

The ANNUAL Meeting of The Mayor and The Borough Council of The Borough of Glen Ridge was held on Monday, January 7<sup>th</sup>, 2013 in the Council Chamber of The Municipal Building, Glen Ridge, New Jersey at 6:53 p. m.

Municipal Clerk Rohal called upon Councilwoman - Elect Elizabeth K. **BAKER** to present herself to The Clerk for the purpose of subscribing to the Oath Of Office.

Municipal Clerk Rohal called upon Councilman - Elect Paul A. **LISOVICZ** to present himself to The Clerk for the purpose of subscribing to the Oath Of Office.

Mayor Hughes called the meeting to order and read a prepared statement that adequate notice of this meeting had been provided to the public as required by statutes.

Present: Mayor Hughes, Councilpersons Patrick, Lisovicz, Lefkovits, Theodorou, Dawson and Baker.

Absent: None.

The following Borough Officer was in attendance: Borough Attorney Malyska, Police Lieutenant Egnizzo and Planning And Development Director Zichelli, III.

It was moved by Councilperson Lefkovits, seconded by Councilperson Theodorou that Councilman **PATRICK'S** name be placed in nomination to serve as **President** of The Borough Council for the year 2013. No further nominations were offered. The Motion was adopted by an aye and no vote; Councilpersons Lisovicz, Lefkovits, Dawson, Theodorou, Baker and Mayor Hughes voting aye and noes none. Council President-Elect Patrick abstained from voting. Mayor Hughes declared that Councilman Patrick will serve as this Council's President for the year 2013 and he offered her his congratulations.

The following was introduced by Councilperson Baker, seconded by Councilperson Dawson and adopted by an aye and no vote; Councilpersons Patrick, Lisovicz, Lefkovits, Dawson, Theodorou and Baker voting aye and noes none: ( Resolution No. 1 - 13 )

**BY - LAWS OF THE COUNCIL - ADOPTING FOR 2013**

( See Resolution Book No. 18 - Page No. 18 - 144 )

Mayor Hughes appointed the following STANDING Committees of The Borough Council for the year 2013: ( the first named on each Committee shall serve as that Committee's Chairperson )

**FINANCE** And **ADMINISTRATION** Committee: **PATRICK**, Lefkovits & Theodorou  
**PUBLIC SAFETY** Committee: **LISOVICZ**, Patrick & Dawson  
**COMMUNITY AFFAIRS** And **PUBLIC RELATIONS**: **LEFKOVITS**, Baker & Patrick  
**PUBLIC WORKS** And **PUBLIC UTILITIES**: **DAWSON**, Theodorou & Baker  
**PARKS** And **RECREATION** Committee: **THEODOROU**, Dawson & Lisovicz  
**PLANNING** And **DEVELOPMENT** Committee: **BAKER**, Lisovicz & Lefkovits

With the advice and consent of The Borough Council, Mayor Hughes appointed John N. **MALYSKA** to the position of Borough **ATTORNEY** for the term of one ( 1 ) year.

The following was introduced by Councilperson Lisovicz, seconded by Councilperson Baker and adopted by an aye and no vote; Councilpersons Patrick, Lisovicz, Lefkovits, Dawson, Theodorou, Baker and Mayor Hughes voting aye and noes none: ( Resolution No. 2 - 13 )

**MALYSKA, JOHN N. - ATTORNEY - APPOINTMENT OF**

( See Resolution Book No. 18 - Page No. 18 - 144 )

With the advice and consent of The Borough Council, Mayor Hughes appointed Elizabeth A. **BREWSTER**, Esq. to the position of Borough **PROSECUTOR** for the term of one ( 1 ) year.

The following was introduced by Councilperson Patrick, seconded by Councilperson Theodorou and adopted by an aye and no vote; Councilpersons Patrick, Lisovicz, Lefkovits, Dawson, Theodorou, Baker and Mayor Hughes voting aye and noes none: ( Resolution No. 3 - 13 )

**BREWSTER, ELIZABETH A. - PROSECUTOR - APPOINTMENT OF**

( See Resolution Book No. 18 - Page No. 18 - 144 )

With the advice and consent of The Borough Council, Mayor Hughes appointed Delia J. **MURPHY**, Esq. to the position of Borough **PUBLIC DEFENDER** in the Municipal Court for the term of one ( 1 ) year.

