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Subject: Budget thoughts

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Hello all,

I hope to instill my thoughts about this years budget talks so far prior to me leaving office.

As a member of the finance committee and as a member of the Township committee I have always prioritized the interest of the taxpayer above all else.

This has resulted in some difficult stances that I have had to take when budget time has come around. I have continually identified and supported avenues to cut our spending and increase revenue streams for the Township, which included not supporting salary increases for any employees.

With the continued Covid issue and the pending revenue cuts related to tax appeals we need to be careful in this years budget. I know there are difficult decisions to make this year.

There are items in the budget that we cannot control and continually increase. A 0% is probably not possible. But we need to continue to control the elements that we can, and then minimize the impact the rest has on our residents.

Last year there was a 0% increase for staff, we also cut hours for one employee to part time. We need to address this issue carefully. I believe this was the first time in my time here that we took such a drastic action to save money.

Its easy to say yes to increases in times that are prosperous, when there should be a more optimistic approach to budgeting. But being conservative is necessary in these times. Saying NO to the extras and the unnecessary is tough but clearly is our job. Maybe some that have higher salaries can lead by example and voluntarily differ their increases until next year.

Please remember that the members of the Governing body have the final say on the operations of the Town- nobody else.

Mike

Thanks, Mike

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