



## TOWNSHIP OF HILLSBOROUGH

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# News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
April 28, 2015

## **Introduced 2015 Municipal Budget is Under 2% Cap Levy** *No Exceptions Taken for 5th Consecutive Year – Saves Taxpayers* *over \$140,000*

Hillsborough Township introduced the 2015 municipal budget at Tuesday's Township Committee meeting, which for the 5th year in a row came in under the 2% levy cap.

"Once again, our fiscally responsible budget has come in below the 2% tax levy, which has been our practice since the 2011 introduction of the 2% levy cap," stated Mayor Doug Tomson during his opening remarks regarding the budget.

The \$28,182,103 municipal budget results in a municipal tax rate change of \$0.003 per \$100 of assessed property value.

The Township saw an increase in the total ratable value for 2015 of \$57 million, which increases the tax base over which the tax levy is distributed. "This increase in ratable values helps hold property tax increases to a minimum, by providing more dollars over which the tax levy can be disseminated," stated Chief Financial Officer Nancy Costa.

"Balancing the municipal budget is never an easy task. We have maintained our business-like approach to government by managing taxpayer's dollars in a fiscally responsible way," stated Mayor Doug Tomson.

As has been the practice of the Township, allowable exceptions over the 2% levy cap which for the 2015 budget could have added \$140,781 to the tax levy, were not utilized in

order to reduce the tax impact on Township residents. Available exceptions include pension obligation increases, deferred charges to future taxation, current year emergency appropriations and prior year ratable increases.

“Had the Township taken advantage of these exceptions, the taxpayers would have incurred an additional \$140K in taxes. For the 5<sup>th</sup> consecutive year, the municipal budget comes in below the 2% tax levy cap while receiving no State aid,” added Committeeman Carl Suraci, Chair and Liaison to the Finance Committee.

For 2015, the key spending changes resulted in a decrease in debt service as the final payment was made on the Library expansion as well as the last payment made on an emergency budget appropriation from 2010 for the Township-wide Property Revaluation, that was ordered by the Somerset County Tax Board. The combination of these two items resulted in a \$392K reduction of spending. Conversely, mandated pension contributions increased along with salary and wages which are contractual obligations through the collective bargaining agreements. Snow removal expenses have also increased for the second consecutive year as a result of the recent harsh winters.

Non-tax revenue for 2015 is decreased slightly (0.3%) from 2014 as a result of decreased UCC fees, application fees and interest on taxes.

“This budget is a direct result of this Township Committee’s commitment to continued fiscal responsibility; working efficiently while providing our taxpayers the same level of service excellence they expect and deserve,” concluded Deputy Mayor Greg Burchette, member of the Finance Committee.

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