The following was introduced by Councilperson Dawson, seconded by Councilperson Lisovicz and adopted by an aye and no vote; Councilpersons Patrick, Lisovicz, Lefkovits, Dawson, Theodorou and Baker voting aye and noes none: ( Resolution No. 4 - 13 )

**MURPHY, DELIA J. - PUBLIC DEFENDER - APPOINTMENT OF**

( See Resolution Book No. 18 - Page No. 18 - 144 )

With the advice and consent of The Borough Council, Mayor Hughes appointed the following **OFFICERS** and **EMPLOYEES** for the year **2013**:

- Irene C. W. **WHEAT** - - - Certified Finance Officer
- Donna **ALTSCHULER** - - - Certified Municipal Tax Collector

The following was introduced by Councilperson Baker, seconded by Councilperson Lefkovits and adopted by an aye and no vote; Councilpersons Patrick, Lisovicz, Lefkovits, Dawson, Theodorou and Baker voting aye and noes none: ( Resolution No. 5 - 13 )

**OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES - APPOINTMENT OF**

( See Resolution Book No. 18 - Page No. 18 - 145 )

With the advice and consent of The Borough Council, Mayor Hughes appointed the following to serve as members of the various **BOARDS, COMMISSIONS** and **COMMITTEES**:

The Board Of Adjustment	( 4 Year Term )	Hugh J. <b>MAHONEY</b>
" " " "	( Alt. No. 1 ) 2 " "	Raymond <b>SCOTT</b>
" " " "	" " 2 " "	Philip <b>JOHNSON</b>
The Planning Board	( Class II ) ( 1 Year Term )	Michael J. <b>ROHAL</b>
" " "	" III " " "	Elizabeth K. <b>BAKER</b>
" " "	" IV 4 " "	J. Kelly <b>CONKLIN</b>
" " "	( Alt. No. 1 ) 2 " "	Timothy <b>HEGARTY</b>

The Board Of Health	( 1 Year Term )	Elizabeth K. <b>BAKER</b>
" " " "	2 " "	Debra <b>PRIESTMAN</b>
" " " "	" " "	Donna <b>LIFSON</b>
" " " "	" " "	Connie <b>BOOTH</b>
" " " " ( Alt. No. 1 )	" " "	Chris <b>VALERIAN</b>
" " " " " " 2	" " "	Donna <b>HEINZEN</b>
The Borough Risk Manager	( 1 Year Term )	Bruce D. <b>RODDY</b>
The Library Board Of Trustees	( 5 Year Term )	Linda W. <b>SEYFFARTH</b>
" " " " "	1 " "	Stuart K. <b>PATRICK</b>
" " " " "	" " "	Dr. John <b>MUCCIOLO</b>
The Borough Historian	( 1 Year Term )	Sally Jane <b>MEYER</b>
The Historic Preservation Commission	( 4 Year Term )	Peter <b>HERRIGEL (B)</b>
" " "	" " "	(B)
" " " (Alt. # 1 B )	2 " "	Sarah <b>GITHENS</b>
The Municipal Alliance Committee	( 1 Year Term )	Nancy <b>McMAHON</b>
" " " "	" " "	Christine <b>HEINCKE</b>
" " " "	" " "	Lorijeane <b>MOODY,</b>
" " " "	" " "	Aubrey <b>BLANDA</b>
" " " "	" " "	Peter A. <b>HUGHES</b>
" " " "	" " "	Michael J. <b>ROHAL</b>
" " " "	" " "	Elizabeth K. <b>BAKER</b>
" " " "	" " "	Yvonne S. <b>PROVOST</b>
" " " "	" " "	Sheila E. <b>BYRON</b>
" " " "	" " "	Joseph <b>CARAVELA</b>
" " " "	" " "	Mark A. <b>CLEMENTE</b>
" " " "	" " "	James T. <b>COWAN</b>
" " " "	" " "	Mary Lynn <b>DePIERRO</b>
" " " "	" " "	Maria <b>DiCONDINA</b>
" " " "	" " "	Lauren <b>DUTTON</b>
" " " "	" " "	Kathy <b>WEISSENBERGER</b>
" " " "	" " "	Dr. John <b>MUCCIOLO</b>
" " " "	" " "	Michael <b>DONOVAN</b>
" " " "	" " "	Deborah <b>FITZPATRICK</b>
" " " "	" " "	Fredric A. <b>EGNEZZO</b>
" " " "	" " "	Vivian <b>MARINO</b>
" " " "	" " "	Jon <b>HEITMANN</b>
" " " "	" " "	Juvenile/Dare Off.
" " " "	" " "	Heather <b>KOBYLINSKI</b>
" " " "	" " "	Sharon <b>HARMS</b>
" " " "	" " "	Robert J. <b>WOHLGEMUTH</b>
" " " "	" " "	Megan <b>GUILLIANI</b>
" " " "	" " "	Lisa <b>KOLLBERG</b>
" " " "	" " "	Tracey <b>ST. AUBORN</b>
" " " "	" " "	Susan <b>HUGHES</b>
" " " "	" " "	Tami <b>KINLEY</b>
" " " "	" " "	L.O'DRISCOLL-MARCHES

