



# OLIVE CONNECTION

## MOUNT OLIVE TOWNSHIP OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER

## Welcome to the Olive Connection

Welcome to the Olive Connection!! I hope you are enjoying the quarterly newsletter. The newsletter will continue to feature updates on official Township business, provide information of upcoming events and dates to remember, highlight Department services and provide relevant information about what's happening around Mount Olive. I hope you find this newsletter beneficial, engaging and an effective means of strengthening our great community.

### *Official Township Business*

On January 2, 2024, the Township held its Re-organization Meeting and swore in newly elected Mayor Joe Nicastro and Council Members Chuck Aaron, Colleen Labow, Mary Lalama, and Alex Roman. Mayor Nicastro provided the 2024 State of The Township Address for his first time as Mayor. Many exciting updates and initiatives were laid out beginning with a property tax reward program, working toward a permanent Mount Olive food pantry, establishing various committees to better serve the community, improving road safety on Route 46, investing in our infrastructure, creating a Veterans Day celebration, helping senior citizens remain in Mount Olive, and working with internet and TV providers to offer our residents more options.

In addition, over the past several months, Departments have been working hard and focusing on developing the 2024 budget. A capital budget will be presented which will include road resurfacing, sidewalk rehabilitation, park improvements, and various equipment and vehicle purchases.

During previous meetings, Township resident, Renley Ghoshal, was given a certificate of appreciation for her fundraising efforts selling lemonade and donating \$500 to the Mount Olive Food Pantry, Councilman John Mania was recognized for his forty years of public service and October was proclaimed as Knock Out Opioid Abuse Month.

In addition, the Township submitted the Best Practices Inventory required by the State which resulted in the Township receiving its final allotment of State Aid.

Lastly, Captain Michael Spitzer was promoted and appointed as the next Police Chief, Lt. Michael Cordileone was promoted to Captain, and Sergeant Zarro was promoted to Lieutenant.

### **DATES TO REMEMBER:**

- February 1 - Property Taxes Due
- February 3 - Budget Meeting

Yard waste pickup will commence the first week of March.

### *Ordinances & Resolutions*

The Township Council has amended several ordinances and adopted resolutions to keep Mount Olive moving forward in the right direction. An ordinance amending a bond was approved providing funding for solar lights at Turkey Brook Park, created a new Deputy Recreation Supervisor position to assist with succession planning, codified a sidewalk snow removal program for certain sidewalks on Smithtown Road, adopted employee salaries for 2024, and amending parking restrictions on Linwood Avenue and Cloverhill Drive during school hours. In addition, the Personnel Policy and Procedures Manual was adopted with model employment practices, a contract was awarded to mitigate the PFOS/PFAS in the Pinecrest Water System in addition to joining a national litigation settlement, supported a grant application submitted by The Land Conservancy to purchase 35 acres along Waterloo Valley Road, and three (3) FOP union contracts were negotiated with the Police Department.

# Other Developments

Developer Agreements were approved for development along Continental Drive for two (2) new warehouses and a planned unit residential development, Continental Crossings. The Township also supported a petition to the Highlands Council for designation of a Highlands Redevelopment Area for a section on the northerly side of Sand Shore Road.



## Employee Recognition

### ***Mary Strain- Land Use Board Secretary & Planning/Zoning Administrative Assistant***

Mary started with the Township in January 2016 as the Planning Department Secretary & Zoning Assistant and took on the additional responsibilities of Land Use Board Secretary six months later. She is certified from the Center for Government Services of Rutgers University in Planning and Zoning Administration. In addition to responding to public inquiries, Mary is responsible for processing all new development applications and professional escrow accounts. She handles all billing associated with various professional reviews, public notice requirements in compliance with the law, scheduling meetings, and public hearings, and attends every Land Use Board meeting twice a month. Mary also handles a wide variety of other day-to-day tasks assisting the Township's Planning and Zoning Officer. Planning Department Director, Chuck McGroarty said: "Mary brings a positive attitude and commitment to excellence to the job every day."

## Grant Awards & Applications

The Township recently received several grants which will help offset the cost of future projects. The Township was awarded a \$150K NJ Transit grant to help offset costs associated with senior transportation, a \$550K Connect and Protect grant which brings a behavior health response program to law enforcement, and a \$300K DOT grant to rehabilitate International Drive/Rt. 46 intersection. The following grants were also applied for and are pending approval: \$500K ARP Firefighters grant for fire protective clothing and equipment and a \$300K DOT grant to rehabilitate a section of Continental Drive.

## Department Highlight

### ***Fire Prevention***

The Fire Prevention Bureau is the local enforcing agency under the supervision of the Township Fire Marshal responsible for the enforcement of the Uniform Fire Safety Act, codes and regulations. The Bureau carries out periodic inspections to every commercial building and business in the Township, inspects residential homes for smoke detectors on each level of the house and a carbon monoxide detector within 10 feet of a bedroom on each level at time of sale, investigates all fires resulting in damage to property, death, serious injury or considered suspicious in nature, and works with the community and schools to discuss and promote fire safety. In addition, the Fire Prevention Bureau provides 24/7 emergency response and supports the volunteer fire departments. These services are also provided as a shared service to Chester Borough, Hackettstown, and Allamuchy.

## Public Meeting Videos

Available on our website are archived videos of Planning Board and Township Council meetings along with a series of informative videos on the following topics: Snow Removal, Where Do My Taxes go?, Township Parks & Future Developments, Recycling, and Cannabis Legalization. Please take some time and watch the educational videos.

## Stay Connected!

Facebook: @Mountolivetownship

Website: [www.mountolivetwpnj.org](http://www.mountolivetwpnj.org)

Emergency Alerts: AlertMTolive

Email: [info@mtolivetwp.org](mailto:info@mtolivetwp.org)

Public Access Channel: Altice Customers Channel 78