The Meeting was called to order at 7:30 P.M. by Council President Gabel. The Salute to the Flag was recited, followed by an Invocation by Councilman Borowiec. Municipal Clerk Kathryn Bowditch-Leon read the Notice of Compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act and noted that this is a non-smoking facility. The Clerk requested that all electronics be silenced at this time.

ROLL CALL:
Present:  Murphy, Buie, Witte, Bergen, Borowiec, President Gabel
Absent:   Lyden

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:
Thomas Andes, Mayor; Steven Ward, Administrator; John Jansen, Township Attorney; Michael Guarino, Chief Finance Officer; Raymond Sarinelli, Township Auditor; Raymond Sarinelli, Jr. Township Auditor; Stephen Dublanica, Social Services Coordinator

PRESENTATIONS/CEREMONIAL MATTERS:
Proclamation – 125th Anniversary of Denville Foodtown, Dickerson Family
Mayor Andes asked the Dickerson family to come forward and then read the proclamation naming March as Denville Foodtown month. A copy of the proclamation may be found at the end of these minutes. Mayor Andes presented Jeff Dickerson with the Key to the Township.
Jeff Dickerson, Denville Foodtown, shared with the Council and the public present the history of Denville Foodtown. He then asked if Laura Daly Russell and Stephen Dublanica, Social Services Coordinator, could come forward. He explained that Ms. Russell coordinated a campaign on FaceBook for people to donate 125 $10 gift cards in honor of Denville Foodtown’s Anniversary. He reported that 235 $10 gift cards were collected, which he then presented to Stephen Dublanica for Denville Social Services.

Presentation of the 2018 Municipal Budget
Mayor Andes read the 2018 Mayor’s Budget Statement, which is attached to the end of these minutes. CFO Guarino thanked the Council for their support of the budget process.
Township Auditor Raymond Sarinelli, Jr. reviewed the budget process and then explained that the Township is unable to adopt the budget tonight because the Governor has not produced his budget, which will include the Township’s State Aid figures. He further explained that the public hearing should take place, but the resolution to adopt the 2018 municipal budget will have to be tabled until the next meeting. He stated that if the State Aid figures are different than what was proposed in the introduced budget, an amendment would have to be adopted.
Mayor Andes stated that he expressed his displeasure to the Governor’s Aide.
Mr. Sarinelli stated that the proposed budget is fiscally responsible and allows for stability in the fund balance, which is reflected in the Township’s bond rating. He stated that the budget is compliant with all applicable laws and statutory requirements. Councilman Murphy asked what the negative impact would be should the State Aid figures change. Mr. Sarinelli briefly explained the budget amendment process. There was a discussion regarding State Aid and how possible changes may affect the residents of Denville.

R-18-50:  Resolution to Read Budget by Title
MOTION TO APPROVE R-18-50:
MOVED BY MEMBER MURPHY, SECONDED BY MEMBER WITTE
OPEN PUBLIC PORTION
No one wished to be heard.
CLOSE PUBLIC PORTION

OPEN PUBLIC HEARING ON ADOPTION OF THE 2018 MUNICIPAL BUDGET
No one wished to be heard.
CLOSED PUBLIC HEARING

Resolution R-18-51, Resolution Authorizing Adoption of the Township of Denville 2018 Municipal Budget was tabled until the March 20, 2018 meeting.

LIAISON REPORTS:
Councilman Murphy had nothing to report.
Councilman Buie shared that the Beautification Committee has begun their spring preparations and that volunteers are always welcome. He then stated that the Municipal Alliance Committee met and is planning a seminar on opioid addiction and A.L.I.C.E. training.
Councilwoman Witte had nothing to report.
Councilman Bergen stated that he attended the Denville Board of Education (DBOE) meeting and reviewed upcoming agenda items, such as the Station Village development on Route 53, with them. He stated that they asked to be notified should that specific development be contemplated for a P.I.L.O.T. agreement. He then reported that a citizen was present at the meeting and requested that the DBOE actively oppose the Glenmont Commons and R.A.M. Associates (Toll Bros.) developments at the fairness hearing. He reported that the DBOE did not seem interested.
Councilman Borowiec shared that he met with Ruth Gimbel from the Denville TV Committee and that volunteers are needed for this committee. He stated the Mayor’s Sports Facilities Advisory Board is working on procuring bleachers for Veterans Memorial Field.
President Gabel reported that the Fire Department is currently working on specifications for the shed. He stated that they will be submitting monthly or quarterly reports to the Council. President Gabel then advised the Council that the Fire Department’s Years of Service Celebration will be held on May 5, 2018 and an invitation is in their mailboxes.