"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	Suzzane	<b>O'CONNOR</b>
"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	Dirk	<b>PHILLIPS</b>
"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	Lynneve	<b>BERKOWITZ</b>
"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	Leah	<b>ZWEIG</b>
"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	Cindy	<b>REYNOLDS</b>
The Cable Channel-36 Citizens Advisory	(	1	Year	Term)	Richard	<b>WATERS</b>			
"	"	"	"	"	Peter A.	<b>HUGHES</b>			
"	"	"	"	"	David A.	<b>LEFKOVITS</b>			
"	"	"	"	"	Linda W.	<b>SEYFFARTH</b>			
"	"	"	"	"	Kathryn	<b>SCHACKNER</b>			
"	"	"	"	"	Eric	<b>GOLDMAN</b>			
"	"	"	"	"	Mark H.	<b>DAVIS</b>			
The Shade Tree Commission	(	3	Year	Term)	Timothy N.	<b>DELORM</b>			
"	"	"	"	"	2	Elizabeth K.	<b>BAKER</b>		
"	"	"	"	"	1	Larry	<b>STAUFFER</b>		
"	"	"	"	"	5	Sally R.	<b>ELLISON</b>		
"	"	"	"	"	4	Betsy	<b>GINSBERG</b>		
The Environmental Advisory Committee	(	1	Year	Term)	Elizabeth A	<b>BREWSTER</b>			
"	"	"	"	"	Elizabeth K.	<b>BAKER</b>			
"	"	"	"	"	Megan	<b>GUILANELLI</b>			
"	"	"	"	"	Joan	<b>LISOVICZ</b>			
"	"	"	"	"	Deborah	<b>MANN</b>			
"	"	"	"	"	Michael J.	<b>ROHAL</b>			
"	"	"	"	"	Jennifer	<b>WEISSMAN</b>			
"	"	"	"	"	Sydney	<b>YOUNG</b>			
"	"	"	"	"	Jacqueline S	<b>YUSTEIN</b>			
Rep. To Second River Joint Meeting	(	1	Year	Term)	Arthur D.	<b>DAWSON</b>			
Rep. To Third River Joint Meeting	(	1	Year	Term)	Peter A.	<b>HUGHES</b>			
Rep. To Essex County S.W.A.C.	(	1	Year	Term)	William	<b>BARTLETT</b>			
"	"	"	"	"	Michael J.	<b>ROHAL</b>			
Recycling Coordinator	(	1	Year	Term)	William	<b>BARTLETT</b>			
Clean Communities Coordinator	"	"	"	"	William	<b>BARTLETT</b>			
Rep. To Essex County C.D.B.G. Program	(	1	Year	Term)	Michael P.	<b>ZICHELLI</b>			
"	"	"	"	"	Arthur D.	<b>DAWSON</b>			

The following was introduced by Councilperson Lisovicz seconded by Councilperson Dawson and adopted by an aye and no vote; Councilpersons Patrick, Lisovicz, Lefkovits, Dawson, Theodorou and Baker voting aye and noes none. ( Resolution No. 6 - 13 )

**BOARDS, COMMISSIONS & COMMITTEES - APPOINTMENTS TO**

( See Resolution Book No. 18 - Page No. 18 - 145 )

The following was introduced by Councilperson Dawson, seconded by Councilperson Baker and adopted by an aye and no vote; Councilpersons Patrick, Lisovicz, Lefkovits, Dawson, Theodorou and Baker voting aye and noes none: ( Resolution No. 7 - 13 )

**2013 REGULAR MEETINGS - MAYOR AND COUNCIL**

( See Resolution Book No. 18 - Page No. 18 - 146 )

