



John A. Zaccaro Jr, Mayor

April, 2018

FROM THE MAYOR'S DESK

The Village has been working in between the raindrops and snowflakes to be ready for the rapidly approaching summer season. Many of the items the Board is working on will be discussed at the upcoming April 10th Board meeting and I will mention many of them below.

Building Renovations

As a result of the Village being designated a managed beach, FEMA had obligated \$2.6M to Saltaire for beach repair after Sandy. However, with the completion of the Army Corps' Fire Island Interim Project (FIMI), those funds were required to be allocated for other capital projects in the Village or they would be reclaimed by the federal government. The Board targeted \$300,000 from that obligation to replace an 800-foot section of Water Main on Bay Promenade, and the remainder to address older and deteriorating buildings at 14 Bay Promenade and Village Hall. The Board has discussed with the public over several meetings how best to optimize the programs currently housed in those two structures (the Village Offices, Village Court, Library, Post Office, a Meeting Space, Public Safety and Medical Offices); and how to best allocate the FEMA funds at those two locations.

A decision was made in January to reconstruct 14 Bay Prom as a single story structure to house the Public Safety office, the Medical Clinic, the Post Office and the Court/Meeting Space with a total enclosed space footprint of approximately 1,500 square feet and a budget of approximately \$1M. <http://www.saltaire.org/14bay.pdf>. The remainder of the FEMA funds would be allocated for renovation of Village Hall that will result in an elevated, slightly expanded and code-complaint structure that will house the Library downstairs and the Village offices upstairs. <http://www.saltaire.org/vhall.pdf>

These allocations were made on budget projections, which can sometimes vary widely from actual costs. In order to obtain cost-certainty for both projects, the Board engaged Butler Engineering to proceed to regulatory approval and constructions documents so we can obtain public bids for both projects. We prioritized Village Hall because its renovation is the most complicated and therefore has the widest range of cost projections. We are hopeful that we will obtain verified bids for Village Hall by the early summer, which will provide cost certainty to make informed decisions for both buildings. We will keep you apprised as we get closer to obtaining verified costs.

Building Donation

Recently, the Board was approached by the owners of 104 Pacific Walk to see if the Village would be interested in accepting the donation of the house currently situated on their property. It may be helpful to refer

to the graphics that can be found at <http://www.saltaire.org/propertydonation.pdf> to better understand the area and context of this offer.

The owners of 104 Pacific are planning to construct a new home on their property but were torn by the fact that their plan for a new house would result in the demolition of one of the oldest Coffey houses in the Village. In fact, as you are aware from our Centennial historic display the residence was built and occupied by Mike Coffey himself. Thus, in consultation with their Architect, Eric Schiller, they officially made the offer to the Village last week.

The Board discussed the offer at the February 28th meeting, and those discussions resulted in the following consensus:

- The Board feels compelled to give serious consideration to saving such an historic house from demolition for the overall benefit of the Village, and are inclined to do so unless compelling arguments are raised to the contrary.
- From a logistical and cost perspective, the most practical relocation site would need to be as close as possible to the original site, resulting in the lot on the opposite corner of Pacific Walk becoming the primary option.
- That the structure would continue to be utilized exclusively as a residential use, in keeping with the original intended use of the building as well as the character of the neighborhood.
- That the surrounding neighbors and the community at-large need an opportunity to become part of the discussion, either through email communication, or in person at the April 10th meeting.

Hopefully this background and the graphics posted on the website provide adequate context for the offer that was made and the decision with which the Board is wrestling. Obviously, this short summary will not cover all of the questions that you might have, so feel free to email me with any questions or comments; and certainly, the Board encourages your participation in the discussion at the April 10th meeting.

Other Building Improvements

Thanks to our State Senator Phil Boyle, and to the diligence of our office staff managing so many governmental grant programs, we have received a \$250,000 NY State Legislative Grant for capital improvements. The Board has decided to allocate the full amount of that grant to the reposting and renovation of the Recreation Arts and Craft Shed which is scheduled to be commenced this Fall. We will keep you apprised as those plans progress.

