



Volume VI Issue 1

Town of Bethlehem e-Newsletter

February 2012

445 Delaware Avenue, Delmar, NY 12054
518.439.4955

www.townofbethlehem.org

Town Board

John Clarkson, Supervisor
Joann Dawson, Board Member
Kyle Kotary, Board Member
Jeffrey Kuhn, Board Member
George Lenhardt, Board Member

February Meeting Schedule

All meetings are held at the Town Hall unless otherwise indicated

Zoning Board of Appeals

Wednesday, February 1, 7:00 p.m.

Planning Board

Tuesday, February 7, 6:00 p.m.

Town Board

Wednesday, February 8, 7:00 p.m.

Zoning Board of Appeals

Wednesday, February 15, 7:00 p.m.

Development Planning Committee

Thursday, February 16, 10:00 a.m.

Planning Board

Tuesday, February 21, 6:00 p.m.

Town Board

Wednesday, February 22, 7:00 p.m.

Industrial Development Agency Audit Committee

Friday, February 24, 7:15 a.m.

PaTHs Committee

Tuesday, February 28, 7:00 p.m.

For agendas and to verify locations and times, see:

www.townofbethlehem.org/pages/agenda/agenda.asp

Upcoming Dates to Remember

Town's No Parking Ordinance is in effect until April 15, 2012

Thursday, February 2 - Groundhog Day

Saturday, February 4 - Middle and High School Ski Club trip to Mount Snow

Monday, February 6 - Food Stamp Assistance and Medicaid Representative at Town Hall, appointment 439-4955 x1176

Thursday, February 9 - Free Senior Legal Services Program at Town Hall, appointment 439-4955 x1176

Tuesday, February 14 - Car Seat Check, free, reservation required, 439-9973

Tuesday, February 14 - St. Valentine's Day

Friday, February 17 - SCREAMS, Valentine's Dance

Saturday, February 18 - Middle and High School Ski Club trip to Okemo

Monday, February 20 - Town Offices closed for Presidents' Day
Abraham Lincoln's birthday - February 12
George Washington's birthday - February 22

Tuesday, March 6 - Learn more about Medicare Parts A, B, C, D, EPIC and various insurance supplements for Seniors, free, register by calling 439-4955, ext. 1176

Letter from Town Supervisor John Clarkson

Bethlehem's Greatest Asset – Our Citizens

In the annual State of the Town address, I said that Bethlehem is in good condition. Despite the economic downturn and fiscal difficulties, life in our town for most of our residents is a good one. We live in a beautiful place, with wonderful people and are in better shape than many other municipalities. We also have far more than our fair share of talented, committed and energetic individuals. As a financial analyst might say, “the fundamentals are good.”



Despite these underlying strengths, there is a lot of work to be done to maintain the good life that we value. Town finances are on an unsustainable course, with expenses growing faster than revenues. Past budgets have depleted reserves, which leaves few resources to shelter us from fiscal reality. The situation is not desperate, but it is serious. We have to find new ways of doing business, or face hard choices to cut services, impose or raise user fees, or find other ways to raise revenues.

One way to do this is to make sure the Town takes full advantage of the commitment, energy and talents of our citizenry. For example, I'm already gathering a group of budget experts to help address town financial issues, on a volunteer basis. They'll help us find areas where we can productively share service, modernize, or otherwise find economies. This is the top priority for 2012, and I'm going to consider any reasonable change that helps restore structural balance to our budget.

In Bethlehem, we never have difficulty putting together group of people to tackle a problem, or finding citizen volunteers with just the right skills to handle any situation. The people who stepped up to fill an interim town board seat are an excellent example. The skills and knowledge offered by this group were truly impressive, including strong community leadership and careers demonstrating great ability and character. I'm proud of the choice we made in George Lenhardt, who will serve us well, and in a nonpartisan fashion, until the voters can directly choose a new board member. But I'm even more proud that so many highly qualified people offered to be considered. Their willingness to do so, and the outstanding qualities they offered, is a testament to our strength as a community.

One of the things we need to do to ensure that we reach our highest potential is to follow through on the good ideas put together by citizens' advisory groups. For example, the work of the Delaware Avenue and 9W study groups was excellent, and yet we haven't made nearly enough progress on these two vital gateways to Bethlehem.

