Update…budget 2011! We continue to look for creative ways to absorb those costs that trickle down from higher levels of government or from general inflation, as well as addressing the loss of revenue from mortgage tax, sales tax, and interest earnings. I commend our department heads for being creative to reduce costs and looking for no-cost options. I have asked our Facilities Director to give the Town Board an update on potential capital costs for all of our facilities over the next three to five years to ensure we are funding capital reserves appropriately to reduce or eliminate the need for borrowing in future years. That meeting will be held Wednesday, August 25 at 7:00 PM, everyone is welcome to attend. Costs are still slightly up for 2011; however, we continue looking for further reductions.

The RepARTee Gallery and the Penfield Art Center recently held the official opening of the “Artistic Impressions of Penfield: A Bicentennial Celebration.” The Town Board had an opportunity to hand out the awards in four categories: those that did an exemplary job of capturing a sense of “place” and the essence of Penfield; Merit Awards; Juror’s Awards; and the Best of Show. Fifteen different artists were recognized while many others have their work on display. Congratulations to Kristina Hutch Matthews for “Wishes Adrift” which was selected by the judge, Peter Giopulos as best in show. Additionally, the Hutch family received the Jeffrey S. Crane Historic Preservation Award. This award is granted in memory of Jeff Crane to individuals who have cared for Penfield’s past through the “Preservation of a Structure with Historic Significance.” The bicentennial art celebration runs through September 24, stop in Wednesday through Saturday from 1:00-5:00 PM to see all the wonderful paintings on display.

Paula Metzler and I attended the 1st Annual Penfield/Webster Challenger Picnic and Baseball Tournament last weekend, and what a success! The Webster program has been in existence for ten years, while this is Penfield’s first year. I could never capture it as well as Steve Pellow, President of Penfield Little League and Chairman and President of the Kids miracle Making Club, Inc., who said, “…some of those hits went two feet, some went over the fence! It wasn’t the distance; it was the cheers they each received as they hustled to first base that made it so great – some running on their own, some with a buddy’s help, some in wheelchairs. So to those very special people who helped make this a great community event, Eastway Wegmans, Penfield Little League Board of Directors, Friends of Penfield Little League, the Challenger Division Sponsors, and the Webster Challenger Commissioners…thank you.” Paula and I will speak on behalf of the entire Town Board to say the picnic and tournament was a big success; this is another reason Penfield is such a wonderful and caring community.

The Energy & Environmental Advisory Committee will be hosting an informational meeting on alternatives to leaf disposal. The committee wanted to tackle this issue prior to this fall when our residents are faced with a yard full of leaves and looking for different or better alternatives for disposal other than bagging. The program will cover items such as composting, mulching, commercial pick up options, and more. We will be inviting Cornell Extension of Monroe County, Town and County representatives, Waste Management, and commercial operators. The tentative date is Thursday, August 26 at 7:00 PM in the auditorium at the Town Hall. We will be issuing a formal press release and posting more details on our website at www.penfield.org.

I was recently asked about four-day work weeks and if the Town would consider implementing them either as a trial or permanently. I am pleased to report that the Highway, Parks, and Sewer Departments have been on four-day work weeks since June 14 as part of a pilot program. Most of these employees work four ten-hour days and have Friday off. We do have a few facility employees working Tuesday through Friday to cover the needs of the Town Hall and Community Center. The benefits we have seen to date are shutting buildings down for three days versus two, thus saving gas and electric. Additionally, we are setting up and taking down one less day per week which has helped with productivity in paving, sewer repairs, and facility maintenance. We agreed to a three month pilot and will then evaluate the benefits of cost and productivity. More details will be shared in the September time-frame.

Enjoy the last few weeks of summer!

Tony
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