

2015 Department Reports

Construction

2015 we had quite a number of new homes and major renovations and additions. There are a lot of young families moving into the Borough and investing in improvements on older homes and keeping the neighborhoods nice. The Deerfield school is doing many improvements and has just finished putting new security entry ways in. There were some delays on the new restaurant stemming from issues on the part of the owner but it's back on track and making progress.

DPW/Zoning

The Department of Public Works continued its mission of delivering services which maintain and enhance the quality of life of our community and its residents.

For the 6th year in a row, we abandoned the use of a subcontractor to assist our small 5 man department with our popular leaf collection program. After being faced with a 36% rate increase 4 years ago, we looked for alternatives. At today's rates, a truck with driver would cost the Borough at least \$850 per day- resulting in an approximate savings of \$17,000 for the season based on 20 days use.

Thru the generosity of the Union County Department of Public Works, our department was once again able to secure the free use of a County owned compactor truck which our personnel operated. Although our collection staff was effectively reduced by 1 man who would have been supplied as part of the vendor contract, we successfully delivered this valuable free service once again to our residents at major cost savings.

The department elevated more than 175 trees located within the Boro roadway right of way. Our current 12" wood chipper was obtained as a result of Superstorm Sandy replacing one that was 18 years old which had become expensive to repair and difficult to obtain parts for. The resulting wood chips were either recycled or utilized by residents for their landscaping.

We repaired hundreds of potholes, applying more than 35,000 pounds of blacktop patch by hand. Clean Communities Day was held on October 24 and brought out numerous volunteers as usual, including cub scout and brownie troops. Hundreds of pounds of trash were picked up from paths and roadside areas by these volunteers assisted by DPW staff.

In response to suggestions and requests from some of our residents, we again doubled the Christmas Tree pickup service, and will soon complete (weather permitting) two full rounds of the Boro's 32 miles of streets.

We also responded to nearly 190 complaints of zoning, tree destruction, or property maintenance violations, helping to protect our property values and enhance the quality of life for which most of us chose Mountainside to call home. While most matters were resolved without the need for legal action, a number of cases were successfully prosecuted in Municipal court.

We again placed an increased emphasis on storm sewer repair and rehabilitation. As our infrastructure continues to age, we have begun aggressively identifying storm water catch basins in need of relatively minor repairs in order to prevent the necessity of more extensive and costly repairs by outside vendors. This past year, approximately 12 catch basins were repaired or partially rebuilt by our 5 man crew in order to extend their useful service life.

The Department appreciates the ability to be of service to our residents and would like to thank everyone for their support and the many kind calls of appreciation.

Finance/Tax

Mountainside's 2015 municipal budget saw the lowest tax increase since 2001!!!

In addition to preparing the regular budget documents, this year the state mandated a user friendly budget to help give residents a clearer picture of the municipal budget. This simplified version of the regular budget as well as other useful information is on the borough's website.

Additional highlights included receiving back our yearly audit with no audit recommendations for the sixth consecutive year. I was extremely proud that our hard work and dedication brought about this accomplishment again. Mountainside continues for the sixth year to score in the top grouping of New Jersey municipalities in the state instituted the "Best Practices Inventory Questionnaire" which is a constructive way to encourage municipalities to consider and embrace a range of best practices that will help improve financial accountability and transparency.

Mountainside continues to achieve a high tax collection rate of 98.52 for 2014. For two years in a row we have had a 100% prior year delinquent tax collection without having to hold a tax sale.

The finance and tax department will continue to do all we can to monitor and decrease expenses while looking for increased revenues. This will help keep taxes low in Mountainside.

Recreation

2015 has been a successful and active year for the Recreation Department. We continued to provide a variety of existing programs and activities, and added new ones for the benefit of Mountainside residents.

Funds received from the *2014 Kids Recreation Trust Grant* were used to line two pickle ball courts at Echo Brook tennis courts, repair fencing around tennis and pool facilities, buy material for fitness trail and repair the infield at the Echo Brook softball field.

Adult and youth sports programs were again very popular. In its sixth year, the Teen Scene Travel Camp, a popular program for 7th-10th graders sold out all four weeks. 241 children participated in basketball, 211 attended Summer Playground, 117 took tennis lessons and 132 played soccer. Over 55 coaches attended training programs throughout the year. Five teams were entered in Women's Softball Leagues and our men's teams played in the Tri-Town league for the fourth year.

