



# TOWN OF NEWTON

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## NEW JERSEY

# 2021

## ANNUAL REPORT



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39 Trinity Street  
Newton, NJ 07860

[newtontownhall.com](http://newtontownhall.com)

# Dear Council Members and Residents of Newton:

In accordance with State statute, I am honored to present Newton's Annual Report for 2021. This 62nd Annual Report outlines and describes the responsibilities and accomplishments of each municipal department. Newton continues to enjoy a reputation as a premier municipality in Sussex County, thoughtfully planned with a vibrant downtown, extraordinary restaurants & shoppes, parks, schools, and neighborhoods. Much of our success stems from the day-to-day operations detailed throughout this report.

Newton is served by 64 full-time and 86 part-time/seasonal employees, spread over several departments and the municipal court. As with most New Jersey towns, we are further dependent upon an ever-increasing number of civic-oriented residents serving as volunteers on boards, committees, commissions, and recreational programs. The combined efforts of all staff and volunteers have a profound, positive impact on the quality of life for Newton and its citizens. If you are not already volunteering, please consider doing so as your time, talent and efforts make a big difference!

## **2021 was another successful year as we (partial listing): Adopted a municipal budget with a nominal increase**

- **Refunded bonds which saved taxpayers \$1.3 million**
- **Received a Neighborhood Preservation Program Grant Award of \$125,000**
- **Negotiated successful shared services contracts for tax collection with Montague and Hardyston**
- **Upgraded the look and feel of the Town Newsletter**
- **Replaced 80 parking meters throughout the Town**
- **Initiated Hybrid Council Meetings so public members can attend in person or via Zoom**
- **Provided shared space at Town Hall for the Greater Newton Area Chamber of Commerce**
- **Reopened the pool for a full season of success and enjoyment for all who attended**
- **Provided Stigma-Free resources on the website and social media**

- **Coordinated many successful public events in spite of the ongoing pandemic**
- **Hired new police officers and promoted several others in the PD**
- **Increased the Recycling Center hours**
- **Received \$190,000 Grant Award for resurfacing of E. Clinton St., Lawnwood Ave., Nelson St.**
- **Finalized the Newton 1.6-mile portion of the Sussex Branch of the Rail Trail**
- **Successfully adopted a Cannabis ordinance and fee structure**
- **Worked with the redeveloper on the successful adoption of the G&H redevelopment PILOT and Redevelopment Agreement, creating the foundation for the new Starbucks, Chipotle, Panera Bread**
- **Received the Preserve NJ Historic Preservation Fund Grant Award of \$30,000**
- **Hired various new staff members to replace those that retired**
- **Adopted plans for the new Thorlabs building at the vacant EJ Brooks site**

I want to thank our Town Council, Department Heads, staff, and volunteers for the excellent job they do on behalf of the people of Newton and for allowing me the opportunity to serve as your Town Manager. Our elected Council members, municipal employees, and volunteers are grateful to serve you and will continue to provide the excellent services, programs, facilities, and leadership necessary to move our community forward by doing things the right way. We all take pride in our 2021 accomplishments and look forward to an even more productive and successful 2022. May you be safe, well, and prosperous.

*Yours for a Better Newton,*  
**Thomas S. Russo, Jr., MPA, CPM**  
 Town Manager

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# Newton Directory of Officials

## MUNICIPAL BUILDING

Main Phone No ..... 973-383-3521

## TOWN MANAGER

Thomas S. Russo, Jr. .... Ext. 224

## TAX ASSESSOR

Scott J. Holzhauser ..... Ext. 225

## PLANNING / ZONING

Kerry Brown ..... Ext. 227

## RECREATION SUPERVISOR

Sherri Kaylani ..... Ext. 231

## MUNICIPAL CLERK /

### DEPUTY TOWN MANAGER

Teresa A. Oswin ..... Ext. 232

## TREASURER

Ginny Raftery ..... Ext. 233

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Kimberly Williams ..... Ext. 234

## TAX COLLECTOR

Theresa Schlosser ..... Ext. 239

## UTILITY COLLECTOR

Jacki Shackleton ..... Ext. 240

## CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

Monica Miebach ..... Ext. 241

## MUNICIPAL COURT

### ADMINISTRATOR

Kathy Quinn ..... Ext. 242

## HUMAN RESOURCES

Jennifer A. Dodd ..... Ext. 254

## CODE ENFORCEMENT

Bernie Hattersley ..... Ext. 256

## QUALIFIED PURCHASING AGENT

Sean P. Canning ..... 862-228-3563

## CONSTRUCTION

Joseph Butto ..... 973-823-7020  
 Ext. 9001

## FIRE PREVENTION OFFICIAL

Virgil Rome ..... 973-579-0389

## FIRE CHIEF

Michael Razzano ..... 973-277-0459

## POLICE CHIEF

Steven VanNieuwland ..... 973-383-2525

## PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR

Kenneth Jaekel ..... 973-383-2090

## ASSISTANT PUBLIC WORKS SUPERVISOR

Adam Vough ..... 973-383-4160

## SENIOR CITIZEN COORDINATOR

Alan Abramson ..... 973-390-1408

## TOWN ATTORNEY

Eric M. Bernstein ..... 732-805-3360

## MUNICIPAL JUDGE

Hon. James Sloan ..... 908-813-2878

## MUNICIPAL PROSECUTOR

Jonathan McMeen ..... 973-729-1880

## MUNICIPAL PUBLIC DEFENDER

Daniel Agatino ..... 973-398-7500

## TOWN ENGINEER

Harold E. Pellow ..... 973-948-6463

## TOWN PLANNER

Jessica Caldwell ..... 973-300-5060

**RECYCLING CENTER** ..... 973-383-1521

# Our Town Council

## MAYOR

Jason J. Schlaffer

*Term expires 12/31/2022*

## DEPUTY MAYOR

Michelle J. Teets

*Term expires 12/31/2024*

## COUNCIL MEMBERS

John-Paul E. Couce

*Term expires 12/31/2024*

Matthew S. Dickson

*Term expires 12/31/2022*

Sandra Lee Diglio

*Term expires 12/31/2022*



## MEETINGS

The Newton Town Council typically meets on the 2nd & 4th Monday of every month. All meetings are held at 7:00 PM in the Council Chambers located on the first floor of the Municipal Building at 39 Trinity Street, Newton and via Zoom unless otherwise noticed. Meetings are open for public attendance and comment. Zoom information can be found on the Town's website: [newtontownhall.com/calendar](http://newtontownhall.com/calendar).

# Important Dates

## TAX DUE DATES

Real estate taxes are due February 1, May 1, August 1, and November 1 each year. Interest of eight percent (8%) is charged after the due dates; eighteen percent (18%) interest is charged for taxes due over \$1,500.00. Taxes are payable without penalty within ten (10) days of the due dates.



## UTILITY DUE DATES

Water and Sewer Utility bills are due March 25, June 25, September 25, and December 25. A 10% penalty is charged on current quarter billings that are not paid during the month in which they are due. The Town has a water shut-off policy it strictly enforces on delinquent accounts.