MAYOR’S REPORT:
Mayor Andes announced the Polar Plunge was very successful. He then thanked everyone for their hard work during Friday’s snow storm. He stated that there were still residents without power and that, even though JCP&L has improved since Superstorm Sandy, they are still a little slow at getting details to the Township.

ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT:
Administrator Ward advised that the Department of Public Works is still clearing the snow from Friday’s storm, so it was decided to forgo brining the streets for tomorrow’s predicted storm. He then reported the NJ Department of Transportation will be having another public hearing at Town Hall on March 26 between 6:00 to 8:00 P.M. regarding the proposed revisions for the Route 46 widening.

CORRESPONDENCE:
All correspondence has been copied and distributed to Council.

OPEN PUBLIC PORTION
No one wished to be heard.
CLOSE PUBLIC PORTION
Township Council
03-06-2018

MATTERS OF OLD AND/OR NEW BUSINESS:
R-18-52: Resolution to Introduce, Approve and Set Public Hearing for the 2018 Budget of the Township of Denville Downtown Business Improvement District
MOVED BY MEMBER WITTE, SECONDED BY MEMBER BERGEN
AYES: WITTE, BERGEN, BUJE, BOROWIEC, PRESIDENT GABEL
NAYS: NONE
ABSTAIN: MURPHY
ABSENT: LYDEN

OPEN PUBLIC HEARING.
No one wished to be heard.
CLOSED PUBLIC HEARING.

BE IT RESOLVED that an Ordinance entitled:
An Ordinance Establishing a Minimum and Maximum Range of Salary for Those Employees of the Denville Township Public Works Employees' Association
Be Read by Title on Second Reading and a Hearing Held Thereon:
MOTION TO READ BY TITLE:
MOVED BY MEMBER MURPHY, SECONDED BY MEMBER BERGEN
AYES: MURPHY, BERGEN, BUJE, WITTE, BOROWIEC, PRESIDENT GABEL
NAYS: NONE
ABSENT: LYDEN

ORDINANCES FOR ADOPTION
03-18
BE IT RESOLVED that an Ordinance entitled:
An Ordinance Establishing a Minimum and Maximum Range of Salary for Those Employees of the Denville Township Public Works Employees' Association
Be passed on Final Reading and that a Notice of Final Passage be published in the 03/14/2018 edition of The Citizen newspaper.
MOTION TO ADOPT:
MOVED BY MEMBER WITTE, SECONDED BY MEMBER BERGEN
AYES: WITTE, BERGEN, MURPHY, BUJE, BOROWIEC, PRESIDENT GABEL
NAYS: NONE
ABSENT: LYDEN

ORDINANCES FOR INTRODUCTION
06-18
BE IT RESOLVED that an Ordinance entitled:
Bond Ordinance Providing for Various Capital Improvements In and By the Township of Denville, In the County of Morris, New Jersey, Appropriating $2,158,425 Therefor and Authorizing the Issuance of $1,298,500 Bonds or Notes of the Township to Finance Part of the Cost Thereof
Be Introduced and Read by Title on First Reading:
MOTION TO READ BY TITLE:
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that said ordinance shall be considered for final passage at the meeting of the Municipal Council of the Township of Denville on 04-03-2018 at 7:30 p.m. in the evening, prevailing time, at the municipal building in said Township of Denville at which time and place all persons interested shall be given an opportunity to be heard concerning said ordinance.

Be Passed on First Reading

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Municipal Clerk be authorized and directed to advertise this ordinance in The Citizen newspaper according to law.