The First Play tennis program continues to grow in its fifth year. The Recreation Department continues to add additional programming for kids in preschool to 2nd grade. Some of the new programs offered this year were First Play Lacrosse and Total Play Multi-Sports. On-going adult programs included everything from craft programs to fitness activities, open gym basketball and volleyball, and trips to New York and Philadelphia. The NJRPA discount ski and amusement park tickets sold through our office accounted for over \$3,347.91 in ticket savings.

The Community Pool experienced another safe and successful season. The pool had some improvements during the off season including updating the security cameras, new shower faucets in the ladies locker room and installed safety gates at the baby pool. The Swim team had over 110 participants and finished 1st in their division. This was the fifth consecutive year that the team had a winning season.

The Community Room continues to be well-utilized as over 460 hours of activities were scheduled, including classes, Scout meetings, training programs and private parties. The Senior Fitness Room continues to help resident members stay in shape. There were 1103 visits recorded from January through October 15th.

Court

This year has been a very successful and productive year for the Municipal Court. During the 2015 year, the Mountainside Municipal Court has continued to successfully resolve matters through the Community Dispute Resolution Program (Mediation). This program is an alternative to signing a criminal complaint

against a person. CDRP utilizes trained volunteers to help resolve disputes. Mediation is often the preferred option for disputes that involve people in ongoing relationships such as neighbors, friends, relatives and co-workers. Mediation is available to everyone who lives or works in Union County. More information on the CDRP (Mediation) can be found by visiting the Mountainside Municipal Court's website at www.mountainside-nj.com/municipalcourt.htm.

Use of www.NJMCdirect.com continues to be positive and very user friendly. This site not only contains information to the public regarding all motor vehicle violations, such as points and penalties, but also allows the public to pay all payable tickets and make payments on their time payment via the internet.

As of September 30, 2015 the Municipal Court received 2,249 traffic complaints, including 15 DWI summonses and 115 parking tickets. 302 criminal complaints including indictables, disorderly, petty disorderly and local ordinances were also filed. To date a total of 2,401 were disposed of. The total amount of fines collected through September 30th, 2015 is \$240,407.50.

In May of this year, the Municipal Court Security Committee met to discuss the safety of the public, borough staff and court employees. (Per directive from Judge Philip S. Carchman, Acting Administrative Director of the Courts). This committee consists of representatives from the Municipal Court, Police, Office of Emergency Management, Borough Administrator and the Union County Municipal Division Manager. The committee will meet once a year to discuss and address a series of security measures enumerated in the "New Jersey Municipal Court Schedule of Protection". The Mountainside Court also implemented the use of a hand held metal and weapons scanner. This device is used for the screening of weapons at the entrance of the courtroom to insure the safety and security of not only the court personnel but also the public.

Once again the Court held our annual collection of book bags and school supplies. Through the generosity of many Mountainside residents, we were able to provide these supplies to numerous children in need. As in the past, starting in the beginning of December we will be holding our annual toy, warm coat, hat and glove drive. The collection of toys for the holidays has always been huge success thanks to the residents of Mountainside who contribute each year.

As always the Mountainside Municipal Court staff will continue to strive to make the public's day in court a positive experience. If you have any questions regarding any of the programs I mentioned please do not hesitate to contact me.

Engineering

1. Paving Improvements on Darby Lane was completed. Work included curb construction, driveway repairs, drainage improvements, roadway repairs, milling and paving of the street.
2. Paving Improvements on Sunny Slope Drive was completed. Work included curb construction, driveway repairs, drainage improvements, roadway repairs, milling and paving of the street.
3. Paving Improvements on Sunny View Road was completed. Work included curb construction, driveway repairs, drainage improvements, roadway repairs, milling and paving of the street.
4. Milling and resurfacing of Cherry Hill Road between Raccoon Hollow and Wyoming Drive was completed. This work was necessary due to utility work which occurred on a street under our road opening moratorium. Work was funded by a developer.
5. Review of approximately 349 zoning applications and submittals over the last 12 months.
6. Work continued on preparation of required NJDEP municipal storm-water permit information including annual report and updating municipal storm sewer maps.

