

THE MASTIC BEACH

May 2016

# VILLAGER

Newsletter – Volume 1, No.4



*Spring  
is Here!*

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# THE MAYOR'S MESSAGE

*By Maura P. Sperry*

Now that April showers have made way for May flowers, I for one, am excited about the warmer weather. Our greatest asset here in Mastic Beach is our waterfront including our proximity to the Atlantic Ocean. It is the reason most of us live here. As we await patiently for summer sports, recreation and the lazy days of summer, I encourage every resident to get outside and experience the full effect of spring which I believe is the most beautiful season here in Mastic Beach Village.

With the election season behind us for another few months, I want to welcome Trustee Joseph H. Johnson to the Village Board and hope Mr. Johnson can find common ground amongst the other board members so we can work together to move Mastic Beach forward.

I personally would like to thank Former, Deputy Mayor Bruce Summa for his service to the community. I will certainly miss his candor. Bruce was able to enact some necessary legislation that has made our Village better, including The blighted homes point system; A red light study for Mastic Road; Safety measures on Market Street; shutting down blighted homes; Removing dozens of squatters from abandoned homes and even the contentious paving of Mastic Road. Thankfully, the job was done, and now we don't have to worry about paving those two-miles for ten years. The paving of Mastic Road brings up an important issue for the Village Board has yet to address—the cost of maintaining and repaving all our roads.

On Friday, April 29th, the Mastic Beach Village Board of Trustees voted 4-1, with my lone vote of dissent, to approve a "Tax-Neutral" budget. This budget will require lay-offs as well as radically reduces the hours employees will work. This "Tax Neutral" budget goes against the advice of our Treasurer and Accountant. Both have voiced serious concerns

that projected revenues are unrealistic, ultimately putting the village in danger of operating deficit for the fourth year in a row. To make up the losses the village the budget calls for aggressively fining residents for code infractions and will be increasing fees on your utility bills, both of which are nothing more than a "back-door tax" on village residents. One way or another, either by raising taxes or fining residents, the people of this village will be paying more to this village government. You can read more on page 4.

Not everything in this village is doom and gloom, on the next page are the upcoming summer events scheduled in and around our Village. These community events are where we can see the best of Mastic Beach, and I encourage every resident to attend.

Also, I have more good news to announce. The lawsuit the Village brought against the Mastic Beach Property Owners Association (MBPOA) has finally been settled. I would like to thank President, Catherine Kobasiuk and the members of the Association for graciously voting to give to the Village of Mastic Beach Marina 5, 6.25 miles of waterfront and the Pattersquash Creek stick docks in a settlement. With the lawsuit that divided a community behind us, now we can focus on moving Mastic Beach forward. You can read more about the agreement on page 6.

I would like to thank Councilman Dan Panico for all the hard work he does for Mastic Beach. He continues to be an inspiration. You can read more on page 7.

Finally, I hope the residents of this Village will take the time to honor those who have made the ultimate sacrifice for our Country and community this Memorial Day. Wishing you a safe and joyous summer.

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

*What's going on, in and around town this summer!*

Below is the list of events that are on our Village Calendar as of May 12, 2016. If you have an event going on, in or around the Village of Mastic Beach, be sure to fill out the form on our website so we can get it on the calendar [www.masticbeachvillageny.gov/calendar/](http://www.masticbeachvillageny.gov/calendar/).

## May

WHAT	WHERE	WHEN
Beach Hut Opens	Smith Point County Park	Friday, May 13th
Marina Opens	M.B.P.O.A. Marina 1	Friday, May 13th
Clean-up	Beautification Committee	Saturday, May 21st, 9:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.
Plant in	Town of Brookhaven	Saturday, May 28th, 9:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.
Memorial Day Parade	Neighborhood + Mastic Beach Roads	Monday, May 30th, 10:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m.

## June

WHAT	WHERE	WHEN
Paint Night	American Legion	Friday, June 3rd, 8:00 p.m.
Tri-Hamlet Day	Various sites around town	Saturday, June 4th, 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.
Pig Roast	American Legion	Saturday, June 11th

## July

WHAT	WHERE	WHEN
Music By The Bay	M.B.P.O.A. Marina 1	Saturday, July 23, 6:00 p.m.–10:00 p.m.

## August

WHAT	WHERE	WHEN
Smith Point Triathlon	Smith Point County Park	Sunday, August 7th, 6:00 a.m.–11:00 a.m.
Blue Claw Crab Festival	M.B.P.O.A. Marina 1	Sunday, August 28th, 10:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m.





