

Rockaway Township Report



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Volume Eight, Issue Four - Fall 2019

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Mayor's Corner



I am grateful to have been reelected Mayor, and I truly look forward to working with our Township Council, employees and public over the next four years. It is my privilege to serve as your Mayor, and I am pleased to tell you about some of the things my Administration has accomplished in an effort to maintain the high quality of life we enjoy in the Township.

Communication

Communication is a key element to success, and proactively communicating with the public has been a very important aspect of my administration. To continue successful and substantive dialogue, Township staff and community members are working on the following initiatives.

The Township is in the process of updating its website. Residents should expect current, comprehensive information when consulting the website for resources, staff contacts and details regarding upcoming events. Any residents who have suggestions, photos or other information to share should email rockadm@rockawaytownship.org, using the subject line 'website.'

Rockaway Township will be incorporating a new emergency alert system, Rave Alert, which is a fast, dependable means of mass notification. This will represent an enhancement to existing alert services, with constant improvements to the interface. Residents will be able to enter important information about themselves and their family members, including family phone numbers and information regarding any family member with special needs. This will assist emergency personnel when responding to a call for emergency services.

Please look for updates from the Police Department on how to sign up for this service, which will be replacing the Nixel mass notification system. To learn more, residents may visit www.ravemobilesafety.com/solutions/community-safety.

Infrastructure

Township Administration is also committed to infrastructure improvements in our community, and I am very pleased to report significant progress on some current and upcoming critical Township projects:

- The bid for the Taylor Street road improvements project was awarded to Cifelli & Sons General Contracting, Inc. at the December 10, 2019 Council Meeting. This project is partially funded by the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) Municipal Aid Grant program and is anticipated to go to construction in early spring 2020.
- The NJDOT also awarded Rockaway Township Municipal Aid Grant funding for improvements to Kings Road. Design is underway for Kings Road Section I (lower portion) and work is anticipated in summer/fall 2020, with Kings Road Section II (upper portion) soon to follow.
- A project to improve parking at the municipal complex is currently out to bid. Award of this project is anticipated for early 2020 with construction in spring 2020. Modifications include the creation of more parking spaces in the existing parking lot and improvements for pedestrian safety. Please check the Township website and Facebook page for updates before and during construction. Thank you in advance for your patience during construction.
- The Hudsonia dam removal and wetlands restoration project will soon be out to bid, and is anticipated for construction in early 2020. Work will include controlled dewatering of the pond, followed by final deconstruction of the dam and restoration of the wetlands and spillway. The project should take about 18 months, due in part to timing restrictions corresponding with permit requirements.
- The Rockaway Township Municipal Utility is working with the Engineering and Public Works Departments toward construction of its long overdue building. The Utility currently operates out of the Township's Well Field facility, which has no running water or permanent laboratory capacities. This building is a much needed asset for this invaluable Rockaway Township service.
- In 2020, Rockaway Township staff will be meeting with engineers, environmental consultants and regulatory agencies to review options for the next phase of Peterson Field development. There have been several meetings with various user groups and we look forward further collaboration in 2020.

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Winter Safety Can Be a Slippery Slope

With the 2019-2020 winter forecast for our region predicting colder temperatures and above average snow activity; here are some useful universal safety tips for residents who wish to enjoy the many outdoor activities our area has to offer. Please be safe!!!

In General...

- Check the weather forecasts. Winter weather can change quickly, so be prepared for anything. Carry backup clothing and supplies.
- Use the proper equipment. Be sure everything is in proper working condition before leaving home.
- Wear the proper attire. Use clothing and gear designed for the activity. Don't wear loose items that can be snagged or caught in equipment or machinery.
- Wear a helmet designed specifically for the activity.
- Stay focused; commit 100 percent of your attention on the activity and the terrain you are on. Rest when you are tired. Hydrate often.
- Avoid alcohol. Don't drink before or during any outdoor activity. Alcohol cools the blood and decreases body temperature. In cold weather conditions, alcohol can speed the

process of frostbite or hypothermia. It increases fatigue and causes impaired judgment.

Skiing & Snowboarding

- Stay on runs that are appropriate for your level of ability. Ski-run ratings can vary dramatically by area.
- Ski or snowboard in control at all times; maintain the ability to stop to avoid people or objects.
- Obey all posted signs and warnings. Do not cross ski area boundary lines.
- Do not ski or snowboard alone. Stay where others can see you in case you need assistance.
- Wear a helmet. Most ski areas require them; some rent them. Use goggles rather than sunglasses.
- Report safety hazards. Alert the local ski patrol about any dangerous activity or hazards.
- Take breaks, stay well hydrated and don't forget to eat. Avoid alcohol. Don't overdo it.

Sledding

- Never use streets or roads unless they are blocked off from traffic.
- Never sled on icy hills. You can lose control easily.

- Avoid big snow bumps or anything that can cause a sled to become airborne.
- Avoid sledding directly into wooded areas, onto ice or into water.
- Be aware of sledders at the bottom and those returning up the hill. Wait until the bottom of the run is clear before starting.

