

Pittsgrove Township Committee
Majority Statement
January 3, 2011

COPY

Good Evening!

Kirk and I would like to thank the residents of Pittsgrove for their support in returning us to the office of Township Committee for Pittsgrove! We will continue to work for you!

I would like to thank my fellow committeemen for appointing me as Mayor for the year 2011. I will work to the best of my ability to lead the Township of Pittsgrove. I will be looking for the continued input from each of you to make the most informed collective decisions for Pittsgrove.

We began 2010 with being immediately faced with major State cuts coming down to us! We were cut almost \$200,000 from a portion of municipal State Aid. Despite that, we were able to keep our tax rate even, did not cut hours of operation and did not lay off any employee. We were able to pay down on our debt above what was required. Any non-essential spending was individually reviewed before approval was given.

Some key accomplishments for 2010 were

- The long awaited 4-way stop at Garden and Porchtown became a reality.
- We were able to cut approximately \$50,000 in landfill fees with the elimination of collecting "Type 13" trash.
- We increased our "Shared Services" in our Construction Office by including Upper Pittsgrove Township. We were able to have a smooth transition in this acquisition with the strong work ethics and dedication of our Construction office staff. Thank you!
- The Township Committee and Board of Education were able to renew a working relationship and open communication with both boards. This was for the benefit of the residents of the Township.
- We saw several severe snow storms in 2010, including one just last week. As a result of the hard work and coordination of our Public Works Department, we were able to dig our township roadways out and keep "safety first" as the motto!
- We were able to get our township owned farmland leased to be kept in agriculture and cared for.
- The Public Safety Standing Committee met several times with the area fire and EMS squads to provide an open dialogue of township needs and means. This rolled into a new working relationship with Elmer Ambulance. They formed a Board of Directors following their going to a paid/volunteer squad. The Mayor of each of the three municipalities, Pittsgrove, Elmer and Upper Pittsgrove Township, now sit on this Board along with their President and Captain.
- The Senior Center was "home" to the Salem County Nutrition Program in 2010. We have been told that a new two-year contract has been signed for the Nutrition Program and we hope that our Senior Center remains the site for this important program for our seniors here and throughout the County!

- The Senior Center has become more active throughout the year with many organizations and groups utilizing this tremendous facility. It is wonderful to see more residents recognizing this as a good meeting place for our residents!
- Once again our employees have shown the importance they put on doing things safely in Pittsgrove. We received several Safety Awards at the annual breakfast meeting. We had several of our employees recognized for their renovations in safety ideas. This overall hard work and dedication resulted in money to be used on safety projects in 2010, but also enabled us to be eligible for a rebate of funds to be paid against 2011 premiums! Thank you to each of you!
- Our Economic Development Committee took on a more active role this year with our local businesses. They were able to gather some stake holders together to work moving forward to provide an opportunity to keep business in Pittsgrove. The continuing economic climate is making it necessary for an active role of this committee to be a necessity! Thank you to these volunteers for their foresight!
- The dedicated volunteers of our "Park Watches" and our "Neighborhood Watch" have succeeded in making these areas a safer place in 2010. We now have signage recognizing their existence and giving notice that our Township is being watched on a daily basis. Thank you for your efforts!
- We continued to support Farmland Preservation and Open Space in Pittsgrove! Our Agricultural Advisory Committee is dedicated to moving qualified properties through the pipeline. Despite a reorganization of personnel serving on the Ag Advisory Board, there is still aggressive work being done. Special thanks to all of these individuals working hard to keep Pittsgrove as rural as possible!
- Our Tax Office has been working diligently to keep our collection rate unbelievably high in these struggling economic times! This is a benefit to ever taxpayer in Pittsgrove!
- As Pittsgrove's Mayor this year, I was given the opportunity to publicly present the "South Jersey Perspective" at a New Jersey Assembly Budget Committee hearing. We need to get the word out there more often that governments in South Jersey are currently working with a good fiscal mentality. We work together, we share where we can and we do not spend frivolously as some of our neighbors in the north!

Some goals we have for 2011 are:

- Continue with the no automatic "non-essential" spending declaration
- Continue to reevaluate the areas where and how we spend money
- We are looking to make "Shared Services" Countywide an actuality this year. I am currently serving as chairperson for the Salem county Shared Service Working Group and we are looking first at sharing Public Works equipment and County services in general. This could be established before the end of 2011.
- We are looking to begin a series of "Shared Services" with the Pittsgrove Board of Education for 2011 utilizing operations we already perform
- We look to encourage businesses in Pittsgrove. We need to provide an open arena for existing businesses to get direction in areas they may need help in facilitating. We need to reach out before a business is "in trouble"!

- We need to still work to preserve land for agriculture and open space to allow our rural atmosphere to continue.
- We need to look into ways and means of becoming more involved with “Sustainable Energy”, utilizing solar power and establishing a “green team” for the Township.
- Our Standing committees need to work to find ways to save more money for our taxpayers and bring those ideas to the full committee for discussion. Some ideas for discussion include ways to make the Convenience Center more “convenient” and economical for everyone, ways to better utilize our township properties and plans to save additional spending in all aspects of the Township operations.
- Continue to achieve a strong voice at the State level for the future of Pittsgrove as we move forward. I plan to be as active in this as possible!

We have been very fortunate to have people working in Pittsgrove who want to continually strive to make Pittsgrove better for each of us! Whether you are one of our volunteers on our various hard working Boards, Committees or Commissions, you are one of our diligent employees or a member of our dedicated professional staff, we appreciate all that you do! Now that you have “raised the bar” of our expectation, we are looking forward to an even better 2011!!

Have a safe, happy and healthy New Year’s!

Thank you and please stay in touch with each of us throughout 2011!

Submitted by Stanley Wojculewski, Kirk Craver and Linda DuBois

Read by: Linda