

MAYOR'S QUARTERLY UPDATE
JANUARY – MARCH 2020

BUDGET

Preparation

Township Business Administrator Peter LoDico and I have met with all department heads to review their annual budget requests. A temporary budget was adopted by the township council, which was 26.25 percent of our yearly 2019 municipal budget. Mr. LoDico and I worked with our professionals to prepare a proposed permanent budget for the township council members to review.

Introduction of Proposed Budget and Hearings

A proposed budget will be presented to the township council at the council meeting(s) in May. This budget will be lean, but will maintain essential services. We will continue funding capital improvements for our road program and updating water and sewer infrastructure. There will be a hearing on the proposed budget during the June council meeting(s). Township Auditor Steve Wielkocz will be present and available for questions concerning the budget and township finances.

Senior Tax Freeze

Township senior citizen homeowners, 65 years of age and older, may be eligible for a tax freeze program initiated by the State of New Jersey. For eligibility requirements and additional information, please call the state's regional information center at (201)791-0500.

Bond Ordinances

#1676-20: Authorizing the acquisition of a *fire truck and various equipment* for the use of the fire department in, by and for the township, to appropriate the sum of \$1,650,000 to pay the cost thereof, to make a down payment, to authorize the issuance of bonds to finance such appropriation and to provide for the issuance of bond anticipation notes in anticipation of the issuance of such bonds.

#1677-20: Authorizing the undertaking of various sanitary *sewer system improvements* in, by and for the township, to appropriate the sum of \$475,000 to pay the cost thereof, to make a down payment, to authorize the issuance of bonds to finance such appropriation and to provide for the issuance of bond anticipation notes in anticipation of the issuance of such bonds.

GRANTS

Pending Grants

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Assistance for Firefighters Grant (AFG)

This grant program provides funding to fire departments for personal protective equipment, self-contained breathing apparatus, training, apparatus, and other firefighting essentials. Our grant writer completed and submitted FY19 AFG with Fire Chief Joe Polizzotti. The fire department has requested 18 new sets of turnout gear, face mask fit tester, and an industrial utility washer/dryer unit. The full application request amount is \$120,092.50. A letter of support was received through Congressman Bill Pascrell's office in support of our application. The application was submitted March 12th and is currently pending.

Firehouse Subs Public Safety Foundation

Our grant writer submitted three applications on behalf of the township for Firehouse Subs 2020 Quarter 2. The grant writer worked with the volunteer ambulance corps, volunteer fire department and police department to submit these applications for needed equipment. The fire department applied for \$24,719 to fund purchase of four sets of gear (pant and coat) as well as a SCBA face mask fit tester. The police department applied in the amount of \$5,861 for vehicle dash cams. The ambulance corps applied in the amount of \$15,912.32 for LUCAS Chest Compression Systems. Quarter 2 applications were not yet awarded. Quarter 3 application opened April 1, 2020.

Bergen County Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) FY2020

Our grant writer initiated, completed and submitted priority #1 and #2 CDBG requests: Albany Street improvements in the amount of \$236,322.24 and barrier free entrances in the amount of \$150,000. Saddle Brook also submitted a third application for senior programming. The township council passed endorsing resolutions at the December 6, 2019 and December 26, 2019 council meetings. The three applications are pending.

New Jersey Transit S5310 FY2019 & FY2018

The N.J. Transit S5310 grant provides municipalities funds to improve and fully fund programs for the enhanced mobility of seniors and individuals with disabilities. Grant categories are as follows: capital assistance, mobility management, and operating assistance. Our grant writer completed and submitted FY2019 and FY2018 applications in the amounts of \$23,775.50 per application. The township council passed endorsing resolutions for both applications. Our grant writer coordinated with the Bergen County United We Ride transportation office for a letter of support and worked with Business Administrator Peter LoDico and Senior Center Director Joe Lecce to gather necessary information and documents. 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. Applications are currently pending.

Grant Work / Funding Opportunities

COPS Hiring Grant FY2020

Our grant writer has completed and submitted the FY2020 COPS Hiring Grant application in the amount of \$125,000. A letter of support was received through Congressman Bill Pascrell's office for our application. Our grant writer met with Police Chief Kugler to discuss the grant and initiated the application on the U.S. Department of Justice COPS portal. The request is for one officer to fill the existing manpower recommendation and bring the department up to full strength. Also discussed was the possibility of funding Class 3 Special Law Enforcement Officers (SLEOs) with this grant, however only School Resource Officers (SROs) are an eligible cost for school security details.

