

Government that Works!

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BUDGET REVIEW

TOWNSHIP OF OLD BRIDGE

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GOVERNMENT THAT WORKS

OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHANGE

The Report of the Township of Old Bridge

New Jerseyans deserve the best government their tax dollars can provide. Governor Whitman is committed to making state government leaner, smarter and more responsive by bringing a common sense approach to the way government does business. It means taxpayers should get a dollar's worth of service for every dollar they send to government, whether it goes to Trenton, their local town hall or school board. Government on all levels must stop thinking that money is the solution to their problems and start examining how they spend the money they now have. It is time for government to do something different.

Of major concern is the rising cost of local government. There is no doubt that local government costs and the property taxes that pay for them have been rising steadily over the past decade. Prior to Governor Whitman's taking office in 1994, the state had never worked as closely with towns to examine what is behind those costs. That is why she created the Local Government Budget Review (LGBR) program. Its mission is simple: to help local governments and school boards find savings and efficiencies without compromising the delivery of services to the public.

The LGBR program utilizes an innovative approach combining the expertise of professionals, primarily from the Departments of Treasury, Community Affairs and Education, with team leaders who are experienced local government managers. In effect, it gives local governments a comprehensive management review and consulting service by the state at no cost. To find those "cost drivers" in local government, teams review all aspects of local government operation, looking for ways to improve efficiency and reduce costs.

In addition, teams also document those state regulations and mandates which place burdens on local governments without value-added benefits and suggest, on behalf of local officials, which ones should be modified or eliminated. Teams also look for "best practices" and innovative ideas that deserve recognition and other communities may want to emulate.

Based upon the dramatic success of the program and the number of requests for review services, in July, 1997, Governor Whitman ordered the expansion of the program, tripling its number of teams, in an effort to reach more communities and school districts. The ultimate goal is to provide assistance to local government that results in meaningful property tax relief to the citizens of New Jersey.

THE REVIEW PROCESS

In order for a town, county or school district to participate in the Local Government Budget Review program, a majority of the elected officials must request the help of the review team through a resolution. There is a practical reason for this: to participate, the governing body must agree to make all personnel and records available to the review team, and agree to an open public presentation and discussion of the review team's findings and recommendations.

As part of the review, team members interviewed each elected official, as well as employees, appointees, members of the public, contractors and any other appropriate individuals. The review teams examined current collective bargaining agreements, audit reports, public offering statements, annual financial statements, the municipal code and independent reports and recommendations previously developed for the governmental entities, and other relevant information. The review team physically visits and observes the work procedures and operations throughout the governmental entity to observe employees in the performance of their duties.

In general, the review team received the full cooperation and assistance of all employees and elected officials. That cooperation and assistance was testament to the willingness, on the part of most to embrace recommendations for change. Those officials and employees who remain skeptical of the need for change or improvement will present a significant challenge for those committed to embracing the recommendations outlined in this report.

Where possible, the potential financial impact of an issue or recommendation is provided in this report. The recommendations do not all have a direct or immediate impact on the budget or the tax rate. In particular, the productivity enhancement values identified in this report do not necessarily reflect actual cash dollars to the municipality, but do represent the cost of the entity's current operations and an opportunity to define the value of improving upon such operations. The estimates have been developed in an effort to provide the entity an indication of the potential magnitude of each issue and the savings, productivity enhancement, or cost to the community. We recognize that all of these recommendations cannot be accomplished immediately and some of the savings will occur only in the first year. Many of these suggestions will require negotiations through the collective bargaining process. We believe, however, that these estimates are conservative and achievable.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT BUDGET REVIEW
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
TOWNSHIP OF OLD BRIDGE**

Mayor/Council

The team recommends that council members not receive benefits from the township, saving \$43,506.

Clerk

By reducing the clerk's office staff by at least two clerical positions, the township could save \$79,512.

The team recommends that, in conjunction with the municipal attorney, either the clerk's staff or a contracting agency do the research necessary to create an accurate and complete municipal code at an expense of approximately \$10,000.

Administration

Budget

The team recommends that the township reexamine and reduce the amount of surplus generated each year to an amount equal to 10% of the budget, for a potential revenue enhancement of \$3,305,323.

Purchasing

Reducing cellular phone assignments from 21 – 10 and assigning beepers would save \$5,339, while costing \$485 for the beepers, for net savings of \$4,854.

Technology

A salary survey to identify appropriate salaries for the technology department staff may produce an expense of \$15,000. It is also recommended that the township fund technology training at an expense of \$50,000.

Health Insurance

The team recommends that the township negotiate either an across the board 10% premium co-payment or a 20% "other-than-single" premium co-payment for a potential savings of \$184,500 - \$214,000.

By renegotiating to increase deductibles and co-pay levels, and eliminate the first dollar benefits for HMO, the township could potentially save \$64,500. The township could potentially save an additional \$29,300 by renegotiating a three-tier co-pay with their employees.

Workers' Compensation

A review and appropriate revision of the estimated number of volunteer first aid and fire personnel will produce at least a 10% reduction in both numbers, saving \$5,000.

The team also recommends that the township review all employees categorized under the municipal worker category. By reclassifying municipal workers to the office worker classification, as appropriate, the township could save \$50,000.

Finance Department

The team recommends that the chief financial officer (CFO) request a monthly account analysis from each bank and competitively invest all balances, for a revenue enhancement of \$45,885.

Police

Patrol Bureau

The team recommends that the department equip all patrol vehicles with radar sets at a one-time expense of \$22,500.

By utilizing the entire year for vacations, the department could prevent minimum staffing overtime during the busy summer months for a productivity enhancement of \$37,258. The department could yield a potential productivity enhancement of \$46,177 by converting vacation days to hours that equal the eight-hour shift.

The team recommends that all officers be scheduled to work an average of 40 hours per week, before contract time off, for a potential productivity enhancement of \$450,423. The team also recommends that all other officers not assigned to the patrol bureau be scheduled to work an average of 40 hours per week, for a potential productivity enhancement of \$129,713.

By enforcing the current contract sections dealing with the verification of sick leave, the township could yield a productivity enhancement of \$111,555.

Establishing a written policy to direct callers to a private locksmith, unless it's an emergency circumstance, could create a productivity enhancement of \$6,076.

The team recommends that the department institute a differential response unit by training call takers/dispatchers to take these types of reports for a productivity enhancement of \$22,481.

Detective Bureau

The team recommends that the detective bureau become a bureau within the operations division and be commanded by a lieutenant, saving \$13,900. The team also recommends that the department institute a formal standby schedule for detectives, at an expense of \$8,000.

The department should consider dedicating a budget line item for the training or continuing education of the youth counselor, at an expense of \$1,000. It is also recommended that a second position be added and funded either through the board of education or a grant, at an expense of \$35,000 - \$50,000.

By trading the forfeiture cars in to a dealer to obtain vehicles that can be used by the department, the department could save \$6,300 by eliminating the need for the rental car.

Special Operations Bureau

The team recommends that the department discontinue the marine patrol and return the equipment to the owner, saving \$21,873.

Animal Control

The team recommends that the kennel be cleaned out to determine the amount of space needed to store supplies and equipment. If needed, the team recommends that the department rent a storage container at an expense of \$540.

Retrieving traps and controlling their use would produce an \$800 cost avoidance.

By not requiring employees to wear a uniform, there would be no need for a clothing allowance. If a uniform is required, the team recommends that the township begin a quartermaster system of issuing and replacing uniforms as needed to replace the cash allowance, saving \$700 - \$1,400.

The team recommends that the township have the clerk's office work with the police department to ensure that all dogs are licensed, for a revenue enhancement of \$30,921. The team also recommends that the township develop a plan to enforce the cat licensing law, for an additional revenue enhancement of \$17,000.

By contracting out for animal control services, the district could yield a net saving of \$27,937.

Emergency Response Team (ERT)

The team recommends that this team be disbanded and that the county SORT team be used for these types of events, for a productivity enhancement of \$27,220.

Cold Water Rescue

The team recommends that this unit be disbanded and the fire department assume this responsibility, which would yield a productivity enhancement of \$2,916 and a cost avoidance of \$1,000.

Emergency Management

The team recommends that the three cars currently dedicated to the Auxiliary Police be transferred to the office of emergency management, saving \$11,490.

Records

By eliminating the records foreman position and directing the various duties elsewhere, the township could save \$74,660. The team also recommends that the bureau be made part of the administration bureau and be supervised by a civilian supervisor, saving \$40,000.

Identification Section

The team recommends that this function report to the detective bureau commander and that all civilian prints be charged \$20 for a revenue enhancement of \$6,675.

The team also recommends that the department redesign the available office space and procure a down draft print table for a one-time value added expense of \$25,000. The department could save an additional \$5,280 by using one car in this section.

By adopting the options listed in the report, the department could save \$21,887 by reducing the overtime incurred by the two identification detectives.

Communications and Computers

The team recommends that the two full-time dispatcher positions be eliminated and replaced with two part-time positions, saving \$78,003.

By changing the dispatchers work schedule to an average workweek of 40 hours, the department could yield a potential productivity enhancement of \$68,240.

By calculating the sick time benefit into hours and ensuring that employees using sick leave are sick, the department could yield a productivity enhancement of \$27,578. The department could yield an additional productivity enhancement of \$18,028 by limiting the number of vacation days granted to 17 per month and by calculating the vacation benefit into hours, based on an eight-hour day.

The team recommends that the township discontinue the use of the old police number, saving \$12,780. It is also recommended that the control and use of cellular phones be directed in a policy issued by the chief and the number of phones be reduced by 11, saving \$12,418.

Administrative Bureau

The department could save \$99,809 by eliminating two mechanics positions. It is, also, recommended that the department budget for the replacement of 1/3 of its patrol fleet per year at an expense of \$34,000.

The team recommends that the marked car fleet be reduced and reassigned as indicated in the report, saving \$32,004, with a one-time revenue enhancement of \$14,000. The team also recommends that the unmarked fleet be reduced by eight owned cars, saving an additional \$36,576, with a one-time revenue enhancement of \$16,000.

It is recommended that the department request permission from the County Prosecutor to trade forfeiture cars for equal value cars to be used by the narcotics detectives, saving \$6,300. The team also recommends that one miscellaneous vehicle be eliminated, saving \$4,572, with a one-time revenue enhancement of \$2,000.

Traffic Safety

The team recommends that this function assume the responsibility of DARE and crime prevention to become a traffic/quality of life bureau, for a productivity enhancement of \$34,738. The team recommends that a lieutenant command this bureau, a sergeant supervise the traffic

enforcement section, and a sergeant supervise the crime prevention/DARE quality of life bureau. The team also recommends that a civilian traffic coordinator be hired, at an expense of \$35,000, to perform the civilian duties of this officer.

It is recommended that the department operate two motorcycles, at an expense of \$28,000.

Old Bridge Township Fire District #3

Facilities and Equipment

The team recommends that the district's equipment be reduced by two pumpers, one brush truck and one 75-foot ladder truck, for a one-time revenue enhancement of \$140,000.

Fire Prevention Bureau

It is recommended that the fire prevention bureaus for all four districts be consolidated into one, saving \$60,000.

Old Bridge Fire Districts

Facilities and Equipment

It is recommended that the fire apparatus for the entire township be reduced by an additional three pumpers, one rescue vehicle, an additional three brush trucks and an additional aerial truck for an additional savings of \$370,000.

Consolidation to One District

The team recommends that the township consolidate all four districts into one district, for a total savings of \$297,214. The team also recommends reducing the consolidated fund balance to \$200,000, for a one-time revenue enhancement of \$637,339.

The team recommends that two paid fire fighter vacancies be filled, only if the districts are consolidated and the fire fighters serve the entire township, at an expense of \$80,000.

EMS

It is recommended that, in subsequent contracts, the township negotiate a zero fee and receive reports of calls responded to in Old Bridge and revenue collected from Old Bridge residents, saving \$32,800.

By competitively contracting with a private company to cover the entire community full-time and negotiate revenue sharing after expenses, the township could save \$175,000 with a revenue enhancement of \$25,813. An alternative recommendation would be to have OBTEMS operate the entire EMS service as one unit and bill for service yielding a net revenue of \$300,000.

The team recommends that the township reduce the number of volunteer first aid squads from five to three, saving \$70,000. The team also recommends that the volunteer squad reduce their fleet of BLS units from eleven to six, for a one-time revenue enhancement of \$175,000.

Social Services

It is recommended that the latch key program reimburse the senior transportation program for the cost of the transportation provided for a revenue enhancement of \$23,439.

The team recommends that the municipality reconsider its decision to maintain its own welfare program and transfer the program to the county, saving \$46,575.

The team also recommends that the township add the public health program to the existing contract for health services, saving \$21,330.

The municipality could yield a revenue enhancement of \$18,840 by increasing health inspection fees.

It is recommended that the registrar function be moved to the clerk's office, saving \$32,458.

Community Development

Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)

It is recommended that the township carefully examine and analyze all CDBG related expenses to assure that they are being charged properly to the program, for a savings of \$25,575.

Engineering

The team recommends that the engineering department either competitively contract for engineering services or reduce its in-house costs to be competitive with the private sector, saving \$167,501.

By eliminating the project coordinator position and the technician responsible for updating the tax map, the township could save \$149,812.

Local Housing and Zoning Code Enforcement

The township could yield a revenue enhancement of \$40,000 by instituting a zoning fee of \$20 for permits reviewed by the zoning officer.

Public Works

It is recommended that, through attrition, the management of this operation be reduced by one manager and one foreman, saving \$159,600 - \$195,835.

By establishing and enforcing strict policies and procedures to reduce sick time usage, the township could yield a productivity enhancement of \$28,298.

The team recommends that the township purchase a state of the art computer system and appropriate software to track unit cost in all areas of public works and vehicle maintenance at a one-time expense of \$4,500.

By competitively contracting out for custodial services, the township could save \$63,185.

It is recommended that the township either reorganize the street sweeping function or competitively bid it to take advantage of market place efficiencies, saving \$119,914.

By successfully encouraging residents to compost brush and vegetative waste, the township could save \$52,464.

By reducing the public works fleet by one dump truck and two pickup trucks, the township could save \$8,175 with a one-time revenue enhancement of \$6,000.

By organizing a combined fleet maintenance operation within public works, the township could save \$32,690.

Recreation

It is recommended that the township coordinate the formation of an association to purchase insurance, electrical power, and field maintenance in bulk, saving \$14,956 - \$22,434.

Collective Bargaining Issues

By renegotiating a reduction in bereavement leave to three days, the township could yield a potential productivity enhancement of \$4,311.

The team recommends that longevity be negotiated out of the contract potentially saving \$146,418. The team also recommends that the township negotiate a contract for the rental of uniforms, potentially saving \$7,425.

**COMPARISON OF BUDGET APPROPRIATION, STATE AID
AND LOCAL TAX RATE WITH RECOMMENDED REDUCTIONS IN
THE TOWNSHIP OF OLD BRIDGE**

<u>Areas Involving Monetary Savings</u>	<u>One-time Savings/ Expense</u>	<u>Annual Savings/ Expense</u>	<u>*Potential Savings</u>	<u>Totals</u>
Mayor/Council				
Discontinue health benefits for council members		\$43,506		\$43,506
Clerk				
Reduce clerical staff by two clerical positions		\$79,512		
Create an accurate and complete municipal code		(\$10,000)		
				\$69,512
Administration				
One-time revenue enhancement from reduction in surplus			\$3,305,323	
Reduce cellular phone assignments from 21 to 10		\$5,339		
Assign beepers instead of cellular phones		(\$485)		
Conduct salary survey to increase salaries for technology department		(\$15,000)		
Fund technology training		(\$50,000)		
Negotiate a 10% co-payment or 20% "other-than-single" co-payment			\$184,500	
Negotiate an increase in deductibles			\$23,000	
Negotiate an increase in co-pay levels			\$17,800	
Eliminate the first dollar benefits for HMOs			\$23,700	
Renegotiate a three-tier co-pay			\$29,300	
Reduce estimated number of first aid and fire personnel		\$5,000		
Reclassify municipal worker category to office worker		\$50,000		
				(\$5,146)
Finance Department				
Revenue enhancement from competitively investing bank balances		\$45,885		
				\$45,885
Police				
Equip all patrol vehicles with radar sets	(\$22,500)			
Utilize entire year for vacations to prevent minimum staffing overtime		\$37,258		
Convert vacation days to hours that equal the eight-hour shift			\$46,177	
Schedule patrol bureau officers to work 40 hours per week			\$450,423	
Schedule all other officers to work 40 hours per week			\$129,713	
Enforce current contract sections dealing with sick leave		\$111,555		
Establish a written policy to direct callers to a private locksmith		\$6,076		

**COMPARISON OF BUDGET APPROPRIATION, STATE AID
AND LOCAL TAX RATE WITH RECOMMENDED REDUCTIONS IN
THE TOWNSHIP OF OLD BRIDGE**

<u>Areas Involving Monetary Savings</u>	<u>One-time Savings/ Expense</u>	<u>Annual Savings/ Expense</u>	<u>*Potential Savings</u>	<u>Totals</u>
Institute a differential response unit		\$22,481		
Place the detective bureau under the operations division		\$13,900		
Institute a formal standby schedule for detectives		(\$8,000)		
Dedicate budget line item for training and education of counselors		(\$1,000)		
Hire a second juvenile counselor		(\$50,000)		
Trade forfeiture cars in to a dealer		\$6,300		
Discontinue marine patrol and return equipment to owner		\$21,873		
Rent storage container for kennel		(\$540)		
Issue and replace uniforms instead of cash allowance		\$700		
Ensure all dogs in township are licensed		\$30,921		
Enforce cat licensing law		\$17,000		
Contract out for animal control services (net savings)		\$27,937		
Disband ERT team and use the county SORT team		\$27,220		
Disband cold water rescue unit		\$2,916		
Transfer auxiliary police vehicles to emergency management		\$11,490		
Eliminate records foreman position and direct duties elsewhere		\$74,660		
Make records bureau part of the administration bureau		\$40,000		
Charge \$20 fee for civilian prints		\$6,675		
Redesign available office space	(\$20,000)			
Procure a down draft print table	(\$5,000)			
Assign only one vehicle to identification section		\$5,280		
Reduction in overtime incurred by identification bureau detectives		\$21,887		
Replace two full-time dispatcher positions with part-time positions		\$78,003		
Change dispatchers' work schedule to 40 hours per week			\$68,240	
Calculate sick time in hours			\$3,213	
Reduce average sick time		\$24,365		
Limit number of vacation days granted		\$7,318		
Calculate vacation benefit in hours			\$10,710	
Discontinue use of old police number		\$12,780		
Reduce number of cellular phones by 11		\$12,418		
Eliminate two mechanics positions		\$99,809		
Budget for replacement of 1/3 of its patrol fleet per year		(\$34,000)		

**COMPARISON OF BUDGET APPROPRIATION, STATE AID
AND LOCAL TAX RATE WITH RECOMMENDED REDUCTIONS IN
THE TOWNSHIP OF OLD BRIDGE**

<u>Areas Involving Monetary Savings</u>	<u>One-time Savings/ Expense</u>	<u>Annual Savings/ Expense</u>	<u>*Potential Savings</u>	<u>Totals</u>
Reduce and reassign marked car fleet		\$32,004		
Revenue enhancement from sale of surplus vehicles	\$14,000			
Reduce unmarked fleet by eight vehicles		\$36,576		
Revenue enhancement from sale of eight vehicles	\$16,000			
Trade forfeiture cars for use by narcotics detectives		\$6,300		
Eliminate one miscellaneous vehicle		\$4,572		
Revenue enhancement from sale of vehicle	\$2,000			
Combine DARE and crime prevention with traffic safety		\$34,738		
Hire a civilian traffic coordinator		(\$35,000)		
Purchase and operation of two motorcycles for traffic safety unit		(\$28,000)		
				\$662,972
Fire District #3				
Reduce equipment as outlined	\$140,000			
Consolidate fire prevention bureaus into one		\$60,000		
				\$200,000
Fire Districts				
Reduce fire apparatus as described		\$370,000		
Consolidate all four districts into one district		\$297,214		
Reduce consolidate fund balance	\$637,339			
Fill two paid fire fighter positions if districts are consolidated		(\$80,000)		
				\$1,224,553
EMS				
Negotiate a zero fee in contracts for calls responded to		\$32,800		
Competitively contract with a private company		\$175,000		
Revenue enhancement from competitive contracting		\$25,813		
Reduce number of first aid squads from five to three		\$70,000		
Reduce volunteer squad fleet of BLS units from eleven to six	\$175,000			
				\$478,613
Social Services				
Reimburse senior transportation program for transportation provided		\$23,439		
Transfer welfare program to the county		\$46,575		
Add public health program to existing health service contract		\$21,330		

**COMPARISON OF BUDGET APPROPRIATION, STATE AID
AND LOCAL TAX RATE WITH RECOMMENDED REDUCTIONS IN
THE TOWNSHIP OF OLD BRIDGE**

<u>Areas Involving Monetary Savings</u>	<u>One-time Savings/ Expense</u>	<u>Annual Savings/ Expense</u>	<u>*Potential Savings</u>	<u>Totals</u>
Increase health inspection fees		\$18,840		
Move registrar function to the clerk's office		\$32,458		
				\$142,642
Community Development				
Examine all CDBG related expenses		\$25,575		
Competitively contract for engineering services or reduce in-house costs		\$167,501		
Eliminate project coordinator position		\$81,614		
Transfer tax map function to engineering staff eliminating one position		\$68,198		
Institute a zoning fee of \$20 for permits reviewed by zoning officer		\$40,000		
				\$382,888
Public Works				
Reduce staff by one manager and one foreman		\$159,600		
Establish and enforce sick time usage policy		\$28,298		
Purchase state of the art system and software to track unit costs	(\$4,500)			
Competitively contract out for custodial services		\$63,185		
Reorganize or competitively bid street sweeping services		\$119,914		
Encourage residents to compost brush		\$16,204		
Encourage residents to compost vegetative waste		\$36,260		
Reduce public works fleet by one dump truck and two pickup trucks		\$8,175		
Revenue enhancement from sale of trucks	\$6,000			
Organize a combined fleet maintenance operation within public works		\$32,690		
				\$465,826
Recreation				
Purchase insurance, electrical power and field maintenance in bulk		\$14,956		
				\$14,956
Collective Bargaining Issues				
Renegotiate a reduction in bereavement leave to three days			\$4,311	
Renegotiate to eliminate longevity			\$146,418	
Negotiate a contract for rental of uniforms			\$7,425	
Total Recommended Savings	\$938,339	\$2,787,868	\$4,450,253	\$3,726,207

**COMPARISON OF BUDGET APPROPRIATION, STATE AID
AND LOCAL TAX RATE WITH RECOMMENDED REDUCTIONS IN
THE TOWNSHIP OF OLD BRIDGE**

<u>Areas Involving Monetary Savings</u>	<u>One-time Savings/ Expense</u>	<u>Annual Savings/ Expense</u>	<u>*Potential Savings</u>	<u>Totals</u>
*\$4,450,253 not included in savings of \$3,726,207.				
Total Amount Raised for Municipal Tax 1999				\$18,448,886
Savings as a % of Municipal Tax				20%
Total Budget				\$39,885,003
Savings as a % of Budget				9%
Total State Aid				\$7,794,562
Savings as a % of State Aid				48%

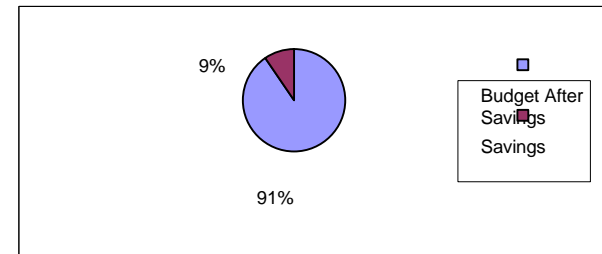
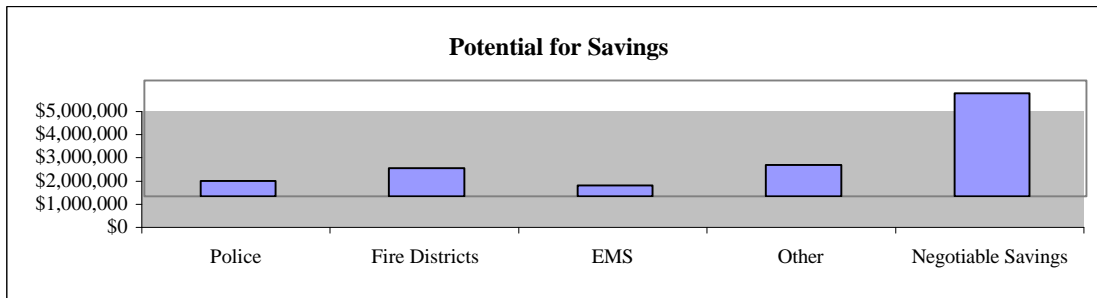


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COMMUNITY OVERVIEW

The Township of Old Bridge is 38 square miles with a 1998 estimated population of 61,000, an estimated 8% increase over 1990 census figures. It is 30 miles south of New York City and is located conveniently to both the Garden State Parkway and the New Jersey Turnpike.

The township's property is an estimated 84% residential, 10% commercial and 6% other. There are 1,258 vacant parcels and a total of 17,670 parcels valued at \$2,839,507,409. 1989 median household income was \$47,482.

The fiscal year 2000 budget totaled \$40,658,468, increasing from \$39,885,003, or 1.9% over the FY99 budget. The amount to be raised by taxes was decreased from \$18,448,886 to \$15,893,828, or by 16%, in FY00 through the realization of a one time revenue in the form of unused reserves for pending tax appeals.

