



Chatham Township Newsletter

Vol. 2 No. 2 Spring 2004

Milestones

75 Years Ago

The Green Village Fire Department is planning a bigger and better carnival this year. On Saturday night \$50 in gold will be given away and on Monday, the closing night, a fully equipped Hudson coach will be awarded to the party holding the lucky number.

The Chatham Press July 20, 1929

50 Years Ago

Township Committee Chairman Louis Hinds conducted an open public meeting to propose a new municipal budget. The proposed amount to be collected by taxes will be \$381,081.

The Chatham Courier March 1954

25 Years Ago

Mayor Dorothy Willis said a number of residents have called her to ask why cable TV has not yet been made available to residents.

Chatham Courier March 1979

Chatham Night with the Newark Bears



Mark your calendars for Saturday, July 10th for Chatham Night at the Newark Bears' Stadium.

Tickets will be available for \$9 each at the Chatham Township Municipal Building or the Chatham Borough Hall. The stadium is only 2 blocks from the Broad Street Train Station (children ride free on the train) As plans firm up, more information will be available on the website or in the newspapers.

Message from the Mayor

Spring is here and summer is just around the corner. While at home we are busy with spring cleaning and working out of doors, the Township Committee has been busy working on your behalf. A brief summary of some of the more notable projects follows:

The New Year always starts with work on the municipal budget. 19% of your tax bill goes to pay the expenses of the municipality. The remaining 81% goes directly to the school district and the county. Included in this newsletter is a report on the municipal budget. The Township Committee has worked hard with the administration and the departments to control spending.

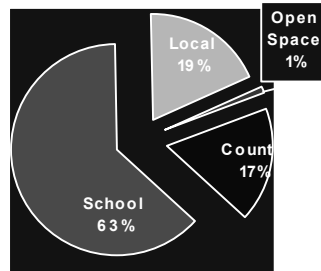
As mentioned in the previous newsletter, Morris County is requiring the Township to do a complete reassessment in 2004. You should have received a pamphlet describing the reassessment process. Our tax assessor has been meeting with groups about the process and public meetings are scheduled on Tuesday, May 25. There will be two sessions: 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. at the meeting room at the Municipal Building, 58 Meyersville Road.

Technology to allow our Police Department to call residents at times of emergencies is now available. The department is in the process of running tests of this equipment. This is a major step forward for our Emergency Management personnel.

GIS (Geographical Information System), a map based system providing data about the Township is due out to the public this month. Check out township website (www.chathamtownship.org) for the links to this new and exciting technology. Enjoy this newsletter. Your comments are always appreciated.

2004 Budget Report

The 2004 Chatham Township Municipal Budget raises local property taxes by 2.8 cents per \$100.00 of assessed value. This computes to \$140.00 per year on a \$500,000 home.



Of the total property tax bill paid, 19% funds the local government operations and expenses listed above. Morris County receives 17% and 1% goes to fund the Open Space Trust Fund. 63% goes to fund the schools.

Chatham Township is forced to rely largely upon property taxes to fund the services that are provided. Many other

towns have various miscellaneous revenues, like parking fees, to reduce their property tax burden. Unfortunately, we are very limited in the miscellaneous revenues available to us and for the past 10 years State Aid has actually decreased slightly.

In 1994 the Township received \$1,164,654 in State Aid. In 2004 the Township will receive \$1,164,418.

In the 6 years from 1998, municipal taxes have been forced to increase just over 16%. That's an average of 2.66% per year. During this same time period, insurance costs have increased \$542,190 or 102% and Police salaries have increased \$314,500 or 19%.

Remarkably, the total increase in insurance costs and police salaries since 1998 of \$856,690 mirrors the increase in the local taxes of \$856,689.

All of the municipal departments work very hard to control their spending. There is very little discretionary spending. The majority of the budget funds Public Safety at 28% of the total, Public Works at 21%; and Insurance at 12%.

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A Tour of Our Town



If you are new to Chatham Township you might enjoy the following tour to help you become familiar with your new hometown. If you've lived here for a long time, you too might like to travel along and, perhaps, learn something new. We won't be able to fit the entire tour into this newsletter, but will continue it in the next edition. You can get the full version along with a map at the Chatham Township website. In this issue we will take you from the Municipal Building at 58 Meyersville Road to the Hickory Tree Shopping Center.

As you drive around, enjoy the openness provided by the golf course, recreation fields, parts of River Road and the western part of town.

