The Season of COVID has been a strange and enduring one for all of us. As this goes to press we know that BCSD will be having a hybrid educational program of online and in person classes and that SUNY Brockport students will be returning to campus at the end of August. Normally, this newsletter would be out in May, but COVID took precedence with only one staff person in the office at a time, and the mayor sheltering at home.

Village business carries on. Village Hall opened to the public on June 22 with 2 people at a time allowed in our narrow lobby. Masks are required of everyone entering the building. The village has a supply of masks from the county, so ask if you need one. Clerical operations are now behind a glass barrier at the front counter. Village board meetings are no longer remote for board members but are still closed to in person attendance by the public. Meetings and workshops are streamed on Facebook live, and posted on www.brockportny.org. Audience participation is still via email to the mayor. DPW continues their full work load, replacing sidewalks on Utica and State Streets and putting in a new water main on South Street. See page 4 for planned street paving this fall.

Outdoor dining has livened up Main Street; the huge flower pots again grace our downtown sidewalks and the familiar hanging flower baskets, provided by the BMA are watered daily by dedicated volunteers Mark Kristansen, Mark Ketchum, Brynn Mott and Corey Minor.

Moving forward, we knew when we adopted the 2020-21 budget back in April that we were going to face unknown shortfalls. Court revenue, for one, as the court closed on March 16 and reopened with restrictions on June 1; the first hearing date was August 7 at 25% capacity. The most significant unknown is sales tax revenue which accounts for a third of our income. Next quarter’s sales tax revenue (April/May/June—received in August) will be the most revealing and hopefully the sparsest we will experience as we emerge from the COVID crisis. In the midst of COVID, work furloughs and job loss, village properties also underwent a required reassessment by the Sweden Assessor. This reassessment did not affect this year’s village taxes, but will impact your school and town/county taxes, and village taxes in 2021.

We face a big challenge, and an opportunity, in the months ahead directed by Governor Cuomo with his issuance of Executive Order 203, on June 12, 2020. Called the NYS Police Reform and Reinvention Collaborative it was created in the wake of the George Floyd murder in Minneapolis, and the ensuing protests and demonstrations for police reform.

Per the law, all municipalities in NYS with police forces are required to do a comprehensive review of “current police force deployments, strategies, policies, procedures, and practices” in order to address the needs of the community and any systemic racial bias, and to foster trust and legitimacy.

We view this as an opportunity to educate ourselves and the citizenry regarding police procedures, training, and practices, and to equally provide an opportunity for our police to hear citizen concerns, complaints, and recommendations for change. In short, an opportunity for all stakeholders to come together, with the police, for an in depth forthright discussion of local policing.

We are tackling this by appointing a committee of citizens with representation from the Village Board, the police, the faith community, BCSD, residents, and the college. While Brockport is an overwhelmingly white rural community, it is important that diverse voices, including black and brown ones, be represented on this committee. The committee will meet monthly from September through January, addressing specific topics related to the legislation. At its conclusion, the committee will produce a report to be submitted to the Governor’s office and, if warranted, propose changes in local laws re policing to be adopted by April 1, 2021. The meetings will be open to the public with opportunities for input, but due to social distancing requirements, public participation will be remote. All information will be posted on our website in advance.

Inside find more news from departments, a farewell to retiring Village Clerk Leslie Morelli, and a welcome to new Clerk/Manager Erica Linden. As you enjoy the remaining days of summer, remember to stay safe—wear that mask, social distance, and avoid large gatherings.

Margay Blackman, Mayor
Village Clerk Leslie Morelli Retires

“This is Leslie.” As she answered the phone her voice was rising and cheerful. For 21 years, Village Clerk Leslie Morelli was the voice of Village Hall. Interacting with the public, she tirelessly fielded questions, answered requests for information and documents along with the inevitable complaints.

No one would dispute Leslie’s organizational skills. Organization was her watchword. She kept a to-do list 25 pages long, identifying alphabetically every aspect of her job and color coding it by priority. No clerk produced more detailed minutes of Village Board meetings than Leslie. They may have consumed a lot of paper, but you could count on a complete record of public comments, decisions, and reports from department heads and village board members.

Leslie also handled village taxes, village insurance, and employee benefits. She oversaw the various village boards and committees. As Village Clerk, she was responsible for maintaining all village government records.

She was the ideal clerk to introduce a new mayor to the job, including me beginning in 2013. Her knowledge of local laws, meeting procedures, rules for executive session, civil service regulations, and more were invaluable. If you wanted to know how building the Seymour Library on East Avenue was funded or how the village acquired the land for its landfill on Canal Road, you asked Leslie and she would produce the relevant documents. If your mail languished in your mailbox too long, she delivered it to your desk. If something slipped my attention, I could count on a reminder email from Leslie. Leslie single-handedly made sure the mayor was on top of the job.

