

**STATE OF THE BOROUGH ADDRESS**  
**MAYOR WILLIAM PIKOLYCKY, WOODBINE**  
**JANUARY 4, 2018**

- As I report to you the State of the Borough of Woodbine, I again extend my wishes for the best in this New Year with Orthodox Christmas Day (also known as “Little Christmas”) and Los Tres Reyes, the Feast of the Three Kings, still ahead of us.
- In this twenty-eighth year of my administration, Council is hard at work on a number of issues and concerns. 2017 was a year in which significant proactive initiatives focusing on consolidation, infrastructure, economic development, public services, and education lead the agenda for the Borough. These activities relate directly to the sustainability of our rural setting in the Pinelands and their positive impacts on our community’s future.
- Most importantly, while we pursue new and innovative concepts for good governance, we continue to hold the line on the local purpose tax rate, and hope to continue to do so in the year ahead.
- Woodbine holds onto the second lowest local municipal property tax in the State of New Jersey.
- One of many positive outcomes of our concerted efforts over the past year is Woodbine’s ratable base which continues to grow as new businesses locate in town and existing businesses expand and upgrade.
- Our tax collection rate remains strong, currently above **98%**.
- Out of every tax dollar collected by the Borough approximately only 15 cents in every dollar collected in taxes remains with the Borough with the balance distributed to our School District and to the County. And as you will see in my State of the Borough Address today, we have been judicious in the expenditure of your tax dollars including the significant leveraging of State and Federal Grants.
- Woodbine again realized savings through our record of safety with the Joint Insurance Fund as well as from the JIF dividend that saved us nearly 10% on our premiums.
- For the first time in the Borough’s history, Woodbine has been rated by Standard and Poors Global Ratings, which has assigned the Borough of Woodbine its “A+/Stable” issuer credit rating.)

- In order to keep our tax rate stable, we hold the line on our local purpose tax through partnerships and shared services which enable us to streamline many operations and management functions. The Borough continues to be proactive in shared services.
- This includes a Shared Services agreement recently negotiated with the Cape May County Municipal Utilities Authority.
- This past year saw the dissolution of our two municipal authorities—the Port Authority and the Municipal Utilities Authority—and their consolidation under the aegis of the Borough, which will result in cost savings of well over \$150,000 on an annual basis, thus saving local tax dollars.
- The Department of Community Affairs provided the Borough with the funding needed for the feasibility study that made this transition possible.
- The significance of this local initiative merited an article published in the November issue of the New Jersey League of Municipalities magazine as an example of good governance.
- Woodbine has been working with the Cape May County Freeholders/Economic Development Office designating Woodbine Municipal Airport as a site for an Integration Pilot Project for Unmanned Aircraft Systems—colloquially known as “drones”—following several successful Emergency Management drone tests previously implemented at the Woodbine Municipal Airport.
- We continue to work with the County on improving Routes 550 and 638 to ease traffic concerns.
- The Department of Community Affairs now is providing Local Planning Assistance to our Planning/Zoning Board as we update our Master Plan.
- Another major accomplishment was finalizing and receiving approval for our Flood Plain Management Plan.
- As a result, property owners within the Borough are eligible to purchase low cost "preferred risk" flood insurance policies. In fact, 14 buildings that were previously in the AE Flood Zone will no longer be in that zone.
- We celebrated our third year as a Coast Guard Community---as noted in the signs at the entrances to the Borough and throughout the County. We are proud to be home to the Coast Guard Uniform Distribution Center.