## HOLIDAYS

Municipal offices are closed on these legal holidays: New Year's Day; Dr. Martin L. King, Jr. Day; Presidents' Day; Good Friday; Memorial Day; Juneteenth; Independence Day; Labor Day; Columbus Day; General Election Day; Veterans' Day; Thanksgiving Day; Day After Thanksgiving; Christmas Eve, & Christmas Day.

## MUNICIPAL MEETINGS

All meetings are conducted at the Municipal Building, 39 Trinity Street. Dates and times of all meetings are posted on the official bulletin board in the lobby of the Municipal Building and on the Town's website: [newtontownhall.com](http://newtontownhall.com).



# Finance Department

The Finance Department is overseen by Monica B. Miebach, CMFO/Finance Director. Financial reporting to the Mayor and Council and to Federal and State regulatory agencies is done in accordance with State statutes and Local Finance regulations. Other responsibilities include cash receipts/investments/flow analysis, short-term financing, budget management, supervision of salary calculations/payments/reporting, grant reporting, and functions regarding insurance and employee benefits.

## THE 2021 MUNICIPAL BUDGET EXPENDITURES WERE:

Salaries and Wages .....	\$4,967,600
Operating Expenses .....	\$3,519,652
Capital Improvements .....	\$195,741
Statutory Expenditures .....	\$1,411,417
Debt .....	\$2,226,700
Reserve for Uncollected Taxes .....	\$545,225
<b>Total 2021 Municipal Budget Expended</b>	<b>\$12,866,335</b>

## WATER/SEWER UTILITY BUDGET EXPENDITURES FOR 2021 WERE:

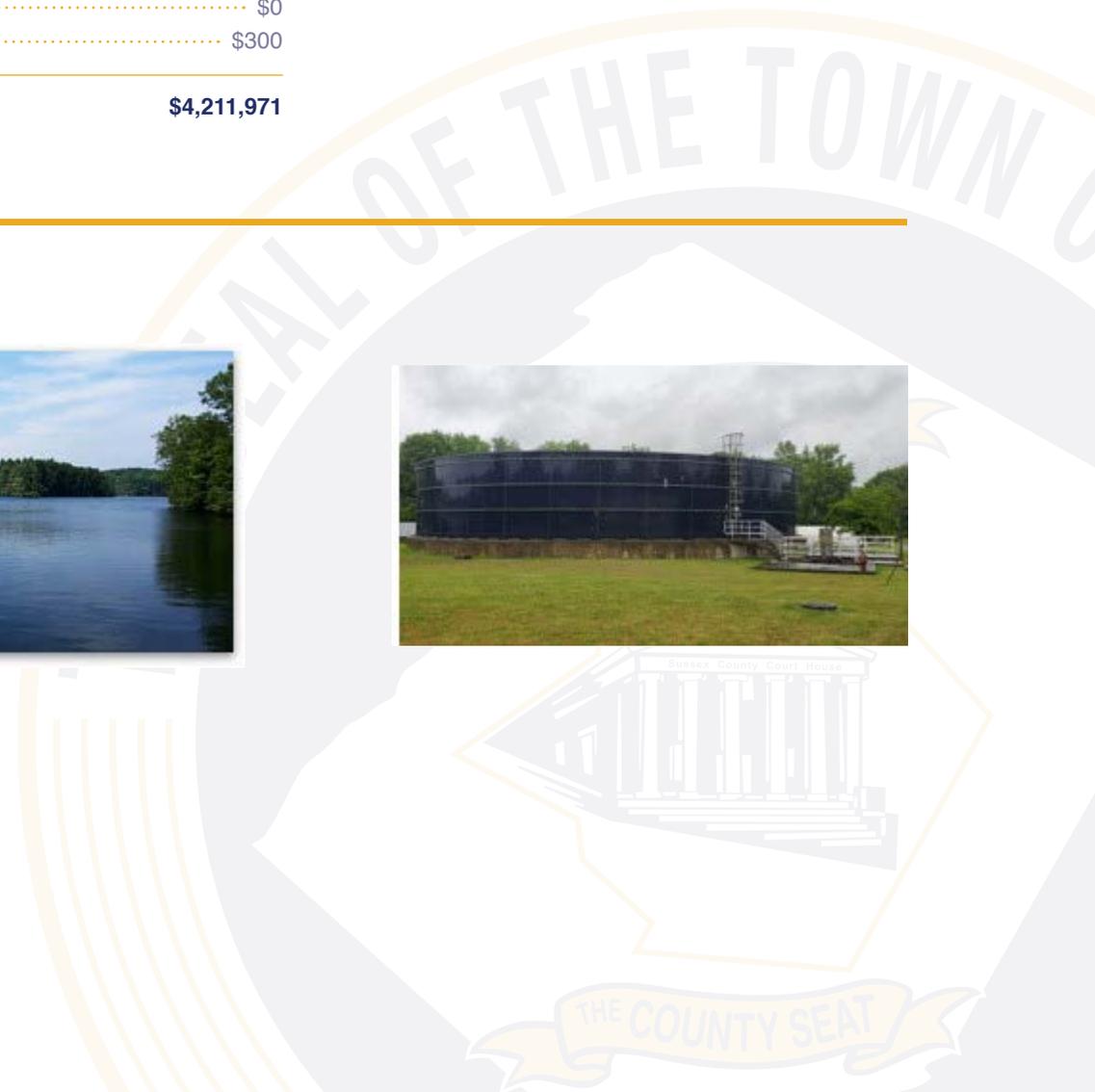
Salaries and Wages .....	\$1,040,340
Operating Expenses .....	\$1,976,225
Capital Improvements .....	\$298,775
Statutory Expenditures .....	\$101,389
Debt .....	\$590,153
<b>Total 2021 W/S Utility Budget Expended</b>	<b>\$4,006,882</b>

	<b>Municipal Budget</b>	<b>Utility Budget</b>
<b>2021 Interest Earned</b>	\$17,532	\$13,960
<b>12/31/2021 Surplus Balance</b>	\$3,476,303	\$2,150,040

**UTILITY COLLECTION DIVISION**

The Utility Collection Division handles the quarterly billing of water and sewer usage. Utility bills are usually mailed Feb 25, May 25, Aug 25, and Nov 25 with payment due within 30 days. 2021 revenue totals are listed below:

Rents .....	\$4,061,838
Water Serv. Turn On/Off .....	\$148
Water/Sewer Connections .....	\$102,129
Water/Sewer Taps .....	\$0
Sprinklers .....	\$38,075
Meter Tests .....	\$0
Final Readings .....	\$5,391
Meters Sold .....	\$2,950
Hydrants .....	\$0
Frozen Meter Charges .....	\$1,000
Returned Check Fees .....	\$140
Delinquent Shut Off .....	\$0
Penalty .....	\$0
Construction Water .....	\$300
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>\$4,211,971</b>



# Tax Assessment

The Tax Assessing Office is responsible for establishing and maintaining the assessed value for all real estate within the Town of Newton. The Assessor receives a copy of all building permits filed within the Town and makes inspections during the summer months to determine any changes in value resulting from new construction. Added Assessments resulting from new construction and/or renovations are levied by October 1, with a separate additional tax bill following by October 15. New construction not completed as of October 1 is carried as a “partial assessment” on the following year Tax Book.