7. Milling and resurfacing of sections of Mill Lane was completed from Globe Avenue to Springfield Avenue.
8. Repairs were completed at the Mountainside Wading Pool. Leak detection and piping repairs were made and paving stone sidewalks were reset.
9. A NJDOT grant reimbursement was prepared for Resurfacing of New Providence Road and Woodland Avenue. A total of \$180,000 was reimbursed to the Borough.
10. Phase 11 of Pothole Repairs was completed. Engineering staff surveyed all of the roads within the Borough and identified potholes requiring repairs. The cost for repair work was \$35,000.00.
11. A grant application was prepared for NJDOT funding for Resurfacing of Wood Valley Road. A grant of \$180,000 was received.
12. Preparation of numerous detailed reports for Planning Board/Board of Adjustment projects were completed.
13. Numerous drywell and drainage inspections and site inspections were made during the year.
14. Inspection and observation work has been performed on subdivisions that are under construction by private developers.
15. A grant application was prepared for NJDOT funding for Resurfacing of Forest Hill Way. A grant of \$285,000 was requested.
16. A NJDOT grant reimbursement was finalized for Resurfacing of Wyoming Drive. A total of \$180,000 was reimbursed to the Borough.
17. Evaluation of special projects as directed by the Mayor/Council and Borough Administrator.
18. Review of RVSA flow data, characteristics and treatment costs.
19. Attend Planning/Zoning Board meetings.
20. Preparation of industrial waste charge sewer rates for commercial properties.
21. Attended Zoning Ordinance/Master Plan Review Committee meetings.
22. Sanitary Sewer Reconstruction on Summit Road was performed. Work included replacement of 32 lineal feet of 10 inch diameter sanitary sewers near Willow Road.
23. Paving Improvements on Saddle Brook Road was designed and bid. Construction is scheduled to commence in early November 2015. Work will include roadway repairs, drainage improvements, minor curb repairs, milling and paving of the street. Pothole repairs on Sylvan Lane are also included in the project.
24. Resurfacing of Cedar Avenue and Oak Street is currently in construction. Completed work included curb construction, drainage improvements, roadway repairs, driveway repairs, milling and paving of the streets. Resurfacing of Cedar Avenue and Oak Street occurred on November 2, 2015. Scheduled work includes traffic striping, traffic sign replacements, manhole cone/frame re-grouting and final restoration work.
25. Preparation and review of numerous road opening permits and soil moving permits.

26. Resurfacing of Pembroke Road was finalized. Work included re-grouting of manhole cone/frame sections. Milling and paving of the street was completed in 2014.
27. Television Inspection of Various Sanitary Sewers was designed and bid. Work includes cleaning and internal television inspection of approximately 41,500+/- lineal feet of 8 inch and 10 inch diameter sanitary sewers in the northwest section of the municipality.
28. Cleaning and Television Inspection of Various Storm Sewers is currently being designed. Work includes cleaning storm sewer lines in the area bounded by Raccoon Hollow, Cherry Hill Road and Sawmill Road.

Mountainside Public Library

The year 2015 saw many achievements and new developments at the Mountainside Public Library.

Circulation

With a return to full summer hours after two years of repairs and HVAC construction, and despite weather closures necessitated by a harsh winter, circulation of all library materials and particularly eBooks has shown a noticeable increase in 2015.

Databases

Despite budget-driven reductions in database offerings by the State Library, use of our databases has continued to be strong, often peaking in conjunction with students' school assignments. The Pronunciator language learning database, sponsored by the *Ryan Patrick Faella Foundation*, continues to be very popular and has recently added a component for prospective US citizens.

Technology

2015 saw the completion of our site-wide computer upgrade from Windows XP to Windows 7, generously sponsored by the *Watts Mountainside Community Foundation*. A wireless campus system was installed in September, which has not only improved and secured the signal for our patrons, but also allowed for the collection of wireless use statistics which all libraries are now required to report annually. In March, the library participated in our first annual MakerDayNJ, an event designed to highlight the essential role of libraries in supporting the national maker culture trend and the principles of STEM and STEAM education. Thanks to a fall grant from the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders we have been able to purchase a 3-D printer, which will enhance our offerings for future MakerDayNJ events and further support these curriculum initiatives for the students in our community.

Programs

Programs for entertainment and education continue to be an increasingly important library offering to the public, as evidenced by a 26% increase in program attendance this year. Our acclaimed children's programming fosters literacy and a love of reading from babyhood on. In addition to stand alone events for adults on a variety of topics, our program series highlighting live music, operas on DVD, recently released feature films, scholarly lectures and guided meditation have also garnered enthusiastic response.

Support

As we constantly strive to respond to the needs and interests of our patrons and to improve our services and offerings to the community of Mountainside, it is important to recognize the wonderful support we receive in return, from individuals, foundations and community groups. In particular, the Friends of the Mountainside Library work tirelessly to raise funds in support of our efforts. The proceeds of their sales and events are used to support and enhance the programs and services so highly valued by the community.