The staff included approximately 250 full-time, 145 part-time and almost 200 temporary employees over the course of FY99.

Old Bridge is fortunate because its geographic size, its population, and its tax base size and growth are such that service delivery can be cost effective. In addition, it has reasonable economic stability and has developed an impressive level and variety of services that seem appropriate to the population. Despite these attributes, the community suffers from a fundamental malaise caused by two characteristics -- decades old political infighting and pettiness and a failure on the part of the entire municipal government system to realize and adapt to the fact that it is not a small rural community anymore. The significance of these facts has grown incrementally in Old Bridge in concert with its budget and its population. Although, as a team we cannot give you a dollar figure, we can say with certainty that this malaise is costing the taxpayers and that cost will continue to grow. We can also say that many of the recommendations and observations we make throughout this report are remedies to the issues caused by these characteristics.

I. BEST PRACTICES

A very important part of the Local Government Budget Review report is the Best Practices section. During the course of every review, each review team identifies procedures, programs and practices, which are noteworthy and deserving of recognition. Best practices are presented to encourage replication in communities and schools throughout the state. By implementing these practices, municipalities and school districts can benefit from the Local Government Budget Review process and, possibly, save considerable expense on their own.

Just as we are not able to identify every area of potential cost savings, the review team cannot cite every cost-effective effort. The following are those best practices recognized for cost and/or service delivery effectiveness.

Temporary/Part-time Employees

The township is commended for its use of temporary and part-time employees. These mechanisms help resolve misuse of personnel but, also, can be time intensive. Having temporary crossing guards or bus drivers prevents the use of police officers or cancellation of routes, both of which are costly, either in terms of service or dollars. In addition, these individuals provide a pool of potential, proven, recruits. Part-time employees are especially useful for positions where the hours that need coverage are not the typical weekday 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. hours, such as for the library and recreation department.

Youth Counselor

Working within the juvenile section of the detective division of the police department is a civilian youth counselor. The program is open to Old Bridge residents under the age of 18. This program gives officers a third option when dealing with kids. The program has:

- Reduced the youth recidivism rate from 83% to 6 - 7% for 20 years.
- Reduced handling of cases from the seven-month backlog in the court system to 10 days.
- Worked closely with schools with 15% intervention referrals from school counselors.
- Returned \$25,000 to victims, with 10 - 15% being returned to the schools for vandalism through the restitution program.
- Intervened in drug cases much sooner than the courts can get to them. Drug-related cases are mandated to be referred to court but are referred to the youth counselor so, by the time the seven month wait for a court date is over, the child has had the benefit of counseling and rehabilitation as needed and has avoided additional trouble.

Latch Key Program

Through the recreation department and using Old Bridge public school facilities and the senior transportation program, before and after school care is provided to 400 students at no cost to the taxpayer and at below market cost to parents. Many communities provide before or after school programs. However, this one is exemplary because it is operated effectively at low cost.

II. OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHANGE/FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this section of the report is to identify opportunities for change and to make recommendations that will result in more efficient operations and financial savings to the municipality and its taxpayers.

In its study, the review team found the municipality makes a conscious effort to control costs and to explore areas of cost saving efficiencies in its operations. Many of these are identified in the Best Practices section of this report. Others will be noted, as appropriate, in the findings to follow. The municipality is to be commended for its efforts. The review team did find areas where additional savings could be generated and has made recommendations for change that will result in reduced costs or increased revenue.

Where possible, a dollar value has been assigned to each recommendation to provide a measure of importance or magnitude to illustrate cost savings. The time it will take to implement each recommendation will vary. It is not possible to expect the total projected savings to be achieved in a short period of time. Nevertheless, the total savings and revenue enhancements should be viewed as an attainable goal. The impact will be reflected in the immediate budget, future budgets, and the tax rate(s). Some recommendations may be subject to collective bargaining considerations and, therefore, may not be implemented until the next round of negotiations. The total savings will lead to a reduction in tax rates resulting from improvements in budgeting, cash management, cost control, and revenue enhancement.

MISSION STATEMENT

A mission statement is a valuable and integral tool when it is developed with the consensus of all that live by it and when it is known and applied by all in their everyday actions. The Township of Old Bridge does have a mission statement (See Appendix 1) that was adopted by council. This particular mission statement is a page long and was presented by a council member and adopted by council. It was not referred to by anyone during our review.

The process of developing a mission statement, agreed to by a cross section of those that would implement it, in and of itself has the value of increasing the cohesiveness of the organization. In addition, it needs to be familiar to all staff and elected officials and incorporated into their approach to their responsibilities.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that a planning process be implemented that includes the mayor, representative council members, representatives of all departments and all levels, and citizens and begins with the development of a mission statement that incorporates the perspectives of all affected parties.

MAYOR/COUNCIL

Old Bridge Township operates under the mayor/council form of government as provided in the Optional Municipal Charter Law. The mayor is elected for four years and nine council members are elected to staggered four-year terms. There are six council members elected from wards and three at-large council members.

The part-time mayor's staff consists of a full-time secretary. Salaries and benefits for the mayor and her secretary totaled \$65,129. At \$15,000, the mayor's salary is consistent with those of other mayors in Middlesex County. Other expenses for the mayor's office totaled \$14,351.

Team members observed just one council meeting, which was a combined business/agenda meeting. The observation to be made from that meeting was that too much was attempted to be addressed at one meeting. The result was that many items were tabled and postponed. The team concedes that this particular meeting could have been an exception, however, 14 of 24 sets of meetings are combined meetings. It is recommended that the mayor, council and clerk's offices work to develop a process that increases the productivity of the meetings.

The municipal code requires that, with the exception of emergencies, all agenda items be submitted by Thursday 2:00 p.m. prior to the meeting, which is held on Monday. In emergencies, code indicates that either the mayor or the council president may add an agenda item. One suggestion would be to delineate the process more clearly and have the agenda deadline be the Tuesday morning before the agenda meeting or one week before the date when the agenda meeting would be held.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the mayor, council and clerk's office work to develop a process that increases the productivity of the council meetings. One suggestion would be to delineate the process more clearly, include realistic deadlines, and make time for an information gathering process.

It is recommended that specific parameters be established delineating an emergency for purposes of adding an item to the agenda and that such items be added with the approval of both the council president and the mayor.

There are nine members of council and the council president is elected at the reorganization meeting each year. The council president runs the council meetings and, in his/her absence, the council vice president runs the meetings.

The council member salary was established at \$6,000 for FY99 with the council president receiving \$7,000. Some council members do receive health benefits. For FY99 the total salary and benefit cost of the council was \$108,660. Health benefit costs totaled \$43,506 or an estimated \$7,500 per council member or 125% of the council member's salary cost. Council salaries are consistent with those of similar communities.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that council members not receive health benefits from the Township of Old Bridge.

Cost Savings: \$43,506

Other expenses for FY99 were \$63,236. \$24,410 was encumbered for a survey regarding the library. \$30,000 was encumbered for a master plan update by Sheehan Consulting. Other expenses included eight \$1,000 donations to senior citizen organizations and the remainder was expended on dues and fees related to the Chamber of Commerce.

CLERK

The clerk's office is staffed by the municipal clerk, a deputy clerk, an assistant deputy clerk and three stenographers. Total salary and benefit costs for FY99 were \$323,899. Other expenditures were \$135,684. Of that amount, \$32,000 was for advertising; \$54,898 was for postage, \$20,000 for a legislative aide; \$9,500 for printing. The office collected more than \$182,000 in FY99 for all licenses and fees.

In a recent survey of communities, we identified one community that operates the registrar function, all clerk and council support functions, as well as, significant community relations efforts, with a total staff of six. Licensing fees collected by this entity were in excess of \$275,000. Population served is significantly larger than Old Bridge's, with more than 65,000 in 1990, or more than 72,000 in 1998.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the clerk's staff be reduced by at least two clericals.

Cost Savings: \$79,512

Council has the authority to hire the staff of the clerk's office. Recently, they made a decision to hire someone from the outside as deputy clerk over four long-term employees. Although this is within its rights, the council's action augments fragmentation and discourages professionalism.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the mayor, the council and the administration develop and commit to following procedures and policies for hiring and promotion consistently, for all hiring and promotion within the township.

The registrar function is currently under the Department of Health and handled by one clerical. In CY99 there were 2,254 total deaths, births, and marriages. With 260 work days, this averages to less than ten transactions per day. It is recommended that the registrar function be moved to

the clerk's office, with no additional staff. Revenues from this operation totaled \$19,430 in CY99. Savings would be the position value of \$32,458, which is accounted as a savings in the health section.

Code

The municipal code has not been recodified since 1973. Copies available were difficult to follow and incomplete. The recodification has been completed by a contracting agency. However, the document, delivered in March, 1999, has never been adopted by council. In addition, there are items not in the code that have been lost. While we were able to find an ordinance creating the first fire district and references in later ordinances to the other three, the ordinances creating each of the districts have not been found and have not been codified. The 1973 adopting ordinance did specify that any omissions relating to the fire districts did not constitute a repeal of the authorization of fire districts. The disagreement over adoption of the code related to changes made by the municipal attorney to create consistency with the current form of government, which was adopted in 1984, after the last recodification.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that in conjunction with the municipal attorney, either the current clerk's staff or a contracting agency do the research necessary to create an accurate and complete municipal code and steps be taken to automate the process within the clerk's office.

Value Added Expense: \$10,000

Professional Services

The team identified eleven completed professional service contracts totaling \$186,973 for FY99. All but four had "not to exceed amounts." There were no contracts for the public defender or the prosecutor because they are on payroll. Engineering contracts totaling close to \$80,000 were awarded to one firm in FY99. Contracts for legal services were limited to special purposes such as planning board and board of adjustment support, foreclosures, and rent stabilization. The municipal attorney is effective in monitoring contracts and charges. However, several attorneys were identified that did not have contracts or resolutions on file in the clerk's office.

Overall, it appears that the use of resolutions and contracts for professional services is inconsistent.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that all professional services be performed in accordance with a contract and resolution that include rates of pay and "not to exceed amounts."

The municipal clerk's office plays a significant part in the democratic process. It is in the clerk's office that the public can gain access to all information pertaining to the operation of their local government and their taxes. The clerk's office can also play a significant role in developing and providing access to the agenda. This particular office is over staffed and still not accomplishing its statutory mandates.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the council president and the council work with the clerk to develop a plan for consistently meeting its statutory mandates in a cost-efficient and responsive manner.

ADMINISTRATION

The department of administration is lead by the mayor-appointed business administrator. The function consists of the business administrator’s office, legal, insurance, human resources and purchasing and budgeting. The administrator is responsible for the day to day operations of the township and negotiates significant relationships, such as, with insurance carriers. The administrator’s staff consists of two secretaries, a purchasing assistant (75%), and a data entry operator, who also serves as a receptionist. The cost of the business administrator’s office is \$235,964 in salary, wages and benefits.

The business office has recently taken on the task of issuing passports. As long as the revenues pay for the time consumed and it does not interfere with municipal operations, it is a pleasant convenience for the residents.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Throughout the review, the team has seen and heard a great deal about conflict over who is in control. This infighting has created a malaise and a lack of accountability that can be resolved with the decision to use the administration staff and functions to set the township in a direction that is positive and has, as its sole purpose, the well being of the residents of the community. For this to occur, the council and the mayor must reach an agreement that gives the business administrator the ability to establish procedures consistent with policies that create an atmosphere of accountability. The discussions of the specific administrative functions provide examples of how this needs to be accomplished.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the council authorize the administration to develop a process that includes representatives of all interests including the mayor, council, and administration, to develop policies relating to all administrative functions that will apply consistently to all departments and functions.

BUDGET

The budget is prepared by the finance director and the budget director and has been introduced on time – July 15th – for six years. No costs are attributed to the budget function because it is so thoroughly integrated with the ongoing operations of the municipality. The budget document is informative showing prior year budget and expenditures as well as current year actions by

administration, mayor and council. In addition, a budget presentation package is prepared that addresses all major issues and concerns in the budget including major increases and reductions in expenditures and revenues, level of state aid and grant funding.

Old Bridge is commended for its informative and detailed presentation of its budget.

The FY00 budget totaled \$40,658,468 increasing from \$39,885,003 or 1.9% over the FY99 budget.

Revenues

Budget revenue estimates are very accurate with the exception of three general revenue items:

- fees and permits;
- interest and cost on taxes; and
- UCC fees.

Each of these items is dependent on the national and local economy and therefore cannot be predicted with complete accuracy.

The other two significant items that affect the revenue and year-end surplus are the use of surplus and the calculation of the reserve for uncollected taxes. Over the past three years the township has generally generated the same amount of surplus that it appropriates and this is a sound practice. In FY98, surplus generated and appropriated were \$6,754,954 and \$6,475,000, respectively. In FY99, surplus generated was \$6,831,777 and surplus anticipated was \$6,791,000. The FY99 surplus was 22% of the budget. In 1998 and 1999, a higher collection rate than estimated generated at least half of the addition to surplus. The actual taxes collected exceeded the budgeted amount to be raised by taxes by \$2.5 million in 1999 and \$3 million in 1998. In 1997, surplus generated by tax related revenue was a little less than \$150,000. The budgeting practices employed in 1999 and 1998 are conservative and possibly appropriately so given the financial history of the township. Some thought should be given to reducing the size of the surplus generated and expended each year since it amounts to 17% of the total general appropriation. Ten percent would be more appropriate and could be accomplished by tightening up revenue projections and budgeted expenses and possibly increasing the projected tax collection rate.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the size of the surplus generated each year be reexamined and reduced to an amount equal to 10% of the budget.

Potential One-time Revenue Enhancement: \$3,305,323

In FY00, Old Bridge enacted a budget that used \$3.2 million in lapsed reserves to lower the tax rate. While lowering the tax rate is commendable, it can, over the long term, lead to financial instability since it is quite likely that elected officials will be reluctant to raise taxes to replace

the one-time revenue next year. When such revenues become available, the more prudent approach would be to earmark it for one-time costs such as reducing debt incurred for capital projects.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the township not use significant one-time revenues to reduce the tax rate but, instead, use it for a one-time expenditure.

Expenditures

Actual FY99 expenditures were \$38,828,157 with \$1,317,069 or 3% of the budgeted amount in reserves. In 1998, \$1,117,725 of \$1,341,069 or 83% in reserves lapsed. In 1997, the experience was similar with \$1,488,608 of \$2,125,160 in reserves lapsing or 70%.

Accountability

The budget can be used to assure accountability on the part of all department heads and operating entities by assuring that a department's budget is clearly, tightly and strictly established to fund the specific activities it plans and the council has directed it to carry out over the year. It was indicated by the mayor and administration staff that they have improved the accountability for expenditures through the creation of more clearly defined line items and a reduction in catch all miscellaneous accounts. Once the budget is so developed there must be a purchasing process that enforces and monitors the budget.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the finance officer cancel the appropriations before the end of the year in order to realize the surplus sooner.

It is recommended that expenditures be budgeted more closely in order to have more control over the use of appropriated tax dollars.

PURCHASING

The purchasing function is staffed by a director of budget/purchasing, a secretary (60%) and a purchasing assistant, who actually works in administration generally, spends approximately 25% of his time on purchasing related functions. The person currently in this position is relatively new and becoming familiar with the systems and budget and is expected to be increasingly effective in enforcing expenditures in strict compliance with the delineated budget. The salary costs of this function total \$79,233.

Office Supplies

There is consolidated ordering of office supplies that is managed by the purchasing assistant. This is commendable, as it can begin to be used to get better prices and to control expenditures. The purchasing assistant is just beginning to track office supply expenditures by operating entity. This tracking will give the administration better information about what is purchased and by

whom. In the most recent office supplies purchasing agreement they were able to increase the discount by 2%. The office supplies budget was decreased by \$10,000 from FY99 to FY00.

The purchasing secretary has centralized the maintenance contracts for copiers with one primary vendor and has increased copy allowances and decreased the per copy charge. The estimated minimum savings in FY00 is 5% or at least \$700.

The fixed asset inventory is maintained by the purchasing assistant and verified, with the purchasing secretary's assistance, by department heads, on an annual basis.

Cell Phones

In the police department the team identified 35 cell phones, including nine spares and one attributed to the business administrator. Total FY99 expenditures reported were \$32,690. Another \$9,708 in mostly non-budgeted charges, was identified for cell phones in various departments, including, treasury and engineering. The total identified expenditures for cell phones, according to the FY99 expenditure report, were \$42,398 for 55 phones. The current monthly charge is \$28.55 for 300 minutes. This means public officials in Old Bridge have access to 16,500 minutes of airtime. Airtime in FY99 was 150 minutes per phone or a total of 8,250 minutes. The police department now handles all cell phone bills. The explanation for this is the police then receive the benefit of airtime unused by the administration staff.

An examination of one month's worth of bills validates the recommended reduction in cell phones and, also indicates, with three exceptions, administration users limit the use of the phones to well under the 1999 150 minute limit. Documentation provided by purchasing does not include identification of a phone for the finance director but bills show up in the expenditure account for him.

In addition to cell phones, the township has issued 41 beepers at a cost of \$9.99 per quarter or \$39.96 annually. Twelve of the individuals with beepers have cell phones. In most circumstances, one or the other should suffice. Some of the individuals with cell phones are clearly inappropriate, such as, the data processing director. In other cases, the circumstances are less clear cut.

The council should develop a policy establishing the circumstances under which a township owned cell phone is appropriate and establishing the rules for use of a township owned cell phone. The team has estimated that the number of administration cell phones can be reduced from 21 - 10. The savings would be at least \$4,854 by replacing cell phones with beepers where there isn't one. Police department cell phone assignments are addressed in the section on the police department.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that a policy be developed delineating the circumstances under which assignment of a cell phone is appropriate and outlining rules for use of a cell phone by any and all employees of the township.

It is recommended that current cell phone assignments be reviewed and reduced. The team believes that the current administration assignments can be reduced from 21 - 10 and, where the party has no beeper, a beeper could be assigned.

**Value Added Expense: \$485 (seven beepers)
Cost Savings: \$5,339 (11 fewer cell phones)**

Through the purchasing process approvals should be designed to assure that the appropriate lines have been charged and that the purchases were included as part of the budgeted amount. Since Old Bridge already has a budget/purchasing director, this should be easily implemented with existing staff.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the mayor, council and business administrator explicitly give the purchasing director the authority to strictly enforce the established budget.

HUMAN RESOURCES

The human resources function is staffed by a director of human resources and a secretary. Total salary and benefit costs for this function in FY99 were \$108,097. Total other expenses were approximately \$6,000. \$2,000 was for an employee recognition event and \$4,000 was for professional services related to required immunizations and pre-employment physicals. Staff includes more than 250 full-time employees, 145 part-time and temporary and, approximately, 200 seasonals are hired over the course of one year.

The municipal code section 2 - 11.5 states that the responsibilities of this office are, under the direction of the business administrator, to develop and administer a sound personnel system and to keep and maintain all personnel and health insurance records. Specifically, the office is responsible for all state and federal mandated training: workers' compensation, disability, cobra, active employee health insurance, retirees health insurance, police, fire, and EMS life insurance, safety committee, liaison to school district for placement of students, recruiting, hiring, processing and orienting employees, oversight of evaluation process and development of job descriptions.

Job Descriptions

Job descriptions are not consistently maintained. While there are descriptions for most positions, they are not up-to-date or do not reflect the job being performed. The value of accurate and up-to-date job descriptions lies in the fact that it creates a baseline for accountability.

Employee Evaluations

The township does require employee evaluations on the employee's anniversary date. The form used was adapted from a human resources catalog. The human resources director sends out the evaluation to department heads prior to the anniversary date of the employee. The evaluations had been completed inconsistently at the time of the team's review of the personnel function. However, the business administrator has requested a review of the form in order assure that it is relevant.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that a cross-section of employees, administration and the council develop a form that meets the staff development needs of the township and that appropriate training be implemented.

It is recommended that evaluations be completed consistently and that job descriptions be developed and updated in conjunction with this process.

Recruitment/Hiring

The departments generally do the hiring while the personnel office assists with advertising and compliance as well as processing the new hires. It seems that the personnel department could play a more active role in staff development not only in terms of training but also in terms of promoting and enriching the responsibilities of existing employees. There are several examples of failed promotions or hiring from the outside over tenured employees. Both of these issues could be addressed with comprehensive staff development and accountability. This is a natural and significant role for a human resources officer.

In addition, a story was told of the hiring of a part-time employee by a division without the approval signature of the administrator. The person appeared at work and was added to the payroll. For this to occur, several individuals had to have believed that they could bend or ignore procedures or rules with impunity. In fact, they did.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the council, mayor and administration develop a comprehensive recruitment and hiring policy and procedure that governs all departments, including, police and the clerk's office, and emphasizes professionalism and public service. Accomplishment of such changes may require revisions to the municipal code. Such a policy should include sanctions for disregard of such policies.

Temporary/Part-time Employees

The township is commended for its use of temporary and part-time employees. These mechanisms help resolve misuse of personnel but also can be time intensive. Having temporary crossing guards or bus drivers prevents use of police officers or cancellation of routes, both costly either in terms of service or dollars. In addition, these individuals provide a pool of potential, proven recruits. Part-time employees are especially useful for positions where the hours that need coverage are not the typical weekday 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. hours such as in the library and recreation department.

Employee Assistance Program

The employee assistance program covers 288 employees for \$2.50 per month per year with a 10% discount, bringing the cost to \$7,776 for FY99. Forty-nine individuals contacted the EAP in FY99. This brings the cost to approximately \$159 per contact.

Personnel Manual

There is currently not an up to date personnel manual. Policies are published and distributed as necessary. The labor attorney has drafted a new set of personnel policies. There is a section of the administrative code, which covers compensation, and other issues for employees not covered by a collective bargaining agreement.

Sick Leave/Compensatory Time Liability

The township does monitor accrued liabilities for sick leave time, compensatory time and vacation time and currently funds 32% of the total liability, which is approximately \$5.7 million. Steps have begun to be taken to reduce the liability accruing from accumulated sick and vacation time and the current policies and changes will be discussed as part of the evaluation of the collective bargaining agreements.

There is a clear statement of policy regarding compensatory time which was adopted and implemented in December, 1999 and affects all management employees. Accrued compensatory time is held by 158 employees and totals \$663,225. Civilian compensatory time has accumulated to as much as \$31,000 for one individual and police compensatory time has accumulated to as much as \$56,000 for one individual.

Employee Database

With the number of employees in the township and the high number of temporary and seasonal employees, a comprehensive employee database with modules that can interface with payroll and finance/budget would be invaluable in improving the township's ability to track its expenses and the progress of its employees.

Recommendation:

Acquire a comprehensive employee database program that can interface with the budget and finance programs.

Accountability

Various opinions were offered about the value of a personnel staff. The size of Old Bridge's staff warrants a personnel officer. The function needs to be elevated from a record keeping function to a vital link in the establishment of a responsive professional, resident oriented staff. It is the team's opinion that language in the code gives the personnel director the authority to enforce the routine submission of performance evaluations, working with departments to assure that job descriptions are up to date and accurate and to implement a centralized, unbiased recruitment and promotion process.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the mayor, council and business administrator work together to more clearly define a proactive professional human resource function that will establish the accountability needed to assure the ongoing development of a responsive, professional resident oriented staff.

LAW DEPARTMENT

The legal department consists of the municipal attorney, an assistant attorney, a law clerk and two legal secretaries. Total salary costs were \$170,483, and benefit costs were \$39,263 in 1999. Other expenditures for legal were \$155,907. Total costs were \$365,653.

The Old Bridge Department of Law was established in 1992. At that time, the township had a significant deficit; was involved in a nonperformance suit relating to the construction of the library, which was complicated by the fact that the bonding company had gone into liquidation; eight police officers had been laid off; there were charges against the finance director; and the taxes had been raised 27%.

Because filing of suits generally led to settlements, Old Bridge had become a target defendant. In 1999, claims totaled \$49,451.

Having an in-house legal department has several benefits. It cut the total legal cost from \$591,041 in 1992 to \$365,653 in 1999. It has enabled Old Bridge to establish a reputation as a tough defendant thus, deflecting some cases. Just by being available and participating in upper management level discussions legal problems are avoided. The municipal attorney provides oversight on billing of outside counsel.

TECHNOLOGY

The data processing department is a unit within finance and consists of three people, an administrator and two programmer/technical support people. The staff has good technological literacy and is underpaid, compared to the marketplace, for their skill levels.

According to information provided to the review team, there were more than 200 computers and three different operating systems: Windows 95/98; Windows NT; and a mainframe package. For software, the township uses a separate finance software package, a payroll software package, a police software package, and an office suite package. The township also maintains a web page. There are other software needs that have yet to be addressed, such as a personnel database.

Old Bridge is in a situation that is common among municipalities regarding technology. There is no written technology plan nor is there a technology committee. The systems that are in place are picked based upon their individual functionality and past practice, but are not integrated properly, nor are they based upon the latest in technology, nor do they always have adequate input from the users of the systems.

Information technology is a fundamental administrative function in a municipality. Like personnel, purchasing and legal services, it must be integrated into the administrative superstructure in order to be used effectively to enhance delivery of services.

This can be accomplished by bringing it within the administration function, involving representatives of all affected entities and developing a plan that establishes a realistic level of resources to be available for implementation of the plan.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the township establish a technology committee representing elected officials, the public, the administration and a representation of users. The mission of this committee would be to develop a thorough and specific five-year plan for addressing integration and accountability issues relating to technology, as well as, identifying the appropriate level of resources and how those resources should be used.