Ice Skating

- Skate in areas that have been approved and posted for ice skating.
- Avoid skating alone; stay where others can see you. Children should never skate unsupervised by adults.
- Remember that ice thickness is never consistent on lakes and ponds, and always beware of thin areas.
- Avoid cracks, seams, pressure ridges, slushy areas and darker areas that signify thinner ice. If the ice doesn't look safe — it probably isn't.
- Never skate after dark in unlighted areas.



Mayor's Special Recognition

Mayor Michael Puzio congratulates Doug Brookes for his appointment and Joe Jackson, Adam Salberg, Howard Kritz and Mary Noon for their election to the Township Council, and also wishes to extend a heartfelt congratulations to the following Township officials on their recent retirement, promotion or employment:

Retirements

Congratulations to the following employees on their retirement. Thank you for your years of service!

- Robert Sheard, Public Works/Fire Director
- Susan Sooy, Public Health Nurse Supervisor
- Craig Babcock, Fire Official
- Sergeant James Iannielli, Police Department

Promotion & Congratulations

Congratulations to Al Knoth for his promotion to Director of the Department of Public Works. Congratulations, also, to Matt Bansch for earning the New Jersey Registered Municipal Clerk certification.

New Employees

Mayor Puzio wishes the following new employees a long, happy and productive career with the Township:

- Lisa Florey, Construction (from PT to FT employment)
- Jeffrey Atehortua, Police Department
- Robert Parks, Police Department
- Thomas Walsh, Police Department
- Angela Skokandich, Division of Health
- Benjamin Keenan, Police Department
- Adam Katz, Water & Sewer Utility
- Jason Cummins, Division of Parks
- Robert Kostka, Division of Parks
- Michael Ramirez, Division of Parks
- Ryan Jackson, Public Works/Recycling
- Lane Lambert, Public Works/Recycling
- Scott Haigh, Police Department
- Dan Haber, Police Department
- Brian Keane, Police Department
- Amanda Bendett, Division of Health
- Dusty Russ, Finance Department
- Todd Shaw, Dial-a-Ride Program
- Jeffrey Heintzleman, Fire Department/Prevention
- Nagiyen Sylejmanovski, Division of Health
- Nancy Immediato, Division of Health

What's Happening: December Events in the Township

DECEMBER

- 6th Santa's Mailbox Open and Available
Rockaway Township Municipal Building (outside)
Please include child's name and address
- 6th Christmas Tree Lighting and Festivities
Rockaway Township Municipal Building (6:30pm)
Bring a weatherproof ornament to place on tree!
- 7th Annual Victorian Christmas
Ford-Faesch House, 629 Mt. Hope Road
2:00pm - 4:00pm
- 23rd Menorah Lighting and Chanukah Celebration
Rockaway Township Municipal Building
7:00pm

- *Pre-registration required for some events. Please call the appropriate department for information.*



Wishing all Rockaway Township residents a safe, healthy and happy holiday season!

Dark Lake 'Spooktacular' a Success!

Rockaway Township would like to thank everyone who came out to the Dark Lake Spooktacular event and helped make it a success! Thanks especially to those who decorated tables and shared their creative ideas in celebrating Halloween. A very special thanks to Rockaway Borough officials and residents for partnering

to make this fantastic community event happen! We hope everyone enjoyed the 2019 Dark Lake Spooktacular. If you have feedback, items we may improve upon or any ideas for next year, we would love to hear from you. Please share your thoughts by sending an email to rtrec@rockawaytownship.org.



Important Tax Collection Information

Homestead Benefits

For information or any questions regarding your application for Homestead Benefits, please contact the State directly at 1-888-238-1233 or visit:

www.state.nj.us/treasury/taxation/homestead/geninf.shtml

Property Tax Reimbursement

For information regarding your application for property tax reimbursement or qualifications for same, please contact the State directly at 1-800-882-6597 or visit:

www.state.nj.us/treasury/taxation/ptr/index.shtml

Residents are reminded that first quarter 2020 property taxes are due on February 1, 2020!!

Community Services: Fun at the Senior Picnic

The Annual Senior Picnic was held at the Craigmear Recreation Complex on September 13. The weather was very cooperative, and well over 400 senior residents attended. Area businesses and organizations generously donated lovely items for prizes, which were awarded to our seniors. Thank you to everyone who was involved in helping create yet another very successful Rockaway Township event!



Diabetes: 30 Million & Counting

Diabetes remains one of the most prevalent chronic illnesses in the United States, and the numbers continue to increase. Over 30 million Americans are diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes, a chronic condition that causes elevated blood sugar levels. Additionally and alarmingly, more than 84 million Americans have prediabetes, and most don't even know they have it.

Prediabetes means that your blood sugar is consistently higher than normal, but it's not high enough to be considered Type 2 diabetes. High blood sugar is damaging to the body and can cause other serious health problems, such as heart disease, vision loss and kidney disease.

The good news is that Type 2 diabetes and prediabetes conditions are manageable, and by incorporating healthy lifestyle choices, you may be able to eliminate your need for medication. In fact, maintaining a healthy diet, increasing exercise and managing stress can help cut your risk of developing Type 2 diabetes by up to 71% for those over 60.