1. Town Hall Parking Lot , 58 Meyersville Road. You are in the Great Swamp watershed. TURN RIGHT as you leave Town Hall, proceed on Meyersville Rd. past Dogwood, Lisa, and Molino Drive.
2. Proceed on Meyersville Rd. and TURN LEFT on APPLE TREE DRIVE. As you drive up the hill notice view of Great Swamp (ancient Lake Passaic) on left. Road becomes Jodi Lane TURN RIGHT on SUSAN DRIVE.
3. SUSAN DRIVE. You are now on the Passaic River side of the ridge. Note the steep drop off as you TURN RIGHT on MARION RD. Drive carefully. TURN at first LEFT (Ormont). TURN at first RIGHT (Henry Drive). TURN LEFT ONTO RIVER ROAD.
4. PASSAIC RIVER PARK. Look for a MORRIS COUNTY PARK sign and road. TURN RIGHT. You are traveling through the floodplain of the Passaic River. Follow the road to the end. Stretch here and enjoy. TURN AROUND. On River Road turn right. You will be staying on this road for a while. Notice, north of Fairmount Avenue, the fairly sparse settlement pattern. The open areas serve to protect the river.

The steeper section of the ridge on your left above the road is a Steep Slope Conservation zone allowing one house on each 2 1 /2 acres. On your right you will pass one of the two Chatham Township volunteer fire departments. -- Chatham Township Fire Department..

5. You will pass the CARDINAL HILL apartment buildings on your left, approved in the 60's by variance. BEAR LEFT at Passaic St. GO STRAIGHT at light (bottom of Snake Hill).
6. The Condos - Heritage Green, Vernon Grove, Sutton Woods, Coachlight Square, Briarwood. TURN AT FIRST RIGHT into HERITAGE DRIVE. The road bears to left and starts uphill. Proceed back to Mt. VERNON AVE., TURN LEFT. Above River Road, note the Georgian house, known as Dixie Dale. All of the condo development used to be part of the grounds of this house.
7. TURN LEFT on RIVER ROAD. BEAR RIGHT UP STEEP SNAKE HILL, a 17% slope which requires extra salting in the winter. Turn RIGHT at top of hill onto FAIRMOUNT AVE. Red School House on corner is 18th Century. Now the Historical Society Museum, it was used as Town Hall until 1984.

As you travel north on Fairmount, you are on a ridge of volcanic rock (the third Watchung mountain) with a steep drop off on your right also a nice view of the Passaic River valley. TURN LEFT onto LONGWOOD AVE, just past the PEDESTRIAN CROSSING sign. The water tower on your right is in Chatham Borough. This is an older neighborhood built on the well drained soils of the glacial moraine. TURN RIGHT on LAFAYETTE AVE. past high school and down to Shunpike Road. TURN LEFT.

8. SHUNPIKE ROAD used from colonial times often to avoid paying the toll charged on Main Street. As you travel West, Cougar Field will be on your right. GO STRAIGHT through traffic light on Noe Avenue. The storm drains in the road direct water down to Fairmount Country Club and from there to the swamp. The woods just after Long Hill Chapel on your left were purchased by the Township in the 1970's with the help of the State Green Acres program. Shunpike recreation field is part of the same Township land.
9. HICKORY SQUARE Proceed straight on Shunpike. The two shopping centers were built in the 1960's. Previously, there was an antique shop, greenhouses, a garage, and some homes.

This is where we will stop today Go do a little shopping and we'll see you back here again next time.

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General Administration, Financial Administration, Data Processing, the Municipal Clerk's Office, Collection of Taxes, Legal Services, Engineering Services and the various Boards and Commissions account for 9% of the total municipal budget combined.

Recreation, including Colony Pool, accounts for just 4%. Note that revenues from Colony Pool fees offset the direct expenses related to the pool operations.

The Township remains committed to providing quality services and controlling the tax burden placed upon our homeowners. We welcome your comments, questions and suggestions.

Senior Moments

The Senior Bus serves all Chatham Township and Chatham Borough residents age 60 and up who are able to board and exit from the bus unassisted. To get the schedule or to make a reservation, please call 973-635-8747 between 6 and 2. Call 973-635-4565 to receive a newsletter with a calendar of events at the Senior Center.

Identity Theft... a growing problem in Chatham Township and the USA

Identity theft is when someone uses your identity and personal data to obtain goods, services, or credit in your name without your knowledge. It is a growing problem in our county. In most cases, by the time the victim has figured out that something is wrong, the thief has covered his/her tracks and is long gone. The damage is already done. The victim is now left behind with thousands of dollars in bills, their good credit is destroyed, and the burden is on them to convince the creditors that it was not they who used a credit card to buy that mink coat or the new Sony Projection TV.

