

Committee Meeting – February 2, 2009
MAYOR’S REPORT

HIGH SCHOOL TRAFFIC:

During our workshop tonight we discussed the traffic situation at the high school. I presented a 2 page report of my observances at the high school during the morning and afternoon. Copies of my report are available here tonight. The Committee, the School Board and the Police Department are working on a solution to this problem.

RECYCLING FESTIVAL:

Last Thursday evening I attended the recycling festival held at the Donahue School. The students, teachers and our Climate Action Commission did a fantastic job displaying posters, projects, videos and skits on the importance of recycling. I am also happy to report that we finally received the recycling containers for distribution to the schools this week.

SHARED SERVICES:

A meeting was held last week between members of the Committee, the School Board and both recreation departments. We discussed how we can further enhance our summer activities while at the same time cut costs. A number of good ideas came from both sides of the table on how we can provide these camps for the kids at a lower cost to our taxpayers. Other issues were discussed on how we can combine some of our duplicated services to further reduce expenses by both entities. Some of those items are facility usage, vehicle maintenance, building maintenance and our future fueling station.

ECONOMIC STIMULUS PACKAGE:

Last week the United States House of Representatives passed their version of the 800 billion dollar plus economic stimulus package. Part of this economic recovery bill is funding for public infrastructure projects. This week, the United States Senate will take up discussion of the bill with the expectation of a modified recovery program being approved by the Senate in the next couple of weeks. Details regarding the process to apply for public infrastructure funding still needs to be developed, however, the Township has been closely monitoring the progress of this recovery plan through various local government advocacy groups such as the state League of Municipalities and the United States Conference of Mayors.

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This past Friday, the Township did submit to the state Environmental Trust Fund proposals for two (2) water and sewer projects totaling over \$800,000 that possibly could be funded under the federal recovery plan. In addition, on tonight’s agenda, the Township is going out to bid on two (2) projects that could qualify for funding under this federal recovery plan, as these projects would be classified as “shovel ready” jobs. The Township will continue to closely monitor developments regarding this economic recovery plan and respond accordingly when the program is finalized.

QUALITY OF LIFE ISSUES:

The Township is currently working on several significant quality of life issues at major residential developments in the Township. This includes concerns at Mirage, Horizons and the two (2) mobile home parks. At Mirage, the Township just completed the inspection of over 80 homes with water in the crawl space problems. In addition, the Construction Code Office just issued numerous notices of violations, commonly called NOV’s to MENK. This represents the first step in resolving the issues in the balance of the 264 homes that were not part of the DCA/MENK agreement. The Township will continue to pursue on multiple fronts resolution of these outstanding code violations at Mirage. Our administrator and attorney will be meeting this week with County officials to further address resolving the issue of our expenditures at the Mirage community.

At Horizons, on behalf of about a half dozen residents, the Township has petitioned the state to assist in correcting water heater problems in certain homes located in the bankrupt Kara development.

Finally, the Township is working on the concerns expressed by the Mobile Home Park residents at the January 20, 2009 workshop meeting. This would also include addressing the rent increase appeal filed by residents of the Mobile Home Parks. At this time, we are planning on having the next Township Committee meeting on Tuesday, February 17, 2009 at the Pinewood Estates Fire Department so that we can address the residents directly on the corrective action being undertaken by the Township along with rendering a decision on the pending rent increase appeal.

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BLACK HISTORY MONTH:

February is “Black History Month”. Month long displays at the Barnegat Library describe the importance of remembering the role that our African American ancestors played in the early beginnings of our nation. A celebration of Black History will be held at the Library on this Saturday, February 7 at 11 AM. This year, Charlotte Blake Alston will be performing and an array of soul food will again be provided by the parishioners of the Mount Zion Baptist Church. This is a great event for people of all ages, so if you have the time, make it a point to attend on Saturday.

BARNEGAT TWP SCHOLARSHIP FUND RAISER:

This Saturday, the Township is hosting a scholarship fundraiser for a Barnegat High School student. The well known comedian, Paul Venier, the One Man Comedy Tornado, will be performing at the Barnegat Fire House on Birdsall St at 8 PM. Tickets are \$20.00 per person and include admission, snacks and soft drinks. Tickets are available in our administration office or at Tobacco Road. Please call Donna Manno at 698-0080, ext 174 for details. We hope to make this a big success and help out a student in our High School. I can tell you from personal experience; this is one night you won’t soon forget.

GROUND HOG DAY:

And finally, in case you missed it, Punxsutawney Phil arose to see his shadow this morning and proclaim that we will have “six more weeks of winter”!

Jeffrey M. Melchiondo
Mayor, Barnegat Township