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'Blue Bag Bandit' Caught In Sherman

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SHERMAN — Village board of trustees learned at their regular meeting that the "blue bag bandit" has been caught after nearly three years.

Village of Sherman Code Enforcement and Zoning Officer Greg Gormley explained the "blue bag bandit" is an individual who has been disposing of blue cat litter bags at various places along roads in the village and town. Not only did the individual get this nickname from the blue bags, but also he wore a blue shirt and drove a blue car, he added.

According to Gormley, "some curious behavior led to Joseph Piszczek getting caught tossing his bags of cat litter off Titus Road near village owned property." Gormley said the situation was brought to his attention by residents witnessing someone throwing bags by the road as far back as October of 2022. Also, he said, Town of Sherman employees reported seeing blue bags accumulating off Armenian Road, visible from I-86.

Gormley said this was only one of several illegal trash disposal issues that the village is addressing. "Another

issue addressed was the significant increase in people burning their trash," he said. "This dangerous and illegal behavior is extremely toxic."

Gormley went on to say that the village is dealing with the issue of people storing accumulated trash in garages and other locations on their properties. "This is creating an excellent habitat for rats, which the state Department of Health said is becoming an issue statewide," he said.

Because this occurs on private property, it is difficult to deal with, Sherman Mayor Colleen Meeder said. "The village enforcement officer is limited to what is visible from the road, making enforcement of state laws and village zoning laws a challenge when trash is accumulating in garages and homes," she said.

Meeder expressed her appreciation of county and state officers' assistance. "The NYSDEC officer has been very responsive in addressing this and other serious cases around the village," she said.

In another matter, trustees learned that the lower section of Miller St. has been completely milled down and will be resurfaced as part of the streets operational budget. All new sidewalks will be installed, along with a

3 feet gutter.

Meeder also said that Armstrong Golden Maple trees will be planted along the street. These trees can grow to 50 to 75 feet in height with a 15 to 20-inch width, she said. "We're trying to get Miller St. back to its original look," Meeder said.

This area, at the center of the village, is a crucial location to the life of Sherman, Meeder said. "If you were really looking at Sherman and asked where the main intersection was, it would be where Franklin and Miller Streets intersect Main Street," she said, "so I think this work is very important."

In a related matter, upper Church Street was milled, returned and rolled, and is expected to be resealed in conjunction with the Town of Sherman in the near future, DPW Director Jay Irwin told trustees. Work along lower Church Street and Franklin Street will be performed by Legend Excavating, he added.

In other business, preparations are in high gear for Sherman Days and the Music Festival, as well as the Paint CHQ Festival, Meeder said. Sherman Days events begin on Friday with the alumni dinner.

In the school gymnasium and culminates on Sunday with live music and a car cruise in Edmunds Park. The parade will take place at 11 a.m. Saturday.

One special event taking place during Sherman Days is a ribbon cutting at 10:15 a.m. on Saturday for a "Free Little Library" in Edmunds Park, Meeder told trustees. This service will be an extension of Minerva Library and is part of the Eagle Scout project of Jasper Eschenbach and his family, she said. The project will also include two benches and two additional flower boxes, she added.

Two nationally known artists/creatives have been selected for the Paint CHQ Project, which will involve the painting of a mural on the west side and south side walls of 104 West Main Street, Meeder said. The details for the mural are confidential, at this point, she said.

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