## 2016-2017 VILLAGE BUDGET

*Mayor suggests a tax increase for more services, 4-1 Board of Trustees votes “nay.” There will be no-tax-increase for 2016–2017.*

There has been a lot of rhetoric bantered about concerning the deficit caused by the paving of Mastic Road. Mayor Spery continues to take full responsibility for the budgetary error, and she wanted to pay off the debt with one year \$75 a household tax that would be removed in 2017–18. What the new accountant and new treasurer have learned from this budgetary error, the forensic audits, and the New York State Comptroller’s Reports is that this Village has been operating at a spending deficit every year this village has been in existence.

For the past six years, Village expenses have consistently exceeded annual tax revenues. Prior administration’s touted “imaginary surpluses” that were not actual money in the bank but came from estimated value of Village assets. For example, the appraised value of Village Hall, machinery, and the cars was added as assets with the cost of running the village subtracted as expenses. To match apples to apples, if this administration used those same accounting practices this administration would have an “imaginary surplus” more than \$300,000—plus a paved road. Mayor Maura Spery said, “I refuse to allow magical accounting to balance

our Village financials, and I took full responsibility for the financial woes of this Administration and past Administrations, by presenting the budget increase to get this Village into the black for the first time in history.”

Further, compounding this budgetary crisis, Mastic Beach still has 86 more miles of road to repave. The cost of which will be on the financial backs of the Village taxpayers alone. Realistically, taking into account how much it costs to pave one mile of road and couple that with the inevitable rising cost of oil over the next two decades, it is going to cost Mastic Beach Village taxpayers close to \$25 million dollars to pave all of our roads over 20 years without using credit.

The inevitable reality is that we will have to repave our roads through a bond which is basically on credit. The total costs of all Village debt will rise to approximately \$50 million. To pay back the Village’s debt, each household will have to pay over \$500 a year over 20 years to maintain our roads at 2015 asphalt and labor prices.

Consequently, in the last six years, there haven’t been any adjustments to the Village’s plan, tax rate, or savings to

compensate for the fact that all, road repair, maintenance, mowing, water and storm management, engineering and paving, is the sole responsibility of the Village government. The cost of our roads are no longer funded by the taxes collected in Bayport or Setauket like they were when the highway was with the Town of Brookhaven. The cost rests solely on the 5,500 households who pay their village taxes.

Our Village must continue to remove squatters from vacant homes, bring illegal-rentals into compliance and continue to have a full-time government that improves the quality-of-life for the residents of Mastic Beach Village. Our greatest challenge with our new budget is how to accomplish these lofty goals.

To generate revenue, the Village will rely heavily on “back-door taxes” including franchise fees added on to residents and businesses telecommunications and cable bills, village fees for permits, and money generating code-enforcement fines. The harsh truth is, with a tax increase or with back door taxes masqueraded as fees and fines, one way or another, the people will be paying more for this Village.

# PERSONNEL CUTS

## *What can we expect in lost of services?*

The Village Board voted 4-1 for a tax-neutral budget. As of May 31, 2016, many full-time and part-time employees jobs were de-funded by the Board of Trustees. The full-time positions will be demoted to part-time positions and lose their health insurance, and the part-time employees will lose even more hours.

All the staff who's hours are being cut, as per their union contract, have the option to accept the cuts in benefits, hours and pay or agree to layoffs and collect unemployment. The employees has decided to look go on unemployment which will be paid for by the Village of Mastic Beach taxpayers. Creating a budgetary deficit in unemployment payments that was not accounted for in the tax-neutral budget.

With so many employees leaving, the services the Village of Mastic Beach provides will be scaled back to the bare minimum until we can find replacement employees willing to work part-time for less than \$15 an hour who are also civil service qualified as required by law. The search for replacement employees is expected to take at least six months.

In the meantime, a person will always be at the receptionist desk and man the phones from 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. These part-time employees will be able to tell residents how long they will have to wait to get an appointment with the clerk or the building inspector. The DPW will be following a daily 20-hour schedule to clean, mow, sweep, fill potholes and dispose of dead animals and will get to each complaint in the order it is received.

# HIGH COST OF LITTER

## *Let's stop this trashy habit!*

Litter clean-up costs the U.S. more than \$11.5 billion annually, with local/state governments, schools, and other organizations picking up the trashy problem. According to Keep America Beautiful latest Litter Study, here are some interesting facts:

- More than 50 billion pieces of litter are on U.S. roadways each year.
- The majority of this trash is less than 4 inches, making it difficult to clean-up.
- That is the equivalent of 6,729 pieces of trash per mile of roadway.
- As you may guess, tobacco products (cigarette butts and packaging) make up about 40% of this litter. Plastic and paper are the next biggest categories.
- Roadway litter comes from both drivers and pedestrians. Drivers cause (52%), pedestrians (23%), and improperly covered trash cans (16%).

