

# Town of Johnsburg Newsletter

## Supervisor's Report

### Short Takes

#### Social Services Outreach

Preliminary efforts are underway to bring Warren County Social Service resources to the Outreach Center. Anita Abrams and Supervisor Goodspeed met with social services staff persons on April 2 to discuss opportunities to bring services to the community rather than forcing multiple trips to the Lake George Office. The meeting included Commissioner Bob Phelps and staff persons Kelly Barker, Mike Jabut, Lisa Zooloff and Jim Converse. Thanks also to Outreach Chairperson Andi McKee for work on this project.

#### Inclusionary Zoning Update

Board member Ron Vanselow will report to the full board on April 22 regarding the status of efforts to amend the town zoning ordinance to establish inclusionary zoning. This type of zoning helps protect the ability of local persons to purchase a home in escalating real estate markets

### Bad Weather Big Money

	Jan	Feb	Mar	1st Qtr Total
<b>2003</b>	84,096.21	59,184.98	50,829.37	194,110.56
<b>2004</b>	61,237.97	71,077.05	60,143.54	192,458.56
<b>2005</b>	109,662.38	62,240.50	82,231.48	254,134.36
<b>2006</b>	100,668.72	72,139.85	70,323.63	243,132.20
<b>2007</b>	114,007.73	69,420.49	74,276.90	257,705.12
<b>2008</b>	110,936.59	95,092.20	79,598.64	285,627.43

*(The above table represents the Town Highway Budget expenditures and the effect inclement weather has on it in any given winter)*

The 2008 Highway Budget was increased \$35,000 over the 2007 budget. In comparing first quarter expenditures, there is a \$28,000.00 increase from 07' to 08'.

In 2005 the retirement expense increased \$5000.00. In addition, unleaded and diesel fuel doubled to \$5,500 per month.

Although a major expense like retirement decreased \$3,300 in 2008, once again unleaded and diesel fuel doubled in 2008 reaching a high of slightly more than \$10,000 per month. 2008 1st Quarter payroll also increased \$17,719 over the 2007 figure.

As challenging as the Town's situation is, Warren County's is even more difficult. The small chart below shows the percentage of the entire yearly budget that was used by April 1 for snow removal.

<b>Snow Removal Salaries</b>	<b>84% of total budget spent by April 1</b>
<b>Snow Removal Overtime</b>	<b>76% of total budget spent by April 1</b>
<b>Snow Removal Supplies</b>	<b>98% of total budget spent by April 1</b>

In essence, both the Town and particularly the County, are now left with vastly depleted budgets to carry us through April, November and December. As I draft this article on April 4 it is snowing hard outside.

## Short Takes

### Ski Bowl Park Grant

The Town Board has decided to move forward with the Ski Bowl Park Grant by committing matching funds. The work however, will be staged so that the matches will not expose taxpayers to the matching requirement. Workers on this program have included Candace Lomax, Joel Beaudin, Andi McKee and Kelly Nessie.

### Hair of the Dog

Hair of the Dog, a Celtic rock band, will be playing live in concert in North Creek on June 27 at the Kellogg/Waddell property on the river. The concert is being organized by a group of volunteers with the help and assistance of the Upper Hudson River Blue-Grass Festival and will take place on the property currently owned by the Open Space Institute (OSI). OSI is deeding the property the property to Warren County who is working with the Town to establish the best uses for this scenic

### Thomas the Tank Engine Returns

Thomas the Tank Engine returns to the North Creek Train Station complex, courtesy of the Upper Hudson River Railroad on May 23,24 & 25, May 30,31 and June 1.

### New Phone System

A new phone system for the town hall is being installed over the next few weeks. Our hope is that the new system will provide better service to residents and help avoid repetitive busy signals that have plagued the town hall.

### Cell Service

Work is continuing on bringing cell phone service to town. A service provider will be present at the April 22 board meeting to discuss the viability of such a project. If tower work goes forward it is important that the tower be sited on town land thereby providing a revenue stream in lease payments.

## Community Economic Coalition Forms

Anticipating still harsher economic times, a coalition of several groups providing services to the North Country has formed with an eye toward a proactive approach to potential economic upheaval.

While the recession has been publicized, how it will affect the North Country is an issue of great gravity. Some economists are anticipating an event that will rival the challenges of the Great Depression. Others are more optimistic and look forward to a quicker turn around.

Either way, as food prices skyrocket, gas prices move towards \$4 per gallon nationally, and the ability to heat our homes gets tougher each year, it is vital that we be ready. In a nutshell, hope for the best and prepare for the worst.

The new coalition will analyze from a long-term planning perspective what the local impact is now and what it could be if the economy further deteriorates. Applying those conclusions to our existing resources (including the Outreach Center, North Country Ministry, Hudson Headwaters, JCS and Rotary, to name but a few) the group will strive to make recommendations as to what steps need to be taken in order to be fully prepared.

Part of this process in my opinion involves a fundamental thought shift in how government spends money. Prioritizing for essential services from the Town and County perspective is the key to preparedness as well as a sound budget.

The new coalition will be headed by Jean Comstock, Anita Abrams and Barbara Thomas. Each of these individuals bring unique experience and attributes to this process. If you would like to be involved in this process please reach out to any of the above or myself at the Town Hall.

### 51st Annual Whitewater Derby

The 51st Annual Hudson River Whitewater Derby will kick off on May 3-4. Pete and Diana Burns and their dedicated group of volunteers have worked very hard and this Derby is sure to be great. This event is one of the reasons our community is so special and we all need to come out to support and enjoy it.

### Budget Advisory Committee

The larger budget advisory group consisting of all of the smaller breakout groups will be reconvening in Wevertown on May 2 at 4 p.m. Many ideas are being batted around and this will be a great opportunity to share and brainstorm yet again.

## Ask Annie

By Ann Deppe, Town Assessor

### What is the overall tax impact of the Front Street Project?

This question requires an assumption that the Front Street Project is built as presently planned and is totally completed. If all phases of the project are completed including residential town homes, hotels and other commercial structures, the impact would be significant. It is important to recognize though that the analysis also assumes that buildings in the development will sell for the value that is anticipated.

All that being said, here are some numbers.

First, Front Street projects that they or related companies will spend \$163 Million to build the entire project. If this happens the effect would be to add approximately 30% more value to the town's tax rolls.

That added value would mean the Town would anticipate an expected increase and annual tax revenues of \$364,000.00. That sum constitutes just over a third of the existing town budget.

If the development were to begin but only complete several phases the impact would be proportionately less significant. External economic factors can also vastly affect the tax impact.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss this further, I can be reached at my office in the Town Hall or at 251-5559.