

Monmouth In Focus

Issue 1 ▲ Spring 2007 ▲ Vol. 2

McMorrow joins freeholder board

Peters sworn in as Monmouth County's new surrogate

Barbara J. McMorrow, a former teacher of English and principal at Howell High School, was sworn in to three-year term on the Monmouth County Board of Chosen Freeholders Jan. 3.

Also taking the oath of office as county surrogate was former Middletown Mayor Rosemarie D. Peters.

During the 2007 Annual Organization meeting that immediately followed the swearing-in ceremony, Freeholder William C. Barham was unanimously reappointed director of the board and Freeholder Lillian G. Burry was named deputy director.

"I am very grateful to the people of Monmouth County who have entrusted me with the job of looking out for their interests on the county level," Freeholder McMorrow said. "The campaign is over, and I intend to build bridges so that, together with my colleagues, we can move forward in a bi-partisan fashion to continue to make sure Monmouth County remains a great place to live and work."

In addition to Barham and Mrs. Burry, Mrs. McMorrow joins freeholders Robert D. Clifton and Anna C. Little on the five-member board.

Mrs. Peters wasted no time getting acquainted with her staff and function of the office.

"People usually come to our office at a difficult time in their lives – when they are dealing with the loss of a loved one," Mrs. Peters said. "What we do has a lot to do with people's lives, and that's how everyone here sees it. There seems to be a real sense of mission, which is reflected in the caring approach the staff brings to their work."

Mrs. McMorrow, who lives in Freehold Township, replaces

See **McMORROW** Page 4



▲ Barbara McMorrow

Rosemarie Peters ▼



COUNTY BUDGET AT A GLANCE

1. \$471.8 million

The 2007 county budget is \$14,474,676 more than last year's spending plan and limits the rise in the tax levy to just 2.9 percent, which is the smallest increase in the last eight years.

2. Comparisons

When measuring the overall percentage of the budget that is supported by taxes, Monmouth County ranks eighth lowest among all 21 New Jersey counties, at 63 percent.

3. Impact on taxes

What does it all mean? Budgets are not the easiest things to understand. The bottom line is the average county tax bill of \$1,403 will increase by about \$41 a year.

4. Public hearings

This year, the Freeholders held additional public hearings outside of Freehold to give residents more opportunity to have input.



Budget details, Page 2

IN THIS ISSUE

Your tax dollars at work: Let us help you rediscover Monmouth County, find out if your child qualifies for a college scholarship, and learn what historic sites in your town are being restored with help from the Monmouth County Board of Chosen Freeholders.



Page 2

The best getaway weekend is right in your own back yard. Get your free copy of "New Jersey's Monmouth County" and discover the state's best-kept secrets.



Page 3

Scholarships worth \$5,000 a year are available to Brookdale Community College graduates who continue their college careers at Monmouth University.



Page 3

The Monmouth County Historical Commission recently awarded preservation grants totalling \$70,000 for 19 restoration projects in 13 municipalities.

2007 budget reflects careful review of costs

The Board of Chosen Freeholders took the 2007 county budget "on the road" this year with a detailed PowerPoint presentation followed by opportunities for the public to provide input.

A number of county residents braved the cold and icy weather and asked some excellent questions.

"It was important to give taxpayers a better opportunity to learn how the county budget is put together," Freeholder Director William C. Barham said. "It was equally important for them to have an opportunity to comment on it as well."

The freeholders introduced the budget at a meeting Jan. 25 and adopted a slimmed down version on March 8. The \$471.8 million budget limits the tax levy rise to 2.9 percent.

The budget is up by \$14,474,676, which is largely due to increases in fixed costs such as health expenses and pension obligations. Of that amount, only \$2 million is considered discretionary and

includes funding for public safety and education.

Compared to other counties, Monmouth ranks eighth lowest when considering the percentage of the budget (63 percent) that is supported by taxes.

The amount to be raised by taxes is \$286.5 million, which represents the 2.9 percent increase. It is the smallest percentage increase for any budget in the last eight years, and is below the rate of inflation for the second year in a row.

Increases in the tax levy in other county budgets are as follows: Atlantic, 3.8 percent; Morris, 4.6 percent; Ocean, 4.7 percent; Sussex, 4.8 percent; Cape May, 6.7 percent; Warren, 6.8 percent; Gloucester, 8.0 percent, and Middlesex, 8.4 percent.