We at the Mountainside Public Library look forward to continuing to play a pivotal role in the life of this very special community.

Senior Citizen Coordinator

During the past year, through many events and activities, we have been keeping our Mountainside Seniors safe, healthy and well-informed by providing recreational, educational and social activities. In addition, we offer an extensive information and referral service and in-home assistance for our more frail seniors. Project Healthy Bones exercise classes have been very successful in 2015, and as well, the "Fit and Healthy," has continued to be well attended.

Other areas that we have administered and /or implemented during the course of the year:

- Continuation of the monthly blood pressure screening every Tuesday.
- The handyman program which resulted in approximately 40 trips to senior homes for minor repairs.
- Oversee the provision of transportation for our seniors for doctor /dentist visits, food shopping, library, Post Office, banks and other outings.
- Coordinated with SAGE Eldercare in an outreach effort for frail seniors and seniors at risk which resulted in numerous referrals to Sage staff to support their continuation to provide assessment and planning through the Watts Foundation grant. Assisted in onsite visits to seniors in need.
- Watercolor classes were introduced and 2 additional sessions were offered for our seniors to continue to develop their skills.
- Continuation of the free ticket program for our seniors to enjoy shows during spring and fall at the Garden State Arts Foundation in Holmdel.
- Provided monthly flyers of the activities/events happening in our town along with an event calendar Provided to the two senior clubs that are currently in place
- Provided guidance and assistance for a variety of personal service areas such as: housing, social security, Medicare, welfare, food stamps, and similar programs.
- Offered 2 educational events; Senior Driving Safety Program and Will & Estate Matters to keep our seniors well informed.

Overall we have made progress in enhancing the services available to the seniors and as well advocate for them as appropriate and within the scope of our services.

Fire Prevention

1. Reorganization of Bureau
2. Submit 2015 New Jersey Right to Know survey for Borough
3. Redo all Right to Know booklets for all Borough properties
4. Continue to provide Fire Safety Educational materials to Fire Department for Fire Prevention Week
5. Begin preparation for adoption of new fire code in 2016
6. Inspect all Life Hazard Uses as required by the Division of Fire Safety
7. Identify and register new Life Hazard Uses within the Borough
8. Inspect all educational facilities prior to June 1st in accordance with Division of Fire Safety mandate

Mountainside Police Department

On February 17, 2015, the Mountainside Borough Council appointed Allan V. Attanasio as Chief of Police. Chief Attanasio has thirty-two years of law enforcement service, having previously served with the Plainfield Police Department.

During 2015, the administrative staff of the Police Department instituted new Community Service and Community Outreach Programs, which have been developed to provide enhanced protection to the residents of Mountainside and foster positive interaction between the youth of our community and the police.

The Mountainside Police "Vacant House Watch Program" has taken our previous Vacant House Notification Program to a new level. Previously, residents would report a time period that their house would be vacant and provide emergency contact information should the need arise for police interaction at the residence. Our new Vacant House Watch Program continues to record this information in addition to allowing the officers to print a daily list of vacant houses within our community. The officers now conduct a daily security walk-around check of each property on the list. This provides an enhanced level of security to our residents and shortens the investigative window for our detectives should a crime be discovered. The success of this program was realized within the first week when officers checking two vacant houses discovered an unlocked rear door on one and an unlocked garage door on another.

The department continues to utilize social media in the form of Facebook and the Union County First Alert System to provide timely information to the citizens on emergency conditions and community events.

The Mountainside Police Law Enforcement Trading Card Program which was privately funded through donations from local businesses has provided an opportunity for the youth of the community to interact with the department's officers. The cards acquaint the children with the officers on a positive level and offer safety & inspirational messages to the children. As an incentive for the children to meet all of the officers a drawing for various prizes will be held at the end of the year. The entry of the children's names is based on the amount of cards collected. Officers have made themselves available to the children at both schools prior to the start of the school day and after dismissal, at community events and at police headquarters where we have received numerous visitors and provided tours for the children.

The department continues to participate in community programs geared towards the youth of Mountainside at the Community Presbyterian Nursery School, Arc Kohler School, Beechwood School, Deerfield School, and Governor Livingston High School. These programs include lock-down drills, school evacuation drills, bus evacuation drills, the bicycle safety rodeo, D.A.R.E., Days of Realization, driver's education, Red Ribbon Week, and the cops vs. 8th grade basketball & softball games. The department also maintains a School Resource Officer/Juvenile Detective who remains in constant contact with the children and parents on issues pertaining to them.

