

Community Update  
Aug. 10, 2021

- Good evening and welcome to the Roxbury Township Council meeting. I am Mayor Bob DeFillippo and on behalf of the Township Council, we appreciate that you have taken the time to join us tonight.

**COVID**

- We start tonight with a Covid report that none of us want to hear. The number of confirmed cases in Roxbury continued to climb at a rate that we have not seen in several months. Since our last meeting on July 27 – just two weeks ago – the number of cases in town went from 2,560 to 2,653. That's 57 new cases.
- Jim Craig, Roxbury's public health nurse, tells me that we are averaging about 5 cases per day. Even with that, Jim says we are doing much better than other parts of the country, which he points out is because a lot of people in our community have gotten vaccinated.
- We should all feel very good about that. Thank you to everyone who has already been fully vaccinated.
- Nevertheless, we are clearly in the grip of another surge. One that is hitting people who are largely unvaccinated and younger.
- As we work through this latest surge, we urge you to be careful when you are traveling to COVID-19 hotspots because we are experiencing cases of residents returning from vacation and testing positive.

- We strongly urge those who have not already done so to get vaccinated. Unvaccinated persons are at much greater risk of infection, and you will help to keep your families and community safe.
- It is also recommended that you wear a mask indoors regardless of vaccination status.
- Township Manager John Shepherd informs me we are reviewing and considering developing updated mask-wearing policies for Town Hall and Roxbury work sites, employees, and guests.
- Our goal is to continue to have all our township buildings open for employees as well as visitors. But we also need to ensure that employees and guests can be confident they are in the safest environment possible.
- More on that in the coming days. Meanwhile, let's stay safe and be smart about our health and the health of our families, friends, and community.

### **Lake Hopatcong Safety**

- Last Wednesday, I joined our first responders and Councilman Shawn Pottillo at the Lake Hopatcong Foundation offices at the beautifully restored Landing Train Station for a lake safety program.
- First responders from communities around the lake, including our own Roxbury Fire and EMS, joined the State Police and Morris County Sheriff Jim Gannon, to raise awareness about how to stay safe when using beautiful Lake Hopatcong.
- I want to thank our first responders for participating in this event, which was particularly important given how heavily the lake is being used this season.

- One of our concerns has been how few police patrols we have on the lake. And on Sunday, Kathy and I were reminded how important it is to have the lake patrolled by the State Police and Sheriff.
- On Sunday, we were near Liffy Island in Jefferson when the battery in our boat died. After trying every marina on the lake to get help or at least a tow, we learned there were no tow boats available on Sunday. Something I found remarkable and unacceptable, given how many boats were out.
- We then called the State Police and State Trooper Steven Kuhn responded and towed us back to our slip. He apologized for how long it took because there were only two patrol boats on the lake. He was professional and courteous, and we do not know what we would have done without his help.
- The State Police and the Sheriff, who patrol the lake, do so with insufficient resources. Given the large number of people who use the lake – the largest lake in New Jersey -- it is important that these agencies get the resources they need to do their jobs.
- And thanks to State Trooper Kuhn for his help.

### **Fireworks**

- I'm very excited to tell you that this Friday night, Roxbury will hold its annual fireworks display at Horseshow Lake. Doors will open on "the island" at 6:30 p.m. There will be food trucks and games.
- Entertainment begins at 6:45 p.m., with a special performance by Madison Pisani, a 20-year-old Roxbury musician and vocalist living and performing in Nashville. I know we are all very excited to hear this 2018 Roxbury High School graduate perform.

- The fireworks are scheduled to go off at about 9 p.m. or slightly after. I'm told by Steve Alford, who helped raise the money and organize the event, that the fireworks show will last about 25 minutes and will be spectacular.
- This was made possible by the generous contributions of our sponsors, who Kathy and I are proud to be among. Tonight, I would like to thank our sponsors on behalf of the Council. They are:
  - Alford Financial
  - Abrusci Team
  - Dr. Darshan Godkar
  - Dr. Viju
  - Fullerton Grounds
  - Gary Ribe
  - Kingtown Truck Stop
  - Legends Car Wash
  - Live the Lake
  - PJ Auto Body
  - Tim Smith & Family
  - Valley Pharmacy & Surgical Center
- It is this kind of community support that once again reminds us that Roxbury is a great place to live, work and raise a family. Please join your neighbors. We are looking forward to seeing many of you Friday night.
- Thank you again for joining us tonight. Now, back to our agenda.

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