

## NOVEMBER ELECTION CHARTER COMMISSION QUESTION

On the ballot at the November 2, General Election will be a Charter Commission question that Township voters can consider. This will be titled "Municipal Question No. 1" and will read, "Shall a charter commission be elected to study the charter of the Township of Hopewell and to consider a new charter or improvement in the present charter and to make recommendations thereon?"

### *What is a Charter Commission?*

A charter commission is a group of five residents, selected by the voters, that studies the town's government and makes recommendations to the citizens about whether the form of government under which the town operates should remain the same or be changed.

The names of the nine candidates running for the five positions on charter commission will be listed in a separate area of the ballot. Voters can select five of these candidates to be charter commissioners.

### *What is the function of a Charter Commission?*

The laws of the state of New Jersey are very specific about the function and duty of the commission. Here is what the law says:

"It shall be the function and duty of the charter commission to study the form of government of the municipality, to compare it with other available forms under the laws of this State, to determine whether or not in its judgment the government of the municipality could be strengthened, made more clearly responsive or accountable to the people, or whether its operation could be more economical or efficient, under a changed form of government."

[N.J.S. 40:69A-7.]

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## TWO TOWNSHIP OPEN SPACE TAX QUESTIONS FOR THE NOVEMBER 2 BALLOT

The Township open space tax has been in existence since 1999. As of September 2004, the Township has leveraged the preservation of 2,250 acres with this tax. The Township has used the three cent open space tax for its intended purpose: conserving land for open space, agricultural and historic preservation and recreation purposes.

In round numbers, the Township has spent \$12,213,000 on these 2,250 acres. After applying grants of \$4,500,000, the Township will be paying about \$605,000 annually for the remaining debt service. This will leave little open space tax for funding additional projects.

The Township can move forward with more projects if the voters support an increase to the municipal open space tax at the November 2 General Election. Two municipal open space tax questions will be on the ballot to give voters a chance to choose how additional cents of open space tax should be spent.

Municipal Question No.2 asks whether an additional \$.01 (one cent) should be approved for open space, conservation, historic and agricultural preservation. Municipal Question No.3 asks whether an additional \$.01 (one cent) should be approved for recreation purposes only. Voters can vote for or against one or both of the questions. If a majority of voters support both questions, then the Township open space tax will increase to \$.05 per hundred dollars of assessed value. Of this one cent will be dedicated to open space, conservation, historic and agricultural preservation but not recreation and one cent of it will be dedicated to recreation. The remaining three cents will continue to be spent for open space, conservation, historic and agricultural preservation and recreation purposes.

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To do all this, the charter commission will hold hearings, sponsor public forums, and generally provide for the widest possible public information and discussion of the purposes and progress of its work. The charter commission must work within the limits of any appropriation made by the Township Committee, and any funds or services it raises through private contributions. Members of the charter commission serve without compensation, but will be reimbursed for their necessary expenses. The charter commission may hire consultants and clerical and other assistants. In the end they will make a recommendation to change or not to change the form of government. If the latter, they will specify what form of government they are recommending. The charter commissioners can not change the form of government. This power resides with the voters.

If the charter commission recommends a change in government, then another referendum will be held, either in November 2005, or at a time designated by the commission. At that time, the voters will decide whether the recommended change should be made. If a majority of the voters say “yes,” then the new form of government will take effect in 2006.

