

The Newton News



VOLUME 23, ISSUE 1

SPRING 2010

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DATES OF INTEREST:

- Spring Brush Cleanup Zones 1&2
May 3rd through the 14th
Zones 3&4
May 17th through the 28th
- Municipal Election Day
May 11th
- Memorial Day Parade
May 31st
- Tax Sale
June 2nd
- Primary Election Day
June 8th
- Newton Day
June 12th
- Miss Newton
Little Mr. & Miss Newton
June 12th, 5:30pm
@ Memory Park
- Pool Opens
June 24th
- Council Reorganization Mtg.
July 1st, 6pm

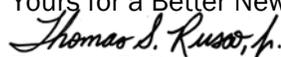
The warmer spring and summer months usher in a busy time of year for all municipal departments as we wrap up winter activities and prepare for the variety of new projects we have scheduled. Newton continues to be a small, vibrant and dynamic community of 8,300 residents with a proud history and brighter future. We are very fortunate to have many accomplishments to detail from the 2nd half of 2009 and the beginning of 2010.

Once again Newton was at the vanguard of intelligent planning in the State of New Jersey as we saw passage of the Sparta Avenue Redevelopment Plan as well as approval of the Town’s new Circulation Plan. All staff members share my commitment to expand the tax base with new quality ratables for our community in 2010 and beyond.

Newton led the way in the County as it related to shared services by partnering with our colleagues in Andover Township on the new Truck Wash facility as well as the Brine Pre-Treatment Solution for our roadways. The Water and Sewer Utility staff implemented a very successful program to account for any lost water from the starting point of our distribution center at Morris Lake as it enters Newton. The new Town website was launched with much fanfare and many accolades for its improved functionality, sleek design and enhanced features. Finally, the Town combined several bond anticipation notes into one bond issue through the Morris County Improvement Authority, saving Newton taxpayers more than \$341,000 over the life of the issue. These are just some of the many examples of positive, incremental changes that have been made to our organization and community by our dedicated staff members and I am grateful for their daily efforts.

This summer we look to implement several key capital projects including but not limited to: a variety of road improvements throughout the Town, paving for Central Plaza and the Pine Street Parking Lot area, the completion of our Town blue street sign replacement project, a new Fire Department Ladder Truck, implementation of energy audit modifications to all municipal buildings, a new multi-purpose practice field at South Park Drive, new basketball courts and hoops at Memory Park, and implementation of Phase I of our Circulation Plan recommendations. As you can see, a lot of thought goes into the planning of these critical projects so that we preserve and protect the existing character of the community while enhancing many areas that benefit the quality of life for our residents.

Our Newton Town Council, staff, professionals and volunteers take great pride in their efforts to make Newton the special place that it is and are to be commended. Together we will continue to make a difference. Thank you once again for reading our publication and please accept my best wishes to you and yours for good health and happiness during the beautiful spring and summer months!

Yours for a Better Newton,

 Thomas S. Russo, Jr.
 Town Manager

STAFF DIRECTORY

The staff of the Town of Newton is here to assist the public whenever possible. Please use the following list of extensions when dialing 973-383-3521 to contact a municipal staff member or department.

221 Deputy Municipal Clerk	
224 Manager's Office	Public Works Garage 973-383-4160
225 Tax Assessor	Recycling Center 973-383-1521
226 Deputy Town Manager	Memory Park Pool 973-383-2810
227 Planning/Zoning	Waste Water
228 Comm. Dev./Recreation	Treatment Plant 973-383-2090
230 Fire Prevention Official	Police Department
231 Construction Department	(Non-emergency) 973-383-2525
232 Municipal Clerk	
233 Treasurer	
236 Deputy Court Administrator	
239 Tax Collector	
240 Water/Sewer Collector	
241 Finance Officer/CFO	
242 Court Administrator	
243 Fire Prevention Secretary	
244 Recreation Supervisor	

OTHER NUMBERS

**THE 2009-2010
NEWTON TOWN COUNCIL**

E. Kevin Elvidge, Mayor
 Kristen Becker, Deputy Mayor
 Thea Unhoch, Councilwoman
 Joseph Ricciardo, Councilman
 Helen Le Frois, Councilwoman

Reorganization to be held July 1st

Thomas S. Russo, Jr., Manager
Lorraine A. Read, Clerk

IN THE COURTS...

