

CHATHAM CARES AND SHARES ADVISORY COMMITTEE 2012

Local Public Assistance

Jim Lonergan –Council Liaison

Janice R. Piccolo- Member

Chatham Borough has always provided for a local approach to public assistance supported by local houses of worship and identified through Borough department interaction with residents. In 2012, a name change, from Local Public Assistance, and the restructuring of an Advisory Committee took place to better identify need, provide necessary resources, and gain wide spread community support. *Chatham neighbors willing to help other neighbors in the community during their temporary need of assistance became the advisory committee's mission.* The committee expanded under the Borough Council Liaison and was adopted by Borough Council Resolution September 10, 2012

During the 2011 budget discussions, Borough Departments and expenditures were fiducially reviewed for effective, efficient government expenditures and community services provided. Based on current Census information, less than 3% of Chatham Borough residents qualify for Work First New Jersey Welfare Benefits, and during the 3rd and 4th quarters of 2011 Chatham had no active or open cases registered with the part time welfare director employed by the Borough. The Morris County Welfare Department would begin Welfare Benefit Verification for Chatham residents in need. Chatham, up to the first quarter of 2012, had been one of very few communities in the state that still verified their own community welfare benefits through a designated employee/welfare director.

The Advisory Committee quickly realized that Chatham Borough residents in need of temporary assistance have mixed need of services, for varied reasons, and for various time frames. It is the intent to develop a pool of resources already available within the community, and to gain a broad base of financial and professional networking support to be able to offer exact assistance directly, on an individual case by case basis.

In December, the Advisory Committee through community member support provided holiday gifts and food for 28 children within 12 identified families struggling during the Holiday Season.