

# Newsletter



December 2008

## **PARKS AND RECREATION**

The Parks & Recreation Board would like to thank everyone who participated in and supported the **Annual Halloween Parade**. The **Senior Spaghetti Supper**, held in September, was an enjoyable evening for all who attended.

Enclosed is a calendar of events to be sponsored by the Parks and Recreation Board for 2009. We look forward to your participation in and support of these exciting events!

**Please join us for our final 2008 activities:**

**December 6<sup>th</sup> - Annual Tree Lighting Ceremony** at Heritage Park (Main Street Bridge) 6 pm.

**December 13<sup>th</sup> - Children's Christmas Party** 2 pm at Borough Hall (pre-registration required)

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**PLEASE NOTE:** the Borough Offices will be closed Nov. 27<sup>th</sup> and Nov. 28<sup>th</sup> for Thanksgiving, December 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> for Christmas and January 1<sup>st</sup> and January 2<sup>nd</sup> for New Year's. The office will also be closing early on December 24<sup>th</sup> and December 31<sup>st</sup>. Regular business hours are 8:00 am to 4:00 pm unless otherwise posted. There is a drop box next to the rear entrance for your convenience.

## **COMMUNITY CALENDAR**

- **Borough Council:** 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Mondays of each month at 7 pm.
- **Parks and Recreation Board:** 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each month at 7 pm.
- **Planning Commission:** 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of each month at 7 pm.
- **Zoning Hearing Board:** last Tuesday of each month at 7 pm as required
- **American Legion Post 31:** 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of each month (September through June).
- **Volunteer Fire Company:** Last Thursday of each month.

## **MAIN STREET REALIGNMENT PROJECT**

Thank you to everyone for your patience during the construction of the Main Street re-alignment. The ribbon cutting ceremony was held on November 1<sup>st</sup> and attended by several residents along with State Representative Robert Freeman and Congressman Charlie Dent. The new road opened for traffic on Friday, November 7<sup>th</sup>. Hopefully you have taken the time to drive the new route. The chain link fence around the old railroad bridge structure is a temporary safety measure until the pedestrian and bike path in the old railroad right-of-way is completed.

## **FROM THE TAX COLLECTOR**

All Borough 2008 Real Estate Taxes must be received by the tax collector, Davina Gallich, before December 15, 2008. After that the taxes get sent to Northampton County for collection and / or sheriff's sale. Bethlehem Area School District taxes are no longer being collected by the Borough Tax Collector. For any questions regarding school taxes you must contact the school district directly.

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**Membership in the Bethlehem Area Public Library is FREE** to Freemansburg residents. The Book Mobile stops at the Freemansburg Elementary School on Thursdays. For Library hours and Book Mobile times, call 610-867-3761.

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The Parks and Recreation Board is looking for volunteers. There are also openings for alternates on the Zoning Hearing Board and the Civil Service Commission. If you are interested in any of these positions, please contact the Borough office at 610-866-2220 x 101 Deb or 102 Lisa.

## **2009 SEWER and SANITATION BILLING SCHEDULE**

**Sewer Billings:** The fourth quarter 2008 sewer bills are due January 15, 2009.

**Sanitation Billings:** The Base Rate for the annual Sanitation (garbage) billing is due by December 5, 2008. This is for the 8/1/08 to 7/31/09 collection period. After December 5<sup>th</sup>, a 10% penalty will be assessed on the total amount due. A schedule of the garbage and recycling collection dates for 2009 is enclosed. Because of the end of the contract the calendar is only through July 31, 2009.

**New for 2009:** To save on postage, paper, and processing time, we will be trying something a little different in 2009. The sewer will be bill in four month cycles instead of three month cycles. Therefore, instead of four invoices at \$75 each, there will be three invoices at \$100 each. This is not a rate increase! The annual sewer billing rate will remain the same. There will still be a discount period for payment in full at the beginning of the year. **The sewer billing schedule will be as follows:**

1<sup>st</sup> billing: 2/1/09 for Jan/Feb/Mar/Apr  
2<sup>nd</sup> billing: 5/1/09 for May/Jun/Jul/Aug  
3<sup>rd</sup> billing: 11/1/09 for Sep/Oct/Nov/Dec

There will be one sanitation billing for August 2009 to December 2009. **The sanitation bill will be mailed approximately 8/1/09.** Until the new contract is bid we do not know what the new rate will be.