Lighthouse Promenade Reconstruction

There are a number of logistical reasons why Lighthouse was chosen to be the last walk in the Village to be reconstructed, but we also wanted to take the time to have FEMA review our request to reconstruct Lighthouse Prom as a timber boardwalk, like every other walk in the Village. Although FEMA does not disagree that the pile-supported timber boardwalk is a better flood-mitigation design, they have not yet given a definitive answer as to whether it meets the complicated requirements for full funding above the cost to replace Lighthouse as a concrete walkway.

Therefore, the Board decided to bid the replacement of Lighthouse Prom as a concrete walkway in order to obtain the baseline cost that has been approved by FEMA for a replacement-in-kind walkway. That process is complete, and we are now in the process of obtaining actual bids for a timber version of Lighthouse Prom. We should have those bid results shortly, and after analysis and discussion with FEMA on how much they will reimburse each design-version, we will discuss the findings with the public.

Either way, we plan to begin the reconstruction of Lighthouse Promenade in the autumn of 2018. This will be a logistically complicated project, and we will certainly keep you apprised how the work will impact the use of your home during the off-season. One aspect that will add to the logistical complexity is that the water main that runs alongside the concrete walk will be replaced as part of this project. FEMA agreed that due to the proximity of the water main to the walkway that it will not survive the project, and the good news here is that FEMA has now agreed with our request to include the new water main as a fully reimbursable component of the project.

Storm Protection

The ocean-fronts in the western Fire Island communities which now have FIMI-protected beaches have stood up very well to the March Northeast storms. The non-FIMI beaches in the communities to the east have been hit very hard and put those communities on the edge of being severely compromised. This off-season provided unequivocal evidence of the effectiveness of a fortified and well-maintained oceanfront. However, as we have seen in other areas of the country we are at the mercy of storms and as a result must remain engaged with the larger Fire Island to Montauk Point (FIMP) reformulation project so that we receive maximum protection in the future.

We also remain very mindful of the Bayfront flooding problem that has become more prominent in recent years, and I have extremely good news to report in that regard. Our application to reconstruct the land formation spit (also known to older-Saltairians as Dogfish Island) on the northern end of Clam Pond Cove has been accepted and approved to be included under the FIMP plan. Our engineering and environmental study demonstrated that not only will this proposed project provide significant storm protection, but it will also provide measurable environmental benefits for habitat reformation of both fowl and fauna. The Army Corps and the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation have agreed and the project will be implemented at no cost to the Village of Saltaire. We owe a great deal of gratitude to our Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone for working with the Village to make this happen. We will remain actively engaged in the FIMP process so that this approved project will commence as soon as possible.

Water Infrastructure

As a Board, we must continually look ahead and plan for the future protection and viability of the Village. As you know, the Village owns and operates its own water system and we are proud of the quality of water we provide. We consistently exceed all required federal and state water standards (look for our annual water report to be emailed shortly). However, we must face the fact that much of our water system infrastructure is aging, as a result we have been pro-actively planning for the replacement of this vital resource. We began that process last year by replacing over 2,300 linear feet of the water main along Bay Prom and Broadway. Also, as mentioned earlier, the Lighthouse Promenade project will include replacement of another 3,300 linear feet of water main. All these replacements have been completed with larger mains which have increased pressure and flow throughout the Village to address the increased consumption and to provide better fire protection. This upcoming off-season we will add a back-up generator to our Well #2 water field so we can provide water service in a power outage situation. This generator will be funded through a grant under the Fire Island Reconstruction Zone program. These improvements have gone a long way to upgrade our water infrastructure, but we have still have more improvements to complete and we are actively pursuing additional funding sources. We will keep you apprised as these initiatives progress.

Saltire Post Office

As you know, online shopping is playing a larger and larger role in the modern world. This changing economic environment is having a large impact on the operation of the Saltaire Post Office. As a background, Postal deliveries to Saltaire are made daily in the summer via ferry boat pursuant to a contract that the USPS has with Fire Island Ferries. The daily postal deliveries are dropped off at the Saltaire dock by Fire Island Ferries, and

the Village is then responsible to transport them to the Post Office in Village Hall. The Saltaire Post Office is generally a one-way service in that very little mail is sent out – it operates almost exclusively as a delivery depot.