The cost of cleaning up litter is high, but so are the environmental consequences. Wind and weather, traffic, and animals move litter around, potentially into gutters, lawns and landscaped areas, alleyways, and parking structures. Litter near storm drains and beach debris are also likely to wash into local waterways, with potential for severe environmental contamination.

Keep Mastic Beach clean by disposing of litter in receptacles and keeping a tight lid on your household garbage. We deserve a clean community, and everyone must do their part to make Mastic Beach a paradise.



THE VILLAGE OF MASTIC BEACH IS A  
**CLIMATE-SMART**  
*{community}*

## CLEAN DRIVING

**HOW TO DRIVE YOUR CAR TO REDUCE THE AMOUNT OF POLLUTANTS RELEASED AND THE AMOUNT OF FUEL USED AND SAVE MONEY**

- 1. DRIVE LESS:**  
Combine trips;  
Carpool;  
Use public transportation;  
Ride bicycles.
- 2. IMPROVE YOUR DRIVING HABITS:**  
Accelerate smoothly;  
Drive moderate speeds (driving 55 mph vs. 65 mph saves 15% of your gas); Avoid idling.
- 3. DON'T OVERFILL YOUR GASOLINE TANK WHEN REFUELING:**  
When it clicks off, stop pumping!
- 4. KEEP VEHICLES IN GOOD RUNNING ORDER AND REGULAR MAINTENANCE:**  
Align wheels;  
Check tire pressure;  
Change oil as required.
- 5. AND MOST IMPORTANT:**  
Buy a less polluting and more fuel-efficient vehicle!



# MBPOA SETTLEMENT FINALIZED

*The M.B.P.O.A. gives waterfront and marina to the Village.*

The first order of business for the fledgling Village government was to sue the Mastic Beach Property Owners Association for their land. Because of a clause in the Mastic Beach Property Owners Association’s 76-year-old deed that inferred, ‘If Mastic Beach becomes a village, the Village gets the land.’ There was one problem, the deed references Mastic Beach as of 1940 which consisted of the original Ten-Sections. The people who owned property from the William Floyd Estate to Johns Neck Creek south of Neighborhood Road to the water owned the land the Village was suing for, and the association was only the stewards of that land. When the Village formed, the founders decided to create a government covering a much larger area which included, Mastic Park, Mastic Acres, Old Mastic and Shirley—which the Property Owners Association said negated the deed clause.

Five years later, and hundreds of thousands of dollars in taxpayer money spent on lawyers and court costs, the Village of Mastic Beach and the Mastic Beach Property Owners Association have come to an agreement. The Mastic Beach Property Owners Association gave the Village of Mastic Beach 6.25 miles of waterfront, Marina 5 located at Sheeps pens Creek, three beaches at Huntington and Riviera in section 5, Hickory and Riviera in section 4, Magnolia and Riviera in section 3, Jefferson Beach in section 2 and Washington Beach in section 1, as well as the stick docks on Pattersquash Creek and Riviera Drive.

Mayor Maura Spery and President Catherine Kobasiuk signed before the judge the settlement on March 29, 2016. The closing and transfer of assets occurred on May XX, 2016, and the Village of Mastic Beach now owns the beaches, marina, stick docks, and waterfront.

The Village finance department has mentioned concerns about the substantial loss of tax revenue because of this lawsuit. The costs of insuring, repairing, maintaining and administering the marina, beaches and stick docks have not been addressed in the 2016-2017 tax-neutral budget passed on April 27, 2016.

The Board can keep the costs of maintaining these properties tax-neutral as long as the Village charges between \$70–\$85 a foot in the marina, \$500–\$1,000 a year rental for each side of a stick dock, and consider a \$50–\$100 seasonal resident parking pass for Village roadways and a \$25–\$50 seasonal resident beach pass.

The Village has the ability to do what has been successful in many other Long Island beach front villages and cities—charge for access the waterfront. Dogs may have to kept off the beaches as well. Insurance rates which have not been considered in the tax-neutral budget, are expected to triple if we keep the waterfront open access the way it is now.

The Board will consider all options at the next Village Board meeting at Village Hall.

# COMPREHENSIVE ACTION PLAN?

*Comprehensive plan has been postponed until further notice.*

The Comprehensive Plan was to be a form of long-range planning for our local municipality. This endeavor was to encourage the residents to think about how our community will change in the short- and long-term. Our planning firms, Wendel and Associates and Vision Long Island, have already begun working with the Steering Committee, but the Board of Trustees voted on by Trustee’s Anderson, Johnson and Snyder

decided to cancel the first public charrette. The majority will let us know when the residents will be allowed to begin and shape their Village’s future. Until that time comes, we have to pay Wendel for their services already rendered which totals \$18,000 and lose the grants from the New York State Long Island Economic Council that would have paid for the Comprehensive Action Plan totaling \$42,000.