In 2015, the department received several grants to help off-set our operating expenses. A \$23,849.79 "Safe Corridor" grant from the New Jersey Department of Transportation was used to purchase a new Ford Police Interceptor SUV. This vehicle is equipped with state of the art law enforcement equipment. A prescription medication collection box was received from a grant provided by CVS Pharmacy. This lockable box has been mounted in the lobby of Police Headquarters to allow our residents to dispose of unused medications at any time. Fourteen fully functional analog Motorola portable radios, two charging stations, portable radio batteries and two mobile radios were received from the Rahway Police Department as a result of their switching to a digital radio system. A "Body Armor Replacement Fund" grant in the amount of \$2,440.08 was received from the New Jersey Division of Criminal Justice. This grant is used for the replacement of bullet proof vests for our officers once the vests reach their expiration date which is five years of service. A drunk driving enforcement grant "Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over" in the amount of \$5,000.00 and a seatbelt enforcement grant "Click-it-or-Ticket" in the amount of \$4,000.00 were received from the New Jersey Department of Highway Traffic Safety. Union County Prevention Links provided a grant in the amount of \$4,000.00. This grant was used to supplement the Drunk Driving Enforcement program as well as Mountainside's participation in the Union County / New Jersey A.B.C. Task Force which targets licensed establishments that sell alcoholic beverages to people under the legal age. Mountainside was also selected as one of eight departments that applied for participation in the Union County Prosecutor's Body Worn Camera Pilot Program. As part of the program, Mountainside Police received eighteen Taser cameras, all

associated hardware, licensing, training, storage, and protection plan costs paid for through the use of confiscated funds totaling \$27,867.30.

Through the investigative work of our officers and detectives \$6,341.94 was awarded to the Mountainside Police Department by the Superior Court of New Jersey under the provisions of the state's forfeiture laws. During 2015 the department replaced six shotguns after thirty years of service. The new shotguns were purchased at a cost of \$1,361.00.

A partnership between the Federal Government Defense Logistics Agency Law Enforcement Support Office and the Mountainside Police Department has provided us surplus military equipment valued at \$33,268.20. This equipment includes a John Deer ATV Gator, a Kawasaki ATV, portable tripod scene lighting, eight folding military shovels, forty first aid kits, two infrared telescopes, fifteen rifle sights, seven binoculars and a thermal imaging night vision scope.

We are continuing the work of updating all of our departmental rules & regulations as well as our policies & procedures to allow our officers to continue to meet the high standards of our core values of Honor, Integrity and Professionalism. The dedication to duty of the officers of the Mountainside Police Department has been the subject of numerous letters of praise received by the department each year.

On behalf of all the members of the Mountainside Police Department, we wish everyone a healthy, safe, and happy New Year!

Mountainside Administrative Department

These times are busy in the Borough. With the addition of multi-family dwelling coming to town while complying with COAH the administration is busy with many changes needed in our local laws.

Residents continue to complement our electronic driveway sign keeping the Borough informed of upcoming events. Again, thanks to the Watts Foundation for their grant to purchase the sign!

Our local TV access Director Matthew Flynn has just finished a complete upgrade to the station serving Comcast Channel 35 and Verizon Channel 39. With a new user friendly format organization can login and post their own announcements. Also every Council meeting and Borough event can be viewed on our own You Tube site. Residents can login into You Tube to "Mountainside TV" and see any meeting and many Borough events any time they would like to view it from the comfort of their own home.

We continue to update our web site at www.mountainside-nj.com on a weekly basis while interfaced with our own Mountainside Facebook Page and Twitter account. Residents are again encouraged to register with Union County First Alert System for both upcoming events and emergency announcements. Speaking of emergencies the Borough this year installed a new permanent generator at the Mountainside Public Library to be used as a place of refuge for our residents during major power failures for warming or cooling, recharging phones and lap tops or just a resting center with full power.

Our congratulations go out to re-elected Mayor Paul Mirabelli, Councilman Robert Messler and newly elected Councilwoman Wendy Fech-Caccamo. Also a warm welcome to our newest Borough employee Finance Assistant Ashley Osieja and Communication Officer Anthony DeLuca, newly appointed Chief of Police Allan Attanasio.

In closing, staff would like to assure all our residents that we are doing our best to squeeze the most out of your tax dollars and we wish everyone "Happy Holidays and a Prosperous New Year."