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- Also, please note the Pinelands Byways signs within & at the entrances to our area, indicating local points of interest. This is another component of the State and National Trails Network that traverses the Borough. It is a significant boost to tourism for the County.
- Both our bikepath extension and our Open Space Project have received Pinelands approvals and we are in the process of going out to bid for Phase 1. County Open Space Grant funding of over \$484,000 will enable us to initiate work on the Borough's plans for a 25-acre Eco-park which has been designed with considerable community input. Because this park is immediately adjacent to Woodbine Elementary School's Community School Complex, our students will benefit from courses that are conducted in this 'classroom in nature' as will our local County Library Branch.
- This year will mark the fifth year we will serve as a distribution site for the State's Tree Recovery Program and the third year of our Mayors Wellness Campaign associated Wellness Fair. These initiatives address both the health of the tree canopy and of the community. Woodbine has adopted a local Forestry Management Plan and continues to implement that plan.
- USDA continues to provide funding for the Food Distribution Site at our Public Safety Building. To date, over \$50,000 has been approved in grants for this Facility which now has the proper setting and equipment for our Faith-based Community to offer nutritional resources for the needy in our community and the surrounding area. In addition, this building doubles as our Public Safety Center for the northern Cape May County area.
- Also in regards to public safety, we have received grants totaling over \$530,000 from AFG, USDA, & DCA for our Fire Department to upgrade both equipment and purchase a state-of-the-art pumper truck.
- We have also renewed our five-year lease agreement with the New Jersey State Police, who with their Barracks in Woodbine afford an added measure of protection for residents, businesses, and visitors.
- This year also marked the start-up of our municipal building emergency generator, which was funded through a FEMA grant.
- We have recently submitted an application through the NJEIT program for a \$100,000 water system asset management grant.

- We are working with the Cape May County Municipal Utilities Authority and the State Department of Human Services to implement a sanitary wastewater collection system. This is another example of the partnerships Woodbine has established with State & County entities.
- The project will not only provide adequate public sanitary sewer service for the Borough's population, but also to ensure that the operational capacity of the Woodbine Developmental Center, a State-operated facility for developmentally disabled persons, can continue to be a viable resource. The first phase of this project is estimated to cost \$4.8 Million. An application to USDA requesting a grant of \$3.6 Million is pending approval in Washington.
- In addition, we are embarking on a \$ 3.0 Million water improvement system which was recently approved by USDA and the NJ Environmental Infrastructure Trust and includes \$2.0 Million in grants.
- As you can see, USDA Rural Development has been an extraordinary partner with the Borough and has worked tirelessly to make available grants and very low interest loans without which these projects could not have occurred. Woodbine is a rural community by definition and thus eligible for USDA Rural Development's Programs to address the same issues that larger urban areas contend with. We extend our sincere thanks to USDA.
- In addition to those shared services already mentioned, our long-term relationships with Federal, State, and County agencies have resulted in our obtaining recurring grant funding for much needed and planned community and economic development projects. We are successful because we honor these funding commitments by carrying them on-time and on-budget with positive outcomes for our Community.
- I would like to take this time to also thank our Federal and State Legislators and County officials who, by recognizing our needs and the importance of our efforts, have assisted us in obtaining this necessary funding by endorsing and supporting these projects that have contributed to Woodbine's managed, responsible growth.
- We continue with improvements to our Municipal Airport and Airport Business Park consistent with the Borough's Airport Master/Layout Plan.
- These have been made possible with the support of the Federal Aviation Administration and New Jersey DOT Aviation Bureau—total funding this past year was approximately \$1.0 Million.

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- We continue to apply for funding from NJDOT, NJDCA, NJDEP, NJ Economic Development Authority, USDA, and FAA in the amount of approximately **\$8.0** Million dollars in current requests. Projects include: airport upgrades, streetscape, roadways, drainage, water and sewer, infrastructure, right-of-way, sidewalk, bikeway, and related activities. In addition, the Borough is currently implementing similar projects totaling over \$3.5 million.
- The Borough and Stockton University are in discussion to develop a partnership with Woodbine Elementary School to explore a model demonstration “Professional Development School Program”. If approved, it will be the first for Stockton in the State and an important resource for our students and teachers in training.
- Our Head Start Building, serving both Early Head Start and Head Start (ages 6 months up to kindergarten), is undergoing renovations bringing it up to indicated standards utilizing a \$386,488 NJDCA Small Cities Grant and an \$80,000 USDA matching grant. This will enable our partner, Gateway Community Action Partnership, to continue its services in state of the art facilities for our children.
- Our County Library Branch serves as a resource for many forms of media and as a focal point and gathering place for members of the community, young & old alike, who find this a safe zone as well as an educational & informational resource.
  - Woodbine was the host branch for numerous programs, summer enrichment, and reading contests last year.
  - Still popular are the annual spring herb demo and autumn decorating with nature demo, both of which have become a Branch tradition.
  - In addition, the County continues to have numerous free children’s and “teen and tween” programs at our branch.
- Woodbine recently recertified as a Sustainable Jersey Community which made us eligible for a number of grants. Our expanding Sustainable Jersey Green Team has been involved in a number of projects, including sponsoring a workshop for the building of rain barrels and the distribution of recycling cans to our residents.
- We have upgraded our municipal buildings through the energy assistance program, which provided a grant for 70%. We also received another grant to match the remaining 30%, for a total of \$100,000 in grant-funded energy improvements.
- Our Sustainable Jersey Green Team continues to work towards the goals of sustainability.

