

Town of Milton

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TOWN MANAGER REPORT OCTOBER 2011

October was a busy month in the Town of Milton. The Administrative Department, Police Department, Public Works Department and Code Enforcement Department have all been diligent in their efforts to serve the public in a friendly and efficient manner. Progress is being made on some of our most pressing issues, too.

Budget

A month ago the Council concluded a rigorous review of the budget and concluded that a conservative estimate of revenue and expenses in the upcoming fiscal year would result in a \$19,000 operating deficit. Through changes in our employee health insurance plan and the Public Works uniform budget, this projected deficit has been erased.

Unexpected events can happen at any time during the year, though. The October 29-30 nor'easter that brought significant snowfall to communities in New Jersey and points north is a good example. That, of course, was an unplanned expense for the affected towns. In our case, there was unexpected revenue. We were informed that federal and state emergency management agencies will soon send the town approximately \$7,500 to reimburse us for expenses incurred as a result of Hurricane Irene (in the last fiscal year). Additionally, an unexpected \$4,000 has been received for processing Lien Certificates.

We continue to follow-through with several measures that will improve our revenue stream. Business and rental license records are being scrutinized to identify non-compliant persons or companies. The accounts receivable report is also being studied in order to verify charges and collect outstanding balances. Finally, the comprehensive revision to the Water Ordinance will soon be added to our legislation through the General Code service. This will ensure that we have effective enforcement of water metering requirements of every home and commercial property. As a consequence, all will be treated equally and the costs of operating the water system are fully recovered.

Grants

The cost of providing services to our residents and businesses in town is greatly reduced through the aggressive application for and proper completion of grants. Missed deadlines and a lack of proper documentation could mean the loss of tens of thousands of dollars. The staff in the Administrative Department has initiated efforts to improve upon our past performance in this area.

As a consequence, our Municipal Street Aid funds arrived in a more timely manner. We are making progress in the use of our Energy Efficiency Community Block Grant funds, too. One of our accounting clerks is now an authorized user for the Department of Justice COPS grant and the other is an authorized user on the federal government website called "Grants.gov". These measures will help the town to find and to utilize the tools necessary to take advantage of more grants in the future.

Trash, Recycling and Yard Waste

In January 2010, Governor Markell proposed a law mandating that curbside recycling service be provided to all residential units in Delaware. That proposed was signed into law in June 2010 and the deadline for its implementation was this September. Together with restrictions regarding the disposal of yard waste, the household routine for trash pickup has become more complicated for all Delawareans.

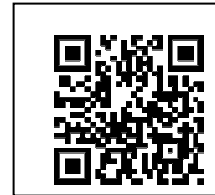
The Town of Milton has secured very favorable rates for the service. A schedule of pickups was distributed with your new cans and is still available on our website (www.ci.milton.de.us). The transition to this service occurred at the same time that we changed vendors. There were some difficulties experienced at that time. Your patience and understanding during that time were very much appreciated.

Landmarks

Some landmarks in Milton are very complimentary – others are not so complimentary.

A targeted effort by our Code Enforcement Department will soon result in securing the abandoned apartment property on Front Street. Entry by animals, children or others will be blocked. A long-term solution to this unsightly property is being actively sought, as well. And, in the meantime, the abandoned home behind this building will be razed and the site will be cleaned-up.

On the bright side, Milton will be an important part of the soon-to-be unveiled Delaware History Trail. The Delaware Office of Tourism chose Governor's Walk as a significant historic destination. The "Preserve America" sign under the Town Clock on Union Street will soon feature a marker that has a QR code for use with "smart phones". The code will "link" visitors to a web site that provides details about The Town of Milton and its historic treasures!



Committees in Action

The Town of Milton is blessed to have so many talented persons who are willing to give their time for the betterment of our community. The Milton Volunteer Fire Company, Chamber of Commerce, Lions Club, Century Club and Garden Club (to name a few) are wonderful partners. The Town Council has, additionally, named several committees to develop and refine proposals before they come to the Council floor. The Economic Development and Finance Committee, as well as the Planning and Zoning Commission have met in the last few weeks. Parks and Recreation will meet on Nov. 2nd.

The ED Committee was quite successful with their Bake Sale at the First *Fall Into Milton Festival* and is actively exploring ways to increase the attractiveness of our downtown for merchants and visitors, alike. The Finance Committee, meanwhile, has completed work on a Purchasing Policy. The Parks Committee will re-visit ideas last discussed in the Spring. These ideas include a fitness trail and a platform for children to more safely access and disembark from the miniature train. And, finally, the Planning and Zoning Commission will be taking a closer look at the Annexation and Impact fees assessed for development in our town.

Staff Training

The adoption of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) will usher-in training for emergency management for both officers and general staff. Training has been started with regard to the pension system, safety measures and web site development, too. Through training, we look forward to providing better service and to making more informed decisions as we serve citizens – every day.