

February 3, 2021

**THE MAYOR'S UPDATE**

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Village Hall is open. Office hours are 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Visitors are required to wear a face covering, maintain social distancing of six feet and sign in to a Visitor's Log outside of the office they are visiting. Furthermore, while multiple people can enter Village Hall, only one person will be admitted into each office space at a time and are asked to abide by employee instructions.

**NOR'EASTER CLEAN UP**

The February 1-2, 2021 Nor'easter dumped more than a foot of snow on Garden City. Crews began salting as snow began to coat roadways at approximately 11:30 p.m. Sunday night, January 31, 2021. According to Public Works Deputy Superintendent Domenick Stanco, crews continued salting roads and parking lots until the snow quickly intensified and began accumulating. The plowing operation then followed at approximately 1:00 a.m. Monday morning, February 1, 2021, and continued through 8:00 a.m. Tuesday morning, February 2, 2021.

There were approximately 46 pieces of equipment - large/medium and small trucks as well as several payloaders and two backhoe loaders - working around the clock during this two-day storm. After the plowing operation, crews then began salting roads and parking lots again at 8:00 a.m. and continued through the day and evening on Tuesday, February 2, 2021.

During the course of the storm, mechanics at the Village Garage were on hand for the duration of the operation in order to keep plows and equipment fully functional. There were miscellaneous breakdowns throughout the day and night that were repaired in the shop. Crews also responded to 15 road calls to keep the fleet up and running.

Garden City Police Officers responded to 27 storm-related calls, including disabled autos, auto accidents, medical aided reports, hazardous conditions and alarms. The Garden City Fire Department reported zero fire calls during the storm, according to Chief Thomas Strycko.

**IDENTITY THEFT: POLICE INVESTIGATING APPROXIMATELY 50 CASES**

As of Monday, February 1, the Garden City Police Department is investigating approximately 50 reports of people's identities being stolen and then used to file for false unemployment claims, including numerous fraud cases against Garden City school district personnel.

Imposters are filing claims for unemployment benefits, using the names and personal information of people who have not filed claims. It has been determined that some scammers are using information from old data breaches of private or government

agencies.

According to the U.S. Department of Labor, employer fraud can include certain actions to avoid tax liability or establishing a fictitious employer account to enable fraudulent claims against that account. Claimant fraud can include knowingly submitting false information; continuing to collect benefits when knowing oneself to be ineligible; not being able and available to work while certifying for benefits under state law; or intentionally not reporting wages or income while collecting full benefits. Additionally, identity theft may result in unemployment insurance fraud that is not the fault of the employer or the identity theft victim.

Commissioner Kenneth Jackson, who noted that state and federal governments have taken additional steps to detect and flag these fraudulent claims, said claimants should never:

- Post screenshots of their claim or their claim status on social media;
- Provide their Social Security number or unemployment benefit claim number to people on social media who offer to help resolve their issues;
- Agree to pay a private firm or individual to file for unemployment insurance benefits on their behalf (the Social Security Department does not charge a fee for filing a claim); or
- File a claim in a crowded setting where someone may “shoulder surf” and steal your data by looking over your shoulder.

According to Commissioner Jackson, indications that someone has used your information to claim benefits include: receiving information in the mail from the Department of Labor about a claim you did not file, or your employer receiving notice of an unemployment claim filed in your name. All unemployment fraud should be reported since unemployment benefits are taxable income. If this happens to you, it means someone is misusing your personal information, including your Social Security number and date of birth. All victims should act promptly by following these steps that can help you protect your finances and your credit:

- Contact your employer's HR Department
- Contact the NYS Department of Labor by calling (888) 209-8124 or emailing <https://www.labor.ny.gov/agencyinfo/report-fraud.shtm>
- File a police report with the Police Department
- File an identity theft complaint with the Federal Trade Commission at [www.FTC.gov](http://www.FTC.gov)
- Report the activity to the credit bureaus (Experian, Equifax, Transunion), and place a fraud alert or credit freeze
- Keep notes for future reference

If you get benefits you never applied for, report it to your state unemployment agency and ask for instructions. Do not respond to any calls, emails or text messages telling you to wire money, send cash or put money on gift cards. Government agencies will never tell you to repay money that way. Anyone who tells you to do those things is a scammer. The Garden City Police Department's Detective Division continues to work with the United States Secret Service in the investigation of fraudulent unemployment applications. If you

believe you may be a victim of identity theft, please contact the Garden City Detective Division at 516-465-4108.

### **555 STEWART AVENUE UPDATE**

The developer for the 555 Stewart Avenue construction project is pursuing the building permit process at this time, according to Thomas Levin, Special Counsel for Zoning Matters. This requires submission of detailed plan information and preparation of various legal documents. It is anticipated that this will be done within the next several weeks and that construction will commence shortly thereafter. The 150-unit residence, which will include two four-story buildings, inclusive of 15 affordable housing units, received final site plan approval in July 2020. The residence will consist of 66 one-bedroom units, 72 two-bedroom units and 12 three-bedroom units.