In recognition of the global role of information technology in the township, it is recommended that the data processing office be a component of the department of administration.

It is recommended that the township conduct a salary survey for the technology department's staff. While the MIS director's pay appeared to be commensurate with duties, the two technical support people were underpaid compared to other reviews conducted by the review team. If the township were to pay \$7,500 more to each technical support person, it would increase the potential for staff retention, which has been a problem in the past.

Value Added Expense: \$15,000

It is recommended that the township fund technology training, initially at \$50,000, with the goal of increasing the amount to between 20 - 30% of total expenditures for hardware and software. Synergy can only be developed upon staff receiving adequate training for the applications that they use in their work.

Value Added Expense: \$50,000

HEALTH INSURANCE

For many years, the township, like many other public entities, provided excellent benefits but a reduced salary for its employees when compared to the private sector for similar occupations. The costs for healthcare benefits became among the highest in the state and were well above \$10,000 for family coverage over five years ago.

One of the unions approached the administration with an alternative. The union offers a health insurance plan to its membership and all nonaffiliated personnel have the opportunity to join the union-run health care plan. This plan originally offered Old Bridge employees a preferred provider plan, a prescription plan, and a dental plan for a flat fee of \$700 per month regardless of benefit level. This was subsequently raised to \$735 per month for each employee for the latest contract period. During negotiations for the renewal of the contract, it appeared that the cost of this was unlikely to increase. The funds rating mechanism was set and was not based on the township's utilization. The township also has a non-compete clause with the union's health fund for this type of managed care. This means the only PPO they can have is the union's PPO.

The existence of this option can prove to be an obstacle to cost savings if the township successfully negotiates plan design changes for prescription and dental that make the total union

plan look more favorable. There is no ability to implement plan design changes in the union plan. Therefore, if employees are allowed to switch freely, the township will not derive the benefits that should accrue from such plan design changes.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the township negotiate the removal of the non-compete clause in order to avail itself of the benefits of market competition for this component of health benefits.

Cost savings can not be reasonably estimated.

The cost for health benefits in Old Bridge was compared to the State Health Benefits Plan (SHBP) using the latest available rates and employee health census figures. The health care plan distribution for Old Bridge's employees falls within the statewide averages for local employers. There were 280 employees and 73 retirees enrolled in health care plans in the township. The estimated medical plan cost for active employees for FY00 is \$1,845,000 and for retirees is \$545,000. This was prior to premium refunds, which although not guaranteed, were expected to be about \$100,000 for 2000.

The average cost for the medical coverage component is \$6,600 for active employees and an estimated \$7,500 for retirees. The district also pays for prescription benefits for their employees and retirees. The union plan has a dental plan included in its costs. The average cost for private industry health care was \$5,214 in 1999 according to a health benefit survey published by the New Jersey Business and Industry Association.

According to the same survey, the cost control strategies most often utilized by employers in New Jersey involved three different strategies:

1. Increase cost sharing with the employee (40%).
2. Switching health care providers (29%).
3. Changing the plan design (21%).

If Old Bridge is going to bring the costs of its healthcare more in line with other employers in New Jersey, it needs to employ one or more of the cost cutting strategies mentioned above. All local entities in the state have the option of switching to SHBP, but the rules for the state's program are rigid. The township has not done a sufficient job of containing costs through these aforementioned strategies to preclude them from switching to SHBP.

The comparison with SHBP shows that the township can save about \$285,000 moving all of its employees and retirees to the state's plan. The primary problem, which is difficult to quantify, is the additional Medicare costs for the 73 retirees most of whom are police officers. The state's plan requires that the retirees over 65 purchase Medicare. Police Officers who were hired prior to January, 1986 are not required to have Medicare deducted from their earnings due to statutory provision.

The township should require all eligible retirees to purchase Medicare Part B. The cost differential between the retiree and the active population can be directly attributed to the plan's lack of a Medicare requirement upon eligibility. It is estimated that about 73% of local retirees under the SHBP are Medicare eligible based upon age for the retiree, their spouse or both.

If the township employees were required to pay the Part B portion for 50 retirees at a cost of \$45.50 per employee per month ($50 \times 12 \times \$45.50$), the total increase in benefit costs to the employee would be \$546 per year for Medicare Part B. This compared to the cost differential between active and retired employees is favorable. Employees who do not have the requisite amount of time for Medicare Part A eligibility should also be required to purchase Part A. The costs will vary for those employees dependent upon their individual circumstances. The cost savings for participating in Medicare coverage whenever eligible are demonstrated to be worthy of the expense.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the township renegotiate with its retirees requiring Medicare as the primary coverage for all eligible retirees. The cost for Part B is minimal compared to the premium reduction for retirees and, therefore, it would be fiscally reasonable for the township to bear the cost if necessary.

The township currently does not require employees to pay for any portion of their health benefits. Currently, the state requires of its employees that they pay 25% of premium costs for traditional coverage and 5% of premium costs for HMO coverage. This was negotiated with the unions and has caused significant plan changes within the state employees' subgroup. Employees who have to pay a participation rate for healthcare do take into account their participation charge when making a decision and, therefore, decisions can be directed to more cost efficient plans through a premium co-pay.

Local Government Budget Review suggests one of three methods of employee cost sharing. A flat percentage premium co-pay of 10% would be the easiest to implement because it impacts everyone fairly on a percentage basis. For the purposes of analysis the review team subtracted \$135.85 per month from the union's program cost in order to account for only the medical portion of health benefits. A 10% premium co-pay would result in \$184,500 in negotiated cost savings.

Another method of reducing cost is in plan design changes. The township is pre-empted from changing the plan design in the union's health benefit plan and is not allowed to have a preferred provider plan that competes with it. They are not pre-empted from having a point of service plan, which could impact upon the choices for the township's employees.

Points of service plans are used by organizations as a hybrid between an HMO and a traditional fee for service plan. They do require referrals and utilization management as tactics to contain costs but they also permit out of network usage at a higher coinsurance level than found within

the network. The township should also request that the union's healthcare cost be separated into single; husband/wife; parent/child and family levels of coverage. This will permit the township to require that the employees pay 20% for other-than-single coverage.

Local Government Budget Review used SHBP premium ratios to estimate what the rates for the managed care plan should be if they were separated. This changed the rate for husband/wife, family and parent/child but it did not affect the overall cost. The savings amount that the review team estimated was, approximately, \$214,000 if the township were to successfully negotiate and implement a 20% other than single co-pay.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the township negotiate either an across the board 10% premium co-payment or a 20% "other-than-single" premium co-payment with its active employees.

Potential Cost Savings: \$184,500 - \$214,000

The township should also look at deductible levels in their traditional plan. If they were to negotiate upward from the current \$100/\$200 deductible to a \$250/\$500 deductible the township could save an additional \$23,000. Also the co-pay levels for the HMOs are low compared to other programs. If the co-pay level were raised from the current \$5 - \$10, the township could expect to save an additional 3% or \$17,800. There are also many first dollar benefits, which if they involved a modest co-payment requirement, would lower overall program costs by another 4%-6%.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the township negotiate an increase in deductibles from the current \$100/\$200 to \$250/\$500.

Potential Cost Savings: \$23,000

It is recommended that the township negotiate an increase in co-pay levels from the current \$5 to \$10.

Potential Cost Savings: \$17,800

It is recommended that the township negotiate the elimination of first dollar benefits for HMOs.

Potential Cost Savings: \$23,700 - \$35,500

The review team is hesitant to recommend that the township change to the State Health Benefits Plan even though the savings are compelling. (There are 73 retirees who do not have Medicare now but the savings for the township on this one benefit alone may compel the township to stay outside of the state's plan.) The costs appear to be competitive yet if Old Bridge does negotiate plan design changes that keep costs competitive, the township can continue to save money outside of the plan.

Prescription Plan

131 of the 280 employees are covered under the union's prescription plan, which, because of its pricing structure, does not permit cost savings measures to be implemented. The township's other employees are covered under a prescription plan sponsored by one of the township's health care providers. The cost of the union's plan includes dental costs, which are estimated by the review team to be between \$32 and \$75 per person per month.

Since only the health insurance sponsored plan has the capability of negotiated plan design changes, the review team's savings are only targeted at this group.

The review team estimates that the township pays \$293,000 annually for its active employees' prescription plan. If the plan switched to a three-tier prescription concept, the review team estimates that the township can save approximately 10 - 15% or \$29,300 - \$44,000. The three tiers would be generic, name brand, non-formulary name brand. Non-formulary medications are medications, which are determined by a pharmacist review panel to have costs that do not equate to their efficacy.

Recommendation:

Old Bridge should negotiate a three-tier co-pay with their employees.

Potential Cost Savings: \$29,300 - \$44,000

PROPERTY AND CASUALTY INSURANCE

Old Bridge is currently enrolled in a joint insurance fund for its property and casualty insurance. The township has been in two different joint insurance funds in the past ten years and the township administrator represents the town as the risk manager. In 2000, the township was assessed \$1,016,000 for costs associated with workers' compensation, auto liability, general liability, and property coverage. This was reduced from 1998 figures of \$1,103,000.

The reductions were the result of reduced assessments in both the auto liability and general liability lines of coverage. Workers' compensation went up moderately, mainly as a result of increases in payroll, rather than significant experience changes. The joint insurance fund has undergone changes in membership recently, and this has left Old Bridge as the largest local entity in the particular fund. As can happen in a jointure situation, Old Bridge is concerned about its present exposure position within the fund.

The administrator has indicated that the township will be shopping for coverage in their next renewal period with the fund. Every three years, a local entity is permitted to decide whether or not to renew their membership with the fund. There are several options that the administrator and the review team discussed and the township appears anxious to employ.

The township appears to be willing to implement a higher self-insured retention. The joint insurance fund has practiced this technique in the past with other members of the fund. If the township had a self-insured retention of \$25,000 - \$50,000 per event versus its current situation,

the up front costs for insurance would be much less. The downside is potential uninsured costs, which would be borne out of the budget of the municipality. This would require more risk management than the municipality has assumed until now.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the township consider alternative strategies to the first dollar coverage that the joint insurance fund is currently providing. The township should also explore other risk financing sources.

Cost Savings: Cannot Be Estimated

Workers' Compensation

The township has recently hired someone to manage aspects of the workers' compensation functions as well as other functions such as purchasing. The review team is confident that if the municipality establishes and implements a comprehensive safety program the municipality can enter into a higher self-insured exposure. The greatest exposure is in workers' compensation coverage.

Workers' compensation pricing is based on three factors: salary level, occupation, and group experience. The salary levels for Old Bridge have increased 12%. The building department, volunteer fire fighters and first aid volunteers were accounted for in the 2000 assessment for the first time.

The review team believes the estimated number of first aid volunteers to be high, compared to the active rolls provided to the team. Since three of the fire districts did not permit a review, the team could not confirm this number. Each volunteer first aid member costs about \$137 in workers' compensation and each additional fire volunteer costs about \$108. These numbers should be based upon an average monthly figure of active volunteers only.

Recommendation:

The township may have over estimated volunteer first aid volunteers and fire personnel. The savings from a 10% reduction in both numbers would be approximately \$5,000.

Cost Savings: \$5,000

The JIF's assessment increase for police department workers' compensation was 10% to \$6.4 million yet there was no difference between the 1999 estimated and 1999 certified salary level of \$5.8 million. The \$600,000 difference cannot be explained away just in salary increases. If the cost for this apparent overage is taken at the established rate of \$2.12 per \$100, this overage is costing the township \$13,000 in premium. The increase in salary is only 3.5% per year, not 10%. This will automatically be adjusted during the salary audit.

The workers' compensation premium is larger than the full manual rating of \$486,000. This can be attributed to a less than average loss experience. The loss experience from the joint insurance fund indicates that the township does need to improve their safety protocols, especially in the

police and public works functions. The review team is concerned about what may be inappropriately high salary levels found in the “municipal worker” category. The review team believes a more careful study of the functional responsibilities of the employees may result in a reclassification of their salaries to an office worker/clerical worker role. This would result in savings of about 90% of the assessment for the workers’ compensation manual rate for all misclassified workers.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that Old Bridge carefully review all employees categorized under the municipal worker category. If \$1,000,000 of salary is reclassified to office worker, the review team estimates the savings to be \$50,000.

Cost Savings: \$50,000

FINANCE DEPARTMENT

The finance department is lead by the director of finance/CFO and consists of general finance, tax collection and data processing. The finance director’s salary and benefits total \$99,462. Total other expenses for finance were \$5,043 in FY99.

Finance

General finance consists of general treasury functions as well as accounts payable and payroll. Payroll costs are identified separately in the section on payroll. General finance staff includes an assistant finance director position, which is currently vacant, a senior accountant, a supervisor of accounts and an accounts payable clerk. Total salary and benefit costs were \$221,651 in FY99.

Debt Service

N.J.S.A. 40A:2 et. seq. is the local bond law. The local bond law establishes the statutory requirements for the issuance of municipal debt. The debt ceiling for New Jersey municipalities is 3½% of equalized valuation basis. For FY99, the equalized valuation basis is the average of the 1997, 1998 and 1999 equalized valuation of real property with improvements plus assessed valuation of Class II R.R. Property. In Old Bridge Township, the 1999 equalized valuation basis is \$2,849,291,629. As of June 30, 1999, the township’s net debt was \$43,122,643 or 1.51% of equalized valuation basis. Comparing FY99 and FY98, the team finds that the net debt decreased by \$935,856 or .07% of equalized valuation basis. Further review reveals that \$8,639,000 of the 1999 net debt is temporary and according to statute needs to be retired or permanently financed by 2001.

Recommendation:

The team recommends the temporary debt be structured and retired according to the current debt-financing schedule, in order to minimize the impact to the taxpayer.

Cash Management

The team analyzed the management of the township's cash balances. According to the chief financial officer (CFO), the township maintains its primary banking relationship with a local bank. The township also maintains accounts at regional banks with branches in the area. A review of the bank statements indicates the township is not paying any fees for banking services, this was confirmed by the CFO.

The township maintains a relationship with the New Jersey Cash Management Fund (NJCMF), a public funds investment division of the State Department of Treasury. The NJCMF is an investment tool for idle funds, but does not provide bank services such as check processing. Since at least 1993, the township has invested a substantial share of idle funds with the NJCMF. Interest earned each month is then rolled into the base investment. Remaining township cash balances are routinely invested in Certificates-of-Deposit (CDs) which are competitively quoted among area banks and benchmarked against the monthly NJCMF rate. In all cases reviewed, the township received the greater of the rates quoted by the issuing bank. Therefore, the rates obtained were the most competitive on the dates quoted. Normally, CDs are for a fixed term with unattractive options for early redemption. However, township officials advised there are no penalties for early redemption for CDs issued by the primary bank.

The team performed an analysis of the various operating bank accounts. Our analysis compares the interest actually earned by the township from July 1, 1998 through June 30, 1999 (fiscal 1999) to the earnings that would have been achieved in the NJCMF and the three month treasury bill. The analysis was complicated by the fact that the township has not taken advantage of a common banking service called an account analysis. The bank account analysis, if requested, is provided with each month's bank statement. It shows the various charges, compensating balances, and average daily balances. Accordingly, without an account analysis, we used the month ending balances from the statements. Using the month ending balances is not as accurate as an average daily balance in computing potential earnings.

The team's analysis shows that had the aggregate month end balances (ranging from \$976,061 - \$5,251,374 with an average monthly balance of \$1,773,742) been invested in the NJCMF or a sweep account based on the 91 day treasury bill, the township would have earned between \$45,884 and \$53,330 over the \$35,824 that was earned in the operating bank accounts. Although the team realizes the need for a certain level of liquidity, the status of the investment program would allow the township to take advantage of daily account sweeping and therefore increased earnings.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the chief financial officer (CFO) request a monthly account analysis from each bank and establish a daily sweep mechanism with the banks. We recommend the township competitively invest all balances in excess of those required for liquidity purposes.

Revenue Enhancement: \$45,885 - \$53,350

Account reconciliation is both timely and consistent. The internal cash reports prepared by staff indicate township cash flow projections are reasonable and consistent with cash needs.

The team review of the banking service reveals an effective relationship with the primary bank. However, the relationship is not reduced to writing and may be subject to interpretation and potential conflict in the event of a management change in either the bank or township. Further, we note RFP's for banking services have not been circulated either formally or informally for the past five years. This could cause complacency and result in the township not receiving the best service available in the marketplace.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the township reduce its banking relationship to writing and periodically test the marketplace to ensure that the banking service provided is the best available.

Payroll

The payroll staff consists of two accounting clerks and total salary and benefits were \$89,001 in FY99. The township has a regular payroll of approximately 400 full-time and part-time, averaging about \$700,000 biweekly. Seasonal employees total just under 200 in the summer. Payroll is automated by ADP and is paid for through the township's banking relationship. They have looked at other vendors for service but have not found another one capable of meeting their needs at this time. In addition, it would be untenable to operate a payroll of this size without a knowledgeable, experienced backup.

The payroll staff is responsible for all payroll-related activities, including, reconciling biweekly deductions, sorting and batching checks when they are delivered and resolving any payroll related problems. Payroll activities consume five workdays of the week prior to payday. The payroll staff also maintains attendance and leave records for the full-time staff of approximately 250 and reconcile it on a regular basis. In addition, they prepare any payroll-related state and federal reports. If we estimate the payroll to average 450 over the course of the year, payroll expenses total \$7.60 per employee per pay. Although this seems high, it is appropriate because they are responsible for many financial reporting aspects that often are the responsibility of finance staff and they also maintain time and attendance.

TAX COLLECTOR

The tax collection office was responsible for collections on 18,240 lines and a total of \$85,495,726 in revenues in FY99.

The township tax collection function is staffed by a tax collector and three clerks. The table of organization calls for a deputy tax collector as well, however, that position has been vacant for two years.

FY99 expenditures totaled \$136,798 in salaries, \$3,320 in temporary salaries, \$39,055 in benefits and other salary related costs and \$9,947 in overtime for a total of \$189,120 in salaries and wages. Other expenditures totaled \$14,223 for printing and direct mail services and \$222 for automation services. Total tax collection expenditures, therefore, were \$203,565.

Overtime is paid at the rate of time and one half for hours worked in excess of 40 hours. The tax office is open the first Saturday of the quarter and open late on the tenth of the month of the quarter.

The collection rate was 97.66% in 1999 and 97.86% in 1998. The anticipated collection rate used for budget purposes is 95.92% for 2000. This is slightly less than the 96% estimated collection rate used for the 1999 budget.

PILOTS

\$148,345 was collected from Old Bridge Rotary Senior Housing and \$205,617 was collected as a one-time payment in lieu of taxes for 1999 from the Reformed Church Home. No written agreement has been found for Old Bridge Rotary Senior Housing.

TAX ASSESSOR

In 1999, The Township of Old Bridge had a total of 18,240 line items and a net valuation taxable of \$2,839,507,490. Its current county equalization ratio is one of the highest in the county at 94.13 and its general coefficient was the second lowest in the county at 7.14 in 1997.

The International Association of Assessing Officers has identified benchmarks for staffing, based on the number of line items. This guideline indicates that there should be four full-time equivalent assessing staff. Old Bridge has 7.5 staff members: an assessor, a deputy, two field inspector/assessors, a senior tax assessment clerk, a senior chief supervising clerk, an administrative aide and a part-time clerk. Salaries, benefits and other salary related costs totaled \$375,097 in FY99. Other expenses totaled \$100,916 in FY99.

Old Bridge underwent a revaluation in 1989 that almost doubled the net valuation taxable from \$1,498,432,161 - \$3,048,681,450 in 1990 and 1991 and was reduced precipitously by tax appeals in 1992 and 1993, with decreases to \$2,906,386,432 and \$2,691,769,372, respectively. The combined tax rate went from 3.86 in 1989 - 2.38 in 1990 and 1991 to 2.68 in 1992 and 2.88 in 1993. This volatility has apparently been brought under control with the tax base increasing between .5% and 1% annually and an equalization ratio in the mid 90% and higher over the last six years.

The assessor accomplishes this by reviewing every assessment every three years and by monitoring the sales ratios and revising assessments in areas where the ratio is inconsistent with the equalization ratio.

There are currently no active tax abatements. A tax abatement law dated back to 1970 and covered 100 properties throughout the town this was changed in 1996 and there are no more eligible properties.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the assessor's office cut staff to the benchmark level. One way to accomplish this would be to not fill any vacancies as they occur unless, or until there is, evidence that the current level of stability and level of accuracy and currency cannot be maintained.

POLICE

The Old Bridge Police Department has 94 sworn officers, fifteen civilian dispatchers and 23 other civilian employees. The department also employs 40 permanent and seven temporary school-crossing guards. The police department FY99 costs included \$8,138,290 in salary, \$1,788,021 in direct benefits, \$647,181 in police overtime and \$461,541 in other expenses. The total operating cost of the department was \$11,035,033. The department answered 46,525 calls for service.

Demographically, Old Bridge is similar in population, area, density, character and median income to Brick Township, Cherry Hill Township, Gloucester Township, Lakewood Township, Piscataway Township and West Orange. Of the six communities, in 1998, Old Bridge had the lowest number of violent crimes reported (54) and Lakewood had the highest (237). Old Bridge had the second lowest crime index (1,189) compared to the highest, Cherry Hill (3,075) and Old Bridge had the second lowest crime per officer (13.8), lowest was Piscataway (13.2) and the highest was Cherry Hill (25.63). See chart in Appendix 2.

ORDINANCE

The department operates under the authority of **Township of Old Bridge Ordinance Nos. 14-98, 22-98 and 76-98 CODIFIED**. Selected sections state:

- **2-14.1 Establishment: Head:** There shall be a department of police in accordance with N.J.S.A. 40-A:14-118. The director of the department shall be appointed by the mayor with the advice and consent of the council
- **2-14.2 TABLE OF ORGANIZATION:** Within the department of police there shall be five bureaus: 1) patrol bureau, 2) detective bureau, 3) records bureau, 4) administration bureau, and 5) special operations bureau. Each bureau shall consist of as many officers as the chief of police shall deem necessary.
- **2-14.3 COMPOSITION:** The department of police shall consist of a chief of police, five captains of police, eight lieutenants of police, 15 sergeants of police and as many regular patrol officers as are necessary to provide for the welfare and safety of the public within the guidelines of the budget and subject to any contractual obligation of the township.

MISSION, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The police department has not developed or published a mission statement. A mission statement is important because it delineates a broad organizational goal, based on planning premises, which justifies an organization's existence. It is a relatively permanent part of an organization's identity and could do much to unify and motivate its members. To be effective, it must be developed with input from the community it serves and be adopted and implemented by the entire organization.

The department has issued 78 general orders that establish policy and direct procedures. The orders that were supplied to the team were complete, but it appeared that the rank and file did not have confidence that everyone was working from the same set. Questions were raised about how and when these were enforced. For example, the dispatch area did not have any copies of orders that pertain to them. This area should have a complete copy of orders to refer to during their tour.

Rules and regulations are published as the "Police Manual" which was approved 9/1/87. While it is not the team's role to review and endorse/approve the rules and regulations, there are some obvious conflicts between the rules and regulations, general orders and the municipal code. The police department has an obligation to ensure that changes are reflected consistently in the rules and regulations, general orders and any other documents that the officers of the department look to for guidance and that superiors use for direction and holding subordinates responsible. Two examples of the inconsistencies are described below.

Table of Organization

Chapter 2 of the police manual outlines the organization and identifies four divisions and one section. The division is defined in Chapter 1 (1:4.8) as "a component part of the organization having jurisdiction wide coverage whose commanding officer reports directly to the chief of police. The section is defined (1:4.35) as "a functional unit subordinate to a division or under the immediate direction of the chief of police. It may be commanded by any rank, depending on the its size and the nature and importance of its function." The divisions identified are, patrol, detective, records services and traffic. The section is identified as administration. Both the division and section descriptions state "the areas of responsibility and the personnel assigned to the division will be clearly outlined in a written job description and indicated on the department's organizational chart, approved by the chief of police." The team was provided with a chart that indicates an internal affairs division and four bureaus: patrol, detective, administration and records. Also, we were provided with a chart that identified functions and listed the responsibilities of each. These were an internal affairs section and five functions not identified as either divisions or sections; they were patrol, detective bureau, records, administration and special operations. The PBA contract identifies functions as bureaus and not divisions or sections. The point is that whatever form the department chooses to take, it needs to be standardized so that all officers, township administrators, elected officials and the citizens can understand the structure and organization of its police department.

By ordinance, the current department is structured with five bureaus: patrol, detective, records, administration and special operations, which are each commanded by a captain. Internal affairs is a section commanded/staffed by a lieutenant.

Professional Conduct and Responsibilities

Chapter 3 of the police manual addresses civilian clothing manner of dress (3:3.9) stating that “male members and employees permitted to wear civilian clothing during a tour of duty shall wear either a business suit or sport coat and slacks. A dress-type shirt with tie shall be worn. Commanding officers may prescribe other types of clothing when necessary to meet a particular police objective. Female employees permitted to wear civilian clothing shall conform to standards normally worn by office personnel in private business firms, unless otherwise directed. Any exceptions must be authorized by the chief of police.” The chief and all members of the department who are not required to wear the uniform do not comply with this regulation. The team was told that the chief has authorized members to wear whatever they feel comfortable in. All five captains of the department do not wear uniforms. During the team’s review, the only time an officer, not in uniform, was observed wearing a tie was the one day the chief wore a suit for an appearance at a conference. With little exception, members wore very casual attire and some members simply wore jeans and a sweatshirt.

