capacity and socially distanced, and tickets must be purchased at least 24 hours in advance. Go to <http://www.hamptontheatre.org/> and support our local theater group.

Lastly, remember that there will be a Memorial Day ceremony in front of the firehouse on Monday, May 31 at 10:00 a.m. Hope to see you there.

Peter Sartorius
Mayor