## **SNOW REMOVAL FROM SIDEWALKS**

Please be reminded, in accordance with Borough ordinance #150-70, "...the responsibility for removal of snow, ice and other obstructions or hazards from pedestrian walkways..." is "...the owner, occupant, possessor, tenant, caretaker or groundskeeper..." of the property "...within 24 hours after the snow, ice, other obstruction or hazard has fallen, formed or appeared..." This is for everyone's safety, especially the children walking to and from school. Police will be enforcing this ordinance and there are penalties and fines for non-compliance.

## **SANITATION SURVEY RESULTS**

Thank you to everyone who participated in the sanitation survey. We had a 27.5% response rate. The following is a summary of those that responded, however copies of the full report are available at Borough Hall.

1. The savings associated with bag limits might not be significant enough to offset the customer dissatisfaction and enforcement issues that would result, however the contract can be bid both ways to see if there are significant savings
2. The respondents are generally satisfied with the services offered by the current hauler
3. There was no definitive differentiation for the preference of the implementation of a rate increase. Respondents were generally satisfied with the billing system as it is currently administrated - paying in full for the year with discount and installment payment options
4. Recycling collection should be bid both weekly and bi-weekly. Respondents want to recycle but do not want to pay extra for additional collection
5. The ability to dispose of bulky items is a priority to the respondents and should continue with the new contract
6. The disposal of yard and leaf debris is an issue for the majority of respondents. The preference is for curbside pick up instead of drop off only, but the consensus is some option is better than no option. Christmas tree disposal is not a high priority, but would be utilized if available
6. There is some interest for backyard composting but by only a small percentage of the respondents
7. Respondents were generally amenable to any day as the collection day

## **BUILDING & ZONING PERMITS AND CHANGES IN RESIDENCY**

Permits are required for all building and zoning projects, as well as changes in occupancy, whether it be selling or renting a property. Building permits include any structural, electrical, and/or plumbing improvements to your business or residence. Please contact the Borough offices when you are planning a project to determine what permits and / or approvals are required.

## **STREETS / PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT**

We would like to let everyone know our snow plowing plan: In general, we try to keep the hills and the most - traveled routes passable. We will normally have two trucks out during a storm. One truck will concentrate on the busier routes and hills, the second truck will make single passes on the side streets to keep a lane of travel open.

As soon as the snow stops we will again make sure the hills and busier routes are clear, moving on to the other streets, plowing curb to curb where possible, one street at a time. If you can wait until your street is plowed to finish clearing your driveway, please do so. With the weight of the snow we cannot turn the plows to avoid pushing the snow in front of the driveways.

Also, if you put your garbage cans or other debris on the alley side of your property, please make sure it is far enough back to allow passage of the plows. And remember, public roads are done first, with alleys last.

## **ADDITIONAL SNOW REMINDERS**

- If you have off street parking please use it during snow storms. With fewer parked cars to work around, it is easier and safer for the workers.
- Do not pile or throw snow into the street. It is not only a hazard, it's against the law!
- The Borough Hall rear parking lot is available for temporary parking in the event of a storm.
- When snow emergency is in effect, please restrict non-essential travel.
- Snow is a time for fun for your children. For their safety, please instruct them to stay clear of traffic and snow plows.

***From the Mayor, Borough Council, Borough Staff and Police Department, we wish everyone a Happy and Safe Holiday Season.***

*Previous Issues*

*June 2005 Newsletter*

<http://www.boroughoffreemansburg.org/NewsletterJune2005.pdf>

*September 2005 Newsletter*

<http://www.boroughoffreemansburg.org/NewsletterSeptember2005.pdf>

*December 2005 Newsletter*

<http://www.boroughoffreemansburg.org/NewsletterDecember2005.pdf>

*March 2006 Newsletter*

<http://www.boroughoffreemansburg.org/NewsletterMarch2006.pdf>

*May 2006 newsletter*

<http://www.boroughoffreemansburg.org/NewsletterMay2006.pdf>

*August 2006 Newsletter*

<http://www.boroughoffreemansburg.org/NewsletterAugust2006.pdf>

*December 2006 Newsletter*

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*March 2007 Newsletter*

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*September 2007 Newsletter*

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*December 2007 Newsletter*

<http://www.boroughoffreemansburg.org/NewsletterDecember2007.pdf>

*March 2008 Newsletter*

<http://www.boroughoffreemansburg.org/NewsletterMarch2008.pdf>