

PRESS RELEASE
TOWNSHIP OF EDGEWATER PARK

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**BUDGETARY CONCERNS PROMPT EDGEWATER PARK TOWNSHIP
COMMITTEE TO MOVE FORWARD WITH LAYOFFS AND FURLOUGHS**

Due to economic reasons, the Township of Edgewater Park will be instituting layoffs and temporary layoffs. The layoffs are being instituted because of the deteriorating fiscal condition of the Township.

The Municipal Budget process for the past two years has been a very difficult and tedious task. In 2008 the township realized a \$192,584 loss in revenue due to the Governor's cuts in municipal aid. In 2009, this revenue was not reinstated and there was an additional loss of \$21,790 in municipal aid; this represents a cumulative loss over the last two year of \$406,958. Other revenue sources are also down due to lower interest rates on investments and declining permit and construction applications.

Effective June 2009 two public works employees and two crossing guards will be laid off. Township administration and school officials are working together so that the impact of the layoffs will be minimized as much a possible. Residents with school age children will be notified prior to the start of school in the September of the modified walking routes.

Other budgetary reductions included the non-appointment of a property maintenance inspector in 2008 and the recreation coordinator in 2009. Also in 2008 Township Committee eliminated the Director of Public Safety Position and created the position of Chief of Police; this was instituted to provide additional policing powers in an effort to provide optimum safety for our residents and officers. The Deputy Clerk position was not filled; duties transferred to the position of Tax Collector creating a part time Deputy Clerk position. The summer enrichment recreation program was also eliminated and holiday events are reduced to those that can be administered through volunteers.

Recently the Township also submitted a temporary layoff plan to the Department of Personnel instituting one day per month layoffs for employees in the administrative and public works departments. The one day per month closing of the departments is anticipated to run from July 2009 through June 2010. Once approval is received by the State closing dates will be listed in the Beverly Bee and on the township's web site.

Mayor Donna Mount stated, "The layoffs and furloughs are not by choice or the fault of township committee. Over the past several months, township officials met with CWA union representatives in an effort to avoid layoffs, but unfortunately negotiations reached an impasse and joint mediation was filed."

This year's local purpose budget is at a bare minimum; future budgets will continue to be difficult to address during this economic crisis. Shared services and grant funding opportunities are continuing to be explored. Efforts to negotiate and renegotiate employee contracts are ongoing. One of Edgewater Park's main resources is the dedication of our employees. The layoff action does not reflect upon any employee or any employee's work performance. Committee understands that this action is difficult, but the layoffs will help to address current budget and economic conditions. We are hopeful that the future will provide mechanisms to continue services, programs and activities.