



JEFF GRAYZEL

PROMOTING OPEN GOVERNMENT



September 2015: Morris Township News Update

Dear Neighbors,

I am pleased to be sending you my periodic E-newsletter containing commentary on our Township Committee meetings as well as other helpful information about our municipality.

There is a lot of good information contained in this newsletter including:

- Township Committee meetings now on YouTube
- My candidacy for Morris Township Committee
- Summaries of the July and August Township Committee meetings
- Listings of upcoming events in the area

If you missed any of my past newsletters, you can review prior issues on my website:

www.JeffGrayzel.com

Please take a moment to read and consider the following information to stay informed about our municipality. As always, I welcome your comments and questions. When you are finished reading, please pass this on to your neighbors and friends.

Township Committee Meetings Now Available on Both Cable TV and Streaming on YouTube

As reported in my last newsletter, our Township Committee meetings are now being broadcast on cable TV. This is being done by a private citizen who has met with constant resistance to the effort by the Township Committee.

Now, thanks to that person - Cathy Wilson - the Township Committee meetings are now available on YouTube too! See the latest meeting here:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCQFH1RFrH-59gPGpiMoaHgQ/videos>

***Tune in to
Cablevision
Channel 21
Monday Nights
at 9:00pm***

Cathy Wilson is a resident of Morris Township who has been advocating for televised access to our meetings for 2 years. She has worked tirelessly to put all the pieces in place so that Cablevision could broadcast the taped telecast. Now she has continued her work by uploading the telecast to YouTube.

Township Committee meetings can be viewed on Cablevision channel 21 every Monday night at 9pm and will be rebroadcast in the same time slot each week until the newest one is available. Cathy is working to

get Verizon FIOS to broadcast the meetings as well.

Read the Morristown Green article about Cathy's efforts:

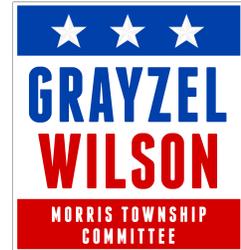
<http://morristowngreen.com/2015/05/18/morris-township-committee-meetings-to-be-televised-candidate-says/>

Kudos to Cathy Wilson for her hard work on behalf of Morris Township residents.

My Candidacy for Morris Township Committee

I am pleased to announce that my campaign to regain a seat on the Township Committee is underway. I will be running with Cathy Wilson, my formidable 2014 running mate.

As you may recall, I lost my 2014 reelection bid by just 14 votes from more than 7,000 voters who participated in the election. Cathy Wilson fell just 133 votes short. This shows how evenly divided the Township electorate is, and highlights the desire by many to have diversity on the Township Committee which is now controlled 5-0 by Republicans. This is not to say that Republicans are poor leaders, but it is always good to have balance and diversity of opinions at all levels of government, including right here in Morris Township.



There are two seats up for re-election this year. One of the seats is currently held by Bruce Sisler. The other seat is the vacated seat held by Scott Rosenbush, who finally resigned in April after having moved to Utah last year.

As the campaign heats up, please remember that this is not a popularity contest or a "who has lived in Morris Township longer" contest. It is about selecting the best possible leadership team for our community.

I am running again because I feel that, while I was on the Committee, both my analytical skills and technical background brought very good questions to the forefront and led the Township Committee to alternatives they otherwise would not have considered. The others usually chose to disagree with me, as a matter of course, but there was definitely greater discussion of issues. Because of that, the public could observe the decision making process. The current Township Committee seems more predisposed to making decisions based on pleasing an interest group or following a party line. A 5-0 power block allows for that, but this is not how good government should work.

The first of the Grayzel/Wilson mailers will be out shortly, but you can get a sneak peak at our campaign on our website:

www.JeffAndCathy.net

Cathy and I look forward to meeting many voters this Fall as we knock on doors all over Morris Township. As always, if you ever have a question or concern you would like to discuss, please send me an email at: jeff@jeffgrayzel.com

I have been privileged to serve as a Committeeman for two terms previously, and I would appreciate your support to bring me back for another term. Election Day is Tuesday November 3.

