

Rockaway Township Report



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Mayor's Corner



We are here to start a new year in the government of Rockaway Township.

As I start my first full term as your Mayor, I must first acknowledge the people who have helped me do the job that I am supposed to be doing for the residents of Rockaway Township over the past year. I give my personal thanks to former Council President Sackett; Council President Jackson; and Council members Quinn, Friedlander, Noon and Brookes for their support and leadership. I also must thank Council Member Salberg for his service as Acting Mayor during the most difficult period in recent political history in Rockaway Township.

I must also give special thanks to the late Mayor Michael Dachisen, whose leadership over many years as a Council member, Council President and Mayor positioned the Township for future success.

Not to be forgotten are the many members of my

administration and staff whose loyalty and tireless work make my job as Mayor possible.

I will not rehash the turmoil of the past two years because it serves no purpose and my administration, the Council and the residents of Rockaway Township must put those experiences behind us and move forward in good, collaborative government.

My administration will continue the practice that I have developed over the past year of working with all members of the Council in all areas that our form of government permits. In that regard, we must recognize and remember that the two arms of Township government – the Mayor and Council – have separate and distinct areas of responsibility and authority. I promise that I will respect the authority of the Council to do its job and ask that they do the same as far as my administration and I are concerned. That is the foundation of good government.

We are all here to serve you, the residents of Rockaway Township. To the residents, I must first say thank you for your support during my prior year as Mayor, and for choosing me to be your Mayor for the next four years. Going forward, I ask our residents to continue their

participation in our government by attending Council meetings, and I urge residents to continue their scrutiny of and communication with both branches of government. The past year, alone, has proven the value of citizen participation and action. It is the reason that most of us are here to serve you.

Each municipality in New Jersey has challenges that it must confront, including taxes, municipal services, public safety issues and more. The key to meeting these challenges is to ensure that the branches of government – which, in our case, means the Mayor and Council – function together responsibly to do the right thing for the residents that they serve. Political squabbling and actions based upon personal interest have no place in good government.

To our new Council members, I say welcome. I promise that I will work with you, as I have with the incumbent members of the Council, to confront all of the issues that will face Rockaway Township in the coming year, and to meet our obligations to the community.

To everyone, I again say thank you. Happy New Year. God bless Rockaway Township and the United States of America.

Very truly yours,
Mayor Michael Puzio

Volunteer to Serve the Township!

Multiple Mayor's appointments for the Township of Rockaway are currently vacant. If you would be interested in serving in any of the appointed positions listed below, please complete a *Citizen Leadership Form*, which may be obtained at the Municipal Clerk's office either in-person or via email at clerk@rockawaytownship.org. Thank you for your interest!

Parks & Recreation Planning Committee

Full Member: 1-year term – ONE appointment

Alternate: 1-year term – TWO appointments

Meets the first Friday of the month at 9:00am

Township Code 2-39: The Committee shall explore and recommend locations and areas suitable for the development of park sites and recreational facilities. The Committee shall plan and develop public recreational areas and facilities. The Committee shall recommend planned recreational activities and programs.

Planning Board

1st Alternate: 2-year term – ONE appointment

2nd Alternate: 2-year term – ONE appointment

Meets the third Monday of the month at 7:30pm

Township Code 54-5: The Planning Board may approve, conditionally approve or disapprove land use applications for the purpose of providing for the orderly and wise development of the Township and affording adequate facilities for housing, transportation, distribution, comfort, convenience, safety and the health and welfare of its population.

Shade Tree Commission

Full Member: 1-year term – THREE appointments

Meets the second Monday of the month at 7:00pm

Township Code 2-31: Duties may include reviewing construction site plans and making recommendations regarding tree removal and planting. Public education such as web page, Arbor Day and local community events. Construct 5-year Rockaway Community Forestry Plan. Perform recertification tasks and submit annual reports to N.J. Forest Service. Keep abreast of invasive diseases and insects.

Citizen's Recreation Committee

Full Member: 1-year term – TWO appointments

Meets the first Tuesday of the month at 7:15pm

Township Code 2-40: Duties may include hearing various recreational programs; assist and advise the Director of the Division of Recreation regarding finances, administration, operations and development; enforce the Youth Sports Code of Conduct; approve program bylaws; conflict resolution.