Commercial property owners are requested to provide information each year pertaining to the operation of their real estate. The request for this information, known as Chapter 91, occurs each year during early summer and is returnable within 45 days of initial mailing. Failure to return this information in a timely fashion will result in an inability to file an appeal challenging the assessment on “valuation” grounds.

During December, the Assessor announces a date and time when the Tax Book will be available for review by the public (typically Christmas week). This provides the public with an opportunity to review any property assessments before those figures are filed with the Sussex County Board of Taxation. The County Tax Board adopts the Official Tax Book by January 10 of each year. Property owners receive written notification of their current assessment each year in February via postcard. Please do not rely on the “taxes billed/paid” section when preparing your income tax. That information is not provided by the Collector and may not be accurate with respect to the actual taxes paid during the prior calendar year (especially if you had a prior appeal judgment or recent added assessment).

The last Reassessment was conducted during 2013 of all properties in response to the continued decline in the housing market at the time. New assessments were established for 2014 – reflecting the estimated Market Value of property as of October 1, 2013. These assessments currently remain in place. The assessment ratio for upcoming Tax Year 2022 is 84.97%, which is down moderately from the prior year. This indicates a continued increase in property values, likely a by-product of the health pandemic and the continued increase in housing demand due to the outward migration of people from NYC and the surrounding urban areas.

The deadline for filing tax appeals to challenge the 2021 assessment of any property within the Town is April 1, 2022. A helpful document entitled “Tax Appeal Filing Procedure” is available on the municipal website through the Tax Assessor’s Department link (under the Finance Dept) and should be consulted prior to filing any regular assessment appeal. Additionally, questions regarding the appeal procedure can be researched further through the County Tax Board website: [www.newtontownhall.com/SussexCountyTax](http://www.newtontownhall.com/SussexCountyTax). You can also obtain the 2022 Tax Appeal Packet through this website.

The Assessor’s Office provides clerical access from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM Monday – Friday to accommodate routine requests for information, schedule appointments, and answer general questions. The Assessor, Scott J. Holzhauer, is available by appointment on Wednesdays from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM, and other times as needed. All meetings with the Assessor must be scheduled. Appointments can be made by calling the Assessing Clerk at (973) 383-3521 ext. 234. Appointments at times other than the typical office hours can also be arranged.

Property Type	No. Line Items	Assessed Value (\$)	% of Total	Acreage
Residential (w/ Farm Bldgs)	2,005	\$371,513,100	62.021%	607.49
Commercial	230	\$164,364,000	27.439%	205.54
Apartment	27	\$38,181,500	6.374%	45.77
Industrial	11	\$13,491,100	2.252%	102.80
Vacant Land	79	\$11,416,700	1.906%	168.19
Qualified Farmland	11	\$41,100	0.007%	114.05
Personal Property (telephone)	2	\$424	0.000%	0.00
<b>NET VALUATION TAXABLE</b>	<b>2,365</b>	<b>599,007,924</b>	<b>100.000%</b>	<b>1,243.84</b>
Exempts (all classes)	182	290,787,000		721.03
Equalization Ratio (2022)		84.97%		
Tax Rate (Prior Year 2021)	\$4.492	(per \$100 of Assmt)		

## TAX COLLECTION DIVISION

The primary responsibilities of the Municipal Tax Collector are billing, collecting, reporting, and enforcement. The Collector must determine the amount of taxes due from each taxpayer and issue tax bills for each account. As property tax payments are received, she must accurately credit those accounts.

The Collector routinely reports collection activities to the Town Council to keep the Governing Body up-to-date regarding municipal finances. Theresa Schlosser serves as the Town's Certified Tax Collector. The Collector is accountable for initiating and enforcing procedures that result in timely payment of taxes due, and must clearly understand the application of interest for delinquent taxes, the use of tax sales, and foreclosure methods. The Collector is required to attend regular seminars and classes to maintain State certification and to keep informed of any changes in tax laws. Tax bills are mailed once a year in July. Payments are due quarterly on Feb 1, May 1, Aug 1, and Nov 1.

## REVENUE COLLECTED IN 2021 BY THE TAX OFFICE IS LISTED BELOW:

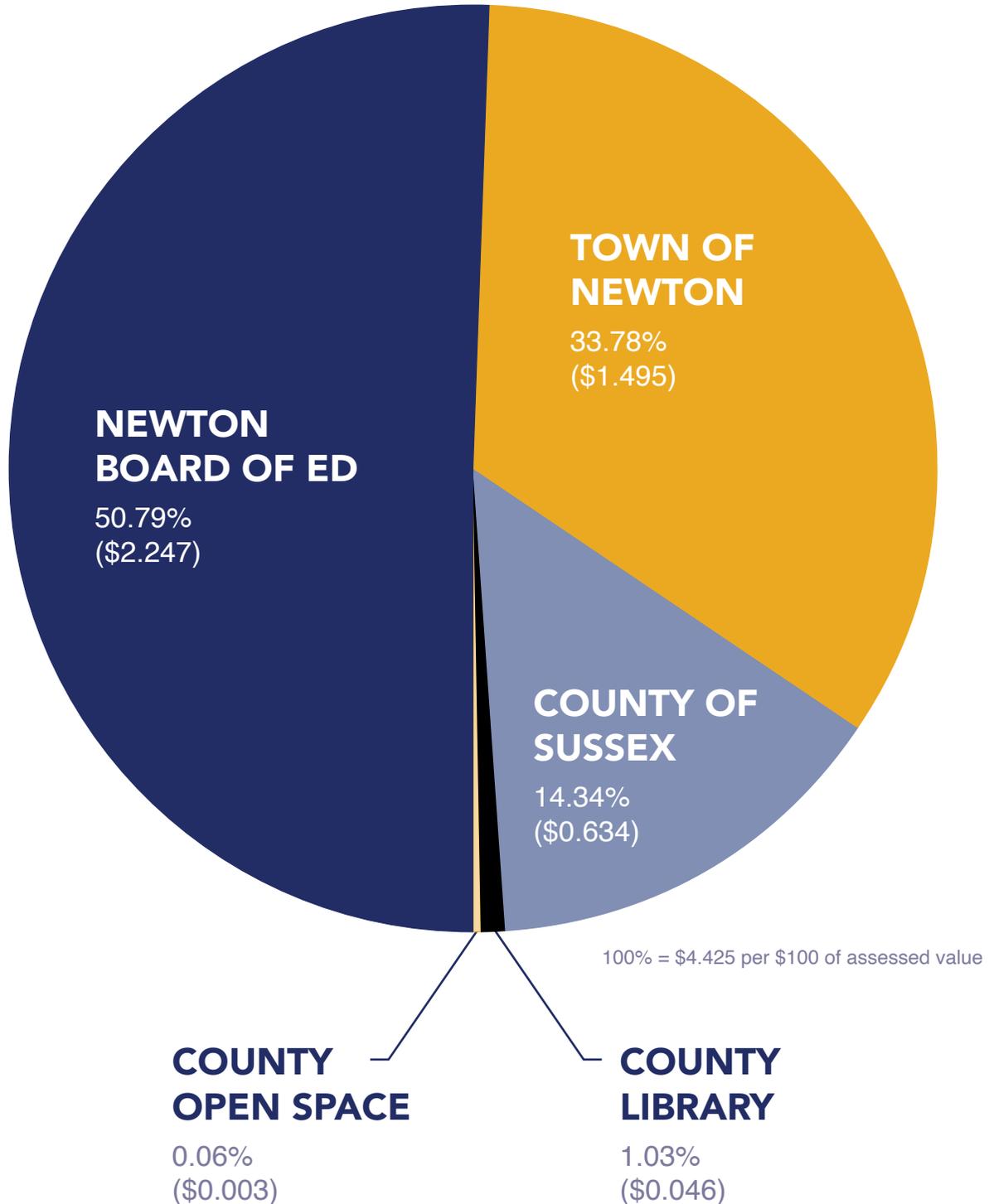
Prepaid 2022 Taxes .....	\$231,167
Current 2021 Taxes .....	\$25,797,700
Prior 2020 Year .....	\$471,859
Interest .....	\$113,208
Town Liens .....	\$5,015
Tax Searches .....	\$85
Miscellaneous Revenues .....	\$1,746
Senior Citizen Disallowances .....	\$0.00

