

## **MAYOR'S MONTHLY UPDATE**

### **April 2016**

#### **BUDGET**

##### Update

The budget was formally adopted at the May 5<sup>th</sup> regular council meeting. The budget is flat for all appropriations that fall within the two percent tax-levy cap. All services and programs currently provided have been maintained. The entire tax increase is due to commercial tax appeals, which have deeply impacted the ratables of the township. In spite of all these appeals, the increase in taxes on an average home assessed at \$296,125 is \$169.74 for municipal purposes. The council and I are taking a proactive approach in working with the township tax assessor and other professionals to limit and minimize the effect of tax appeals now and in the future. We are considering implementing a five year rolling tax assessment, which has benefited other municipalities in the area.

##### Full Time Recreation Director

Our current recreation director works on part-time basis. Our director is tasked with planning, developing, promoting and overseeing all recreation programs and activities. This includes establishing schedules and methods of providing services, developing standards, policies and procedures, providing guidelines and instruction to each sport commissioner on mandatory guidelines and safety practices; monitoring the functions of each sport and their leaders to ensure efficiency; identifying the needs of programs, facilities and resources to ensure objectives are met; and providing input into the development of budgets and approving and monitoring expenditures. In order to ensure the effective and efficiency of our recreation department, the council and I believe a full-time recreation director would be beneficial to the township. Funds were allocated in our 2016 municipal budget to provide for this position. The township will be advertising shortly for this position along with specific job requirements and qualifications.

## GRANTS

### **Safe Routes to Schools Program (SRTS)**

The township has an opportunity to obtain a grant through SRTS program. It requires endorsement by the Board of Education plus support from the municipality. The application is due June 27, 2016. Our grant writer will be attending a workshop on SRTS to obtain a better understanding of the specifics of the program. The basic purpose of the program is to empower communities to make walking and bicycling to school a safe and routine activity. The Program makes funding available for a wide variety of projects and activities that support and encourage students to walk and bicycle to school.

## COMMITTEE UPDATES

### 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

#### **Adopt a Spot Banner Program**

The 300th Anniversary Committee "Adopt a Spot" banner program in honor of the town's tercentennial has sold approximately 120 banners. The committee would like to give a big THANK YOU to all those local businesses and individuals who sponsored and supported the program. The banners are being produced and should be ready in 2-3 weeks. For a complete list of sponsors please see our website: <http://saddlebrooknj.us/> or Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/SaddleBrook300/>

#### **Historical Photo Journal**

A subcommittee of the 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee are producing an historic photo journal for publication. The authors hope to provide a history of Saddle Brook's development from its agricultural beginnings, through its growth during the 19<sup>th</sup>-century on to its transformation as a suburban community. I want to thank VFW Post 3484 of Saddle Brook for their generous donation to help pay for the cost of printing the journals.

### **300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Memorial Day Float – Sunday, May 29<sup>th</sup>**

We are having a rolling parade float designed to take part in the Memorial Day Parade. The float will commemorate our township's 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a patriotic theme as well. The township governing body and 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary chairpersons will ride on the float during the Memorial Day Parade.

### **Pizza Party Social – Friday, June 10<sup>th</sup>**

The 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee has announced that they will be having a pizza party at the VFW, 44 Market Street (Upper Hall) from 7:00PM – 11PM. It will be a night of fun, food and entertainment. Tickets will be \$10.00 per person. Anyone looking to purchase tickets, please message the tercentennial Facebook page, contact any committee member or the Mayor's Office at 201-587-2903.

### Access for All – Wednesday, May 4<sup>th</sup>

The Access for All Committee met at the Senior Center. A mission statement was formulated and committee by-laws are being reviewed for adoption. The goal of the committee is to improve access to public buildings, public services, education, shops and leisure. The next meeting is Wednesday, June 1<sup>st</sup> 7:00PM at the Senior Center.

### **EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES**

### Golden Key and Exempt ID Cards – Tuesday April 26<sup>th</sup>

A big thank you to Bergen County Clerk John Hogan and his staff for signing up our senior citizens, exempt firefighters and veterans for Golden Key Photo Cards at our Senior Center. A total of 113 people registered and received the card on site between 10AM and noon. The wallet sized card can be used at participating businesses and organizations which offer discounts. I also want to thank Senior Center Director Joe Lecce and my secretary Christine Genuario for their assistance.

### Operation Take Back – Saturday, April 30<sup>th</sup>

The Saddle Brook Police Department accepted unused, unwanted and/or expired prescription and over-the-counter medications at the lobby of police headquarters from 10AM to 2PM. The township is appreciative of the community's past and continued support in making this program the success that it is. It is a priority of our police department to ensure that these expired, unneeded medications are not diverted to an unauthorized users or accidentally taken by another person.

I am proud to announce that the township has been approved for a permanent "Drop Box" to be located in the police department lobby for 24/7 disposal. We were recently approved by the DEA and New Jersey Attorney General's Office as a result of our program's past years of success.

