MAYOR'S QUARTERLY UPDATE
OCTOBER – DECEMBER 2019

BUDGET

Township Audit - 2018

In accordance with Government Auditing Standards, an audit report of Township financial statements for 2018 was issued by independent auditor, Ferraioli, Wielkotz, Cerullo & Cuva, P.A. The report, received in August 2019, was reviewed and recommendations considered. The 2018 audit has been posted on the Township webpage at http://saddlebrooknj.us.

Preparation for 2020 Municipal Budget

Business Administrator Peter LoDico and I have scheduled budget hearings with department heads during the month of December. The department heads were instructed to complete budget worksheets for their projected fiscal requirements for 2020. Each department was asked not to exceed the state required spending cap for budget appropriations.

2020 Temporary Budget

Township Business Administrator Peter LoDico and I have reviewed the operational budget requests of Township department heads. A temporary budget was prepared and adopted by the Township Council at the January 2, 2020 reorganization meeting. The temporary budget is 26.25 percent of our yearly 2019 municipal budget. Our Township Auditor and Chief Financial Officer have been asked for an assessment of the Township's finances and to provide an overview of anticipated revenues, expenses, surplus, and debt services. We are working together to prepare a permanent budget for introduction at the March 2020 council meeting.

Bond Ordinances

Ord. No. 1668-19: To authorize the improvement (paving) of Fairlawn Parkway (Phase II) and Herbert Terrace (Entire Length) to appropriate the sum of $650,000 to pay the cost thereof, to make a down payment, to authorize the issuance of bonds to finance such appropriation.

Ord. No. 1673-19: To authorize the 2020 Road Improvement Program to appropriate the sum of $1,400,000 to pay the cost thereof, to make a down payment, to authorize the issuance of bonds to finance such appropriation.

Ord. No. 1674-19: To authorize the Kuhn Court and Bell Avenue Water Main Replacement Project and Water System Improvements at various locations for the water utility of the Township, to make a down payment, to authorize the issuance of bonds to finance such appropriation.

GRANTS

Available Grants

COPS Hiring

Our grant writer is monitoring the status of the COPS Hiring Program through the Bureau of Justice Assistance, set to be released soon. The COPS Hiring Grant offers funding to offset the cost of officers for police departments running below full strength. COPS is a competitive federal program. Departments must have an up to date System for Award Management (SAM) registration before applying. COPS will soon be accepting applications for both 2018 and 2019.

Sustainable Jersey

Sustainable Jersey, in partnership with the Public Service Electric and Gas (PSEG) Foundation, is contributing $200,000 to support the Sustainable Jersey Grants Program for municipalities. The purpose of this grant is to support local sustainability initiatives in municipalities and schools across the state and to improve the quality of life in New Jersey by enhancing and promoting wide-ranging sustainability efforts. Eligible actions and projects include projects that support solar, electric vehicles, farmer's markets, brownfields assessments/mitigation projects, natural resources, gardens, green infrastructure, etc. Sustainable Jersey will be making grants in three (3) categories: four (4) $20,000 project grants, eight (8) $10,000 project grants, and twenty (20) $2,000 project or green team support grants. Applications are due February 14, 2020.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) - Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program (AFG)

Our grant writer coordinated with Assistant Fire Chief Joseph Joseph Polizzotti to complete the AFG online registration and has kept track of upcoming AFG webinars, releases, or trainings to note programmatic changes. AFG was open starting December 2nd, 2019. The grant writer is working with Fire Department officials to research call volumes and other important stats. She also attended debriefing for Saddle Brook's FY2018 application with FEMA representatives.

Grants Submitted Pending Notification

Bergen County Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) 2020

Our grant writer initiated, completed and submitted our FY20 Priority #1 and Priority #2 CDBG requests. Priority #1 is Albany Street road improvements in the amount of $236,322.24 and Priority #2 is barrier free entrances in the amount of $150,000 at our new municipal complex, 55 Mayhill Street. A third application was submitted for programming for senior citizens, specifically funds to offset costs for our bus service and bus driver. Our three applications are currently pending.

NJ Transit S5310

Our grant writers completed and submitted FY2019 and FY2018 NJ Transit S5310 application in the amounts of $23,775.50 per-application. The grant writer coordinated with the Bergen County United We Ride Transportation Office for a letter of support and also worked with Township Senior Citizen Center Director Joe Lecce and Business Administrator Peter LoDico. If awarded, funds will be designated to offsetting costs of the senior bus driver, insurance, fuel, and maintenance costs for the Township's senior bus service. The NJ Transit S5310 grant provides municipalities with funds to improve and fully fund programs for the enhanced mobility of seniors and individuals with disabilities. The applications are currently pending.