**Total Revenue Collected** **\$26,620,780**

The collection rate for 2021 was 97.96% of revenue billed.

# Fiscal Facts - Your Tax Dollars

The property tax is divided among the County of Sussex, County Library, County Open Space, Newton Board of Education, and the Town of Newton. The chart below illustrates the percentage that each of the jurisdictions received in 2021 from the average taxpayer in the Town.



## TREASURY DIVISION

Virginia Raftery serves as the Town's Treasurer. Her responsibilities include the vouchering for all Town expenditures, preparing bill lists for Mayor and Council approval, maintaining subsidiary account controls, payroll preparation and agency remittances, fixed asset accounting, and other activities necessary to maintaining fiscal accountability of the Town's assets. Over 500 checks a month are processed to meet the operating, capital, and debt service expenses.

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# Municipal Clerk

The role of the Clerk was best described in the National Institute of Municipal Clerks' Newsletter as follows: "The Clerk's Office can be truly called the hub of local government. It is the Clerk who is the contact between the citizens and the government. It is the Clerk to whom most complaints are brought. The Clerk gives advice on many subjects, not necessarily related to government, but by the Clerk's contact with the public, they, for the most part, place confidence in the Clerk as the one who can answer most any question."

The Municipal Clerk's office is entrusted with numerous and diverse duties under both State law and Local ordinances.

## IN 2021, THE MUNICIPAL CLERK'S OFFICE:



On August 31, 2021, after over thirty-five years of public service with the Town of Newton, Lorraine A. Read, retired as Municipal Clerk. Teresa A. Oswin, RMC was appointed as Municipal Clerk September 1, 2021.

# Registrar of Vital Statistics

Vital Statistics may be defined as those records concerned with live births, deaths, fetal deaths, (still-births), marriages, civil union, domestic partnerships, divorces, adoptions, and legitimacy. In short, all the events which have to do with an individual's entrance into or departure from life, together with the changes in civil status which may occur during one's lifetime. Vital Statistics involves interaction with people on a daily basis. This branch of Statistics is the second oldest history in the world.

## USES OF VITAL RECORDS

- 1. Birth Records** are needed as proof of age to enter school, work, to serve in the armed forces, operate a motor vehicle, establish voting rights, obtain social security benefits, establish citizenship by birth and obtain passports. In some cases needed to establish inheritance rights, enter into legal contracts and obtain exemption from alien restrictions.
- 2. Marriage Records** are needed to change driver's licenses, establish claim for social security. Also needed in connection with family support, establish rights to inheritance, pension, prove ancestry and lineage.
- 3. Domestic Partnership Records** establishes the domestic partnership. Can be used to obtain health or pension benefits or grant authority to make medical decisions or obtain certified copies of death certificates.
- 4. Death Records** are needed to settle inheritance or insurance claims, change bank accounts or stock certificates. Establishes an exact location of a death on accident cases. Claims for social security, private pensions etc., dependent upon proof of death of the family wage earner.

Janien N. Roberts, CMR serves as Registrar of Vital Statistics and Teresa A. Oswin, CMR serves as Deputy Registrar.

## DURING 2021 THE REGISTRAR'S OFFICE:



# Municipal Court

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, municipal courts continue to conduct their court sessions virtually, enabling most cases to be adjudicated remotely. The court is committed to become even more efficient in the face of the ongoing fiscal challenges, as we continue to effectively resolve disputes, protect rights and liberties and ensure justice for all.

Please remember all fines can now be paid online at [www.njmcdirect.com](http://www.njmcdirect.com).

## 2021 COURT ACTIVITY:

<b>96</b>	<b>3,128</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>1,367</b>
Virtual Court Sessions	Total E-Tickets Issued	DWI's	Parking

## CRIMINAL COMPLAINTS ISSUE

<b>455</b>	<b>210</b>
Disorderly/Petty Disorderly	Indictable (Crimes of a higher degree)

Town of Newton fines & costs collected .....	<b>\$129,613.98</b>
Public Defender Fees collected .....	<b>\$2,814.50</b>
POAA Fees collected .....	<b>\$390.00</b>
Monies paid to Sussex County .....	<b>\$45,978.52</b>

# Historic Preservation

The Newton Historic Preservation Advisory Commission was created by local ordinance on November 9, 1987 by the Town Council to ensure the preservation of Newton's heritage. It was the intention of the Town Council to create an agency which will work with and advise the Planning Board on the effect of development applications on designated historic landmarks or improvements within the historic district. In addition, the Commission shall review all development activities involving the exterior of a historic landmark or an improvement within the historic district.

In 2021 the Historic Preservation Commission held two regularly scheduled meetings and nine applications were reviewed.

The Commission is composed of four regular members who are appointed by the Town Council, each serving a three year term, set on a staggered basis of reappointment. Councilwoman Sandra Lee Diglio serves as liaison between the Historic Commission and the Town Council. Jessica Caldwell of J. Caldwell & Associates, the Town Planner, lends guidance to the Historic Commission on properties throughout the Town. Kerry Brown serves as the Historic Preservation Commission Secretary and can be reached at 973-383-3521, ext. 227. The Historic Preservation Commission meets on the third Monday of every month at 7:00 PM at the Municipal Building.

# Zoning Officer

The Zoning Officer is the first municipal official with whom a property owner meets to discuss plans regarding improvements or changes to his property. Upon review of a zoning application, the Zoning Officer issues zoning permits.

In addition, the Zoning Officer is responsible for enforcement of the provisions of the municipal zoning ordinance, as well as for determining whether or not a specific use is permitted in a particular zone.

The Zoning Officer issued 135 permits for various permitted uses and denied 22 permits during the year 2021. Enforcement activities consisted of 24 notices of violation through 2021. The Zoning Officer is Kerry Brown and can be reached at 973-383-3521, ext. 227.

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# Land Use

The Municipal Land Use Law requires Boards of Adjustment, at least once a year, to review their decisions on applications and appeals for variances and prepare and adopt by Resolution a report on its findings on zoning ordinance provisions that were the subject of variance requests. They are also required to provide any recommendations they may have for zoning ordinance amendments. Since the Planning Board serves as the Board of Adjustment in the Town, the Planning Board is required to make that report. The required information is set forth below. Only those variance applications that would have been heard by the Board of Adjustment prior to its merger with the Planning Board are addressed.

