

STATE OF THE BOROUGH ADDRESS
MAYOR WILLIAM PIKOLYCKY, WOODBINE
JANUARY 08, 2012

It is my great pleasure to report to you the State of the Borough of Woodbine along with my wishes for the best in the New Year and a Happy Day after Eastern European Christmas. I want to welcome and thank all of you for attending and am particularly appreciative of Freeholder Desiderio for taking time out of his busy schedule to be here.

To begin, I am pleased to note that for twenty-one years we have held the line on the local purpose tax rate and our goal is to hold the line again in 2012.

As we all are well aware of the economic and financial challenges each of us face, we are able to report:

The Borough continues to be a leader in getting our fair share of funding from State and Federal agencies.

In addition, the use of shared services between the Borough, the Woodbine Municipal Utilities Authority, the Woodbine Port Authority, Woodbine Developmental Center, the local School District, as well as our court system and the County itself, has resulted in ongoing savings to our taxpayers, well in advance of these services becoming State-mandated.

Partnering and collaboration with both private and public entities is a part of how we accomplish cost savings with no reduction in services, in fact even expanding some services.

Speaking of "sharing", Stockton College was gifted by the Azeez Family Foundation with the Sam Azeez Museum of Woodbine Heritage building, and a generous donation to continue its support, now giving Woodbine a college presence within the community.

The Museum has received final approval for an addition to accommodate classrooms and other educational amenities in a more spacious and state-of-the-art facility.

Recently, I also responded to an invitation from representatives from Atlantic Cape Community College to discuss the possibility of the College setting up an Aviation Training Program at Woodbine Municipal Airport.

As I previously mentioned, this past year the Borough was identified by The Sam Azeez Foundation and Stockton College as the site for a College Annex on the Jewish Heritage Museum site.

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In the same regard, I viewed Atlantic-Cape's interest as another opportunity for Woodbine to build upon its heritage as an educational center from the Baron DeHirsch's agricultural college.

A project of this magnitude is worthy of more in-depth discussions with the College and collaborations with other partners interested in aviation growth here in Woodbine.

If located in Woodbine, Atlantic-Cape's Aviation Training Program could result in construction of a control tower which would greatly improve air traffic safety and at the same time support an expanded curriculum for the College.

Also in 2011, Woodbine received more than \$6 million in grants for community and economic development projects and has over \$9 million in project applications pending and under review from various Federal and State agencies.

Woodbine is so noted for its aggressiveness in seeking grant funds, that I was asked to present at the League of Municipalities Conference on a panel on grant-getting.

And in July, along with Borough Engineer Bruce Graham, I gave a

Presentation at Richard Stockton College on New Jersey DOT's Safe Routes to Schools Program.

This was part of a workshop titled "Complete Streets and Safe Routes to Schools: How to Address Healthy and Active Transportation in Your Community" which was co-sponsored by Sustainable Jersey, Shaping New Jersey, New Jersey Future, the New Jersey Bike and Walk Coalition, Rutgers, and both the United States and New Jersey Departments of Transportation.

Woodbine has been recognized for its efforts in working with the Governor and Lt. Governor on an interagency economic development strategy designed to streamline the permitting process and encourage new private investment to the extent that our success with that "Red Tape" committee was the subject of an article in the League of Municipalities magazine.

We are working with Garden State bio-Enterprises (formerly Garden State Ethanol) which has undertaken extensive engineering analyses to cap and redevelop the landfill which is the proposed site for a multi-million dollar facility designed to convert algae into high-end products.

GSE is actively seeking partners to create what would be among the largest commercial investments in Woodbine creating jobs and rateables

for long term economic sustainability for the Borough and the Region.

The Borough's application to the USDA-Rural Development requesting \$5 Million for sanitary sewer line extensions to serve the Borough's business and industrial zone is under review.

This may represent a unique opportunity for the Borough and the CMCMUA to serve each others needs at a lesser cost and with far greater positive return on the investment.

The CMCMUA is seeking grant funds to analyze and determine the best way to treat leachate from the County Landfill.

I am hopeful that as the result of working closely with the CMCMUA, we will be able to get better use of our treatment plant at the Airport Eco-Business Park and at the same time have a long term, cost effective solution for waste water treatment for both the Borough and the CMCMUA.

For the Borough, it can mean ultimately having public sewer service available borough-wide, like we are doing with the South Jersey Gas expansion of its natural gas lines.

The Borough's Master Plan is being updated, taking into consideration the various new certifications required by the State, placing the Borough in a stronger position for future funding opportunities.

This coming year, we are working to upgrade our Sustainable Jersey certification to the Silver level.

