Town of Penfield Supervisor’s Column

Week of March 19, 2018
Guest columnist Eric Tait, Director, DPW

Part I: Winter Review

March has certainly come to Penfield like a lion. On March 2nd we experienced one of the heaviest and wettest snow events to hit Rochester in recent years. In total, the storm dumped a steady 16 inches of snow. All DPW crews were hands-on throughout the event. Like many residents, we were also presented with challenges including the extreme weight of the snow, a number of cars parked in the road or abandoned, some equipment breakdowns, and even plows getting stuck while clearing cul-de-sacs and circles.

Throughout the storm—and all winter long—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 were 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 hundreds of storm-related calls and relayed priorities to foremen.

In all, the DPW team has worked countless hours and spread nearly 9,500 tons of salt to keep all local, county, and state roads, sidewalks, and town facilities open and passable for emergency responders and residents this winter.

We all hope that Mother Nature is done with the wild weather. Let’s move on to spring news.

Part II: Spring Seasonal News

Once winter is truly gone, we will attend to spring chores like filling potholes, repairing lawn damage from town plows, and verifying, 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 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 18, 7:30 AM–5:00 PM and Saturday, May 19, 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 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 hazardous materials.
- Highway crews will conduct their annual oil and stone treatment program on approximately 12.5 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 the second half of the paving project in the White Village/Parkview neighborhood to repave areas of roads that were damaged and disrupted during the installation of sanitary sewers.
● DPW will continue to work on drainage tasks including the completion of the Panorama Trail drainage project. 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 doing the installation, DPW has been busy preparing a site on the DPW complex for a new solar array to be 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 to 75 percent of the electrical usage of our town facilities. We will also continue to convert the Town’s street lights to LED and upgrade the lighting and playground at Greenwood Park.

● 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 19. 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, on Saturday, September 15, 7:45 AM–1:00 PM. The Town of Penfield will be hosting this year’s event at our DPW complex at 1607 Jackson Road. 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 snowstorm 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 your spring and summer!