The following was introduced by Councilperson Theodorou, seconded by Councilperson Patrick and adopted by an aye and no vote; Councilpersons Patrick, Lisovicz, Lefkovits, Dawson, Theodorou and Baker voting aye and noes none: ( Resolution No. 8 - 13 )

**2013 OFFICIAL HOLIDAYS - ESTABLISHMENT OF**

( See Resolution Book No. 18 - Page No. 18 - 146 )

The following was introduced by Councilperson Patrick, seconded by Councilperson Lisovicz and adopted by an aye and no vote; Councilpersons Patrick, Lisovicz, Lefkovits, Dawson, Theodorou and Baker voting aye and noes none: ( Resolution No. 9 - 13 )

**CLAIMS - APPROVAL OF**

( See Resolution Book No. 18 - Page No. 18 - 147 )

The following was introduced by Councilperson Patrick, seconded by Councilperson Lefkovits and adopted by an aye and no vote; Councilpersons Patrick, Lisovicz, Lefkovits, Dawson, Theodorou and Baker voting aye and noes none: ( Resolution No. 10 - 13 )

**2013 TEMPORARY BUDGET - ADOPTING**

( See Resolution Book No. 18 - Page No. 18 - 148 & B )

The following was introduced by Councilperson Patrick, seconded by Councilperson Lisovicz and adopted by an aye and no vote; Councilpersons Patrick, Lisovicz, Lefkovits, Dawson, Theodorou and Baker voting aye and noes none: ( Resolution No. 11 - 13 )

**POLICE INTERCEPTOR - PURCHASE OF**

( See Resolution Book No. 18 - Page No. 18 - 149 )

Mayor Hughes presented his sixth "State Of The Borough" address to the citizens in attendance.

I would like to welcome everyone to the 118<sup>th</sup> reorganization meeting of the Borough of Glen Ridge. Tonight we swear in (2) councilpersons - Councilman Paul Lisovicz and Councilwoman Elizabeth Baker, and we appoint the many volunteers who so ably staff our various boards and committees. We also recognize those volunteers who are leaving their service to the Borough. I will also take the opportunity to review some of the highlights from 2012 and to present some of our goals for 2013.

Let me start first by extending an official welcome back to the Council to Elizabeth Baker and Paul Lisovicz.

I am delighted that both of you are willing to serve for another 3 years on the Council. I can't thank you and your families enough for the service you give to the Borough. You have both proved yourselves to be excellent stewards of your community, and you both willingly give of your time, energy, and personal talents to maintain and to promote the high quality of life and standards of good government that we have all come to expect here in Glen Ridge.

**Next I would like to recognize several new members to the borough Administration.**

**Mark Clemente**

In 2012, Mark Clemente was appointed to the Glen Ridge Municipal Court as its 4<sup>th</sup> Judge, replacing Judge Joe Connelly, who retired in 2012 after 33 years of service to the Borough. Councilman Lisovicz led our search committee for a new judge, and in my remarks last year I said that we would have a difficult time finding someone as hardworking and as wise as Judge Connelly. Fortunately for all of us, we did find

someone to fill Joe's shoes. A long-term resident of Glen Ridge, a life-long attorney, a graduate from Cornell and Seton Hall law, Mark Clemente is exceptionally qualified and has settled nicely into his new role. I believe that Mark will be an outstanding judge, and I hope he will serve the Borough for many years to come.

#### **George Librizzi**

In 2012 we hired George Librizzi as our municipal tax assessor. Now the Town's Tax Assessor is generally not a popular guy, but I believe we did fine one who is extremely qualified and competent, and someone who is approachable and who communicates very well. George is currently tax assessor in Glen Ridge, Verona, North Caldwell and Nutley and in the past was Tax Administrator for the County of Essex. In his short time with the Borough, George has completely reorganized the department, installed a new state-of-the-art computer aided mass appraisal system, which includes digital photos of each property in Town, and has updated the Borough's tax maps, bringing them up to NJ Division of taxation standards. George will be overseeing the current reassessment of all town properties in 2013.

#### **Bill Bartlett**

Tonight I would like to recognize our Supervisor of Public Works, Bill Bartlett. As a result of our efforts to cut the budget, the position of DPW Superintendent was eliminated. Bill Bartlett has taken over supervisory responsibility for the department.

