

## **MAYOR'S MONTHLY UPDATE APRIL 2015**

### **RE-DESIGN OF TOWNSHIP WEBSITE**

The Township website is scheduled to be re-designed (currently <http://www.saddlebrooknj.us/>). The new website will utilize a Responsive Multisite design, so it will be easy to use and see on any size screen. Many new features are planned for the website as well. All of the township departments will be well represented. A Saddle Brook firm, JKO Consulting, Inc. (<http://www.jkoconsulting.com/>) will be designing the website and managing the project. Progress and updates will be posted in this report each month. The new site is expected to be online later this year.

### **EASTER CELEBRATION**

I want to thank the township Projects and Activities Committee for organizing a well-attended, very successful township Easter Celebration held on Saturday, March 28<sup>th</sup> at the Saddle Brook High / Middle School. I also want to thank members of the Mayor's Youth Group and the Saddle Brook Women's Club for their assistance volunteering at the event. It was a very special day with games and activities for the children along with a special visit from the Easter Bunny. The celebration was videotaped and broadcasted on SBCTV. The video and photographs of the event were also posted on the township website and Facebook page.

### **VETERAN'S FIELD UPDATE**

The council and I want to thank the residents for their patience regarding the completion of the Veteran's Field turf project. While the contractors have been completing the last of the work, everyone has been anxiously awaiting the opening of the new turf field. We anticipate that the field will be ready for use by Thursday, May 14<sup>th</sup>. There are a few off field, unfinished (punch list) items remaining, which should be completed by the end of May. In order to preserve the quality of the synthetic turf and provide a healthy and clean environment, the council and I will meet with the township recreation director to discuss the establishment of facility use rules and guidelines. We will also plan a grand opening ceremony to rededicate the field to our township veterans.

## BUDGET UPDATE

The township council had budget meetings on Tuesday, February 16<sup>th</sup>, Wednesday, February 24<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>. The budget was introduced at the April 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting and was forwarded to the state for review. Currently, the budget is below the two percent tax-levy cap excluding specific exceptions under the law. The average tax increase for property owners on the municipal side will be \$95.00 for a home assessed at \$300,000.00. We are having a public hearing on Tuesday, May 12<sup>th</sup> and hope to adopt the budget shortly.

## COMMITTEE UPDATES

The township used various methods to advertise for volunteers for a Flood Committee and a 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee. There is significant interest from the community for both committees. I have named Councilman Joseph Camilleri and Councilwoman Karen D'Arminio to be Co-Chairpersons of the Flood Committee. Police Chief Robert Kugler will be the Chairman and Councilwoman Florence Mazzer, Township Historian Jack WasDyke and former Recreation Director Louis Verile will be Vice Chairpersons of the 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee. All former township mayors will be asked to participate as honorary members of the 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee. Meetings for both committees will be scheduled in the near future.

## GRANT UPDATES

The township received \$149,000.00 from The New Jersey Department of Transportation for phase two (paving) for the Fifth Street water main project. We also received approximately \$25,000.00 from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Clean Communities Grant fund. We are awaiting final approval for funds from applications submitted to the Bergen County Open Space, Floodplain Protection Trust Fund and Bergen County Community Development Block Grant. These committees have made recommendation to the Bergen County Board of Freeholders that funds be awarded for our proposals.

## ROAD PROGRAM

The 2015 budget calls for capital improvements, which would fund the implementation of a road improvement program. This would involve resurfacing many of our township's aging roads and improving storm drainage and other infrastructure. The town engineer and DPW have conducted an assessment of our town roads in order to determine which are in most need of repair. This list is being compiled and we will look to move forward once the budget is approved.

## ANTI-NEPOTISM ORDINANCE

Councilman Andrew Cimiluca introduced an ordinance that would ban the hiring of parents, siblings or children of elected officials to any position in town government. The ordinance would also restrict hiring of relatives for positions in the same department where supervision conflicts exist or potential conflicts could exist. The purpose of the policy is intended to eliminate the potential for preferential treatment of relatives of government personnel. The ordinance was narrowly approved by a 3-2 margin at the first reading at the April 2<sup>nd</sup> council meeting.

## GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING

I met with representatives from Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission and Rutgers University regarding Green Infrastructure Planning. Green Infrastructure tries to find more effective approaches to addressing storm water and sewer overflow issues. Passaic Valley and Rutgers works with municipalities to help develop green infrastructure techniques that conform to NJ laws and regulations governing storm water management. These techniques can be incorporated into our flood mitigation initiatives. The concept of Green Infrastructure Planning also promotes training and advance the economic benefits that green techniques provide. The township council has agreed to allow Passaic Valley and Rutgers to make a presentation at our June council work session.

## ORCHARD LANE PARKING

My office received several complaints of parking violations from the residents of Orchard Lane cul-de-sac. The complaints included vehicles parked too close to the intersection of Saddle River Road and vehicles blocking a fire hydrant and resident's driveways. In addition, vehicles were parked overnight on both sides of the street making it difficult for garbage trucks and township snow plows to fit through an existing narrow street. The complaints were forwarded to Police Chief Robert Kugler who conducted a traffic study of the area and recommended an ordinance be passed to prohibit overnight parking on the street. The purpose of the parking restriction will be to limit vehicles from parking during certain hours and to allow for passage of larger trucks onto Orchard Lane. This will help to ensure that those residents receive the basic services they deserve from the township.