



Borough of Chatham
BOROUGH HALL
54 FAIRMOUNT AVENUE
CHATHAM, NEW JERSEY 07928
973-635-0674

Dear Chatham Borough Residents and Taxpayers,

August 1, 2016

This newsletter accompanies your 2016 tax bill and includes an overview of the municipal budget and other information that we feel will be of interest.

Last year we were proud to re-certify for Sustainable Jersey at the highest level – Silver – and to once again receive the Champion Award for receiving the most sustainability points for a medium-sized town. This recognizes our many “green” practices.

We were graced with beautiful weather on June 11th for the annual Fishawack Festival. This was the first year in which the municipal government took the lead in organizing the festival, and there were some changes made, including focusing more of the activities in the south train station parking lot and the adjacent Lower Lum Field. Thousands came to enjoy the festivities.


Beautiful, warm weather encouraged thousands to come out and enjoy the 62nd Fourth of July Parade, and the drizzle that evening did not prevent spectators from enjoying the spectacular fireworks display, courtesy of the Chatham Fire Department Association. On Friday, July 22nd, News12 visited Chatham with its “On the Road” show. Anchor Rick Holmes and meteorologist Dave Curren broadcast live from downtown Chatham, visited local businesses, and conducted a fun trivia contest on Main Street. This fall, the Mayors’ Wellness Committee and the Environmental Commission will conduct a Sustainability Fair on Saturday, September 10th at the Farmers’ Market, and the Arts and Crafts Fair will return, on Sunday, September 11th.

Volunteers are vital to our community. This year at Fishawack we recognized the following individuals for their commitment to the Borough: Chris Tomaino, Carolyn Cherry and Mary Tracey, for organizing Fishawack; Kate Murphy, Chair of the Environmental Commission; and the Girl Scouts and Troop 8 of the Boy Scouts.

In addition, in 2016 we recognized the Chatham Emergency Squad for providing emergency medical services for 80 years, and Troop 8 of the Boy Scouts for 100 years of scouting.

One of the most important activities this year is the update of our Master Plan. The Master Plan is not a law or mandate, but is a document that sets the vision for the Borough's growth, revitalization and preservation. Conducted by the Planning Board, the update is well underway and is accomplishing exactly what it is supposed to do - get people talking. Through workshops, focus groups and an online survey, residents, property and business owners have been able to share their vision of how they would like to see Chatham Borough grow, revitalize and preserve its character. The next steps are to review all the collected data and prepare a draft report. Then there will be a public hearing to introduce the document to the public before it is adopted by the Planning Board this fall. Stay tuned to the website for meeting dates.

The following information highlights what the Council and I, along with our Borough employees and volunteers, have been working on. We encourage you to share your questions, concerns and ideas with us by sending them to mayor@chathamborough.org, council@chathamborough.org, or to the Mayor or Council by regular mail to Borough Hall, 54 Fairmount Avenue, Chatham, NJ 07928. Or you can call me at 973-635-0674 x 213. And you will find a wealth of information on the Borough website, www.chathamborough.org.

Sincerely,

Bruce A. Harris
Mayor

2016 BUDGET

The total municipal budget for 2016 is \$14.26 million - \$125,886 more than the budget for 2015. General revenues are expected to increase slightly from \$5.66 million in 2015 to \$5.67 million in 2016. Net valuations of real property increased from \$2.061 billion to \$2.074 billion. Through careful management, we were able to limit the municipal tax increase to 0.73%. The total tax rate for 2016 will be \$1.934 per \$100 assessed value. The Borough's portion is \$0.375, or 19% of your tax dollar. The School District receives \$1.218, or 63% and Morris County \$0.287 or

15%. The remainder goes to the Library of the Chathams and to county and municipal open space funds.

The tax increase is within the 2% cap established by the State Legislature. We continue to benefit from the numerous shared services arrangements we have entered into for 911 dispatch, the Joint Municipal Court with four other communities, our shared Construction Office with Madison, and other sharing arrangements. Please visit the Borough website for more information on the budget.

CHATHAM GATEWAY

The new craft beer brewery on Watchung Avenue and River Road and the upcoming replacement of an old industrial building on River Road with a 47-unit luxury apartment building are among the improvements resulting from the zoning change to the area we now refer to as Chatham Gateway. This area centers on the intersection of River Road and Watchung Avenue. As a result of the changes there are more permitted uses in this zone, and mixed uses are encouraged, making it easier and more desirable to do business in this underutilized area of the Borough.