Bill and his crew consistently earn praise for the job they do clearing streets after storms, maintaining fields, helping out at events like the Ashenfelter 8K, repairing roads, and doing all of the necessary jobs around town. As the new supervisor of the department, Bill has tremendously improved communication and cooperation with the GR Police Department, the GR Board of Ed, and with our Borough Administrators. Bill has also worked closely with our Borough Arborist in identifying and removing unhealthy trees with our own equipment and staff at a significant savings to the Borough. He has also taken a hands-on approach to training our staff in best practices in grass maintenance and tree care to help the new trees we are planting as part of our 600 tree campaign survive and flourish.

I would also like to recognize the outstanding job done by Bill and the entire DPW crew during super storm Sandy. Bill along with Tommy Allin worked 36 hours straight during the storm. As a direct result of their efforts all of our streets were cleared of downed trees and debris within 48 hours after the storm. I believe that the Department of Public Works is in good hands.

Now, I would like to acknowledge and thank some volunteers who are leaving us this year:

Ellen Fletcher is leaving the Planning Board due to a relocation.

David Barrington Pierce is also leaving the Planning Board due to a time conflict

Herb Addison is retiring from the Historic Preservation Committee after 7 years of dedicated service on that board. Herb was also a member of the Glen Ridge Historical Society and was passionate towards the preservation of the Borough of Glen Ridge. One doesn't have to travel too far beyond the borders of Glen Ridge to see what the importance of a strong Historic District means to the character and charm of the Borough. Herb understood this and served the HPC well.

Anne Nielston is retiring from the Library Board of trustees after 15 years of dedicated service, having served as Library Board President, Vice President, and Chair of the Building and Grounds Committee and the Personnel Committee. In 2007 and 2008, major renovations were made to the library, and Anne was involved in the process from beginning to end; from the initial feasibility study, to fundraising, to working with the architect to bring the project to completion.

Anne was also the driving force behind the Library's staffing study which revolutionized the Library's approach to staffing and work flow, and which saved thousands of dollars helping the Library Director and Board maintain a high level of service and a flat budget for the past 5 years.

On behalf of the Council, I extend to each of these volunteers our sincere appreciation and thanks for their service.

Let me turn now to some of the highlights from 2012.

### **Sandy**

Super Storm Sandy hit on October 29<sup>th</sup>, and in its wake left billions of dollars in damage, ruined homes and businesses, disrupted lives, and affected all of us in many different ways. In Glen Ridge, while the damage was not as severe as in some other towns along the coast, the cost to the Town was substantial: 48 Borough trees and over a dozen County trees had to be removed, power and communication wires were downed, roads and schools were closed, and rail transportation was suspended.

The cost to the town amounted to \$330,000.00, which is three times the cost of the October snow storm from 2011. The Town does expect FEMA to reimburse 75% of the cost from the storm, and maybe 90%, which is the amount that Governor Christie has requested.

In the first 48 hours after a major event like Sandy, local communities are pretty much on their own in dealing with the impact. While we know that help will come eventually, we also know that it will take time for County, State and Federal Agencies to assess the damage and marshal the necessary resources to meet the need. So, it's up to Towns like ours to deal with whatever comes our way using our own resources in the immediate aftermath of an event like Sandy.

I am very proud of the way our Borough responded to this event. Before the storm hit, our Office of Emergency Management went into high gear holding meetings and reviewing plans to have staff and materials ready to respond to the storm. GRPD, our Public Works department, and our town Engineers were fully involved in preparations for the storm as was Montclair Fire Department.

The night of the storm, I rode with Mike Zichelli. Electric transformers were exploding making it look like the fourth of July, it was raining cats and dogs, and the wind was blowing at 50-60 MPH. Trees and braches were falling suddenly and without warning making driving and working outside extremely hazardous. Yet throughout that night, our administrators, our Police, and our Public Works crews bravely answered calls for help, put out cones and flares, cleared blocked roadways, and helped residents who had to evacuate.

Despite wide-spread damage, within just 48 hours after the storm, and relying solely on our own resources, all our roadways were cleared and our schools reopened. In fact, Glen Ridge Schools were the first in the County to reopen, and we can all be proud of that.

Many residents lost heat and power as a result of the storm and others were affected by the suspension of train service into Hoboken, Jersey City, and New York. To help those who were without heat and power, the library and Train Station were kept open as warming centers. Likewise our two churches in Town opened their doors to all residents who were without light and heat and access to the internet. Many residents who couldn't get to work or whose office was flooded were able to carry on by making these locations mini offices.