MOTION TO PASS ON FIRST READING:

MOVED BY MEMBER BERGEN, SECONDED BY MEMBER BUIE
AYES: BERGEN, BUIE, MURPHY, WITTE, BOROWIEC, PRESIDENT GABEL
NAYS: NONE
ABSENT: LYDEN

07-18

BE IT RESOLVED that an Ordinance entitled:
Ordinance Providing for Various Capital Improvements in and By the Township of Denville, in the County of Morris, New Jersey, Appropriating $2,158,425 Therefor and Authorizing the Issuance of $1,298,500 Bonds or Notes of the Township to Finance Part of the Cost Thereof

Be Introduced and Read by Title on First Reading:

MOTION TO READ BY TITLE:

MOVED BY MEMBER BERGEN, SECONDED BY MEMBER WITTE
AYES: BERGEN, WITTE, MURPHY, BUIE, BOROWIEC, PRESIDENT GABEL
NAYS: NONE
ABSENT: LYDEN

BE IT RESOLVED that an Ordinance entitled:
Ordinance Providing for Various Improvements or Purposes in the Sum of $311,600 from the General Capital Improvement Fund of the Township of Denville

Be Passed on First Reading

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that said ordinance shall be considered for final passage at the meeting of the Municipal Council of the Township of Denville on 04-03-2018 at 7:30 p.m. in the evening, prevailing time, at the municipal building in said Township of Denville at which time and place all persons interested shall be given an opportunity to be heard concerning said ordinance.

Be Passed on Second Reading

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that said ordinance shall be considered for final passage at the meeting of the Municipal Council of the Township of Denville on 04-03-2018 at 7:30 p.m. in the evening, prevailing time, at the municipal building in said Township of Denville at which time and place all persons interested shall be given an opportunity to be heard concerning said ordinance.
MOTION TO PASS ON FIRST READING:
MOVED BY MEMBER BERGEN, SECONDED BY MEMBER BUIE
AYES: BERGEN, WITTE, MURPHY, BERGEN, BOROWIEC, PRESIDENT GABEL
NAYS: NONE
ABSENT: LYDEN

08-18
BE IT RESOLVED that an Ordinance entitled:
Ordinance Providing for Various Improvements or Purposes in the Sum of $135,000 from the Open Space Trust Fund of the Township of Denville

MOTION TO READ BY TITLE:
MOVED BY MEMBER MURPHY, SECONDED BY MEMBER WITTE

Discussion: Councilman Bergen noted that this ordinance includes $50,000 to support Project Playground.

BE IT RESOLVED that an Ordinance entitled:
Ordinance Providing for Various Improvements or Purposes in the Sum of $135,000 from the Open Space Trust Fund of the Township of Denville

BE PASSED ON FIRST READING

MOTION TO PASS ON FIRST READING:
MOVED BY MEMBER BERGEN, SECONDED BY MEMBER WITTE
AYES: BERGEN, WITTE, MURPHY, BUIE, BOROWIEC, PRESIDENT GABEL
NAYS: NONE
ABSENT: LYDEN

09-18
BE IT RESOLVED that an Ordinance entitled:
An Ordinance of the Township of Denville, County of Morris, State of New Jersey, to Amend Fees for Certain Use Variances

BE INTRODUCED AND READ BY TITLE ON FIRST READING:
MOTION TO READ BY TITLE:

BE IT RESOLVED that the Municipal Clerk be authorized and directed to advertise this ordinance in The Citizen newspaper according to law.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that said ordinance shall be considered for final passage at the meeting of the Municipal Council of the Township of Denville on 04-03-2018 at 7:30 p.m. in the evening, prevailing time, at the municipal building in said Township of Denville at which time and place all persons interested shall be given an opportunity to be heard concerning said ordinance.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Municipal Clerk be authorized and directed to advertise this ordinance in The Citizen newspaper according to law.
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MOVED BY MEMBER BERGEN, SECONDED BY MEMBER WITTE

Discussion: President Gabel commented that it was his opinion that the new fee structure will be more business and resident friendly for those ancillary improvements listed in the ordinance.