COMMUNICATIONS

In 2015 the volunteers on the Communications and Technology Advisory Committee introduced the quarterly, electronic newsletter that provides a brief overview of Borough events. You can sign up for the newsletter on the Borough website.

As a reminder, last year we added streaming video of Council meetings to the website – so you no longer have to wait to watch the rebroadcasts on Cablevision 21 and FIOS 32.

The Committee also invites you to provide comments on the website to webmaster@chathamborough.org.

RECYCLING

We do a great job of recycling in the Borough. The Morris County MUA, our recycling vendor, has requested that we do a better job of ensuring that recycled containers (both glass and plastic) are cleaned before they are put into the recycling stream. Dirty containers weigh more and confuse the sorting machinery at the recycling plant, forcing the plant's personnel to manually put the material in the correct bin. Please take the time to make sure that residue has been removed from containers. Thanks!

SHADE TREE

The Shade Tree Commission (STC) has been busy in 2016. The STC arranged to have over 100 ash trees on Borough property treated to prevent infestation from the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB). This insect has been killing millions of trees across the country and is now entering Chatham. If not treated, an ash tree has a 99% death rate. The cost of treating the trees is about \$200 for a two-year treatment, versus a \$2,000 tree removal bill. Additionally, the STC planted 50 trees this spring to ensure that future generations will have beautiful tree-lined streets to enjoy. Please check out the Borough website for more information about EAB or about how you can request a tree in the public right of way of your property.

SENIOR SERVICES OF THE CHATHAMS, INC.

Senior Services of the Chathams continues to support the independence of our senior community by providing an enrichment center, transportation, and referral services. It operates a center at the Chatham Township Municipal Building at 58 Meyersville Road. Donations are welcome! For more information call 973-635-4565 or visit www.chathamseiorcenter.org

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

The Borough is working with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) to ensure our waterways remain unpolluted and viable through effective stormwater management. To ensure the success of this effort, we ask that residents help in implementing the initiatives undertaken by the Borough to better manage stormwater.

In 2006, the Borough adopted a stormwater management program that mandates that every resident and business properly dispose of pet waste. It also prohibits feeding wildlife on public property and prohibits dumping of any kind into storm sewers and disposing of wastewater to a storm sewer.

Please visit www.chathamborough.org or www.cleanwater.nj.org for more information on how to keep our streams and rivers clean. If you have any questions about stormwater management, please contact Vincent DeNave, Borough Engineer, at 973-635-0674 x 270.

VOLUNTEER/INTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Volunteers perform key roles in our community. Volunteers staff our fire department and emergency squad, our recreation programs, our Farmers' Market and our boards, commissions and committees.

To volunteer to serve on the Chatham Borough Fire Department, either as an adult or junior member, contact Steve Williams at 973-701-6807. To volunteer to serve on the Chatham Emergency Squad, contact the VP of Personnel at 973-769-8337 or visit www.chathamemergencysquad.org.

To serve on a municipal board, commission or committee, simply complete the "Application for Boards, Commissions and Committees" (available on the website under "Forms & Applications" and also at the Municipal Clerk's office) and indicate your interest.

A list of the volunteer opportunities is on the Borough website.

We continue to provide internships for high school and college students. Please contact Janice Piccolo at 973-635-0674 x 200.

FINAL NOTES

Pilgrim Pipeline. We are working with other municipalities on the proposed route of this bi-directional oil/fuel pipeline to ensure that our environmental resources – in particular, our water aquifer – are protected. Check the website for updates.

Train Station Restaurant/Bar. New Jersey Transit has advised that they are in negotiations with a bidder who responded to its 2015 Request for Proposal. However, they have not provided any timeframe for concluding those negotiations.

AlertChathamBorough. This remains our primary vehicle for distributing emergency information, and also for non-emergency information. Visit the website or call 973-635-0674 x 200 for information on how to sign up. **If we can't reach you, we can't alert you.**

Friendly Reminders. In Chatham Borough we have ordinances that restrict the use of water for lawn watering and use of power equipment outdoors to certain hours. We are in a mild drought. According to the National Weather Service, as of July 26, 2016 we have received 40.9 inches of rain over the past 365 days, which is 9.4 inches less than normal. Please see the Borough calendar and the website for more information.

MyChathamNJ. This committee plays a leading role in many community events, including the Spring Clean beautification and the White Lights during the winter holidays. You can volunteer to participate in their activities and/or you can also make a donation (small or large) to their events. Please complete the enclosed envelope if you want to volunteer or make a donation, or you can visit the website for links to volunteer or make a donation.

***Distracted driving remains a problem. Remember:
Texting and driving don't mix!***