Bergen County Open Space Grant

Bergen County is now accepting letters of intent for municipal park improvement plans, land acquisition, and farmland and historic preservation, as well as floodplain protection. The trust fund is divided into two separate programs, each having its own distinct goals and objectives. The county program uses trust fund dollars for projects involving any of the five areas: land acquisition, county recreation facilities, historic preservation, floodplain protection, and farmland preservation. Seventy percent of the trust fund goes towards this program. The remaining 30% of the trust fund goes towards the municipal park improvement program. Each of Bergen County's seventy municipalities is eligible to apply to this program for help to improve their municipal open space and recreation facilities. Our grant writer is working with Business Administrator Peter LoDico to determine a project for the township.

CARES ACT—Coronavirus Federal Stimulus Package

The U.S. House of Representatives passed the Senate version of the third COVID-19 Supplemental Bill (The CARES Act). This \$2.2 trillion infusion includes approximately \$340 billion to state and local governments in emergency funding to combat the COVID-19 outbreak plus an additional \$150 billion under the Coronavirus Relief Fund that provides funding to cover the costs incurred because of the public health emergency. Details of the specifics included in this bill are just beginning to emerge, and at the time of this report, how municipalities will be able to access this funding is not yet available. The largest amount of funding for municipal entities is the \$150 billion included in the "Coronavirus Relief Fund." Funds will be provided under a formula that divides the funding among the 50 states, the District of Columbia, territories, and tribal governments. Our grant writer has received preliminary information that New Jersey's allocation will be about \$1.4 billion.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

Mayor's Youth Group (MYG) Meeting - Saturday, February 1st

At our first meeting for 2020, we discussed upcoming events, including the Saddle Brook Township Pancake Breakfast on February 22nd and the Easter Celebration scheduled for Saturday, April 4th. We were happy to welcome three new members to our group and we scheduled our next meeting for Saturday, March 28th.

Community Partnership / Access for All Committee

The committee met on Monday, January 13th and discussed a drug awareness and prevention event that we hosted for Alumni in Recovery on January 27, 2020 (7-9PM) at the senior center. See the subtitle Alumni in Recovery under the heading Events and Activities. The committee also met on Monday, February 10th. Discussion included participation in community events and organizing food collection for the local food pantries. The committee also would like to do more community outreach with our seniors, especially shut-ins that can benefit from social visits and welfare checks.

Flood Committee – Hiring of Floodplain Manager

The committee made a recommendation to the township council members to hire 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). A contract was awarded to hire Mianeck Consulting as the township's floodplain manager at the February 6, 2020 council meeting.

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.

Fire Department Installation Dinner – Saturday, January 4th

It was an honor to swear-in our new Fire Chief Joseph Polizzotti and Assistant Fire Chief Jason Sibani at the fire department installation dinner. Congratulations to both of them and thank you to outgoing Chief Chris Sloma who did a tremendous job in 2018-2019! New firefighters and officers were also installed and welcomed into the department. Thank you to all our volunteer firefighters for the outstanding service they provide to our community. The members of the township council also attended the dinner to show their appreciation and support for the members of the fire department and their families.

Alumni in Recovery (AIR) Drug Awareness Presentation - Monday, January 27th

It was a pleasure hosting the AIR presentation at the senior center. AIR is a voluntary program where members share their stories in hopes that others will avoid the path of addiction to drugs and alcohol through better choices. AIR offers its services to municipalities, primarily schools, with the goal of giving attendees an opportunity to identify with the speaker's feelings and experiences, helping them to opt for positive choices. They also provide information and resources to individuals and families that are struggling with addiction. I would like to thank Nancy Labov and all the members of AIR for bringing the program to Saddle Brook. Special thanks to Danny Foose and Rich Hallahan for participating and telling their stories. Thank you as well to Christine Genuario and Joe Lecce of the township for all their assistance organizing and promoting the event. Also, Pastor Christopher Wolf of First Reformed Church and members of the Saddle Brook Community Partnership Committee. We appreciated the attendance and participation of Police Chief Bob Kugler, Fire Chief Joe Polizzotti and Ambulance Captain Harry Reid and members of their respective departments. Finally, thank you to the following local businesses that supported and contributed to the event: Acme Supermarket, Maria's Bakery, Saddle Brook Veterinary Center, Medicine Shoppe Pharmacy, and Que Pasta Restaurant.

