



BOROUGH OF NORWOOD

455 Broadway
Norwood, New Jersey 07648
Fax (201) 784-2270

James P. Barsa
Mayor
Email: norwoodboro@gmail.com

July 14, 2021

Dear Residents,

Tonight, the Council will be introducing an ordinance to opt out of allowing operations of any class of cannabis businesses within the geographical boundaries of Norwood. I am aware that there has been some misrepresentation of exactly what the ordinance entails as well as other borough concerns. I would like to correct and clarify certain discussion points that have been circulating so everyone has accurate information.

The borough has not issued two new liquor licenses. These are current license that are being transferred from one entity to another. The borough has not received or asked for any new liquor licenses.

The Daibes project on Livingston Street brings in tax revenue of approximately \$111,115.80 per year. The businesses that will be opening in this project, as well as at The Grande, will be bringing employment opportunities to the town.

New Jersey law does state that municipalities can enact a local cannabis tax. This tax cannot exceed 2% for cultivator, manufacturer or retailer and 1% for wholesalers. We cannot tax delivery services.

For a resident to see a decrease in their tax bill due to revenue brought into the borough, revenue has to be at least \$121,000.00. That \$121,000.00 is equal to one tax point which would result in an average tax decrease of \$55.00.

Approximately 60% of our residents voted to legalize marijuana in the State of New Jersey. The purpose of that vote was specifically regarding legalization, not for approval of cannabis-based businesses in town.

The decision of whether to permit or prohibit cannabis businesses of any kind in the borough has been discussed in detail at two prior Mayor & Council meetings. We heard from our Council members, Police Chief, and Borough Attorney as well as anyone from the public who wished to speak on the issue.

The municipality must decide no later than August 21st, as to whether we choose to opt out of allowing cannabis businesses to operate in town. I want to be clear, opting out does not mean the borough can never allow cannabis businesses in town. Opting out grants us the time to gather as much information as possible so we can make an informed decision. We can opt in anytime within the next five years. If we were to opt in before the August deadline, we are locked in.

We have reached out to municipalities in the Northern Valley and Pascack Valley area to see how those municipalities have voted on this issue. All of the towns that responded back in the Northern and Pascack valleys voted to opt out. For a complete list of the towns which were surveyed and their responses please contact the Borough Clerk's office.

It has always been my goal to represent the residents of this town to the best of my ability. We work for you. You voted to give everyone before you a seat at the dais. It is our job to represent your best interests and the best interests of the town we all call home. It is incredibly important to me that you have accurate information regarding all issues discussed and acted upon by myself and the Council. If at any time you have questions or would like to voice concerns please do not hesitate to speak at a meeting or come to me directly.

Vaccination Percentage

We currently have 61% of our residents with one dose of the vaccine and 55% of our residents are fully vaccinated.

July 4th Fireworks

Our 4th of July fireworks were even more spectacular than years past. Thank you to our police department, DPW, fire department and all the others towns that helped the event go smoothly. It takes us all working together as a team to not only hold these events, but to keep our town running in such a productive and efficient manner.

Administration

I know many of you, including myself, like to use apps to gain information and keep your daily life organized. There are different apps available that help with all aspects of your life, everything from weather updates to an exercise schedule. What I haven't seen before was an app that involved the town calendars that affect your life. We are always looking for ways to streamline the information we rely on daily, as well as keeping the borough moving forward in the 21st century. Over the past few months Councilman Foschino has been working closely with Burbio, an app that has all your important calendars in one place. Burbio is a free app to both the borough and the residents. With Burbio you can access the borough calendar, including all meetings, public school calendar, high school calendar and others with just the tip of your finger. You can also pick and choose which calendars you would like access to. I would like to thank him for taking the time to research this and for his continued communication with Burbio to have Norwood be a part of this service. You can find links for this app on our borough website and Facebook page or in the app store for both android and Apple devices.

Grant Writer

Also on tonight's agenda is discussion on hiring a grant writer. I started the Grant Writing Committee in January so we could get a better understanding of what services a grant writer would provide, the cost of these services and if it would be at all beneficial to the borough. I did not feel comfortable spending the boroughs money on a grant writer without having all the necessary information needed to move forward. We have interviewed two grant writing companies and will be contacting a third.

Recreation

Registration is currently open for the Norwood Raiders and Cheer, as well as Norwood Soccer. All registration links can be found on our borough website or the recreation Facebook page, Norwood NJ Recreation.

I would like to stress that the borough website and the borough Facebook page are the only sources for true and accurate information for borough business. On these pages you will not find opinions or personal views, but you will find correct information regarding all facets of the borough. If at any time you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact our Borough Administrator or myself directly.

Sincerely,

James P. Barsa
Mayor