The Planning Board met eight (8) times during the 2021 year. The first half of the year, the meetings were held via zoom due to COVID-19. The second half of the year, from July on, the Planning Board meetings were held in person.

The Planning Board heard one application for use or “d” variance relief in 2021. The application was heard on February 17, 2021. The application was made by Angelina Louis and Alfred Steward (PB-14-2020) located at 137 Mill Street, Block 3.04, Bot 3 located in the SD-3 retail zone. The applicant was seeking site plan and “d” variance approval. The property consisted of a two-family dwelling and a three-bay garage. The applicant was seeking approval to convert the two-family dwelling into a three-family dwelling and convert the garage into a residential structure along with minor site improvements. The Board approved the application on February 17, 2021 and was memorialized on March 17, 2021.

The Planning Board did not hear any appeals or interpretations during the 2021 year.

The Municipal Land Use Law states that the Board’s annual report to the Town Council should include any recommendations for zoning ordinance amendments or revisions that the Board may have. At the current time there are no recommendations.

# Recreation

The Recreation Commission continues to work at providing varied recreational opportunities for the residents of Newton. Although we continued to face uncertainty throughout the year, we were still able to host several successful events and provide the community with a full pool season.

Some events which took place were the Senior Spring Luncheon at Liberty Towers and the Senior Fall Luncheon at Newton Town Centre. We virtually held two contest events; the 2nd annual Town wide Jack-o-lantern carving contest and the Gingerbread house decorating contest. Throughout the year we were able to connect with the recreation community and provide important updates and resources online via our Social Media pages.

We held our 3rd Annual Flags of Honor event in the Town of Newton. This event serves to honor Veterans by displaying purchased/donated flags dedicated to them on the front lawn of Town Hall. This year there were a total of 100 Flags displayed with 92 of those flags named after a Veteran. The event fundraised \$2,856. 100% of those proceeds benefited Community Hope's - Hope for Veterans Program which ensures a safe haven for homeless and disabled Veterans daily. This event was appreciated by all involved. We look forward to this event growing further in 2022.

One of our 2021 recreation highlights was the success of the Newton Town Pool Season. Despite a National Lifeguard shortage, the Newton Town Pool thrived! The facility serves as the hub of community pool life and the home of the Newton Sharks Swim Team. The Newton Town Pool was host to the 4th of July celebration and the Center for Prevention and Counseling Family Night. An improved swim lessons program was implemented. The program was a huge success and will be back in 2022 with more options. There was also the addition of a brand new portable A.D.A. compliant aqua lift chair. We received a proposal for the possible addition of a Spray Park to the facility in the future. The Newton Town Pool Management and Town staff take pride in this hidden gem and ensured the safety and customer experience of all guests remained as the number one priority. The pool facility had approximately 8,253 guest check-ins over the season which ran from June 15 through Labor Day.

Thanks to the dedicated efforts of numerous volunteers, Newton youth athletics continued to remain a strong and vibrant part of our community. They continued to face unprecedented times yet provided the community with various sports opportunities. Newton hosts baseball, basketball, cheerleading, football, roller hockey, soccer, softball, field hockey, swimming, and wrestling.

We are looking forward to a successful and exciting 2022!





# Fire Prevention Bureau

In streamlining our local government the Town of Newton entered into a shared services agreement with the Sussex County Fire Marshal's Office for the enforcement of the Uniform Fire Code of the State of New Jersey.

For the year 2021, the Fire Marshal's Office performed:

161 inspections/re-inspections of Life Hazard Use Businesses

383 inspections/re-inspections of Non-Life Hazard Use Businesses. Recorded/entered a total of 434 active businesses into our database

Issued the following:

<b>74</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>498</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>29</b>
Notices of Violation	Fire Safety Permits*	Certificates of Inspection	Fire Investigations Conducted	Complaints Investigated

\* (Consisting of cooking, food trucks, tents, fireworks, LPG cylinder exchange)

All Life Hazard Use Inspections have been certified to the Division of Fire Safety for the year 2021. We have begun the 2022 inspections. As in the past if you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact the Fire Marshal, Virgil Rome at 973-579-0380, ext. 2207 or at [vrome@sussexcountysheriff.com](mailto:vrome@sussexcountysheriff.com).

The Fire Marshal's office also assists and supports the Newton Fire Museum located on Spring Street and works very closely with the Newton Fire Department and Construction Department with other life safety issues concerning fire protection as new development comes into Newton.



# Construction Department

The Construction Department is responsible for issuing all permits required for new construction, additions, alterations, renovations, and demolition of residential and commercial structures. The administration of the department, and the responsibilities of the Construction Official as well as the Building, Fire & Plumbing Subcode Officials are contracted through a shared services agreement with Hardyston Township. During 2021, the Department issued a total of 348 permits. The total costs for realty improvements in the Town of Newton were \$2,881,343.00 for new construction and \$5,788,066.00 for alterations. Additionally, there were 310 Certificates issued for completed construction. Information pertaining to all types of permits related to construction may be obtained from the staff members of the Construction Department. For hours of operation and other information visit the Town's website.

## Code Enforcement

The Code Enforcement Department consists of three part-time employees: Code Enforcement Director Bernard Hattersley, Certificate of Compliance Inspector Jeffrey B. Schiffner and also available is a Code Enforcement Assistant, Sherri Kaylani.

The function of the Code Enforcement Department is to enforce the International Property Maintenance Code, as well as the Town of Newton's Municipal Codes pertinent to property maintenance.

Some examples of violations are: improper storage of trash prior to disposal, overgrown grass or weeds, peeling paint and cracked or heaving sidewalks and driveways which are all the responsibility of the property owner. Please note a permit may be required from the Newton Department of Public Works prior to any sidewalk repair work.

For the year 2021, 11 Summons-Complaints were issued, which require a mandatory court appearance, and approximately 282 violations were cited.

Snow removal complaints are processed by the Newton Police Department. Please call their non-emergency telephone number at 973-383-2525.

Code Enforcement Director Bernard Hattersley can be reached at [bhattersley@newtontownhall.com](mailto:bhattersley@newtontownhall.com) or 973-383-3521 Ext. 256.