### **POTHOLE REPAIRS**

Pothole repair is ongoing in the Village. Roving crews are addressing problem areas that the Department of Public Works is aware of and responding to calls from residents for specific concerns. If a resident sees a pothole and wants to alert the Department for repairs, please call the DPW dispatcher at 465-4031/32 and the Highway Department will be notified. Also, as a reminder, the Village does not own all of the streets in the Village. For example, Nassau Boulevard and portions of Stewart Avenue are Nassau County-owned. We cannot fix those streets but as always the Village attempts to have the County make repairs in a timely fashion.

### **NEW GAS MAIN PROJECT ON SEVENTH STREET**

National Grid will be installing a new gas main and service line transfers on Seventh Street, from Franklin Avenue to Hilton Avenue. The project is expected to begin this week, weather permitting, and expected to take two-and-a-half to three months to complete. Notification from National Grid has been made to business owners on Seventh Street informing them of the scope of the project as well as providing contact information. A construction representative will contact business owners 24-48 hours in advance to schedule gas service transfers. Any sidewalks or pavement areas that are disturbed will be fully restored by National Grid. If you have any questions about the project, call 625-2118. We thank you in advance for your cooperation during this project.

### **CONSTRUCTION MANAGER SEARCH**

The Library is seeking a construction manager for its Children's Room redesign project. Library Board Chair Randy Colahan said the consulting position is part-time. Commitment of five to 12 hours per week, depending upon completion of the project, is required. The construction manager will act as liaison between H2M Architects & Engineers, the Village and the trades to ensure the project is completed within budget and on time. Inquiries should be directed to the Village's Human Resources Department, 516-465-4006.

## **RECREATION APP**

The Recreation and Parks Department is looking into an app-based card system. “The Village of Floral Park has been issuing park cards for some time to residents to access their facilities. Transferring this idea to an app made more sense moving forward,” according to Recreation Chairman Paul Blake. “To the best of my knowledge, we would be one of the first organizations to have such a ‘pass’ on a phone app.” The Department is working with software vendor, Rec Pro, to see if they can provide this sort of app. If they cannot, the Department will check with other recreation software providers to see what may be out there. “We want to try to make this as convenient and easy for our residents as possible. If we can get this into an app-based application we’re going to be a little bit ahead of the game,” Mr. Blake added.

## **MERILLON AVENUE STATION ENHANCEMENT**

On February 15, eastbound platform service will be extended to 12 cars at the Merillon Avenue LIRR station. On February 22, following the commissioning of the New Nassau 1 Interlocking & Signal System, the Main Line tracks will be renamed to conform to the future permanent system accounting for three tracks. The naming system as follows will affect Floral Park, New Hyde Park, Merillon Avenue, Mineola, Carle Place and the Westbury stations:

- Track 3 – Westbound platform (north)
- Track 1 – Currently accessible eastbound platform (south)
- Track 2 – Future 3rd track (currently under construction)

Construction on the ADA-compliant elevators is expected to be substantially complete this winter. Following the completion of construction, crews will begin commissioning and testing the elevators to ensure complete functionality and safety requirements are met. On the south side of the station, platform barriers and metal art railings are being installed along with brick enclosures and canopy roofing. On the north side of the tracks, crews will continue installing under platform barriers along with guardrails and railings for the stairs and ramps. The installation of the station signage band along the westbound platform will take place this month during overnight hours.

## **SNOWSTORMS - HELP US HELP YOU**

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Village residents and merchants who shoveled and cleared their sidewalks within **24 hours** following last month’s snow event. Looking ahead to the possibility of future snowstorms, the following suggestions are offered in an effort to reduce inconvenience to residents and to assist the Village in serving your needs:

- If possible, wait until the Village plows the street to clear the snow from your driveway entrance. If you can’t wait, shovel or blow the snow onto your property. Do not shovel or blow snow back into the street.

- When you hear that a storm is expected, move your car off the street into your driveway. This will speed up the plowing operation and make the streets safer for travel.
- Park your car, or cars, as close to the end of the driveway as is safely possible. This eliminates the need for shoveling the entire driveway to free your car when the storm has ended and the roads are safe to travel.
- If you are unable to shovel snow or are going to be away, make arrangements to have the snow cleared from your sidewalk. Please remember that you are responsible to shovel your sidewalks within 24 hours after the storm. This will be enforced by the Police Department. This is also applicable to the business community.
- Please clear snow away from all hydrants so that the Fire Department can reach them without delay. Also, make sure that the snow is not blocking the address number to your house.
- To facilitate safe garbage collections, a clear path should be made from the sidewalk to where the garbage is kept. If this is not possible, it is suggested that the garbage be carried to the curb for pickup.
- Be on the lookout for announcements on the Village website and social media pages regarding changes/cancellations in Village services.