Holiday Cheer in Rockaway Township



Rockaway Township held its Christmas tree trimming and holiday celebration on December 6 at the Township municipal building. Residents members of the governing body provided Christmas spirit as Santa arrived, followed by hot cocoa, cookies and Christmas carols from the Morris Hills Choir. Santa stayed until every child in attendance had a chance to let him know what they most wanted for Christmas.

Township Fire Officials Sworn In

On January 1, 2020, Mayor Michael Puzio introduced officers at a swearing in ceremony, hosted by White Meadow Lake Fire Company #5. Pictured (L to R): Battalion Chief 4 Randy Miller, Assistant EMS Chief Brian McCormack, Battalion Chief 2 Sean D'Amico, Deputy Chief Jim Russo, Mayor Michael Puzio, Chief Joe Aragona, Battalion Chief 1 Carlos Pais, Battalion Chief 5 Tom Garvey and Battalion Chief 3 Kurt Pederson.



Congratulations to all the men and women of the Rockaway Township Fire Department, with a special thank you to those who served as officers in 2019. Our volunteers provide a valuable service to the community each and every day. Please recognize those neighbors who selflessly volunteer to help others.

Residents are reminded that dog and cat license renewals were due to the Division of Health by January 31!



Winter Safety Reminders

Winter weather is here, and we would like to provide some safety tips for residents who wish to enjoy the many outdoor activities our area has to offer. Please be safe!!!

In General...

- Check the forecast. Weather can change quickly, so be prepared for anything. Carry backup clothing and supplies.
- Use the proper equipment. Be sure everything is in good 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.
- Stay focused; commit 100% of your attention to the activity and the terrain. Rest when you are tired and hydrate often.
- Avoid alcohol. Don't drink before or during any outdoor activity. Alcohol cools the blood and decreases body temperature. It increases fatigue and impairs 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.
- Take breaks, stay well hydrated and avoid alcohol. Don't overdo it.

Sledding

- Never use roads unless they are blocked off from traffic.
- 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 path 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.
- Never skate in dark areas after dark.



Scouts Visit Township

AOL Den Pack Troop #165 Cub Scouts visited with Mayor Michael Puzio on Saturday, January 18 to learn about municipal government. The troop, comprised of fifth grade students from Katherine D. Malone School, is led by Eric Nellessen and Yasmin Warden. Pictured with the Mayor (L to R): Owen Ramos, Matthew Nellessen, Alex Shields, Thomas Warden and Matthew Jordan. Troop #165 not only learned a lot about local government, but also left with some Township swag.



Tips for Preventing the Flu

The single best way to prevent seasonal flu is to wash your hands, but good health habits like covering your cough and getting vaccinated can help stop the spread of germs and prevent respiratory illnesses like the flu. There also are flu antiviral drugs that can be used to treat and prevent flu. The tips and resources below will help you learn steps you can take to protect yourself and others from flu and help stop the spread of germs.

Get vaccinated

- The seasonal flu vaccine protects against the influenza viruses that research indicates will be most common during the upcoming season. There are several flu vaccine options for the 2019-2020 flu season.

Avoid close contact

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick. When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick, too.

Stay home when you are sick

- If possible, stay home from work, school and other activities when you are sick. This will help prevent spreading illness to others.

Cover your mouth and nose

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. It may prevent those around you from getting sick. Flu and other serious respiratory illnesses, like whooping cough and severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS), are spread by cough, sneezing or unclean hands.

Clean your hands

- Washing your hands often will help protect you from germs. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.

Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth

- Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose or mouth.

Practice other good health habits

- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces at home, work or school, especially when someone is ill. Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids and eat nutritious food.

Preventing Flu at School

- Find out about plans your child's school, child care program or college has if an outbreak of flu or another illness occurs, and whether flu vaccinations are offered onsite.
- Make sure your child's school, child care program or college routinely cleans frequently touched objects and surfaces, and that they have a good supply of tissues, soap, paper towels, alcohol-based hand rubs and disposable wipes onsite.
- Ask how sick students and staff are separated from others and who will care for them until they can go home.

Preventing Flu at Work

- Find out about your employer's plans if an outbreak of flu or another illness occurs and whether flu vaccinations are offered onsite.
- Routinely clean frequently touched objects and surfaces, including doorknobs, keyboards and phones, to help remove germs.
- Make sure your workplace has an adequate supply of tissues, soap, paper towels, alcohol-based hand rubs and disposable wipes.
- Cross-train others to perform some job functions so they can cover for you in case you or a family member gets sick and you have to stay home.
- If you begin to feel sick while at work, go home as soon as possible.

