



FAST FACTS ON WEST ORANGE SPENDING

West Orange is a great place to live and raise a family. But financially, our property values have not kept pace with most neighboring towns, due primarily to extraordinarily high property taxes. A Town Council member for eight years, including a year as Council President, Joe Krakoviak knows the issues and has a plan to move our town in a better direction.

The mayor has raised our municipal property taxes by the maximum allowed, 2%, in each of the last four years. He also says we can't cut taxes. But 67 New Jersey municipalities reduced taxes in 2017, including two in Essex County. With a "common sense budget" that sets priorities and cuts wasteful spending, we can cut taxes, too.

Some recent examples of wasteful spending Joe has voted against:

- ✓ More than \$500,000 to build 25 parking spaces on Eagle Rock Avenue near Pleasant Valley Way, when across the street Chase Bank is giving us more than 70 spaces for free. The town administration broke down construction into several parts, avoiding competitive bidding.
- ✓ A one-bid garbage/recycling contract that raises the annual cost 61%, by nearly \$1.1 million, with no additional features or services. Council majority, with Administration recommendation, took a five-year contract instead of the lower-cost 3-year or 1-year options. Joe urged the Council to take the one-year version, to develop a new bid specification with less-expensive features and to market better to attract more bidders and competition. Both the mayor and Council President McCartney recused themselves because their brothers work at the vendor.
- ✓ No competitive bidding on hundreds of thousands of dollars in contracts annually. The town's insurance broker has held the contract, valued at \$400,000-\$500,000, since the 1990s without competitive bidding. Also, the mayor recently proposed the Council approve a \$97,300 no-bid engineering contract. After Joe objected, the town got another bid that reduced the cost more than \$50,000. Joe wants to expand competitive bidding on all contracts of more than \$10,000. He believes the savings will be substantial.
- ✓ Five straight years of raises for the town CFO totaling \$33,500, a 24% increase to nearly \$174,000.
- ✓ \$24,000 annually for a vendor to manage the town's social media. Joe wants to outsource this to talented students at the high school at no cost.
- ✓ A proposal to spend \$110,000 on an "ice bumper car facility" that resident research has shown to be impractical without multiples of additional costs.
- ✓ Designation of Essex Green Shopping Center as an area in need of redevelopment ("untenantable" and "blighted"), opening the door to mayor-supported 30-year tax abatements. **UPDATE:** Essex Green's owner abandons the redevelopment process, instead choosing the usual route of filing an application for improvements with the Planning Board. Mayor writes "Redevelopment worked," when the opposite is true.

Be an informed voter! For more examples of wasteful spending and Joe's vision & plans for a better West Orange, visit www.JoeKrakoviak.com.