



## Councilman Joe Krakoviak's Common Sense Budget

1. Priorities
  - a. Keep property taxes/tax increases as low as possible while maintaining services.
  - b. Cut wasteful and inefficient spending.
  - c. Redirect spending and savings to taxpayers and to areas that increase government efficiency and maximize benefit to the largest number of residents and families, such as public safety.
2. Reduce record debt (\$82 million, up 37% under Mayor Parisi) and annual debt service (\$7.3 million, up 48% under Mayor Parisi) -- gradually, over a period of years.
  - a. Focus capital spending on infrastructure (roads, repairs to fire stations and other town facilities) and projects that increase efficiency and livability (such as technology, improving traffic flow/safety and protecting trees and open space).
    - i. Stop wasteful capital projects like \$110,000 ice bumper cars, \$200,000+ skate park, \$85,000+ to improve the bleachers sightline at the high school baseball field, \$550,000 to Llewellyn Park property owners for cost-overruns on their road and sewer project, and \$550,000 for 25-space parking lot on Eagle Rock Avenue when Chase Bank is giving up more than 70 free parking spaces across the street.
    - ii. Maintain/upgrade existing recreation facilities and study expanding programs to better serve non-athletes with activities such as video games, computer coding and the arts.
  - b. Stop municipal borrowing for school capital projects under the "fig leaf" of "shared services." If the Board of Education wants capital projects, it should follow state law and give voters a say through referendum.
  - c. Reduced borrowing will also lower the amount of the required 5% of the financing as a budget expenditure (**anticipated savings \$25,000**). Reduced debt service will produce additional savings over time.
  - d. Aggressively pursue grants to fund capital projects, not just services.
3. Require competitive bidding on all contracts expected to cost at least \$10,000, including hundreds of thousands of dollars spent annually on no-bid contracts (**anticipated savings \$300,000**).
4. Change insurance broker contract, now no-bid and commission-driven, to fee-for-service contracts awarded through competitive bidding for each line of insurance (**anticipated savings \$200,000**).
5. Rebid recycling center management contract with revised specifications, based on input of several vendors who expressed interest but didn't bid, to achieve more competition than the lone non-responsive bid (rendering it invalid) earlier this year (**anticipated revenue \$75,000**).

6. Eliminate township's no-bid Facebook management contract and replace with talented area high school students (anticipated savings \$24,000).
7. Eliminate no-bid Public Information Officer contract (anticipated savings \$30,000).
8. Reduce \$500,000+ cost of jitney with advertising (anticipated revenue \$50,000) and consider charging riders a small fee, in part to cover cost of resident verification: \$1 per day/\$260 per year (anticipated revenue \$81,000 – total anticipated revenue \$131,000).
9. Boost transparency and enable greater resident knowledge about town budgeting and finances.
  - a. Do everything possible to realize a functioning Citizens Budget Advisory Committee, which includes annual appointments by the mayor and council members pursuant to a 2009 town council resolution. (Joe's appointee is the only current one to the group, severely hampering its ability to contribute to the budget process.)
  - b. Facebook Live/Videotape annual statutory budget meetings and post all documents on town website to provide transparency on this critical issue and encourage citizen participation and input.
    - i. Enable resident questions and input during these meetings, a practice that is currently not allowed.
10. Significantly reduce annual budget "special requests," which are promotions and pay increases not required by labor contract (anticipated savings \$70,000). (These requests totaled more than more than \$90,000 in the 2018 budget.)
11. Eliminate non-critical cell phones/service (anticipated savings \$5,000).
12. Eliminate resident-geese-control contract and replace with volunteers, as other Essex County municipalities do (anticipated savings \$2,000).
13. Audit each department on a rotating basis, seeking ways to create efficiencies by eliminating redundancies and streamlining operations and processes (anticipated savings \$100,000).
  - a. Involve all employees and managers in the process to identify and implement efficiencies.
  - b. Institute mid-year reporting to Town Council so that the Administration is more accountable for following budget.
  - c. Institute anonymous "tip jar" to identify potential efficiencies and begin an award program with a monetary prize for the ideas that deliver the most efficiency.
14. Raise traffic-violation fines to cover part of the cost of eTicketing (computerized ticketing at traffic stop and wireless transmission) (anticipated revenue \$15,000).
15. Add parking meters and improve collection (anticipated revenue \$10,000).
16. Hire second part-time parking-enforcement officer (anticipated revenue net of wage cost \$10,000).
17. Hire a full-time town planner with economic-development experience to attract focused and appropriate commercial activity to boost ratables, targeting specific areas of town

that need help such as downtown. (The township's tax base declined eight years in a row before rising .03% this year. A rising tax base puts downward pressure on tax rates, because the tax levy to fund the budget is taken from a larger pie.)

18. Expand review of potential to share services with nearby municipalities, particularly for senior transportation.
19. Stop the abuse of the state Local Redevelopment and Housing Law with redevelopment areas that clearly don't meet the requirement of "blight" -- but only serves to enable 30-year property tax abatements that enrich wealthy developers at the expense of taxpayers.
20. Hold garbage/recycling vendor strictly accountable and renegotiate contract -- which just raised the annual cost by nearly \$1.1 million, or 61%, for the next five years.

Under the West Orange municipal charter, the Mayor drafts the annual budget/capital budget and negotiates all contracts. This will allow Joe to avoid even suggesting wasteful spending for the Town Council to consider. Also, Joe expects to find additional wasteful spending and opportunities to increase efficiency once in office. He will post these additions to the budget on the township website homepage. He'll also make it easier for residents to have access to budget and spending information -- for example, posting the bi-weekly list of all bills reviewed and approved by Town Council as other towns do -- and to provide their input and ideas.

[www.JoeKrakoviak.com](http://www.JoeKrakoviak.com)