

TOWNSHIP OF BYRAM

NEW JERSEY

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WEBSITE ADDRESS:
www.byramtwp.org

TO: Township Council

FROM: Joseph W. Sabatini, Township Manager

DATE: August 13, 2021

RE: 2022 Budget - Strategic Planning/Goal Setting

In my July 18, 2021, memo to the Mayor and Council, I identified that the Council's most important annual policy statement is the municipal budget. It defines how the local government team will implement its priorities for the next fiscal year. It is important to identify the goals and objectives to identify resources including funding needed to carry out the work plan. Each individual Council Member was asked to provide their individual 2022 goals and objectives to support discussion at the August 17 meeting. Attached are the responses received. I have included Management Goals and Objectives on my list.

Below is a portion of a chapter on Policy Making and Strategic Planning from a guide for elected leaders. I have previously shared this information with prior members of the Council and thought it would be beneficial to share again to support the discussion during the August 17 meeting. I see the August 17 meeting as the kickoff, and it may take a few meetings to identify the goals and priorities of the Council.

Policy Making and Strategic Planning

So, you're a member of a local leadership team, committed to ensuring that the team works effectively. And you're also a local policy maker, committed to making good policy decisions as a member of the local leadership team. What exactly does that mean? What is policy? You ran for office with ideas about what's important for your community—the issues that matter most, changes you'd like to see, your vision for the community. As part of your transition from citizen to elected official to team member to policy maker, you'll begin to mesh your personal ideas with those of others to define desirable directions for the community.

This chapter examines the process of local policy making, including

- Understanding policy
- Setting goals and strategic priorities
- Linking policies and money through the annual budget
- Evaluating policy effectiveness.

A Vision and a Sense of Mission:

As an elected official, you are responsible for making decisions about the scope of services that your government will provide and about how to pay for those services. You are also responsible for establishing policies that affect every dimension of your community—local economic growth, cultural change, the environment, new residents, regional collaboration, long-term financial management, and more. Your decisions are guided by a clearly defined mission. A mission is the reason that your local government exists, and it is usually defined in terms of the community's vision of its future. And your job as an elected official is to put in place policies, programs, and facilities that will carry out the mission to make your community's vision come true.

Some local governments create both a broad vision statement for the community and a specific mission for the government. Some also develop core value statements that define how the government serves and guides the community. Others use slogans to convey what the community is or expects to be. The specific form your “sense of mission” takes is secondary to ensuring that your governing body operates from a shared foundation that defines an overall direction and your team's commitment to the community.

Understanding Policy:

Policy is a plan of action agreed to by a group of people with the power to carry it out and enforce it. Policy can be as specific as adopting an ordinance—a local law—requiring dogs to be kept on leashes in public areas, or requiring all residents to recycle specific materials, or requiring developers to build sidewalks in residential neighborhoods. Or it can be a declaration of a broad government commitment, such as providing affordable housing or attracting new businesses to broaden the tax base and create new jobs. Generally, policy making means deciding what you are going to do in your community, not how you are going to do it. Your annual budget, capital improvement plan, land use master plan, and housing strategy are all policy statements that define a course for your community.

Good public policy is

- Beneficial to the community
- Necessary to move the community forward or to respond to a specific emerging need
- Consistent with the government's overall mission
- Easily understood by the community in general and by those who will be most affected by it
- Well-informed and rigorous based on an analysis of policy alternatives and implementation costs and consequences
- Open to change or improvement as circumstances change or evaluation suggests a new direction
- Responsive to urgent needs, emerging challenges, or needed changes of direction
- Able to be enacted on the basis of clear input from the chief administrative officer

Policy making can be passive as well as active. Deciding not to act (or not deciding), deciding to do something the way you did it last year, or making a special exception to a rule are policy decisions. Adopted policies are usually summarized—or codified—in the local government code. To understand your government's mission, it is important to become familiar with adopted policies. Begin your service as a policy maker by reviewing the most recent annual budget; the capital improvement plan, the comprehensive, general, or master plan; and the local government code.

Strategic Planning: Setting Goals and Priorities

While all policy that supports your mission is important, it's the big issues that merit most of your time. Action demands, such as fixing potholes in certain neighborhoods, replacing trees in public areas, or adding stop signs, are important but should not be allowed to consume all your time. Today's local governments generally use strategic plans to set clear policy goals and priorities for action.

A strategic planning or goal-setting process

- Moves the organization and the community toward a desired future
- Provides a framework for action to guide the leadership team
- Gets everyone pulling in the same direction by helping the team share different ideas and then agree on which goals will get attention
- Helps you manage your time more effectively by deciding what the governing body will focus on
- Establishes clear guidelines for the chief administrative officer and professional staff
- Provides guidelines and priorities for budgeting, particularly if you're facing financial constraints
- Strengthens your team by giving it experience working together to make tough choices.

A strategic plan defines broad policy goals that span several years. Priorities, objectives, and strategies narrow the timeframe and describe how the organization will achieve the long-term goals. The strategic plan serves as a framework for setting annual priorities, defining action strategies, and allocating resources to carry out the actions needed to reach the goals. Some plans begin with broad strategic priorities or themes that carry over from year to year with annual targets under each priority. The language may vary but the purpose is the same: to agree on broad directions for the community that will guide governance action during a specified period of time. Many local leadership teams use retreats to develop strategic plans and review and update policy goals.

