



# JEFF GRAYZEL

## MORRIS TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE

**EMAIL UPDATE**

Newsletter #5 ~ February 3, 2008

**IMPORTANT -- PLEASE NOTE:**

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Dear Neighbors,

I am pleased to be sending you this latest update in a series of E-newsletters since my swearing in as a Morris Township Committeeman eight months ago. I will be sending newsletters containing highlights and some commentary monthly after each Township Committee meeting in order to keep you informed of happenings in our municipality. This newsletter covers the Township Committee meetings of 1/2/08 and 1/16/08. If you did not see the prior newsletters, you can view them at [www.JeffGrayzel.com](http://www.JeffGrayzel.com) and click on the "newsletter" link.

Last month was my longest newsletter, and this one will be the shortest. That is because no ordinances are allowed to be carried over from one year to the next. This rule is in place due to the possible changeover of committee-people from year to year on the Township Committee, as was the case this year with Ron Goldberg taking his seat on January 2nd.

The Jan. 2 meeting was the annual "Reorganization" meeting where many committee appointments are announced, but no substantive legislative business is conducted. Ron Goldberg was sworn in on this evening. A quick view of the actual Township Committee Reorganization agenda from 1/2/08 will give you an idea of the proceeding, and this can be found via a link to our Township website:

<http://morristownship.org/agendas/2008orgagenda.pdf>

My personal remarks made at this meeting related to Ron's swearing-in can be found at this link:

[http://www.jeffgrayzel.com/index\\_files/Page345.htm](http://www.jeffgrayzel.com/index_files/Page345.htm)

The Jan. 16 Township Committee meeting is the main focus of this month's newsletter. A copy of the actual Township Committee meeting agenda from 1/16/08 can be found via a link to our Township website:

[http://morristownship.org/agendas/twpcomm\\_01\\_16\\_08.pdf](http://morristownship.org/agendas/twpcomm_01_16_08.pdf)

### **New Police Officers Sworn In**

The January 16 meeting opened up with the swearing-in of 3 new police officers, all of whom were recent graduates of either the Morris County or Union County Police Academies. They take the place of 3 police officers (including our Chief, see below) who have either retired or resigned their positions. Please join me in welcoming our new Patrolmen Steven Smith, Justin Crowell and Robert Hydock Jr. to the police force.

More details can be found on this article in the [Newsbee Newspaper](#).

### **Ordinances...**

The Jan. 16 Township Committee meeting had very short agenda, since there were no

Ordinances for Public Hearing and Final Approval for the reasons stated above. Three ordinances were Introduced, and the public commentary and a final vote on these ordinances will take place at the February 6 meeting.

The first item was a salary ordinance for our paid firefighters who are represented by the FMBA union (Firemen's Benevolent Association). The Township and the union agreed on a contract several weeks ago, and this ordinance is the formalization of their pay increases. The firemen received the same wage increase as our police officers agreed to several months ago.

The second ordinance brought for introduction adjusted the fee schedule for participation in certain recreation programs. Two years ago the Township implemented fee-based programming instead of allowing residents to participate in certain activities for free. This helps to partially offset the costs associated with running these programs.

The third ordinance introduced updated rules for our swimming pools.

Copies of any of these ordinances can be obtained from our Township Clerk.

### **Public Commentary...**

Every Committee meeting has a "public commentary" portion during which anyone can make a statement concerning anything related to Township matters.



1. The first speaker this night was a resident questioning the way our leaf collection service was run this year. He complained that we were entering the 3rd week of January and there were still leaves on many streets. For more on this issue see the additional commentary below.
2. The second resident asked about the traffic light signal at the intersection of Whippany Road and Columbia Turnpike. She complained that people who try to get to the Westin hotel are not allowed to make a left turn and end up having to turn around in her street. She was informed that a new state-of-the-art traffic signal would be installed during 2008 and that the Morris County engineering department was drawing up plans to go out to bid. This new signal would not allow for left turns into the Westin.
3. The third speaker commented on the Traction Line trail, which is a paved pedestrian/bike trail running alongside the train tracks in Convent Station. There are a number of vehicle crossings on the trail at which the vehicles are not required to stop. She asked the Township Committee to consider installing stop signs at these crossings. She was told that the Police Department would investigate and give the Committee recommendations.

### **Jeff's Comments...**

The final portion of the meeting allows for each member of the Township Committee to make any general comments they please. I made the following comments:

1. I apologized for leaf collection delays and said that our DPW should determine whether changes could or should be made in collection methods.
2. I had recently taken the New Jersey League of Municipalities course for Newly Elected Municipal Officials. This course is only offered once per year, and since I took office in Mid-May of 2007 this was my first opportunity to complete it.
3. I recently attended an informational session for municipal officials on the Highlands Protection Plan. This legislation is expected to be approved in March or April of this year and will most probably require an update to our mast plan to incorporate some of its elements.
4. I gave an update to the status of the Open Appointments Ordinance that I proposed in September 2007, which has been stalled in our Legislation Sub-committee. Additional information is being attempted to be collected prior to bringing it back to the Township Committee.