Safe and Secure Communities

The Township is eligible for $30,000 through this grant. The Safe and Secure Grant Program (SSGP) is designed to provide eligible municipalities with state funding to support the salary of law enforcement personnel to address crime in a community-oriented manner. The grant essentially offsets the cost of two officers. The Program requires a municipality to increase the number of law enforcement personnel through the use of grant funds and then maintain that total number of law enforcement personnel. The Township would be required to raise our total number of police officers to thirty five (35) from our current amount of thirty four (34). The Township is interested in hiring another police officer through this program and we are awaiting funding announcements.

Firehouse Subs (FHS) 2020 Quarter 1

Our grant writer completed and submitted our Police Department's 2019 Quarter 4 application with revisions. Body worn cameras are no longer an eligible item to request through the FHS Foundation. The grant writer coordinated with Chief Kugler to apply solely for dash cameras and revised the application quotes and narrative accordingly. The revised application was submitted in the amount of $24,721. The FHS Public Safety Foundation offers grants to all first responders (police, firefighters, OEM, EMS) for personal protective equipment, apparatus, or public safety programming in amounts up to $25,000. These grants are offered quarterly and the announcement of the awards are pending and expected before February 2020.

FEMA - Hazard Mitigation Grant Program

The application is for a generator at the Senior Citizen Center. The requested amount is $81,000. Saddle Brook's contribution for the generator is $27,000. Announcement of the award is pending.

Grant Notifications

New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) Local Aid

Our grant writer completed and submitted an application for improvements to Mayhill Street - Phase I for a request amount of $353,862. The Department encourages municipalities to fund projects that promote and support walking and biking in their communities. In November 2019, the Township received notification from NJDOT of being awarded $182,653 for Road Preservation of Mayhill Street.

2017 Recycling Tonnage Grants

The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) has awarded more than $14,000,000 in grants to municipal and county governments to enhance recycling efforts. Recycling tonnage grants are awarded through the state's Recycling Enhancement Act, which authorizes a $3 per-ton surcharge on trash disposed at solid waste facilities to fund recycling efforts. The NJDEP allocates this money back to municipalities and counties based on their recycling accomplishments. This year's grants are based on recycling performance in 2017. Saddle Brook was awarded $24,956.69 based upon its 2017 recycling tonnage.

Other

Playground Research

Our grant writer has conducted research for grants that fund playgrounds. There are several available including: KaBoom! Playgrounds, NJDEP Green Acres, National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA), New Jersey Healthy Communities Network (NJHCN), Chris & Dana Reeves Foundation, and National Football League (NFL) Grassroots. KaBoom! Playgrounds requires a hefty fundraising requirement and has geographic stipulations which rotate every few months. NJDEP Green Acres typically accepts applications on a rolling basis. NRPA 2020 will be announced at some point in coming months. There are grants for expanding and renovating playgrounds to create more accessible spaces for individuals with disabilities as well as the Game Time grant which requires 100% matching grant-funds.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

Mayor's Youth Group (MYG)

After summer break, the group met on October 12th to discuss the details regarding the preparation of and participation in upcoming events. This included the Annual Senior Halloween Party on October 22nd and Trunk or Treat on October 26th. Members helped serve food and drinks at the Senior Party and they assisted the Projects and Activities Committee at the Trunk or Treat by handing out candy at the MYG decorated table. On October 30th, members met at the Senior Center for pizza before boarding a bus for judging the Halloween Home Decorating Contest. At our November 16th meeting, members discussed and planned for a fundraising event, a Thanksgiving video message and the Annual Tree Lighting and Holiday Party. On November 22nd, in coordination with Township Recreation Director Andy Gallo, the group hosted a (donation entry fee) viewing of the movie Aladdin and served complimentary snacks. Winter hats were also sold for $15 and are now on sale at Town Hall for $10. All money raised goes to Mia Filan, a Township child, who is receiving cancer treatment. On November 29th, members decorated the Christmas tree and helped set up the High School Gym prior to the Township Tree Lighting and Holiday Party. Lastly, on December 19th, the group went out to judge the homes for the Holiday Decorating Contest.

Community Partnership / Access for All

The Committee met on October 28th and November 18th. Topics of discussion included participation in community events and organizing food collection for the local food pantries. The Committee also received gift card donations from Saddle Brook Walmart and Saddle Brook Senior Citizen Clubs (local AARP chapter and Saddle Brook Seniors), which were distributed to needy families in the Township for the holiday season. The Community Partnership will be hosting an event for drug awareness and prevention on January 27, 2020 from 7-9PM at the Senior Center. Refreshments will be served! Our next meeting will be on January 13, 2020 at 6:30PM at the Senior Center.

