



Indiana University of Pennsylvania



M.A. IN SPANISH



It's Just 10
The place where \$10 is the only currency.

SOUTH JERSEY

SUNNEWS



Around the Towns We're All Over

JAN 4, 2012 9:00 AM

Voorhees names goals for new year

BY MELISSA DIPENTO



Tweet 8

+1 Like Confir

Voorhees just closed the books on 2011, a year that charged the township with looking to trim its municipal budget by cutting costs and creatively sharing services, along with taking steps to make the township greener and working to appeal the arrival of a charter school in town.

The township will look to chart a similar course in 2012, by continuing to seek cooperative services with nearby municipalities and working to present a budget to taxpayers, reflecting cuts in spending and additional revenue.

Mayor Michael Mignogna said the first order of business in the New Year is to take a look at how the township can reduce spending while generating income. He said the township has made significant progress in recent years to pare down the budget.

“Over the last few years, township committee has worked hard to reduce spending while providing the quality services our residents expect and deserve,” Mignogna said. “There was no increase in the municipal tax.”

Mignogna said the main areas of cost savings have been realized in staff reductions and efficiencies throughout town hall.

“There are now 25 less full-time township employees than in 2006. We initiated a side-arm trash pick-up system and single-stream recycling, allowing our public works department to operate more efficiently. The planning and zoning offices have been reorganized, allowing more efficient operation with less people. The township recently partnered with an energy company, allowing us to purchase utilities directly from the providers and saving \$150,000 a year,” Mignogna said.

Additional revenue has also helped to stabilize taxes over the years, Mignogna added. He said the new Virtua Medical Campus on Route 73 created 1,000 new jobs and generated thousands in tax revenue. The Voorhees Town Center, he added, has brought in more foot traffic and additional revenue for the township, as well.



WALDEN UNIVERSITY
A higher degree. A higher purpose.

More choices, more opportunities.

Start Now
www.WaldenU.edu

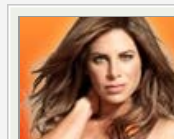
Follow Like Confir Follow +1

My Hometown

[Business](#) | [Crime](#) | [Entertainment](#) | [Families](#) | [Headlines](#) | [Politics](#) | [Schools](#) | [Sports](#) | [Voices](#)

Related Stories

- Politics** [Mayor reflects on Martin Luther King, Jr.](#)
Jan 6, 2012 8:30 am
- Entertainment** [Meet Miss Camden County](#)
Jan 4, 2012 8:30 am
- Politics** [Mignogna sworn in as Mayor of Voorhees](#)
Jan 3, 2012 3:30 pm
- Schools** [Letter: Get 'real' about the amount of money going to charter](#)
Dec 29, 2011 4:30 pm
- All News** [Goodbye, 2011](#)
Dec 28, 2011 8:30 am



From Jillian's Blog:
The worst diet offender is alcohol!
But if you order vodka or tequila



Multiply your money with penny stocks
Our free service will tell you which penny stocks can rise up to...

“The Voorhees Town Center is thriving with the addition of town hall, the Star Group, Rizzeri Spa and Day School, Coffee Works, Firecreek restaurant and Doghouse Gourmet Burgers. Other businesses opening soon include Spoon Me and the relocation of Catelli’s,” Mignogna said. “It’s becoming the ‘downtown’ we never had.”

The township also plans to seek out additional shared-service contracts this year to keep costs at bay.

Mignogna said township officials meet regularly with representatives from Cherry Hill and Evesham to explore new ways to share services and save money.

Last year, the township merged its dispatch system with Camden County’s dispatch, freeing \$400,000 in the municipal budget. The township also entered a trash-disposal agreement last year with Cherry Hill and six other county municipalities, saving Voorhees \$138,000 over 14 months.

Mignogna said the township is on the verge of signing a trash-removal contract with Laurel Springs and will continue to look for new cost-saving and sharing measures.

One shared service that will not be pursued this year, Mignogna added, is the proposed countywide police force.

“Not all shared-services agreements make sense for Voorhees. I am against Voorhees entering

the proposed countywide police force, since it would call for local tax dollars to be spent policing other municipalities,” Mignogna said. “I am very happy with

our police department and believe it is one of the finest in the state.”

A hot topic loomed large in 2011, by way of a charter school that gained state approval for opening in the community.

Mignogna said he and the township committee retain their position against the arrival of a charter school. The township has little say in the matter, as new charter schools are currently approved entirely by the state Department of Education.

“Local communities have no say in the process, even though funding for charter schools come out of local public school budgets. The charter school recently approved in the Ashland section of Cherry Hill expects to draw students from Voorhees, requiring \$727,000 to be set aside out of our local schools’ budget,” Mignogna said. “This will have a direct effect on the quality of education afforded by our schools.”

The township committee supports the Voorhees Public Schools’ decision to appeal the recently approval of the Regis Academy Charter School, Mignogna said.

“We will partner with the schools and local parent groups in their opposition to charter schools that affect Voorhees,” Mignogna said. “I encourage our residents to support the appeal of the charter school approval and to call on our state legislators



Mom Turns \$47 into \$6872

New Jersey: Mom spills secret on how she makes \$6872/mo part time

Ads by Pulse 360

to let residents have a voice in the charter school approval process.”

Another goal for 2012 is to increase sustainability efforts in the township.

Mignogna said preserving open space and repurposing land are big to-dos this year.

“I am very proud of our record of protecting the environment. With the upcoming purchase of the Ashland Woods 20-acre parcel, Voorhees will have preserved 223 acres of open space since 2003,” Mignogna said. “Last year, a former sewer plant was transformed into Hale Park. A former landfill is evolving into the Voorhees Environmental Park. Through a partnership with Rutgers University, this site will become a passive outdoor retreat for all to enjoy.”

Sustainable Voorhees is also picking up some speed with its recent Sustainable Jersey designation. The township will continue to work together with the volunteer group this year.

Overall, 2012 is looking up for Voorhees.

Mignogna said the township will focus not just on the budget, shared services, businesses and the environment, but also on activities that can bring neighbors together.

“Residents can expect the township committee to continue to work hard to stabilize taxes while providing a high level of municipal services. We will continue shared service programs, the improvement of our parks and recreation facilities and protecting the environment,” Mignogna said. “Free community events, such as our Summer Twilight Series, will continue to bring our residents together.”



About Melissa DiPento

If it happens in Cherry Hill, I want to know about it. I'm a South Philly resident/South Jersey suburbanite and will see the story first-hand, even if that means riding my single-speed bike along Route 70. I especially enjoy writing about politics and sustainability. | [View all posts by Melissa DiPento](#) →



The webpage cannot be f

Post to FacebookComment using...

Facebook social plugin