Leslie lived in the Brockport area 30 years and was Brockport Village Clerk from June 1999 – May 2020, after holding the position of Deputy Town clerk in Clarkson for 5 1/2 years. As Brockport clerk she served 5 mayors, 22 trustees, 6 treasurers and 6 deputy clerks along with numerous department heads, boards and committees, vendors and volunteers. Remarkable!

During those years, she was the administrative assistant to five different mayors—in personality, policy, and perspective—and to her credit she worked well with and was valued by all of them. “I’m Switzerland,” she would declare, referencing the impartiality she exhibited in her relationships to the mayors she served.

Despite her husband’s deteriorating health the last few years, Leslie remained dedicated to her job and her spirited demeanor and good humor were unflagging. Her early retirement was anticlimactic and overwhelmed by the COVID pandemic that closed down Village Hall. Leslie’s final days as Village Clerk were spent on family medical leave to tend to her ailing husband, who passed away on August 12, 2020.

In a different year, Leslie’s retirement would have been marked with a festive send off, attended by the public, past and present village employees and mayors, and her fellow Monroe County village clerks. Nonetheless, we sincerely wish Leslie a happy retirement and toast her years of dedicated service to the Village of Brockport. If you wish to send a card, you can reach her at 13 English Station Road, Rochester, NY 14616.

NOTICE FOR VILLAGE ELECTIONS

The annual general village election was suspended through an Executive Order due to Covid-19. The election is scheduled to be held on September 15, 2020 from noon to 9pm at 49 State St., Brockport Village Court. Two trustee positions are up for re-election. Please wear your mask to vote.

Applications for absentee ballots must be received by September 8, 2020, although we recommend allowing more time for postal service delivery. You can also download the application from this link: https://www.elections.ny.gov/NYSBOE/download/voting/AbsenteeBallot-English.pdf
The Brockport Police Department continues to strive through the summer and into the fall as we welcome back SUNY Brockport students into our community. Health and safety remain our number one priority for all residents and visitors. A "Zero Tolerance" policy will be in place for all large gatherings. The BPD will continue to work closely with SUNY Brockport Office of Student Conduct to address any student situations that may jeopardize the safety of the community.

We recognize the need to improve and have taken steps to develop a better understanding of those different from us, and greater compassion, by participating in Cultural Sensitivity Training taught by Pastor Marlowe Washington and Dr. Torrance Jones. The instructors were excellent and engaged with the officers in positive interactive dialogue, initiating difficult conversations that need to happen to gain a better understanding of all cultures.

I recently read a quote by Michael Gallen that stated, "True wisdom is gained by understanding you don't know everything. True ignorance is when you believe that you do". We at the Brockport Police Department remain committed that we will always look to be better in everything we do.

Respectfully,

Mark T. Cuzzupoli,
Chief of Police

AJ stopped by to say thank you to the Officers who participated in a parade in front of her house on her birthday. AJ gave Officers pizzas as a token of her gratitude. Thank you, AJ!

True Blue - NY dropped off some cookies made by Sweets by Sara LLC! We appreciate your support and the cookies were excellent!

In June, Officer Tyler Dawson was sworn in as the new Criminal Investigative Officer for Brockport.

Congratulations!
Village Trees
Our Spring Arbor day planting was different this year due to Covid-19; the DPW planted all 17 trees without our usual volunteers. We hope to see them for Arbor Day 2021!

Summer is our busy season! We typically reserve tree work for the fall/winter months, but when emergencies arise, we address those as needed.

Milling & Paving 2020
- McCormick Lane - Section II
- Westwood Dr.
- Water St.
- Holley St. - from Perry St. to Utica St.
- South St.
- Park Ave. - from Main St. to railroad tracks

We are also working with our vendor to evaluate streets for micro paving and/or chips sealing.

CDBG Sidewalk Grant Update:
Department of Public Works began our busy summer replacing several feet of sidewalk on Utica Street with CDBG grant money. We are continuing the State Street sidewalk with CDBG grant funds also.

South Street Project:
We started the South St. project with the abandonment of the 4” water main to switch all South St. residents to the existing 10” water main. After evaluating and televising the storm sewer, it was determined that the storm sewer would need to be replaced, which also required the curbs to be replaced.

Milling will start the week of August 10th and paving will soon follow.
A Message from the Building/Code Enforcement Department

TRASH, GARBAGE AND DEBRIS

Due to numerous recent complaints, we would like to remind all property owners to provide adequate and proper receptacles for disposing of trash, garbage and debris pursuant to Village Code Section 21-5 and Property Maintenance Code of New York State Section 308.

Village Code:  § 21-5 Receptacles; specifications. A.