Following these guidelines will help reduce the spread of germs and will help lower the risk of flu to you and your family. Residents with questions about influenza or the flu shot may call the Rockaway Township Division of Health at 973-983-2848.

What's Happening

FEBRUARY

20th Blood pressure screening
Rockaway Township Municipal Building
11:00am - 11:30am

MARCH

21st Blood pressure screening
Rockaway Township Municipal Building
11:00am - 11:30am

28th Annual Easter Festival
Copeland Middle School - Old Gym
10:00am

Save the Date!

APRIL

11st Opening Day Fishing

25st Little League Parade

MAY

7st Skin Cancer Screening

12th & 19th Mental Health First Aid

25st Memorial Day Parade



New Township Alert System

Rockaway Township is now using the new Rave - Alert system, powered by Smart911. With Smart911, residents can provide 9-1-1 call takers and first responders with critical information you would like them to know in any kind of emergency.

Over 80% of calls made to 9-1-1 come from mobile phones - but when you dial 9-1-1 from a mobile phone, the call takers have very little information to help you - only your phone number and a general sense of your location. When you call 9-1-1, your profile displays on the 9-1-1 screen and the call taker can view your address, medical information, home information, description of pets and vehicles, and emergency contacts. You can provide as much or as little information as you wish.

Smart911 is a national service, which means your Smart911 Safety Profile travels with you and is visible to any participating 9-1-1 center across the country. This alert system can save time and lives.



Mayor Michael Puzio delivers his address at the January 7 Rockaway Township reorganization meeting. Mayor Puzio's comments may be found on page one of this newsletter.

Safe Syringe Disposal

Some residents require home use of syringes for medical conditions. The proper disposal of used needles and syringes can protect your family and pets, and can keep our trash collectors safe on the job.

Syringes may be discarded with household trash but *must* be in sturdy plastic containers, such as empty laundry detergent bottles or approved sharps containers. If you dispose of syringes at home, please *make sure the containers are sealed and labeled 'syringes.'* Never place loose syringes with trash, and never place syringe-filled containers with recyclables. Following are other options for safe disposal:

Drop off locations

Syringes placed in sealed, rigid containers may be dropped off at the following locations:

St. Clare's Hospital: Accepted at Dover campus (973-989-3073) and Denville campus (973-625-6026). Containers may be delivered to front desk.

Morristown Medical Center (973-971-4177): Containers available for pickup and drop-off Monday through Friday from 7am to 7pm, and Saturday from 7am to 3pm.

Waste Management

Waste Management provides residents with disposal containers that may be returned by mail. Contact Waste Management at 877-WASTE-MD for pricing and details.

Should you have further questions about syringe disposal, please contact the Rockaway Township Division of Health at 973-983-2848.

Public Works: Winter Tips

Plowing Policies

With winter upon us, here are some tips to avoid snow plowing rage!

- Park cars off the street
- To minimize multiple shoveling commitments, don't clear driveways near the street until plowing is complete
- Don't shovel driveway snow onto the street – This is a violation of Township Ordinances and creates a hazard
- Don't shovel sidewalks onto street – this is also a violation of Township Ordinances and creates a hazard
- Per Township Ordinance, residents have 24 hours to remove snow from sidewalks in front of their home
- If you wish to file a claim for damage to your vehicle caused by Township equipment, you must have a police report

Avoid towing and impound charges: Township Ordinance 7-6.3(a,b) imposes temporary parking prohibition when snow has fallen and accumulated, at which point an emergency shall

be declared until the snow has ceased and the streets have been plowed sufficiently. Any unoccupied vehicles may be towed and impounded at the owner's expense. Please cooperate with plow crews by parking off the roads until plowing is complete. This will ensure safe, clean streets.

To report an ice condition, call 973-983-2891. To report a snow or ice related emergency off hours, please contact the Rockaway Township Police Department at 973-625-4000.

Street Lights

Street lights are maintained by Jersey Central Power and Light (JCP&L). As a courtesy, the Township can report a street light outage to the utility company if you provide us with the exact street address. Outages and street light issues may also be reported directly to JCP&L by dialing 800-662-3115 or by visiting www.firstenergycorp.com/service_requests/report-lighting-problem.html?form and completing their on-line form.

