**SUPERVISOR’S MESSAGE**

**2020 IN REVIEW**

With all of the unexpected challenges and trials that we faced, we can all be glad that 2020 is quickly coming to a close. We are proud that even with the turbulence created by a global pandemic, the past twelve months have been a productive year and our board can be proud of the accomplishments made or started.

The Town Board came into 2020 to serve Coeymans with the goals of:

-Attracting business

-Lowering taxes

-Redirecting Heavy traffic off of Main Street

-Improving government operations by consolidating and sharing services, and

-Updating the Town’s Comprehensive Master Plan, which was 15 years overdue

In 2020, this board passed an unprecedented 12 pieces of local legislation for the benefit of our community. Several of those were updates to our current code and zoning laws making them more cohesive, relevant, and enforceable. One such example is our Planning Board and our Zoning Board of Appeals being merged into one dual purpose board, making the land use application and building process more streamlined, efficient and accountable for prospective residents and business owners.

We met with local business leaders and worked out a plan together to reroute some of the truck traffic from our Main Streets, which cut over 50% of the existing truck traffic both on Main Street, Ravena and Main Street, Coeymans.

We reorganized the Community Beautification Department to increase efficiency along with saving town taxpayers approximately $76,000 in 2020 and the same amount as we move into 2021.

Our Town Justice Court has substantially increased its revenues this year by absorbing the Ravena Village Court upon its sudden dissolve, yet the Town Court was able to maintain its expenses at prior levels. This type of consolidation is a step in the right direction as Village taxpayers were able to dissolve a Village Court that was losing money every year, and Coeymans taxpayers now enjoy the additional revenue generated by having only one Court. Truly a win-win for all taxpayers in Coeymans and Ravena.

Thankfully, despite the pandemic, our town was still able to have some outdoor entertainment. We were able to expand Evening on the Green Band Concerts this year and add a successful Farmer’s market to the Riverfront Park, as well as plan and conduct our first Riverfest in many years, all paid for by corporate donations and done at NO cost to the town taxpayer.

We were able to produce a budget for 2021 that puts our taxpayers first by lowering the tax rate by nearly 10%, while still protecting public safety and much needed public services. We also were able to provide a 2021 Sewer Budget that reflects a considerable reduction in Sewer Rates for both Hamlet and Village sewer users.

On January 6, 2020, the Albany County Sheriff’s office signed a 5 year Municipal agreement with the Town of Coeymans, which served to more than double police patrols and increase public safety within the community, while simultaneously allowing the town to save over $300,000 in expenses.

Our Board is currently working with MJ Engineering on updating our Comprehensive Master Plan and we are on track to have it fully developed and adopted by the end of February.

All of this has been accomplished while dealing with a global pandemic, which no one could have predicted. Thankfully, our staff has diligently followed protocols enabling us to still make vital municipal services available to the public, but in a safe and healthy manner.

2020 has been an unpredictable year, which our Town has navigated well. And although this Town Board certainly played a part in the successes of 2020, the real credit for the success of this year goes to the men and women employed by the Town of Coeymans. The Town Highway Superintendent and his Highway Workers, our Wastewater Treatment Plant Chief and his employees, our men and women in uniform in the Coeymans Police Department, our Building Department and Codes Officials, our Assessor, my Clerk to the Supervisor and Confidential Secretary, our Secretary’s, Administrative Assistants and Clerks both full-time as well as part-time throughout the town departments, our Judges and Justice Court Clerks, our Attorneys, our Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk, and all of the men and women serving this community on the Planning Board/Zoning Board of Appeals, Board of Assessment Review and Ethics Committee. These are the folks that have truly served selflessly this past year and have put the needs, health, and safety of our residents ahead of their own safety and made 2020 a year to remember.

Thanks also to those residents who have been involved in town government, offering positive and productive comments and ideas about how to provide a better future for our town.

On behalf of the Coeymans Town Board I want to publicly thank all of our employees, staff, and board members who have given so much of themselves this year to insure that 2020 was a success, in spite of the challenges we faced. I also would like to thank the residents and business owners of Coeymans for persevering this year in spite of the many challenges we aced and continue to face. And I look forward to a new year in 2021, continuing the honor and privilege of leading our great Town of Coeymans down the path of prosperity. Happy Holidays and Happy New Year to everyone, please stay safe and healthy, and God Bless the Town of Coeymans.

George D. McHugh

Coeymans Town Supervisor