Flood Committee

During the last quarter of the year, the committee formulated a mission statement and decided to apply to join the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Rating System. We obtained flood mitigation assistance brochures from FEMA to educate residents within the flood zone. The committee met on Monday, December 16th along with representatives from the Borough of Rochelle Park. We discussed the advantages of hiring a flood plain manager to conduct flood loss reduction activities including enforcing our flood damage prevention ordinance, updating flood maps, plans and policies of the community, and any activities related to administration of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). We requested a proposal for services from Rochelle Park's flood plain manager and plan to have her make a presentation to the Township Council.

EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

• NOTE: MOST EVENTS ARE PHOTOGRAPHED AND RECORDED. THE RECORDINGS ARE BROADCASTED ON OUR TOWN (PUBLIC ACCESS) TV, CH. 77 – CABLEVISION, CH. 38 – VERIZON FIOS. THE PHOTOS AND RECORDINGS ARE ALSO POSTED ON THE TOWNSHIP WEBSITE AND FACEBOOK PAGE.

Unico Street Fair – Sunday October 6th

I want to thank the Saddle Brook Unico for hosting another great street fair and helping bring our community together for a day of entertainment and socializing with friends and neighbors. There were food and merchandise vendors, local businesses and civic organizations providing information, and amusements and rides for children. Thank you also to Saddle Brook Police, Fire Dept., Ambulance Corps and D.P.W. for their assistance.

Senior Halloween Party – Tuesday, October 22nd

The Saddle Brook seniors had a great time at their annual Halloween party at the VFW. Many dressed in costume and it was a nice night of fun, music, dancing, good food and treats. The night also included a costume contest with gifts and prizes for the winners. It was a great way to welcome in the fall season and get ready for a happy, spooky Halloween! Thank you to Councilwoman D'Arminio, Senior Director Joe Lecce and Secretary Christine Genuario for their assistance planning and organizing the event. The assistance of Mayor's Youth Group members who helped serve food was most appreciated.

Trunk or Treat – Saturday, October 26th

The Township Council and I want to thank all who attended and volunteered at the Halloween Trunk or Treat, held inside the High School gym. The event was well attended and a fun-filled afternoon of trunk or treaters dressed in amazing costumes. We want to commend the Project and Activities Committee, Mayor's Youth Group and Secretary Christine Genuario for all their assistance in planning and organizing the event. Special thanks to Committee Chairwoman Shannon Accomando and Councilman Todd Accomando for taking the lead role and working hard to make the event a great success and memorable occasion.

Halloween Decorating Contest – Wednesday, October 30th

The Mayor's Youth Group and I had a great time touring the town to judge our Halloween Decorating Contest. Our group, driven by Senior Center Bus Driver Howard Rofofsky, stopped to view all the homes of residents who registered for the contest. I want to thank Christine Genuario, Thomas Van Winkle for joining us on the tour and assisting. Our participating residents did an awesome job decorating their homes! They put a great deal of imaginative and creative effort into making their homes scary and spooky for Halloween. The top three participants received awards.

Holiday Tree Lighting and Party – Friday, November 29th

The Township hosted our annual Tree Lighting Ceremony at Town Hall at 6PM and Holiday Party afterwards in the High School Gym. It was fun-filled evening of holiday music with beautiful decorations, food / refreshments for everyone and a face painter, superheroes and photos with Santa and Mrs. Claus for the kids. We truly appreciate Mr. Frank Ortega and the High / Middle School Band for an outstanding job performing at the Tree Lighting Ceremony. Special acknowledgment to our Projects and Activities Committee, specifically Chairwomen Shannon Accomando and Christine Genuario for planning and organizing everything along with Councilwoman Karen D'Arminio and Councilman Todd Accomando. They do a great job creating a very special and memorable event for everyone. I appreciate and want to recognize individuals and groups that helped make the night a great success. A big thank you to the Woman's Club of Saddle Brook, Mayor's Youth Group Liaison Thomas Van Winkle and all the members of our Mayor's Youth Group. Also the members of our Department of Public Works, Police Department and school custodians for their assistance. Special thanks to Joe Schilp and Debra Cannariato as Santa and Mrs. Claus, our volunteer fire department for transporting them and JoAnn Brendel and Thomas Van Winkle for taking photos.

