

Report to the City Council of the Mayor's recommended Budget Calendar Year 2021

# Citizens Budget Advisory Committee (CBAC)



# Active Members of CBAC

Carl Fields Jr.

•appointed by Hon. Tency A. Eason

Catherine Stramps

•appointed by Hon. Tency A. Eason

Carol Perkins

•appointed by Hon. Harold J. Johnson

Deborah Bartley Carter

•appointed by Hon. Jamie Summers-Johnson

Janicea Jones-Vance

•appointed by Hon. Weldon Montague, III

Leonor Yong

•appointed by Hon. Weldon Montague, III

Sharief Williams

•appointed by Adrienne Wooten

Thomas Boran

•appointed by Hon. Harold J. Johnson

Zonasha Ward

•appointed by Hon. Clifford Ross

# CBAC Mission

The mission of CBAC as outlined in RESO: 188-2021- line 4  
“Whereas, the Municipal Council wishes to continue to increase public participation in the budgeting process and the difficult choices which have to be made while utilizing the talents of citizens with relevant experience and find new innovative ways and means of maintaining essential services, **with a view to ultimately lessening the tax burden;**”

**CITY COUNCIL**

**The City of Orange Township, New Jersey**

DATE April 6, 2021

NUMBER 188-2021

**TITLE: A RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING A CITIZEN'S BUDGET ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CBAC) FOR THE 2021 ANNUAL MUNICIPAL BUDGET PROCESS.**

**WHEREAS**, the Municipal budget process is extremely complex, governed by State laws and regulations and affected by Federal and State budgets as well as grant programs; and

**WHEREAS**, the revenues which support the Municipal budget come primarily from taxes; and

**WHEREAS**, the reliance on property taxes combined with the rising costs of services, the ever present demand for services and the inability to increase rates at will cause increasing pressure on municipal officials and on taxpaying citizens in making the hard choices to decrease services or increase taxes; and

**WHEREAS**, the Municipal Council wishes to continue to increase public participation in the budgeting process, both to further educate the public about the budgeting process and the difficult choices which have to be made while utilizing the talents of citizens with relevant experience and find new and innovative ways and means of maintaining essential services, with a view to ultimately lessening the tax burden; and

**WHEREAS**, the Municipal Council desires the expertise and advice of the citizens who have reviewed the budget book, reviewed the line item legal budget, attended the budget hearings, familiarized themselves with the local budget law and are willing and able to share their thoughts and expertise in a formal report to the City Council.


**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ORANGE TOWNSHIP**, is hereby authorized to appoint members to the City of Orange Citizen's Budget Advisory Committee for the 2021 Calendar Year Budget process to consult and advise the City Council in its annual municipal budgeting process.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that such committee shall consist of fourteen (14) members, each Council Member having recommended two members of the public who shall become members of the committee.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Board members shall meet with the Council Budget Consultant and the Council President to receive orientation to the budget process, and shall periodically meet with the Municipal Council to render their valuable insight, ideas, advice and recommendations.

Adopted: **April 6, 2021**

  
Joyce L. Lanier  
City Clerk

  
Kerry J. Coley  
Council President

# Opening Statement

The CBAC members strongly believe that the proposed calendar year 2021 budget does **NOT** meet the needs of the citizens of Orange.

A budget, besides being a tool, also serves as a guidepost for the direction of the city. We do not see any such objectives in this budget.

The CBAC members **DO NOT APPROVE** of the 2021 Municipal requested budget of **\$78,469,990**

An increase of **6.35%** from the 2020 initial requested budget of **\$73,782,205**



# Comprehensive Recommendations

The 2021 budget as it currently stands does not meet the needs of the residents of Orange, which include:

- make hard choices to decrease staff
- be more efficient with supplies
- reduce services
- find new and innovative ways and means of maintaining essential services, and
- lessening the residents tax burden.



# Detailed Suggestions

## Revenue increase

- Increase the commercial taxes revenue sources
- Recapture loss revenue due to nonfunctioning parking meters ( 27.7% of the city meters need repair)
- Establish a parking permit program
- Establish a municipal parking lot
- Recouping cost on maintenance on abandoned properties
- Prioritize the Library
  - Ex: city physical assets

## Expense reduction

- Eliminate the vacancies that total \$798,141.46 an increase of 58.9% from the total of 2020 vacancies \$502,199.04
- Freeze new hires and cap OT for nonessential workers
- Establish an overtime cap
- Increase cross municipal partnership
- Align budgets to so we can see all budgets with and without walk-ons



# Departmental Recommendations



# Department of Police

**This department has a proven trend of lowering crime and keeping the city safe**

- Renegotiate union contracts which have been **expired as of December 2020**
  - Reduce the multiple streams of stipends
  - Freeze on new recruits
- Efficiently manage the officers to resident ratio

# Water Operation

- provide more clarity around total operational spend and debt servicing

# Long Term Recommendations

## Propose CBAC as a standing committee

- The Administration as well as the City Council are charged with the responsibility of good stewardship regarding Orange residents tax dollars. The installation of the CBAC as a standing committee of the city council would be another step in the right direction to that end.
- All contracts that impact citizens funds should be as transparent as possible
- Department contracts and Memorandum of Agreement's should be provided to the CBAC since budgetary decisions are based upon the language within
- The members of CBAC, along with many residents request a Forensic Audit of the city budget.
  - A forensic audit would assure that taxpayers monies are being spent to the benefit of the citizens