In other departments reviewed, such casual attire is normally permitted as part of a special function such as narcotics investigations, where such attire is required for officer safety and the success of investigations. The reason that business attire is the norm for most police departments is that contact with the public requires the professional appearance of all members of the organization. That is the reason given to hold the uniform officers to the highest standards of appearance. Also, the reasons given to compensate all officers with a uniform allowance is the cost of maintaining the uniform and, for non-uniformed members, the cost to purchase and maintain business attire.

Personal Appearance

The same rationale applies to haircuts and requiring that clothes be clean and pressed. According to 3:3.12, the uniformed and non-uniformed members are held to the same standard.

Department Vehicle Use

Section 3:4.4 states that “the chief may assign vehicles for the 24-hour use of the deputy chief and the bureau commanders.” There are at least nine other cars assigned to members for 24-hour use. This will be addressed in the fleet section later in the report.

Telephones

Section 3:5.4 states that “department telephone equipment may not be used for the transmission of messages involving toll charges without the express approval of a commanding officer. A toll call charge slip must be completed and placed on file.” There is no evidence of this being done or any review of phone charges to determine possible abuse of the phone system or the reimbursement for personal calls.

Sickness and Injury Leave (4:9) Unauthorized Absence

Section 4:9.4 states “members or employees who absent themselves in an improper manner shall be subject to disciplinary action being preferred against them.” Two of the infractions identified are, “not home or are not at their place of confinement while on sick leave, when visited by a physician or a superior officer” and “feign illness or injury.” During our review, it was stated many times that officers routinely use sick leave when not sick and that the policy of the department was not to challenge them or verify the illness unless it was beyond the requirement of the contract for producing a doctors note after five days. The five-day requirement is significant because of the four day on, four day off schedule. This allows officers nine days off before a doctor’s note is required.

Citizen complaints against Police Personnel

Section 5:4 should be reviewed to ensure compliance with the latest attorney general’s guidelines for this type of complaint. These were issued 8/91 and revised 11/92. General order 072-94 appears to be more in compliance with the attorney general’s guidelines but a phone number listed is no longer in service and indicates that the orders must be reviewed.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that a relevant mission statement be developed which defines the reason the department exists and how it will serve the community.

It is recommended that a complete set of orders be maintained within the dispatch area.

It is recommended that the rules and regulations be reviewed to ensure that they do not conflict with the municipal code or with current policy and procedures identified in the general orders. If, as in the example of the “department vehicle use,” a policy is not needed at all, that it is eliminated. Like a law, if a rule or regulation is not enforced because it is no longer relevant, it should be eliminated or changed to become relevant.

HIRING/PROMOTIONS

Municipal ordinance 2-14.3, gives the director the power to appoint new officers to the department. The testing procedures for new officers are outlined in ordinance 2-14.5.

Ordinance 2-14.6 addresses residency qualifications for employment. One of the sections (d. 3.) directs that the appointment from any list will be “appointed in the order from the above list.” This eliminates any choice the appointing official has when choosing qualified candidates from the list.

For promotion to the rank of sergeant, ordinance #2-14.12 applies. This ordinance outlines the testing procedure the eligible candidates must follow for consideration. The team feels that the testing procedure is reasonable and, since it is outlined in the ordinance, fair and public. This allows all candidates to know what is expected of them. The problem observed is that once a list

of eligible candidates is promulgated, the power to appoint is surrendered from the civilian authority to the chief of police. Section K gives the chief the authority to select any one of the top three candidates.

Promotion to lieutenant is addressed in 2-14.12 (B). This also identifies the chief as the appointing authority for the rank. The ordinance directs the chief to appoint the most senior sergeant to the rank of lieutenant. There is no testing for this rank.

The power to promote to captain is also given to the chief. This is according to 2-14.12 (C). There is no testing for the rank and the seniority provision outlined for the lieutenant's rank is eliminated. The chief can select any eligible lieutenant.

The power to promote to chief is given to the mayor in 2-14.12 (D). There is no testing for the rank and is open to captains or lieutenants with five years in an administrative position.

The team has identified a number of problems with the promotion procedures outlined in the ordinances. They are:

- In the promotion ordinances from sergeant to captain there is a section that states "Promotion shall be made within 30 days of an existing vacancy. The number of promotions are to be determined in accordance with section 2-14.3 of this section." This eliminates the management rights of the department by dictating the number of supervisors needed to effectively manage the department.
- The chief of police controls the entire promotion process with no input or concurrence from mayor, director or business administrator. By choosing from the top three sergeants he determines the next lieutenant. The lieutenants are chosen by seniority; there is no test. He then controls the captains because there is no test; the chief picks the captain he wants. He can then control the next chief because there is no test and the next chief must have five years assigned in an administrative position. Since the chief has exclusive power to assign members of the department, he can control who is eligible for the mayor to appoint.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the ordinance be changed to incorporate a testing process for all ranks and that language be amended to assure that the appointing authority is an appropriate civilian.

It is recommended that the section that mandates promotions be eliminated or rewritten.

ORGANIZATION/OPERATIONS

At the time of the review, the department organization included one chief, five captains, eight lieutenants, and ten sergeants. These 24 supervisors control 70 officers and detectives, 15 civilian dispatchers and 25 other civilian workers. There are also 40 permanent and seven temporary crossing guards and 30 special officers.

The department is divided into five bureaus commanded by captains that report directly to the chief. The bureaus are: patrol, detective, special operations, records and administration. The internal affairs section reports directly to the chief. This organization is illustrated in Appendix 3.

Proposed Organization

The proposed police department organization (Appendix 4) would include the chief’s office and two divisions. The chief’s office would include the Internal Affairs Bureau, be staffed with a lieutenant and report directly to the chief.

A captain would command the operations division. This division would be responsible for the three patrol shifts. A lieutenant would command each patrol shift. The shifts would have 12 sergeants and 38 officers. The detective bureau would be commanded by a lieutenant and be comprised of two sergeants and 12 detectives assigned to criminal investigations, juvenile investigations, narcotics and identification. The traffic/quality of life bureau would be commanded by a lieutenant and have two sergeants and ten officers. The lines and signs and crossing guards will be reporting to this bureau.

A captain would command the administration division. It would be responsible for training, scheduling, range, haz-mat, emergency management, special and auxiliary officers, fleet, communications and computers. The division will have one sergeant and one officer.

The following table summarizes the recommended changes and shows the cost savings if all recommended organizational changes are made. The specific savings of specific actions are provided in the discussions of each operational unit.

Old Bridge Police Department Staffing						
	Current	Position Value	Proposed	Position Value	Change	
Chief	1	\$129,689	1	\$129,689	\$0	
Captain	5	\$574,794	2	\$236,631	\$338,163	
Lieutenant	8	\$859,662	7	\$758,855	\$100,807	
Sergeant	10	\$1,010,580	17	\$1,663,115	(\$652,535)	
Officer	70	\$5,253,445	62	\$4,938,645	\$314,800	
Total Sworn	94	\$7,828,170	89	\$7,726,935	\$101,235	

OVERTIME

A recurring issue with the police department is the amount of overtime used each year. The police department leadership’s explanation is that the overtime is driven by the fact that they are understaffed. The department has issued reports that illustrate that they have the lowest officer per 1,000-population ratio in the county. This may be true but, as will be illustrated later in this report, the workload of the officers is well within the norms. Until the workload increases, the manpower of the department is sufficient. The increased development will eventually demand increased staffing in areas such as traffic enforcement and school resource officers, but until the

calls for service rise the basic patrol force is adequate. The team believes that the current overtime expenditures can be reduced by managing the current staff assets in a more efficient and effective manner.

Some of the causes of the overtime identified include:

- A work schedule allowing the officers assigned to the four on, four off schedule to come to work 255 hours less than if they worked a forty hour work week before contracted days off.
- Failure to convert vacation and sick days into hours, when allowing ten-hour workdays.
- Failure to manage vacation schedules so that vacations are spread throughout the year.
- Failure to manage/control sick time.
- Failure to manage court time by requiring municipal court appearances while on duty and a detective work schedule that forces ½ of the detectives' schedule to work evenings and go to court on overtime.
- Failure to develop a policy that controls the time identification detectives are called out to process crime scenes.
- Deploying officers on beach patrol on overtime when special officers could be hired to fill this assignment.
- Transporting prisoners to the county jail on overtime rather than housing them until officers could do it while on regular duty.

Many of these points will be discussed in detail later in the report.

Historically, the police department has been allowed to overspend its overtime budget. The mayor, council and administration have a responsibility to require that the police administration operate within its budget, including the overtime budget allocated by the township. For this to be accomplished, appropriate decisions will need to be made at the level that controls the expenditure. For example, the detective commander should be given a budget of a certain amount of dollars or hours per year for overtime and then required to operate within that allowance. For purposes of monitoring and control, meetings should be scheduled either weekly or by pay period to review the spending of the detective bureau. The overtime restrictions will force the detective bureau not to follow up on some cases that are not likely to be solved. The detective commander and the chief should determine the policy regarding prioritization of detective bureau cases.

This same approach should be implemented across functions in order to control the overtime. The chief, or his representative, should meet on a regular basis with the business administrator to report his expenditures.

The township administration and the police administration must be willing to reduce some services as a result of reducing overtime, but the review team is confident that this control, along with the recommendations given later in the report, will be effective.

The department tracks overtime by 10 categories for sworn officers and one for civilians.

Old Bridge Police Department Overtime					
	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Number of Sworn Officers	87	85	82	86	84
Number of Calls for Service	38,000	38,157	39,056	43,406	42,673
Uniform Overtime Costs					
Training	\$9,097	\$4,104	\$17,345	\$11,431	\$14,474
Court	\$61,239	\$67,415	\$63,382	\$68,446	\$78,822
Arrests	\$3,961	\$8,255	\$18,190	\$21,729	\$23,227
Surveillance	\$1,599	\$1,171	\$10,699	\$3,171	\$27,179
Investigations	\$79,197	\$61,999	\$80,584	\$98,551	\$75,855
Warrants	\$3,788	\$3,023	\$9,283	\$6,088	\$8,106
Prisoner Transport	\$2,115	\$2,764	\$4,898	\$732	\$6,185
Staffing	\$244,700	\$273,276	\$263,147	\$229,854	\$225,832
Other	\$57,600	\$63,988	\$65,015	\$45,179	\$123,628
Subtotal Uniform Overtime Costs	\$463,296	\$485,995	\$532,543	\$485,181	\$583,308
Civilian Overtime Costs	\$46,970	\$81,689	\$61,967	\$60,211	\$64,312
Total Taxpayer Cost	\$510,266	\$567,684	\$594,510	\$545,392	\$647,620
Grant Funded Overtime Cost	\$19,943	\$19,336	\$21,573	\$17,062	\$22,051
Department Total	\$530,209	\$587,020	\$616,083	\$562,454	\$669,671

Of the 10 categories for sworn officer, nine are paid by the taxpayers of Old Bridge and one is funded by grants.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the department track overtime by hours in each category in addition to dollars. This will allow for an equalized comparison of trends from year to year, removing the impact of salary increases on the trends in overtime.

INTERNAL AFFAIRS

The internal affairs section is staffed by a lieutenant who works the five on, two off schedule Monday to Friday. During 1998, he handled fourteen internal affairs cases and did 14 police background investigations and 20 civilian background investigations. He is also responsible for sensitive investigations; these are cases assigned to him by the chief. During 1998, he had 38 cases of this type, some are ongoing. He works in an open cube within the administration office that lacks the privacy that this type of work requires.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that this section be moved into an office.

PATROL BUREAU

A captain commands the patrol bureau, which includes the three patrol shifts and all dispatchers. He also controls the department's entire budget. He has a civilian secretary assigned to assist him.

The patrol shifts are split into two squads, which work four days on and four days off, ten hours each tour. A lieutenant commands each side of the shift; he acts as Officer in Charge (OIC) and generally stays in the building, in an office with a window at the lobby to greet visitors to the police department. In addition to commanding the shift, his duties include maintaining the officers' *Daily Sheet* that is used to record personnel on-duty, arrests and other events. He greets the public and takes walk-in reports. The dispatch center is adjacent to his office and the lieutenant acts as the immediate supervisor to the dispatchers. The 1st shift (10:00 p.m. - 8:00 a.m.) has one sergeant working on each squad and has six officers assigned. The department determined that a minimum staffing of four officers and one sergeant during the week and five officers and a sergeant on weekends and busy holidays is appropriate. The other two shifts are staffed with two sergeants and seven officers and have a minimum staffing of five officers and one sergeant. The 2nd shift works 7:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. and the 3rd from 5:00 p.m. - 3:00 a.m. The township is divided into five patrol sectors and one officer is assigned to each sector. When extra officers are available they are assigned as extra cars that act as backup cars. When both sergeants are working, they split the town into two sectors for supervision. These sergeants are also responsible for supervising any off duty officers engaged in extra duty jobs. There is an overlap of two officers from the 3rd shift that start at 12:30 p.m. - 10:30 p.m. to allow for extra coverage during the early afternoon. All radio cars are equipped with shotguns but none are equipped with radar. There are five radar sets available in the OIC office for officers to take out. These radar sets are old and the officers do not feel compelled to use them. During the review, the team did not observe these in use. There was no indication that traffic enforcement is a priority in the patrol bureau. There is a traffic car (DWI funded) that is not used except for DWI overtime. It has new radar in it and sits idle except for the four hours of DWI overtime per week.

The department is commended for the flexible scheduling of officers to react to the demand for calls.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the department equips all patrol cars with radar sets and develops a policy for routine traffic enforcement by patrol.

One-time Value Added Expense: \$22,500

Each shift has a set of cars assigned to it. The cars are very well maintained and are assigned to two officers. This system allows for accountability for the operation of the vehicles and gives the officers a sense of ownership of the equipment. The patrol officers do not fill out a patrol log or activity sheet. The sergeant and lieutenant must be aware, by listening to the radio, what the officers are doing during the tour of duty. There is no policy establishing the level of enforcement activity/patrol activity expected from the officers.

Shift commanders do not have access to keys to the unmarked fleet. If a situation comes up in which they could use an unmarked car, they cannot respond. Unmarked cars can only be requested in advance.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that keys for all vehicles be available to the OIC for use as events dictate.

The schedule allows a 30-minute overlap between shifts. This time is being used for briefing and inspection. The sergeant who reviews previous shift activity conducts the briefing. The amount of officers that are inspected and the amount of information disseminated at these briefings leave a great amount of time wasted. The time could be used for much needed in-service training. Fifteen minutes per day would total 37.25 hours of training per officer per year.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the supervisor's work schedule be adjusted so that the supervisor starts and ends at least ½ hour before the rest of the shift. This time should be used to prepare training sessions for the shift. The department training officer can be tasked with ensuring that all officers receive training and that the training is documented.

It is recommended that the patrol division and the training officer develop a formal training schedule to be followed and documented by the shift supervisors.

Vacation

Another cause of overtime is the vacation schedule. The department has allowed the patrol officers to pick their vacation schedule in a way that fails to spread out the amount of officers on vacation throughout the year. The PBA contract (page 20 section 2) states "for patrol officers, the time off requested shall be granted, provided that there are at least five other patrol officers assigned to road patrol for that day." This allows the shift to be at minimum staffing during the summer months when the department is busy and any other absence will result in a officer being called in for overtime. Appendix 5 depicts the result of this policy. If the vacation days were taken evenly through out the year, the patrol bureau would use 65 vacation days per month. The current policy has resulted in as few as 23 vacation days used in February and as many as 113 days in July. The gain in officer days during the busy summer months would be 21 in June, 48 in July, 34 in August and 18 in September.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the department utilize the entire year for vacations. This will result in the average of 65 vacation days available to officers per month. It will also prevent the shift from being at minimum staffing during the busy summer months. The average gain in officer availability per month during the months of June, July, August, September will be 30.66 officer days.

Productivity Enhancement: \$37,258

Another factor affecting the vacation schedule is the department's failure to convert the vacation allowance from days to hours when the work schedule for patrol officers was changed. The PBA contract (page 19 section A #3) allows for 20 vacation days per year for the 4th year and after. This results in the officers gaining 40 extra hours of vacation time per year if multiplied by 38 officers on patrol that results in 1,520 less patrol hours per year.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the vacation days be converted to hours that equal the eight-hour shift that was in effect when the days were given.

Potential Productivity Enhancement: \$46,177

Schedule

The department is split into two schedules. The patrol bureau works a ten-hour shift four days on and four days off. This results in officers being available for work 182 days per year before contracted time off. At 10-hours per day this is 260 hours less than a 40-hour workweek or 2,080-hour work year.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that all officers be scheduled to work an average 40 hours per week before contracted time off.

Potential Productivity Enhancement: \$450,423

All other employees not assigned to the patrol bureau work a five-day on, two day off, eight-hour tour Monday through Friday. There is no weekend or holiday standby. These employees are granted an additional 17 days off to bring their annual work hours to 1,944 before contracted time off.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that all other officers not assigned to the patrol bureau be scheduled to work an average of 40 hours per week before contracted time off.

Potential Productivity Enhancement: \$129,713

Sick Leave Use

A significant issue facing this department is the excessive use of sick leave by the patrol officers. The average officer assigned to the patrol division uses 11.34 ten-hour days per year while the officers assigned to non-patrol duties use an average of 5.64 eight-hour days per year.

The team has identified two primary causes for the considerable difference in the usage. The first and most important is the change in contract limiting the amount of sick leave that can be banked and paid out at retirement. This has created a three-tiered system. The first tier is for employees hired before 1/1/84. These employees are allowed to accrue 280 days and will be paid up to \$75,000 for these days. The second tier is for employees hired between 1/1/84 and

7/1/94. They are allowed to accrue 100 days and are limited to a cash pay out of \$37,500 at retirement. The third tier is for employees hired after 7/1/94. They are limited to a \$15,000 pay out. The younger, and most people would assume, healthier, are assigned to the patrol division and it is those officers that are calling out sick at a rate of 113 hours per year. This is 68 hours more per year than the other officers. The patrol officers are willing to state that they will use the benefit rather than lose it at the end. The township is following a trend to cap the pay out package of its employees. This may solve the problem of large payoffs at retirement but is creating a staffing problem throughout the year. The difference in staffing if the patrol officers sick leave matched the other officers is 1.35 positions.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the township change the sick leave provision in the contract to allow for unlimited sick leave and eliminate all payouts at retirement. This can only be recommended with an aggressive policy of verification of all sick leave requests.

The second reason is the contract language that states “sick leave is to be considered an insurance type benefit, to be used when needed due to personal illness or physical incapacity. Sick leave may be used for illness in an employee’s immediate family, requiring the employee’s attention. Immediate family is defined as: mother, father, mother-in-law, father-in-law, grandparents, husband, wife, son, daughter, brother, sister, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, or any other blood relative residing in the employee’s household.”

This is interpreted as a problem by management. Management feels that they cannot verify a family member’s illness and the definitions are very broad. The supervisors also state that they cannot verify an employee’s illness other than requiring a doctor’s note after five consecutive days sick. The team would point to section 5 of the contract that states, “The chief may verify the illness of any employee. Such verification procedure may include a telephone call or visit to employee’s home.” This section allows the chief to send a health care professional, with the powers to diagnose, to examine the employee on the first day of illness. Section 6 of the contract states, “The chief may require an employee to submit to a physical examination. Such examination is to be conducted at the township’s expense.” This requires the employee to submit to the exam. This action will have two benefits. If the employee is not sick, the chief can then bring that employee up on charges. If the employee is sick, they can be offered a course of treatment to ensure their early return to work.

Additional contract language should be considered to allow the chief to require the same verification of the family member’s illness as currently allowed the employee.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the current contract sections dealing with verification of sick leave be vigorously enforced. The goal should be to reduce the average sick time used by patrol officers (113 hours per year) to that of the non-patrol officers (45 hours per year).

Productivity Enhancement: \$111,555

Patrol Analysis

The department reported 46,525 calls for service between 11/01/98 and 11/30/99. The average time consumed for these calls for service was taken from the department's Computer Aided Dispatch System (CAD). The average response time was 4.06 minutes and the average on site time was 19.13 minutes. This results in 23.19 minutes total time before calling back into service.

Officer availability is a factor in determining the staffing levels in the patrol bureau. Subtracting averages for scheduled time off, vacation, personal, sick, compensatory, training, holiday and other time from the total number of hour's available, results in the average officer availability of 149 days per year or 1490 hours per year. (See Appendix 6 for details.)

The team used two methods for evaluating patrol staffing. One is based on the number of calls for service and the other is based on the minimum number of officers the department feels safe deploying for a shift.

The first method does not include the patrol supervisors, special assignments, traffic officers, detectives, DARE officers, and administration services.

This method takes the total calls for service, multiplied by the average consumed time, multiplied by a factor of three, which allows for preventive patrol, answering calls and administrative time. It then divides that time by the average officer availability. Based on the 1999 patrol workload, 37 patrol officers are required to provide appropriate coverage. During our review, the department had 38 officers assigned to this division. The number of supervisors recommended is one lieutenant that commands the shift. This lieutenant should work two days with one squad and two days with the other squad, similar to the dispatchers. The number of sergeants on each shift should be increased by one. The additional sergeant would work opposite the lieutenant.

The second method is based on the number of patrol officers available for road patrol for each squad. The department has determined, and we agree, that five officers are the minimum numbers required.

To calculate the total number of officers needed to provide the desired minimum staffing, the number of officers is multiplied by the number of shifts, which is multiplied by the number of hours per shift, which is then multiplied by 365. This is then divided by the officer availability. The result is 37 officers. This method does not include the supervisors. (See Appendix 6.)

Both calculations indicate the present staffing levels of 38 officers for the patrol bureau is adequate.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the size of the patrol division remain at 38 officers until the growth of the township results in increased calls for service.

Lock-out Service

This department assists callers in gaining entry to locked vehicles and buildings. During 1999, the department responded to 913 calls for this service. The department could not break down the number of calls for vehicle and buildings. The consensus was that the vast majority was vehicles. The 913 calls consumed 304 hours; average length of time required for each call was 20 minutes (19.59). It has been our experience that only 60% of the attempts to open vehicles are successful. The newer cars are designed to defeat entry attempts using the tool that officers are equipped with. Officers are not given any formal training in the use of the tool. The newer cars are equipped with electric locks, power windows, side air bags and other electronic controls that can be damaged. The public is required to sign damage waivers so that the officer and the township are not held liable for damages. Unless there is an extraordinary circumstance ,(baby/child locked in a running car), a locksmith should be called to provide this service. A list of approved vendors should be available at the dispatch center along with a price list for this service. The township's current tow service protocol operates in this way. A police officer can be dispatched to stand by when safety is a concern.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that a written policy be established to direct callers to a private locksmith unless there is an emergency circumstance associated with it.

Productivity Enhancement: \$6,076

DIFFERENTIAL RESPONSE

Differential response is a tool that can be used, along with other police strategies, to free up patrol officers for more important assignments and create more time for proactive/directed patrols. This has been in effect in varying degrees, under different names, in New Jersey for the last twenty years. A great deal of importance is placed by public managers on rapid response while most police managers realize that nationally, fewer than 20% of calls to police are criminal type calls. The Police Executive Research Forum did a study in the 1980s and reported that three percent or less of all arrests were made at the scene of a crime as the result of a rapid response. Studies have shown that the public will not insist on immediate response to non-emergency calls, if they are educated as to what to expect. Options can include:

- Immediate police response, if available.
- Delayed police response, if a patrol car is not free at the moment. The complainant should be told how long of a delay can be expected.
- Police response to take a report at a later time.
- Schedule a time that the complainant can come into the police department to have a report taken.
- Completing the police report over the phone at the time of the call, and sending the complainant a copy of the report by mail, free of charge.
- The call takers and the complainant arranging a convenient time for the call taker to call the complainant back to complete the report and sending the complainant a copy of the report by mail, free of charge.

Types of call that could be included are listed below.

Old Bridge Police Potential Differential Response Calls 1999			
Call	Number	Average Response	Average at Scene
Auto Theft	116	7.49	42.44
Lost Property	250	1.47	9.49
Phone threat/annoying calls	143	9.09	22.37
Property damage	57	10.08	16.14
Larceny/theft	967	8.02	35
Threats	198	7.53	33.49
Vandalism	526	9.22	18.02
Criminal mischief	355	8.48	19.47
Harassment	268	6.24	29.1
Total	2,880		

For the differential response to be effective, implementation should include:

- A clear policy that states the types of calls eligible for differential response.
- An educational effort that makes citizens aware that this is actually an increase of service to them by the police department.
- The ability of the citizens to choose which option is best for them.
- Training the call takers to effectively carry out this task.
- Ensuring that reports taken over the phone are reviewed for accuracy and are included in any feedback to the patrol squads, so that patrol units assigned to certain areas remain aware of incidents occurring within their area of responsibility.

A reasonable goal for this program would be to reduce by 50% the on scene response by officers to these types of calls. This, in turn, would increase the patrol time that these officers have available to respond to more serious/life threatening events and for preventive/proactive patrol.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the department institute a differential response unit by training call takers/dispatchers to take these types of reports. The current staffing of fifteen dispatchers is sufficient to accommodate this work.

