

## **Maurice River, Commercial Get Extraordinary Aid**

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**Jean Jones**

**Bridgeton News**

MAURICE RIVER -- Two Cumberland County municipalities are among 39 statewide who are receiving extraordinary aid for property tax relief this year.

Maurice River Township will receive \$250,000 and Commercial Township will get \$240,000.

The awards were announced by Department of Community Affairs Acting Commissioner Charles A. Richman.

"Governor Corzine has worked tirelessly to ease the burden on New Jersey residents," Richman said. "His efforts have resulted in the lowest property tax increase in years. Extraordinary aid is just another way to ease that burden and ensure that local government can maintain services essential to their community."

Commercial Township Mayor George Garrison was surprised when The News asked for his reaction to the award.

"This is news to me," he said. "I'm completely surprised! I'm elated. I knew we had applied, but we had heard nothing."

Maurice River Township Mayor Andy Sarclette could not be reached for comment.

Extraordinary aid is awarded to communities who, because of extreme circumstances, would not be able to provide essential services to the community without a substantial increase in their property tax rate.

The community must have submitted an application to the Division of Local Government Services by April 1 of this year, detailing the municipality's fiscal condition and including information about its efforts to contain costs and share services.

This year's budget contained \$500,000 less than last year's funding for extraordinary aid.

The program is administered through the Department of Community Affairs Division of Local Government Services, which works with local governments throughout the state to ensure their fiscal integrity and to support their efforts to comply with state laws and regulations.

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