Every owner, lessee or occupant of any building, premises or place of business within the Village shall provide or cause to be provided and at all times keep suitable and sufficient receptacles for receiving and containing offal, garbage, ashes, refuse, rubbish or noxious substances that may accumulate from or be used upon said premises. No such receptacles shall be kept near any public place longer than may be necessary for the removal of the contents thereof. All receptacles used for the reception of garbage and/or refuse or noxious substances shall be provided with proper covers, and such receptacles shall at all times be securely closed and watertight. Receptacles (including recycling bins) and garbage of any type must be kept from public view, either inside of structures or behind screening, from neighboring property or public view until the day of trash pickup.

Building and Codes Department in the Community

Barbara, Chad, & Carol

Carol & Chad

Grace (Barbara's daughter) & Barbara volunteering to distribute masks

We joined the mayor, village board members, the police department and numerous community volunteers to help distribute items to residents during the covid shut-down in New York. April 10, 2020 we volunteered at the Food Link Distribution held at Oliver Middle School and handed out over 100 boxes of food.

On May 9, 2020 we joined forces to hand out over 5,000 masks at Oliver Middle School.

The Village of Brockport recently completed a grant funded project to scan property files in the Building and Codes Department. As a result, we have many paper files that we no longer need. Property owners may request and pick up large format documents (maps, plans) pertaining to their residence or business if any are in our possession and available.

Please email Barbara A. Krizen, Building/Codes Coordinator at bkrizen@brockportny.org to see if any documents relating to your property are available and if so, to schedule a pick-up appointment.
One of the recommendations of our recently adopted Village Comprehensive Plan was the hiring of a village manager. On April 1, 2020, following the retirement of Leslie Morelli, Erica Linden assumed the combined position of village manager/village clerk. This is not the first time Brockport has had a village manager. From 2005 to 2008 Ian Coyle (now Livingston County Administrator) was village manager, and for a brief 6 month period in 2011-12 Michael Giardino served as village manager until he left to become director of the Greater Rochester Airport.

The village manager works closely with the mayor, and their responsibilities compliment one another. The manager is appointed by the mayor and serves at the pleasure of the village board. The village manager oversees the direction and control of day to day operations of village government, including coordinating and supervising staff. Add to those responsibilities the tasks of village clerk—managing all records, taking minutes at village board meetings, collecting taxes, handling FOIL requests, workman’s compensation, and HR responsibilities, and you have one very busy senior employee.

Erica Linden was hired as deputy clerk treasurer in the fall of 2013. Although treasurer was in her title she did not have a background in accounting. But she was so personable, quick thinking, and a creative problem solver, we knew she was the right person for the job. In the end we hewed to the advice of one of her references: “Always hire ‘smart’.” We did and never looked back.

Erica came to Brockport Village Hall with a long list of credentials and professional experience that have served her well as she moved from deputy clerk treasurer to village manager/clerk. These include a masters degree in public management and leadership positions in grant writing, academic program directing at the elementary, middle, and high school levels, and a management trainee at the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services in Washington, DC.

As Deputy Clerk Treasurer, Erica took on several more responsibilities than her position required. She manages the village website, created and manages the village’s Facebook page, wrote our social media policy, administers all our grants, and publishes our semi-annual village newsletter. Fortunately, for village government and residents, these responsibilities followed her to her new position.

Her former position remains vacant and will likely be for some time given the budget uncertainties in 2020-21.

Erica, her husband Jeremy (JR), and their two daughters, Mathea (14) and Mairi (12) are village residents. They own their own business, Linden Preservation Services, where Jeremy specializes in cultural heritage preservation and sustainability.

Despite her heavy work load Erica finds time locally to serve on the Boards of the Morgan Manning House (Western Monroe Historical Society), and the Brockport Community Rowing Club. She organizes the Village’s Canal Clean Sweep effort and the Earth Day Community Celebration each spring and the 4th grade poster contest for the annual Low Bridge High Water Celebration. Professionally, she is a board member of the NY Association of Local Government Record Managers. In her precious spare time, Erica reports that she listens to podcasts, walks the family dogs, and dreams of travel.

Due to Covid-19 many changes have taken place. We have new protocols for entering the building, new hand sanitizing stations at each door, and even a new barrier at the front counter. What has not changed is our commitment to our village residents and to our community. If you have a question about village services, or if you need help and you aren’t sure who to call, we will do our best to point you in the right direction. We will continue to support our youth, our senior citizens, and everyone in-between.

Be well.
**Community Updates**

**Farmers Market**
The Brockport Farmers Market is open Sundays from 8am-1pm on Market Street. Face coverings are required. Hand sanitizer available at each station for the public. No live performances this year, but terrific produce! Please be respectful of one another as you load up on healthy fruits, vegetables, meats, and homemade breads and treats!