Productivity Enhancement: \$22,481

DETECTIVE BUREAU

This bureau is commanded by a captain and is staffed by a lieutenant, six criminal detectives, three narcotics detectives, two juvenile detectives, one juvenile counselor and two secretaries. The hours for the six detectives assigned to criminal investigations are split evenly between 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. and 3:00 p.m. - 11:00 p.m. Monday to Friday. There is no standby provision for coverage when detectives are not on duty. If detectives are needed, the OIC refers to overtime list and calls detectives to see if they would return to duty. The detectives do not have to

respond. The reason given for this policy is that the township will not compensate officers for being on standby. The patrol officers who request the services of the detectives, as well as the detectives themselves, have identified this as a problem. It appears that some detectives respond less than others do. The chart in Appendix 7 shows the difference between detectives earning overtime. The last two columns depict the overtime of the two identification bureau detectives. By instituting a standby system for call outs, the workload could be more equitably distributed. With eight detectives, each detective could be on call one week every two months.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the detective bureau become a bureau within the operations division and be commanded by a lieutenant. A sergeant and six detectives can make up the adult crime section. The juvenile detectives and the identification detectives should also be included in the bureau.

Cost Savings: \$13,900

It is recommended that the department institute a formal standby schedule for detectives.

Value Added Expense: \$8,000

Another problem that we observed with the schedule is that there are now three detectives working days and three working nights. This staffing configuration was recently implemented to solve the problem related to replacing the night detective if the detective called out sick. Prior to this staffing configuration, one detective was assigned to nights on a rotating basis. With two extra detectives on nights, all three-night officers must work overtime when called in for the Grand Jury and Superior Court. The team recognizes the fact that detectives can be productive in the evening, scheduling interviews when victims and witnesses are home. However, this configuration is increasing the court overtime being paid.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the detective bureau schedule two detectives for the evening hours and four to work during the day.

The department has followed the national trend with a reduction in crime. Workload figures for detectives are very subjective. The type of crime and the solvability factors present are factors the screening detective lieutenant uses to determine if the crime should be investigated and how much time is spent trying to close the case. The unwritten policy of the department is that a detective should look at every crime, even if it is only to assure the victim that a detective is assigned to the case. This policy is very costly in time and takes time away from cases that could be solved.

In response to a patrol vacancy, the detective sergeant was promoted to lieutenant and a second individual was promoted to patrol lieutenant because the detective lieutenant was considered too valuable in the bureau to move to patrol.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that promotions meet the needs of the department and when promoted, officers are transferred to the function where the rank is needed. Promotions without the additional duties and responsibilities of the next rank are wasteful. When officers or superiors are faced with the choice of promotion or staying in an assignment or position, the officer can make that choice.

Juvenile Section

This section is staffed with two detectives, one youth counselor and one secretary. They report to the detective lieutenant and have an office adjacent to the detective bureau on the second floor of the department. The secretary also serves as the detective captain's secretary. One detective works from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and the other works from 3:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. This section is assigned incidents if a juvenile is either a suspect or a victim. They also are assigned all missing person cases and all sex related cases. The section reported that in 1999 they handled 501 cases, 144 less than the previous year. Of the 501 cases handled, 110 were missing persons cases. The juvenile detectives are called out when needed in the same way as the detective bureau. There is no stand-by schedule. If the OIC cannot find a juvenile detective to come in he can call in one of the other detectives. One of the juvenile detectives has been trained as an arson investigator.

Youth Counselor

Working within the juvenile section of the detective division is a civilian youth counselor. This highly trained and motivated person was hired along with another counselor 22 years ago, under a grant that funded positions, office equipment and a car. The second person left ten years ago and was not replaced. The car was also never replaced. At the start of this program, the recidivism rate for juveniles was 83%. This was reduced to 6 - 7% and has remained at this level for the last twenty years. The program is open to Old Bridge residents under the age of 18. This program gives officers a third option when dealing with kids. (The other options are street/stationhouse adjudication or court complaints.) Currently, there is a seven-month backlog for juvenile cases in the county court system. This program allows for a child to have his/her case addressed within ten days. When he takes a case, a letter is sent to the parents advising them of the option of the counselor program. If they refuse they are advised that the case will then be turned over to the courts. Most people take part to avoid the court system.

The school system plays a big part in the program. A conservative estimate is that 15% of referrals come from the schools. He works closely with the school counselors. Referrals from the schools often are for non-criminal events that are dealt with proactively, before the child crosses the line into criminal behavior.

In 1999, there were 173 new cases and 16 repeat offenders. Cases often involve more than one child and each child's family is involved with counseling. This means that each case will involve as many as 5 - 10 people.

Another important aspect of this program is that it requires restitution. Restitution made through this program has returned over \$25,000 to victims since the program began. At least 10 - 15% of this money has been turned over to the school system to pay for vandalism of school property.

Any drug related cases that are initiated within the school system must be referred to the county court system. The counselor still becomes involved and, if appropriate, refers the child to a rehabilitation facility. This allows intervention that can prevent further trouble and can prevent incarceration or other serious penalties when the case is heard seven months later, if the child is given the opportunity to demonstrate rehabilitation.

The success and efficiency of this program would warrant the support of any and all available resources. However, the counselor is not given a car to use; there is no training budget; and the workload would justify a second counselor.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the police department make a car available for use during duty hours.

It is recommended that a budget line item be dedicated for the training or continuing education of this counselor.

Value Added Expense: \$1,000

It is recommended that a second position be added and funded either through the board of education or a grant.

Value Added Expense: \$35,000 - \$50,000

Narcotics Section

This section consists of three detectives who work from an office in the basement of the department. The senior detective acts as the supervisor for the unit. They work a five-day on, two day off schedule. The hours worked vary considerably and the detectives change their hours to meet the demands of this type of work. The amount of overtime or compensatory time earned by this unit is minimal and the detectives should be commended for their flexibility. This unit is responsible for narcotics, vice and organized crime investigation. They maintain a close working relationship with the county narcotics task force and other local agencies. The unit has access to the cars that have been seized and forfeited to the department and a rental car. The detectives have access to these cars to take home. The department lacks a surveillance van to use during prolonged investigations. Surveillance equipment has been purchased on grants to equip a vehicle, but the vehicle has not yet been acquired.

Funds for undercover purchases are taken from forfeiture funds. Staffing is a problem when days off and vacations are being scheduled. This type of work cannot be done alone so if more than one detective is off, the unit is essentially shut down. Another concern is the lack of an assigned supervisor. The senior detective is a very capable detective but the unit's remote location in the building and the nature of its investigation calls for the assignment of a sergeant as supervisor.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the department assign a sergeant to this unit.

It is recommended that the department begin a program of trading the forfeiture cars in to a dealer to obtain vehicles that can be used by the department, including a van that can support department owned surveillance equipment. This will eliminate the need for the rental car.

Cost Savings: \$6,300

SPECIAL OPERATIONS BUREAU

The special operations bureau was created in 1998 and is commanded by a captain. The review team could not find an order or procedure that establishes this bureau or outlines its responsibilities. In the 1998 annual report, the chief states that he established this bureau and listed its responsibilities as the beachfront patrol, haz-mat, pistol range, auxiliary police and the first aid and fire department liaison. Other duties not listed in the report include the supervision of animal control, two DARE officers, the emergency response team, the cold water rescue team, the marine patrol unit, crime prevention and emergency management. The haz-mat function is really the responsibility of the administration captain and the sergeant that works for the administration captain that conducts the crime prevention program.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that this bureau be eliminated and that its duties either be transferred into other bureaus or discontinued as noted below.

Beachfront Patrol

Beachfront patrol and marine patrol units fall under this command. The beachfront consists of approximately three miles of beach on the Raritan Bay in the Lawrence Harbor section. The township has agreed to lease a portion of this area to the county so that the county can develop the area into a "passive" waterfront facility to be known as "Waterfront Park." That agreement is dated April 8, 1998. The plan includes an eight-foot wide walkway from the Morgan Creek area to the Margaret Creek area, which is about one mile. The plans include increased access and parking for about 250 cars, comfort stations and an observation/band pavilion.

The lease document calls for the township and the county to agree on a plan that provides police protection for the park, to be supplied by the Old Bridge Police Department. The county has agreed to build a facility for police, first aid and maintenance that the Old Bridge Police refer to as a sub-station.

The police have submitted to the team a proposed preliminary police plan for the Lawrence Harbor beach restoration. This plan calls for full-time police coverage beginning on April 1st of each year and continuing through September 30th of each year. Staffing would consist of two officers on the day and night shifts and one officer on the midnight shift. The rest of the year the staffing would be on an as needed basis. Also in the plan is a requirement for an 18 - 20 foot

boat that would be used to “patrol the waterfront, keeping water craft at a safe distance from the bathing area and to assist any boats or bathers in trouble. It will have the capacity to administer first aid and transport people.” The department states that it will need ten additional full-time officers to staff this plan. The team has checked with other shorefront communities and has found that these estimates of staffing and equipment are excessive in comparison.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the beachfront patrol mission be incorporated into the patrol operations bureau and the staffing be met with special officers. Shore front communities use these officers for these missions. The time frame of mid-April to the end of September seems reasonable, but the need for two officers from 7:00 a.m. to 12:00 midnight seven days a week and an officer assigned to protect a fishing pier from midnight to 7:00 a.m. seven days a week is excessive. It is suggested that, initially, Special Law Enforcement Officers (SLEO) be hired to cover the weekends and, perhaps, some times during the week, based on projections from the county on the estimated use of the facility. The department should refrain from agreeing to provide a large number of full-time officers initially that could be used to force the township into hiring additional officers or face the cost of the county providing this agreed to protection.

It is recommended that the police department assign the responsibility of first aid calls and rescue calls on the water to the appropriate agencies (NJSP, Coast Guard and local first aid squads).

The department has deployed two All Terrain Vehicles (ATV) to the beachfront and has a four wheel drive vehicle that was acquired as a forfeiture asset. The department patrols the area from one week before Memorial Day until the weather turns cool usually around mid-September. They provide ten-hour day coverage on the beach with the two ATV's. This is divided into two five-hour shifts staffed by special officers. If the weather is rainy, the 4WD vehicle is used. It is stated that on the weekends there can be up to 1,000 people on the beach.

Officers staffing two Jet Ski personal watercrafts now provide marine patrol. These units valued at \$10,000 each are on loan from Kawasaki. The primary mission for this unit is to police the waters on the weekends. The department states that there are around 100 boats off shore when the weather is nice and people operating personal watercraft “buzz” the anchored boats and the people swimming around them. They do boat safety checks and have been trained in water rescue and a law enforcement small boat course given by the New Jersey State Police (NJSP). This course is one month in length and was taken by the Captain of the Special Service Bureau in October of 1999 and a sergeant was sent in the spring of 2000. Other officers will be scheduled for this training when slots are available.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the department prioritize the training to ensure that the scarce training be offered to the officers expected to perform the work. The one-month training of the captain of the bureau would assume that he would be assigned to duties of an officer and not the commander.

In 1999, the department stated that they responded to three boat fires and seven rescues. They also provided two medical transports from boats to the shore. The department staffed this either on overtime or compensatory time. If the coverage was for the twelve weekends of June, July and August and the coverage was ten hours per day that would account for 240 hours per officer for a total of 480 hours. If the time were overtime, it would cost \$21,873 if officers were used.

A problem that was identified by the department and the NJSP Marine Law Enforcement Unit is that a Jet Ski is not the best platform from which to do this type of work. The officer along with his radio, gun and reports is exposed to the water. Whenever the officer comes alongside another vessel, the design and size of the Jet Ski often puts the officer below most other boats. If the officer must write a report or issue a summons, the officer must either board the other boat to do it or remain on the Jet Ski and write sitting on the bench seat. In addition, there is very little room to transport injured people safely or transport an arrested individual.

The department mentioned that as part of the project of upgrading the waterfront a \$45,000 equipment portion was included. The department plans to purchase a boat with most of that money.

The team contacted the NJSP Marine Unit responsible for the waters of Old Bridge Township, Lawrence Harbor. The NJSP has the responsibility for all reports of boat accidents and enforcement of State of New Jersey boat laws and education programs. The Newark Bay station is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to respond to this area. When faced with an emergency, boater's call the Coast Guard for assistance, the coast guard communicates with the NJSP for response when warranted. There is no established protocol for either the Coast Guard or the NJSP to notify the Old Bridge Police. Boaters generally do not know what town the beach belongs to.

According to NJSP records, the area in question is not a high volume area for complaints. In July, 1999, they responded to two calls; one was a vessel in distress that took nine minutes to respond to, the other was an overdue vessel that returned under its own power. They estimate that from May to September they stop and board 10 to 15 boats per week in that area.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the department discontinue the marine patrol and return the equipment to the owner. This is an area in which a Coast Guard or NJSP response clearly is appropriate. If every local police department established its own maritime response unit

the cost of duplicated service would be staggering. First aid squads in Old Bridge have boats in the area that can be used for rescue and first aid. Such response falls within their areas of responsibility.

Cost Savings: \$21,873

Haz-Mat

The captain of the administration bureau provides haz-mat response. He is a level 3 Incident Command Specialist (ICS) and controls the emergency management response. He reports to the captain of the special operations bureau.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that this function be moved to the administration bureau and that the captain retain responsibility for the haz-mat function and related emergency management activities.

Range

The range officer is a sergeant who is tasked with a multitude of responsibilities. His primary responsibility is to operate and maintain the department's five-port indoor range and to ensure compliance with the attorney general's guidelines regarding officer firearms qualification. Recently, the department changed the scheduling of officers for firearm qualification to have the firearms instructor come to work when the officers are on duty so that they avoid paying overtime to the officers. The firearm instructor adjusts his schedule to accommodate this. He is also an instructor in the FireArms Training System (FATS) recently purchased by the county prosecutor. This is a very valuable training aid in the "shoot/don't shoot" decision process concerning deadly force situations.

This officer is also a member of the county Special Operations and Response Team (SORT). This team has been in existence since 1979 and consists of 30 members from departments throughout the county. Their goal is to respond to events anywhere in the county within one hour, when requested. The county team trains twice per month. This sergeant has a car available 24 hours a day.

The range and department owned weapons are up to date and very well maintained. The indoor range is located in the basement of the main building that houses the police department and the administrative offices of the township. The range has some time constraints as to its use due to its location under the courtroom. When court is in session or when the courtroom is used for other meetings the noise from the range is disruptive.

While touring the range and visiting other police offices in the basement, the lack of physical security of the police department became evident. The front entrance to the police department is located in a common lobby of the main building. The police department has a window that is generally staffed by the OIC. If the public requests access to the record area, they are directed to enter and go three doors down to the record room. The OIC cannot see if the visitor, indeed, goes there or chooses to wander throughout the building. Visitors are not required to display any badge or device. Officers not in uniform are not required to display any type of identification.

Due to the casual dress of non-uniformed officers, it is hard to tell visitors from officers. A cipher lock controls the rear entrance but the door does not always close and it is said that everyone knows the combination, including deliverymen. Another problem is the elevator located in the lobby that can be accessed before encountering the OIC or the civilian receptionist on the administration side. This elevator can go to the second floor or to the basement. If taken to the basement the visitor can go anywhere unchallenged.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the physical security be enhanced by periodically changing the combination to the rear door and ensuring that it closes and locks every time it is used. Visitors should be required to sign in at the OIC and display a badge that gives them access only to certain areas. Non-uniformed officers and civilian employees should be required to display police identification when in the building. Visitors not displaying proper identification should be challenged and returned to the public portion of the building. The elevator should be modified so that the basement cannot be accessed without a key. A door that is protected by a cipher lock should block the police portion of the basement.

It is recommended that range operations be assigned to the administration bureau.

Auxiliary Police

This force of volunteer officers serves without pay in various scenarios throughout the year. The number of volunteers has varied from 51 down to 17. While in training status they fall under the police department. The department trains these officers in the use of PR-24 batons and pepper spray. There has been a question as to where the funding for these officers should come from. Currently, the police department absorbs the cost to equip the officers with uniforms and equipment. The emergency management office actually controls these officers when a state of emergency is declared and they have a budget in which the funds for these officers should reside.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the funds currently being spent to train and equip these officers be transferred to the emergency management budget.

The department maintains three marked cars identical to the Old Bridge police cars, that are dedicated to the auxiliary unit. These cars are only used when there is a crowd control event or during training. These cars are not equipped with shotguns. It has been pointed out that there have been times that auxiliary officers have been assigned other marked police cars that have been equipped with shot guns.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that, if auxiliary officers are assigned to cars equipped with shot guns, the guns be removed and stored in headquarters.

It is recommended that these three vehicles be transferred to the emergency management office and be used to support the personnel assigned. The cars should remain marked but the police identifier be removed and replaced with “office of emergency management.”

It is recommended that the department, along with the office of emergency management, define in writing the mission of the force and outline a course of action that supports this mission.

For the purpose of training, it is recommended that this function report to the administration bureau.

It is recommended that control of this valuable asset reside in OEM and be supported by the police department for training.

ANIMAL CONTROL

This function was located within the department of health until the township decided to join the county health system in 1998. At that time, this function was transferred to the police department and the special operations bureau was formed and became the direct supervisor for the animal shelter.

The office is staffed with two full-time animal control officers (ACO). The FY99 salary and benefit cost of these workers was \$99,752. Other expenses were \$10,578. Total expenses were \$117,937. \$7,607 was paid in overtime. Fifty-seven compensatory hours were earned and 197 compensatory hours were used. This did not include building or vehicle maintenance costs. At the end of 1999 a total of 2,083 hours of compensatory time was owed to these two employees. The contract between the township and Teamsters Local #490 section G states that “At no time shall an employee be permitted to accrue more than 240 hours of comp-time. All compensation earned beyond 240 hours must be paid in cash.”

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the township budget funds to pay these workers for the excess compensatory time to make the hours owed consistent with the contract. In addition, future compensatory time should be limited to be consistent with the budget.

Mission

The animal control function has no defining document that describes its mission or purpose. The workers related that their job was to pick up stray dogs and cats and any other unwanted animals within the township. They attempt to adopt out all animals they find. They also remove dead animals from the road, except deer, which are disposed of by contract. They loan traps and carriers to the public. The licensing of animals is the responsibility of the clerk’s office. The workers stated that they had no knowledge of the budget or what it costs to operate. They also have no idea how much money is raised in fees and licensing.

Staff

There are two licensed ACO's. The staff work hours, as directed by a July 19, 1998 procedural memo issued by the captain in charge of the special operations bureau, are from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday to Friday. The contract directs the workers to work alternating weekends for the feeding and cleaning of the pens. This is done without additional cost through schedule adjustments. The workers are allowed seven hours to perform these tasks. When the workers do the "cleaning and feeding" on the weekends, they determine what hours this takes place, they do it in the morning and come back for the afternoon. The workers do not stay the entire day or perform any other functions.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the one ACO be scheduled to work both days on the weekend along with volunteers to perform the cleaning and feeding requirements, along with opening the shelter to make the shelter available to the public for adoptions. Volunteers could augment the days during the week that there is only one ACO on duty.

The workers are directed to physically report to the station commander at the beginning and end of each workday. The team observed that this did not happen and the workers could call in to the OIC instead. The actual hours that these workers worked was always in question. The workers told us that they varied their hours depending on how they felt (one claimed to have a chronic bad back) or on the condition of family members. The station commander would note on the time sheet that they called in but the times were not noted. The team observed that some days the kennel was not staffed until 9:00 a.m. or 10:00 a.m. and then by only one person. The team observed that the workers often did not submit time sheets in a timely manner. They were directed to submit these sheets each week by Friday. Often these were submitted so late that it was impossible to verify the accuracy of the time submitted.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the workers be compelled to comply with existing directives, contracts and procedures regarding the work schedule. This should be done through progressive discipline for the workers and their immediate supervisor. If the workers are not forced to comply, the supervisor should be held responsible. All hours not verified should not be paid.

Facility

The shelter is located in a building next to the department of public works, distant from the police department. The building is a cinder block building that is in need of basic housekeeping and maintenance. The entrance leads into an office that has two desks, a counter that contains a sink and a small number of storage cabinets. The office is so cluttered that it is impossible to clean and to operate it efficiently. There was no clear space on the counter. Piles of food and other pet supplies took all available space. The walls are covered with pictures of adopted animals and clippings from newspapers. The office suffers from a flooding problem caused by improper grading of the walkway causing water to pour in the front door when it rains. This has

been identified to various officials without any corrective action. The non-responsiveness on the part of police supervisors and, prior to the police, the health department supervisors, is used as an excuse to the public when they are confronted with the chaos in the kennel.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the township assign a custodian to provide basic cleaning for the building.

It is recommended that the township also assure that the flooding condition is corrected promptly.

It is recommended that the pictures and other items on the wall be taken down and placed into an album if needed to encourage adoption.

It is recommended that once the facility is in reasonable condition, the workers are held to the standard the rest of the township employees are held to concerning the organization of the kennel and the maintenance of township assets. Supervisors should be held responsible for assurance of compliance.

The kennel portion of the building consists of 18 indoor/outdoor runs for dogs and nine cages for cats. At the time of the review, the ACO stated that ten runs were usable and nine runs are used for storage. We observed five runs being used for storage of food and other supplies. Another run was being used to store the bicycle of one of the ACOs. The tops of the runs were full of animal carriers and traps. This equipment was in various states of repair and in pieces. There is no inventory or asset list. We estimate there were approximately ten dog and 30 - 35 cat carriers and three traps. The team was told that there were another three to five lent out and people don't always return them. Records indicated there were thirteen traps out and not returned; some of these have been out for 18 months. They also indicated that two carriers were out and not returned. The staff made no effort to reclaim them even though they had the address and phone numbers of the people who have them. These traps are valued at \$80 each. There is no written policy to guide these workers and create accountability.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the kennel portion of the building be cleaned out. There is a real problem with the lack of storage for the food, supplies and equipment needed to run this operation. Once the broken carriers and traps are disposed of and a proper amount of supplies needed to be stored in "inventory" is determined, the amount of space to store these items then can be determined. This can be accomplished by renting a storage container (estimated at \$45/month/\$540/year). If this works, then the option of purchasing the unit could be explored.

Value Added Expense: \$540/year

It is recommended that the personal belongings of the workers not be stored in the kennel.

It is recommended that the missing traps be retrieved and nothing else be lent out until a written policy and procedure is developed. If 10 of the 13 traps can be recovered, that would amount to \$800 in township property returned and the cost avoidance of replacing this equipment. If carriers are donated to the township, they then become township property and must be protected and accounted for as any other township asset.

Cost Avoidance: \$800

It is recommended that the shelter develops an accurate inventory of township property and is held accountable for its safekeeping.

Another limitation in this building, observed at the time of the review, was a lack of appropriate space to be used to destroy animals. The current practice is to do this in the office by clearing off the counter and destroying the animal in the office. To expect the workers to do this, and to subject owners who bring their pets to be destroyed to this, is unacceptable. The process of lifting a large dog onto a kitchen-sized counter and to hold the animal until the animal succumbs creates risk for the employee in lifting and it is not possible to clean up and disinfect that area properly afterward.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that all euthanasia that stems from un-adoptable animals held by the shelter be done in another facility and that the animals be transported to that facility.

It is recommended that animals that are brought to the facility by their owners to be destroyed be referred to another facility.

Vehicle

The shelter was issued a 1998 15-passenger window van that has the rear seats removed and cages installed. The van is too large for this operation. The number of cages needed could easily fit into a smaller mini-van type vehicle. Since the truck replaced a car, one of the excess cars with the rear seat removed could serve the purpose. The present truck has a very high ground clearance and if an animal cannot be convinced to jump into the truck and must be lifted, the height is a problem.

The practice of the animal control officer being called to remove dead animals from the roads should be revised. The practice of putting a dead dog into the truck that has no separation between the cargo area and the operator should stop at once. Cleaning the interior of the truck properly after removing a dead dog is a problem. This type of truck is not intended to be exposed to hosing out or pressure washing.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the truck currently used by the shelter be reassigned to the traffic safety unit, where it could be used to replace an old suburban that should be taken out of

service. The replacement vehicle should be a car taken from the police fleet once that fleet is reconfigured. With rear seats removed and cages installed, a retired police vehicle would suffice until a more suitable replacement vehicle is funded.

It is recommended that the practice of the animal control officer being called to remove carcasses from the roadway is stopped and the road department be tasked to do this.

Uniforms

In a July 19, 1998 directive, the ACOs were ordered to “have and maintain a minimum of three fatigue uniforms (khaki drill pants and shirt), and to wear same on regular duty days.” The contract allows each ACO a \$700 per year clothing allowance. The team observed that the ACOs did not wear a uniform and reported to work wearing whatever they liked.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the township address its uniform policy. If the township does not require a uniform to be worn, there is no need to provide a clothing allowance. If a uniform is required, the township should begin a quartermaster system of issuing and replacing uniforms as needed to replace the cash allowance.

Cost Savings: \$700 - \$1,400

Licensing and Fees

The clerk’s office is responsible for issuing licenses and collecting fees for dogs and cats. The township collected \$17,852 in license fees for 3,072 dogs in FY99. They also collected \$3,320 for 457 cats and \$110 in kennel fees. The clerk’s office turned over \$6,319 to the state for the dogs. The American Veterinary Medical Association estimates that .28 of the households own 1.5 dogs. That would place 8,393 dogs in Old Bridge or 5,321 more dogs than are currently licensed. Issuance of all the estimated additional licenses would generate another \$30,921 in fees. The estimate for the cat population for Old Bridge is 5,456. Therefore, an estimated 4,998 cats are not licensed or more than \$35,000 in revenues are lost.

A problem described by the shelter workers is that when an unlicensed dog is found and claimed by its owner, they must release the dog to the owner because the clerk’s office can’t license the dog without proof of a rabies vaccination. The clerk’s office should follow up on the dog but the clerk’s office contends it is not their responsibility. The shelter workers don’t believe it is their responsibility since they don’t issue the license. At the annual free rabies vaccination given each November, shots are given without proof that the dog is licensed. The clerk’s office chooses not to have someone on site so that the license could be purchased at that site.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the clerk’s office work with the police department to ensure that all dogs in the township be licensed.