Ambulance Corps. Installation Dinner – Saturday, February 29th

I had the privilege of swearing-in the executive officers for the Saddle Brook Volunteer Ambulance Corps at their annual installation dinner. There were also certificates handed out to members for length of service and number of calls made in 2019 and special recognition life-saving awards were presented to corps members and police officers. Our ambulance members deserve tremendous credit and recognition for all they do for the township. Members of the township council were also on hand to show their appreciation and support for the corps members and their families.

Township Pancake Breakfast - Saturday, February 22, 2020

Good food and good times were had by residents and friends at the Township's 2020 Pancake Breakfast at the Dynasty Buffet from 9-11AM. The breakfast was a good opportunity to get residents together to socialize and enjoy each other's company. Thank you to everyone who attended and all those who helped make it a successful event, Special thanks to Christine Genuario, Peter LoDico and Police Chief Bob Kugler for helping to organize and run the event. Also Thomas Van Winkle for taking photos. We appreciate Jessie and Endy of Dynasty Buffet for providing a delicious selection of food at a very reasonable price.

Women in History Month

March is Women in History month. Every year the township council and I celebrate by recognizing women from town who have made significant contributions to the community. This year was extra special because it also happens to be the anniversary of the passage of 19th Amendment guaranteeing and protecting women's constitutional right to vote. To acknowledge this historic centennial, eight Saddle Brook women who currently hold elected office, received public commendation at the March 5th township council meeting. Each woman plays an important role in serving the public and giving back to the residents of Saddle Brook. The recipients were: Councilwomen FLORENCE MAZZER and KAREN D'ARMINIO; Board of Education Trustees REGINA BARRALE, MARIANA IANNEILLO, KELLY MAHONEY (Vice President), ANGELA ROBINSON, MICHELE ROLOFF, and SYLVIA ZOTTARELLI. Congratulations to all the recipients and we thank them for their service.

CORONAVIRUS

Due to the Coronavirus outbreak and Governor Murphy's orders relating to social gatherings and distancing, the Easter Celebration and Memorial Day Parade have been cancelled. Please check the township website, Facebook page and Our Town Cable TV (Ch. 77 Cablevision, Ch. 38 Verizon Fios), for informational updates and briefings about the Coronavirus.

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, and fire and ambulance corps. The cost of the project will be financed by bonding funds through the Bergen County Improvement Authority and utilize their AAA bond rating. The closing on the 55 Mayhill Street property has been delayed due to the Coronavirus outbreak. We will keep residents informed as we proceed on this important project for our community.

2019 Road Program

The contract was awarded to 4-Cleanup in the amount of \$466,431.07 and 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 15, 2019 and a notice to proceed was issued for a start date on October 17, 2019. 4-Cleanup commenced work on March 9th. All concrete work on all roads has been completed. Milling of all roads commenced prior to the issuance of this report (April 15th) and paving should be completed by the end of April 2020.

2019 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) - Rochelle Parkway Road Project

The project was awarded to 4-Cleanup at the November 7, 2019 council meeting. A pre-construction meeting was held on February 5th. All concrete work has been completed. Milling commenced prior to the issuance of this report (April 15) and paving should be completed by the end of April 2020.

North Leswing Avenue and South Leswing Avenue Road Projects

North and South Leswing Avenues were originally to be funded under the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program but was switched with Rochelle Parkway due to eligibility changes. North and South Leswing will now be part of the 2019 Road Program. The design is complete and currently out to bid. Those bids are scheduled to be received on April 28th and anticipated for award at the May council meeting.

Water Main Scheele Place

The water main installation is complete and operational. All work is complete and final payment has been submitted to the council by the township engineer. Final paving of the roadway is anticipated in the spring 2020.