**Summer Serenades Presents — Chris Wilson—**
August 20th 7-8:30pm

[www.chriswilson.us](http://www.chriswilson.us) Free Online Concert
Sponsored by the Greater Brockport Development Corporation
We hope to see you all in person to share musical performances next season!

**Erie Canal Mural Restoration Project**
The Village of Brockport was awarded an Erie Canalway IMPACT! grant to restore the Erie Canal Mural on the facade of 45 Main St., Brockport, NY (the Lift Bridge Book Shop Building). Originally installed in August of 2010, the artwork has failed to endure the ravages of weather and time. Stacy Kirby, artist, will reconstruct the mural on durable panels to be installed over the existing image, painted on the brickwork. When complete, the mural will join the collection of public art works currently owned and maintained by the Village of Brockport.

Grant funding provides $7,000 for the $14,000 project; the panels will be installed with $2,000 of in-kind service from the Village DPW. Installation is anticipated for the end of October.

That leaves $5,000 needed from other sources - An opportunity for you to be part of this placemaking project.

We invite you to consider a donation in name of Bill Andrews, in honor of his 90th birthday this August. Bill has played a key role in establishing public art projects throughout Brockport and is unparalleled in his contributions to the historic preservation, interpretation and understanding of our community.

Our goal is to raise 90 donations of $50 or more —for a project that exemplifies Bill Andrews’ Brockport spirit.

If interested, checks made payable to the Village of Brockport with “Mural Project 2020” on the item line can be mailed to 127 Main St., Brockport, NY 14420. Donations of $100.00 or more will be recognized on the mural, if requested, on a scroll painted onto the lower left corner of the new mural installation. Any short-fall will be made up by the building owners, Archie and Patty Kutz.

**West Side Historic District Survey:** Bero Architecture PLLC has been conducting an architectural survey in the West Side neighborhood. Survey staff will be photographing and recording observations about the exteriors of the buildings; this information will be used to prepare a State and National Register Historic District nomination for the area. The project is sponsored by the Village of Brockport and funded in part by a grant from the State of New York’s Certified Local Government program. The West Side Historic District will be the third State and National Register-listed district in Brockport, joining the Main Street Historic District and Park Avenue / State Street Historic District. If you have questions about this program or what a designation might mean for your property please visit www.brockportny.org or call Erica Linden at (585) 637-5300 x112.
Dear SUNY Brockport Students,

Greetings and welcome to the Village of Brockport. You are coming to campus during an historic and unprecedented time.

You are part of our community, and your health and safety are as important as that of our permanent residents. All of us have just lived through six months of an unending pandemic and we want it to end. But for that to happen we must each do our part.

To keep the virus from spiking and spreading, we must all be vigilant and follow the guidelines that have been set by the CDC and the State of New York. The Village and College are on the same page when it comes to following those guidelines. The College has provided you with detailed instruction for conduct on campus. I write to share the Village of Brockport’s expectations for when you are off-campus. Be advised that the College’s Code of Student Conduct applies off campus as well as on campus.

Masks, Social Distancing, Hand Hygiene

Foremost among these are adhering to social distancing, mask wearing, and regular handwashing. Please have a mask with you at all times and wear it in any situation where you cannot be 6 feet or more away from others. Be advised that our local businesses, supermarkets, and big box stores require you to wear masks to enter and to use hand sanitizer upon entering. As the weather cools, wearing masks will become even more important as people spend more time indoors in closed spaces.

Gatherings

Large gatherings are especially concerning. For those of you who live off-campus in our community, we understand that your housemates are your local family here. Enjoy their company, but please do not host parties. If you do so, the Brockport police (BPD) can and will disperse these gatherings. Our police wear body cameras. Video footage is shared with the Office of Student Conduct at the College and violators are subject to appropriate disciplinary action. Our police look for respectful, voluntary compliance, but they may have no other option than to issue a ticket.

Bars and Restaurants

For those of you who are of legal age, Village bars and restaurants serving alcohol have been given strict guidelines by Governor Cuomo in order to remain open. Crowding and standing in groups to drink can lead to revocation of the establishment’s liquor license and closure by the State Liquor Authority. Our bar owners have a good relationship with our police who are working with them to follow these guidelines.

One reason for this highly unusual welcome is that Brockport residents are understandably concerned about the influx of 7000 students at the end of August. We have had, and currently have, COVID cases in Brockport and no one wants to see the virus spike again. Equally important, I do not want to see the College forced to terminate in-class instruction requiring students to return home to continue their college courses online. These measures are to protect the entire community, residents and students alike.

Despite all these regulations I wish you a great college experience in 2020-21 at SUNY Brockport. The Village of Brockport is a friendly community that has hosted college students for over 150 years; your youth and energy are an enduring and welcome asset to our community.

With best wishes for a safe, successful, and productive college year,

Margay Blackman
Mayor