# LET'S THANK DAN PANICO!

*Working to fix Mastic Beach Village every way he is able.*

Town of Brookhaven Councilman Dan Panico grew up right here in Mastic Beach on Jefferson Drive. He attended William Floyd High School attended Touro Law School and worked for Town Councilman Keith Romaine and Suffolk County Clerk Judith Pascale.

After Keith had passed away, Dan won his first elected in a special election in March of 2010. Five months later we became a Village. Even though the residents of Mastic Beach must go to the Village of Mastic Beach for all things local government, Dan has always been at the Town of Brookhaven trying to improve Mastic Beach in his limited capacity since the Village's inception.

Dan worked with the New York State to buy homes ruined by Sandy and returned them to a state of "forever wild" to be a part of the Town of Brookhaven Conservation Plan for Mastic Beach and Shirley. He has rebuilt homes with Habitat for Humanity and continued to champion our community.

Dan Panico was instrumental in getting the new LEEDS certified Mastic Beach Ambulance Company building on Neighborhood Road and Diana Drive. Keeping the building away from sensitive wetlands and protecting our environment. Thank you, Dan, for all the hard work you do for Mastic Beach.



# OPERATION TAKE BACK

*Thanks to the S.C.P.D. for keeping up the momentum.*

The joint effort between the Village of Mastic Beach, Suffolk County Police Department and the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department has led to even more arrests and evictions in Mastic Beach Village.

As a continuation of Operation Take-Back, on Thursday, March 24, 2016, the Village of Mastic Beach Public-Safety Department, led by past Supervisor Michael Maffei, along with the Village Building Department and Fire Marshal's Office, supported the Suffolk County Police Department Seventh Precinct Gang Unit, Suffolk County Police Department Seventh Precinct Narcotics

Unit, and the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department, in the police department's successful execution of warrants on Orchid Drive. The warrants resulted in seven (7) arrests, four (4) of which were for narcotics. The search warrant served by Suffolk County Seventh Precinct led to a quantity of heroin and crack-cocaine recovered from the location. Additionally, the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department executed two (2) eviction warrants at the residence. Numerous Building- and Code-violation summonses were issued by the Village, and the home was deemed unfit for human habitation.



# CITIZENS'-ADVISORY COMMITTEE SPOTLIGHT

## *Marketing Committee: Meets the second Wednesday of the Month*

The Marketing Committee is an open committee to all residents. We meet on the second Wednesday of the month at Village Hall. Our Committee is comprised of professionals in engineering, business management, real-estate, graphic design, marketing, and architecture. If you are creative, talented and can conceptualize from concept to completion, we would love for you to join the Marketing Committee.

The mission of the committee is to work to enhance the Village and promote our area in a positive way. Working with consultants we developed a marketing plan, a branding guide, website, and ad campaign for the Village of Mastic Beach.

We have had input in the creation of this newsletter. The Marketing Committee

helped to create the new logo and created specific keyword searches for both the website and created social media campaigns.

Our Committee especially member, Charles Angona, has developed the look for the renovation of Village Hall. The colors, design and a cohesive look for the area is debated and designed in our committee meetings.

In the future, we want continue to produce our way-finding signs, market our brand on social media, produce our advertising campaign and publicizing our Village's natural beauty, rich history and smart-growth opportunities.

Working hand in hand with Board Liaison

and Deputy Mayor Betty Manzella, our goal is to create a positive image for the Village of Mastic Beach outside of our area. With a limited budget, that requires some serious imagination and dedication to Marketing Mastic Beach.

We would love for you to bring your ideas and more importantly, your skills in making those ideas a reality, to the Committee. Mastic Beach needs you to help us make this Village great again.

The work we have done can be found on the village website <http://www.masticbeachvillageny.gov/marketing>.

Contact the chairperson, Ted Selmer, at [marketing@masticbeachvillageny.gov](mailto:marketing@masticbeachvillageny.gov) for more information.

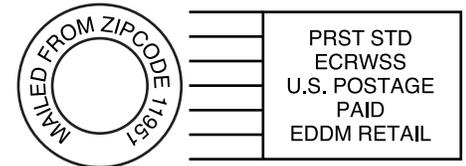
**COMMITTEE SCHEDULES CAN BE FOUND ON THE VILLAGE WEBSITE** Committees meet regularly and are open to the public. Meeting dates/times are included in the Village's website calendar of events ([www.masticbeachvillageny.gov/calendar](http://www.masticbeachvillageny.gov/calendar)).



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