Revenue Enhancement: \$30,921

It is recommended that Old Bridge develop a plan for consistently enforcing the cat licensing law. If they are successful in registering half of the unregistered cats, they would earn \$17,000.

Revenue Enhancement: \$17,000

Recent police department directives include:

- “No money, cash, check or money order will be accepted at the kennel. All money generated by the shelter will be accepted only at the police administrative officers on the second floor of police headquarters.”
- “All large material donations (i.e., dog or cat food, kitty litter, cages, traps, transport boxes/cages etc.), must be cleared through the accounts control clerk. She will then make arrangements for the pickup and delivery to the kennel.”
- “No volunteers will be permitted to work at the kennel. A volunteer is further defined as anyone who is not a township employee specifically employed as a animal control officer or clerical help assigned to the kennel, who donates or attempts to donate his/her time to the kennel.”
- “Kennel employees will refrain from discussing internal problems with the general public (i.e., the condition of the shelter, kennel vehicle or working environment). General public is further defined as anyone who is not directly involved with the operation of the kennel, who is not a member of the police department, or anyone who would not be authorized to possess such information.”

These directives, although most are being ignored and not enforced, show that there is a lack of trust between the police administration and the animal control officers. There are more directives not listed here that support this view. The observed operation of the shelter and the lack of police supervision and the lack of township commitment to this operation are staggering. The reasons why this atmosphere exists are numerous and they all are superficial. If the police department is tasked to oversee this operation, they should be held to it. If the police administration finds the conditions in the shelter dirty and use this as a reason for not going down there to ensure proper operation and supervision, then they should be held accountable. If the employees fail to come to work and not work when they show up, they must be held accountable.

Workload

During 1999, the shelter reported that they picked up 198 dogs and 380 cats (578 total). Of these fifteen dogs and 108 cats were destroyed (123 total). They adopted out 176 dogs and 204 cats (380 total). That would be 65% adopted and 21% destroyed. There are 75 (13%) dogs and cats missing from these records.

The township contracts with a private animal crematorium for the disposal of animal carcasses. As part of the contract, the vendor supplies a freezer at the shelter (housed outside in a homemade shelter) and provides maintenance for it. The vendor picks up the animals and disposes of the remains. During 1999, the vendor picked up and disposed of 2,692 pounds of animals. These included animals picked up on the road and animals brought to the shelter to be

destroyed. The shelter has no records that indicate how many animals were picked up from the road or how many were brought in by their owners for disposal. The charge for this was \$120 per year for the freezer rental and 35 cents per pound for the disposal (\$942).

Future Plans

The shelter and the department have generated plans that would charge fees for costs such as:

- adoption;
- when animals are turned into the shelter;
- euthanasia and cremation of remains; and
- for picking up and returning strays.

They also plan to start a donation program using cans placed in area businesses. The team was shown plans dating back to 1994 that were rejected without a reason. The team also saw a copy of a rebuttal to a proposed fee schedule developed by the captain in charge of the special operation bureau to the business administrator from the animal control officer. This just provides further evidence of the chaos of this organization.

The township must decide what course to take in regards to the mission of the shelter. The facility as it stands now is too small to support the types of programs that could generate enough funding to be profitable. At the minimum, rooms would have to be constructed to conduct operations such as euthanasia. The freezer that now is outside in a makeshift shelter should be housed indoors. A room is needed for the storage and security of the supplies to properly run this operation. Investing in such improvements without addressing the fundamental underlying problems would be fruitless.

The underlying problems include the reluctance to force the workers to comply with basic work rules; the reluctance to supervise these workers and develop standards of work and enforce compliance; and the police administration's failure to recognize the lack of supervision by its own supervisor.

All of these factors have led the team to recommend that this operation be moved into the private sector.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the township bid this service out to a private contractor. Estimates of the cost would range from \$1.25 - \$1.50 per resident.

Value Added Expense: \$90,000
Cost Savings: \$117,937
Net Savings: \$27,937

DARE

Two officers who work from an office located in the basement of headquarters staff Old Bridge's DARE program. They provide DARE instruction for twelve public and three private schools and

about 1,000 5th grade children. They have no funding from the police department. The approximately \$30,000 needed to operate is taken from grants and donations. The grant funding will be reduced from \$11,000 in 1999 to \$6,500 in 2000. The officers are confident that this reduction will be replaced by increased donations. The officers solicit items that they need from the donors so that they do not receive any cash. The local PBA and a local bank donate at least \$5,000 each in supplies. The New Jersey DARE office places clothing donation bins throughout the town and donate \$150 for each bin; they currently have 35 bins placed. There are two other officers that are trained and teach part-time. These officers also provide tours of the police department and attend all DARE graduations; nine of these were held in the council chambers in the evening. During the time there is no school, these officers are assigned to duties in the beachfront area.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the DARE officers be relocated into space in the school system and be assigned a vehicle that can be used to travel between the fifteen schools. This function can report to the proposed traffic/quality of life bureau for supervision and assignment when not needed at the schools.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM (ERT)

The department operates an ERT team that is made up of one captain, one sergeant and five officers. They were used for four high-risk entries in 1999. There is no written policy, procedure or general order directing when they are to be used, who is authorized to employ the team and the special weapons they employ. This, in a department that has a general order (007 - 94) titled "Authorized Use of Metal Flashlights" describing the type of metal flashlight to be carried and how it could and could not be used. This team trains one day per month and one day per quarter for weapons qualifications.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that this team be disbanded and the department continues to support the county SORT team and use that team for these types of events. The patrol force can be given increased training so that they can contain events until the county team can arrive on the scene.

Productivity Enhancement: \$27,220

COLD WATER RESCUE

The department has three officers trained in cold water rescue. There is no written policy, procedure or general order directing when they are to be used or who is authorized to employ the team. There is no formal training plan in place. The dry suits that each member is issued cost about \$400. Other equipment needed for this unit, such as a flat bottom boat and ropes, have not been purchased. There is no plan in place that outlines how the unit will progress or how much time and expense is needed to establish an effective unit. The fire department has this capability and should be used when needed.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that this unit be disbanded and that the fire department assume this responsibility.

**Productivity Enhancement: \$2,916
Cost avoidance boat and other equipment: \$1,000**

CRIME PREVENTION

A sergeant that is assigned to the administrative bureau performs this function. The sergeant has an active program aimed at seniors, community groups and in the schools.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that this function be moved into the proposed traffic/quality of life bureau and the sergeant work with, and supervise, the DARE officers.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

The emergency management position within the police department is set up to control the auxiliary police officers and, as such, is responsible for the training of these non-paid officers. It costs about \$1,100 to outfit each officer and that is taken from the police budget training line. The captain maintains the training schedule for these officers. The funding for these officers should reside in the emergency management budget. This can be offset by properly employing the emergency management assets to recover costs in cleanups.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the costs associated with OEM be moved from the police budget into the emergency management budget.

It is recommended that the police department and the office of emergency management develop a policy and procedure that directs OEM involvement in certain events that promise cost recovery. The police should only be involved in the training of these police officers.

It is recommended that the three cars presently in the police fleet dedicated to the Auxiliary Police should be transferred to the office of emergency management.

Cost Savings: \$11,490

It is recommended that this function report to the administration bureau.

RECORDS

The records bureau is commanded by a captain that is responsible for the records section, identification section, the domestic violence team, Megan's Law compliance, the radio system

and the computer system. The captain also administers the drunk driving enforcement grant and, when funded, the aggressive driving and seat belt grants. This bureau is staffed with three sworn officers and eight civilians.

The records bureau has five data entry clerks, one Uniform Crime Report (UCR) clerk, one steno secretary and one records foreman, who was transferred from the road department but works for the police department in records. The records section is open to the public from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The seven workers are cross-trained so that all aspects of the job can be accomplished during absences. The workers have a schedule to assign the common tasks to each so that the workload is distributed appropriately.

During the last twelve-months, the records bureau sold 3,686 copies and generated \$14,619 in fees.

Warrants are received from the court and from out of town agencies. They are entered into the computer system and the clerk sends out a letter to the person advising them of the warrant. If the people come in or are arrested, she cancels the warrant and sends it back to the issuing court or agency. The team discovered that, at the time of our review, 377 Old Bridge residents were named on warrants, some on multiple warrants. As of February 8, 2000, 60 residents were named on the county fugitive list. According to the annual reports from 1996, 1997, 1998 and 1999, no warrants were served. The warrant arrests that were made were from other police/citizen encounters.

The records foreman, who was transferred from the road department in 1980, has, as the number one item of the job description provided to the review team, the responsibility to serve warrants. This job description was dated December 15, 1994.

1. Serving of warrants issued by the Old Bridge Court and out of town municipalities for residents of Old Bridge.
2. To oversee the maintenance of all portable radios for the police department and the delivery and pick up of radios to the radio vendor.
3. Deliver evidence from the ID section to the prosecutor's office and the expired license plates to the division of Motor Vehicles in Mattoon.
4. Deliver copies of cases to the prosecutor's office.
5. Pick-up forms for the police department from Trenton, New Brunswick, Sheriff's Office and County Police Academy.
6. Deliver affidavits to the County Court law clerk and return to Old Bridge the cases and evidence needed for Old Bridge Court.
7. Deliver reports pertaining to the Old Bridge budget to New Brunswick and Trenton.
8. Deliver documents for the law department.
9. Deliver agenda minutes to council member's homes; deliver any and all documents upon request to all council members; deliver advertisements for publication to newspapers; responsible for the postal stamping machine.

10. To be on standby for any request or deliveries to be made for the mayor's office and to be a driver for the employees trip reduction program.
11. On call for all departments in case they want deliveries or pickups.
12. Any other tasks for the record bureau captain.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the records foreman position be eliminated and the various duties be directed elsewhere.

It is recommended that the patrol bureau begin to serve warrants during their tour of duty.

It is recommended that the radio vendor picks up and delivers radios as part of the maintenance contract.

It is recommended that ID detectives deliver evidence to labs and prosecutor's office.

It is recommended that a civilian in administration make deliveries.

Cost Savings: \$74,660

It is recommended that this bureau become a part of the administration bureau and be supervised by a civilian supervisor. The civilian supervisor should be promoted from the existing workers and not be an additional worker.

Cost Savings: \$40,000

IDENTIFICATION SECTION

Two detectives staff the identification section. They work out of an office on the first floor. They work from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday to Friday, except for Tuesdays, when one of the detectives works 12:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. in order to provide the court with evidence, if needed. Their duties include crime scene processing, photos, fingerprinting and evidence collection. They process evidence that must be sent or transported to laboratories. They did 45 civilian prints during the last twelve months and collected \$2,225. This is at a rate of \$5 for residents and \$20 for non-residents. If they all were charged \$20, the revenue would be \$8,900.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that this function report to the detective bureau commander. It is further recommended that all civilian prints be charged \$20.

Revenue Enhancement: \$6,675

This unit also provides photo support for all municipal functions as well as DARE and Crime Prevention programs. They take about 2,000 Polaroid pictures for six to eight Child ID days.

The group sponsoring these events donates the film. All photos delivered to lawyers are subject to charges by ordinance of \$5 per photo and the lawyer must take the entire roll even if they want a single picture.

The identification section works from four small and very cluttered rooms on the first floor. The storage space and work surfaces are inadequate. The spaces are not connected and have two separate doors leading into the hallway making officer safety a concern at times. The section lacks a down draft print table that would greatly enhance the efficiency of the operation. Training is also an issue for the detectives. One of the detectives still needs to go to fingerprint comparison school after 4.5 years assigned to the unit.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the department redesign the available office space and procure a down draft print table.

One-time Value Added Expense: \$20,000 for rooms and \$5,000 for table

Both detectives have vehicles assigned to them so that they can respond from home when needed. Since the department does not have an on call policy or schedule, both detectives are issued a car. The average mileage used by these two detectives is telling. One detective lives in the township and the average monthly mileage of the car assigned to him was 1,363. The other detective lives out of the township and the average monthly mileage of the car assigned to him was 3,194. The difference in mileage between the two people doing the same job is 1,831 miles per month or 21,972 miles per year. The fleet average miles per gallon is 10.6. That would save 2,072 gallons of gas costing an average of \$1,450 (.70/gallon).

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the identification section use one car and, if a detective is called in on overtime, he can respond to headquarters and pick up the car and respond to the scene.

Cost Savings: \$5,280

Department and township administration leadership alike has identified overtime as a problem. Another issue that should be and has not been identified as such is compensatory time. The two detectives in this section have accumulated, in 1999, 545-overtime hours that were paid for and 76 additional compensatory hours. The two detectives have \$56,949 worth of compensatory hours owed to them (1,752 hours).

This overtime is generated by the policy of calling out on overtime one of the two identification officers to process all crime scenes whenever they are discovered. The team suggests the following options.

- Stagger the two detective's hours to cover 16 hours a day.
- Train the patrol officers to accomplish most initial crime scene processing.

- Develop policy that enables road supervisors to determine which crime scenes can be processed by patrol officer, which scenes must be processed by the identification detectives and which scenes can be secured and processed at a later date.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the department adopt the options listed above with the goal of reducing the overtime incurred by the two identification detectives by 75%.

Cost Savings: \$21,887

COMMUNICATIONS AND COMPUTERS

The department has an officer assigned to this section. His duties include being the Terminal Agency Control (TAC) officer, 911 coordinator, and Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) and records system administrator and communications manager. He works the administration schedule, Monday to Friday, and has a car assigned to take home. The radio system is a new four frequency 800 MHz trunked system that serves the entire township. The system consists of 246 portable radios and 172 mobile radios installed in vehicles in addition to the consoles, transmitters, receivers and repeaters located throughout the township.

The dispatchers are the responsibility of the patrol bureau captain and are directly supervised by the OIC. The communications officer serves as the training officer for all communications and CAD related training. The dispatchers work ten-hour shifts, the same as the patrol squads. The only difference is that the days stagger the two patrol squads so that they work two days with squad A and two days with squad B. Staffing is scheduled as follows:

- 0300 to 0700 two on duty
- 0700 to 0800 four on duty
- 0800 to 1200 two on duty
- 1200 to 1700 three on duty
- 1700 to 2200 two on duty
- 2200 to 0300 three on duty

This level of staffing is adequate to support the proposed differential response program mentioned earlier in the report. If the department chooses not to implement the differential response program, the staffing can be reduced by two full-time positions. The department should train and employ two per diem dispatchers to be available for scheduled day off coverage and sick time call in.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that two full-time positions be eliminated and replaced with two part-time positions unless a differential response program is implemented.

Cost Savings: \$78,003

This work schedule allows for 1,825 hours work per year before contracted days off. This is 255 hours less than if they worked an average 40-hour week (2,080).

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the work schedule be changed so that dispatchers work an average workweek of 40 hours (2,080 hours per year) before contracted days off.

Potential Productivity Enhancement: \$68,240

Sick time usage within the dispatchers seems high. Records show that in 1999 the average dispatcher was absent 14.7 ten-hour days (147 hours) sick. According to the contract, (IFPTE Local # 196) Article IX Section A ‘sick leave is to be considered an insurance type benefit, to be used when needed due to personal illness or physical incapacity. Sick leave may be used for illness in an employee’s immediate family requiring the employee’s attention.’”

Sick time was changed from 16, eight -hour days (128 hours) to 14, 10-hour days (140 hours) in an addendum to the labor agreement that is in effect July 1, 1996 through June 30, 1999 signed March 3, 1999.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the sick time benefit be calculated into hours and be based on 16 eight hour days or 128 hours per year.

Potential Productivity Enhancement: \$3,213

It is recommended that the department ensure that employees using sick leave are sick. The goal should be to reduce the average sick time to the equivalent of seven eight-hour days per year (56 hours).

Productivity Enhancement: \$24,365

Vacation time is a contract item. The average dispatcher used 16.81 ten-hour days of (168 hours) vacation. The team observed that the vacation time used by the dispatchers varied during the year. Based on the vacation time used in 1999, the average number of vacation days granted per month would have been 16.8 days. The actual number varied from a low of five to a high of 35.5. During the months of May, July and December, a total of 41 additional staff days would be available if vacation time were scheduled evenly throughout the year. This scheduling drives overtime replacement costs. This is illustrated in Appendix 8.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the department schedule vacations through out the year and limit the number of vacation days granted to 17 days per month.

Productivity Enhancement: \$7,318

It is recommended that the vacation benefit be calculated into hours and be based on an eight hour day. Based on the maximum vacation allowed (reached after only ten years) which is 20 days, the savings would be 40 hours each dispatcher.

Potential Productivity Enhancement: \$10,710

The police department has excellent control of the 120 portables and has individually signed records for each issued radio. Also, the 58 mobile radios are inventoried and accounted for. The department has records of which organization was issued the remainder of the equipment but cannot verify the end user of the portables or the location of the mobiles. A case was pointed out where a portable radio was lost by one of the first aid squads (Green and White Ambulance) around December 25, 1999 and a report was finally submitted February 29, 2000. The report did not say what was being done to replace the radio or to compensate the township for its loss. This equipment cost the township \$1,844. This raised the following questions.

1. Who owns the equipment when it is given to the fire districts and first aid squads?
2. Does the police department, who controls the system, have the right to inventory and inspect the equipment?
3. Who replaces lost equipment and who insures the equipment?
4. Does the police department have the right to demand the return of equipment it deems excess?

The officer charged with managing the radio system could not answer these questions. The approximate cost of the equipment given to the township divisions, fire districts and first aid squads is \$470,000.

The team observed that the professional (paid) ambulance service that deployed during the day did not have direct radio contact with the dispatch center. It was offered that there were not enough radios to allow this. The team questions why the volunteer squads have 34 portable radios issued to them and none could be found for the paid ambulance.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that two portable radios be turned in from the volunteer first aid squads and be maintained in the OIC office in a charger so that they can be issued each day and returned at the end of the tour by the professional (paid) squad.

It is recommended that a township policy/directive be issued that identifies a person or department that is responsible for the inventory, control and appropriate use of this equipment.

It is recommended that the township appoint a radio communications administrator that has the authority to control all the radio communications assets within the township. This person should be able to set radio policy and create radio procedures that determine the operation of all users of the radio system. The current police communication officer could be given this as an additional duty.

The dispatch area is located behind the OIC office and is capable of supporting its current mission. It has three call taker/dispatcher consoles that are equipped with CAD, radios, phones and recorders. The call taker/dispatchers answer three phone systems: 911, the main township number 721-5600 and the old police number 721-4000. A problem was observed when the phone number displayed on all marked police cars, 721-4000, is called and is answered in the dispatch area. If the caller would like to speak to any other office such as, detectives, chief's office, internal affairs etc., the caller must be told to hang up and call back on the township line (721-5600). The team was told that the rationale for keeping the 721-4000 number is that it was the old police emergency number and some residents still use it. The current configuration of the 5600 number is that it is answered by a menu system that directs callers throughout the township offices, including the police department. The team feels that the 911 emergency phone system and the township system are more than adequate to serve the township and the 4000 number has outlived its usefulness.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the township discontinue use of the old police number and review the taped menu of the 5600 number to ensure the public access to the police for non-emergency business.

Cost Savings: \$12,780

The department has recently upgraded its CAD system and was in the process of transitioning to it. Not all functions were being used at the time of the review. The old system could not be used during the transition because it was not Y2K compliant. The dispatchers/call takers were being trained as modules were being added. The transition seemed to be occurring smoothly.

Cellular Phones

During 1999, the police department, paid for 35 cellular phones at a cost of \$29,335. The captain of the patrol bureau controls these phones and has issued them as indicated in the chart below.

The police department assumes the cost of all the phones and the other user costs are not charged back to the departments. The phones are contracted through the State Contract # A89589. It was observed that there are no policies in place that govern the use of these phones. Additionally, there is no accounting or review of the bills by the users of these phones for non-police calls.

The number of phones operated by the township seems high, given the fact that there is no control of their use. The team did not review individual bills for individual phones. If the department paid \$29,335 for the use of 26 issued phones, that would average \$2,446 per month for 26 issued phones, which averages \$94 per phone, per month (\$1,128 per year).

	Current	Proposed
Detectives	6	2
Narcotics	3	3
Police Cars	3	3
ID Officers	2	1
Captains	5	2
Range	1	1
Radio/Comm.	1	1
Chief	1	1
E.M. Office.	3	3
B.A.	1	1
Spares	9	6
Total	35	24

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the control and use of these phones be directed in a policy issued by the chief. The number of phones on hand can be reduced by 11 phones.

Cost Savings: \$12,418

ADMINISTRATIVE BUREAU

This bureau is commanded by a captain, who has been assigned to administration since 1988 as a sergeant. He is responsible for updating the general orders, scheduling, traffic and safety, school crossing guards, special police officers, training and the fleet. The unit includes a sergeant, a purchasing clerk and a payroll clerk.

Fleet

The police fleet consists of 70 owned vehicles, one rented car, two All Terrain Vehicles (ATVs) and two personal watercraft. The department employs four mechanics to maintain these vehicles at a site detached from the main township complex. The cost to maintain all owned vehicles (including ATVs and Jet Skis) was \$292,476. This is \$3,830 per vehicle, not including fuel. The fuel costs are borne by the township at a central fueling point. The vehicles are very well maintained.

The four mechanics work Monday to Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. All maintenance actions are documented and a thorough vehicle history is maintained. All preventive maintenance schedules are maintained and adhered to. All documentation is in a paper/file card system. As long as this system is maintained, a computer system is not needed.

The team has determined that the four mechanics positions cause the cost of maintaining each vehicle to be significantly higher than found in the competitive market. The current mechanic per car ratio is one mechanic for 19.65 cars. If the fleet size is reduced as per the team's

recommendation, the department could eliminate two mechanic positions and have a ratio of one mechanic per 30 cars. This is acceptable and would bring the maintenance cost per car down to \$2,551 per year. This is below current market costs.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that two mechanics positions be eliminated.

Cost Savings: \$99,809

The township has agreed to a vehicle replacement plan that allows \$150,000 per year for replacement vehicles. This plan is seven years old and the dollar amount has not increased. The plan should be for the replacement of a set number of vehicles not a fixed dollar amount. When the plan was enacted, it provided for seven or eight cars. Now the number of cars purchased would be 6. Once the fleet is reduced to the appropriate size, eight replacement vehicles would be required annually. At current prices, the expenditure required would be \$184,000.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the department budget for the replacement of 1/3 of its patrol fleet per year.

Value Added Expense: \$34,000

The number of vehicles that the police department operates is excessive. The marked patrol car fleet currently consists of a set of eight cars per patrol shift. The department needs two sets of cars to accommodate the overlapping shifts. The third set of cars is for the third shift. This accounts for 24 cars. Three marked cars are assigned to traffic. The department has two cars set aside for use by off duty officers for off duty jobs. One car is used for DWI overtime patrols. The department also has three cars assigned to the auxiliary police. A spare marked car is maintained at the garage. The team proposes that the off duty cars be eliminated; that one of the traffic cars be eliminated and replaced by the DWI car; that the spare at the garage be eliminated; and that the auxiliary cars be transferred to the emergency management office. OEM's budget should include the cost to maintain them. This will still assure vehicle availability for off duty and for use as a spare.

Marked Cars	Actual	Proposed
Patrol shifts	24	24
Traffic	3	2
Off Duty	2	0
DWI	1	1
Auxiliary	3	0
Garage spare	1	0
Total	34	27

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the marked car fleet be reduced and reassigned as indicated in the chart above.

Cost Savings: \$32,004
One-time Revenue Enhancement: \$14,000

The unmarked fleet is assigned as follows:

Function	Actual	Unmarked Proposed
Chief	1	1
Captains	5	2
Detectives	8	5
I.D. bureau	2	1
Special Service	1	1
Internal Affairs	1	1
Admin. Bureau	1	1
Forfeiture	6	6
Rental	1	0
Garage Spare	1	1
Traffic	1	1
Radio	1	0
Totals	29	20

The number of captains under the proposed table of organization would be reduced to two. The number of detectives will remain the same but the team feels that five cars to support eight detectives is adequate since two detectives should work nights. That leaves five cars for seven detectives and the commander and his assignment sergeant can share a car. The officer assigned to the radio section has no need for an assigned vehicle. The two ID detectives can share one car if they work staggered shifts. These cars can be assigned as pool cars to be used as needed and not assigned to individuals.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the unmarked fleet be reduced by eight owned cars.

Cost Savings: \$36,576
One-time Revenue Enhancement: \$16,000

The narcotics squad can use the forfeited cars. This will eliminate the need for the rental car.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the department request permission from the county prosecutor to trade forfeiture cars for equal value cars to be used by the narcotics detectives.

Cost Savings: \$6,300

The miscellaneous total is reduced by one. The marked car that is used by the garage to pick up parts and as a spare can be eliminated. The pick up truck can be used for parts. The DARE officer can use a marked car from the unused shift. The emergency management office can assume control of the three cars transferred from the police fleet along with their costs. The Jeep assigned to DARE and the Auxiliary can be eliminated.

Marked Misc. Function	Actual	Proposed
DARE	1	0
Garage	1	0
Traffic	2	2
Animal control	1	1
E.M. Office	1	3
Auxiliary	1	0
Special Service	1	1
Totals	8	7

Recommendation:

It is recommended that one car be eliminated.