Township Committee Meetings of July 22 and August 26, 2015

The Township Committee held regular meetings on July 22 and August 26, 2015. The agendas for each of the meetings can be found at the Township's online "Agenda Center" on the municipal website:

<http://www.morristwp.com/AgendaCenter>



At the **July** meeting, there were no ordinances for final adoption that were voted upon. However, in the resolutions the Committee appropriated the following funds:

- \$824,000 for the annual Township roadway overlay program (resurfacing of a handful of streets)
- \$338,912 to resurface the Convent Station train parking lot
- \$154,900 to purchase a new snow plow
- \$39,745 for a new pick-up truck

At the **August** meeting, there were two ordinances voted on and adopted:

- **Ordinance 26-15:** Appropriates \$500,000 to the Morristown-Morris Township joint library for repairs to the library facade. Of note, this is half of the \$1 million being provided by Morris Township on this project. This is our portion of the \$2 million in special funding requested by the library that is being split evenly with Morristown.
- **Ordinance 27-15:** Established salaries for the calendar year 2015 for all non-union Township personnel.

Next up at each meeting was the passage of **resolutions** where the Committee appropriated the following funds:

- \$1,844,000 for the reconstruction of Streeter pool (a similar amount was appropriated last year for the Ginty pool reconstruction)
- \$288,367 contract for consulting services to a company that will design and manage the reconstruction of Streeter pool (this is in addition to the \$1,844,000 appropriation above)
- \$136,916 to replace the roof at the Butterworth sewer plant.
- \$63,700 contract to a consulting firm to manage the upgrades to systems at the Woodland sewer plant.
- \$40,000 contract for special legal services.
- \$20,000 contract for general consulting services related to our two sewer plants.
- \$25,000 for a new 4WD utility vehicle.
- Additionally, the Township came to an agreement with the Morris County Municipal Utilities Authority for a conservation partnership where the MCMUA will contribute \$100,000 towards the purchase of property on Picatinny Road for preservation as open space. This is in addition to a \$700,000 appropriation by Morris Township and an \$800,000 contribution for the Morris County Open Space Fund. The total of \$1.6 million in funding will preserve the property called "ValleyVue Farm" on Picatinny Road, which (in my opinion) is one of the nicest viewsheds in all of Morris Township.

Each Township Committee meeting has a portion for **public commentary** in which residents can stand up and ask questions of the Township Committee or make statements/commentary related to Township issues. During the public commentary period at the August meeting, **there was a heated exchange between Cathy Wilson and the Township Committee** about the cost of the swimming pools versus the cost for a possible senior center. Read about it as reported in the Newsbee newspaper:

http://www.newjerseyhills.com/morris_news_bee/news/political-sparks-fly-at-morris-township-committee-meeting-over-costs/article_c721a7fe-14c7-5beb-a8bc-0fd24bb9a303.html

And remember that you can also see the exchange on a taped broadcast on either Cablevision channel 21 or on YouTube here:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCQFH1RFRH-59gPGpiMoaHgQ/videos>

The next Township Committee meeting will be held this coming Wednesday, September 16th at 7:00 pm in our municipal building.

Swimming Pool Update

1. Community Swim Pool PICNIC - Saturday, September 12th

Morris Township's Department of Parks and Recreation and the Morris Township Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee will host its Annual End of Season Swim Pool Picnic & BBQ on Saturday, September 12 from 1:00 pm to 6:00 pm at Ginty Pool. The event is open to all Morris Township residents and their guests. The rain date is Sunday, September 13.

The Pool Picnic will feature continuous music with Cloud 9 DJs and a special live performance by the contemporary country music band-Due South from 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm. The day will also feature kid's games, inflatable fun, arts and crafts projects, as well as a final day of swimming and sunning at Ginty Pool.



The cost for the pool party is \$10 per person at the door for everyone ages one and above and includes a traditional BBQ with hamburgers, hot dogs, salads, Jersey sweet corn, desserts, lemonade and ice tea.

2. Streeter Pool Construction Contract Awarded

At their July meeting, the Township Committee voted 4-1 to award a \$1.85 million contract to renovate Streeter Pool. Read the story in the Newsbee:

http://www.newjerseyhills.com/morris_news_bee/news/morris-township-accepts-million-bid-to-repair-streeter-pool/article_95ad67bb-8cb3-5a45-bdae-47efb772e303.html

I very much support us having a municipal pool and think it is an asset to the community. The Recreation Department has done an admirable job keeping the pools up and running the past 5 years as they continued to degrade and leak water.