- In relation to this, I continue to serve as a Sustainable Jersey Board member.
  - Woodbine Elementary has also registered with Sustainable Jersey Schools.
- I was reelected to serve on the Executive Board of the New Jersey League of Municipalities and the Board of Directors of the New Jersey Conference of Mayors and continue as Chair of the Pinelands Municipal Council
  - I also continue to serve on the Advisory Board of the Anne Azeez Instructional site and the Sam Azeez Museum of Woodbine Heritage, which serves as a resource to our community as well as now being a member of the Board of Trustees for the Woodbine Developmental Center.
  - The Borough of Woodbine received an award for Complete Streets Champion at the 2017 New Jersey Complete Streets Summit in New Brunswick, adding to our Champion status as a Sustainable Jersey Champion Rural Community.
  - Woodbine has previously been recognized for its accomplishments in achieving Complete Streets Community status. At that time, the Borough was cited for its understanding of the economic, public health, and mobility benefits of Complete Streets design when planning and implementing rights-of-way and other pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular improvement projects.
  - I continue to serve on Boards and Commissions so that I can be as up to date as possible on activities of the legislature and assigned boards as they may affect Woodbine and equally importantly, so that our Community has a voice in decisions especially as they relate to programs and funding that can benefit Woodbine.
- Woodbine's Green Team held a Green Fair in conjunction with the Chamber Car Show.
- The Borough held its third Wellness Fair at the Community Center this April as part of the Mayors Wellness Campaign.
- Our Mayors Wellness Campaign now sponsors bi-monthly Red Cross blood drives at the Community Center, replacing those previously held at St. Casimir's.
- We also continue to hold our annual rabies vaccination clinic, supporting the health of our pets.
- Woodbine Elementary School participated in International Walk to School Day.
- The school also held a flu clinic serving students and local residents.

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- Kudos to Councilwoman Mary Helen Perez for holding her sixth annual Kids Carnival in Lincoln Park this past August, at which time discussions began that led to the reorganization of Boy Scout Troop 77.
  - Our Recreation Commission continues its efforts in the Community, as does our local AARP Chapter.
  - Our Community Center is now open on a more regular basis and serves an increasing senior “fan-base”.
  - Woodbine Municipal Alliance, funded through the County, continues its anti-drug, tobacco, and other substance abuse outreach throughout the community, with assistance from volunteers from many sectors of the community.
  - We thank all those who are involved with this program at this time as I also invite all those interested to attend the quarterly meetings and assist in these all-volunteer efforts.
- I thank the Federally-funded Pathstone Program (the successor to Experience Works) for its involvement in our community in assisting seniors through its training program. I thank all those who have labored in our community under this program, especially those in our municipal buildings.
- I thank the Greater Woodbine Chamber of Commerce and congratulate them on the immense success of their Fifth Annual Car Show, the best attended one yet. We recognize the Chamber for their commitment to promoting activities that will support business retention and new business attraction and also thank them for the generous donation they made to CASA. Please check out the Chamber website.
- Speaking of “new” businesses, we are pleased to welcome Family Dollar to Woodbine.
  - I am pleased to announce that we are finalizing our agreement with Comcast to provide Public Access Television public service announcements for the Borough community that will allow us to notify residents in an enhanced format that complements our borough website.
  - I would also like to thank the Borough Council, appointed officials and members of our Boards and Commissions, first responders, Borough employees, and Borough professionals for their dedicated work for Woodbine and all those committees who volunteer their time and lend their experience, time, and talent. My thanks to all of you!