It's time to get going by identifying near-term achievable solutions, and then moving forward. I will work with the business community and civic groups to see what we can do right now to make Delaware Avenue the premier main street in the region, and a shining example of all that Bethlehem has to offer. If we roll up our sleeves and find just a few resources, plant some trees and work together, I know we can kick it up a notch. And we should be asking the same questions about an action plan for 9W, because a study on the shelf doesn't move us forward.

We should also revisit our town's comprehensive plan and land use initiatives. It's time to evaluate the first seven years of the plan, and reach out to the citizens to get their input on its many goals. These include promoting a stronger nonresidential tax base, mixed-use development in some areas, choices in housing, particularly for seniors, and preservation of natural areas and open space. I know there is both support for, and concern about, development. We need to be sure that the policies we follow are the best choices we can make together as a community.

Bethlehem should be able to create an efficient, modern government that serves as a model for suburban towns across the state, and we should also be a model for engaging politics, ethics and civic involvement. I will not be satisfied until Bethlehem stands out as a shining example to every community in the region. That is both our privilege and responsibility.

NEW! TOWN OF BETHLEHEM ANNOUNCES ONLINE PROPERTY TAX PAYMENTS

The Town of Bethlehem Receiver of Taxes Nancy Mendick, in conjunction with the MIS Department, announces that the Town is now providing Town citizens with online access to their real property tax bills and will also be accepting online payments through the Town's website located at <http://www.townofbethlehem.org/pages/Tax/taxPaymentInfo.asp>.

The system being utilized by the Town was developed in partnership with MuniTrax™, a New York-based internet content services provider to local governments throughout the northeast United States. The system was customized specifically for the Town and the residents of the Town of Bethlehem and effectively balances convenient citizen access to needed information while maintaining a sophisticated level of data security. There was no cost to the Town for the new system.

Taxpayers may register online for free access to their Property/School tax statements. They may log in via an internet connection at any time to view, print, or check the payment status of their real property tax bills. Additionally, for a "convenience fee," taxpayers will also be able to pay their tax bills online using a credit card, debit card or Automatic Clearing House (ACH)/Electronic Check payment (*2.5% of total amount due for credit cards, \$4.95 flat fee for debit cards and \$2.00 flat fee for electronic checks*).

To learn more about the system, please feel free to visit <http://www.townofbethlehem.org/pages/OnlineServices/OnlineServices.asp> or contact Receiver of Taxes Nancy Mendick's office at (518) 439-4955.

Auction - IBM Laptop, Servers, Printers and more; bids due by 2/4

Please visit <http://www.auctionsinternational.com/display.cgi?categories=296> for photos and detailed information.

Advisory Group Members Wanted, apply by February 7

The Town of Bethlehem is looking for volunteers to serve on three newly formed advisory groups. These advisory groups will focus on Budget, Ethics and Governance. A detailed description of these groups can be found on the Town of Bethlehem's Human Resource Page on our website at <http://www.townofbethlehem.org/pages/HR/HRJobPostings.asp>.

If you would like to be considered for appointment on one of these boards, please send your cover letter and resume by February 7, 2012 to Mary Tremblay-Glassman, Director of Human Resources, 445 Delaware Ave, Delmar, NY 12054.

Bethlehem Industrial Development Agency Members Wanted, apply by February 7

The Town Board will soon be making two appointments to vacancies on the Town of Bethlehem's Industrial Development Agency (BIDA). The overall membership of the Agency should include individuals with experience and skills in public and private finance, economic development, business management, public policy, and other areas the Town Board considers relevant.

The Governance Committee of the BIDA recommends that the Town Board consider qualifications which include: personal and professional integrity, good business judgment, demonstrated commitment to the community, and relevant experience and skills which will enable the agency to carry out its mission of enhancing economic development in the Town.

For more details on the functions and responsibilities of the BIDA please visit bethlehemida.com.

Please send your cover letter and resume by February 7, 2012 to Mary Tremblay-Glassman, Director of Human Resources, 445 Delaware Ave, Delmar, NY 12054.