AYES: BERGEN, WITTE, MURPHY, BUIE, BOROWIEC, PRESIDENT GABEL
NAYS: NONE
ABSENT: LYDEN

BE IT RESOLVED that an Ordinance entitled
An Ordinance of the Township of Denville, County of Morris, State of New Jersey, to Amend Fees for Certain Use Variances

Be Passed on First Reading

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that said ordinance shall be considered for final passage at the meeting of the Municipal Council of the Township of Denville on 04-17-2018 at 7:30 p.m. in the evening, prevailing time, at the municipal building in said Township of Denville at which time and place all persons interested shall be given an opportunity to be heard concerning said ordinance.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Municipal Clerk be authorized and directed to advertise this ordinance in The Citizen newspaper according to law.

MOTION TO PASS ON FIRST READING:

MOVED BY MEMBER BERGEN, SECONDED BY MEMBER BUIE

AYES: BERGEN, BUIE, MURPHY, WITTE, BOROWIEC, PRESIDENT GABEL
NAYS: NONE
ABSENT: LYDEN

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION:

Franklin Avenue Bridge Weight Limit

Township Attorney Jansen explained that NJ Transit requested the Township post and maintain signs pursuant to N.J.S.A. 27:5G-14, which makes municipalities responsible for routine maintenance of the roadways, the posting of signs, etc. but not the structural support components of the bridge. He explained that at the last meeting, after it was reported that the signs were posted, he had questioned whether the Township had to adopt an ordinance or a resolution in order to enforce the weight restrictions or if it had already been done by NJ Transit, NJ Department of Transportation (NJDOT) or Morris County.

Mr. Jansen explained that he contacted NJ Transit and asked if the weight restriction had been established. He was advised that they would check. He also researched the State Statutes and concluded that it was NJ Transit’s and/or NJDOT’s responsibility to establish the weight limit on this bridge. He stated that he is waiting to hear back from the NJDOT’s Senior Engineer for Structures as to whether the weight limit has been officially established.

Mr. Jansen went on to say that there is a statute in Title 39 that prohibits motor vehicles from driving over a bridge if that vehicle exceeds the posted weight limit, establishes a penalty and places responsibility on the owner/operator for any damage done to the bridge.

Mr. Jansen stated that there is another provision in Title 39 which allows for the establishment of emergent traffic regulations for a period not to exceed 3 months. He explained that the resolution provided puts the restriction on the roadway which traverses the bridge, not on the bridge itself, as the Township does not have jurisdiction over the bridge. He urged the Council to adopt the resolution as it reinforces the restrictions which hopefully were established by NJ Transit or NJDOT.
Councilman Murphy asked what the Township’s liability would be by adopting this resolution. Mr. Jansen stated that the NJDOT report determined the weight restriction, which is within their authority. He then restated that it would be the responsibility of the owner/operator of the vehicle which damages the bridge to pay for the damages they cause.

Councilwoman Witte stated her belief that the signage is clear and redirects overweight vehicles appropriately. She voiced her support of the passage of the resolution.

Councilman Buie asked how to get NJ Transit and/or NJDOT to fix the bridge as soon as possible, to which Mr. Ward confirmed that the Township will continue to be the squeaky wheel to keep the pressure on. President Gabel asked for confirmation that all the school bussing has been re-routed, to which the answer was yes. He then asked if there could be extra enforcement in the area.

The resolution will be assigned a number an added to the end of this agenda.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

President Gabel announced that Resolution R-18-31, Resolution Authorizing the Award of a Five-Year License to Conduct Agricultural Activity on Knuth Farm to Jeffrey O’Hara, will be removed from the Consent Agenda and tabled until the March 20, 2018 Council meeting.