"The county was faced with many challenges in crafting this year's budget," Freeholder Robert D. Clifton said. "We were able to maintain services while keeping the increase to a minimum in the face of state-mandated pension obligations."

See **BUDGET** Page 4



The perfect getaway is Closer than you think

NJ's best-kept secrets are in your own back yard.

Finding year-round activities in Monmouth County just got easier with "New Jersey's Monmouth County," a 66-page magazine highlighting the county's great attractions.

It highlights our beaches, shopping centers, theaters, museums, historic sites, lighthouses, parks and a long list of cultural and recreational activities, plus information on recreational and charter boat fishing.

The Monmouth County Department of Economic Development and Tourism is now distributing "New Jersey's Monmouth County" free to residents and visitors, said Bea Duffy, the department's director.

"Residents and visitors have always enjoyed our county in the spring and summer, but there's so much to do that we are now listing

year-round activities so people can enjoy them anytime," she said.

Jeanne DeYoung, the county's tourism representative, said "New Jersey's Monmouth County" tells where to play volleyball on the beach, walk through a forest in autumn, take a moonlight cruise, stay in a seaside bed-and-breakfast inn or catch a free concert almost any summer night.

At www.visitmonmouth.com/tourism, you can also find extensive information on nearly every activity you and your family would enjoy. These resources help visitors and residents learn and have fun.

Get your copy of the magazine by calling 1-800-523-2587, by e-mail at jdeyoung@visitmonmouth.com, or at the department, 31 E. Main St., Freehold.



Scholarships for Brookdale students

Find out how you can help fund your

Scholarships worth \$5,000 a year are available to qualifying Brookdale Community College graduates who elect to continue their college careers at Monmouth University, West Long Branch. The scholarships, which total \$100,000 a year, were established by the Monmouth County Board of Chosen Freeholders. Each year, 10 new Brookdale graduates are selected based on meeting the following criteria:

Helpful links for students:

www.brookdalecc.edu

www.monmouth.edu



1. Each grant application must include a description of the mission, its meaning to history and the significance and the audience it serves. It must also include a detailed budget.



2. There is a \$500 minimum and a \$5,000 maximum grant per applicant in any year. The program is competitive and proof of the availability of matching funds is required.



3. Each grantee is required to submit interim and final reports, and the documents are to be accompanied by three photographs that detail the project's progress.

Planting the Preservation Seed

County awards grants worth \$70,000 in 13 towns

The Monmouth County Historical Commission has awarded preservation grants recently for 19 restoration projects in 13 municipalities. The awards totaled \$70,000.

The Historical Commission is dedicated to preserving the past and creating a living history. Since its establishment

19 years ago, the preservation grant program has provided the funds for smaller organizations in their undertaking to protect the county's historic legacy.

"These grants directly support the great work being done by the community," Freeholder Deputy Director Lillian G. Burry



First Baptist Church, Freehold

said. "Through our collective efforts, we are helping to share not just our story, but also a greater understanding and appreciation of who we are as a people."

The Monmouth County Historical Commission is an official county body created by the Board of Chosen Freeholders for the preservation

and conservation of Monmouth County history. Established in August 1988, its principal program is the preservation grants, an undertaking that recognizes the acute need for funds to preserve Monmouth County's rich and diverse historic legacy. The Monmouth County Historical

Commission grants money on a competitive basis to municipalities and nonprofit organizations needing financial help in the preservation or restoration of historic structures.

The types of projects eligible for funding are preservation,

restoration or rehabilitation of historic structures, usually 50 years or older, and which are accessible to the public. The program covers essentially structural work for projects commonly known as "bricks and mortar" undertakings.

