# MAYOR'S MONTHLY UPDATE
## May 2016

## BUDGET UPDATE

### Five Year Rolling Reassessment Program

At the June 2nd council meeting the council voted unanimously to approve a contract with Appraisal Systems, Inc. to provide a "Rolling Re-assessment" for a five year period. Our Tax Assessor, Tax Appeals Attorney, Appraiser and Auditor believe this program will reduce commercial tax appeals, which have negatively impacted our township budget. The program starts with a total revaluation of township properties and then over the next four years reassessments are completed where a minimum of 25 percent of our properties are inspected. After the initial revaluation in year one, the entire town is reassessed on a yearly basis using a sampling of properties. This program brings all property values back to 100 percent every year, so if problems are encountered in an area they can be rectified rather than wait for a new revaluation. Keeping property values closer to 100 percent assessed value is beneficial to all taxpayers and should drastically reduce the number of commercial tax appeals that have plagued the township over the last six years.

### Anticipatory Bond Rate

The township has received an interest rate of 8.9 percent from TD Bank for bond anticipatory notes, which are used by the township for borrowing funds for capital improvements. This means the township can borrow at a minimal rate of interest and cost to the taxpayers.

## GRANTS

### Safe Routes to Schools Program (SRTS)

The township has an opportunity to obtain a grant through SRTS program. Through discussion and negotiations between the town and school district administrators, the submission of an application for a bus pull off construction project at Helen I. Smith Elementary School on Cambridge Ave has been proposed. A resolution to proceed with said application was approved at our June 2nd council meeting. The application is due by June 27, 2016.

Platt Ave Tercentennial Park Development

Our grant writer checked with Bergen County Open Space to inquire about possible discretionary funds for development of Tercentennial Park. A reply was received indicating there are no discretionary funds and the township will have to wait for the next round of funding later this year in the fall.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

300th Anniversary

**Adopt a Spot Banner Program**

The placing of Township 300th Anniversary banners on utility poles along major roadways in the township began on Monday, June 6th and should be completed by Friday, June 10th. The banner program in honor of the town's tercentennial has sold approximately 120 banners. Again, our committee would like to give acknowledgement to all our local businesses and individuals who sponsored and supported the program. For a complete list of sponsors please see our website: http://saddlebrooknj.us/ or Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/SaddleBrook300/

**Historical Photo Journal Committee Looking for Old Photos.**

A subcommittee of the 300th 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 19th-century on to its transformation as a suburban community. The subcommittee is seeking historic photos (negative or original photographs). You can mail or drop off photos to my office at 93 Market Street or call 201-587-2903 to have someone pick up your photos directly. You can also scan and email them to mayorwhite@saddlebrooknj.gov

**Pizza Party Social – Friday, June 10th**

The SB300 PIZZA PARTY is scheduled for this Friday, June10th from 7p-11p at the VFW. Tickets are just $10.00. There will be entertainment from Donny Ferraro and Joe Gilligan who perform "A Touch of Sinatra" and Do Wop Rock and Roll. We also have invited a special guest, a Saddle Brook resident who will turn 100 years old and we will give a special recognition for his 100th birthday. Also, a local business has provided a special SB300 commemorative gift that all attendees will receive.

Flood Advisory Committee

There was a shared services flood meeting on Thursday, May 26th at the Senior Center. Council President Joseph Camilleri, Councilwoman Karen D'Arminio, Township Clerk Peter Lo Dico and I attended along with representatives from neighboring municipalities. N.J. Assemblyman Tim Eustace was on hand to offer assistance. The meeting was organized by Bergen County Shared Services Director Tom Richards and the keynote speaker was flood mitigation expert Betsy Stagg of Bergen County Office of Emergency Management. The main thrust of the meeting was communities working together to reduce their risk of flooding. The group will continue to meet and focus on a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) program called "The Community Rating System". The system gives municipalities the opportunity to implement plans and policies that will lower their risk of flooding. By doing so township residents living in the flood zone who are required to purchase flood insurance will see a reduction in their insurance premium.

EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Saddle Brook (SB) Police Department Memorial Service – Friday, May 13th

I want to thank all the family and friends who attended and participated in the 16th Annual SB Police Memorial Service. Special thanks to Chief Robert Kugler for organizing the ceremony, Pastor Theesmas of St. Philip's the Apostle for the invocation and benediction, SB Honor Guard representatives Lieutenant Christopher Mamone, Sergeant Jeffrey Panagia and Chris Stanton, Special Police Officer Raymond Curry for playing Amazing Grace on the bagpipes and Police Officer John Tritto for playing taps on the trumpet at the ceremony. The annual service, which is held on or about May 15th honors and renders a solemn tribute to all deceased SB police officers and their families.

Armed Forces Day – Saturday, May 21st

The Saddle Brook Library held an event in honor of the men and women of the United States Armed Forces who served in military engagements. Saddle Brook resident Henry Ballone did a presentation, "One Soldier's Journey", about his Father's experience during WWII assigned to a military battalion that helped build the Alcan Highway in Alaska. The highway was originally constructed by the United States Department of Defense as a security measure for the purpose of connecting the contiguous United States to Alaska through Canada. After the presentation there were light refreshments and entertainment by Richard Reiter's Swing Band.

