

# Town of Rensselaerville Highway Department

## Monthly Town Board Report

March 11, 2010

1. **Apology:** I would like to apologize to the Town Board and again to the Supervisor for inadvertently overstepping my boundaries. I upgraded the lighting in the far bay because it was a hazard to walk through that area if a truck or piece of machinery was in there and the men couldn't see to work on the machinery. I had assumed that I could pay for it out of my budget, but after consulting with the Supervisor and Town Attorney I found out I was wrong. I will bring any future anticipated purchases to the attention of the Town Board for their approval. I think the energy savings and rebates will offset the cost of the new lights along with the savings on heating oil from utilizing the waste oil furnace.
2. **Acknowledgment:** I would like to thank Gary Packard for interrupting his schedule and coming to the rescue of an elderly couple near Crystal Lake who had called here in desperation trying to get someone to dig them out. People helping people, what a wonderful thing.
3. **Snow Storm 02/23/10:** How about that snowstorm!?! It started snowing on Tuesday and snowed for 6 days straight leaving us with unprecedented snowfall totals ranging from 3-4ft in Medusa and up to 5-6ft in Crystal Lake of heavy wet snow. At times it was snowing so hard it became difficult keeping up with it and we had to concentrate on keeping just the primary roads open. But with hard work, a won't quit attitude, and with one less person than last year, the men had all of our roads opened by the end of the day on Friday. Except for Durham, we were the only other town in the surrounding area to accomplish that. The men did a tremendous job. Of course we had our breakdowns (4 trucks at one time) and trucks getting stuck (3 at one time) because the snow was so wet and heavy. These older trucks took a beating, and so did the surrounding towns. Because of their trucks being down also, we plowed one road for the Town of Berne and two roads for the Town of Conesville.
4. **Possible Federal/State Assistance:** I have been in contact with Albany County Emergency Management Office and County Legislature Sandy Gordon about the extent of damages to collapsed buildings and the cost of plowing, removal of the snow and repairs to trucks and equipment. Our estimated cost for this storm is \$175k; Westerlo's was around \$150k. The EMO told me that because this storm was isolated to the hilltowns they don't think they will have enough to qualify for assistance.
5. **2010 Bids:** Town Clerk Kathy Hallenbeck has the materials bid package for 2010 and should be going out soon with Town Board approval.
6. **2010 Highway Contract:** Even though most of our ditches and culverts are buried, I am doing my best to come up with a highway contract for this year that I can present to the Town Board before the next monthly meeting. I may have to use County or State material bid pricing for now until we get our bids back.

7. **Equipment/Truck Replacement Plan:** I am still doing research on a realistic replacement plan for our aging fleet of trucks and equipment. What more reason do we need to have a plan in place than after this last snowstorm. I hope to have that for the Town Board before next months meeting.
8. **Route 85:** It looks like the next round for the selection of projects is going to be April 7th. If some of us want to start a letter writing campaign, now would be a good time. The public comment period is going on right now. You can send your letters to CDTC, One Park Place, Albany, NY 12205 or send an email by going to their web site CDTCMPO.org and click on 'comments'.
9. **Gas and Diesel Costs:** I just want to clarify that the Highway Department purchases all the gasoline and diesel for the Senior Vehicles, Ambulance, Transfer Station Truck and all three Fire Departments Vehicles without reimbursement. If this is true, and since all of these entities have their place in our budget, is it possible in future budgets there could be money allocated to the appropriate line items for reimbursement to the Highway Department and I could operate with a true budget?
10. **Storm Damage:** I took digital pictures of the storm damage to this building and the Transfer Station if they are needed for insurance purposes.
11. **Albany County DPW:** I wanted to thank Don Hempstead and Mike Francini from Albany County DPW for lending us their Snow Blower and Loader for use on Pond Hill Road and Gulf Road. With only two phone calls, they had the blower and operator here within two hours. People helping people.
12. **Accessibility:** I just wanted to remind everyone that the door to my office is always open and you can call me anytime if there is ever a question or problem or if you have some valuable information about your road that might be beneficial to the highway department. I have an email address ([twnhwy.rensselaerville@yahoo.com](mailto:twnhwy.rensselaerville@yahoo.com)). If you are happy with the way your town roads are being maintained, please tell the men. If you are unhappy, please tell me.

Respectfully Submitted,

Gary Zeh  
Highway Superintendent