The deadline to apply for preservation grants is Nov. 1 of every year. For more information, please visit us on the Web at www.visitmonmouth.com/history

19

Projects that received county grant money

- 1 St. Andrew By-the-Sea, Allenhurst, roof restoration.
- 2 Strauss House, Atlantic Highlands, porch restoration.
- 3 Montrose School, Colts Neck, exterior cladding.
- 4 First Baptist Church, Freehold, exterior painting.
- 5 Historical Association, Freehold, millwork repair.
- 6 Bethel A.M.E. Church, Freehold, window preservation.
- 7 West Freehold School House, Freehold Township.
- 8 Van Mater Farm, Holmdel, cow barn restoration.
- 9 Church of Presidents, Long Branch, gutter/leaders.
- 10 Neptune Hose Co. 1, Long Branch, interior restoration.
- 11 Carnegie Library, Long Branch, painting.
- 12 Elberon Memorial Church, Long Branch, stained glass.
- 13 Life Saving Station, Manasquan, porch.
- 14 Old Neptune High School, Neptune, exterior restoration.
- 15 Eden Woolley House, Ocean, copper gutters.
- 16 Religious Society of Friends, Shrewsbury, windows/chimneys
- 17 Crawford House, Tinton Falls, door/windows.
- 18 Camp Evans, Wall, roof repair.
- 19 Barkalow Homestead/Blansingburg Schoolhouse, Wall, restoration.

college education.

- Have a permanent county address and lived here for one year
- Graduate with a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or better
- Maintain full course load (minimum 12 credits) at Monmouth University
- Demonstrate a financial need

Scholarships awarded to juniors are renewable senior year. For more information about a freeholder scholarship, contact Patrick Dorsey at Monmouth University's undergraduate admissions office: (732) 263-5873.



From Page 2

'07 budget protects Monmouth's excellent quality of life without impacting services!

The county tax rate is 24.06 cents per \$100 of equalized valuation, Finance Director Mark E. Acker said. Last year's rate was 26.61 cents. The county tax rate would differ in each municipality because it is adjusted according to equalized values.

Following the public hearings, the freeholders eliminated 18 vacant positions before adopting the budget. The savings from those positions, plus an extra \$350,000 in anticipated revenue from housing federal inmates in the Monmouth County Correctional Institution, saved a total \$496,000 off the amount to be raised through taxation this year.

The average county tax bill would be \$1,403, up \$41, under the proposed spending plan.

Freeholder Deputy Director Lillian G. Burry said most of the county's discretionary spending supports Brookdale Community College and the vocational high school system.

The vote to adopt the budget was 3 to 2, with Freeholders Barbara J. McMorrow and Anna C. Little voting no.

Visit us today at www.visitmonmouth.com to view the 2007 county budget in its entirety!

Monmouth County
The Place You Want to Be

From Page 1

McMorrow, Peters sworn in

Theodore J. Narozanick, a long-time freeholder and county administrator. Narozanick did not seek re-election after serving on the board for 21 years.

After thanking her supporters, Mrs. McMorrow outlined some of her immediate goals: forming a bipartisan committee to review the county budget, and holding public budget meetings at various locations around the county prior to its adoption.

She also wants to establish a student journalism program, working with area high schools and coordinated through the county's Department of Public Information, to get students more interested in how their local government works and, at the same time, teaching them to write news that provides a real public service.

Barham and Mrs. Burry welcomed Mrs. McMorrow to

the board.

"Monmouth County is more than just a governmental entity; it is where we live and work go about our lives," Barham said. "Monmouth County is our home, and we are proud to call it our home because we know we have the best parks, the best schools, the best library system and the best services of any county in New Jersey. I look forward to working with Barbara to make government more affordable and preserve our quality of life."

"Standing now a third of the way through a term as freeholder, I can tell you with pride and confidence that the culture of county government has been reformed," Mrs. Burry said. "The policies and practices that cast a shadow over all the good works this county does have been eliminated. "I am proud of what we have

done, confident in what we will do, and fully committed to keeping Monmouth County in the forefront of counties across America," Mrs. Burry added. "I welcome Barbara McMorrow to the board and look forward to working with her."

Mrs. McMorrow worked in the Freehold Regional High School District for more than 30 years, beginning her career as a teacher of English at Freehold High School. She was principal of Howell High School until she retired in 2003.

During her tenure, Mrs. McMorrow helped Howell become known throughout the district as "The Fine and Performing Arts High School" and established the Humanities Program, designed to help students prepare for college.

Mrs. Peters served on the Middletown Township Committee for 18 years, four of those as mayor.



Monmouth In Focus

is published quarterly online by the Monmouth County Board of Chosen Freeholders.

William C. Barham
Lillian G. Burry
Robert D. Clifton
Anna C. Little
Barbara J. McMorrow

~

Department of Public Information
William K. Heine, Director
Danielle Brancadora, Editor
(732) 431-7310
www.visitmonmouth.com