Annual Review for Agricultural Districts 2/1-3/1



Please be advised that the 30-day annual review period for [Albany County Agricultural Districts](#) begins on February 1.

During this period, landowners can apply to have predominantly viable agricultural land included in a certified Agricultural District.

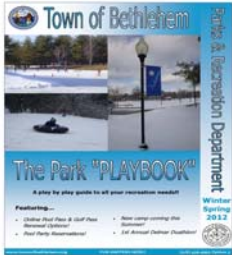
At the end of the 30-day open period, the County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board will review the applications and report its recommendations to the County Legislature. Based on these recommendations and comments received from a public hearing, the Legislature will forward proposed modifications to the Districts to the Commissioner of NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets for approval. Municipalities whose territory encompasses the lands which are proposed to be included in an agricultural district will receive a map with parcel numbers of the proposed inclusions and will be notified directly in writing of the time, date and location of the public hearing.

If you have any questions about the [Agricultural District review process](#), you may go to the County's website at <http://albanycounty.com/edcp/agDistricts.asp?id=1165>.



Parks and Recreation Department News

2012 Winter/Spring Activity Registration



We are currently accepting 2012 winter / spring registrations. They can be submitted in person, over the phone or through our *online registration process*.

The 2012 Winter / Spring Park "Playbook" will provide you with our complete schedule of activities and special events. This brochure can also be accessed through the town web site at: <http://www.townofbethlehem.org/pages/parksMain/parksBroch.asp>

Renew Your Pool Pass Online

Avoid waiting in lines and renew online at your convenience! This option is only available to those residents who own property in the Town of Bethlehem. You may also complete our pool pass renewal form from the park playbook. Please note that this renewal option is only for passes issued from 2008 and on.

ABOUT ONLINE REGISTRATION AND PASS RENEWAL

Use your Household ID # and password to register for activities and renew your pool/golf pass. If you are new to online registration or have forgotten your ID # and Password, a link is available in the Online Registration System.

This ID # will be your permanent User Name for all future online registrations. You will now be able to:

- ~Register for activities from your home or office.
- ~Renew your pool and golf passes
- ~Receive e-mail confirmations of online registrations.
- ~View facility calendars to check date availability of rental pavilions

<http://www.townofbethlehem.org>. Links are available from the home page of the Town website under Online Services and the Parks and Recreation Department.

Renew or Purchase Your Colonial Acres Season Pass Now and Receive 2 FREE guest passes!

Hurry this offer is only valid until March 31. Renew online or mail in the application form.

<http://www.townofbethlehem.org/images/parks/2012GolfCourseSeasonPassApplication.pdf>



Delmar Duathlon - NEW in 2012!

Sunday, April 22, 8:00 a.m. at Elm Avenue Park

This first ever event in the Town of Bethlehem will feature a 2 mile run followed by a 10 mile bike ride concluding with another 2 mile run. This special event is co-sponsored by the Town of Bethlehem Parks and Recreation Department and the Bethlehem area YMCA. For complete race details and registration information visit the Town of Bethlehem Special Events web Page: <http://www.townofbethlehem.org/pages/parksMain/parksEvents.asp>

SCREAMS Club – Valentine Dance / Skating Party

Students Craving Really Exciting Activities at the Middle School (**SCREAMS**)



A Valentine Dance / Skating Party will be held Friday, February 17, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. at the Elm Avenue Park Skating Rink and Warming Area. The event is open to all Middle School students who reside in the Town of Bethlehem or Bethlehem Central School District. The evening will feature a DJ, dancing and skating (weather permitting, bring your own skates). The snack bar will be open. Chaperones are needed. Please call Jason Gallo at 439-4955 x1604 if you can help.



Pavilion Reservations for 2012

Residents of the Town or Town based organizations may reserve the pavilions at Elm Avenue Park, Henry Hudson Park and Maple Ridge Park for recreational functions beginning January 3rd. Permit forms and fee information are available on the town website. Permits for all users will be issued on a first come, first paid basis. Pavilion availability may be viewed online via our new system <https://www.townofbethlehem.org/parksonline>.

Middle and High School Ski Club

Saturday, February 4 - Mount Snow
Saturday, February 18 - Okemo



Ski or snowboard at many ski resorts this winter. Beginners are welcome! Trip destinations vary so watch for flyers this month for information!