Senior Holiday Party – Monday, December 16th

Members of our Saddle Brook Senior Club and AARP Chapter had a holiday party at the Venetian Banquet Hall in Garfield. They enjoyed delicious food and a fun afternoon of dancing and laughs with friends. I want to personally thank Senior Center Director Joe Lecce, AARP Vice President / Councilwoman Karen D'Arminio, Senior Club President Cecilia Lipari, and my secretary, Christine Genuario, for all their hard work planning and organizing the event. Special thanks to Council President Mazzer for donated poinsettia plant gifts and Nina from Teri's Florist for donating flower center pieces.

Holiday Decorating Contest Judging – Thursday, December 19th

It was a fun night as the Mayor's Youth Group (MYG) toured the town to judge the homes registered for the Holiday Decorating Contest. The group was thrilled to witness all the artistic and imaginative effort Township residents put into making their homes beautiful and festive for the holidays. The top three contestants were announced and will receive a gift certificate from the Township. Congratulations to the winners and thank you to all who participated in the contest. Photographs of all the registered homes can be found on the Township website and Facebook page.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

Proposed Municipal Complex – 55 Mayhill Street

The Township has entered into a contract to purchase 55 Mayhill Street and will proceed with construction to retrofit / renovate the existing structure to a much needed Civic Center and Municipal Complex that includes Municipal Offices, Court, Fire and Ambulance Corps. On Wednesday, November 13th, Business Administrator Peter LoDico and I attended a Bergen County Board of Freeholders meeting where we presented our project. During that meeting, the freeholders approved our request to finance the cost of the project by bonding funds through the Bergen County Improvement Authority and utilize their AAA bond rating. On Wednesday, December 11th, Business Administrator Peter LoDico and I joined our Township Auditor and representatives of the Bergen County Improvement Authority at a N.J. Local Finance Board meeting. We made a presentation detailing the scope of the construction work and our plan to finance the project. The board voted unanimously to approve our request. The Township should be closing on the 55 Mayhill Street property before the end of February 2020. We will keep residents informed as we proceed on this important project for our community.

2018 Road Program

This project consisted of Erie Street, Hayes Drive, Legregni Street, Nedellec Drive and Claremont Avenue and was awarded to AJM Contractors. A bulk of the work was completed in the fall of 2018 including paving all roads except Erie, which was paved in the spring 2019. AJM is progressing with the punch list items. Pavement analysis has been submitted by AJM in accordance with contract documents. The analysis was verified and found to be acceptable. Punch list work has progressed and is near completion.

2019 Road Program

The contract was awarded to 4-Cleanup in the amount of $466,431.07. This project consists of Rosedale Avenue, Madison Avenue, North 6th Street, Evans Place and Oak Avenue. Contracts have been executed. A preconstruction meeting took place on October 15th and a Notice to Proceed was issued for a start date on October 17th. Due to the weather, work has been put off until the spring 2020. ***North Leswing Avenue and South Leswing Avenue*** were originally to be funded under the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program but were switched with Rochelle Parkway due to eligibility changes. North and South Leswing will now be part of the 2019 Road Program. A proposal for engineering services has been approved and preparation of the plans has commenced. Construction is anticipated for spring 2020.

Rochelle Parkway Paving - (CDBG 2019)

The project was awarded to 4-Cleanup at the November 7th council meeting. Construction is anticipated for spring 2020.

Albany Street Paving - FY 2020 CDBG Funding Cycle

Our engineer is working with our grant writer to submit a grant application to resurface Albany Street. Back up was provided for the application, which was submitted by our grant writer, Bruno Associates, prior to the December 6th deadline.

Water Main Scheele Place

The project was advertised for bid on June 20th. Bids were received on July 2nd. The project was awarded to John Garcia Construction on August 1st in the amount of $134,911.50. Work commenced on September 17th. The water main installation is complete and operational. All work has been completed and final payment has been submitted to the Township Council for approval.

Fairlawn Parkway Paving – N.J. Dept. of Transportation Municipal Aid (NJDOT 2018)

The NJ DOT approved $392,000.00 towards this project (FY 2018 and 2019 combined). It was intended to prepare one bid package for both phases and issue the bid package in the fall for construction in the spring 2020. The project will also include Herbert Terrace. Design work is near completion.

Kuhn Court and Bell Avenue Water Main

A proposal for preparation of plans to replace the water main on Kuhn Court has been provided by the Township Engineer.