Cost Savings: \$4,572
One-time Revenue Enhancement: \$2,000

TRAFFIC SAFETY

The traffic section works from an office located away from the main police building, adjacent to the police garage. It consists of the traffic officers and the lines and signs section. At the time of our review, the traffic squad was staffed with three officers and a county officer on loan to the department.

The stated mission of the traffic section is enforcement. The traffic section should be responsible for the planning, analysis, monitoring and coordination of the department’s traffic activities. Since there is a close interrelationship between traffic enforcement and all other law enforcement activities, the responsibility for enforcing traffic laws must be shared by all uniform personnel. The number of motor vehicle crashes occurring in the township in 1999 was 2,512. The number of summonses issued during that time was 8,785. During our review, it was mentioned many times that traffic enforcement is not a priority in this department. The traffic unit has primary responsibility for enforcement and has only two officers on the road doing enforcement. A county officer is generally assigned to parking enforcement in the commuter parking lots. Traffic is a major problem within the township, where five major roads add tremendous amounts of commuter traffic to the growing traffic generated by new construction. The number of summonses issued during the last five years is illustrated in Appendix 9. The department has recently (9/99) added another officer to the traffic section. This has increased the traffic section’s share of total summons from 27% of the department total with two officers to 37% of the department total with three officers. The 1999 records show that the average officer on patrol issued 13.5 summonses per month for the year and the traffic officers averaged 89 summonses per month.

There was no supervisor assigned at the operating level. The senior officer acted as the supervisor and reported directly to the captain. The senior officer's duties include:

- RADAR training.
- Maintaining certifications for all RADAR sets and tuning forks.
- Monitoring traffic complaints and assigning officers to selective enforcement response at those sites.
- Determining where to deploy speed display trailer.
- Monitoring speed, using speed counters for traffic surveys.
- Reviewing plans for new construction sites to comment on traffic issues.
- Developing traffic ordinances for new roads.
- Reviewing and approving all construction sites for work zone compliance issues.
- Investigating handicapped parking space requirement in parking lots.

Many of the duties of this officer come from supporting the township engineer. It is estimated that three hours per day is spent on site review, traffic ordinance development, traffic survey and investigating the handicapped parking requirements for parking lots. All of the duties listed and the other administrative chores performed by this officer can be accomplished by a civilian.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that this function assume the responsibilities of DARE and crime prevention to become a traffic/quality of life bureau that reports to the patrol operations bureau. The bureau should be the lead bureau to address all quality of life/community policing issues within the department.

It is recommended that a lieutenant command this bureau, sergeant supervise the traffic enforcement section, and a sergeant supervise the crime prevention/DARE/quality of life bureau.

It is recommended that a civilian traffic coordinator be hired at \$35,000 to perform civilian duties currently performed by the traffic officer.

**Productivity Enhancement: \$34,738
Value Added Expense: \$35,000**

The traffic section does not respond to traffic crashes and does not have a fatal crash investigation unit responsibility. The detective bureau is charged with investigating serious or fatal crashes.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the traffic section be given the responsibility for investigating serious and fatal crashes. A traffic officer should be trained for this function and be sent as courses are offered.

The traffic section is equipped with three marked cars and one unmarked car. The department should explore the deployment of two motorcycles for this unit. A major concern within the township is the traffic congestion and the lack of enforcement of the traffic laws. The congestion along the five major roadways that bisect the town is cited as a problem for officers responding to calls. The motorcycle officer could be used to patrol the commuter lots, condominium area and rental apartment areas as a part of a community police/quality of life program. The motorcycles could be purchased and replaced every two years, for no cost other than the initial purchase cost.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the department operate two motorcycles.

Value Added Expense: \$28,000

OLD BRIDGE TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICT #3

The Old Bridge Township Fire District #3 is commended for actively participating in the Local Government Budget Review process. None of the other fire districts were willing to be held to the same level of accountability. The Old Bridge Township Fire District #3 was established by ordinance in 1959 and was expanded geographically in 1975.

FINANCIAL

The district's primary source of funding is a property tax levy for the fire district. The district receives no direct aid from the township. Total expenditures by the district were \$875,217 in FY99. In FY99, District #3's revenue totaled \$909,450 including \$832,157 in taxes, \$12,361 from the New Jersey Supplemental Fire Services Program (SFSP), \$18,863 from interest on investments, miscellaneous income of \$1,237 and \$44,831 from the enforcement of the Uniform Fire Safety Act.

The district has five commissioners receiving \$2,500 each, totaling \$12,500, one secretary \$33,727, and one part-time office assistant receiving \$7,000. Fringe benefits for the secretary totaled \$17,000 for a total administration salary and wage cost of \$70,227. Included in the \$17,000 is payment for unused sick leave, estimated at \$2,000. The district office's other expenses totaled \$140,512. Total cost for administrative salary, wages and expenses for the District #3 office was \$210,739. Included in this amount is payment for unused sick leave, estimated at \$21,000.

The Fire District Volunteers participate in the New Jersey State Length of Service Awards Program (LOSAP) for a 1999 cost of \$74,540.

FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

The Old Bridge Fire District #3 is responsible for the section of Old Bridge known as South Old Bridge. There are three fire companies in separate stations in the district. They are known as Station 301, 302, and 303. Station 301, on Applebee Avenue and Englishtown Road, has two pumpers, one heavy rescue and one brush truck. Station 302, on Thockmorton Lane, has two pumpers, one aerial and a brush truck. Station 303, on Vantines Lane and Englishtown Road has one pumper, one brush truck and a hazardous material trailer.

Altogether District #3, covers 23 square miles and about 37,000 of the population, or 60% of Old Bridge Township's total population and area. The district has three 1,500 gallon per minute pumpers, one 1,250 gallon per minute pumper, one 1,000 gallon per minute pumper, one 75' aerial ladder, one rescue/pumper vehicle (a 1,500 gallon per minute pump capacity), three brush trucks and a hazardous material trailer. Additional equipment includes three Ford sedans and a Ford Bronco. The equipment in District 3 alone would be more than sufficient to supply fire protection in the entire township, if properly distributed.

The district out-sourced all maintenance and repairs in FY99 for a cost of \$88,700.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the equipment be reduced as follows for appropriate service to the district:

- **Reduce pumpers from five to three.** **One-time Revenue Enhancement: \$100,000**
- **Reduce brush trucks from three to one.** **One-time Revenue Enhancement: \$20,000**
- **Dispose of the one 75-foot ladder truck.** **One-time Revenue Enhancement: \$20,000**

STAFFING

There are 70 volunteers eligible for fire fighting duty in District #3. A total of 112 volunteers are grouped into four classifications of volunteer firefighters in Old Bridge based on years of service and fulfillment of required certifications.

- **Active:** There are 40 active members who have the required certification for firefighting duties but have less than 15 years of service.
- **Active life:** There are 30 active life members who have completed 15 years of service and still wish to respond to alarms. This requires that they complete the yearly training as required by the Division of Fire Safety.
- **Inactive life:** There are 18 inactive life members who have completed 15 years of service but do not wish to respond to alarms any more, so they do not maintain their training requirement for fire fighting duties.

- **Inactive:** There are 22 inactive members who have not completed the required courses to allow them to respond to fire calls.

It was difficult to ascertain the level of staffing on a company responding to a fire call. Although the team monitored the calls during the daytime hours, the infrequent occurrences and the limited ability of the team to be at the scene to take a head count, made it impossible to verify the level of staffing at company response.

From the hours of 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. it is not uncommon, in volunteer fire departments, that the first apparatus on scene will not have sufficient staffing to do an effective job of suppression, rescue, ventilation, and salvage. Some members of the fire district have voiced an opinion that there is a need for paid firefighters in at least one company in the district to ensure that a fully staffed apparatus can be dispatched immediately. It is a concern to some in the district that the fire companies are not able to abide by the OSHA requirement that at least four firefighters are on the scene before entering a structure and beginning interior fire suppression activities.

The team reviewed all daytime (6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.) response records for the year 1999 and found that 16 of the 200 daytime calls in that year did not have proper staffing levels upon district response to a call. The required number of personnel was calculated adding all members responding on all three-district apparatus, not on one single apparatus. Of these 16 incidents, only two would be considered a structural incident. This does not seem to support the need for full-time firefighters.

The team reviewed individual company responses as well. Engine 3, on Vantines Lane, reported 200 incidents and did not meet the required level of staffing 172 times. Of these 172 times, there were 24 reported possible fires in a structure and of these, 12 alarms did not have staffing of this apparatus at all. Five responses had only two firefighters and one had only one firefighter.

Engine 1 recorded 141 responses without the proper level of staffing to initiate an interior structural fire attack. Of the 24 reported possible structure fires, five responses had no fire fighters. In some instances, this may have been because they were told not to respond by the chief officer at the scene. Two had only one firefighter, four had only two fire fighters and six had three firefighters.

Engine 2 on Throckmorton Lane showed the best turnout of personnel. Of the 200 calls 55 responses were reported with less than the proper level of staffing to initiate an interior structural fire attack. Of the 24 reported possible structure fires, on two occasions they reported three firefighters and once they reported two firefighters. All other times they reported proper staffing to engage in fire operations.

Recommendation:

To address the inconsistency of responses across the companies within the district, an effort should be made to equalize the number of members in each company. In addition, response protocols should coordinate all of the resources of the district to assure an appropriate response.

VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT

Fire District #3 participates in a committee to create incentives for individuals who join the volunteer fire companies or first aid squads. The members of the committee are mostly the chiefs and captains of each unit and they meet, as time permits, to identify methods of attracting new members to the organizations. Township officials have authorized a program to issue picture identification badges for all members of the volunteer associations. This program is being implemented. The badges will allow members to avoid the payment of fees for certain township permits and for township recreational activities. The township has also agreed to make up and distribute a package of volunteer fire and first aid information to all new residents of the community when they occupy a home in the township. It explains the work of the volunteers and the benefits that are offered to individuals that join. The township also has set up a telephone "hot line" for those people that are interested in becoming volunteers.

The committee has met with the township Chamber of Commerce to extract ideas on how merchants in the township can assist with supporting volunteers to the fire and first aid units. Many merchants now are offering discounts in their stores for members that show their township volunteer member ID cards.

The committee has been in contact with Sayreville, along with the New Jersey Division of Fire Safety and the Volunteer Firemen's council of New Jersey, in order to identify more incentives.

All of these efforts are showing signs of success. Last year there were more volunteers that joined than there were volunteers that were lost. So far, in the year 2000, there are six new recruits to replace only two members that have resigned.

The township is commended for its efforts to attract new volunteers to the fire and first aid service.

FIRE SUPPRESSION

Fire District #3 is the only Fire District in Old Bridge Township that participates in the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS). The New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, Division of Fire Safety, maintains these reports. According to these reports, the Old Bridge Fire District #3, in 1999, responded to 33 building fires (incidents that are reported to be inside a structure, i.e. food, dryer, electrical problem etc.), 29 vehicle fires, and 79 other fires. Additionally they responded to 19 rescue calls, 73 hazardous conditions, 33 service calls, 54 good intent and 67 false calls. The total calls for 1999 were 455. Total fire loss was \$5,502. No firefighter or civilian injuries or deaths were caused by fire.

The district is commended for participating in the National Fire Incident Reporting System.

The Insurance Services Office (ISO) graded the Old Bridge Fire District #3 at a Classification 4. The ISO is an independent, statistical, rating and advisory organization that serves the property and casualty insurance industry. The ISO collects and analyzes the data using its Fire

Suppression Rating Schedule. The ISO then assigns a public protection classification from one to 10. Class 1 represents the best public protection and class 10 indicates no recognized protection. Class 4 is the best available for a volunteer fire district.

FIRE PREVENTION BUREAU

Pursuant to Section 11 of the Uniform Fire Safety Act, the Uniform Fire Safety Code is enforced locally within the established limits of the four fire districts in the Township of Old Bridge. The Board of Fire Commissioners enforces the Uniform Fire Safety Act and Codes and Regulations in all buildings within the established boundaries of the fire district. Total FY99 expenditures were \$145,114, including a one-time expenditure of \$20,000 on a Fire Safety House trailer. The earlier discussion of cooperating with the township for purchase of health benefits includes the costs and savings to be derived for this function as well.

Staffing

The Board of Fire Commissioners of Fire District 3 operates the fire prevention office with one full-time Fire Official/Fire Marshall who is also the Chief of the Fire Prevention Bureau. There is also one part-time fire inspector. It is the duty of the fire prevention office to enforce and administer the Uniform Fire Safety Act, the Uniform Fire Safety Code and any State or local rules and regulations. Along with performing fire inspections, their responsibilities include scheduling repair and maintenance work on apparatus, responding to fires during the day time hours, investigating all complaints, performing site plan reviews, presenting fire prevention programs for schools and civic groups, participating in fire watch programs for the district and conducting fire investigations.

Operations

The bureau performed 486 inspections and approximately 1,215 re-inspections. The revenue generated by registration fees in 1999 was \$38,980 and \$5,851 was received in penalties and fines for a total revenue received of \$44,831. All revenue generated is for the purpose of enforcement of the Uniform Fire Safety Code. At the time of LGBR's review, there was a move for a 35% increase in the fee schedule for registrations and permits along with a proposal for new classifications for buildings over 45,000 square feet. All life safety units and non-life safety units are registered and inspected as required by law. The fire sub-code official within the township office of code enforcement presently does smoke alarm inspections. This procedure limits the ability of the fire organization to become familiar with building sites and occupancies that may become involved in a fire incident. The bureau is the fire company's information base concerning what to expect upon response to a fire scene.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the fire prevention bureau perform the inspection of smoke detectors.

The bureau is commended for initiating the proposal to increase fees by 35% to offset the cost of the enforcement of the Uniform Fire Safety Code in the district. It is estimated that this action will increase revenues by at least \$15,000.

The fire official in District 2 performs the enforcement of the uniform fire code in districts 1, 2, and 4. All revenues collected and expended remain with District 2. The combined budgets and revenues for all four districts for FY99 were \$224,719 in expenditures and \$144,446 in revenues. Combining the two fire prevention functions would reduce the costs by one fire official or an estimated \$60,000. Increased fees already under consideration should raise revenues by approximately \$15,000 for total revenues of \$165,000 and expenditures of \$185,000.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the fire prevention bureaus for all four districts be consolidated into one and that every effort be made to have the function be self-supporting.

Cost Savings: \$60,000

OLD BRIDGE FIRE DISTRICTS

Old Bridge Township operates four fire districts: Laurence Harbor District 1; Cheesequake District 2; South Old Bridge District 3; and Madison Park District 4 with mostly volunteers and three paid firefighters. The fire districts operate separately within the Township of Old Bridge. When the police dispatchers receive a call, it is transmitted to all firefighters by way of a voice recording system worn by all members of the fire districts. The dispatcher announces which district is to respond and the location of the fire call.

Although the team was only invited to review one fire district, District 3 (South Old Bridge), we did a general review of all four districts and saw that they functioned in basically the same manner, financially and operationally.

THE FIRE DISTRICT CONCEPT

A fire district can be thought of as a mini-municipality with the limited purpose of fire protection. Each district has a board of five commissioners. The board sets its fire tax rate, hires personnel, holds elections, is subject to the sunshine laws, buys equipment, and does basically everything that a municipality does. In 1999, the four Old Bridge Fire Districts collected a total of \$2,276,725 in taxes to provide fire protection for the township. We know that there were a total of 946 fire calls dispatched by the police department and 455 were handled by District 3, so three other districts answered 491 calls and cost \$1,401,508 in property taxes.

The fire district concept of fire protection, in effect, divides a township and seems to foster division and conflict rather than overall township-wide coverage. If there is a fire reported in District 2 (Cheesequake) and it is on the fringe of District 3, 1, or 4, they are not permitted to respond unless requested. Therefore, a fire company can travel a further distance within its district boundaries than another fire company from outside of that boundary. The team was told of an incident where a fire was reported in a shopping center within view of a fire company. This fire company was not in the same district as the shopping center, so could not respond even though they were the closest fire apparatus to the location. This causes unnecessary delays to a fire or other emergency scene. If all the fire companies were in one township fire department,

the closest apparatus in the township would respond rather than being concerned with what district covers this geographical area. The address would dictate who responds, not what district the address is in.

This concept of multiple fire districts serving one community runs contrary to the State of New Jersey's regionalization program. The state is seeking to correct the high cost of New Jersey's tendency to create and operate multiple overlapping governmental entities. Yet, in Old Bridge four more distinct, separate entities have been added to the existing general government structure. This is one township yet there are four separate fire departments. Mutual aid requests are crossing artificial boundaries within the town rather than to communities outside of Old Bridge.

FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

The fire district concept also fosters duplication and excess in the acquisition and operation of fire equipment. Each district orders equipment based on the individual district needs even if that same piece of equipment is in an adjoining district. Again, the purpose is to maintain self-sufficiency within a section of the community. In the four fire districts of the Township of Old Bridge there are 14 pumpers, three aerial apparatus, three rescue trucks (two of which can be classified as pumpers) seven brush trucks and two hazardous material units. In comparison, Jersey City has 16 pumpers, nine aerials and one rescue. Paterson has seven pumpers, three aerials and one rescue.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that apparatus be reduced as described below. The suggested reductions are inclusive of those recommended for District #3.

Reduce the total number of pumpers from fourteen to seven front line pieces and two spares.

Cost Savings: \$250,000

Reduce the total number of rescue vehicles from three to two.

Cost Savings: \$70,000

Reduce the total number of brush trucks from seven to three.

Cost Savings: \$40,000

Reduce the total number of aerial equipment from three to two.

Cost Savings: \$10,000

The Township of Old Bridge is serviced by nine fire stations. Each of these facilities is owned by the fire companies. They are properly located to limit the distance of travel and the time of response to a reported fire. Given the size of the township in square miles, these fire stations provide the proper distances as recommended by the Insurance Service Office. Two fire stations could be eliminated and still maintain the suggested travel distances – a fire station in the

Laurence Harbor section and the fire station on Route 516, west of Route 9 in the Cheesequake district. This would benefit the township by returning the facilities to the tax rolls and the companies would receive one-time revenues for the support of their other facilities.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the fire companies close and sell two fire stations.

FINANCIAL

Generally, volunteer fire organizations are commendable and should be supported. However, volunteer districts funded by tax revenue need to have a high degree of accountability to the residents and taxpayers. Because the fire districts' tax levy represents a significant amount of taxes raised for the delivery of a municipal service, the governing body has an obligation to assure a high degree of accountability. The municipality should also consider the fire districts' expenditures in relation to the entire municipal budget, generally to determine their relative appropriateness. Since voter turnout is typically extremely light for fire district elections, it behooves a municipality to maintain some general oversight of the fire district tax levy on behalf of the taxpayers. The tax rate for each district in 1999 was as follows: District 1 - .129, District 2 - .088, District 3 - .060, and District 4 - .103 for a total tax of \$2,276,725. This represents 5.5% of the municipal tax levy. Each district is an autonomous body with five commissioners, each receiving remuneration. Each district office has a paid secretary and incurs the normal expenses inherent with an office operation. Salary expense for these districts total \$146,541. Administration expenses for all districts total \$323,340. Although taxpayer monies are collected for these districts, there is no township oversight. In 1999, the four Old Bridge Fire Districts collected a total of \$2,276,725 to provide fire protection for the township.

In an effort to provide township officials with some idea of how fire service costs in their municipality compare with other similar townships, the team examined the costs and, to some degree, the quality of Old Bridge fire service. We compared the budget expenditures of Old Bridge Township's four fire districts, which are responsible for the fire protection area of the township's 38 square miles and 61,000 residents, with the Wayne, New Jersey Township's Volunteer Fire Department that is responsible for the fire protection area of 26 square miles and 45,000 residents.

Old Bridge Fire Districts Comparison						
	District 1	District 2	District 4	District 3	Total	Wayne
Admin Expenses	\$94,800	\$60,700	\$56,900	\$140,512	\$352,912	\$0
Admin Salaries	\$18,050	\$55,214	\$11,550	\$70,227	\$155,041	\$0
Admin Total	\$112,850	\$115,914	\$68,450	\$210,739	\$507,953	\$0
Paid Fire Fighters		\$155,564			\$155,564	\$0
Operating Costs	\$137,000	\$754,195	\$123,952	\$570,616	\$1,585,763	\$175,000
LOSAP	\$17,000	\$98,000	\$20,000	\$74,540	\$209,540	\$300,000
Aid to Fire Company	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$150,000
Total	\$266,850	\$1,123,673	\$212,402	\$855,895	\$2,458,820	\$625,000
Members	48	40	22	70	180	175
Stations	2	3	1	3	9	5
Population	24,000			37,000	61,000	45,000
Area	15			23	38	26

We see from the chart that there is duplication of organizational functions in providing fire protection for Old Bridge Township, as compared to having one single responsible agency. Abolishing all of the districts and replacing them with a municipal volunteer fire department or reducing the number of districts to one would significantly reduce the cost of fire service delivery in Old Bridge. The four districts are redundant in paid personnel, services, and equipment resulting in an extremely high total fire budget of \$2.3 million dollars for a “volunteer fire force.” There is no township control or oversight. Therefore, taxpayer oversight is limited to a low turnout election on the Saturday of Washington’s Birthday weekend in February.

N.J.S.A. 40A:14-91 allows for the dissolution of fire districts upon written application of at least 5% of the registered voters or 20 legal voters, whichever is greater. The government of the municipality wherein the district is located shall consider the dissolution of the fire district. Upon receipt of such an application, the governing body of said municipality should fix a time and place for a hearing thereon. The municipal clerk shall advertise the notice of hearing in a newspaper circulating in the county wherein the municipality is located at least once, and not less than 10 days, prior to the meeting. After the hearing, the governing body of said municipality should determine the question of the proposed dissolution. If the resolution were adopted that the fire district be dissolved, any money remaining in the fire district treasury shall be disposed of as directed by the governing body.

Although eliminating all fire districts and establishing a township volunteer fire department could save additional monies, consolidating all fire services to an already established district organization would be more practical.

CONSOLIDATION TO ONE DISTRICT

The team is basing its analysis and recommendations regarding consolidation of the districts on its detailed review of Fire District #3 and information about the other districts and fire service, generally, that is available as public information.

Fire District #3 is a professionally run organization with dedicated personnel both in the district office and on the fire commission board. The board members show a high concern for the protection of the lives and property of their residents. Possibly most importantly, this board has demonstrated a high degree of accountability not found in any other fire district in Old Bridge. The fire official and the district office have the necessary skill, knowledge and material to operate a township wide fire organization. The district is ahead of the others in participating in the National Fire Incident Reporting System. There are enough resources that can be drawn on from the abolished fire districts to continue the programs and inspections on a township-wide basis.

Savings on the elimination of any district would be basically limited to the administrative salary, wages, and other administrative expenses of the districts, which at the present time are being paid out four times. Included are such items as election costs, rental charges, telephones, attorneys, auditors, bookkeepers, janitors, utilities, insurances and office equipment. In addition

to the cost savings, a unified district could more easily manage the fire station and equipment reductions, better coordinate the use of both volunteer and paid fire fighters and facilitate consolidation of the fire official functions.

Fund Balance

Three of the four districts have unrestricted fund balances of \$200,000 or more totaling \$837,339. In a consolidated district, an operating fund balance of \$200,000 would be more than sufficient.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the township consolidate all four-fire districts into one district.

Consolidate District 1

Cost Savings: \$112,850

Consolidate District 2

Cost Savings: \$115,914

Consolidate District 4

Cost Savings: \$68,450

Total Savings: \$297,214

Reduce the consolidated fund balance to \$200,000.

One-time Revenue Enhancement: \$637,339

Staffing

The savings to be generated by a unified district could justify filling all five currently authorized paid fire fighters to service the entire township. There are currently three paid firefighters in District 2 and the district is currently planning to hire a fourth. The incremental cost of filling the fourth and fifth position would be appropriate if, and only if, the paid firefighters serve the entire township and the costs are offset by the operational savings of merging the districts.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the two paid firefighter vacancies be filled only if the districts are consolidated and the firefighters serve the entire township.

Value Added Expense: \$80,000

EMS

Five separate volunteer squads provide Old Bridge Emergency Medical Services (see Appendix 10 for a detailed description of the squads). Old Bridge Township budgets \$175,000 annually

for a contribution of \$35,000 to each squad. Together they own five buildings and 11 Basic Life Support units. FY99 expenditures totaled \$348,263. Together they answer a total of 3,029 calls. 1,342 of those calls occurred between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.

Each squad is responsible for a set geographic area, However, each squad accepts a duty day where there is maintained a ready to respond crew to cover the township immediately upon receiving a call for service. The duty day is rotated so that the township has coverage in the evening and on weekends.

In 1997, the first aid squads became concerned about the availability of volunteer personnel during the daytime hours when most volunteers worked outside the township. They formed a non-profit organization for the purpose of representing the collective interests of the five squads and providing emergency medical services to the residents and persons in and around the Township of Old Bridge during those times. This organization is the Old Bridge Township Emergency Medical Service (OBTEMS). OBTEMS, through the squads, is the entity responsible for providing emergency medical ambulance service throughout the Township of Old Bridge on a 24-hour, seven day a week basis. OBTEMS entered into an agreement with a private ambulance service to assist in providing daytime emergency ambulance service to the township. They consulted with the township and the township agreed to recognize OBTEMS and the private ambulance agreement to provide for daytime coverage.