### HOPEWELL TOWNSHIP OPEN SPACE TAX PROJECTS

Parcel	Year	Acres	Open Space/ Farm	Township Contribution	Other Grants Received	Final Township Cost/Acre	Final Township Cost	Total Cost*
Alliger	1998	167.3	OS	Repaid by grant	\$820,017	\$0	\$0	\$1,240,034
Bald Pate	1998	1097.0	OS	\$750,000	\$250,000	\$684	\$750,000	\$11,400,000
Genovesi	2000	3.0	OS	\$4,550		\$1,517	\$4,550	\$65,000
Hart	2000	7.2	OS	\$15,000		\$2,080	\$15,000	\$129,780
The Elks	2000	44.6	OS	\$63,600		\$1,425	\$63,600	\$424,000
Franz	2000	18.5	OS	\$34,975		\$1,891	\$34,975	\$349,750
Hillman	2000	73.0	OS/Farm	\$103,000		\$1,411	\$103,000	\$1,031,000
Driver	2001	11.1	OS	\$19,500		\$1,752	\$19,500	\$195,000
Hollinger	2001	32.0	Farm	\$388,883	\$80,869	n/a	pending**	\$575,000
Vogler	2001	10.3	Farm	\$297,950	\$27,050	n/a	pending	\$325,000
Thompson	2001	57.0	O/S	\$193,730		\$3,399	\$193,730	\$968,650
Vales	2002	6.0	O/S	\$243,574	\$56,210	n/a	pending	\$332,000
Kuser	2002	129.0	O/S	\$10,000		\$78	\$10,000	\$990,000
Albahary	2002	6.0	O/S	\$18,200		\$3,033	\$18,200	\$175,000
Lawrence	2002	14.0	O/S	\$15,700		\$1,121	\$15,700	\$157,000
Rappaport	2002	43.0	O/S	\$474,074	\$87,500	n/a	pending	\$748,000
Gomez	2002	58.0	Farm	\$769,336	\$190,664	n/a	pending	\$1,250,000
Bellando	2002	42.9	O/S	\$632,531		n/a	pending	\$825,000
Else	2003	65.0	Farm	\$2,525,000		n/a	pending	\$2,525,000
Faille Easement	2003	40.3	Farm	\$201,450		\$5,000	\$201,450	\$382,755
Eames	2004	74.1	O/S	\$50,000		\$675	\$50,000	\$1,010,000
Martin	2004	250.5	Farm	\$5,402,045		n/a	pending	\$5,402,045
<b>Total</b>		<b>2,250</b>		<b>\$12,213,098</b>	<b>\$1,512,310</b>	<b>\$1,719</b>	<b>\$1,479,705</b>	<b>\$30,500,014</b>

\* Total costs paid by Township and other governmental and non-profit participants. These costs do not include the contributions from the property owners who accepted a price less than the fair market value. This means that the 10%-25% difference between the amount paid to the owner and the fair market value has not been included in the “Total Cost”

\*\* “pending” indicates that State and non-profit grants funds are expected to be provided to help off-set the Township’s final costs.

## **CAN: THE EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION SYSTEM**

The Hopewell Township Police Department has the capability of placing phone calls to some or all Hopewell Valley residents in the event that an emergency message needs to be rapidly disseminated. This system is known as the Community Alert Network, or "CAN". The system utilizes computers and banks of phone lines to quickly dial the phones of all residents in the selected areas and play a recorded message giving specific details and information pertaining to the emergency.

This system allows the department to instantly map out a particular area to be called for a limited emergency. In the event of a large-scale event, the department can activate the system for the entire Valley to be called with a warning message.

One drawback to the system is that it is only able to access listed or published phone numbers. Another issue is that telephone devices designed to block incoming recorded phone calls will also intercept these recorded emergency messages. Residents with unlisted numbers may be added to the list, if they wish, by supplying the police department with their name, full address and phone number. This system is for emergency use only and all phone numbers are kept confidential.

If your phone number is listed, you have been automatically added to the list. If you have an unlisted phone number or have recently moved into the Valley and would like to be added to the list, you may obtain a registration form by accessing the police department web site at [www.HopewellTwpPolice.org](http://www.HopewellTwpPolice.org) and clicking on "Community Alert Network Registration Form." If you do not have Internet access or you have questions you may contact Captain George Meyer at the police department, 737-3100 Ext. 518.

If you have previously registered a non-published phone number, it remains on file and there is no need to re-register.

### **OCTOBER 26th DEADLINE FOR ABSENTEE BALLOT APPLICATIONS**

**If you have recently moved to Hopewell Township you need to reregister to vote.  
Mail-in registration forms are available through the Municipal Clerk's office.**

**The last day to make application for Absentee Ballots is October 26, 2004.**

**General Election Day is November 2, 2004 and polls will be open from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m.**

**If you have questions about your registration, polling place, or need directions, contact the Municipal Clerk's office at: 737-0605 or email your questions to: [mail@HopewellTwp.org](mailto:mail@HopewellTwp.org).**



## **PROPERTY REVALUATION STARTS SOON**

The Mercer County Board of Taxation has ordered Hopewell Township, Pennington Borough and Hopewell Borough to do a revaluation of all properties that will effect taxable values in 2006. Revaluations are done so that property taxes are distributed fairly. Statistics show there is now a disparity and the Township must make adjustments to assessed property values to maintain fairness in the tax distributions. The last revaluation was done 10 years ago.

