Recent cold and frosty mornings remind me of what lies ahead. On the Town front, you will see our Highway Department installing snow fence and placing road markers for the plows. We can also count on Highway crews to do their usual great job of keeping the roadways clear of snow and salting as needed. Do your own winterizing plans include a service appointment to have your car checked to ensure you have a good battery and anti-freeze in the radiator to cover you in sub-zero temperatures? Are your tires ready to handle winter conditions? For your safety, make sure you have basic supplies in your car including a blanket, jumper cables, flashlight, candle and matches, and a shovel in the event you are stranded. If you do not have a cellular phone, consider investing in one and keep it with you at all times. As drivers, we all need to adjust our driving habits in the upcoming winter season to avoid accidents and injuries. For more tips and information on winter driving, consider logging on to www.aaa.com.

The Town Board passed a resolution to schedule a public hearing for changes and updates to the Sign Ordinance for Tuesday, December 7 at 7:30 PM. This section of the ordinance has not been significantly changed or updated for more than 30 years. Sections that will see some significant change will be general provisions, signs permitted for business and industry, real estate signs, political signs, and Four Corners signage. The sign ordinance is available online at www.penfield.org (see online documents). We welcome your comments and thoughts on the proposed changes via e-mail, in person at the public hearing, or via letter. Thank you in advance for your input on this very important section of the Town Code.

Health Care costs for 2011 and beyond…as you recall Penfield was one of 13 towns and villages to join forces to form the “Finger Lakes Health Insurance Trust” consortium. The intent was to have the major providers understand that municipalities cannot continue to see double digit increases of 12 to 20% year after year that impact budgets. We cannot afford it, nor are we willing to accept it! I am happy to report that the Town Board just adopted an inter-municipal agreement and a trust and membership agreement to move forward with the consortium that resulted in no increase to medical premiums in 2011. This is a real success story! For 2012 and 2013 we are projecting single digit increases— well below the rates we have seen from providers in the past. The next significant changes in the Federal Health Care Plan take effect in 2014, and we have no idea at this time what financial impact those changes will have on Penfield. However, the consortium will continue to look for creative ways to manage and reduce costs.

If you are at the Town Hall over the next month, or are watching PCTV-12, you will notice that the auditorium is under construction. This is a last phase project of the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) grant that Penfield received in 2009. The lighting and ceiling are being replaced to provide more insulating value and reduced energy costs. We continue to look for ways to reduce costs and cut spending in the budget. Energy savings help us to achieve that, and reducing energy consumption is the right thing to do for the environment.

Here are a few items to consider placing on your calendar: The Penfield Players present “The Sunshine Boys” on November 12, 13, 19, and 20 at 8 PM at the Community Center; our holiday event and Santa’s all-you-can-eat pancake dinner is on Saturday, December 4 from 5 to 7 PM at the Community Center. The holiday event will feature Christmas-themed crafts, games, and special visitors from the North Pole. To purchase advance tickets, please contact the Recreation Department at 340-8655. There will be a free guided hike at Sherwood Park on Saturday, November 13 from 10 AM to 12 PM. Join the Trails Committee at Fire Station No. 3 off Rt. 441, east of Harris Road, and explore a work-in-progress park that is slated to be completed in 2011.

I hope you enjoy your weekend! Until next week, I hope to see you out in the community.

Tony
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