R-18-53: Resolution Requesting Approval of Items of Revenue and Appropriation Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:4-87
R-18-54: Resolution Rejecting Bid for the Denville Fire Department Dive Team Equipment and Granting Permission to Rebid
R-18-55: Resolution Authorizing Raffle Licenses in the Township of Denville

President Gabel asked if anyone from the public or from the Council would like to have any resolutions removed from the Consent Agenda. Administrator Ward asked that Resolution R-18-53, Resolution Requesting Approval of Items of Revenue and Appropriation Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:4-87, also be removed and tabled until the March 20, 2018 meeting. No one else responded.

Discussion: Councilman Murphy asked for clarification on R-18-54, to which Mr. Ward explained that the bid contained incorrect quantities of the items, which caused the cost to be overbudget. He further stated that when re-bid with the correct quantities, the cost will come in within budget.

**MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA, AS MODIFIED:**

MOVED BY MEMBER WITTE, SECONDED BY MEMBER BERGEN

AYES: WITTE, BERGEN, MURPHY, BUIE, BOROWIEC, PRESIDENT GABEL

NAYS: NONE

ABSENT: LYDEN

**NON-CONSENT AGENDA:**

R-18-56: Resolution Refunding the Overpayment of 2018 Taxes

MOTION TO APPROVE R-18-56:

MOVED BY MEMBER MURPHY, SECONDED BY MEMBER BERGEN

AYES: MURPHY, BERGEN, BUIE, WITTE, BOROWIEC, PRESIDENT GABEL

NAYS: NONE

ABSENT: LYDEN

R-18-57: Resolution Authorizing the Execution of the Collective Bargaining Agreement Between the Township of Denville and the Denville Township Public Works Employees’ Association

MOTION TO APPROVE R-18-57:

MOVED BY MEMBER MURPHY, SECONDED BY MEMBER BERGEN

AYES: MURPHY, BERGEN, BUIE, WITTE, BOROWIEC, PRESIDENT GABEL
R-18-58: Resolution Authorizing a Transfer of $3,509.90 from the Denville General Trust Fund to the Township's Affordable Housing Trust Fund
MOTION TO APPROVE R-18-58:
MOVED BY MEMBER MURPHY, SECONDED BY MEMBER BUJE
AYES: MURPHY, BUJE, WITTE, BERGEN, BOROWIEC, PRESIDENT GABEL
NAYS: NONE
ABSENT: LYDEN

R-18-59: Resolution Authorizing the Award of Contract for the Muriel Hepner Park Pedestrian Bridge Replacement
MOTION TO APPROVE R-18-59:
MOVED BY MEMBER MURPHY, SECONDED BY MEMBER BUJE
AYES: MURPHY, BUJE, WITTE, BERGEN, BOROWIEC, PRESIDENT GABEL
NAYS: NONE
ABSENT: LYDEN

R-18-60: Resolution Refunding the Payment of Taxes Overpaid Due to a Judgment by the Tax Court of New Jersey
MOTION TO APPROVE R-18-60:
MOVED BY MEMBER MURPHY, SECONDED BY MEMBER WITTE
AYES: MURPHY, WITTE, BUJE, BERGEN, BOROWIEC, PRESIDENT GABEL
NAYS: NONE
ABSENT: LYDEN

R-18-61: Resolution of the Township of Denville, County of Morris, State of New Jersey, Authorizing the Cancellation of Disabled Veteran's Taxes
MOTION TO APPROVE R-18-61:
MOVED BY MEMBER MURPHY, SECONDED BY MEMBER BERGEN
AYES: MURPHY, BERGEN, BUJE, WITTE, BOROWIEC, PRESIDENT GABEL
NAYS: NONE
ABSENT: LYDEN

R-18-62: Resolution Concerning the Establishment and Posting of a Gross Weight Limit for that Part of Franklin Avenue that Traverses the Bridge Over the Morristown Line in the Township of Denville
MOTION TO APPROVE R-18-62:
MOVED BY MEMBER MURPHY, SECONDED BY MEMBER BUJE
AYES: MURPHY, BUJE, WITTE, BERGEN, BOROWIEC, PRESIDENT GABEL
NAYS: NONE
ABSENT: LYDEN

MINUTES FOR ADOPTION:
February 13, 2018 (Workshop Only); February 20, 2018:
MOVED BY MEMBER BERGEN, SECONDED BY MEMBER WITTE
AYES: BERGEN, WITTE, MURPHY for February 20, 2018, BUJE, BOROWIEC, PRESIDENT GABEL
NAYS: NONE
ABSENT: LYDEN
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ABSTAIN: MURPHY for February 13, 2018

MOTION TO ADJOURN:
MOVED BY MEMBER WITTE, SECONDED BY MEMBER BERGEN
AYES: UNANIMOUS

The Meeting adjourned at 8:55 P.M.