Borough continues to negotiate with the Painters Union to repaint the railroad trestle bridge which serves as a gateway to our community. We look forward to this partnership which would be a great project for their apprentices and will enlist the financial support of our business community, as well as the Greater Woodbine Chamber of Commerce for the materials needed for this project.

Pinelands has approved our Municipal Airport Business Park. This, with our Washington/DeHirsch Avenue Business District, which has been also identified by Federal and State agencies as a major Smart Growth planned development area, is a vital part of our economic development initiative.

The Gentilini family will be constructing a new \$4 million facility car dealership as the first customer in the new business park, and relocating their Chevy facility there.

This would be adjacent to their current Ford dealership on Route 550.

The Borough plans to continue to work with the Gentilini Family to not only see to the successful move of their Chevrolet Dealership but to also assist in finding a suitable reuse for the existing property here in our town-center.

We have held a leadership role in the advancement of the designated scenic Pine Barrens Byway and its implementation Association which promotes area eco-tourism.

We have also been at the forefront of the awareness efforts concerning the Southern Pine Beetle tree damage.

The Department of Transportation, along with other funding sources such as FEMA, continues to provide the Borough with funding towards streetscape, bikeways, road reconstruction, sidewalks, curbing and enhanced drainage as well as airport runway/aviation improvements, thus addressing these transportation needs without increasing the burden to local taxpayers.

An over-the road flashing beacon lights at the intersection of Route 557 and 550 is one of the latest achievements in addressing the traffic issues at our busy crossroads.

We thank the county for their partnership in this as well as in the road reconstruction on Route 550 and look forward to more involvement by the County in addressing concerns as to the County right-of-ways passing through Woodbine.

Our Safe Routes to Schools education and infrastructure programs are progressing well.

In addition to the grants received and proposed, we have continued our local efforts to improve the safety of our children and their parents and guardians who walk or bicycle to and from school.

In this regard, Cross County Connection is developing a "School Travel Plan" that will evaluate the routes kids take to school and will then offer suggestions for parents, guardians, and the children as to how to best negotiate the major street crossings and provide other suggestions to educate and inform in order to improve safe movement to and from our Community School Complex for both in school and after-school activities.

The Department of Community Affairs funding has permitted the Borough to expand the Community Center with an eye toward the particular needs of our senior population.

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On the same front, the Woodbine Recreation Commission has continued to add programs including many specifically geared toward that senior citizen population.

Recreation of course continues with its youth-oriented programs, including sports. *(team that made finals/opening day here)*

Woodbine AARP continues its presence in our community.

Woodbine Municipal Alliance also continues its anti-drug, tobacco, and other substance outreach throughout the community and has been partnering with Woodbine Recreation for senior outreach programs.

The Borough continues to work with the Cape May County Animal Shelter Alliance to promote the health and safety of the Borough's animal population, and to hold an annual rabies clinic.

Woodbine is promoting health-related initiatives through the school and by the continuing Recreation Commission classes.

Woodbine was chosen as a Focus group survey site for the Rural Health Care Focus Group, being the only municipality in the county designated as "rural".

Although Cape Human Resources has closed their Woodbine office, PRAC has become involved in the weatherization program.

Atlantic Human Resources Head Start and Early Head Start programs now have expanded space in our Social Services Building.

Experience Works continues to be a big help to our municipality particularly during these economic times by funded workers being trained throughout the Borough.

At this time, I would like to once again thank that Federally-funded Experience Works Program.

I would like to take a moment to review the considerable progress that has been made with regard to our fully renovated and expanded Community School. Woodbine Elementary school has over the past five years been transformed from a local elementary school to a complex that has a new Gymnasium, new Technology Lab, and a new Library wing that is adjacent to the Woodbine branch of the County Library System.

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In addition, the Board of Education embarked on a major capital program to fully renovate the existing buildings to include new roofs with a solar array, new kitchen facilities, a secure entryway in to the school with the appropriate security system in place and much more.

To support this effort and reduce the bond indebtedness for Borough taxpayers by 50% from a projected budget of over \$6 Million to just over \$3 Million, the Borough was able to secure a number of Federal and State Grants.

Equally important, this school complex can and will be able to serve our children by providing a setting conducive to a positive educational experience.

In addition, it will host community activities AFTER school hours into the evenings and weekends for parents, guardians, and friends with the children.....a true "Community School".

I thank the Greater Woodbine Chamber of Commerce as it continues its hard work throughout the community promoting Woodbine—with plans to expand their Festival to include a car show this autumn.

I would also like to thank the Borough Council, appointed officials and members of our Boards, Authorities, and Commissions, Borough employees, and Borough professionals for their dedicated work for Woodbine.

I would especially like to compliment our first responders and Public Works employees for their hard work and dedication in this particularly trying past year.

Thank you,

William Pikolycky, Mayor