# Emergency Management

Emergency Management is a vital function involving all departmental levels of local government and works closely with the Police Department, Fire Department, First Aid Squad, and Department of Public Works, as well as the County and State Offices of Emergency Management including FEMA, NJSP, and State OEM, and Homeland Security. The Emergency Management Coordinator (EMC), Ken Teets, and Deputies, Dan Finkle, and Jason Miller, work with all Municipal department heads and representatives of community organizations to develop plans to address emergency situations. Emergency Management maintains an inventory of resources and materials, equipment, and manpower available from the public and private sectors when emergencies arise. The EMC develops response training programs and schedules drills or exercises to test response capabilities. Emergency Plans for local industrial facilities, schools, Newton Medical Center, and long term care facilities are compiled by the Coordinator in cooperation with various entities. The EMC ensures those plans can be put into effect under the Town's Basic Emergency Management Plans. The office continues to work with the Sussex County EOC with preparing and training for the next major weather or catastrophic event. Each year, our team participates in several full scale exercises at long term care facilities as well as safety drills with the Newton Public Schools helping to ensure the process of

continual improvement in emergency planning continues. In the past year, our office has helped to coordinate the Town's response to the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure the smooth and uninterrupted operation of municipal services throughout the State of Emergency. We successfully attained quadrennial re-certification of our municipal Emergency Operations Plan from Emergency Management agencies at the State and Federal levels. We have responded to several major weather events and continued to work closely with the Newton Police Department, Sussex County Social Services, and our local nonprofit partners to ensure the availability of emergency warming and cooling centers for at-risk residents during periods of extreme heat and cold. We are currently in the process of revising our Countywide Hazard Mitigation Plan which seeks to identify and reduce the vulnerability to hazards to protect the health, safety, quality of life, environment, and economy of the Town of Newton. We are also working to attain Federal reimbursement for expenses incurred following recent winter storms and as we continue to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. As we enter 2022, we will continue to work to mitigate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from the effects of hazards which might pose a threat to the Town of Newton.



# Fire Department

The Newton Fire Department responded to 300+ incidents and performed over 60 training drills expending over 2,300 man hours while operating a fleet of 1 Tender/Engine, 1 Tower Ladder Truck, 1 Rescue/Engine, and a Snozzle/Engine. In 2021 the Fire Department assisted and worked closely with the First Aid Squad, Police Department and Office of Emergency Management as well as our surrounding communities with mutual aid. Answering calls from public assists to structure fires.

## **FIRE OFFICERS FOR 2022:**

Chief of Dept. - Anthony M. Razzano

Deputy Chief - Jason Miller

Captain - Christopher Blakely

Captain - Anthony Perigo

Lieutenant - Derek Wechtler

Lieutenant - Eric Humbert

Lieutenant - Peter Naumowicz

Lieutenant - Charles Weber

President - Jeff Diener

Vice President - Michael Teets

Secretary - Charles Weber

Treasurer - Eric Humbert



# Police Department

## TRUST, INTEGRITY, TRADITION

Everyday Newton Police Officers carry out their duties each day mindful of their mission to serve, to safeguard the public trust and to always perform competently and professionally. The Department is continually moving forward and adapting with the changes of modern policing standards which is essential for the department to continue to be effective in a world of ever-changing culture which embraces change but also aligns with community expectations. As an organization we are committed to continue our partnership with the community in providing a friendly and professional department exercising integrity, compassion, fairness, and respect. We are constantly evaluating our efficiency and effectiveness and are always looking for ways to improve our department through policy and training standards. As a department, we continue to emphasize the importance of trust and transparency between our agency and the people we serve.



## ADMINISTRATION

The Police Chief, Steven VanNieuwland is accountable for the general direction, control, planning, and budgeting for the Department. He develops and ensures adherence to the Department's established Rules & Regulations as well as all applicable case law and policies, procedures, or directives from agencies like the New Jersey Attorney General and the Sussex County Prosecutor. Under Chief VanNieuwlands' direction, the Department will continue to maintain high standards of accountability and service. Through continual policy review and development and training of personnel combined with continual transparency, public engagement and communication, we will always strive to exceed expectations.

Chief VanNieuwlands' administration consists of two Lieutenants who command the two divisions of the department; the **Operations Division** led by Lt. Thomas Muller and the **Support Services Division** led by Lt. Scott King. Detective Sergeant Danial Finkle manages the day-to-day direction of the **Detective Bureau**.

Chief VanNieuwland can be reached by e-mail at [Svannieuwland@NewtonPolice.org](mailto:Svannieuwland@NewtonPolice.org) or telephone (973) 383-2525.

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## OPERATIONS DIVISION

The Operations Division is under the leadership and management of Lt. Thomas Muller. He oversees the main patrol operations function of the Department. Two Patrol Sergeants: Sgt. Thomas Tosti and Sgt. Michael Wolanski report directly to him. The Patrol Sergeants each supervise and work with a squad consisting of 3 Patrolmen. Patrol squads work 12-hour shifts to give constant police coverage every day of the year.

On average, Police Officers handle over 60 calls for service per day; ranging from domestic violence incidents, theft investigations, and burglaries, to aiding someone with a medical emergency, helping to locate a missing child or an elderly person or investigating the cause of a car crash. They also regularly conduct traffic enforcement to help keep our roads safer for travel and to help ensure that all pedestrians, particularly the many children who walk to and from schools, can do so safely. Officers have often prevented criminal activity through proactive patrolling, checking on suspicious vehicles, interrupting acts of disorderly conduct and locating people who were wanted for outstanding warrants. Officers regularly conduct premises checks on businesses after they close for the day and routinely check homes when residents are away on vacation.

Lieutenant Muller serves as our Public Information Officer as well as our Internal Affairs Officer. He is also responsible for departmental training, administering the performance evaluation system and he handles officer scheduling and planning for special details like parades and similar events. Lt. Muller also reviews all accident reports, OPRA requests, and Court discovery for the Police Department.

The Internal Affairs function of the Police Department plays an integral role in building and maintaining public trust. Our ability to deliver effective public safety services depends on our credibility and reputation and thus must be safeguarded through a proactive internal affairs process consisting of regular personnel inspections and training, investigations of complaints, and discipline when appropriate.

To be transparent about the process, we've prepared the following statistical report summarizing complaints received about Officers and their dispositions for 2021. Matters investigated and documented within our internal affairs process may have originated from a citizen complaint, anonymously or from within the department, such as through inspection or supervision of personnel. If no complaints were received, then that category of complaint has not been listed, such as domestic violence, complaints of improper search and other criminal violations. Cases that do not have outcomes at this time are listed as pending.

Type of Internal Affairs Complaint	#	Outcomes
Demeanor	13	8 exonerated, 1 unfounded, 3 sustained, 1 pending
Excessive Force	3	3 pending
Other Criminal Violation	1	1 sustained
Other Rule Violation	4	4 sustained
<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	No disciplinary action was taken that resulted in a fine or suspension of 10 days or more

The Newton Police Department approaches professional standards and citizen complaints very seriously. It is reasonable to expect Officers to consistently perform professionally, lawfully, safely and consistent with policy. Each complaint receives priority attention from department supervisors. Each time an employee uses force, is involved in a motor vehicle accident, or is accused of misconduct, a complete and thorough internal affairs process is strictly adhered to and followed to its logical conclusion, consistent with the guidelines issued by the NJ Attorney General's Office. The internal affairs process also seeks to identify any needs for training or policy revision. Any disciplinary action imposed is progressive and corrective. We hope that providing this information will prove to be both helpful to understand our process and reassuring to the public we serve.

Patrol Sergeants and members of their patrol squads assist with several administrative functions as well. Sgt. Michael Wolanski is our liaison for the Domestic Violence Response Team, a program in collaboration with Domestic Abuse & Sexual Assault Intervention Services.

Lt. Muller also supervises and schedules the Department's Class II Special Law Enforcement Officers (SLEO). The Special Officers work a foot patrol or bike patrol assignment in the business district most days and evenings. We currently have one full-time and two part-time Special Officers.

Lt. Thomas Muller can be reached by e-mail at [Tmuller@NewtonPolice.org](mailto:Tmuller@NewtonPolice.org) or telephone (973) 383-2525.