New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) Local Aid – Mayhill Street

An application for funding for FY 2020 under the NJDOT Municipal Aid Program has been submitted to resurface Mayhill Street from Leswing Avenue to the Route 80 Bridge. Funding awards were recently announced. Saddle Brook received $182,653 for this project. We are awaiting a proposal for engineering services, which should be received shortly.

Public Service Electric and Gas (PSE&G) Work

At the end of November, PSE&G completed working in the north end of the Township replacing aging cast iron gas pipes with new, durable plastic and/or coated steel piping. Some of the streets where gas pipes were replaced have already been paved curb to curb by PSE&G. The remaining streets will be done in the spring 2020. PSE&G began a second phase of this gas main replacement project in December on Erie Street, Lyster Avenue, Steinway Road and Dewey Avenue.

OTHER

Ordinances Passed

Number 1667-19 – Fee for Water Meters with Sale of House

The Township recognized the need to amend Chapter 203, Section 25, "Fee For Meters With Sale of House", by amending Article I and adding the following sentence: "Should the fee have been paid as of January 12, 2013, said fee shall be waived, and, the said fee shall be waived if the same has already been paid from the date of adoption of this ordinance."

Number 1670-19 – Amendment of Chapter 206 Article VE, "Zoning, Affordable Housing Districts"

The Township Council recognized the need to amend Chapter 206 Article VE, "Zoning, Affordable Housing Districts" by amending as follows: The following is added to Article I as a new section: A. Block 402, Lots 3, 4 and 5 shall be rezoned from the B-3 Highway Business District to the AH-7 Affordable Housing Residential District; B. The purpose of the AH-7 District is to provide for enhanced opportunities for affordable housing.

Mayhill Street Playground Adjacent Saddle Brook Library

The Township Council and I recognize the need to make improvements to this playground and it will be one of our priorities for the upcoming year. We are continuing to look for sources to help fund a project of this type and are also searching for available grant opportunities (SEE GRANTS: PLAYGROUND RESEARCH). We are anticipating a donation from a local business that would help defray costs. We are hoping to rebuild the playground before the summer of 2020.

Saddle Brook Library Bench & Tree Dedication for Adeline Goldsholl - Sunday, October 6th

The Saddle Brook Library honored long time Board Trustee Adeline "Addie" Goldsholl with a planting of a dogwood tree and dedicated a bench in her memory. I attended along with other Township officials, Library administrators, staff and board members as well as Addie's family and friends. Addie served on the Library Board from 2003 through 2017, serving as President from 2013-2016. She was a guiding force for the library addition, ensuring that the library funds were spent wisely. Addie was a long time Saddle Brook resident who was greatly involved in our community. While raising 5 children with her husband Bernie, Addie served in the PTA, Saddle Brook Board of Education, and enjoyed an enriching career as a nurse. Addie passed away in November, 2018 and I am proud to have called Addie a friend and grateful for her contributions to our community.

Bell Dedication – First Reformed Church – Sunday, October 20th

Council President Florence Mazzer, Councilman David Gierek and I attended a special dedication ceremony for the newly restored church bell at First Reformed Church. I presented the church with a proclamation on behalf of the Township and Council President Mazzer shared a declaration from Congressman Bill Pascrell.

Veterans Day Ceremony – Monday, November 11th

VFW Post 3484 held their annual Veterans Day Ceremony at the VFW Circle, Saddle River Road and Mayhill Street. The Township is forever grateful to all our veterans for their service and sacrifices to our great nation. God Bless them all. The Township appreciates VFW Post 3484 for all of their generosity and support throughout the years.

Eagle Scout Court of Honor – Saturday, November 16th

It was my privilege to join in honoring Michael Maniscalco for achieving the rank of Eagle Scout at a Court of Honor ceremony held 1-4PM by Boy Scout Troop 213 in the auditorium at Saint Philip's Church. Eagle Scout is the highest achievement in the scouting program. The rigorous requirements took Michael years to attain and has earned him great respect from his family, friends, fellow scouts and the community. Michael's community project of building a barrier free playground at Avon Park was a huge undertaking and a significant achievement that truly improved the Township. Congratulations and best wishes for continued success!

Challenger Christmas Party – Sunday, December 1st

The Challenger Christmas Party was held at the Saddle Brook VFW from 1-4PM. Saddle Brook resident Lou Verile has been hosting this party for decades and was acknowledged for his years of dedicated service to the organization by Challenger League parents Monica Maniscalco and Dawn Pallotta. Lou and Saddle Brook resident Tommy Hayes began initiating programs for kids with disabilities 30 years ago and have been supporting them ever since. The kids and their families had a great time at the party - dancing, singing and receiving Christmas presents from Santa and Mrs. Claus.