

Village of Bergen

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Mayor's Message

It looks like Spring has finally arrived! It is nice to see the kids outside playing and residents walking, running and biking in the Village. As the weather continues to improve, please make sure to obey our Village speed limit, especially on our side streets. We are in the process of installing two new radar speed limit signs on route 19, one near the Fire Department and the other by Hickory Park. A third portable sign will be moved around the village where needed. Also please observe the pedestrian crossing signs, our residents safety is of the utmost importance to us.

We hope during the warm weather you will enjoy our Village parks. The Hickory Park playground just got new and improved wood chips and we are always looking for donations of basketballs, soccer balls and other outside toys to fill our basket once again. After Bergen Park Festival we will begin work on the baseball fields, getting them ready for the summer season.

As a reminder, if you see suspicious activity in the park or around the Village, please report it. We want to keep your parks and Village looking great and safe for all our residents to enjoy. The Genesee County Sheriff will begin summer patrols soon. Enjoy the great weather and see you around the Village!

Mayor Ralph Marsocci

Village of Bergen Clean Up Day
Saturday, May 4th

Start time is 6:30 am

Bergen Park Festival
June 7th & 8th

Volunteers are still needed for the Bergen Park Festival.

If you are interested in helping out, please contact the Village Office at 494-1513.

Community Action Day - May 18th

Calling all volunteers! We need your help to make our annual Community Action Day a success.

All volunteers will meet in Hickory Park at 10:00 am.

Assemblyman Steve Hawley Town Hall
Meeting is Saturday, May 4th

Join us at the Village Office at **10:00 am** to discuss State issues with Assemblyman Hawley.

Have you visited our website?
Visit us at villageofbergen.com

News from the Village Board

“What do I get for my Village taxes?”

This is an age old question and one that was actually asked at one of our recent board meetings. It may seem like all we get are trivial things for our tax money so I thought I would put some numbers on paper to see what the residents (myself included) get out of their tax dollars here in our Village. I am going to use my house as an example, simply because I have a year's worth of bills sitting in front of me.

The current Village tax rate is \$5.62 per thousand of assessed value; therefore, at an assessment of \$120,000 my Village tax bill is \$674.40 yearly. Now, what benefits do I have as a Village resident that justifies paying \$674.40 more a year than I would if I lived outside of the Village? I will make a quick list and go into detail below.

- Sidewalks
- Streets
- Street Lights
- Curbside Garbage Pickup
- Fire Department Within Walking Distance
- Leaf and Brush Pickup
- Sewer
- Inexpensive Electric
- Plowing/Snow Removal
- Local Control

Sidewalks and Street Lights: These are obvious ones; sidewalks that are installed, plowed, and replaced by the Village and Street Lights that are also installed and maintained by the Village.

Curbside Garbage Pickup: Yes, we do pay for 'tags' that are placed on our bags in order to be picked up. However, as a resident I don't have to enter into a contract with a refuse company myself or take my trash to a transfer station so I believe the 'pay by bag' method is a good value for curbside pickup. I also enjoy the annual spring clean-up service. As a side note, what you may not know is that the Village's refuse fund is not self-sustaining, in other words, the Village does not generate enough money from the sale of tags to cover the cost of our yearly refuse contract. The Village actually contributes several thousand dollars per year to make this line item 'whole'. While this may not sound like good business sense, we believe it is a benefit that we should provide for our residents.

Fire Department Within Walking Distance: Sure, the Fire Department would serve my property if I lived outside of the Village but in an emergency situation, those extra few minutes that are saved by being so close to the Fire Department could easily be the difference between life and death in my opinion.

Leaf and Brush Pickup: I enjoy the benefit of trimming my trees or bagging leaves and simply dragging them to the curb. I don't have to worry about burning them or paying someone to haul them away. It's a small benefit but a convenient one.

Sewer: While I do pay a separate sewer bill, the fact is that the system would not be available to me if I was not in the Village (although there is a small section of the town served by our sewer plant). The Village maintains the tank and the lines. I can call whenever I have a problem.

Inexpensive Electric: Now this is where the real value is. My house is 100% electric; my heat, hot water, and appliances are all electric. I wanted to compare what I would pay for electric outside of the Village to what I actually pay. The total of my 2012 electric bills were about \$1,575. By comparison, if I were outside of the Village and served by National Grid, the same power consumption (approximately 19,213 kWh) for the last 12 months would have cost me over \$3,074! This benefit alone more than covers my \$674.40 Village tax bill. In addition, the Village employs two full time linemen dedicated to only our system. We do not share our line workers with a large region like National Grid or RG&E does. If we have an outage, we do not wait hours for a crew to be dispatched; our staff is here and ready. It is a huge benefit to have qualified line workers on staff and in the Village should a problem arise.

Local Control: As a Village, we have the ability to make decisions that affect just us. We have the luxury of making decisions that add to the ambiance, security, and amenities we enjoy in our Village.

I hope this information helps answer that age old question. As always, if you have any comments or concerns feel free to contact me or any other Trustee (contact info at www.villageofbergen.com) or better yet attend a Board meeting, they are held on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of each month at 7pm unless otherwise posted.

Paul Cooper
Deputy Mayor
585-704-2283 (cell)