



BOROUGH OF HAWTHORNE

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John V. Lane
Mayor

July 25, 2022

Dear Resident,

First and foremost, I would like to thank Mayor Emeritus Rich Goldberg and the previous Administration and Borough Council for leaving us in a strong financial position. Also, I would like to thank you for entrusting me to lead the Borough of Hawthorne. I look forward to working hard for each and every one of you, and I welcome your thoughts and concerns. Please feel free to call me at my office at any time.

My administration and I are looking forward to moving the town forward with improved services. In 2022, it is necessary to address some issues that require attention.

Our public safety communication system is outdated. At present, we are relying on communication equipment that is antiquated – some of it in excess of thirty years old - and no longer supported by the manufacturers. This project will cost approximately \$2 million. I have hired a consultant to assist us with the entire project so that we get the best equipment that we can purchase. We are working with our Police Department, Fire Department, and Ambulance Corps to finalize plans. This is a necessity. In some instances, we have no signal coverage, and the antiquated equipment is subject to catastrophic failure. \$1.2 million was appropriated in the budget for the project; the remainder will need to be bonded.

Since we have been turned down for grants to update the library lights, we have appropriated money in the budget to update these. Again, this is another necessity as our aging library needs to be updated.

We will continue with the improvements to our athletic recreation facilities as recommended by the fields committee appointed by my predecessor. The 2022 budget includes an initial appropriation of \$500,000 towards improvements to ballfields and our roller hockey rink. To complete all recommended projects, we will need to bond. The Borough applied to the Passaic County Open Space Fund and received a grant of \$99,000 this year towards the \$800,000 cost of new field lights for Franklin Field. Recently we completed construction of two projects for which we received County Open Space grants last year: a new playground on the pool property and pathway lighting for the Bandshell.

New State regulations have required major capital expenditures in the water utility, which in turn will lead to rate increases in 2023 and beyond. We have completed Phase 1 of a program to replace our galvanized water service lines, even though testing has shown that there is no lead problem in the system. This project will continue in phases over ten years at an estimated total cost of \$15 million. We are planning now for Phase 2 for which we hope to receive low-interest financing now available from the State. Also, in compliance with new State regulations, we have been approved for \$8 million in borrowing to construct a treatment system to remove PFAS from our water. Plans are ready to bid as soon as we receive State approval for a low-interest loan for the project.

The Covid Pandemic is still with us, with variants cropping up. I encourage everyone to remain vigilant in keeping yourself and loved ones safe and healthy.

Please consider signing up for Nixle to keep you up-to-date on Hawthorne issues; you can refer to your calendar for instructions. Also, please subscribe, at no cost, to *TAPinto Hawthorne*, the digital news platform for Hawthorne.

The municipal portion of the tax bill, including the amount for the Library, represents the smallest share of the total, just 22%. Passaic County accounts for 23.2% of the total, and the local schools, 54.8%.

My staff and I welcome your ideas and thoughts and look forward to serving you.

Sincerely,

Mayor John V. Lane