

Hillsborough Township

379 South Branch Road
Hillsborough, NJ 08844
Phone (908) 369-4313
Fax (908) 369-6034

News Release

Contact: Mayor Carl Suraci
Deputy Mayor Gloria McCauley
Phone: 908-369-3535

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Hillsborough Adopts 2017 Budget with No Change in the Municipal Tax Rate *7th Consecutive Year – No Exceptions Taken – Resulting in \$194,071 Taxpayer Savings*

Hillsborough Township adopted the 2017 municipal budget at Tuesday's Township Committee meeting, which as indicated when the budget was introduced, maintains a budget for the 7th year under the 2% levy cap. Additionally, for the 3rd year in a row the municipal tax rate remains the same.

"This fiscally responsible budget once again has come in below the 2% tax levy, which as previously stated, has been the practice of the Township since the 2011 introduction of the 2% levy cap. This saves our Hillsborough taxpayers \$194,071 just this year," commented Mayor Carl Suraci during the public hearing on the budget.

"It is important to note that the municipal portion of your tax bill, assuming the same assessed value, will see no increase. Said another way, the municipal tax rate is not increasing for 2017," added Mayor Suraci.

Adopting a balanced municipal budget is never an easy task, however, by maintaining the business-like approach to government and managing taxpayer dollars in a fiscally prudent way, we are, once again, able to achieve a balanced budget," stated Mayor Carl Suraci during the budget introduction.

The 2017 adopted budget saw a decrease in spending as a result of attrition in the Police Department, a mild winter realized a decrease in snow removal, as well as lower fuel costs and finally the increase in employee contributions to healthcare costs.

The Township continues the “Pay As You Go Program” for routine capital purchases and further makes payments on debt service greater than what is required, therefore further reducing the debt of the Township. This practice affords the Township to maintain its AA+ bond rating.

Non-tax revenue for 2017 saw a decrease in two main areas, the Municipal Court and the Building Department. The decrease in Court revenue was the result of lower available grants for enforcement funding that would directly benefit the Township. In 2015, the Building Department had a record year, but decreased in 2016.

The Township saw an increase in the total ratable value for 2017 of \$112 million, which increases the tax base over which the tax levy is distributed. The increase in ratable value within the Township helps to hold the municipal property tax flat for 2017, by providing more dollars over which the tax levy can be dispersed.

As has been the practice of the Township, allowable exceptions over the 2% levy cap which for the 2017 budget could have added \$194,071 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, health insurance increases and increase in debt service and capital improvement appropriations.

“If the Township were to take advantage of the allowable exceptions and exceed the 2% levy cap, the taxpayers would have incurred an additional \$194,071 in taxes. As Mayor Suraci previously stated for the 7th consecutive year, the municipal budget comes in below the 2% tax levy cap while receiving no additional State aid,” added Deputy Mayor Gloria McCauley, Chair and Liaison to the Finance Committee.

“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 McCauley.

“It has been the position of this Township Committee to take a fiscally responsible stand when dealing with the Township’s finances. Therefore, once again, for the 7th consecutive year we are introducing a budget below the 2% tax levy. In addition, cost savings have been a part of the Municipal employee’s annual goals and objectives. Their efforts are additionally realized in the results of this budget,” concluded Mayor Carl Suraci.

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