



# The Long Hill Ledger

Quarterly Newsletter

## Message from the Mayor:

I firmly believe in order to be an effective elected official on the local level it is critical to develop close relationships with elected officials on both sides of the aisle on every level of government. The Township Committee maintains an open dialogue with federal and state representatives, as well as municipal officials throughout New Jersey. Importantly, it has developed a collegiate and collaborative relationship with Gov. Murphy and his administration.

I'm fortunate to serve on several bipartisan state and county committees, including the New Jersey League of Municipalities and the New Jersey Conference of Mayors Legislative Committees. These committees review key bills under consideration in Trenton and offer support, suggestions and sometimes opposition. I'm Vice Chair of the Morris County League of Municipalities and the Morris County Open Space Committees. I'm proud to serve on the Executive Board, Board of Trustees and as Treasurer of the Great Swamp Watershed Association.

In addition, the Township Committee has constant communication with key executives at each of the utilities that serve our town, JCP&L, Verizon, New Jersey American Water and PSE&G. Lastly, we have a strong relationship with both the New Jersey and Morris County Chambers of Commerce. Long Hill can rest assured that our voices are heard and opinions expressed through these relationships, committees and organizations.

Guy Piserchia - Mayor



## A WAY OUT

By Brendan Rae – Township Committee Member

America's problems with opiate addiction were decades in the making and they will not be resolved quickly. The current opiate crisis does not respect any boundaries of race, age, religion or economic status. During the time taken to identify, fund and implement effective governmental strategies to stem the tide of misery caused by the scourge of addiction, a concerted local community plan of action and involvement may be the best and only hope to make a positive difference.

A WAY OUT was born out of the belief that local action will ultimately prove to be a critical component of the way America finds its way out of this crisis. A WAY OUT is a Long Hill Township-focused community-wide alliance dedicated to:

- Preventing the abuse of opiates and opiate addiction and eliminating stigma through activism and effective education of physicians, families and children;
- Supporting loved ones of those battling the disease of opiate addiction; and
- Advocating for and providing access to counseling and treatment professionals and facilities to enable life-long recovery for those afflicted by opiate addiction.

The organization is a partnership between Long Hill Township's local government, police and schools.

A WAY OUT has already made some important strides to combat opiate abuse in Long Hill Township:

- Established a 24-hour/7-day Drug Drop Off Bin at Police Headquarters as well as mobile drug drop-off days;
- Partnered with the Centre for Addiction Research Education and Success (CARES) and the Morris County Sheriff's Office;
- Ensured that a Peer Recovery Specialist is available to talk to overdose victims or opiate-addicted individuals who seek help;
- Trained groups to administer NARCAN – Morris County's HOPE ONE van has visited the Township and a group of 100 teachers were trained in the administration of NARCAN in March;
- Initiated parent outreach in the Township school district – this will be followed up by presentations at the Back to School nights and other events.

We urge you to support A WAY OUT and do all you can to assist it in its mission. Use the Drug Drop Off Bin at the Police Department to rid your homes of all unwanted medication. Educate yourself about non-opiate based pain therapies so you can have an informed discussion with your caregivers about pain treatment for you or your loved ones. And above all, remain vigilant – look for the warning signs of addiction in friends, families and loved ones – and be that early warning system. (Visit <https://www.addictioncenter.com/opiates/symptoms-signs/>.)

If you would like to know more about A WAY OUT and its mission, please contact [BrendanRae@longhillnj.gov](mailto:BrendanRae@longhillnj.gov).



*Long Hill Township's A WAY OUT Task Force comprises (from left to right) Lt. Alexis Ciambriello and Chief Ahmed Naga of the Long Hill Police Department; Dr. Edwin Acevedo, School Superintendent; and Township Committee Member Brendan Rae and Mayor Guy Piserchia (not pictured).*

# Administrator's Corner

Following is an update on important issues going on in the Township.

**2018 Municipal Budget:** The budget was adopted last month with a modest 1 percent increase. In addition, a sewer utility was created as a budgetary mechanism to collect sewer fees and disburse operational and capital expenses for sewer-related matters. The major repairs and upgrades needed to bring the wastewater plant into compliance with DEP regulations will require approximately \$7.2 million worth of capital projects in the next three-to-four years. This required an increase in sewer rates of 25.4 percent for an average user in the first year.

**Road Paving Schedule:** The Department of Public Works will be paving portions of the following roads this summer: Church Road, Highland Avenue, Hilltop Road, Home Street, Midvale Avenue, Lower Overlook Road, Passaic Street, Riverview Drive, Skyline Drive and Stone House Road. Notifications will be distributed to affected residents prior to the start of paving.

Have a safe and enjoyable summer!

Nancy Malool – Township Administrator  
administration@longhillnj.gov

# Public Safety

## Home Improvement Alert

By Police Chief Ahmed Naga

Homeowners should be aware of potential home improvement scams. It is common for unlicensed companies offering paving, driveway sealcoating, painting and masonry work to post signs around the Township. Offering or performing any type of home improvement without obtaining a state home improvement contractor's license is a fourth degree crime in New Jersey.

Residents should avoid utilizing any company to perform home improvements if they cannot provide their license number. This number will start with the prefix "13VH" and must be displayed on any vehicles, signs and paperwork associated with the business.

As summer approaches, businesses may offer their services by going door to door. Residential business solicitors are required to obtain a solicitors permit from the Township and have it available for display. Contact the Police Department with any questions and they will verify the solicitor's permit and identity. If you prefer to avoid solicitation at your home, you may obtain an application for the No Knock registry by visiting <http://longhillnj.gov/police/applications/No-Knock-Application.pdf>.

## Going on Vacation?

Contact the Long Hill Police Department to add your home to the Vacant/Vacation Security House Check List by calling 908.647.1819, then pressing 1. Your home will be checked by our ride-by procedure, which consists of a visual check.

# Fair Share Housing

## NJ Affordable Housing History

In 1975, in a case known as Mount Laurel I, the New Jersey Supreme Court determined every municipality has a constitutional obligation to use its zoning powers to provide a realistic opportunity for the production of affordable housing. The court revisited the issue in Mount Laurel II, providing mechanisms intended to make the Mount Laurel I doctrine more effective. Notably, the court allowed builders to file lawsuits, called builder's remedy lawsuits, against municipalities that were purportedly not allowing for the creation of affordable housing.

A builder's remedy lawsuit allows a developer to sue for the opportunity to construct housing at a much higher density than allowed. If a developer prevails, the municipality loses control over the zoning of the developer's property and may be liable for attorneys' fees, the fees of a Special Master, appointed by the court to oversee the new zoning for the property, and the costs of infrastructure upgrades.

In 1985 the Fair Housing Act codified the Mount Laurel decisions and created the Council on Affordable Housing (COAH), placing the agency in charge of establishing affordable housing obligations and granting protection to compliant municipalities from builder's remedy lawsuits. COAH functioned in its role until it failed to adopt rules for the housing period that was to begin in 1999 (the Third Round). Finally, on March 20, 2015, the Supreme Court transferred all affordable housing matters from COAH back to the courts and gave municipalities 90 days to file court actions to protect themselves against builder's

remedy lawsuits. The court also allowed an organization called Fair Share Housing Center (FSHC) to intervene and participate in every municipality's case.

## Long Hill's Participation

Long Hill has been involved in the Mount Laurel process since it received approval from COAH on August 2, 1995. The Township applied to COAH twice during the Third Round but COAH's own inability to adopt rules deprived the Township of the opportunity to be shielded from builder's remedy lawsuits. In an effort to avoid such lawsuits, the Township filed a court action on July 16, 2015. After filing its case, the Township could have gone to trial but, after weighing the risks, the Township Committee decided that settling the case was in the best interest of the Township and its residents.

After negotiating with FSHC, the Township was able to settle for an obligation of 220 affordable units, but because of certain mechanisms and bonuses, that obligation has been reduced to between 54 and 72 units. At FSHC's insistence, between 21 and 28 affordable units are proposed to be provided at the Tifa site, subject to further authorization from entities having jurisdiction over the property, such as the NJDEP. The settlement agreement with FSHC is not a framework for future discussions; it is an enforceable agreement that will conclude the Township's affordable housing litigation and protect the Township from builder's remedy lawsuits until 2025.

Jolanta Maziarz – Long Hill Township Planning Board Attorney  
Guy Piserchia – Mayor

# Recreation

## Summer is the Perfect Time to Be in the Parks!

As school routines come to a halt and we are ready to welcome in the less hectic routine of summer days, we hope you will join us to usher in the summer season with a kick-off concert at Stirling Lake. On Saturday, June 23, we welcome back a crowd favorite – Parrot Beach. Pack a picnic dinner and join us on the beach at Stirling Lake to listen to Jimmy Buffet tunes and relax. The concert is free to all Stirling Lake members and Long Hill residents – fun for the whole family. Parking is limited so walking and carpooling are strongly encouraged.

The summer is very busy for the Recreation Department. It's the perfect time to be outside enjoying the parks with us. We hope you will join us for swimming, kayaking, paddleboarding, volleyball, "Wibit racing," sunbathing, castle-building and many other fun activities at Stirling Lake. Memberships still are available and more information is on the website. Long Hill residents also can purchase a daily pass at the gate if you want to come "try it out." (Children must be accompanied by an adult.) Don't forget about our "Learn to Swim" lessons available at the lake, as well.

This summer we will be offering our Summer Rec Camps for pre-schoolers (ages 3-5) and for our students in grades K-8. We have lots of fun summer activities and trips planned – the kind of stuff summer is all about! During August we also are running several one-week camps at the Millington Schoolhouse: "Lemonade Stand Entrepreneurs" for ages 8-12; "Introduction to Coding with Scratch" for ages 8-11; and "LEGO® Bricks 4 Kidz Camp" for ages 5-10.

Also in July we will be running a beach volleyball program at Stirling Lake for high school students, a field hockey clinic for grades 5-9 and field hockey scrimmages for high school and college students. All information regarding camp opportunities can be found on the Township website Recreation pages.

We are planning movie nights at Stirling Lake, as well – one in July and one in August. Please keep watching the website for more information as we bring the BIG screen to Stirling Lake. Make sure to sign up for our Recreation E-News blasts on the front page of the Township website.

Lisa Scanlon – Director, Parks & Recreation  
recreation@longhillnj.gov



*Haleigh and Noah Puchalski next to "their castle" built with their father last summer.*

# Finance

## Property Taxes – Where Does Our Money Go?

By Bruce Meringolo – Township Committee Member

Elected officials are often asked, "Where does our money go?" The property taxes we pay are divided into several areas but most go to schools and municipal services, the hard working folks who keep us safe, educate our kids, fix our roads and provide us with services.

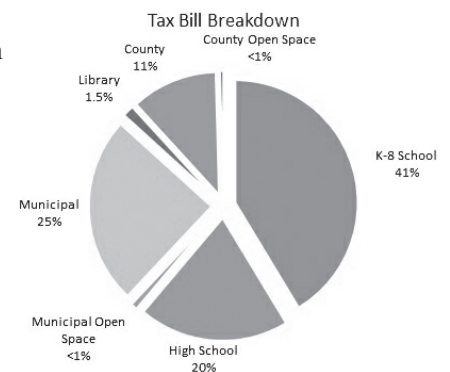
As the chart shows, schools represent 61 percent of your tax bill. That is common in New Jersey and in some communities the percentage is even higher.

The next largest recipient is the Township at 25 percent and those funds pay for our police, public works, street lights and garbage collection and provide aid to our emergency services groups. This year the 86 percent of your tax bill that comprises schools and municipal services will total about \$34 million, not including sewer.

The county portion is next at 11 percent and that generally goes toward the sheriff, clerk, parks and various other county services. Finally we have some smaller amounts for areas such as the library and open space preservation.