Strategic Planning Steps

A strategic planning or goal-setting process follows these general steps.

Step 1: Identify issues and needs. Challenges to be pursued, needs to be met, or problems to be solved are identified by the governing body and chief administrator, and often emerge from citizen surveys or from a broad citizen involvement process.

Step 2: Define goals. Goals define the desired outcome in response to a challenge, need, or problem. Goals often identify a point or outcome to work toward beyond what the governing body can accomplish in one year or even one term of office.

Step 3: Establish action strategies/objectives. Strategies, objectives, targets, or milestones define steps you intend to take within a specified timeframe to move toward your goals. Strategies are usually tied to the annual budget and define measurable achievements so that the team can assess progress.

Step 4: Choose priorities. Priorities define what will be done first based on both need and available resources. Money is often the key factor in determining priorities. But to ensure that you pay attention to the most important challenges, needs, or problems—not just to the affordable ones—you may want to leave the money issue off the table in initial discussions of priorities.

Step 5: Provide resources for action. Translating goals and strategies into programs is generally a staff role, but the governing body monitors progress on the priorities it has set. The annual budget is the operating framework for accomplishing the work that the leadership team has agreed to. The next section of this handbook focuses on linking policy goals and money.

Step 6: Evaluate progress. Unsolicited feedback gives the governing body one way to assess progress toward its goals; it is also an important indicator of how well government priorities are connecting with citizen's needs and interests. Regular and rigorous measures of performance are important as well. Performance measures can include surveys to assess how residents view services and overall government performance.

Linking Policies and Money; The Annual Budget

The municipal budget is your most important annual policy statement. It defines how the local government team will implement its priorities for the next fiscal year, and where the money will come from to carry out that work plan. The late Henry Maier, former mayor of Milwaukee, once called budgeting “the world series of municipal government,” because it is the government's most important annual action. The annual budget is much more than a one-year spending plan. It is

- A statement of priorities for the community
- A management blueprint for providing services
- The document that translates policies into action
- A tool for protecting the government's long-term financial health
- A communication document for the public.

Resource: *Newly Elected Leaders Toolkit – Leading Your Community: A Guide for Elected Officials – Excerpted from the ICMA publication.*

Management's Goals and Objectives List:

- Dedicated Annual Road Resurfacing Budget
- Township Codes:
 - Chapter 48 – Police Department (Police Manual) – Has not had a complete review and update since 1994.
 - Zoning/Property Maintenance Changes:
 - Pop-up Temporary Structures
 - Outdoor Dining
 - Soil Importation Ordinance
- Records Management – continue to explore government records that can be scanned and permanently destroyed. Need to commit funding.
- Shared Services:
 - Animal Control including Dog Park oversight and Pound Shared Services
 - Building Department
- Software Enhancements:
 - Implement Document Management System
 - Explore system utilized in Police Department - Power DMS Software.
 - Policy Management System.
 - Look to explore software alternatives to increase efficiency of services to residents.
- Personnel/Staffing:
 - Dedicated Parks Maintenance Staffing (increase of DPW staff)
 - Police Department Succession Planning

Joseph Sabatini

From: Raymond Bonker
Sent: Friday, August 6, 2021 8:44 PM
To: Joseph Sabatini
Cc: Alex Rubenstein
Subject: Re: 2022 Municipal Budget – Goals and Objectives

I made the deadline! Style points!

Ray

2022 Byram Budget Goals and Objectives

1. Build the new municipal buildings (police, administration and DPW). Use the existing \$500,000 for a down payment. Use the entire \$400,000 ARP money for an additional down payment. Use next year's \$400,000 ARP money for either another down payment or as a bridge to the termination of our existing 2015 bond.
2. Build the dog park. Use either the Green Acres 2% loan and/or Open Space money.
3. Build 3 trails at CO Johnson and the Tamarack extension/Cranberry Overlook trail. Use Open Space and Sussex County Trails Grant money.
4. Build the kayak launch at Riverside Park. Use Open Space and/or Highlands money.
5. Build out our digital infrastructure. Either make SDL work or look for another platform. Set up Zoom for all meetings. Establish cell phone access for as many services as possible.
6. Build a multi-year financial model to ease the impact of the new municipal building expenses on the tax rate while also looking to lock in low long-term interest rates via a bond offering.
7. Encourage development along Route 206 through meetings with potential developers, purchasing additional MSA allocations, and/or examining changes to the Master Plan.
8. Explore potential outsourcing/shared services agreements with neighboring towns, especially construction

From: Joseph Sabatini <jsabatini@byramtwp.org>

Sent: Thursday, August 5, 2021 2:19 PM

To: Alex Rubenstein <arubenstein@byramtwp.org>; Cris Franco <cfranco@byramtwp.org>; Harvey Roseff <hroseff@byramtwp.org>; John Gallagher <jgallagher@byramtwp.org>; Raymond Bonker <rbonker@byramtwp.org>

Cc: Ashleigh Frueholz <afrueholz@byramtwp.org>; Construction Official <constructionofficial@byramtwp.org>; Ken Burke <kburke@byrampd.org>; Michael Orgera <morgera@byramtwp.org>; Phil Crosson <pcrosson@byramtwp.org>; Todd Rudloff <chief@byramfd.com>; Zoning Officer <zoning@byramtwp.org>; Penny Holenstein <pholenstein@byramtwp.org>; Cindy Church <cchurch@byramtwp.org>

Subject: RE: 2022 Municipal Budget – Goals and Objectives

Reminder...Thanks!