I would like to thank everyone who helped us get through the storm: Our Administrators, our Public Works crew, the members of our Police Department, our Borough Forester, our library and recreation staffs, and our volunteer ambulance squad members. I would also like to thank so many neighbors who had heat and power and who, in the best Glen Ridge tradition, invited their neighbors without heat and power to come over for a hot meal and in some cases a warm bed.

Since the storm, we have been studying what worked and what needs to be improved. Clearly, communication at all levels is critical. Residents need to know what's going on. Our primary tool for communication is our Borough email system, and we sent out a number of updates in the days and weeks after the storm. But to receive an email you have to be on our email list, you have to have access to the internet, and you have to have power. Because there was so much damage, not everyone had these things, so our message did not get out as well as it needed to. So this year we are planning to purchase and install a system called Nixle, that is similar to a reverse 911 system, except that this system sends out texts and emails. The advantage of the Nixle system is that you don't have to have a smart phone to get the message. And, since many of our residents don't have smart phones, we think this will expand our ability to communicate with all our residents.

We have also had meetings with the President of PSEG and we have made it clear to him that PSE&G will have to do much better in the future when faced with a storm the size of Sandy. We have suggested that our Police and Public Works crews could take their repair crews to homes without power instead of their searching around for them in the dark using maps. Another advantage of this approach is that the Borough would have direct contact with line supervisors and could inform residents of PSE&G's daily work plans. We have also asked that PSEG share with our OEM officials their circuit maps so we can understand what they are planning and advise them as to where the need may be greatest. Finally we are looking at a better registry of all our residents with special medical needs like oxygen who are significantly at risk if power goes out.

#### **Montclair Fire Contract**

Another significant highlight from 2012 was the new fire contract we signed in January with the Township of Montclair. This 10 year contract extends a relationship that began 23 years ago, and resulted in hundreds of thousands of dollars in cost savings to the Borough. But it's not all about money, it's also about service, and Montclair Fire has delivered excellent service to the residents of Glen Ridge. Super storm Sandy is just one example of the excellent service we receive from Montclair Fire. Before the storm hit, Montclair Fire stationed an engine and crew outside Borough Hall, which reduced response time as they worked throughout the night to assist Glen Ridge families impacted by the storm. Along with our police department, Montclair Fire did an outstanding job, and I believe the new fire contract is one accomplishment from 2012 that the Council can be very proud of.

#### **Town-wide Revaluation**

In 2012 the Borough was ordered by Essex County to conduct a town-wide reassessment of all its properties because of the number of appeals that resulted from the drop in market values from the last revaluation that was done in 2007. After a formal bid process, Tyler Technologies was selected to conduct the revaluation process. At this point they are approximately 60% complete and expect to be finished in early February. Sometime in February, they will mail out new valuations that will be in effect for 2013, and they will hold informal meeting with residents to review individual assessments.

I would like to make several points on the revaluation:

- a property revaluation does not change the total tax to be raised. Taxes are raised through the budget process. What the revaluation does is to look at the current market value of each home as of October 2012 and apportion the tax based on house value.
- the goal of the process is fairness. What we don't want is to have some homes with lower values because they went through an appeal process and other homes with higher values and higher taxes because they didn't go through an appeals process.
- Tax appeals are very costly to the Borough and represent a severe negative impact on our budget. When the Town loses an appeal, the property value is reduced and we refund the amount of tax that was lowered by the appeal. So the Borough's budget is reduced. But that's not true for the County and school board portion of the tax. Their



budgets are not reduced by an appeal and the Town has to make pay over the full amount to the County and Schools out of its budget. This can get expensive and we would normally fund this out of surplus revenue from prior years.

- The cost of tax appeals since the last town-wide revaluation has reduced our cash surplus from over \$550,000.00 to \$30,000.00. Last year, we had to take on new debt of \$188,000.00 to fund the School and County portion of lost tax appeals.

### **Let's turn now to 2013**

#### **Budget**

I have been involved with Town Government for 12 years and I have never seen a more challenging fiscal environment. The reality imposed by the 2% cap on property taxes is that over the long-term Councilman Patrick and his committee won't be able to make the capital investments that are needed to maintain a state of good repair on infrastructure and equipment. Fortunately for us, we spent a lot of money in 2007 on our infrastructure and it is in good shape. But I don't think any level of government can continue to under-invest long-term without a reduction in the quality of service that government is expected to deliver.

