

State of the Village Address
Mayor Paul Labas

As we work our way through January, I wanted to take a few moments to update everyone concerning the progress seen in Granville over the past year, as well as some of what we hope to accomplish in 2025. This past year has been a busy and productive one in many ways.

Culture & Recreation: First, we were able to complete several additional projects that promote outdoor recreation in and around the Village. This summer, we received a grant from the Granville Community Foundation to place two new Pickleball Courts in Mettowee Park. Additional support received from the Town of Granville and Granville Lions Club allowed us to fence in the new courts and provide equipment to maintain them (squeegees, etc.). I am happy to report that the courts saw sustained, consistent use throughout the fall season, with a nice mix of Village residents and folks visiting from out of town playing regularly. In addition to the Pickleball Courts, the Village received a grant through Glens Falls Hospital/Albany Medical Center to place benches, signage, and fruit trees in five locations along the Rail Trail. These stations provide a spot to rest/relax for those using the trail system, and/or partake of a healthy snack if they wish to. The Village is also working to procure additional grant funds for improvements including upgrades to the trail surface, lighting, public restrooms, a potable water station, and a bike repair station in hopes of facilitating further use in coming seasons.

Website Development: Through ARPA Funding, the Village also commissioned a new website called DiscoverGranvilleNY.com. If you have not had an opportunity to take a look at it yet, I encourage you to do so. The site contains detailed information concerning Village-sponsored events, as well directories for local service clubs, civic organizations, churches, restaurants, and lodging opportunities. The site is an excellent resource for our constituents, and also serves as a means to promote Granville and attract visitors and tourism to our community. Many thanks to Karin Rozell, Jackie Williams, and Sarah Bixby for their efforts in facilitating this project and keeping things fresh and current.

Stable Fiscal Policy: My administration also remains focused on maintaining stable budgets with low tax and water/sewer rent increases. Over the past eight years, the average levy increase seen by Village residents stands at 1.83%, while Water/Sewer rate increases have also been low or non-existent. Our reserves are adequate in all Funds and our fiscal stress score remains at zero. These are all healthy signs. For the coming year, we see increases slightly below the rate of inflation. We hope to keep the levy increase to 2.5% for the 2025-26 Budget, while increasing water/sewer rates by \$10 or less per year. These are challenging times, but the Board & I remain focused on keeping costs reasonable for our residents and this will remain a priority for us going forward.

Infrastructure Improvements: The Village announced a \$350K grant this past summer received through the Northern Border Region Commission (NBRC) to facilitate replacement of a section of Water Main from the Church Street Bridge to Main Street. This upgrade will increase the diameter of the pipe in this area from 4" to 10" and greatly increase supply/fire flows to Main Street and a fairly large cross-section of the Village upon completion. This should prove helpful in a number of ways, including driving down costs for fire insurance premiums for some residents. We anticipate that this project will be engineered, bid, and placed for construction over the next twelve months, with a target date for completion of January, 2026. The Village has long believed in investing in its infrastructure, placing a new, State-of-the-Art Water Plant in 2012, and upgrading our Wastewater Treatment Plant significantly three times over the past twenty years. When combined with stormwater upgrades and other distribution system

improvements, these investments allow the Village to provide one of the safest and cleanest infrastructure systems seen in Washington County.

Upcoming Projects: This summer, the Village will be working with the Town of Granville and Washington County to make streetscape improvements and repave County Route 24 from the junction at Pine Hill to the intersection with Route 22A in Middle Granville. In addition to replacement of several culverts and stormwater management already completed, this project will include some nice upgrades for bicyclists and pedestrians when it is finished. The Village is also working collaboratively with The Adirondack Transportation Council to incorporate informational and safety upgrades to the Rail Trail simultaneously as these improvements are being completed.

New and Upcoming Events: This fall, the Village hopes to work with the Chamber of Commerce and other Service Organizations to promote a new “Fall Festival” type of event. Ideas including a Smoke-off Competition, Pickleball Tournament, Apple Pie Contest, etc. are all being considered for a weekend in early October. We feel that an event like this would draw people to the Village while simultaneously showcasing much of what Granville has to offer.

In addition to the Fall Festival, the Village will continue partnering with the Chamber of Commerce to sponsor decorating efforts for the Holidays and the Annual Tree-Lighting Ceremony in Veterans Park on Saturday, December 6th. This event will be followed by the Annual Lighted Tractor Parade on Saturday, December 13th—it is not unusual for Granville to see some 6,000-8,000 attend the Tractor Parade annually—another event that attracts many patrons to the Village.

As we enter the heart of the winter season, I am happy to report that the State of the Village remains strong, and that Granville remains a great place to work, play, and raise a family. Best wishes to everyone in the Village for a happy and healthy year. If you have questions or concerns, please feel free to contact the staff at my office. They are glad to listen and provide information/guidance in whatever means possible to assist you.

Mayor Paul Labas