

Grayzel Commentary
Township Committee Meeting
Meeting of December 18, 2013

As I think you will hear from all of my colleagues, I want to thank the Department of Public Works for all their hard work during all of the snowstorms of the past 2 weeks. Many of these men were out nights and weekends keeping our roads safe for residents, and they did a really great job.

As we close the year, I want to take this opportunity to publicly thank all the employees of Morris Township for all their good work this past year. From the office staff, to the supervisors and department heads, and also to our Administrator Tim Quinn, we have a great group of people working for us here in Morris Township.

I would also like to thank the many volunteers that help us throughout the township, from those that sit on our various boards and committees, to our volunteer firemen and the Minute Men, to our volunteer coaches in the various sports leagues, and all the other volunteers who give of their time for the benefit of other residents. We are grateful for the ways in which you give back to the community.

As you may have heard at our last meeting, we are merging our municipal court into a joint court located in Madison. We had our last court session last night. The people running our court have been with us for a long time, and I wanted to take this opportunity to thank all of them for their years of service with us: Jim Lavin- 46 years; Theresa Rizzo – 22 years; Phyllis Arci – 12 years; and Judge Nish – 15 years. Thank you for all of your good work over the years, and I wish all of you the best for what the future will bring you.

Congratulations to Morris Township resident Leslie Bensley. Leslie is the Director of the Morris County Tourism Bureau and she is also the secretary of the Board of Trustees for the group Crossroads of the American Revolution Historic Association. She has been honored by

the New Jersey Historical Commission with their 2013 Award of Recognition. This award recognizes Leslie for her long-time support and promotion of Morris County's history and historic sites as Executive Director of Morris County Tourism. In her devotion to preserve state history, Leslie also serves on the boards of the Advocates for New Jersey History and was the vice chair of the Heritage Tourism Task Force. Her stewardship has raised public awareness of Morris County's history. Also, in 2010 the county tourism website received the Governor's Tourism Award. As civil war buffs like to say: **HUZZAH!**

I am pleased that we are putting the Township's open space funds to use with the purchase of the Baker Farm on Lake Valley Road. Thank you to the Open Space Committee for all their work on this project. On a related note, the state of New Jersey has run out of open space funds and our legislators have not agreed on a long-term funding plan. I read that New Jersey is predicted to be the first state in the country to reach full build out, which I read is estimated to be in 2050. I think it is important that we continue our efforts to preserve open space both in our township and across our state. I urge our state legislators to move forward on a funding plan.

I would like to close by sending my best wishes to all of our residents, as well as our employees and volunteers, for a wonderful holiday season. And remember, you should not drink and drive at all times, but you should be especially conscious of how much you drink during this holiday season before getting in a car.

Lastly, my best wishes to all my colleagues on the Township Committee for a happy and healthy new year.

(end)