Memorial Day Parade – Sunday May 29th

Once again the township celebrated our annual Memorial Day services and parade in remembrance of those who have died defending our country and all those who have and currently are serving our country. I want to express our gratitude and appreciation to the Romaine-Sinniger VFW Post 3484 for hosting the parade along with the township. Special thanks also to the American Legion Post 415 and Taejon Chapter 170 Korean War Veterans Association for holding ceremonies at their respective monuments. I also want to commend the Saddle Brook Fire Department and Volunteer Ambulance Corps for conducting their annual memorial services in memory of their deceased members.

During the Fire Department memorial service, street signs were unveiled to name the corner of Cambridge Ave and Don Wilson Memorial Park (by Engine Company # 1's monument) in the memory of two township fire fighters that died in the line of duty. The intersection was named for Chief Donald Wilson, who died on June 26, 1970, and Joseph Kovolisky, who died on November 14, 1973. Members of the Wilson and Kovolisky families were on hand for the presentation.

Members of the Township Council, 300th Anniversary Committee , former elected officials of Saddle Brook and I rode on a special parade float designed to commemorate our Township's 300th Anniversary while also saluting our war veterans. The Memorial Day festivities were videotaped and broadcasted on Our Town TV. The video and photographs of the event were also posted on the township website and Facebook page.

Police Blue Mass – Wednesday June 1st

A special Blue Mass honoring all law enforcement and public safety officers was held at St. Philip the Apostle Church. Special recognition and tribute was given to law enforcement officers who lost their lives in the line of duty in service to their communities, as well as to their families. Lt. Governor Kim Guadagno and Congressman Bill Pascrell Jr. were among those in attendance.

On behalf of the township, I thank Father Theemas of Saint Philips the Apostle for hosting the mass and recognize all the clergy who participated in the event. Specials thanks to all the government officials and members of the various law enforcement agencies represented and especially the police department honor guards and members of the Police Pipes and Drums of Bergen County. A very special thanks and appreciation to the Blue Mass Committee and especially Mr. Bill Gent, Sheriff Mike Saudino, Chief Robert Kugler and the administrative staff of St. Philip the Apostle – Mrs. Dina Kudlack and Mrs. Janet Marchese. And lastly I commend and acknowledge the families of our officers that we honored and remembered during the mass and all the other police officers who have lost their lives while serving and protecting their communities. The mass was videotaped and broadcasted on Our Town TV. The video and photographs of the event were also posted on the township website and Facebook page.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Kiwanis Fishing Derby – Saturday June 11th

Come join the Kiwanis and the township for a fun-filled morning at Saddle River County Park, Otto Pehle Lake from 9AM – 12PM. All anglers receive trophies and there are special awards for the top three catches by size. Participants must bring their own equipment.

Township Fireworks Display, Sunday, July 3rd

The township will be holding its annual fireworks display on Sunday, July 3rd in the Saddle River County Park. The fireworks display is scheduled to begin when dark at approximately 9pm and should conclude by 10pm. Saddle River Road will be closed to vehicular traffic at approximately 8:30pm until the conclusion of the event and the departure of the crowd from the park area (approx 10pm). Residents should be prepared for road closures and detours in the area of the park.

Motorist should pay extra attention to different traffic patterns, posted emergency No Parking areas and increased pedestrian traffic in the area of Saddle River Road and the Saddle River County Park. Residents are also reminded that ALL personal fireworks are illegal in New Jersey including sparklers, firecrackers and bottle rockets.

UPDATE ON SPECIAL PROJECTS

Veterans Field Bathrooms and Concession Stand

Bids were received on May 27th and bid was awarded to Trino Associates at the June 2nd council meeting.

North Fifth Street Water Main

Bids were received and opened. There were issues with all of the bids and they were rejected at the June 2nd council meeting. Project to be rebid as soon as possible.

Jefferson Street & Fourth Street Water & Roadway Improvements

These documents are complete, however there is a developer who is about to complete water systems testing that will determine if the developer is responsible for some of the water improvements within the project. The developer indicates that there are issues delaying the project, but those issues should be resolved shortly.

William Street Improvements

The contract between the township and the contractor has been executed. Work should start within the next month or so.

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.

Mayhill Street Pump Station Flow Gate

The engineer recommended the replacement of a damaged sewage flow gate. Shop drawings were approved and the parts ordered. The gate should be received in 6-8 weeks.

RECREATION

Full Time Recreation Director

The township will be posting an advertisement for a full time recreation director. We have consulted with other municipalities that have full time directors in order to determine what specific job requirement and qualifications are necessary. We are also formulating a job description for the position as well.

Directive Regulating Use of Veterans Field

The township is monitoring the use of and access of Veterans Field. When the field is not being used for recreation games and events, it is now open daily from dawn to dusk to residents only for non-organized exercise and sports activities. A procedure for opening the field in the morning and securing it in the evening has been implemented. There has been no incidents of vandalism reported.