However, the recent volume of packages caused by the rise of Amazon and other internet-based delivery services has forced the Village to look at its costs of providing this service. What in the past was a daily delivery of a small mail bag of letters and magazines has effectively turned into a freight operation of cartloads of boxes and packages. Our small Post Office of less than 100 square feet is now vastly undersized to hold the daily influx of packages carrying everything from groceries to bicycles. We have to send two Public Safety Officers in golf carts to the dock to pick up the packages every day, and they have to assist the Postal Clerk in cataloguing and moving the packages (sometimes to the Saltaire Firehouse across the street in order to have sufficient interior space to accommodate the packages) until they are picked up. That is one of the reasons why we are planning to move Post Office operations to 14 Bay Promenade to a larger space with greater storage options.

Our costs in providing the services to meet this new delivery paradigm have risen dramatically, to the point where the Village could no longer ignore the differential between our costs and the current annual fee of \$2,500 collected from the USPS. We requested from the USPS a rate increase to \$21,000 annually, and after negotiation with the national director in Colorado for the USPS we settled on a new increased annual rate of \$15,000. That contract adjustment will be voted on at the next meeting.

Although the rate adjustment comes closer to meeting our costs of operation, it doesn't address the quality of life issues associated with the new on-line shopping paradigm, both positive and negative depending upon your perspective. We will continue to discuss those quality of life issues at upcoming meetings and throughout the summer to gauge your views on this issue.

Ferry and Parking Operations

The current concession contracts with Fire Island Ferries for Passenger & Freight Ferry service, and with Fire Island Terminal for Parking services, expire at the end of this calendar year. We are in the process, as required by law, of soliciting proposals for all three of those services, which are due April 30th. We anticipate the current operators will remain interested in providing those services, and hope for other operators to be interested enough to submit proposals. Regardless of the outcome, our goals remain to maximize both revenues and quality of service, and we are optimistic that we can do both. We will keep you apprised.

For this upcoming summer, we have arranged with our neighbor to the north of the Saltaire Terminal, Maple Avenue Marina (MAM), to allow travelers to/from the Saltaire Lot to use the bathroom facility in the MAM lot. We feel this will provide a big improvement above the temporary facilities that we have arranged in the past. Access will be provided through a direct gate to the bathroom in the northeast corner of the lot, which is the opposite corner of where the old Port-a-Potty was. Signs will be posted shortly.

Presentation and Adoption of the Budget for the 2018/19 Fiscal Year

Pursuant to State Law, the Village must present its proposed operating budget to the public and then adopt it prior to May 1st. The Board has extensively reviewed the proposed 2018/19 budget and is now prepared to present it for public comment and adoption at the April 10th meeting. The proposed Tentative Budget can be found at <http://www.saltire.org/1819tentbud.pdf>. Copies are also available at the Village office. We encourage your review, your questions and your participation in the budget discussion at the meeting. If you are unable to attend, please do not hesitate to contact me or the Village office staff with any questions.

It is important to point out that the implementation of the numerous capital projects outlined above will have *minimal or no impact* on the tax rate that is being proposed for the coming year. That is because the majority

of the projects have all or most of the costs reimbursed through grant programs. In addition, the Board has planned for the deficit spending that is included in this budget with increased reserves. These reserves will offset our last year of debt service from the 2009 Beach Project bond. After this year, our annual debt service will be reduced by \$275,000, providing much relief to our annual budgets going forward.

We are presenting a budget that I feel addresses our critical infrastructure requirements, meets our current capital funding needs while at the same time maintains our traditional level of services. The Board will discuss at the meeting the amount, if any, of a tax rate increase that will be part of the budget. We will present all of our budgetary options in more detail at the meeting, and we look forward to your active participation.

Saltaire Day Camp

The Saltaire Day Camp continues to forge its exciting new path under the supervision of Deputy Mayor Richard. We are all excited about our new Camp Director Keith Miller <http://saltairecamp.com/meet-the-team/> whose years of experience and history with Saltaire will be a big benefit to the Camp program. This year camp registration will be processed through an on-line platform that we are confident will prove more convenient for parents to register their children and will provide more real-time data for our Camp management. The finishing touches are being put on the website and you can look for email blasts in the next few weeks which will guide you through the registration process.