5. I applauded our Recreation Director, Bill Foelsch, for applying for a Morris County Community Development Grant for improvements to the Collinsville playground. Upgrades to this playground are long overdue and this grant, if approved, would go a long way to giving this community playground a much needed facelift.

### **Closed Session**

The Township Committee then recessed into "closed session" which occurs when there are legal or personnel matters that cannot be discussed in public. Minutes of the closed session are released to the public when the matters discussed are resolved. The Township Attorney John Mills announced at the meeting (prior to recessing into closed session) that the closed session would deal with personnel matters and union negotiations.

### **Police Chief Loughman steps down....**

As you may have read in the newspapers this week, Chief Michael Loughman will be retiring on April 1. His retirement takes effect on February 1 and he will use up his remaining vacation during that period of time. The text of the Township press release distributed on Jan. 23:

*The Township Committee announces the retirement of Police Chief Michael Loughman, effective April 1, 2008. Chief Loughman has been employed with the Morris Township Police Department since 1973, beginning his career as a patrolman/cadet and working his way through the ranks as sergeant (1985), lieutenant (1991) and captain (1995). In 2002, Captain Loughman was promoted to Chief of Police where he led the department of 55 employees and instituted better command and control initiatives among his personnel.*

*Chief Loughman is a lifelong Morris Township resident and is very active in the Boy Scouts of America and Morris Plains Rotary.*

*Succeeding Chief Loughman will be Captain Timothy Quinn who will become Acting Police Chief on February 1, 2008. Captain Quinn has been with the Morris Township Police Department for 29 years, working his way from communications officer all the way up to captain in 2002. Captain Quinn graduated from the FBI National Academy last summer and is a national and chapter executive board member of the Police Unity Tour. Captain Quinn resides in Morris Township with his wife and two daughters.*

More details can be found on this article in the [Newsbee Newspaper](#).

### **Leaf Collection**

As of last week some of you still had leaf piles on your street. Our leaf collection services have been hampered this year by the warm weather lasting far into the Fall season, thus causing many leaves to fall just weeks before the first snowfall.

More information can be found at this link:

[http://morristownship.org/pdfs/leaf\\_01\\_16\\_08.pdf](http://morristownship.org/pdfs/leaf_01_16_08.pdf)

Almost all leaves have now been picked up. But if you still have leaves on your street then please call DPW at 973-326-7398 to let them know to come back and get them.

### **Morris Township Tip....**

Volunteer firefighters are needed. Morris Township relies on volunteers to supplement its paid firefighter force. We currently have 18 full-time firemen plus a Chief, a Deputy Chief, and an Inspector. Volunteers man 3 of our 5 firehouses on the weekends, and respond to alarms at other times as well.



Not only do the volunteers serve the community, but they also help keep our taxes down. If we can get enough volunteer firefighters then we can hold steady the number of paid firefighters we have in our budget. Having to add paid firefighters to our staff would result in an increased budget, and most probably a rise in taxes. So increasing the volunteer pool is a

top priority of the Township.

The Morris Township Fire Department provides all necessary equipment and training. Interested men and women (yes, we do have several women volunteers) should stop in at any of our fire houses or call Fire Headquarters at 973-326-7435.

More information can also be found at this link:

<http://morristownship.org/pdfs/JoinTheFD.pdf>

### **Timely Health Tip.....**

For those of you attending super bowl parties, the USDA released a health tip this past week. Please see the link below.

***USDA Gives Food Safety Advice to Kick Off Your Super Bowl Party*** (published Jan 24, 2007): *Avoid the penalty of foodborne illness by following simple food safety rules.*

[http://www.fsis.usda.gov/News\\_&\\_Events/NR\\_012408\\_02/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/News_&_Events/NR_012408_02/index.asp)



**Go  
Giants!!!**

### **The Next Meeting...**

The next two Township Committee meeting are scheduled for this Wednesday February 6th and for Wednesday February 20th. Please attend!! Your presence improves the quality of the proceedings, and your questions require the Township Committee to be responsive to our citizens.

Please feel free to forward this e-mail on to others. If you know someone who would like to subscribe, please have them contact me at [Jeff@JeffGrayzel.com](mailto:Jeff@JeffGrayzel.com) .

As always, if you have any comments you would like to share with me then please send an e-mail to [Jeff@JeffGrayzel.com](mailto:Jeff@JeffGrayzel.com) .

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