The Municipal Court holds regular sessions on the second and fourth Tuesday evenings each month at 6:00 pm for first appearance. Early disposition conferences are held on Tuesday at 9:30am. Trials are conducted every Tuesday at 11:00am.



The Newton Municipal Court offers payment of your tickets and your time payments thru the Web. For On-line payments options please log on to www.njmcdirect.com. The Newton Court has noticed a big increase in payments received on the Internet. The Newton Court Code is **1915**. Newton Court also accepts payments of traffic fines by credit card. These payments needs to be done in person.

Amy Davis, our Data Entry clerk, retired on March 31st. We would like to wish Amy a long, healthy and happy retirement!

For more information, please contact the Court Administrator, Ann Rosellen @ 973-383-3521 ext. 242 or arosellen@newtontownhall.com or our bilingual Deputy Court Administrator Tania Ell at ext. 236 or tell@newtontownhall.com.

BRUSH CLEANUP...

The DPW crew will pick up brush and bagged vegetative yard debris during the month of May.

****PLEASE TAKE NOTE OF THE NEW SCHEDULE FOR PICKUP****

Pickup will follow the Recycling pickup schedule. **Zone 1 and 2** will be picked up the weeks of May 3rd and May 10th, **Zone 3 and 4** the weeks of May 17th and May 24th. Please cooperate by making sure debris is bagged correctly and is placed at the curb ***by 7:00am on the Monday morning of your Zone's pickup week.***

Tree limbs must be **smaller than 4 inches in diameter** (no exceptions). The clean up is intended for residents to clear away naturally occurring fallen winter brush and light pruning. Property owners are responsible for felled trees. Non-chippable items including leaves, vines, stumps and building material may not be set out for collection. ***Vegetative yard clippings must be in bio-degradable bags for collection at the curb.*** All yard waste will be taken to the Sussex County Municipal Utilities Authority in Lafayette for disposal.

FINANCE...

Tax Assessment

Inspections for added assessments occur during the summer months on properties that have had recent additions or renovations. Billing for those added assessments are mailed by October 25th and payment is due by November 1st.

Anyone wishing to have their assessment reviewed for the 2011 tax year may contact the Assessor between October 15 and December 15, 2010.

Tax Collection

The Town of Newton's annual tax sale will be held on June 2, 2010, at 10:30am in the Municipal Building. The sale will be for real estate taxes, water and sewer charges and other municipal charges existing against properties on December 31, 2009.

Reminders

June 1st is the due date for any senior citizen or disabled person who needs to file their 2009 *Property Tax Reimbursement (PTR) Forms* with the State. Please call 1-800-882-6597, Monday - Friday, 8:30am - 4:30pm, for more details.

2010 BUDGET ANALYSIS

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

When preparing the municipal and water/sewer budgets, we are guided by focusing on 3 core areas. The **first** is a focus on improving **cost effectiveness** through increased staff productivity with a targeted use of part-time personnel, volunteers and technology. The **second** is a focus on **protecting core services**. We must always be cognizant of maintaining our exceptional reputation for delivering quality municipal services with an emphasis on doing the right things the right way. **Finally**, we are guided by a focus on **revenue enhancement**. This allows us to minimize tax increases on the overall community while forcing us to be more deliberate with user fees and shared services strategies with governmental agencies like the Newton Board of Education, Andover and Hardyston Townships, and the County of Sussex. Ultimately, all three core principles are inexorably tied to the prevailing ideology of enhancing mission achievement – making the Newton municipal organization the best it can be.

APPROPRIATIONS

Newton's 2010 Municipal Budget and Capital Improvement Program totals **\$10,757,870**. The Municipal government is a service based organization. Approximately **65%** of the municipal budget provides funding for the salaries and benefits of **66 full-time and 58 part-time** employees.

