



April 2015 Newsletter
South River Democratic Org.
P.O. Box 204
South River, NJ 08882

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UPCOMING EVENTS

VFW Calzone Dinners

Tuesdays & Fridays 6pm

Special Ed PTA Fundraiser

Mentalist Anthony Rose, April 11
SR High Auditorium, 7pm
Tickets: <http://bit.ly/1ApeSXs>

SAVE THE DATE Primary Election Day

June 2, 6am - 8pm

(Primary Voter Reg. Deadline May 12, visit
<http://bit.ly/1DbekBL> or contact us for more info)

SRD E M S . O R G

Sign up for our monthly newsletter email

the SOUTH RIVER *Progress*

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE SOUTH RIVER DEMOCRATIC PARTY

A Word From Our Chair

We're continuing our outreach efforts in 2015, and we'd like to invite you into the conversation. We hope this newsletter will foster open dialogue so we can ensure our borough's representatives pay attention to the community's voice. The South River Democratic Party has big plans for the year ahead, and we're looking for your support.

With the Mayor and Council majority in Republican hands, I believe the leadership in this town is not listening to resident concerns. All Republican members voted to raise your taxes *and* electric rates last year, placing an incredible burden on citizens. Last year these members said we couldn't find enough money as justification for their vote. Yet, at just the first meeting of this year, they miraculously found nearly a half-million dollars that could have gone back in *your* pockets.

I welcome your comments and concerns and will do whatever it takes to have your voice heard. Please, don't hesitate to call, email, or write me.

Thanks,



Tele Koukourdelis, Chairman
info@srdems.org (732) 955-2165

Inside this issue

A WORD FROM OUR CHAIR

HAUSSERMANN'S UPDATE

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STRESS FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY**

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Haussermann's Update

Councilman Shawn Haussermann is our Democratic Councilman running for reelection.

Mayor Krenzle— Bad ideas on top of terrible solutions leading SR in wrong direction

On New Year's Day, Mayor Krenzle demonstrated his "leadership" by proposing to increase taxes every year as a solution to our problems. That's his solution for town.

In March, his budget proposed an increase *even greater* than the State-allowed 2%! He would rather balance the budget on the backs of our working families of South River than cut back on his foolish spending.

After Sandy struck, News 12 interviewed Krenzle about the challenges ahead. I watched in disbelief as he stated, "The buildings will begin to deteriorate, and as they deteriorate people will look at it...the place will look junky, they won't be coming back...who wants to be in this area?" He gave no sense of even caring about our town.

When Councilman Roselli and I attempted to offer relief to the downtown businesses by using \$600k we had set aside for electric rate assistance, Krenzle urged the money be spent on his pet project instead. The Republican council used the money to buy a backup generator to power the DPW yard. To raise the additional \$400k, Republicans pushed the 20% electric rate increase through, further hurting the businesses and residents throughout the town.

Now Krenzle wants to hand developers our downtown, giving *them* 30-year tax breaks and leaving *us*—the remaining businesses and residents to pick up the tab. He even drafted a resolution to use Eminent Domain to take properties if owners refused to sell. What kind of development can we expect? The Lincoln School developer wants to build 20 or more multi-family units. Instead of tax smart development, he's encouraging development that only grows our school taxes, as families with children move in!

We remember the last time the Krenzle-Eppinger team led South River. They gave us the biggest tax and electric increases the town had ever seen. Just like that bad movie that didn't need a sequel, now we have Krenzle 2: Tax Us Some More!

Councilman Roselli and I left this year's Council with a surplus from last year's budget. Our CFO Mr. Zanga recently confirmed \$300k in Electric deposit funds and over \$160k in leftover Bond funds from the department. Take this surplus with the \$390k in debt service savings and the tax and electric rate decreases that Tom and I promised would be done today! But with Krenzle at the top, all we can count on is the highest taxes and electric rates we have ever seen.

It's time for a change!

Dems Welcome New Firehouse; Stress Fiscal Responsibility

By: Rui Almeida

In early March, demolition of the Knights of Columbus on Jackson Street began, which formally begins the construction phase of South River's new firehouse project. For several years, Democrats have welcomed the project with reservations, understanding the need for a suitable replacement to our existing structure that is in disrepair, while pushing for a fiscally responsible solution to the matter.

Much of the debate surrounding the new firehouse project has been confused by rhetoric. Last year in particular, Democrats called for a new firehouse that fit our town's budget. The opposition refused to discuss the finances, instead choosing to distract from this concern by pointing fingers suggesting we were opposed to a new structure being built.

When councilmen questioned the price tag of the project, Republicans claimed the \$10 million figure many attached to the project was a manufactured lie. However, as the project comes into focus, the minimum price tag being discussed for

just the construction of the building is billed at \$9 million, without accounting for furnishings, equipment, overruns, etc. Architects typically estimate such expenses to cost around 20% of the construction bill, which would make the \$10 million figure discussed last year on the low side of estimates.

