



## **MAYOR'S REPORT TO THE COUNCIL AND CITIZENS OF GREENCASTLE**

**January 3, 2023**

**MONTH OF DECEMBER:** The month was exciting with Heritage Christmas, the Highline Train Station open house, and shopping small as the town as busy with many purchasing locally. Thank you for supporting our businesses and watch for January sales.

**WELCOME NEW SENATOR DOUG MASTRIANO:** Thanks to our former Senator, Judy Ward, for assisting Greencastle that included a storm water, rain garden grant. Due to redistricting following the 2020 census, Doug Mastriano is now serving all Franklin County. The retired Army Colonel was in Greencastle several weeks ago and visited the downtown, the Borough office, and Rescue Hose Company.

**NORFOLK SOUTHERN TRAINS REPORT:** Larry (Pittman) reports Norfolk Southern (N/S) engines are again since mid-November including some running all night, including Christmas eve and Christmas day. Noises including diesel idling, rattling, and air (drying) brake sounds. Trains do sit idle depending on ambient temperatures. Here is Mr. Husband's response to my latest inquiry.

Mayor Thomas:

Thank you for your email. As we discussed, the track configuration through Greencastle requires southbound trains to periodically (not always) sit at a signal in Greencastle while waiting for northbound trains to pass. Another component of being able to move trains is crew availability. Under the federal Hours of Service law, train crew members can work up to 12 hours in a 24-hour period before they must be relieved. Unfortunately, Norfolk Southern is currently experiencing severe crew shortages throughout our 22-state network, which is the leading cause of train delays. The article linked below provides more detail regarding the current state of Norfolk Southern's operations. I can assure you that we are doing everything we can to make our operations more fluid, but it is going to take some time.

<https://www.trains.com/trn/news-reviews/news-wire/norfolk-southern-working-to-alleviate-crew-shortages-and-improve-service/>

As far as using the Greencastle intermodal facility to hold trains, the fact is that the terminal was not designed for this type of operation. This would be analogous to parking a train on tracks adjacent to a passenger station. How would the passengers get on and off an inbound or outbound train if another train was blocking access? In this case, how would the freight arriving and departing the Greencastle facility get in or out if a freight train was sitting on the loading and unloading tracks? This would just lead to further train congestion in the Greencastle area.

Finally, you should be aware that state and local laws that may affect the movement of interstate commerce, such as PA Act 124, generally do not apply to freight railroads as we are federally regulated.

Rudy Husband

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**EMERGENCY SERVICES PROVIDED OVER THE HOLIDAYS:** All of our emergency services were kept busy assisting our citizens and visitors over the Christmas and New Year holiday. Thank you to the men and women providing police, EMS, fire, and fire-police services 24 hours a day. Thanks to public works personnel who were out over the holidays as well taking care of ice related issues during the extremely cold and windy weather over Christmas. Emilee...you also worked over the holidays. THANK-YOU!

Happy new year everyone!

Respectfully submitted,

Ben Thomas, Jr. Mayor