Though the cost of providing health insurance continues to increase, the Town has, over a period of years, implemented policies requiring employees to share in health insurance premium costs for dependent coverage. These policies are necessary and certainly will continue for the foreseeable future. Additionally, the Town, as of January 1, 2010, became a member in the North Jersey Municipal Employee Benefits Fund (NJMEBF). This will allow us to better manage our health insurance premium costs in the long run while maintaining quality healthcare coverage for our employees and retirees.

REVENUES IN SUPPORT OF THE BUDGET

Over the course of the last five years, State Aid has continued to decrease while the taxpayers of Newton have had to pick up where the State has left off. Local fees continue to fluctuate along with the ability of the Town to create a consistent level of fund balance. With State Aid and grant funding continuing to diminish, coupled with the reality of a tax base that is 25% exempt, it is an ever increasing challenge to maintain appropriate service levels and sound fiscal policies while mitigating any significant municipal tax increases. The Municipal Tax necessary to support the municipal organization, including the Reserve for Uncollected Taxes, is increasing for the 2010 year. **The 2010 municipal tax rate will be .9031 vs. .8352 from 2009, an increase of 6.79 tax points.** This is the lowest increase since 2003. The impact on the average assessed residential structure (\$269,000 assessed value) is \$182 per year or \$3.50 per week.

WATER AND SEWER

The Town maintains independent financial records for the Water and Sewer fund. Both functions are supported by customer billings and do not require property tax revenues to meet financial obligations. The Water and Sewer budget is proposed at **\$4,015,000** for the 2010 year. The Water and Sewer budget provides service to over **2,600 accounts**. The current rate structure continues to allow the Town to provide funds for current and future capital improvements and the retirement of existing debt.

SUMMARY

It is my belief that the budget appropriations and revenue projections, as contained in the 2010 budget for Newton, will enable the Town to meet the public's demand and need for critical services. Furthermore, the budget is structured as a fiscally responsible document to ensure that the financial well being of our municipal government is preserved. This 2010 budget as presented will enable the municipal organization to continue mission achievement - achieving the excellence in governance expected by our customers, the taxpayers and residents of Newton.

MUNICIPAL ELECTION

May 11th is the date for the Town's Municipal Election. Polls are open 6:00am to 8:00pm. As you may know, three Town Council seats are at stake in this election. The successful candidates in the May Municipal Election will be sworn into office at the annual Reorganization meeting of the Town Council to be held on July 1st in accordance with our non-partisan Council-Manager form of government. If you have any questions, please contact the Municipal Clerk at 973-383-3521 extension 232.



FIRE CHIEF'S CORNER

The Newton Fire Department would like to remind everyone of some important safety tips when grilling during this barbeque season:



- Designate the grilling area a "No Play Zone", keeping kids and pets well away until grill equipment is completely cool.
- Before using, position your grill at least 3 feet away from other objects, including the house and any shrubs or bushes. Grills should not be used under covered porches or decks.
- Only use starter fluid made for barbecue grills when starting a fire in a charcoal grill.
- Before using a gas grill, check the connection between the propane tank and the fuel line to be sure it is working properly and not leaking.
- Never use a match to check for leaks. If you detect a leak, immediately turn off the gas and don't attempt to light the grill again until the leak is fixed.
- Never bring a barbecue grill indoors, or into any unventilated space! This is both a fire and carbon monoxide poisoning hazard.

JUNIOR FIREFIGHTER PROGRAM

This program is open to all residents 14-17 years of age. The purpose of the program is to provide an opportunity to gain insight into the profession of firefighting and other public safety careers. This program will provide personal growth and self-confidence through education and training. For more information please contact Lt. Jean Bond at 973-383-4746. Please leave your name and contact information.

ROAD PROJECTS

The following are scheduled for resurfacing in 2010:

Academy Street	Thompson Street
Franklin Street	Overlook Road
Hillside Avenue	Ashford Street
Maple Avenue	Smith Street
Grand Avenue	Slate Hill Road

Newton received a grant from the NJDOT for the milling and resurfacing of North Park Drive. Construction is set to begin in this summer on the roadway and delays will occur with this project. North Park Drive will be completed by the end of the summer.