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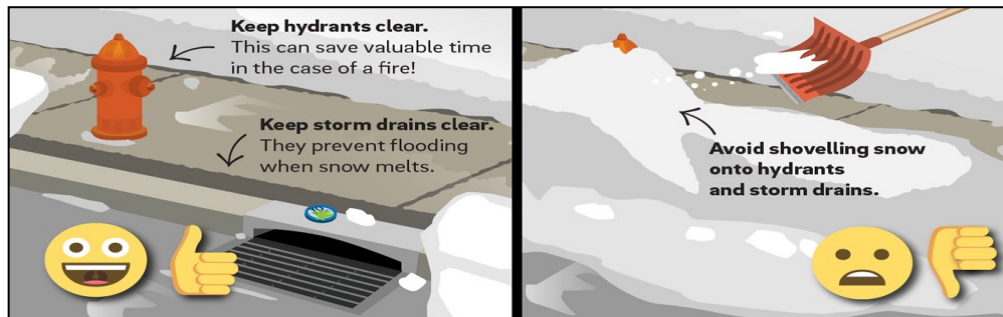
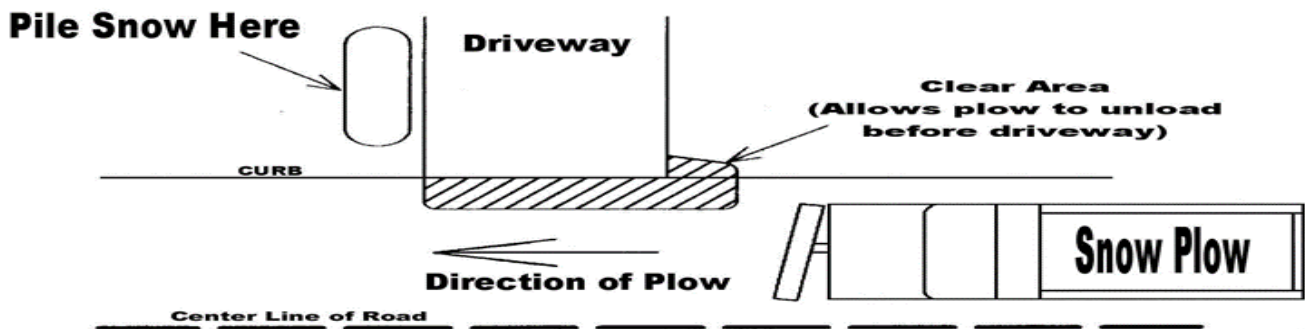
Proper Shoveling: Driveways, Sidewalks & Fire Hydrants

With winter here, the Rockaway Township Department of Public Works asks for your assistance in keeping our streets, sidewalks and fire hydrants clear of snow. Residents are reminded to shovel

snow away from the street and fire hydrants when cleaning sidewalks, and to help neighbors who are elderly, handicapped or who have medical conditions. Please use the following

guidelines when determining where to shovel snow when cleaning your driveway, or when clearing sidewalks and fire hydrants. The Department of Public Works thanks you in advance for your help!

Driveway Plowing Policies



New Look to Township Governing Body

Rockaway Township Mayor Michael Puzio was sworn in at the Township's January 7 reorganization meeting after being reelected Mayor for a four year term. Also elected were Adam Salberg and Howard Kritz as Council-at-Large members, and reelected was Council Member Joseph Jackson, who also was named Council President. Mary Noon was elected to fill the unexpired term vacated by Ward One Council Member Victor Palumbo, and Ward Four Council Member Jonathan Sackett was named Council Vice President. Congratulations to all elected and reelected members of the governing body!



2020 Township Reorganization (clockwise from top left): Ward Four Council Member Jonathan Sackett is sworn in as the Sackett family looks on; Mayor Puzio swears in Council Member-at-Large Howard Kritz; Council Member-at-Large Adam Salberg takes his oath of office; Ward Three Council Member Douglas Brookes with wife Kim (Brookes is filling the unexpired term of former Council Member Phyllis Smith).