All your Ski Club Information and Permission Slips are available on-line at <http://www.townofbethlehem.org/pages/parksMain/parksSkiClub.asp>. Registration needs to be submitted to the Parks Office. Mr. Tyler leads the Middle School Club (Room 142) and Mr. Mooney leads the High School Club (Room A 107).

- Permission slips & dues are required prior to attending your first trip.
- Bus fees are required prior to attending each trip.
- Lift ticket, rentals & lessons are paid for the morning of, prior to departure.

Pool Party Reservations

Back by popular demand residents with a valid pool pass may reserve the "arts and crafts" shelter and surrounding grass area near Splash Islands for parties. It's just \$125 for up to 20 party attendees. Reservations are currently being accepted http://www.townofbethlehem.org/images/parks/Form_PoolParty.pdf.

Dog Park Tags for 2012



Tags for 2012 are \$30 and \$15 for dog owners who are senior citizens and are mandatory beginning January 1. Tags are only available at the Town Clerk's office in the Town Hall.

Apply for Summer Jobs Now

Applications for summer jobs are now available at the Parks and Recreation office or you can download one from the town website at: <http://www.townofbethlehem.org/pages/forms/showforms.asp#Parks> All applications must be received by April 1, 2012. Job opportunities include: Lifeguard, Pool or Golf Course Attendant, Swim Instructor, Maintenance (park and golf course), Camp Counselor, Ranger, Office Clerk, and many other program leaders and supervisors.

Did You Know?

Law Regarding Appropriate Shelter for Dogs



There is a New York State law that requires that dogs kept outdoors be provided with a waterproof, structurally sound and adequately insulated shelter that must allow freedom of movement and normal postural adjustments. The shelter and the area immediately surrounding it must be regularly cleaned.



For more information regarding the law, please see <http://public.leginfo.state.ny.us/menugetf.cgi?COMMONQUERY=LAWS>, select AGM for Agriculture and Markets, then Article 26 - Animals, and then Article 353-B "Appropriate shelter for dogs left outdoors."

From the Town Historian

Do you know where the name Normans Kill comes from? Who settled in what was to become Bethlehem in the 1650s? What sought after commodity was found under Bethlehem's soil? Did you know the owner of Historic Cherry Hill was Bethlehem's first supervisor? These and other questions are answered in historian Susan Leath's talk *Bethlehem Basics*. If your group is interested in scheduling a presentation, please feel free to contact her. [sleath @ townofbethlehem.org](mailto:sleath@townofbethlehem.org)

Youth Employment Service

Need part-time help?



The [Youth Employment Service \(Y.E.S.\)](#) has a large database of reliable teens eager for part-time work. Town of Bethlehem residents needing help with housework, yard work, baby-sitting, animal care or handyman work should contact Y.E.S. Businesses can also contact the service for help finding part-time staff.



Want some extra cash?

The Youth Employment Service (YES) is a free, year round job matching program for teens. Town of Bethlehem residents, ages 14-21, can register with YES at the Parks and Recreation office located at Elm Avenue Park.

For more information, contact the Y.E.S. Director, Rachel Promutico, at 439-4955 ext. 1608 or YES@townofbethlehem.org

H.E.A.P. Application Assistance 2011-2012 Heating Season



The Home Energy Assistance Program helps individuals on fixed or lower incomes (financial guidelines of \$2,129 per month for 1 individual or \$2,784 for 2 individuals) with energy-related bills.

Outreach workers Jane Sanders, Will Vail and Alice Parker are available to assist residents of the Town of Bethlehem age 60 and over with H.E.A.P applications Monday through Friday by appointment. To schedule an appointment, call 439-4955, #1173, #1174 or #1175. Documents to bring: ID, Birth Certificates, Marriage Certificate (if applicable), Social Security Cards, Shelter Expenses, and Proof of Income (last 4 weeks, 2 biweekly).

For persons under age 60, representatives are available to do HEAP applications on the following date: Wednesday, February 15th from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at Bethlehem Town Hall. Available for all County residents regardless of age. (Appointments preferred, but not required.)