Please note that this list is current as of April 19, 2010 and may be changed by the Town of Newton without notice due to modifications in construction costs and/or engineering fees.



FIRST AID SQUAD

The Newton First Aid Squad would like to thank all the good residents and businesses of Newton for their generous financial support over the years, however, now we need something different. We need new members as our ranks are dwindling. Won't you please consider becoming an EMT, First Responder or Ambulance Driver? We Squad members all subscribe to the motto of "Neighbors helping Neighbors". We're your neighbors and you are ours... come join us help other neighbors! You can contact us at 973-383-3377 and leave a message for Captain Kinney.



May 16th-22nd is National EMS week. The squad will be hosting various events throughout town, look for information on the Town's website. An open house is set to be held at the squad building, located at 66 Sussex Street on Saturday, May 22nd. Details will be available when all the plans are finalized.

2010 CENSUS

The U.S. Constitution mandates a headcount, every 10 years, for everyone living in the United States. This is know as a census. The federal government is collecting census data for each resident of the Town of Newton. Over \$400 billion in federal funds are awarded to states and communities for new hospitals, schools, better transportation and social services, based on the population information gathered from the census. The population totals from this census also determines how many seats each state has in the House of Representatives. It is very important for as much participation as possible so there is a very accurate count. The Newton Municipal Building has been designated as a census site for collection. If you misplaced your census form, more are available in the Community Development Office on the second floor of the municipal building. There is also a link on the Town of Newton's website homepage to the 2010 Census website. **"It's in your hands"** to be counted!



POLICE DESK

100 Year Anniversary

Upon discovery that the Department will celebrate its 100 year anniversary this June 1, 2010, members of the Police Department have launched a project researching its long history. Members have reached out to known family members living in the area, who have been gracious in providing photographs and other pieces of memorabilia. Retired members and employees responded to an invitation to be part of the research and included in part: Chief Michael Meeker, Lt. James Ransnorth, D/Sgts. Clarence Metzgar & Anthony Virga, Sgts. Mike Pandiscia, Steven Mills, Bruce Jorritsma, Det. Ken Armstrong and Officers Tom Morris, Gerry Garris and Bill Fehr. Their input has been invaluable, providing information and identifying individuals depicted in dated photographs and news articles.



The Department intends to display some of this rich and interesting history on the walls of the police headquarters building during an open house on Newton Day, June 12, 2010. Visitors could quite possibly recognize some of the images of our past and reminisce over some of the community-minded contributions that have served as the cornerstone to the Department's mission.

Alarm Ordinance

The Chief of Police, or his designee, will serve as the Administrator under Ordinance 5-22 Alarms. The Ordinance, common in many communities, encourages alarm users and alarm companies to properly use and maintain the operational effectiveness of alarm systems, designed to summon law enforcement. The purpose is to improve in the reliability of alarm systems, provide the most appropriate

level of response by police officers and reduce or eliminate false alarms.

The Ordinance applies to both commercial and residential alarm users and requires registration, establishes fees, provides for penalties for violations, establishes a system of administration, and sets conditions for suspension or revocation of registration.

In 2009, the Police Department responded to 407 Burglar and Panic alarms in the Town of Newton. Commercial businesses and residents should expect to receive additional information and applicable registration materials over the next few weeks. The entire Ordinance is available for viewing and inspection by accessing the Municipal Code section on the Town's website www.newtontownhall.com.



Black Bears

Since March 19th, police officers have responded to at least 20 reported sightings or complaints relating to black bears. It is imperative that residents and businesses properly secure trash and other refuse containers, particularly during this time of year by black bears. Competition for food sources and conflicts over territory could result in aggressive behavior by the bears. The Department's officers are specially trained to deal with black bears.



CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY

Inspections and subsequent issuance of a Certificate of Compliance before the re-occupancy by means of re-rental or re-sale of one and two family dwellings, and all commercial structures or rental portions, are required. For residential units the Code requires a smoke detector inspection, carbon monoxide and fire extinguisher certification.



Inspections may be scheduled through the Construction Department by calling 973-383-3521 ext. 231 during normal business hours.