Joseph Sabatini

From: John Gallagher
Sent: Monday, August 9, 2021 1:02 PM
To: Joseph Sabatini
Subject: Re: 2022 Municipal Budget – Goals and Objectives

Joe

What I'm looking to see in the upcoming year

Infrastructure -

Roads and Drainage problems addressed and continuation with the road Improvement/pavement projects

DPW breakroom fixed up

Cable/internet/cell service upgrades

Lean to or some type of simple structure to keep our equipment out of the elements at the DPW yard

Continued movement on the New Municipal buildings

C O Johnson

Continued movement on this project

Fire Dept

replacing of the 23 year old engine #1

the squat that is parked in the lackawanna building fixed/taken off the books (has to be costing us money just sitting there Insurance)

Some thought

Thank You

Jack Gallagher

Byram Township Councilmen

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Sign up for township alerts: <https://local.nixle.com/signup/widget/i/15862>

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Subject: RE: 2022 Municipal Budget – Goals and Objectives

Joseph Sabatini

From: Alex Rubenstein
Sent: Wednesday, August 11, 2021 12:15 PM
To: Joseph Sabatini
Subject: 2022 budget goals

1 – Continued progress on the municipal building and police station. We are in progress with bid documents, so we will be coming upon the need to discuss how this will be funded. Part of this will be public outreach showing a financial model of what the impact to the average taxpayer will really be. Overlooked in this and should also be considered are the improvements to the DPW break room and outbuilding to protect the equipment we have been investing in.

2 – Continued progress on various COJ Park improvements, including the dog park and parking areas on the southern end of the park. 2022 should also be a time where we refine the long term plan of the park.

3 – Continue to embrace and exploit any technology for our staff members for increased effectivity and efficiency.

4 – At current, we fund a capital reserve account for drainage improvements at \$5,000/yr. We all know the storm drain infrastructure in town is aging and will need more attention in years to come. I would like to see an increase in this annual capital reserve contribution, perhaps \$5k or \$10k additional and a ramp up over years to come.

5 – DPW staffing. We have been told by our superintendent that he is understaffed. cursory analysis shows that the staffing in this department has decreased substantially over the last 10 to 15 years as people have retired and moved on. As we ask for them to do more (such as more maintenance on existing items, or introduction of new things like line painting and a dog park), we need to look to what he is saying and add 1 or 2 staff members in the next year.

Beyond that, I would be careful in how many new projects we take on in 2022. We have a lot on our plate as it is and I feel 2022 should be a year of catching up and closure of ongoing projects.

--

Alex Rubenstein, Mayor
The Township of Byram
<http://www.byramtwp.org>
Mobile - 973-214-8835

From: [Cris Franco](#)
To: [Joseph Sabatini](#)
Subject: Re: 2022 Municipal Budget – Goals and Objectives
Date: Thursday, August 12, 2021 2:18:17 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

My goals and objectives:

1. Municipal Building moves forward including educating the taxpayers as to the true cost per household. I think we need a campaign giving the taxpayers the truth (transparency is crucial).

2. Continue with plans for CO Johnson Park

3. Continue with road maintenance

4. Find ways to draw more business to Byram

Sorry for the late reply.

Cris Franco

Sent from my iPhone

On Aug 11, 2021, at 4:34 PM, Joseph Sabatini <jsabatini@byramtwp.org> wrote:

From: Joseph Sabatini

Sent: Thursday, August 5, 2021 2:20 PM

To: Alex Rubenstein <arubenstein@byramtwp.org>; Cris Franco <cfranco@byramtwp.org>; Harvey Roseff <hroseff@byramtwp.org>; John Gallagher <jgallagher@byramtwp.org>; Raymond Bonker <rbonker@byramtwp.org>

Cc: Ashleigh Frueholz <afrueholz@byramtwp.org>; Construction Official <constructionofficial@byramtwp.org>; kburke@byrampd.org; Michael Orgera <morgera@byramtwp.org>; Phil Crosson <pcrosson@byramtwp.org>; Todd Rudloff <chief@byramfd.com>; Zoning Officer <zoning@byramtwp.org>; Penny Holenstein <pholenstein@byramtwp.org>; Cindy Church <cchurch@byramtwp.org>

Subject: RE: 2022 Municipal Budget – Goals and Objectives

Reminder...Thanks!

<[image001.png](#)>

Joseph W. Sabatini
Byram Township Manager

Phone: 973.347.2500, Ext. 129

10 Mansfield Drive, Stanhope, NJ 07874