Environmental

The Village has gone to great lengths to modify their staffing schedule for public safety and seasonal employees to maximize the use of the ferry and thereby reducing approximately 640 vehicle trips off island during the summer. In addition, the Village will be instituting a pilot composting program at the yard and you can contact the Village Office for details. We also will be planting Brodtkin park with indigenous trees, shrubs and plants shortly as we complete our Bayfront transformation.

Other Project and Quality of Life Initiatives

- The tentative budget includes funding for in-residence Paramedics to be available on a 24/7 basis during the summer to assist our terrific volunteer members of the Rescue Squad. The Fire Company feels, and the Board agrees, that this extra level of paid-service will serve to support the high level of care already provided and will give our volunteer members relief when needed. The Board under the guidance of Trustee Wolfe has been working with the Fire Company on this program, as well as the purchase of the new Pumper and the new Ambulance, which will arrive and be operational this summer season.
- The Bayfront lighting project should be completed shortly. This public private partnership is complete except for the relocation of a transformer at Pacific Walk which we expect to be relocated during the spring season. This project buried all the lines on the Bayfront, replace the line voltage with low voltage and the new low-profile poles now have all led lighting. This will reduce down the Village cost going forward and provide a safer condition during storms.
- The budget also includes funding for the continuation of the public beach chair program, with expansion of the number of chairs at all lifeguard locations. Finding the right chair at the right price that can be re-ordered as necessary continues to be a challenge. Trustee Oppenheimer is overseeing this program and we will have the chairs in place by the start of the summer season.
- We will continue to discuss and fine-tune the parameters of service offered by the SCA Courtesy Cart, with an eye toward allowing our less-mobile residents to enjoy more of the recreational opportunities our Village has to offer. Trustee O'Brien has been instrumental on this initiative and will be leading the discussion at the upcoming Board meeting.
- The Board passed a local law that requires all garbage enclosures to have a mail-box type flag on them so that during the summer, shoulder and off-seasons, the Maintenance staff knows when private garbage

is ready for pick-up. The Village will supply the flags and look for email communications on their availability.

- Segueing from garbage collection, the budget includes funding for a Welcome Back Memorial Day Party scheduled for Saturday night May 26th on the Ball Field. Save the date, and you will be seeing email blasts with more details as we get closer to the event.

Village Elections

The annual Village election will take place Friday, May 25th this year. It is sometimes easy to take the governance of the Village for granted, but I encourage you to get involved and participate. You can make a difference. Residents can choose to establish Saltaire as their voting residency by registering with the Suffolk County Board of Elections. The number of registered voters aids the Village in many ways with government funding and political influence. In addition, the Village has two dates set by New York Election Law (Sunday, May 13th and Tuesday, May 15th) when residents can come to the Village to personally register to vote for the candidates for the Village election. There are three spots on the Board of Trustees up for election this year – the Mayor and two Trustee spots. If you are interested in running for any of the positions, or wish to be eligible to vote, the opportunities to do both are available, but only pursuant to certain filing and deadline requirements. These requirements and deadlines can be found at <http://www.saltaire.org/electiondates.pdf>.

Next Meeting Reminder

These and other topics will be discussed at upcoming Board meetings. The remote attendance options through the internet has removed a major obstacle for many to attend during the off-season. Our next Board meeting will be held on April 10th, and the specific agenda items, the meeting's physical location, and the remote connection instructions can be found at the following link to the Village website - <http://www.saltaire.org/agenda.pdf>. Please do not hesitate to express any questions, comments or concerns to any of your Board members.

I want to thank you for the privilege to serve as your Mayor. I, along with my fellow Board members, strive to improve the quality of life for our current and future residents of Saltaire. I also want to thank all the board members and those that volunteer to serve our Village, for it is your participation that makes Saltaire special and an important place in all of our lives.

Mayor John A. Zaccaro Jr.

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In Case of Emergency While in Saltaire, Call 911
Village Website: www.saltaire.org; Email: office@saltaire.org