Fairlawn Parkway (FY 2018 & 2019) New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJ DOT) Municipal Aid Grant

The NJ DOT approved \$392,000.00 towards this project (FY 2018 and 2019 combined). One bid package was prepared and was advertised for bid on January 17th. Bids were received on February 4th and awarded to the low bidder, Marini Brothers, on February 6th. Contracts have been executed and a preconstruction meeting was held on March 31st. Construction commenced prior to issuance of this report (April 14th) starting with concrete work at the Cambridge Avenue end.

Kuhn Court and Bell Avenue Water Main

The township engineer has commenced with the preparation of the plans for this project. The township is currently awaiting progress on obtaining an easement through the Church of the Korean Martyrs property prior to issuance of bid documents.

Albany Street for the FY 2020 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

The township engineer has been working with our township grant writer, Bruno Associates, for a grant application to resurface Albany Street. They have provided Bruno Associates with the necessary backup for the application, which was submitted prior to the December 6, 2019 deadline. We are awaiting announcement of grant awards.

Mayhill Street Phase I - FY 2020 New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJ DOT) Grant

An application for funding under the Municipal Aid Program had been submitted to resurface Mayhill Street from Leswing Avenue to the Route 80 Bridge. Funding awards were recently announced and Saddle Brook received \$182,653 for this project. A proposal for engineering services has been authorized by the township council and the township engineer has begun working.

2020 Road Program

The 2020 Road Program consists of Jamros Terrace, Colonial Avenue, Woodcrest Place, Danna Way, and Taggart Way. The road program also includes the installation of a sump collection system for Oxford Ave ahead of paving by Public Service Gas and Electric. Our township engineer has been authorized to commence with the preparation of the bid documents. Additionally, the condition of the sanitary sewers for the roads will be checked and recommendations for repair made.

OTHER

Proposal of Class 3 Special Law Enforcement Officers (SLEOs), Saddle Brook Board of Education Meeting - Wednesday, February 26th

The township council and I have proposed implementation of a Class 3 SLEO school security program for all township public schools. At a public meeting held with Public Schools Superintendent Danielle Shanley and Trustees of the Saddle Brook Board of Education, Police Chief Bob Kugler and I presented the proposal to assign SLEOs to act as armed security officers at the Middle/High School and all township elementary schools beginning in September 2020.

The officers, known as SLEO 3 Officers, are retired police officers employed part-time by the township and perform their duties under the direction and authority of the Chief of Police. The township shall cover the salary and other costs associated with the program which shall supplement the activities of the School Resource Officer, LEAD Officers and the police department. Further review, evaluation and approval of the proposal will be required by the Board of Education and Public Schools Superintendent.

Cub Scout Blue and Gold Celebration - Saturday, February 29th

Saddle Brook Cub Scout Pack 222 celebrated its annual Blue & Gold Banquet in the auditorium at Saint Philip's Church. The Blue and Gold Banquet is the highlight event of the year for Cub Scouts. It's the birthday celebration of Cub Scouting and brings families together for an afternoon of fun and cheer. The banquet is usually held in February, as this is the anniversary month of the Boy Scouts of America. The Blue & Gold gets its name from the Cub Scout colors. It was a pleasure attending the banquet and spending time with the Cub Scouts and their families.

Read Across America – Monday, March 2nd

I had fun participating in Read Across America at Long Memorial, Helen I. Smith and Franklin elementary schools. A big thank you to all the principals, teachers and students for inviting me to read and making it such a great experience. Read Across America is an annual event to encourage young children to read and to acknowledge the work of children's book author Dr. Theodor Seuss Geisel. Better known as Dr. Seuss, he authored many books to encourage young children to enjoy reading. Dr. Seuss was born March 2, 1904. Some of his very well-known and best-selling books of all time include *The CAT IN THE HAT* and *GREEN EGGS AND HAM*.

Local Ordinance No. 1675-20 (Swimming Pools)

This ordinance was passed March 5th and amends Chapter 183 of the township code entitled, "Swimming Pools/Private." The following is added as a new section: Article I. A. Fifty percent (50%) of the area of any private swimming pool, be it above ground or below ground, be counted as impervious coverage; B. Pertinent walkways, patios, etc. follow existing rules as to impervious coverage, i.e., concrete surfaces would be counted 100%; brick paver surfaces as 75%. The following was deleted from Chapter 183: A. Section 183-5(D) be and hereby is repealed in its entirety.