If you live in the Glenmont or Selkirk area, Choices in Faith Plaza on Rt. 9W in Ravena may be more convenient. To schedule an appointment, call 756-8650.

If you have a "shut-off" notice and are applying for Emergency H.E.A.P., proof of resources should include bank accounts, stocks, bonds, etc.

Senior Services News

Shopping Center Trip

Monday, February 6 to Colonie Center and Northway Mall

Caregiver's Support Group

Wednesday, February 22

Are you caring for a loved one who has been diagnosed with Alzheimer's or another dementia? Join us on the fourth Wednesday of each month from 10:30 a.m. - noon at Bethlehem Town Hall. Transportation can be arranged by calling 439-4955, extension 1176.

The group is co-sponsored by the Bethlehem Senior Services and the Alzheimer's Association.

Senior Legal Services Program

Thursday, February 9

Where: Bethlehem Town Hall
Appointments: 439-4955 #1176

The Senior Legal Services Program provides legal services for residents of Albany County who are 60 years of age or older. The program is funded by the Albany County Department for Aging and is staffed through the Legal Aid Society of Northeastern New York, Inc. If you cannot make this month's date, this program generally has dates once per month, contact one of the Outreach workers for more information.

There is no cost for this program.

A.A.R.P. Tax Counseling Service

Bethlehem Senior Services will offer A.A.R.P.'s Income Tax Assistance Program on Wednesdays from February 8th through April 11th from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., **by appointment**, at the Bethlehem Town Hall, 445 Delaware Avenue in Delmar.

Appointments may be made by calling 439-4955, #1176. Please bring copies of your 2010 Federal and State returns, your 2011 W-2 and 1099 forms and receipts for contributions, interest, medical bills, property and school tax receipts.



Perhaps your New Year's resolution is to begin attending a new program series that focuses on various health and wellness issues. Programs will be held on Fridays from 1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m., January through March, at Bethlehem Town Hall, 445 Delaware Avenue, Delmar. See the Senior Services Newsletter for more details.

Senior Services Newsletter

To see all of the interesting activities, events, programs and services provided by Town's Senior Services department, pick up a copy of the bi-monthly Senior Services newsletter at the Senior Services Department, Room 110 at the Town Hall, on Senior Services transportation vehicles or on the Town's web site at <http://www.townofbethlehem.org/pages/Seniors/SeniorsBrochures.asp>.

Not just for Seniors!

Some programs may have age restrictions, many do not (for example, Food Pantry, HEAP, LawHelp/NY, volunteers, Caregiver programs), please call for specifics, 439-4955. In order to participate in any programs or to volunteer, an [Intake Form](#) MUST be filled out first. Intake forms are available in the Senior Services office or [on the Town's web site](#).



Did You Know?



For information regarding winter road maintenance, please visit the Highway Department's page
<http://www.townofbethlehem.org/pages/Highway/highwayDeptWinter.asp>

News from BEMO **Bethlehem Emergency Management Office**

Check your home for these Winter weather-related recalled products

<http://www.cpsc.gov/cpscpub/prerele/prhtml12/12065.html>

Put a Freeze on Winter Fires

The [U.S. Fire Administration](#) (USFA) and the [National Fire Protection Association](#) (NFPA) are reminding individuals and communities that fire safety awareness and efforts are especially important in the coming months. To support this effort, the USFA and NFPA are sponsoring a special initiative - Put a Freeze on Winter Fires – to help get the word out about home fire safety.

Each winter, an estimated 108,400 home fires occur in the United States, resulting in approximately 945 deaths and \$1.7 billion in property loss. Cooking is the leading cause of winter home fires and winter storms can cause people to turn to alternative heating sources, such as space heaters, which account for about one third of home heating fires and approximately 80 percent of home heating fire deaths.

Winter fires can be prevented! The following fire safety tips can help maintain a fire-safe home this winter season:

- Stay in the kitchen when cooking something on top of the stove or when grilling or broiling food.
- Keep anything that can burn at least three feet away from space heaters, woodstoves, etc.
- Replace damaged electrical or extension cords.
- Never use the oven or stovetop to heat a home; carbon monoxide gas can kill people and pets.
- Avoid using lighted candles; try flameless candles instead.