Kathryn Bowditch-Leon, RMC
Municipal Clerk
It is with great pleasure that I recommend the adoption of the 2018 Denville Municipal Budget. The budget in front of you this evening is the result of a collaborative effort between various groups, including the Township Council, the various Township Departments, Administration and even the Township’s various Township labor associations.

This budget has continued with our conservative approach to the municipal financial management of our municipality. The 2018 budget not only ensures that we are able to meet current personnel, equipment and infrastructure needs and to continue to provide the high quality services to our community and its residents for this year but also takes affirmative steps to ensure continued fiscal stability and health into the future. Our continued collective approach over the past six years was rewarded last fall when Moody’s conferred a Aa1 bond rating on Denville. Only a handful of municipalities, 13 statewide at last count, have a bond rating higher than we do here in Denville. Based upon the thorough and detailed nature of the review performed by Moody’s, having such an internationally renowned rating agency confer such a high financial grade on our community is something we can all collectively be proud of.

To discuss some of the accomplishments of this budget, I would first like to discuss our debt service. In 2018, we’ve increased our payment of outstanding bonds and notes by $1,096,397 over 2017 to $3,235,000, of which more than $1, million is extra voluntary payments of our outstanding debt. This aggressive down payment of our outstanding debt is aimed and enabling our community to transition into more of a “pay as you go” approach to capital purchases after our two largest debt instruments are paid off in 2021 and 2022. With the plan we have set in motion, it is my goal to limit the amount of new debt after 2022 to an absolute minimum.

The revenue streams of the municipality continue to be extremely healthy with a year-over-year increase of $100,000 to our year-end fund balance. Our conservative projections for 2018 indicate we will meet and most likely exceed even the 2017 fund balance regeneration levels. This increase in our year-end fund balance has enabled us to
anticipate an additional $100,000 as revenue in the budget this year. However, with our conservative approach, this $100,000 has been applied to capital items and debt service so as not to have a detrimental impact on the 2019 and 2020 budgets in the event unanticipated factors cause our projections to be off.

The 2018 budget continues with our aggressive road maintenance program and appropriates $672,000 towards the resurfacing of roads within our municipality. In addition to the $180,000 NJDOT grant we will receive to resurface Casterline Road, we will be resurfacing a near record $850,000 in roads this year. The DPW will also be tasked with crack scaling and performing more maintenance of roads paved 4 – 8 years ago in order to maximize the life of more recently paved roadways for the long-term benefit of the infrastructure.

The 2018 budget continues with our aggressive road maintenance program and appropriates $672,000 towards the resurfacing of roads within our municipality. In addition to the $180,000 NJDOT grant we will receive to resurface Casterline Road, we will be resurfacing a near record $850,000 in roads this year. The DPW will also be tasked with crack scaling and performing more maintenance of roads paved 4 – 8 years ago in order to maximize the life of more recently paved roadways for the long-term benefit of the infrastructure.

The total budget value has increased as a result of two positive revenue anomalies. First, the Township after two appeals was successful in receiving $369,000 from FEMA for the reconstruction of the Valley View Fire House (“VVFH”) that was destroyed during Hurricane Irene. Additionally, as part of our bond sale last year, the lowest successful bidder included a $474,000 bond premium payment to the Township. Both of these one-time sources of revenue have been applied towards outstanding debt. In fact, with the money from FEMA for the VVFH, the debt instrument used to fund the reconstruction of the VVFH will be paid off in full with the adoption of this budget.