However, I am very frustrated with how the elected officials have kicked the can down the road for so many years and allowed the pools to fall into such a sad state of disrepair. The Township is now faced with \$4 million dollars in debt due to renovations to both our pools, and this debt could have been spread out instead of taken on all at once. As noted in my prior newsletter about our 2015 municipal budget, the general municipal budget is now significantly propping up the pool budget, because the pool utility cannot support itself in the face of the new debt load.

Recreation Department Releases Fall Schedule

The Township recreation department, led by Director Bill Foelsch, does a tremendous job of maintaining our parks, playgrounds, playing fields and swimming pools. They also put on a host of programming including a wide range of activities for all ages as well as the recently completed summer movie series and outdoor concert series.

The recreation department has just released its Fall/Winter programming guide. Please take a look at the offerings:

<http://www.morristwp.com/DocumentCenter/View/2966>

Thank you to the entire recreation department staff. They are a small staff producing an outsized set of programming options for our residents.

JCP&L Proposes New Transmission Line into Whippany

This proposed project will benefit Morris Township residents because it provides another layer of redundancy within the power grid that supports our municipality.

More information is available on the JCP&L website:

https://www.firstenergycorp.com/content/fecorp/about/transmission_projects/new_jersey/montville-whippany.html

And here: <http://www.energizingnjfuture.com/about-the-project/>

Other Items of Interest...

* **Morris County's 9/11 Memorial Service:** The 14th annual 9/11 remembrance service and candlelight vigil will be held this Sunday, September 13th at 5 pm at the 9/11 Memorial adjacent to the Fire Academy on West Hanover Avenue.

* **Be safe around school buses:** Passing a school bus gets you five points on your license, so a license suspension could come with a first offense.

<http://patch.com/new-jersey/morris/s/f8o23/thinking-of-passing-a-school-bus-you-could-go-to-jail?utm>



* **Household Hazardous Waste & Computer/TV Drop-Off Event on Saturday Sept. 12:** This drop-off event runs 9 am-2 pm at the Morris County Public Safety Training Academy at 500 West Hanover Avenue. Read about the allowable materials here:

<http://www.morristwp.com/DocumentCenter/View/2405>

* **Yardwaste Collections continue:** The next pick-ups are scheduled for ZONE 1 on September 12th and ZONE 2 on September 19th. Read a summary of the program here:

<http://www.morristwp.com/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=238>

Find your zone here: <http://www.morristwp.com/DocumentCenter/View/2416>

If you have any questions, please contact the Department of Public Works office at 973-326-7398.

* **Festival of Books returning for second season:** Organizers of the Morristown Festival of Books have announced that the festival will be returning for a second season beginning on October 2. Read about the many authors coming to town here: <http://morristownfestivalofbooks.org/>

* **September is Disaster Preparedness Month in Morris County:** The Morris County's Office of Emergency Management (OEM) wants residents to be prepared in case disaster strikes. Read their tips in this Newsbee article:

http://www.newjerseyhills.com/morris_news_bee/news/morris-county-wants-residents-prepared-for-disaster/article_f5ccebfbf-47c3-5e12-8cb8-c48341abe06d.html

Upcoming Committee Meetings...

The next regular meeting of the Township Committee will be this Wednesday, September 16th at 7:00 pm in our municipal building. The October meeting is scheduled for October 21st.

Contact Jeff...

I will continue to communicate with the public by e-newsletter on a periodic basis. However, if you ever have a question or an issue you would like to discuss, feel free to contact me by email. I will continue to respond to e-mails sent to Jeff@JeffGrayzel.com

Please feel free to forward this email news to others. If you know someone who would like to subscribe to future issues, please have them contact me at Jeff@JeffGrayzel.com

I look forward to another year of communicating to and with the residents of Morris Township about issues that affect all of us. Please do not hesitate to contact me with questions, ideas, or concerns.

I hope you enjoyed the holiday weekend and took a moment to reflect on its significance to our country.

Your neighbor,
Jeff

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See what's happening on Jeff's Facebook page:

