

2010 MUNICIPAL BUDGET
PUBLIC HEARING
MAY 26, 2010

- The total 2010 municipal budget is \$11,573,408, inclusive of \$778,228 to be raised by dedicated open space funds.
- In 2009, the municipal budget was \$11,175,778, inclusive of \$363,449 raised by dedicated open space funds.
- Please note that the Township Committee fully intends to reduce the 2.5 cent dedicated open space tax; however, the Township Attorney has advised this can only be done by referendum in November. If approved, this tax will be reduced to approximately 1.2 cents in 2011. The Township intends to pay \$621,000 of open space and farmland debt principal this year.
- The municipal portion of the tax rate will increase by one cent per \$100 of assessed valuation from 16 cents to 17 cents.
- For a home assessed at \$800,000, this represents an increase of \$80 in property taxes for the year.
- \$2,300,000 of surplus funds have been utilized to support the budget. This includes a school tax deferral of \$800,000. The Township has used all but \$150,000 of surplus funds to offset the tax rate.
- \$5,302,380 will be raised by taxation to support the budget.
- The cumulative effect of 4% property tax cap, declining State Aid and the erosion of other revenues have combined to create serious budget challenges for most New Jersey municipalities, and Colts Neck is not immune.
- In 2008, the Township lost \$112,740 in State Aid, another \$163,000 last year, and yet another \$217,899 this year, for a total of \$493,639 in three years.
- In response to these challenges, most operating budgets have been reduced by 5% on average. Advisory boards and committees have been significantly reduced, as have donations to the First Aid Squad, Sports Foundation and the Senior Citizens Club.
- Non-union employees will not receive a raise this year, and the stipend for Township Committeemembers has been reduced.

- Certain amenities, such as fireworks and the Community Band, remain funded, but costs for these events will be offset by revenues. Clean-up day has been reduced to one day to save money.
- Increases to the budget include snow removal (up \$77,500) Police dispatching (up \$26,642), Insurance (up \$29,600) and statutory expenses (up \$33,697).
- Capital expenditures are an exception to the 4% property tax levy, and funds have been appropriated for the following on a “pay as you go” basis:
 - \$32,000 for a marked Police 4WD vehicle.
 - \$28,000 for Police computers, portable radios, cameras and copy machine.
 - \$15,000 for road improvements, such as minor drainage projects, road striping or road repair.
 - \$11,050 to refurbish playground equipment, improve Bucks Mill and Five Point Parks, improve the Recreation building and improve a donated school bus.
 - \$25,000 to upgrade all public buildings.
 - \$25,000 to purchase Scott Air Pacs or turn-out gear for the Fire Department.
- The Township’s Finance Officer, Mr. John Antonides, and Auditor, Mr. Robert Allison, are here tonight to answer questions, if needed.
- The Township Committee would also like to thank those residents that attended all or some of the six budget sessions needed to prepare the budget.
- Unless there are additional comments by members of the Township Committee, I would like to open the public hearing on the 2010 Municipal Budget.

Members of the township committee, we hope you would reconsider the layoffs of police personnel. We hope that your priorities lie in the protection of the citizens of this township. Please don't act on political pressures at the expense of the township residents. It is our belief that emergency services should be the last budget item cut, and we strongly recommend that the township committee please find other options in the budget. Please help us keep Colts Neck the best and safest place to live in Monmouth County.