### Saddle Brook Police Department L.E.A.D. Graduation – Tuesday, May 10<sup>th</sup>

I attended the annual L.E.A.D. graduation ceremony at the Saddle Brook High School at 6:30PM. All the sixth grade students of our public schools were acknowledged for their successful completion of the police department's drug prevention and education program. There was a pizza party after the ceremony for the graduates at the VFW on Market St. Congratulations to all the L.E.A.D. graduates and their families.

## UPCOMING EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

### Saddle Brook Police Department Memorial Service – Friday, May 13<sup>th</sup>

The Saddle Brook Police Department is hosting its 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Police Memorial Service in front of town hall beginning at 12 noon. There will be a reception after the service with refreshments at the VFW on Market Street.

### New Voter Registration – Tuesday, May 17<sup>th</sup>

Township Clerk Peter Lo Dico will be available to register new voters from 8:30AM – 9:00PM at town hall. May 17<sup>th</sup> is the last day to register to vote in the General Primary on Tuesday, June 7<sup>th</sup>.

## UPDATE ON SPECIAL PROJECTS

### Veterans Field Bathrooms and Concession Stand

The township engineer completed the plans and bid document the first week of May and has sent Notice to Bidders to the newspaper. This should allow the township to open bids and award a contract at our June township council meeting.

### North Fifth Street Water Main

This project is currently out to bid. There was a delay in bidding partially due to the fact that the project required a NJDOT Road Opening permit that hadn't been applied for by the previous engineer. There was also some difficulty in obtaining permits from the NJDEP.

### Jefferson Street & Fourth Street Water & Roadway Improvements

We are ready to go out to bid; however there is a developer who is about to complete water system testing that will determine if the developer is responsible for some of the water improvements with the project. The developer's responsibilities may impact the scope of the project. We are waiting for the developer to install part of its water system and perform testing to establish the extent of the work.

### William Street Improvements

The township council approved a bid from Marini Brothers at the May 5<sup>th</sup> regular council meeting and work should be started shortly.

### Municipal Building Generator

This project was briefly delayed while the township waited for PSE&G to provide historical electric bills. Once provided, it was determined that the documents did not contain all the requested information. We are hoping that the town engineer can work directly with the utility to obtain this historical data.

### Fifth Street Drainage

Bergen County Mosquito Commission has agreed to clean out the drainage culvert / stream in the rear of the factories on Fifth Street between Victor Street and Route 46. The township will be going out to bid for a contractor to clean out the pipe that runs alongside the culvert in order to increase the flow of storm water.

### Bergen County Curb Cuts / Ramps - Midland Ave

Bergen County Executive's Office has assured the township that there are funds available in 2016 to reimburse the township for installation of handicapped accessible curb cuts / ramps along Midland Avenue. Bergen County requires that curb cuts / ramps be completed before they will resurface Midland Avenue. Bergen County Executive's Office has stated that County funding is available to resurface Midland Avenue sometime late this year or in 2017. The town engineer met with Bergen County Engineering to finalize the plans.

## RECREATION

### Vandalism Update

There was minor vandalism reported at Veterans Field back in March, which included a sign spray painted over, gate handles bent, an electric closet entered into and a stolen base. Police reviewed video surveillance cameras, but were unable to determine who committed the acts. There has been no other reported incidents of vandalism since.

### Directive Regulating Use of Veterans Field

I issued a directive to Recreation Director Joseph Setticase regulating the use and access of Veterans Field. When the field is not being used for recreation games and events, it will be open daily from dawn to dusk to residents only for non-organized exercise and sports activities.

## LEGAL

### Stop Signs on President Street

Ordinance # 1609-16 eliminating stop signs along President Street at the intersections of 3rd, 6th, 7th, and 9th streets passed on second reading. Those signs will be removed by the Department of Public Works.

### Township Resolution - NJ Council on Affordable Housing (COAH)

The township council passed a resolution authorizing payment of \$2000.00 to continue the township's participation in a "Consortium" for the purpose of obtaining expert legal advice regarding the township's constitutional obligation of providing reasonable opportunity for affordable housing by and within the township.

## OTHER

### Mayor's Annual Report / Newsletter

A newsletter entitled "Saddle Brook Update" from the township governing body was mailed to all households in the township. The newsletter highlights many of the township's accomplishments and features a Mayor's Message, Township Phone Directory, and Recycling Schedule. It also includes a brief overview of important activities and events in our Police Department, Public Works, Recreation and Senior Services. Additionally, there is information concerning our Municipal Budget, 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration, Township Website and Veterans Field Projects. Recycling grant funds were used to pay for the production and mailing of the newsletter

### Paving Roads

PSE&G's, as part of their Energy Strong Program, replaced gas lines in streets just north of Market Street between Saddle River Road and West Street and some streets just south of Market between Bella Vista and Woodward Street. These new gas lines will prevent water from entering the mains and increase the reliability of gas service in areas prone to flooding during storms. The 15 streets that were affected by the construction are now being repaved curb to curb. This work should be completed by the May 16, 2016.