

From the Supervisor's Desk

Last year when I thought about what this Town Board might accomplish in 2020, I can assure you that confronting the coronavirus and dealing with an application for a 700+ acre solar panel project in Craryville were nowhere on the list.

The good news is that the members of this Town Board are working diligently and together - to confront both of these new challenges and also do many good things on behalf of the people of Copake.

As you know, I have appointed Deputy Supervisor Richard Wolf to be the Board's point person on the solar situation. As for the coronavirus - the Board of Supervisors was briefed by the Columbia County Department of Health at our March meeting. It is clear that the Department is taking this public health challenge very seriously. They are working with the New York State Department of Health and Columbia Memorial Hospital to assure that our county is ready to address the needs of the community as we go forward.

The DOH made clear that tests are available in Columbia County. They not available for the asking, but if a person meets certain criteria, they can be tested. Testing is available at both the Hospital and the Rapid Care facility in Copake.

I have been informed by Copake Rapid Care that anyone wanting to be tested for COVID-19 should call ahead. Rapid Care has a 24-hour special hotline - 518-329-5902. If you have concerns that you may have the virus, you should not just arrive at the Rapid Care facility. Call the hotline first. If you are going to be tested you will be given an appointment and a provider will meet you outside to administer the test.

The Town Board is also concerned about how the Town should be reacting to the coronavirus outbreak. We need to think about such things as what services are essential, whether employees can work from home, and whether meetings should be cancelled. At our March Town Board meeting we created a Public Health Emergency Taskforce and appointed Rus Davis, Dave Proper and Janet Mackin as members. They will meet to consider steps the Town should be taken and advise the Town Board.

As we move forward, it is very clear that the best advice is still the common sense advice that we have heard since we were young: wash your hands, cover your mouth when you cough, and please - stay at home if you are sick! This is a time for prudence not panic. To get the best, most up to date information, call or go to the [Columbia County Department of Health website](#), or the [NYS Department of Health website](#), or the [CDC website](#). Or speak to your personal physician.

Meantime, in other business, the Town Board took the following actions:

Numerous Resolutions were passed to streamline Board functions and assure that our practices were consistent with our Policy Manual. We set specific spending limits on

various Town Departments, instituted certain financial controls and fine-tuned some procedures in Town administration. The Resolutions will be posted on the [Town Board page of our website](#).

Fiber optic service will be installed in the Town Hall to improve internet service. Stosh Gansowski is exploring broadband for the Town Garage and the Park Building, and the Town Board authorized him to move forward on those matters.

The Town Board agreed to reinstall a spotlight on the American Flag in front of the Town Hall.

Ten applications for the new Copake Economic Development Advisory Committee were acknowledged, and it was agreed that the applicants will be interviewed on a date to be announced.

A date was set for the interview of applicants for the position of Animal Control Officer.

As liaison to the Building Department, Stosh Gansowski announced that Copake residents need not actually sign a complaint in order to report what they believe is a code violation.

A committee was appointed to review the items now displayed in the public areas of Town Hall (the Courtroom, the Rheinstrom Conference Room and the hallways). The committee will recommend to the Board which items should be retained and assist in the rehangings of items. The Copake residents appointed to the committee are Town Historian Howard Blue, Copake artist Nick Fritsch and long time Town Clerk and Deputy Clerk Vana Hotaling.

The Board will pass a resolution at the June 11, 2020 Town Board meeting making Copake a Purple Heart Town. A sign announcing the designation is being designed by the Columbia County Sign Shop. The Town Board is asking the community for help in identifying Purple Heart recipients.

If you wish to discuss any of this with me, please do not hesitate to call me at 518-329-1234 Ext 1. My office hours are Monday afternoons 1:00pm to 5:00pm or by appointment.

Keep calm and keep washing your hands.

Jeanne E. Mettler

Supervisor