The revaluation will be bid this fall. After awarding a bid, the revaluation company will make a presentation, introduce their staff and discuss their methodology at a public meeting. After that, the staff will be going out into the various neighborhoods to collect data for each taxable property. Notices from the revaluation company will be sent informing property owners of when inspections will be done. Appointments will be scheduled, if requested. As the revaluation progresses, there will be press releases and informational literature sent to property owners including notices for meetings with the revaluation firm.

In addition to bringing all properties up to true market value, the revaluation will cause the tax base to undergo a major change. The current total property tax rate in Hopewell Township is \$3.21 per \$100 of assessed value. The percent of market value for 2004 is 71.22%. The township's current tax base is \$2,315,218,983. If, for example, after the revaluation, the tax base should double, the tax rate would change from \$3.21 to \$1.61 so there would be a new, higher assessed value with a lower tax rate. Those who were assessed at the average ratio of 71.22% will be paying the same; those who were assessed at a lower than average ratio will be paying more; and those who were assessed at a higher than average ratio will be paying less.

Check the Township Channel 95 scroll and the website: [www.HopewellTwp.org](http://www.HopewellTwp.org) for more information about revaluation and updates on its progress.

## **FREE INFLUENZA IMMUNIZATIONS FOR VALLEY SENIORS 65 AND OVER**

### **Postponed until further notice!**

Due to a manufacturing problem, the State Contract Supplier that provides the Township Health Department with flu vaccine will not be able to supply the vaccine as scheduled.

It is anticipated that it may not be available to the Health Department for several months.

Seniors and High Risk Individuals may want to check with their physician to obtain a flu shot earlier in the season.

## ***FALL HEALTH PROGRAMS***

### **FREE HOPEWELL VALLEY RABIES CLINICS FOR DOGS AND CATS**

**Saturday, November 6, 2004**

**10:00 am to 12 Noon**

**Hopewell Township Public Works Facility  
203 Washington Crossing-Pennington Road**

For more information, or the location of other free clinics in the Greater Mercer Area call the Hopewell Township Health Department Animal Control at 737-0120 Ext. 678.

All pets three months of age or those with no previous vaccination history will be given a one year vaccination certificate. All pets with proof of a previous vaccination and that are one year of age or older will be given a three year vaccination certificate. All pets should be revaccinated every two years.

### **EATING DISORDER WORKSHOP**

**Thursday, November 11**

**7:00-9:30 p.m.**

**Timberlane Middle School  
8<sup>th</sup> Grade House Center**

Hopewell Valley residents who have pre-adolescent or adolescent children are urged to attend an eating disorders workshop called **What's Eating You? Consumer Culture, Eating Disorders, and Adolescence**. The event has been funded through a generous grant from Bristol-Myers Squibb, and spearheaded by a community-wide consortium consisting of the Hopewell Township Health Department, Timberlane Middle School PTO, Hopewell Valley Municipal Alliance, the University Medical Center at Princeton Eating Disorders Program, HiTOPS, Hopewell Valley Public Libraries, and the Pennington Quality Market.

Registration is required. Call the Township Health Department at 737-0120, Ext. 636 to make your reservation.

## **HOPEWELL: A HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY**

The 1990 award-winning book by archeologist Richard W. Hunter and historian Richard L. Porter is in its third printing and is available for sale to the public. *Hopewell: A Historical Geography* is the most authoritative book ever published on the Hopewell Valley, featuring nearly 200 vintage photographs, historic maps and detailed charts of survey data collected and analyzed by the authors over a two-year period. An exhaustive examination of the valley's social, economic and physical evolution, the 274-page hard cover volume, edited by New Jersey State Archivist Karl Niederer, is a penetrating look at a community in transition and its efforts to preserve itself in the face of mounting development pressures.

The 2003 edition features a new preface from the authors who review changes in the physical and political landscape since the book's original publication and examine the challenges still facing the cause of preserving the valley's heritage. Anyone interested in the future of Hopewell will want a copy of this updated version. Copies are available in the Municipal Building lobby or in the Administration Office. The price is \$35.