CODE ENFORCEMENT REMINDERS

The owner of the premises is to maintain the structures and exterior property. Also, occupant(s) of a dwelling unit are responsible for keeping that part of the structure which they occupy or control in a clean, sanitary and safe condition. All premises and exterior property shall be maintained free from weeds or plant growth in excess of ten (10) inches.

Receptacles for the storage of garbage and trash prior to collection shall be located in the rear yard of the premises or under cover within the building and shall be maintained in such a manner with the cover in place to prevent the creation of a nuisance or a menace to public health.

THE POOL AT MEMORY PARK

The Pool Season will begin on Thursday, June 24, 2010 and continue through Sunday, August 29, 2010. The pool is open to all Sussex County residents, seven days per week from Noon to 7:00pm. The pre-season badges for the municipal pool will be available for purchase in the Finance Office located on the ground floor of the Municipal Building at 39 Trinity Street beginning Tuesday, May 25th. Badges may be purchased daily in the Finance Department between 8:30am and 4:30pm until the pool opens, at which time badges will be sold at the pool. The fees for passes for 2010 are as follows:



Newton Residents:	All Others: (Residing outside of Town limits):	Senior Citizen:	Swim Team Participant:	Replacement Badge:
Family - \$200.00*	Family - \$300.00*	Couple - \$60.00	\$30.00	\$5.00
Couple - \$150.00	Couple - \$200.00	Single - \$35.00		
Single - \$100.00	Single - \$125.00			

* Families shall include any adult, his or her spouse and their children 18 years of age or younger living together in one household.

Daily rates are: Senior Citizen - \$2.00 / All Others - \$5.00

*Thursdays are free to Senior Citizens 55 years of age or older.



There will be three swim lesson sessions for children four years of age and older as follows:

Session I - June 28 to July 16 **Session II** - July 19 to Aug. 6 **Session III** - Aug. 9 to Aug. 27

Swimming Lessons Fees: Season Pass Holder - \$30.00 All Others - \$75.00

Initially, each child will be permitted to participate in only one session during the season. Each session is 1/2 hr. each day Monday thru Friday, for 3 weeks. Sign-ups for swimming lessons will be on Thursday, June 24th and Friday, June 25th from 10:00am until Noon at the pool and during regular pool hours. Parents are to remain outside the fenced-in area during swimming lessons.

NEWTON DAY

Plans are underway for *Newton Day* to take place on Saturday, June 12th, with a rain date of June 19th. The event will take place on Spring Street from 11:00am to 4:30pm and then move to Memory Park. Evening entertainment is planned for Memory Park that includes music, refreshments, kids games and fireworks. The annual *"Miss Newton"* contest is planned for June 12th. The contest will be held at Memory Park as part of the Newton Day festivities. The event will begin at 5:30pm, and will be open to all single Newton young women between 17 and 21 years of age. The *"Little Miss and Mr. Newton"* contest will be held on the same day. Details will be available when all of the plans are finalized. Applications for the above contests are available in the Recreation Office on the 2nd floor of the Municipal Building. For more information please visit the Town's website at www.newtontownhall.com.

UNHOCH RETIRING



On June 30, 2010, Councilwoman Thea Unhoch is stepping down as a member of the Newton Governing Body. Mrs. Unhoch has served on the Council since she was first elected in 1998. Prior to her serving in public office, she was employed by the Town as Zoning Officer and Planning and Zoning Administrator.

The Mayor, Council, Manager and Staff would like to thank Thea for her dedication to the Town of Newton and its residents over the years. We wish Thea a long and happy retirement!

The Newton News
Editors - Terri Oswin & Thomas S. Russo, Jr.

WATER AND SEWER UTILITY

Since the retirement of William Grenville as Water and Sewer Superintendent in June of 2009 the Town has made some organizational changes to the department. Paul Baldwin is now the Water and Sewer Supervisor and John Madden is the Licensed Operator for the department.



The Morris Lake Reservoir, Newton's water source, located in Sparta, NJ is currently at spillway which will place the Town in good position as we enter the Spring and Summer months. For the fourth straight year an eagle has laid eggs in the eagle's nest at Morris Lake.

