Town of Penfield Supervisor’s Column

Week of February 4, 2019
Guest columnist Eric Tait, Director, DPW

Part I: Winter Review

The Farmer’s Almanac accurately predicted the fall and early winter weather being that of above average temperatures and wet conditions. With that said, our recent frosty forecast has been a bit of a surprise. On January 19, the snow began falling at a steady rate for the next four days. In total, we received approximately 17 inches of snow, at times wet and heavy. Just as the snowfall seemed to lighten up, the rain began and made for slippery and sloppy road conditions. All DPW crews were hands-on throughout the event. Like many residents, we were also presented with challenges including the weight and moisture content of the snow, the extended period that it took to accumulate, a number of cars parked in the road or abandoned, and some equipment breakdowns.

Throughout the storm and winter so far, the DPW has worked to keep all roads in the town open and passable with 18 trucks continuously deployed to plow and salt their routes. Other loaders and smaller trucks have been used to clear parking lots, doorways, and assist with some of the smaller cul-de-sacs and circles. Our parks team cleared primary sidewalks, and the DPW clerks fielded numerous storm-related calls and relayed priorities to the foremen.

In all, the DPW team has worked hundreds of hours and spread nearly 4,000 tons of salt to date in an effort to keep all local, county and state roads, sidewalks, and town facilities open and passable for emergency responders and residents this winter.

Prior to our most recent storm, DPW crews have also been busy working to ensure public safety by addressing concerns and performing tree work at the former Shadow Pines golf course property. On September 1, 2018, the “front nine” portion of the property was opened up to the public and on February 1, 2019, the “back nine” portion was open to public access. With that, the entire property is now available for passive recreational use. As our crews continue wrapping up tree work on the property, please be cautious and give us plenty of room to work.

Hopefully Mother Nature is done with the wild weather but we’ll be ready either way. Let’s move on to spring news.
Part II: Spring Seasonal News

Once winter is truly gone, we will attend to spring chores including: filling potholes, repairing lawn damage from town plows, and repairing or replacing mailboxes damaged by our plow blades (not snow). We will also repair sidewalk damage, trim trees, and clean storm water drainage ponds and sewer systems.

Need mulch? Our mulch pile is currently stocked in the parking area on Columbus Crossing near the Town Hall. We will continue to replenish the pile throughout the spring and summer. This is a free service for Penfield residents in partnership with Monroe County DES. After grinding all the fall and winter debris we should have an impressive supply.

As a reminder, brush drop-off is open to residents year-round Monday through Friday, 7:30 AM–3:00 PM, except holidays.

Please make note of the following events and activities:

- DPW will host its annual Spring Drop-off at the 1607 Jackson Road Facility on Friday, May 17, 7:30 AM–5:00 PM and Saturday, May 18, 9:00 AM–3:00 PM. This service is for Penfield residents only. We will accept general household refuse; furniture; metals; appliances; lawn mowers with fluids drained; vehicle batteries; concrete, brush, and tree limbs; and unmounted passenger vehicle tires (four per resident limit). We cannot accept propane tanks; household electronics including computers and accessories, printers, copiers; TVs; grass clippings and leaves; motorized vehicles; and/or hazardous materials.
- Highway crews will conduct their annual oil and stone treatment program on approximately 13.5 miles of town roads and micro pave a number of cul-de-sacs and circles. Both processes extend road surface life. Details will be posted at www.penfield.org and letters will be mailed out to all residents living on streets scheduled to be treated.
- Highway crews will also be undertaking a road reconstruction project on Old Penfield Road between the west side of the bridge over Irondequoit Creek and Penfield Road (CR 269).
- DPW crews will also be working on a project to expand the parking lot at LaSalle’s Landing Park.
- DPW will continue to work on drainage tasks including catch basin replacements in the Beacon Hills neighborhood as well as cast-in-place pipe lining under Panorama Trail. Several additional projects are also scheduled for the summer season.
- We are continuing to work on a few projects to support the town’s goals of becoming more energy efficient. Although we are not responsible for the installation, this past fall, DPW was busy preparing a site on the DPW complex for a new solar array being installed by Tesla (formerly Solar City). The agreement with Tesla is a power purchase agreement (PPA). With this PPA, Tesla pays the entire cost of equipment and materials up front and no Penfield taxpayer money is being spent on the project. Over time, the new system will provide approximately 70–75 percent of the electrical usage of our town facilities. The solar array is expected to be operational once RG&E grants the “permission to operate” mid to late February.
- We will also continue to convert the town’s street lights to LED in an effort to upgrade the lighting.
- If you are a parent or grandparent, please join us for our popular heavy equipment show for children at the Penfield Public Library on July 18. Watch the library website for details. Children and adults love to see and climb around the impressive DPW heavy equipment. Bring your camera!
- If you need to dispose of household hazardous waste please note the Monroe County Department of Environmental Service (DES) has moved our traditional spring collection to the fall. Please keep an eye out on the website for the date, time, and location. Schedule your required appointment and learn more at http://www.monroecounty.gov/hhw.

We have a wonderful group of dedicated people working at the Penfield DPW. Public safety and the safety of our employees is our highest priority, guiding our decision-making every day.

When you are out driving in your car—whether in a snow storm or on a beautiful summer day—please pay attention to the posted signage and our flag people and follow their directions. Please remember to always give heavy equipment and plows the room they need to perform their jobs. We want to ensure that at the end of each day, our valued employees return to their families in the same healthy condition in which they reported to work.

Thank you and enjoy the rest of the winter, spring, and summer!