Identity theft shows its face in many different ways. From the simple fraudulent purchase over the internet using a credit card receipt the thief found, to the use of your social security number to get a new credit card in your name, the bad guys always find a way to scam the system. Some are creative too. Cloning of the magnetic strip on credit cards is ever increasing. In fact, this has occurred right in Chatham Township. Everyone is a potential victim, even cops. Two of our police officers themselves have been victims of identity theft. As each week passes, we continue to receive additional reports from township residents who have been victims. These thieves don't discriminate.

Always shred your documents which contain social security numbers, account numbers, your mother's maiden name and other confidential data. Criminals do go through garbage. Never let your credit card leave your sight. You must watch the actions of store employees. Store employees can be criminals and can steal your number or clone the magnetic strip.

Under no circumstance should you ever give out any personal data over the phone to callers. When individuals inquire, call them back so you're sure you know to whom you are talking before giving out that data. Creative con-artists pose as customer service reps. Never give out personal data in response to email. Legitimate companies never ask.

Don't assume that internet shopping is unsafe. In fact, the thief usually gets your number in other ways and then shops on the internet. Most legitimate companies use encrypted software to prevent hacking.

At least twice a year, get copies of your credit reports. If someone is using your good name, this is how you are going to find out. These reports are usually free and are easy to obtain. Equifax—1-800-685-1111; Experian—1 888-397-3742; TransUnion—1-800-916-8800. When getting those credit reports, arrange with the customer service person to put restrictions on your name. They can call you first, before giving credit information out to verify it's you who is applying for it. Many other restrictions are available to minimize your chances of being the next victim.

There are many other steps you can take to prevent this from happening to you. Identity theft leads the list of the most increased incident of crime in this country. The Chatham Township Police Department is committed to assist you with this problem. From providing literature to speaking at a civic or social group, we are available. Please contact Ptl. Mike Giannone for additional information at 973-377-0100.

Calendar of Upcoming Events

May 22—Steak & Lobster at the Green Village Firehouse. Call 973-377-7073 Ext 4.

May 29th. Colony Pool Opens today
It is then open on weekends until the end of school. The Pool opens full time on Thursday, June 24th. Call 973-635-3201 for a membership application.

June 5—The Chatham Township Fire Department will host a family night barbeque at the River Road firehouse from 4 to 10 p.m.

June 6—The Historical Society welcomes visitors to the Red Brick School Museum on Southern Blvd. from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

June 10 — Chatham Township Art League will have their summer show on display at the Municipal Building, 58 Meyersville Road from 9-4:30 daily from June 10 through August 30. The group welcomes new members. For more information call 973-701-8988.

September 30—Green Village Firemen will hold their annual Golf Outing. Call 973-377-7073 Ext 4.

www.chathamtownship.org

*Committees, Boards, Commissions
Monthly Schedules*

All meetings are at Township Municipal Building, 58 Meyersville Road, unless otherwise noted. Please check the township website or call for changes due to holiday schedules .

Township Committee

2nd & 4th Thursday of each month at 7:30 p.m.

Planning Board

1st & 3rd Monday of each month at 7:30 p.m.

Board of Adjustment

3rd Thursday and 2nd Wednesday of each month at 7:30 p.m.

Board of Health

2nd Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m.

Environmental Commission

2nd Monday each month at 7:45 p.m.

Recreation Committee

2nd Tuesday of each month at 8:00 p.m. The meetings alternate between the Township and Borough.

Open Space Committee

4th Monday of each month at 7:30 p.m.

Colony Pool Committee

4th Wednesday of each month at 8:00 p.m. at Colony Pool Clubhouse.

Tree Protection Committee

3rd Monday of each month at 9:15 a.m.

Board of Education

2nd & 4th Monday of the month at 8:00 p.m. in the Band Room at the Middle School, 480 Main Street.

Library Trustees

4th Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at the Library.

RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMER

Recreation Schedule

Summer Sports Camp applications are now being accepted for over 20 camps being offered this summer. Call the Recreation Office for a copy of the various camps.

Fall Program sign ups for Soccer, Football, Flag Football, Field Hockey and Cheerleading begin in mid-June. Other programs begin in September. Applications are available in the Recreation Office or they can be downloaded from the website at www.chathamrecreation.org.

Train Station Parking Lottery :



The borough of Madison is offering 125 new train station parking spaces. Seventy-five will be for daily parking at \$5 per day and 50 at \$250 for six months will be through a lottery.

You can sign up for the lottery at the Madison Municipal Building on Kings Road across from the train station. They will be accepting applications from May 17 through May 28 and the drawing for the lucky winners will held on June 1.

Call 973-593-3015 for more information.