Speak with your doctor about measuring and managing your blood sugar levels. Diabetes educators are available to help you develop a plan to monitor your health. They can help you take small, manageable steps that fit in your schedule and in your life. For more information on diabetes, call the Division of Health at 973-983-2848.

Breast Cancer Awareness

With the exception of skin cancer, breast cancer is the most common cancer in women in the United States. Awareness and early detection have allowed deaths from breast cancer to decline over time, but the disease remains the second leading cause of cancer death among women.

Each year in the United States, about 245,000 cases of breast cancer are diagnosed in women and about 2,200 in men. The main factors influencing breast cancer risk are being a woman and aging. Other risk factors include:

- Starting menopause after age 55
- Taking hormones to replace missing estrogen and progesterone in menopause for more than five years
- Taking oral contraceptives (birth control pills)
- Family history of breast cancer (parent, sibling, or child)
- Ashkenazi Jewish heritage
- Being overweight, especially after menopause
- History of radiation therapy to breast or chest earlier in life

Maintaining a healthy lifestyle, incorporating regular exercise, keeping a nutritious diet and having routine screening tests can help reduce the risk of developing breast cancer. Women age 50 to 74 years old should have a screening mammogram every two years.

If you are 40 to 49 years old, or think you may have a higher risk of breast cancer, ask your doctor when to have a screening mammogram. For more information about breast cancer or for referral to potential services, call the Division of Health at 973-983-2848.

Mayor's Message *(continued from page one)*

- In early 2019, the Morris County Department of Engineering and Transportation determined that the Chestnut Terrace bridge, located beside Parks Lake, was in need of replacement. The County gave special attention to Rockaway Township's concerns regarding the need for both vehicular and pedestrian improvements.

As a result of this dialogue, final construction plans feature several safety improvements, including

widening of the sidewalk on the south sidewalk and the addition of a new sidewalk along the north side of the bridge. The County is also enhancing accessibility adjacent to the ADA parking at Parks Lake and at the Senior Center.

This collaboration with the County is important and beneficial to the Township, as this area is beloved and utilized by so many of our residents. Weather

permitting, the bridge structure is anticipated to be delivered and installed on or around December 18/19.

As you can see, Administration and staff are working hard to make Rockaway Township a wonderful place to live and work. As always, I welcome your ideas and suggestions in this regard. I wish all residents a healthy, safe and happy holidays.

Mayor Michael Puzio

Eagle Scout Project Restores Municipal & Police Entrance Signs



James Suter showed true civic mindedness when selecting his Eagle Scout project this year. He and members of Boy Scout Troop 150 from Sparta renovated the Township Municipal Building and Police Department signs, located in the municipal complex. The appearance of this restoration, featuring a Belgian block and gravel base, is comparable to other recent Eagle Scout projects at the municipal complex. These projects, completed in 2015, include a Beach Glen Mine 'skip car' and a large anvil, both of which may be viewed at the main entrance to the Township Municipal Building. Pictured (l to r) are Tom Schwarzrock, James Suter, Anthony Del Coro and Brendan Del Coro. Rockaway Township officials and residents thank James Suter and members of Boy Scout Troop 150 for generously giving of their time and effort!

Rockaway Township Morris County, New Jersey Annual Notice of 2020 Meetings of the Township Council

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE, that in compliance with the provisions of the “Open Public Meetings Act” of the State of New Jersey, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq., Chapter 231, P.L. 1975, notice is hereby given that the schedule of the 2020 Regular Meetings for Rockaway Township shall be as follows. All meetings will be held in the Municipal Building, 65 Mt. Hope Road, Rockaway Township at 7:30pm. Formal action may be taken at all meetings.

January 7, 2020 (Reorganization)

January 28, 2020	June 23, 2020
February 11, 2020	July 14, 2020
February 25, 2020	August 11, 2020
March 10, 2020	September 8, 2020
March 24, 2020	September 22, 2020
April 14, 2020	October 13, 2020
April 28, 2020	October 27, 2020
May 12, 2020	November 10, 2020
May 26, 2020	November 24, 2020
June 9, 2020	December 8, 2020

COPD: What You Should Know

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, or COPD, is an umbrella term that encompasses both emphysema and chronic bronchitis. More than 13 million Americans have been diagnosed with COPD, and it is estimated that an additional 12 million Americans may have COPD but have not been diagnosed.

Signs and symptoms of COPD, including shortness of breath,

chronic coughing and wheezing, often develop slowly, which can delay diagnosis. People can mistake their breathing issues as a part of aging or a consequence of being out of shape – but early diagnosis and treatment can help people improve their quality of life and health.

Over 75% of COPD cases are directly related to cigarettes, so it comes as no surprise that the best

way to prevent COPD is to quit or never begin smoking. People who have COPD and quit smoking usually have marked reduction in the progression of the disease. Other factors like chemicals, fumes and air pollution can enhance the risk of developing COPD.

Residents with concerns are advised to speak with their doctor about risk factors and symptoms.