Taxes and electric rates continue to rise in South River, with the GOP majority claiming that nothing can be done to curb these expenses. In fact, Mayor Krenzle continues to parrot his message that they're simply "planning for the future," without ever questioning whether their vision of the future matches that of residents.

You can be in favor of a firehouse without being in favor of writing a blank check that residents will be paying for well into the future. Our party is making every effort to fight these excesses. We continue to fight for a sensible firehouse that is appropriate for protecting a town of our size.

Democrats Donate More Than 100lbs of Food During Holiday Food Drive



Councilmen Haussermann and Roselli deliver food collected during holiday food drive to the South River Food Bank in December to replenish the pantry.

Get Involved. You Can Make a Difference!

By: Traci Mosser Alai

Show of hands: How many of us have ever complained about our town, our local government, or our services? But how many of us have attended a council or commission meeting, emailed or called a representative, written a letter to the editor, or somehow made our voices heard?

But this town depends on active community members to drive it forward. Do you have a role?

Getting involved can feel like a burden. Everyone's busy, time is precious, and we may feel our voice is not valued. But this town—and every town—depends on active community members to drive it forward. Do you have a role?

We'd like to challenge our fellow Democrats to get involved. We know you care about this town, and we need your voices and participation. Maybe you

don't have time to serve as a committee person, run for election, or be on a board.

But if you care about South River's future, we need you! Try attending just one meeting. Just show up. Listen. Ask a question. Tell your neighbors about what you learned. You may enjoy it! Below, you'll find a list of meetings open to the public. Locations are listed on first reference.

- 4/6: Economic Development Commission, 7:30 p.m., 61 Main St.
- 4/13: Borough Council, 7 p.m. 61 Main St.
- 4/14: Parks & Recreation Commission, 7 p.m., 55 Reid St.
- 4/15: Municipal Alliance Commission, 5 p.m. 61 Main St.
- 4/21: Board of Health, 6 p.m., 48 Washington St.

- 4/27: Planning Board, 7 p.m. 61 Main St. Cultural Arts & Heritage Commission, 7:30 p.m., 55 Appleby Ave. Borough Council, 7 p.m. Board of Education Budget Hearing, 7 p.m.
- 4/28: Mayor's Council on Aging, 12 p.m., 55 Reid St. Zoning Board of Adjustment, 7:30 p.m.
- 5/4: Economic Development Commission, 7:30 p.m.
- 5/5: Parks & Recreation Advisory Board, 7 p.m.
- 5/11: Borough Council, 7 p.m.
- 5/19: Board of Health, 6 p.m. Planning Board, 7 p.m. Cultural Arts & Heritage Commission, 7:30 p.m.
- 5/20: Municipal Alliance Commission, 5 p.m.
- 5/26: Borough Council, 7 p.m.
- 5/27: Zoning Board of Adjustment, 7:30 p.m.
- 5/28: Board of Education, 7 p.m.

Budget Not Televised; Tax Increase Hidden From Public?

By: Nicole Sansone

On March 7, the Republican controlled Council unveiled their budget proposal in an annual budget presentation given at a council meeting a few months into the year. This year's presentation is embroiled in controversy, given largely in part to the lack of transparency undertaken by the council in what many are suggesting was intentional. As residents are aware, TV35 broadcasts council meetings for the benefit of open governance and disbursement of information.

presentation was conducted on a date in which the TV cameras just happened to be "broken." Making this strange coincidence even more interesting is that the actual contents of the budget are pretty startling.

Some of the comments from the presentation appear to be laying the groundwork for numerous rate increases in 2015. With over \$35 million in revenues, and with plans to build a \$6.9 million firehouse (bringing the estimated total to over \$9 million thus far, without even breaking ground) the council seemed to suggest there would be a 3% tax increase for residents (about \$53 per home). Never

missing an opportunity, the Republicans are again blaming the past for these increases despite voting in favor of last year's budget.

There's also talk of raising parking rates and mercantile license rates. Councilman Trenga said, "Permit parking rates are too low." A few minutes later Borough Administrator Frederick Carr added, "It costs way more to process a Mercantile license than we get back with the fee. [Property Maintenance Inspector] Ronnie Zammit is looking at his fees. They are too low." He continued, "same thing with Liquor Licenses."

We can expect another year of spending with the GOP in charge.

We want to hear from you

Our party is listening to your concerns and we want to hear from you. If you'd like to get in touch with us or would like to get more involved, please rip off and return with any additional comments you may have.

Name: _____

Email: _____

Telephone: _____

Interested in getting involved? Yes

Mail To:

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