The Department maintains a computerized record system documenting the activity of its Police Officers. Listed on the next page is statistical information about some of the calls that Newton Police Officers have responded to and the amount of certain types of investigations that were conducted.

While it is evident that members of the Police Department were certainly quite busy; it should also be pointed out our effectiveness is often quite dependent on the support we receive. This support comes in the form of continued administrative and investigative emphases in our staffing, adequate resources being made available to the department as well as timely reporting of criminal or suspicious activity from members of the public.



Type of Call/Police Activity	2018	2019	2020	2021
Homicide	0	0	0	0
Robbery	1	2	1	0
Kidnapping	0	0	0	0
Burglary/Attempted Burglary	52	15	24	22
Sexual Assault/Contact	18	20	15	7
Assault	29	27	31	22
Theft	76	87	55	55
Motor Vehicle Theft	2	0	2	2
Motor Vehicle Accidents	440	468	313	323
Medical Emergencies	848	1,001	1,313	1,365
DWI Arrests	15	18	16	15
Black Bear	34	62	70	46
Criminal Mischief	71	46	39	40
Domestic Dispute/TRO Request	145	181	217	189
Fight/Verbal Dispute/Disturbance	385	364	491	456
Missing Person Adult/Juvenile	16	22	19	18
Vehicle Lock-Out Assist	210	213	125	164
Motor Vehicle Stops	12,081	10,656	7,093	10,124
Weapons Offense/Guns	2	1	3	3
Burglar Alarms	274	298	298	257
Total Arrests Made	250	264	233	193
Total Summonses Issued	2,853	2,030	2,194	3,188
Total Ordinance Violation Summonses	92	92	168	99
Narcan Administration	38	26	42	39
Anonymous Tips Received	28	25	31	20

## SUPPORT SERVICES DIVISION

Lieutenant Scott King is the Department's Support Services Division Commander. He supervises the 9-1-1 Emergency Communications Center, schedules dispatch staffing, assists with the internal affairs function and manages the department's technology resources, records management systems, E-Ticket devices, Police, Fire, and EMS radios and is responsible for managing the repair and maintenance of all our police vehicles and other departmental equipment. Lt. King oversees the alarm ordinance, registering alarms and conducting enforcement as needed. He is also responsible for supervising, scheduling, and training our school crossing guards. The Department currently has 14 regular crossing guards and 3 substitute crossing guards. Two Patrol Sergeants report directly to Lt. King: Sgt. Joseph D'Annibale and Sgt. Kenneth Teets. The Patrol Sergeants each supervise and work with a squad consisting of 3 Patrolmen.

Patrol Sergeants and members of their patrol squads assist with several administrative functions as well. Sgt. Thomas Tosti assists with juvenile matters and handles the functions of the Crime Prevention Bureau. Due to Covid restrictions, Sgt. Tosti was only able to schedule one "Coffee With a Cop" in 2021. We look forward to 2022 and hope we can schedule more informal community meetings throughout the year. Ptl. John Flanagan conducts applicant investigations related to Town ordinances and is also a firearms instructor.

Ptl. Russell Post performs the function of Juvenile Officer. He assists with juvenile/family crisis incidents, maintains State required records related to juvenile delinquency cases and administers the stationhouse adjustment program for eligible juvenile offenders. Eight juveniles were provided with a stationhouse adjustment to resolve their minor offense. A stationhouse adjustment is an alternative method that law enforcement agencies may use to handle first-time juvenile offenders who have committed minor juvenile delinquency offenses within their jurisdiction. Ptl. Post



also instructs the **L.E.A.D.** program (**L**aw **E**nforcement **A**gainst **D**rugs) to 5th grade students at Halsted Street School. He also assists Sgt. Tosti in our crime prevention program and is often seen at various community events. Since being reassigned to patrol in January 2022, Ptl. Post will be assisting Detective Judy Torres, who was recently assigned to the Detective Bureau in transitioning into the Juvenile Officer assignment.

Overseen by Lt. King and the Patrol Sergeants' squad that they're assigned, 4 full-time and 7 part-time Public Safety Telecommunicators (PST) staff the Newton Police Department's 9-1-1 Communications Center 24/7, receiving 9-1-1 calls, performing radio dispatching for Newton Police, Fire and First Aid Squad. Our PST's provide pre-arrival instructions to callers while simultaneously sending emergency personnel to the scene. Our PST's are highly skilled, trained and experienced and our equipment has the latest technological capabilities making us ready for Next Generation 9-1-1. The dispatchers often manage several stressful public safety emergencies at the same time, while also communicating regularly with Officers conducting patrol duties and fielding administrative telephone calls from the public with requests for information. Our dispatch center continues to provide the highest quality public safety call-taking and dispatching service available to the Town of Newton.

Lt. Scott King can be reached by e-mail at [Skings@NewtonPolice.org](mailto:Skings@NewtonPolice.org) or telephone (973) 383-2525.



## DETECTIVE BUREAU

The day-to-day direction of the Detective Bureau is managed by Detective Sergeant Danial Finkle. DSG. Finkle oversees all criminal investigations conducted in the Town of Newton and reviews all investigation reports. With this responsibility, he supervises two Detectives: Det. Jared Zappa and Det. Judy Torres. Each year, the Police Department faces challenges in the form of major crimes that occur and it is generally left to the members of the Detective Bureau to follow through on these difficult investigations until they are successfully prosecuted, a process that usually takes several years.

Detectives are involved in numerous criminal investigations. They collect and analyze intelligence, develop informants and work cooperatively with Detectives from neighboring jurisdictions, the State Police, State Parole, and other law enforcement agencies; County, State and Federal. Detectives monitor and track registered sex offenders. They collect, store, inventory and arrange for appropriate disposition of all property and evidence found or seized by members of the Police Department. Detectives also have the responsibility for investigating liquor license transfers and for conducting ABC enforcement and inspections of the 12 licensed premises in the Town of Newton.

The department's Domestic Preparedness function is also handled by the Detective Bureau; planning and exercising of drills at each of the schools for lockdowns and evacuations in the event of an emergency and coordinating regular meetings with school officials and substance abuse counselors from schools across the County to exchange information about trends and observations in an effort to prevent delinquent behavior, drug activity, and to help provide for the safest schools possible. Domestic preparedness also involves training for response to an Active Shooter Incident, meeting regularly and public safety planning with facilities such as the Newton Medical Center and the Sussex County Community College.

Detectives are also responsible for Project Medicine Drop, a program designed to help halt the abuse and diversion of prescription drugs. Residents can anonymously and safely dispose of their unwanted or expired medications. Successfully implemented as the first participating Police Department in Sussex County, we collected, secured and arranged for the destruction of 635 pounds of medications in 2021. Detective Jared Zappa handles all firearms applicant investigations and 110 permits to purchase firearms were issued in 2021.

Working cooperatively, the three Detectives remain available for duty call-out at any time, every day of the year whenever crimes occur. Detectives receive and coordinate responses or necessary follow-up to anonymous tips through our Text-A-Tip service. They process crime scenes for latent evidence, take photographs and are specialists in conducting interviews and interrogations, preparing search warrants and criminal complaints. The investigative strength, diligence, determination, and inter-agency cooperation of the Detectives at the Newton Police Department continually yields successful outcomes for investigations into the most serious criminal activity.