With respect to the departmental operating budgets, I want to extend my thanks for the various department heads for coming in with very responsible budgets. As you will note, the departments have embraces the concept of doing more with less as we continue to try to find new ways to improve the services we offer to our residents at a reduced cost.

Furthermore, in the coming weeks, we will have all five (5) collective bargaining agreements signed thru December 2021. All of the settlements were fair to the employees and most importantly fair to the taxpayers. I want to extend my thanks to our labor associations for negotiating in good faith and voluntarily settling the contracts for truly fair amounts for all parties involved. As salary and wages account for approximately 65% of the Township’s annual budget, these settlements alone will ensure budget stability into the coming years.

As the Council well knows, this year’s budget was not without its challenges. First and foremost is the 2016 tax appeal filed by Prime Healthcare, the for-profit owner of Saint Clare’s Hospital. Although our tax experts firmly believe the assessment on the hospital is fair and defendable, we have increased the “Reserve for Tax Appeals” to a balance of $1.515 million. This reserve will serve to protect our healthy financial condition in the event of an adverse ruling by the tax court. Despite the Township only receiving 18 cents of every property tax dollar paid, we are responsible to pay 100% of the refund in the
event of a tax appeal. Therefore, the establishment of such a healthy reserve with our largest rate payer is the appropriate conservative and prudent approach.

The other two notable increases in our budget are associated with legal fees of $75,000 to defend the pending declaratory judgment action, in which the Superior Court will determine our affordable housing obligation for the period between 2015 – 2025. The attorney representing Denville is deemed by many as one of the preeminent affordable housing attorneys in the State of New Jersey. As our adversary’s proposed obligations are more than 10x greater than the obligations purported by our experts, we have no choice but to budget the additional funds to provide us with the best opportunity for a positive outcome in court and reduce the probability of an indelible change to so many elements of our community.

The other increase was associated with a $90,240 increase in our contribution towards our State pension obligation. This obligation which is dictated to us by the State fluctuates from year-to-year, often significantly, which creates challenges on the municipal level for budgetary planning purposes.

The original budget presented to the Township Council contained an annual increase of $35.02 to the average assessed property or less than $3 per month on a mortgage statement. After a series of budget hearings and thoughtful discussion among the Members of the Township Council, three modifications were proposed by the Council to reduce the budgetary annual impact to $27.91 prior to the introduction of the budget on February 6, 2018. After careful review and consideration of the proposed modifications, the suggestions would have no long term detrimental impact to the budget and were fully supported and endorsed by Administration.

Therefore, for the reasons I have just explained, I support the 2018 introduced municipal budget and recommend its passage this evening by the Members of the Township Council.
Proclamation

Whereas; In 1893, brother and sister Elmer and Susan Dickerson purchased a general store on a dirt road in Rockaway New Jersey; and

Whereas; On April 14th 1913 the people of Denville and Union Hill sections of Rockaway Township received their charter from the State of New Jersey and the Township of Denville was formed; and

Whereas; The Dickerson General Store passed to Elmer’s son Claude, and grandson Ron, and they grew the business to an IGA supermarket; and

Whereas; In the 1960’s Claude and Ron demolished the second building and built a new shopping center with a spacious parking lot; and

Whereas; Ron’s son Jeff manages the business today and he installed four hundred thirty two panels on the rooftop creating electricity and helping the environment. The Denville Foodtown is Denville’s first shopping center to truly go green; and

Whereas; Today Jeff’s three daughter’s Taylor, Morgan and Carly have all worked at the store manning the register and working in the office; and

Whereas; For one hundred and twenty five years the Dickerson’s have ran a family business; treating every customer like they are a member of their family; performing countless acts of kindness for our community, all while being Denville’s longest, continuously run family business; and

Whereas; Ron and Marie and Jeff and Sharon and their children are pillars of the Denville and Mount Tabor Communities.

Now, Therefore I, Thomas W. Andes, Mayor of the Township of Denville proclaim March 2018, “Denville Foodtown Month” and urge all of our Citizens to pay special tribute to this business and to this very special family in our community.

Mayor Thomas W. Andes
March 6, 2018