Fishing:

Fishing at Morris Lake began on Saturday, April 10, 2010. Please note that there is a "No Fishing Zone" area, as required by NJDEP to protect the bald eagles nesting.



Fishing permits are available and maps providing the "No Fishing Zone" may be viewed at the Municipal Clerk's Office located on the first floor of the municipal building Monday thru Friday between the hours of 8:30am and 4:30pm. Fishing permits are only available to Newton residents.

ZONING FAST FACTS

When do I need a zoning permit?

Zoning and Building permits are required for new construction plus most home improvement projects, including additions, decks, shed, fences, garages and PODS.

What information is need to obtain a zoning permit?

You need to provide a current survey of your property with the proposed work to be done drawn to scale. You also need to provide the setback of the property, height of construction an dimensions of additions, decks, sheds, fences, etc.

What if my home is located in the Historic District?

Structures that are located in the Historic District require review for any exterior alterations by the Newton Historic Advisory Commission. Examples of alterations that must be reviewed are: windows, siding, doors, roofs and signage. For more information on the Historic District please see the Historic website at www.historicnewton.com.

Kathy Citterbart is Newton's Zoning Officer as well as at the Historic Preservation Advisory Commission's secretary. She would be happy to answer any questions you may have and can be reached at 973-383-3521 ext. 227, or at kcitterbart@newtontownhall.com.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

In December 2009, the Planning Board adopted a circulation plan for the Town of Newton. This plan is part of the Town's overall Master Plan and provides guidelines for better traffic circulation, signage, wayfinding and parking. This summer the circulation plan will begin to be implemented and residents should see some improvements related to parking, signage and wayfinding in the downtown business district.

RECYCLING NEWS

The Town of Newton conducts monthly curbside collection of commingled recycling and newspaper. As a reminder containers placed curbside can be no larger than 35 gallons and must be at the curb no later than 7:30am on your designated pick up day.

Twice a year, in June and December the Town sends the "Newton Recycling News" to all its residents outlining recycling guidelines and the curbside collection schedule. This publication is also available on the Town's website at www.newtontownhall.com.

Recycling center hours are Thursday 8:00am to 4:00pm and Saturdays 8:00am to 1:00pm. Brush leaves and grass clippings are longer accepted at the Recycling Center.

Town of Newton
39 Trinity Street
Newton, NJ 07860

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U.S. POSTAGE
PAID

PERMIT NO. 268
NEWTON, NJ 07860

NEWTON: ENVISIONING THE FUTURE

The Newton News is printed and distributed twice a year to keep all residents informed of the many programs and services offered by the Town. Please take a few moments to update your calendars on upcoming events and keep this edition of our newsletter handy for convenient reference in the future. For more timely updates please visit www.newtontownhall.com.

GREATER NEWTON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Greater Newton Chamber of Commerce is an organization of business and professional people in Newton and the surrounding municipalities in Sussex County that work together to further economic development, community improvement and civic responsibility. They are a non-profit organization whose major concern and commitment is to further the interest of the business community in the greater Newton area.

Each year the Chamber sponsors several community events, most notably, **Newton Day** on Saturday, June 12th. The event will take place on Spring Street from 11:00am to 4:30pm and then move to Memory Park. Evening entertainment is planned for Memory Park that includes music, refreshments, kids games and fireworks. The annual "**Miss Newton**" contest is also planned for June 12th. The contest will be held at Memory Park as part of the Newton Day festivities. The event will begin at 5:30pm, and will be open to all single Newton young women between 17 and 21 years of age. The "**Little Miss and Mr. Newton**" contest will be held on the same day. Details will be available when all of the plans are finalized. Applications for the above contests are available in the Recreation Office on the 2nd floor of the Municipal Building. For more information please visit the Town's website at www.newtontownhall.com.



Another annual Chamber event is the **Taste of Newton**, which will also be held on Spring Street on the evening of Monday, September 13th. This annual event supports the Chamber's scholarship and decorating fund. The area's best restaurants gather to offer tastings of their finest dishes.

For more information on the Chamber and the many events they sponsor throughout the year visit their website at greaternewtoncc.com.