The Township Committee and Board of Education work very hard to keep tax increases as low as possible. Last year the Township increase was 0 percent and this year it will be 1 percent but that is difficult to sustain. The Township

generates revenue to help offset taxes through such things as fees and revenue-generating opportunities such as cell phone towers. But the schools have a very limited ability to do so. The state provides aid funded by income and sales taxes but our area gets very little so the schools must rely on property taxes.



In Long Hill residential tax payers pay approximately 90 percent of all property taxes while commercial tax payers contribute approximately 10 percent. Commercial property bills generally are higher than residential bills because their assessed value is generally higher but there are fewer of them.

So how do we lower our taxes? There is no easy answer. Lowering costs could mean cutting staff and reducing services, which no one wants. To raise revenues we look toward the future and will need some new ideas to do so to keep our community affordable.



## **Events Around the Township**

### **Township Schools Close - Summer Recess**

Friday, June 22 • Last day of classes • Happy Summer!

### **Stirling Lake Season**

Summer swim and fun. Season is underway. Family, single, student and senior memberships available. DAILY Passes for residents. Away for July? August-only badges available.

### **Summer of Learning at the Library – Kick Off**

Saturday, June 23 • 11:00 am-1:00 pm

Kick off summer reading program with a party! Fun crafts & snacks.

### **Parrot Beach ~ Live Jimmy Buffet Tribute Band**

Saturday, June 23 • 6:30-8:30 pm • Stirling Lake

An evening of dancing on the beach and the summer sounds of Jimmy Buffet. Pack a picnic dinner and bring the family. Limited parking – go green; walk or carpool!

### **Long Hill Recreation Summer Camp Opening Day**

Monday, June 25 • First day for all registered campers K-8

Little Explorers Camp for Pre-K campers opens Monday, July 2

### **Beach Volley Ball – High School Students**

Tuesday and Thursday nights June 26, 28; July 3, 5, 10, 12

Pre-register on REC Department website

### **Crossword Puzzles DeMystified! with Deb Amlen**

Tuesday, June 26 • 7:00 pm • Long Hill Library

Meet columnist & editor of the NY Times crossword column. Master a few basic strategies. You'll find that puzzle-solving is not only possible but highly addictive. So let's get solving.

### **Field Hockey at Kantor Park**

Mondays & Wednesdays • June 25-July 18

Clinics for grades 5-9

Tuesdays & Thursdays • June 26-August 7

Scrimmages for high school and college students.

### **Go Van Gogh**

Saturday, July 14 • 12:00 pm • Long Hill Library

Enjoy a stroll through the Met Museum without the trip into the city. Van Gogh, curated by Mike Norris, educator at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and Cloisters.

### **Learn to Play the Ukulele**

Mondays 7:00 pm • July 16-August 20 • Group lessons

Registration is required. Ukuleles available or bring your own.

### **On the Road to Woodstock/Concert at the Library**

Saturday, July 21 • 1:00 pm

Listen to the music you loved... without the mud and crowds.

### **Tennis Anyone?**

Summer clinics for adult and juniors at Kantor Park

Outdoor clinics through Skyline Tennis.

Registration info on REC Department website.

### **Outdoor Movies at the beach**

July 27 and Aug 17 • Stirling Lake

Bring your blanket, relax and enjoy a FREE family-friendly movie on the sand under the stars.

### **August Camps**

#### **Long Hill Recreation STEM Summer Camps**

Monday-Fridays • 9:00 am-12:00 pm • Millington Schoolhouse  
Week-long fun and exploration. Engaging hands on projects in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

**Lemonade Stand Entrepreneurs** • July 30-August 3 • Ages 8-12

**Introduction to Coding with Scratch** • August 6-10 • Ages 8-11

**Bricks 4 Kidz Lego® Camp** • August 13-17 • Ages 5-10

### **Looking for more summer fun?**

Visit Parks & Recreation Programs • [www.longhillnj.gov/rec](http://www.longhillnj.gov/rec)