

April 2016

In mid-March, the Borough Council was poised to introduce a budget, public works was preparing for a snow storm, and we were hoping to locate the electrical short in the fritzed-out sign in front of Borough Hall and put it back into action.

New sidewalks were going in on Church Street. The Fire Department's annual St. Patrick's Day party and fundraiser had been a success. And Little Silver Day looked to be on schedule for its June 25 debut.

So it seemed that things were running smoothly, until I found in my mailbox the resignation of Ed Jacobi, the long time chairman of Little Silver's combined Planning and Zoning Board.

Chairman Jacobi had been serving despite a health issue, and was determined to continue to provide his extraordinary brand of gentlemanly public service as long as his health would allow. So the resignation letter was not a good sign.

Less than two weeks later, our Chairman lost his battle with a rare blood cancer.

It is not often that a town's Planning Board is run by someone with the intellect of the Harvard Law School graduate that he was, and rarer still when that Chairman also has the temperament and character to handle everything from the least contentious applications, to applications that seemed to divide the entire town. So Little Silver was lucky.

Chairman Jacobi always made sure every applicant and objector was heard.

He made sure every board member had the opportunity to have every question answered. And he did so with the courteous, patient demeanor of someone who understood just how important each and every application was to those involved.

K. Edward Jacobi was elected to the Borough Council in 1974, and at the end of his term was asked to join what was then the Zoning Board. That board, and its successor combined board, elected him Vice-Chairman, and then Chairman, forty times. That's a lot of volunteer time devoted to making Little Silver the well-planned, well-thought-out town that it is. We thank and offer condolences to his widow, Katharine, who volunteers at our library, their two grown children, Ellen and Jane, and his entire family.

The last line of our Chairman's resignation letter reads: "*My 'gold standard' for public service is also my favorite Bible verse (from the Prophet Micah), namely, '... do justice, love kindness and walk humbly with thy God.'*"

Thank you, Mr. Chairman,
for your service, your wisdom, and your example.

In less somber news, we want to thank Little Silver PBA 359 for sponsoring and running the annual Easter Egg hunt, and our Environmental Commission for holding its annual Environmental Day. Both were successful events.

We're also gratified to report that the renovation of the barns behind the Parker Homestead continues on schedule, and that the Parker Homestead—1665 Inc. continues to renovate the homestead's interior, with an eye toward opening the property to the public on a regular basis.

In the finance category, the Borough Council has introduced the 2016 Municipal Budget, a description of which can be found on www.littlesilver.org.

The budget increases spending by under \$150,000.00, most of which is due to increased contractual obligations. Overall spending by departments stayed relatively flat.

The increase is less than a tax point and \$117,715.00 under the Tax Levy Cap, which means that, with the overall increase in property valuation in the Borough, the municipal tax rate will decrease again this year from 0.431 in 2015 to 0.428 for 2016.

In short, a house valued last year and this at \$600,000 will see a municipal purposes tax decrease of \$18.00.

Please keep in mind that this is less than a third of your annual tax bill, the remainder of which constitutes the school tax, the county tax, and the penny open space tax. Since the schools and county have not yet adopted their budgets, the overall tax rate has not yet been calculated.

With respect to the municipal budget, smart spending by our various departments, shared services on equipment, shared services for certain operations, and innovative health insurance planning have helped us keep costs down. Our thanks to everyone involved in this year-long effort.

On behalf of the Governing Body, we wish you a pleasant Spring season. As always, please call Borough Hall with any concerns, or contact me directly by calling my home phone at 732-576-8595, or emailing me at bobneff80@gmail.com.

Robert C. Neff, Jr.
Mayor, Borough of Little Silver