

Council Corner

The Robbinsville Township
Governing Body Newsletter



Councilwoman Chris Ciaccio was on hand last month for the planting of a new Japanese Lilac tree known as "Ivory Silk" on the Robbinsville Recreation campus at Miry Run in celebration of Arbor Day.

2023 Municipal Budget Introduced

As many of you know by now the Council formally introduced the 2023 municipal budget of \$26.6 million at the May 11 meeting.

One of the more significant changes was modifying of the Shared Services Agreement between the Township and Robbinsville School District. Earlier this year, Council President Debbie Blakely and Councilman Mike Cipriano met with school officials at the request of Superintendent Brian Betze to discuss the many financial challenges the district, as well at the Township, were facing this budget year, particularly with the school being denied millions in State aid. Once the Council received the budget from the Mayor it listened to feedback from the School District, the community, and safety professionals in an effort to revise the funding formula of that Shared Services Agreement. Although the proposed municipal budget already featured a tax increase of 3.7 cents per every \$100 of assessed value, upon weighing the concerns of the residents and the district, Council introduced a budget utilizing \$152,000 more from the Township's surplus to help with the School District's shortfall. The governing body is counting on the district to use those funds to restore a full-time teaching position at the elementary level, as well as restoring courtesy bussing for Town Center East. By law we cannot allocate funds directly to those two needs. What it can do is appropriate those funds and allow the district to redirect that amount from their budget line for the three School Resource Officers, who are Township employees. The net result of the introduced budget, pending final adoption, would slightly increase the proposed municipal tax increase from 3.7 cents to 3.8 cents, or approximately \$144 per year, per household. "A lot of hard work, listening, determination, sacrifice, and compromise went into this decision, but Council feels this was the right thing to do considering the difficult fiscal times facing all of us right now," Council Vice President Mike Todd said.

The new proposed tax rate of 57.7 cents (from 57.6) is applied to every \$100 of assessed value based on the current average assessed value of a home in Robbinsville, which is \$379,400. A penny in Robbinsville Township tax rate is worth \$267,128.71.

Public hearing and the vote for adoption is scheduled for June 8.

2023 SOTT/Pay it Forward Event May 16

Township Council is proud to support Mayor Dave Fried as he Pays it Forward on May 16, 2023 to the McLaughlin Family of Robbinsville.

On behalf of the mayor and his incredible team, thank you to all of the corporate and community sponsors, and to everyone who have purchased tickets or donated through PayPal. Visit the Township website at www.robbinsville.net for complete details.

Regarding the tax burdens associated with both the municipal and school district's budgets, it appears continued misinformation, or at the very least a lack of understanding, is once again causing confusion on some social media platforms.

Once again, the municipality and the school district are two separate and distinct forms of government with two budgets that must follow the law.

Repeatedly asking the municipality to simply hand over money to another government entity to help close a budget gap without certain guardrails such as caps is illegal.

The biggest falsehood is that the municipality is raising taxes this year to pay for the former Investors/Roma Bank building next door, a move that may or may not happen.

This is simply NOT TRUE!

We continue to encourage residents to reach out to our local lawmakers and Gov. Murphy to voice your concerns regarding the future and fairness of school funding.



If you have questions or concerns, please email us, or attend a public meeting. The next two are scheduled for May 25 and June 8 at 7 p.m. for your added convenience.

Council encourages residents to reach out to us with their questions, concerns, or suggestions to:
Council@robbinsville.net