### **The Hopewell Township Report is on-line at: [www.HopewellTwp.org](http://www.HopewellTwp.org)**

In 2003, readers were asked to let us know if they still wished to receive a paper copy of the Report. So far 5,000 have not replied. The Township saves thousands of dollars in printing and postage for the newsletter by making the Report available online to those who prefer to view it on the web site. The Webmaster has uploaded a color copy of the Fall, 2004 Report. It is placed in the "News and Announcements" section of the web site. Previous issues can be found by clicking on "Documents".

We recognize that some residents are not able, or find it inconvenient to access the newsletter on the web site. If you would like future newsletters sent to you in paper form, call the

### **POLICE DEPARTMENT FORMS NOW ON-LINE**

**Go to [www.HopewellTwpPolice.org](http://www.HopewellTwpPolice.org) and scroll down to "Forms" and select the following form that you wish to print:**

- **Community Alert Network Registration Form**
- **Alarm Registration Form**
- **Business Registration Form**
- **Home Security Check Form**
- **Police Department Employment Application**

# **PUBLIC WORKS FALL SERVICES**

## **Brush and Bulky Waste Collection**

The Public Works Department resumed collecting brush and bulk in the month of September. Anyone requesting a bulk pickup, must call 737-0799 Ext. 668 or Ext. 650 Monday thru Friday 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. for their "FIRST FREE PICK UP". Thereafter, a non-refundable payment of \$10 needs to be paid prior to their scheduled pickup either in person or by mail delivered to Public Works Department, 203 Washington Crossing-Pennington Road, Titusville, New Jersey 08540 Attn: Bulk Program. The payment must be received the Wednesday before the pickup. It is illegal and unsafe to place bulky waste items in the street.

For brush pickup, no phone call is required, except along Rtes. 29 and 31 where a police escort is needed for safety precautions. The brush must be placed curbside on Monday by 7:00 a.m. of your scheduled pickup week, and it will be removed sometime during that week. It is illegal and unsafe to place brush in the street. The pickups are as follows:

<b>Zone 1</b>	November 1, 2004	December 6, 2004
<b>Zone 2</b>	November 8, 2004	December 13, 2004
<b>Zone 3</b>	November 15, 2004	December 20, 2004

### **TIRE PICKUP**

#### **FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 2004**

Those interested in this service, need to pre-pay \$2.00 for a 16" tire and \$8.00 for a tire larger than 16". Maximum tire size is 19" in diameter. No tires on rims or tires associated with non-resident use can be collected.

### **ITEMS WITH FREON**

Pickup of appliances containing Freon is the last Thursday of every month. The non-refundable fee is \$20.00 per appliance. Residents are required to pre-pay for this service prior to the pick up.

## **Fall Leaf Collection will start the week of October 25, 2004.**

Neighborhoods will be posted with notices the week before.

## **TOWNSHIP HOLIDAYS**

The Township offices will be closed on these upcoming holidays:

- Veterans Day, Thursday, November 11
- Thanksgiving Day, Thursday, November 25
- Day after Thanksgiving, Friday, November 26
- Christmas Day holiday taken Friday, December 24
- New Years Day holiday taken Friday, December 31

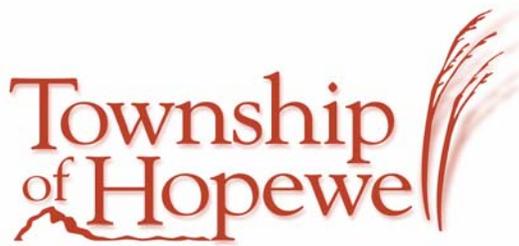
**Hopewell Township Report Contributors:** Our thanks goes out to the following individuals who contributed the articles and information inside: Annette Bielawski, Gary Guarino, George Meyer, Victor Silvestrov, Toni Sost, Christine Smeltzer.

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**Comments, corrections, questions, stories or reports?**

Volunteer **Reporters** are most welcome. Contact Christine Smeltzer at 737-0605 or by mail: 201 Washington Crossing - Pennington Road, Titusville, NJ 08560 or by email: [mail@HopewellTwp.org](mailto:mail@HopewellTwp.org).



201 Washington Crossing - Pennington Road  
Titusville, NJ 08560

**2004 Township Committee**

Vanessa Sandom, Mayor  
David Sandahl, Deputy Mayor  
Jon Edwards, Committee Member  
Marylou Ferrara, Committee Member  
Arlene Kemp, Committee Member