In the past 3 years, the Town's budget has been essentially flat. Expenditures in 2010 were \$11,924,982.96, in 2011 \$11,919,862.52, and in 2012 \$12,021,502.48. We have done a very good job, I think, in managing the cost side of our budget. Our problem frankly is on the revenue side of our budget, and our Municipal balance sheet is not as strong today as it was 3 years ago. I've already discussed what has happened to our cash surplus. It went from \$550,000 to pretty much zero. What this means is that we don't have a savings account to draw from in the event we have another major storm like Sandy.

Alarming, in the same period, our capital expense account which is used to purchase long term assets has gone from over \$360,000.00 to \$90,000.00 as we have not funded this account adequately during this period due to budget pressures. Unless we can restore the balance in this account, we will have to borrow money to replace equipment like police cars and public works equipment. Bringing the capital account to historic levels, and restoring our surplus have to be a priorities for us in 2013.

#### **Union Negotiations**

2013 is a negotiation year for the Borough with both the PBA and the CWA contracts up for renewal. We are looking at a very difficult process given the weakness of our balance sheet and the impact of the 2% cap on budget increases. We recognize how important both groups are to the Borough, and we have not forgotten the outstanding effort they put forth during the storm and afterwards. The Council and I are hopeful that we will achieve our stated goal: to negotiate new salary contracts with both unions that are as fair as possible and within caps, and avoid costly arbitrations.

#### **"Complete Street"**

2013 will, hopefully, the repaving of at least a part of Ridgewood Avenue by the County. We won't know for sure until the State Department of Transportation makes its awards later in the year, and we get final confirmation from the County, but we are hoping to include as part of the repaving some improvements that will make Ridgewood Avenue a "complete Street". As Councilwoman Baker has pointed out, what this means is that we will look to add a number of crosswalks, improve stoplights at intersections, improve the parking lanes that are used by bicyclists, walkers and joggers, and take the opportunity to plant as many trees as we can after the paving is done. Ridgewood Avenue is vital to this town and part of the Town's vitality comes from Ridgewood Avenue.

#### **Fields**

Despite our best efforts and considerable expense, our fields continue to suffer from over use. As we have stated many times in the past, we simply don't have enough resources to support the number of sports programs that we have in Town. Councilman Theodorou has been looking

for solutions to this problem inside and outside the Borough, but these solutions aren't easy and will take time to develop. In the meantime we will have to make do with what we have and look for continued cooperation from the user groups to use the fields responsibly.

Finally, in 2013, we will:

1. support the efforts of the shade tree commission to redevelop our urban forest
2. Continue water and sewer programs to assure a state of good repair
3. Continue ongoing discussions with the County and surrounding Municipalities for additional shared services
4. Review the Bloomfield Avenue corridor for redevelopment opportunities
5. improve municipal facilities energy efficiency through grants
6. install a handicap accessible restroom in Town Hall
7. Consider increasing cable access programming to include Planning Board, Board of Adjustment and HPC meetings.

Former Councilwoman Helene Kaplan of 5 Christina Court, Fairfield, New Jersey, the residents of Glen Ridge should feel very fortunate to live here due to its non-political nature and that Glen Ridge always selects the brightest and best candidates to deal with such daunting tasks. Mrs. Kaplan wished everyone the best of luck in the New Year.

Former Councilwoman Jacqueline S. Yustein of 326 Washington Street, Glen Ridge, stated that it was a pleasure to live in Glen Ridge where everyone works together for a common goal and that this year will be a very tough year / time for all officials including those at the State and County levels.

Mr. Patrick Pignatello of 277 Baldwin Street, Glen Ridge, congratulated and thanked Mayor Hughes and the Borough Council.

Councilman Lisovicz sincerely thanked Mayor Hughes and Councilman Dawson for all their diligent efforts during Super Storm Sandy in October.

With no further remarks or business to come before this Council, Mayor Hughes entertained a Motion to adjourn this meeting.

It was moved by Councilperson Theodorou, seconded by Councilperson Lefkovits that this meeting be adjourned. The Motion was adopted by an aye and no vote; Councilperson Patrick, Lisovicz, Lefkovits, Dawson, Theodorou and Baker voting aye and noes none.

Mayor Hughes thanked everyone for attending the meeting and he declared that this meeting is hereby adjourned.

Mayor Hughes extended an invitation to everyone in attendance to attend the Council reception at Fitzgerald's immediately following this meeting.

The Council adjourned at 7:35 p. m.

Michael J. Rohal  
Michael J. Rohal,  
Municipal Clerk