## TRANSITION OF PERSONNEL

During 2021, Chief Robert Osborn Jr. retired after 33 years of service. Initially being hired as a dispatcher, Chief Osborn was hired as a full-time officer in 1990 and advanced through his career being promoted to the ranks of Sergeant, Lieutenant and Chief. Lieutenant Michael Monaco also retired in 2021 after 27 years of service with the Town of Newton Lt. Monaco began his career as a special officer and a dispatcher eventually being hired as a full-time officer in 1994. He held the ranks of Sergeant and Lieutenant during his tenure. These retirements resulted in several promotions. In June Lt. Steven VanNieuwland was promoted to Chief, Sergeant King was promoted to Lieutenant, and Patrolman Finkle was promoted to Sergeant and was subsequently assigned to the Detective Bureau. In September, Sergeant Thomas Muller was promoted to Lieutenant and Patrolman Teets was promoted to Sergeant. We also hired 2 new officers, Justin Sibblies and Jordan Harvey who both look forward to serving the residents of Newton with integrity, compassion, fairness, and respect.

Our success is tied to the support we receive from the community we serve. With this in mind, we'll continue to engage the public and communicate information about our activities in an effort to enhance our public safety partnership. Please visit our website [www.newtonpolice.org](http://www.newtonpolice.org) and visit us on social media to see the many other services provided by the Police Department and view information about our activity which is updated on a daily basis and published via a service called Crime Reports to a page on our website. As we strive to constantly improve the quality of law enforcement services provided, we look forward to ongoing public support and cooperation as we do our part to help make Newton continue to be a great place to raise a family and to conduct business.



# Water and Sewer Utility

The Newton Water and Sewer Utility operates on a self-sustaining basis with income received from Utility rates and miscellaneous receipts.

The Town's surface water supply is the Morris Lake reservoir located in Sparta Township. This has been Newton's water source since the early 1900s. Water Department personnel operate and maintain the water system, performing quarterly water meter readings, and inspecting all fire hydrants semi-annually. The Water Department personnel are out each quarter doing leak detection to help maintain our unaccounted for water number.

The wastewater treatment plant with a capacity to treat 1.4 million gallons per day, processed an average of 941,698 gallons of wastewater flow each day in 2021. Plant personnel are responsible for operating four sewer pump stations and over 20 miles of sewer collection lines. Newton consistently performs within its DEP permits.

Due to leak detection being discovered the Town's total unaccounted for water is under the NJDEP requirement of 15%. The Town of Newton is currently 11.75% unaccounted for water.

The water filtration plant at Morris Lake continues to provide the residents of Newton with great tasting water. The Town of Newton continues its extensive flushing program to stay in compliance for disinfection by-products. There were no maximum contaminant level exceedances for disinfection by-products for 2021. Average water usage for 2021 was 733,397 gallons a day. Newton also met the lead and copper rule limits again this year. Newton performs 9 total coliform tests monthly with only 1 positive sample in June of 2021. Newton grabbed 3 follow-up samples, which all came back negative for total coliform.

In 2021, The Town of Newton replaced 2 secondary clarifiers at the wastewater treatment plant.

In 2021, The Town of Newton upgraded the chlorine and sulfur dioxide rooms with new piping and gas detectors.

Joseph Carr is the Licensed Operator for the Wastewater Treatment Plant and collection system. Jonathan Kazer is the licensed operator for the Water Treatment Plant and distribution system.

The Water and Sewer Department can be reached at 973-383-2090. For questions regarding your utility bill please call 973-383-3521 ext. 240.



# Public Works Department

Despite the tumultuous year due to the coronavirus pandemic the Public Works Department maintained its normal busy schedule during 2021, devoting one day each week (Tuesday) to collecting recyclable items at the curb, in accordance with past practice. Staff take all safety precautions to protect themselves and keep providing all the services the residents expect. In addition, DPW staff carried out all of the routine maintenance activities during 2021. They also conducted a Spring and Fall Leaf and Brush Collection Program which lasted each time for approximately 6 weeks. The crew collected leaves and brush that were placed at the curb in bio-degradable bags.

A sweeping schedule was maintained throughout 2021. Crews sweep the entire Town once a month while the downtown area is maintained once to twice a week. Garbage collection and litter patrol on Spring Street is done on a daily basis. Storm basins are inspected yearly and crews rigorously repair/rebuild throughout the year weather permitting. Routine road work is also done throughout the year which includes pothole repair, crack sealing, and minor resurfacing projects.

The DPW crew has focused on maintaining and caring for the parks in Town during 2021. Litter and garbage was regularly picked up throughout the parks. Crews continue to be scheduled on Saturdays for park maintenance. Crews also routinely disinfect Town vehicles each morning to help protect our staff against the coronavirus.

The Public Works Department, along with the Water and Sewer Division, fixed numerous breaks and leaks that occurred throughout the year.

## EQUIPMENT/PROJECTS

A new Cargill Brine System was installed which enables our crews to pre-treat Town roads prior to anticipated winter weather events. This is beneficial for the clearing of travel lanes and the removal of ice and snow. This system utilizes a salt and water mix, which is sprayed from a holding tank on the back of our trucks. The Department continues to upgrade and improve our storm water system throughout Town. New basins were built and many pieces of basin pipe were replaced. Refurbishment of a 2004 Elgin Sweeper was completed and entered back into our maintenance fleet. Our sweepers work year-round to vacuum the roadways of winter mix and also debris that builds up from daily traffic and year-round refuse.



## RECYCLING

Twice each year in June and December, a recycling schedule is mailed to Newton residents with the dates when the Town will be collecting co-mingled glass, plastic, and recyclable cans at the curb. All items to be recycled should be rinsed clean, caps, and rings should be removed, and the items should be placed in a waterproof container at the curb. Containers used for mixed recycling should be ***no larger than 35 gallon garbage containers***. Cardboard boxes and paper or plastic grocery bags are not acceptable containers.

Co-mingled recyclables include glass jars, bottles, aluminum cans and tin-plated steel cans, plastic clear and green soda bottles, milk, water or cider containers, shampoo and hair conditioner bottles, liquid laundry soap bottles, fabric softener and bleach bottles, and plastics with a recycling symbol on the bottom. Newspapers to be recycled must be dry and tied in bundles. On curbside collection dates when it is wet or rainy, *newspapers will not be picked up*.

Newspapers, corrugated cardboard, office paper, magazines, aluminum and foil pie plates, as well as co-mingled recyclables defined above, may be brought to the Recycling Center on South Park Drive by Newton residents Tuesdays & Thursdays between 8:00 AM and 4:00 PM, or Saturdays from 8:00 AM to 1:00 PM. Any questions can be directed to our office at 973-383-4160.

Recycling is mandated by New Jersey State Law. However, the law does not require local governments to provide a curbside collection program. The Town of Newton offers the service, at no cost to taxpayers, for the convenience of its citizens, through the assistance of the Public Works Department.

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**TOWN OF NEWTON**  
NEW JERSEY

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39 Trinity Street  
Newton, NJ 07860

[newtontownhall.com](http://newtontownhall.com)