

**Committee Meeting – May 17, 2010
MAYOR’S REPORT**

BARNEGAT TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT BUDGET:

Last Wednesday, the Township Committee and the Board of Education passed resolutions certifying the school tax levy after the school budget for 2010-2011 failed to pass in April. Both entities agreed to reduce the budget by \$812,000. After a mandated increase in the unemployment tax reserve of \$205,000., the net decrease in the budget was \$607,000. Utilizing cash management tools available to the Township, the school tax rate increase will be reduced from 14.9 cents to 8.1 cents. The school tax rate for 2010 will be \$1.00 per \$100.00 of assessed value for all properties in Barnegat.

I want to commend this Committee, the School Board and both administrations for their hard work during the past few weeks and for their cooperation that enabled us to come to a reasonable solution on this issue.

GIVING BACK:

Over this past week, a number of events were held to benefit both local and national charities. An estimated \$100,000.00 in cash and material donations was raised through the following; Relay for Life, Pet Day, the Township Scholarship fundraiser, the Victorian Tea and the local Food Drive. This weekend Team Barnegat will ride for the 5th time to benefit MS research & have raised over \$5300.00 to date for this ride. This is again another example of the fine work of our many volunteer groups and the enormous generosity of the residents of Barnegat Township.

PET DAY:

The Chamber of Commerce’s 5th annual Pet Day held this past Saturday at Meadowedge Park was an overwhelming success. With beautiful weather, there were nearly 60 vendors and exhibitors on hand and an estimated 1000+ pet lovers and their pets in attendance. Many thanks are in order to the Pet Day committee, Public Works, Police, Station 11 and their Ladies Auxiliary and the state Forest Fire Service for their tremendous effort in bringing us this “one of a kind” event in New Jersey to Barnegat.

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PROPOSITION “CAP 2.5”:

On Friday afternoon, I received a call from the Governor’s office in Trenton requesting support of Governor Christie’s proposed 33 bill tax reform package and Proposition “CAP 2.5”. The numerous bills are broken down into 3 basic “tool kit” categories; municipal and county, educational and higher education and are all aimed at bringing tax relief to all of us in Barnegat and New Jersey as a whole. While many of the bills pertain to union contracts, arbitration, pension reform and shared services, the cornerstone of his proposal is the 2.5% cap on municipal, county, school and state budgets. In the past, this Committee and prior Committees were allowed to increase spending by up to 4.0% annually with numerous expenditures being exempted or “outside of the cap”. This proposed 2.5% cap would place a hard cap on all spending and eliminate all of the items exempted from the existing cap with the exception of debt service payments. This would mean that we either live within the 2.5% annual allowable increase in spending or we amend our Township operations to meet that requirement by reducing our overall spending which means the real possibility of reduced municipal services.

This is a tough decision but one that I believe most taxpayers would agree is what we need to do to make New Jersey and Barnegat Township an affordable place to live in both now and in the future.

After much thought and discussion, I have decided to support the Governor’s proposals by endorsing his 33 bill package and Proposal “CAP 2.5”. I truly believe it is the right thing to do for all New Jerseyans.

**Jeffrey M. Melchiondo
Mayor, Barnegat Township**