

Pleasantville residents to see 5 cent tax rate decrease in proposed 2020 budget

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PLEASANTVILLE — City administrators introduced a \$31 million 2020 municipal budget Monday that will reduce the tax rate by 5 cents, officials said.

The City Council was told the assessed value of the city increased from \$764,000 to \$800 million, and the city underwent a revaluation last year, said Chief Financial Office Barry Ludy.

Homeowners with the average 2020 assessed value of \$101,465 would pay \$2,875 in municipal taxes under the new rate, Ludy said.

“We don’t know what will happen with the county and the schools,” said Ludy, who added the city told its department heads to not expect more money this year compared with last year. “Hopefully, as we go along, we will get more ratables.”

A public hearing on the budget has been scheduled for April 20.

Mayor Jesse L. Tweedle Sr. did not attend the meeting, but he released a statement afterwards.

“We (have been) very, very prudent about spending. From my department heads to my administrators to my finance committee group, we have been working very hard as far as trying to keep taxes down. It has culminated into a savings. I’m extremely, extremely happy. This is a historic event with our taxes decreasing,” Tweedle said.

Residents need to know the tax decrease didn’t just happen, Tweedle said.

“It happened because of hard work and dedication and commitment to our taxpayers,” Tweedle said.

With proposed development on Devins Lane and the Lakes Bay Area, City Administrator Linda D. Peyton said she hopes the municipal taxes will be stabilized for next year.

With Tweedle absent, Peyton spoke on his behalf.

In regard to the new coronavirus, a phone call over the weekend involved Gov. Phil Murphy, Tweedle and Atlantic City Mayor Marty Small Sr. Small and Tweedle recommended Bader Field in Atlantic City as a place where testing could take place in South Jersey if necessary, Peyton said.

All nonessential city workers are off and are being paid by the city for the next two weeks, Peyton said.

The seven-member City Council was practicing its social distancing as Councilmen Stanley Swan and Augustus Harmon participated in the meeting by phone. Council members sat with one chair between them, and

Councilman Lockland Scott sat on the lower level with Municipal Clerk Davinna P. King-Ali, not up on the dais with the other four council members.