Roughly two-thirds of home fire deaths resulted from fires in properties without working smoke alarms

In 2005-2009, roughly two-thirds of home fire deaths resulted from fires in properties without working smoke alarms, according to the report "Smoke Alarms in U.S. Home Fires," released by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). The report examines the number of reported fires in U.S. households with and without working smoke alarms, as well as the effectiveness of smoke alarms in preventing fire-related deaths.

"Working smoke alarms are essential in saving lives from fire," said Lorraine Carli, vice president of communications for NFPA. "We know you can have as little as three minutes to get out if you have a fire before it becomes deadly. The early warning provided by smoke alarms gives you extra time to escape."

Read complete article at [nfpa.com](http://www.nfpa.com): New report focuses on smoke alarm effectiveness
(<http://www.nfpa.org/newsReleaseDetails.asp?categoryId=488&itemId=53774&cookie%5Ftest=1>)

Just a reminder

**The United States already requires smoke detectors on every level of every residence near all sleeping areas.
AND
All homes in New York are required by law to have a carbon monoxide detector.**



Upcoming Local Blood Drives

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Monday, February 20
1:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.
16 Elsmere Avenue, Delmar

Appointments appreciated, 1-800-GIVE-LIFE (1-800-448-3543). Walk-ins will be taken as time allows. Positive ID, such as a driver's license, is required.

If you choose and are eligible, you may donate double red cells at these drives.

See the Red Cross web site for more information or to schedule an appointment
<http://www.redcrossblood.org/make-donation>

If you cannot donate at a local drive, consider using one of the local Red Cross Donor Centers
33 Everett Road, Albany
or
Route 7 and Watt Street, Schenectady

Trees being trimmed by National Grid

National Grid are working on their tree trimming through 4/1/2012 in the Bethlehem area.

National Grid has been reaching out, through mailers, and door-to-door (Nelson Tree Service) to residents who may be affected by this process, to address any concerns of the residents.



Did You Know?



Fore ways to recycle unwanted clothing, items, etc., please see [Donating Reusables and Voluntary Recycling](#) and [Electronic Recycling at the Rupert Road Transfer Station](#).



REMINDER: Every year, the town has a "NO PARKING" ordinance that **begins on November 1** and continues through April 15. The law prohibits vehicles from parking on town streets and highways between the hours of 1:00 a.m. and 7:00 a.m. Vehicles parked in violation of the "NO PARKING" ordinance may be ticketed and/or towed at the owner's expense.



Albany County News



[Albany County Department of Health](#) Immunization Clinics, 4-6 p.m. on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month, **call** for appointment or more information, 447-4602 for infants and children, 447-4589 for college immunizations. College immunizations are available for a fee. Call ahead for confirmation of date and time.

Albany County Offers Free Prescription Discount Card to All County Residents

Program Provides Discounts Up to 20% on Brand Name Drugs, Up to 70% on Generic
Please see <http://www.albanycounty.com/departments/executive/news.asp?id=2644> for more information.

Foster and Adoption Families Needed!

For more information go to the [Albany County Department for Children, Youth and Families web site](#).

GREEN ALBANY COUNTY

An online resource to help residents and businesses lower energy use and save money on their utility bills

[Green Albany County](#) is a one stop information resource for energy saving tips, rebates, incentives and tax credits and green products and services. The website also highlights the County's energy efficiency projects and other green initiatives.

A monthly newsletter will also be available to residents who wish to provide their email addresses on the [GreenAlbanyCounty.org](#) website. The newsletter will provide information relating to clean energy grants and incentives, as well as ongoing projects and tips on how to become more energy efficient.



Did You Know?



- If you have a question to Town government or operations, you can visit our [Frequently Asked Questions page](#) on our web site to look for quick references.



We'd like to hear from you

Let us know what you think of this newsletter. Please use the feedback form on the Town's web site, www.townofbethlehem.org/pages/about/contact.asp

[Click here for a printable version of this e-Newsletter](#)

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If you were forwarded this e-newsletter and would like to receive this monthly information at your own e-mail address, please fill out the form at <http://www.townofbethlehem.org/pages/Newsletter/newsletter.asp>.

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web: <http://www.townofbethlehem.org>

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