Your 2020 Governing Body

Mayor
Michael Puzio

Council President
Joseph Jackson

Council Vice President
Jonathan Sackett

Ward 1 Council Member
Mary Noon

Ward 2 Council Member
Jack Quinn

Ward 3 Council Member
Douglas Brookes

Ward 4 Council Member
Jonathan Sackett

Ward 5 Council Member
Emanuel Friedlander

Ward 6 Council Member
Tucker M. Kelley

At Large Council Member
Adam Salberg

At Large Council Member
Howard Kritz

News from the Tax Collector

Quarterly Property Tax Payments

The 2020 first quarter property tax payments are due on February 1, 2020, with a 10 calendar day grace period. The last day payments may be made without interest is February 10, 2020. To submit your payment online, please visit the Township website at www.rockawaytownship.org.

To receive email notifications and reminders from the Tax Collector's office, visit www.rockawaytownship.org,

click on *Notify Me* and register for finance notifications. By subscribing, you will receive quarterly reminders of your property tax due date. Residents may also use the Township website to make water and/or sewer payments.

Homestead Benefits

Residents having questions or seeking information regarding applications for Homestead Benefits should contact the State Division of Taxation directly

at 1-888-238-1233 or may visit www.state.nj.us/treasury/taxation/homestead/geninf.shtml.

Property Tax Reimbursement

For detailed information or answers to questions regarding applications for Property Tax Reimbursement or qualification for same, please contact the State directly at 1-800-882-6597. Residents may also visit the State's website at www.state.nj.us/treasury/taxation/ptr/index.shtml

Public Works: Recycling News *(continued from page six)*

Recycling Collection Dates

Recycling calendars, flyers and other useful items are available on the Township website. Visit www.rockawaytownship.org/189/Recycle, click on the *My Schedule* tab and input your home address. Here, you can view or print your personalized collection calendar and sign up for important alerts and reminders with Rockaway Township's *ReCollect App*.

Single Stream Recycling

Curbside collection of recycling is 'single stream.' This means you may put cans, bottles, newspapers and cardboard out together. *Please note that recycling brought to our depots is not single stream and must be separated into*

commingled (cans and bottles), cardboard and newspaper. Plastic bags are *not* permitted in single stream collection or at either of the recycling centers.

Please note that *weight restrictions* are in effect for curbside recycling: Recyclables may be placed in tote-style cans (preferred) filled to capacity or in regular garbage cans no heavier than 50 pounds each. Please make sure your recycling is free of garbage, Styrofoam and plastic bags, and label all recycling cans (stickers are free at the Municipal Building). Failure to comply may result in rejection of your recyclables. Rejected

recyclables will be stickered accordingly to reference why they were not collected.

Single Stream Recycling

Because various collections are held on the same days, including garbage, recyclables and vegetative waste, it is important to label all cans to ensure proper collection. 'Recycling' and 'Vegetative Waste' stickers are available for your convenience at the Municipal Building and Public Library. If you would like stickers mailed to you, please call 973-983-2891. Please include your name and address, and a packet will be mailed to you.

Safe Home Heating

Residents who are planning to use a pellet stove or wood burning stove to heat their home this winter are asked to contact the Construction Department regarding any permit requirements that may be applicable. We wish to keep everyone safe.

Please note that all home improvement contractors must be registered with the NJ Division of Consumer Affairs. Residents are encouraged to visit the NJ Division of Consumer Affairs website to verify a contractor's registration status.

The Construction Department is here to assist you in following all applicable State and municipal regulations. Should you require any assistance, please don't hesitate to contact us at 973-983-2809, or email us at: construction@rockawaytownship.org.



Rockaway Township Historical Society members held the Historic Victorian Christmas event at the Ford-Faesch House on December 7, 2019, featuring games and a recreation of Santa's visit to the children of miners.

Helpful Info from Water Utility

The Rockaway Township Municipal Utility would like to share some valuable information to help you prevent a disaster due to frozen pipes.

Give your pipes a helping hand...Leave your cabinets open if your water pipes run through them. This allows for warm air to get to them and helps prevent freezing.

Keep your water moving when extremely cold...Keep your water moving by allowing a slow trickle run through the faucet, the cost of the water is far less than the cost of damage and repairs from a frozen or broken line.

If your pipes freeze during the winter...Locate your shutoff valve and turn the water off right away, *even if the line is not broken.* Thaw pipes with warm air or a heat gun – *do not use open flames to thaw pipes, as you could cause a fire.* Turn water back on slowly and let the ice move freely to an open faucet.

If you do not know where your water shutoff is, call the water office at 973-983-2825 and we will attempt to assist you over the phone, or will set up an appointment to help you find the location. The valves will be located before and after your water meter.

Thank you, and stay safe and warm this winter!