The private ambulance service maintains one primary ambulance in a ready state to respond to calls received by the township police dispatch center during the hours of 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. It also maintains a secondary ambulance ready for immediate response from 6:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m., Monday through Friday. The cost of this three-year agreement is \$32,800 each year for a total contract cost of \$98,400. The private carrier bills insurance at a rate of \$450 per call and generally recovers an average of \$250 per call. The contracting company could not provide either an actual number of calls responded to in Old Bridge or total revenues derived from Old Bridge residents. Using police dispatch records, the team estimates that the contractor responded to at least 1,342 calls for service. From this, the team estimates that the contractor collected approximately \$335,500, in addition to the contract fee.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that, in subsequent contracts, the township negotiate a zero fee and receive reports of calls responded to in Old Bridge and revenue collected from Old Bridge residents. It may require an adjustment to automated systems but with notice should be fairly easily accomplished.

Cost Savings: \$32,800

An alternative to this present contract would be to have the contractor take over all emergency medical service calls, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. This would save the township the \$175,000 yearly donation to the five first aid squads plus the balance of the squad's annual operating budgets of \$348,263. At a total of 3,029 calls averaging \$250 in collected revenues, \$757,250 would be the collectible billing by the contracting agency and, therefore, it would be

reasonable to negotiate not only a zero fee but a percentage income after a certain point. For example, negotiate a share of 25% of income after expenses. The key to this is agreeing to what expenses are charged to the contract as part of the contract.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that Old Bridge competitively contract with a private company to cover the entire community full-time and negotiate revenue sharing after expenses.

Cost Savings: \$175,000
Revenue Enhancement: \$25,813

If salvaging this volunteer resource is a priority that outweighs the total cost of the five first aid squads operating budget of \$348,263, then an alternative would be to operate as one entity under the present OBTEMS corporation, dispose of some of the equipment and property, and contract for billing. If they bill insurance companies for service at \$450 per transport, as does the private contracting firm, it would allow OBTEMS to be financially self-sufficient. Realizing that even though \$450 is charged for service, each form of insurance pays at a different rate and using the private carrier's average return of \$250 per transport and 1999 call volume of 3,029, OBTEMS could receive more than is necessary to provide this service without impacting on the township.

Recommendation:

An alternative recommendation would be to have OBTEMS operate the entire EMS service as one unit and bill for service.

Net Revenue: \$300,000

At present, the five first aid squads own eleven certified, fully equipped Basic Life Support Units ranging in ages from 1990 to 1996. The township has approximately 61,000 residents. These volunteer squads are highly motivated and should be commended for their volunteerism and dedication but five squads and eleven ambulances for Old Bridge is excessive. This conclusion is supported when it is compared to Jersey City where the Jersey City Medical Center maintains five BLS units to serve more than 380,000 residents. In 1998, the five units from the Jersey City Medical Center responded to over 30,000 calls as compared to 3,029 calls in Old Bridge. This level of coverage is one ambulance per 76,000 residents by the Jersey City Medical Center to 13,000 residents per unit in Old Bridge.

Recommendation:

The township should reduce the number of volunteer first aid squads from five to three.

Cost Savings: \$70,000

Equipment

Whether or not the township reduces the number of squads, the fleet of vehicles should be reduced by five. With six vehicles, there is enough to maintain a front line fleet with one spare to be used as backup or to replace a unit during preventive maintenance or repair.

Recommendation:

The volunteer squads should reduce their fleet of BLS units from eleven to six.

One-time Revenue Enhancement: \$175,000

MUNICIPAL COURT

While the team recognizes the separate authority and responsibility of the judicial branch of government, the following comments and recommendations have been made in an effort to provide the community with information on current and potential operations, procedures and programs available to the court. Recommendations are made with the knowledge that further review and approval will be required by appropriate judicial personnel.

In FY99, the operating expenses for the court were \$323,815 for salaries, \$47,253 in benefits and \$25,344 in other expenses for a total of \$396,412. The court collected a total of \$865,618 in revenues. Of these, the township retained \$430,491.

Court sessions are held on Tuesday morning from 9:00 a.m. to completion and on Wednesday evening from 6:00 p.m. to completion and, typically, the sessions run three hours.

Staffing and Organization

The court is staffed by a court administrator, an assistant court administrator, one senior deputy court administrator, three deputy court administrators, a violations clerk and a part-time accounting clerk. Each court session is staffed by three people, one on the bench with the judge and two at the violations window. Staff members work just one court session per week. Security is provided by one special police officer on Tuesdays and two special police officers on Wednesday night. Special police officers are funded by the police department. The court has a presiding judge and a secondary judge costing \$47,750 in salaries. The accounting clerk works up to 20 hours per week and is responsible for bank reconciliations, disbursements and bail analysis and reconciliation. They also use a coop student from the high school for the school year. The coop students work up to 20 hours per week.

Workload

The court disposed of 9,376 cases in FY99. Of those, 7,136 were traffic related and of the traffic, 983 were for parking and 189 were for DWIs. A total of 9,098 cases were added in FY99. The court, therefore, is disposing of 3% more cases than are added annually. With 7.5 FTE positions, the staff disposed of 104 cases per month per person. Productivity is affected by many factors including the relative proportions of parking, moving violations and disorderly person (criminal) cases and the training and experience of the staff. However, this is just 51% of the conservative productivity benchmark of 205 used by LGBR.

Recommendation:

The governing body should request a staffing analysis by representatives from the vicinage assignment judge's office to identify the appropriate staffing level.

Comparing average cases added per month to average cases pending per month, indicate that there is generally a two month inventory of cases, except for DWI, which has the equivalent of four months of cases and local ordinances which have a backlog of more than nine months.

The observed daytime court session went smoothly with approximately 45 cases being disposed of between 9:00 and 12:00 with two cases that required extra time and attention and 30 which were called but were not present. Three cases were postponed because the police officer wasn't available. In comparison, team members have observed as many as 150 cases being handled appropriately within a three-hour court session.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the court staff work with representatives from the vicinage assignment judge's office to increase the productivity of currently scheduled court sessions.

Collections

Total collections including time payments for traffic are generally 92% of the fines and court costs imposed and 111% of fines and court costs imposed for criminal cases. This indicates excellent collection experience. In addition, the number of delinquent time payments averages to 25 out of a total of 682 accounts or less than 4% and the value of the delinquent time payments average \$13,591 out of a total outstanding of \$365,483 or less than 4%.

Bail averages around \$11,000 and is forfeited and aged as appropriate.

Facility

The courtroom and bench are shared with council optimizing the use of comfortable space. The room is more than adequate from the calendars observed. The only shortcoming of the facility is that there is no easy exit for court personnel from the bench. They must walk through the courtroom to an exit onto an unsecured hallway. Any future rearrangement of the current facility should include consideration of this issue.

SOCIAL SERVICES

The division of social services has five components: the office on aging, welfare, health/registrar, municipal alliance and the LatchKey Program (before and after school day care). The mission statement of the social services division is to render effective, meaningful and timely service.

THE OFFICE ON AGING

The mission of the office on aging is to facilitate successful aging in place in Old Bridge. The goals of the office are to:

- Enhance the quality of life for seniors and disabled residents over 60.
- Encourage mental and physical health, to affirm dignity, self worth and independence.
- Offer meaningful services, programs and opportunities.
- Utilize elders experience knowledge and skills.
- Provide a comfortable and caring environment based on the current needs of the participants.

Old Bridge very successfully accomplishes its missions and goals by offering a great range of services made possible only by connecting effectively with the other resources available in the area for seniors including the county run nutrition and safe housing programs, coordinating with the schools and working with the municipal alliance.

Staffing

The full-time staff consists of a director, a director's assistant, a senior center manager, frail client/center aide and four drivers. The part-time staff consists of a social worker, three center aides who assist with clerical and other support functions and two substitute drivers.

Financial

This office expended \$390,361 for salaries and benefits in FY99 and \$16,021 for other program expenses for operation of all senior services except the transportation program, which is discussed later in this section.

PROGRAMS

This unit manages two senior centers that provide 46,298 service units to more than 1,000 seniors annually. The senior centers are located at the municipal complex and in Laurence Harbor. The office also operates a fixed route transportation system, providing 58,965 rides to 575 seniors and 16 latch key individuals annually. It oversees a food bank providing 1,416 service units to 247 clients. Numerous health, educational and social activities are offered. Lunch is provided at the center daily by the county office on aging.

Senior Meals Program

The Middlesex County Office on Aging sponsors the nutrition project with federal funding. This program helps meet the objective of improving overall health by providing daily meals consisting of one third of necessary nutrients. In 1999, 13,547 meals were served at the Old Bridge Senior Center. The county pays a monthly rental fee of \$2,700 for use of the kitchen.

Health Clinics

There is an Annual Health Clinic sponsored by the County Department of Health. Also available are annual flu shots, monthly blood pressure screening, hearing, eye and foot exams. These services are provided by local physicians, other health care providers, and the Carriage House Preventive Care Unit without charge to the client or the township.

Home Safety

Safe Housing is a Middlesex County grant to eligible seniors identified by Old Bridge's Senior Center staff. It provides security devices such as locks, door peepholes, lighting and other safety items for participants. The office on aging identifies the needy and provides screening of those in need of this service.

Intergenerational

Each month during the school year, students come to participate in activities such as helping with lunch, billboards, shuffleboard, etc. Students instruct beginning square dance, scouts setup gardens with perennial plants and help with the food bank throughout the year. Grade schools present plays and interview seniors about their youth. The choral group and band from the middle school perform at the center. The psychology class has a monthly project co-sponsored by the Municipal Alliance.

Social Worker Support

There were 1,529 contacts covering issues such as abuse and neglect, legal problems, dementia related problems, protective service referrals, health, home care needs, housing and assisted living needs, advocacy, and family conflict management/resolution, transportation, finance, personal hygiene, elder driving risks, depression/anxiety, family disorientation, family consultation on participants ability and guidance for high school psychology students.

Referral Service, Advocacy Services and Interaction

Telephone referrals to appropriate social service agencies and assistance in filling out forms are provided on a continuous basis. Contacts are made on behalf of individuals because of unique circumstances.

Food Bank

The office on aging, provides emergency assistance for any township resident in need of food. The food bank operates daily after 2:30 p.m., on Wednesday nights and on weekends with prior appointment.

Other Services

Speakers, workshops and seminars are presented on topics of current interest including basic computer training; "Sitercise" exercises, shuffleboard, line dancing and billiard tournaments are held at both centers; calls are made short term for those recovering from illness, long term for those who are home bound; Senior Health Insurance Program consists of assistance for Medicare recipients to file medical claims or needing information on the different HMOs; tax counseling for elderly provides assistance to seniors with filing federal and state income taxes; day trips to local museums, historical sites, theaters and other popular destinations; various arts crafts and games are provided continuously.

Transportation

The office on aging operates a four route transportation system with four busses and one van using four full-time and two part-time drivers at a salary and benefit cost of \$128,357 and an overtime cost of \$1,557, with other expenses of \$14,517 for a total operating cost of \$144,431. Several of the vehicles are donated or purchased with grant funds in the amount of \$151,209.

The capital cost to the local taxpayers for the four buses and one van is \$132,676. In 1999, the system provided 53,844 senior rides and 3,121 latch key rides, traveling a cumulative 69,003 miles. This is a locally funded operating cost of \$2.54 per trip, a capital cost of \$2.33 per trip and a grants or donation cost of \$2.65. This is a total per trip cost of \$7.51 and a total per trip local cost of \$4.86. The cost of trips provided to the latch key program are \$23,439.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the latch key program reimburse the senior transportation program for the cost of the transportation provided.

Revenue Enhancement: \$23,439

The township is commended for operating an excellent, cost effective transportation program.

LATCH KEY (BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL DAY CARE PROGRAM)

Old Bridge established before and after school child care programs in 1989. Both programs are successful self-sustaining programs, operating out of nine before and eight after school locations. In cooperation with the board of education, all sites are located in local elementary schools. There is also a summer recess program that operates from the closing of school in June to the last week in August. Hours are 7:30 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. A host of activities are scheduled, providing physical and sedentary activities, field trips, etc., for children in kindergarten through grade five.

Staffing

The social services division of the parks, recreation and social services department oversees this program. The operation functions with a total dedicated staff of 47 part-time employees to include one director, thirteen instructors and thirty-three aids.

Financial

In FY99, this operation generated revenues of \$365,517 from fees. The salary and benefit costs were \$240,296 and other expense costs were \$79,934. Space for the program is provided at no cost by the school district. This is a total cost of \$320,231 and is \$45,287 or approximately 12.4.5% less cost than revenues generated. This operation began the year with a reserve of \$95,977, this is almost 30% of the FY99 operating costs, and ended the year with a reserve of \$141,236 or more than 44% of the FY99 operating cost. The municipality should determine what, if any, costs are associated with the use of the schools for this function and reimburse the board of education or expand the learning opportunities within the program.

This program provides before school day care for \$70 per month, after school day care for \$125 per month and combination before and after school for \$185 per month. Parents using this service only three or four days per week have a reduced payment and those enrolling a second or third child have a reduced payment for the second and an increased reduction for a third child. This is somewhat lower than the typical market price for this service. The camp program costs \$110 per week and that too is fairly low for this service.

Program Activity

Participation in these programs has grown steadily over the past several years. Presently there are 400 students enrolled in the before and after school programs. In the summer of 1999, there were 150 children in the summer recess program. These services are provided to residents needing childcare at a very minimal cost, with no cost to the taxpayer.

We commend the township for providing a vital service at no cost to the taxpayers of Old Bridge.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the staff of the latch key program work with school district officials to develop an academic enrichment program to be operated as part of the latch key program with surplus revenues provided through tuition.

WELFARE

The community of Old Bridge is served by a five-member welfare board that keeps municipal officials informed of changes in the social service field. The welfare office is located in the municipal complex and shares a building with the registrar and housing operations. The welfare office is open from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. daily. The welfare director occasionally functions as a backup registrar for the vital statistics function in the absence of the registrar. A director and a clerk staffed this office until February, 1999. The welfare director remains as the only employee in this office.

Financial

In FY99, the operating expenses of this department were \$56,660 for salary and benefits and \$595 for other expenses. The remaining employee in this department has a salary and benefit cost of \$46,575. The PATF I account totaled \$16,529 with expenditures of \$2,164. The PATF II account totaled \$133,176 with expenditures of \$115,692.

Caseload

In FY99, the caseload ranged from a high of 34 in the summer to a low of 19 in the winter. The average caseload for the year was 23.5. More than 64% of these cases are pending SSI. Only 21% were employable.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the municipality reconsider its decision to maintain its own welfare program and transfer the welfare program to the county.

Cost Savings: \$46,575

HEALTH

The majority of the public health program is provided through a contract with Middlesex County at a base cost for FY99 of \$101,174. This cost can rise or fall in the succeeding year based on FY99, actual cost being more or less than, the base for FY99. The county uses properly licensed personnel to provide the following services:

- health education;
- environmental health;
- public health nursing;
- maternal and child health; and
- adult health.

Provisions of this contract require the municipality to appoint the county health director as the township health officer serving as the general agent for the enforcement of all local health ordinances and laws, rules and regulations of the New Jersey Department of Health. The director of the county department of public health also supervises and directs all public health activities and health employees of the municipality.

At the inception of the township contracting most of their health services with the county one long term employee of the municipality functioning as health inspector was retained by the township. This employee has since retired. The Middlesex County Public Health Department estimated that an additional \$40,000 would be required for the county to add the inspection services to the existing contract. The FY99 cost for salary and benefits for the township to staff this position was \$61,330. The county would perform this service for \$21,330 or 35% less than current cost.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the township add the health inspection function to the existing contract for health services with Middlesex County.

Cost Savings: \$21,330

Fees

It was reported by the outgoing health inspector that the inspection fees in Old Bridge are low. A review of fee information gathered by LGBR indicates that fees in other communities are more than double what the municipality charges. Fees collected in FY99 were \$18,840 and retained by Old Bridge.

Recommendation:

Because fees collected are low in relation to costs it is recommended that the municipality adjust the fees to more closely reflect costs and current practices.

Revenue Enhancement: \$18,840

Registrar

The registrar function is currently under the Department of Health and is handled by one clerical employee. In FY99, there were 2,254 deaths, births, and marriages. With a standard 260-day work year, an average of less than ten transactions are performed daily. It is recommended that the registrar function be moved to the clerk's office. The clerk's office needs no additional staff to perform this function.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the registrar function be moved to the clerk's office.

Cost Savings: \$32,458

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The Department of Community Development in the Township of Old Bridge is comprised of four divisions: Community Development Block Grants (CDBG); engineering; code enforcement; and planning and zoning. The department head is the municipal engineer.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANTS (CDBG)

The Township of Old Bridge received \$360,000 in FY99 from the U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development. The community development block grant office administers these monies. The program activities must meet one or more of the following three national objectives: benefit low and moderate-income families; aid in prevention or elimination of slums and blight; and meet other community development needs posing a serious and immediate threat to community health and welfare. The office operates a housing rehabilitation program for homes owned by low and very low-income persons and is responsible for implementation of public improvement and facilities projects in targeted areas of the community.

Staffing

An assistant director, a clerk/typist, and a part-time day care coordinator staff the office. The clerk/typist position is split with engineering where half of her time is spent on data entry for the engineering department. The daycare coordinator's time is split with 43% spent on daycare and 57% on CDBG.

Financial

The CDBG office is allowed to expend 20% of the total grant, plus any income on administrative expenses. Salary expenses attributed to CDBG administrative functions totaled \$89,187. Other expenses attributed to CDBG totaled \$3,840. In addition, the township paid all benefit costs reported as \$25,571. In FY99, \$476,528 was the amount subject to this 20% planning and administrative cap. The office reported and was reimbursed for 19.52% of their total allotment or \$93,027. A careful review of staffing, functions and HUD grant rules will reveal that the township should be able to reallocate its funds to recoup administrative benefit costs as well.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the township carefully examine and analyze all CDBG related expenses to assure that they are being charged properly to program versus administration. Every effort should be made to assure that all grant administrative costs are funded with grant monies.

Cost Savings: \$25,575

FUNCTIONS

Some of the general activities that are eligible for CDBG funds are housing repair and rehabilitation, including energy conservation; street and utility improvements; drainage, water, sewer, fire, police and solid waste improvements; acquisition of land and buildings for housing, parks, community facilities and other projects; construction and/or rehabilitation of buildings for community and senior centers and for residential treatment facilities or shelters; public services such as shared housing, day care, servicing for the disabled; preservation and rehabilitation of historic structures; accessibility projects for the disabled; and economic development activities.

Activities specifically ineligible are buildings or portions used for the general conduct of government, e.g. municipal administration buildings, libraries etc. In addition, CDBG funds cannot be used for general government operating and maintenance expenses, purchase of equipment, new housing construction, income payments, or political activities. The township estimates that 100% of the funds expended in FY99 will benefit persons of low/moderate incomes. The department's final FY1999 CDBG report indicated that 318 households were assisted. This was an increase of 88% from FY98. The increase can primarily be attributed to the implementation of a "Home Buyers Assistance Program" which has been very popular with Old Bridge residents.

CDBG funds were used from July 1, 1998 to June 30, 1999 to provide these services:

Frail Elderly Aide

The CDBG grant funds 53% or \$11,000 of the \$20,659 salary of a frail elderly aide within the office on aging. The aide assists people unable to assist themselves at the George Bush Senior Center and the office on aging. This person helps the elderly in eating, walking and exercising. A total of 65 persons meeting low to moderate-income limits are assisted each day. The township pays \$9,659 for the remainder of the salary to cover custodial duties, which are not eligible under CDBG guidelines.

Family Day Care

During this period \$33,046 was expended on Family Day Care. A total of \$51,829 was allocated for this program, leaving a balance of \$18,783. The program funds a certified trained day care provider to assist low and moderate-income recipients with day care in the provider's home. During this period 14 children were in day care services. Parents pay part of day care costs based on income and family size.

Housing

The assistant director spends 50% of his time providing the housing programs and services described below:

- **Housing Rights Complaints:** A total of four new fair housing complaints were handled on behalf of Old Bridge residents. Sixty-nine households were counseled on tenancy matters.
- **Homeownership Counseling:** A total of 21 households received individual homeownership counseling and 35 households received default counseling. Close to 40 households received general information on affordable housing and mortgage options.
- **Permanent Housing Assistance:** Approximately 30 residents contacted the Coalition for General Information on housing programs and options, including rental and utility assistance, shelters, homelessness prevention, rooming houses, etc. Eleven residents received assistance to obtain or maintain housing.
- **Community Education:** 84 residents attended workshops on home buying, housing rights, and reverse mortgages for the elderly.
- **Housing Rehabilitation for Existing Homeowners:** Eligible rehabilitation activities included the abatement of code violations, improvements for handicapped persons, energy efficiency improvements and other rehabilitation activities. Subsidy assistance is in the form of a \$3,500 grant and deferred interest free loans with a maximum amount of \$15,000. This is available on a township-wide basis to income eligible homeowners. Housing rehabilitation provides services to low and moderate income families. Thirteen homes participated in this program during this time. Six homes received grants and seven homes received deferred loans. A 25% match is required for low-income households. The office of CDBG appropriated \$150,000 for this service and expended \$117,015.

Funds for Public Facilities

CDBG provided \$50,000 for the Pension Road Park sport facility; \$69,706 for recreational facilities at Cliffwood Recreation Center; and \$58,127 for recreational facilities at Laurence Harbor Recreation Center. The office has also allocated \$37,160 for curb cuts throughout the township to provide for barrier free access for the handicapped and \$31,770 to provide access for the handicapped at the Laurence Harbor Library.

In 1999, the CDBG office in Old Bridge was cited by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for not meeting the performance standard for timely expenditure of CDBG funds. When asked what measures were being taken to resolve the situation, CDBG staff stated that they are participating in additional training in order to identify additional programs to meet the objectives of the CDBG program. Recent financial reports indicate that the FY99 year-end grant balance was \$478,833. HUD rules require that they should never have more than 1.5 times the annual allocation available at one time. Old Bridge, technically, would have the \$478,833, plus is eligible for the FY00 allocation of \$360,000. Its year-end balance, therefore, should be no greater than \$180,000. Effectively using these monies in Old Bridge will require more than attending training; it will take a concerted, creative, and energetic effort.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the mayor, council and business administrator direct the CDBG staff to develop a detailed plan for using the CDBG monies to meet the needs of the residents of Old Bridge.

ENGINEERING

Staffing

The township engineer, who also serves as the director of community development approximately 25% of his time, and an assistant township engineer currently staff and oversee the engineering department which consists of four sections: inspection, design/review, building/grounds and tax maps. The inspection section has two engineers, design/review has three engineers, buildings/grounds has one project coordinator and tax maps has one engineering technician. There is a secretarial section comprised of a secretary to the department head, a full-time data entry clerk and a full-time data entry clerk who works half time for engineering and half time for the community development block grant office. The time spent with CDBG is paid out of CDBG funding.

Financial

In FY99, the engineering division employed the municipal engineer at 75% of his time plus 10.5 personnel for a salary and benefit expense of \$702,580. Other expenses were \$17,914 for a total operating expense of \$720,494. Escrow fees of \$248,270 were collected in 1999, funding 41% of the engineering operation.

The salary and benefit costs by function are as follows:

Administration:	\$ 75,783
Tax Map:	\$ 68,198
Buildings and Grounds:	\$ 81,614
Engineering:	\$476,985

This financial breakdown assumes that clerical support and the assistant engineer primarily support the general engineering function.

FUNCTIONS

The engineering division does all engineering work in-house unless a major development needs outside consultation. The department is responsible for the supervision of drainage and road projects throughout the township plus monitoring the construction of subdivisions. There were 13 drainage and road projects that were completed and seven subdivision construction projects in 1999. There were three major drainage projects started in 1999 that will affect large sections of the township drainage systems. The construction value of these projects totaled \$1,820,493. The engineering operation costs 26% of the total construction value of the projects under its purview. In the marketplace, engineering firms charge 15 - 17% of a project's value for this function.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the engineering department either competitively contract for engineering services or reduce its in-house costs to be competitive with the private sector.

Cost Savings: \$167,501

The engineering office reviewed 33 applications for commercial land development and 18 applications for residential development. This review includes pre-application meetings; plan review; representation at board meetings; and the preparation of bond estimates and review for final signature.

The engineering office acts as a liaison between various state and county agencies to coordinate and improve the township infrastructure. During 1999, this included obtaining approval for and installing a light in front of the main post office, acquiring land for traffic signals on Route 515, which is to start in the year 2000, obtaining a grant for \$185,000 for re-paving and re-curbings, and participating in discussions with NJDOT regarding the Route 516, Route 18, Route 527 interchange.

Except for time spent on developments which is billed to the developers, time sheet records are not kept by this office to record and verify time spent by engineers at different sites or on various projects. This made it impossible to perform an effective cost analysis for engineering performed in the township. The director attends approximately five or six planning and zoning meetings each month.

While there is no formal mission statement for the function, the staff considers responsiveness to resident concerns and complaints to be a top priority. There are two or three daily.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the engineering department establish a verifiable accounting system for time spent by engineers on different projects. A form similar to that suggested for public works in Appendix 11 may be helpful as a starting point.

Building and Grounds

This function is staffed by a full-time project coordinator who is responsible for facilitating all buildings and grounds projects. It is recommended that these duties be the responsibility of the municipal engineer in conjunction with the superintendent of public works.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the project coordinator position be eliminated and that the function be coordinated by the municipal engineer and the director of public works.

Cost Savings: \$81,614

Tax Map

An engineering technician is responsible for updating the tax map. This is an itinerant function and, therefore, should be directed by the municipal engineer and performed by engineering staff or by contract.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that this position be eliminated and that the function be performed by the engineering staff under the direction of the municipal engineer.

Cost Savings: \$68,198

CODE ENFORCEMENT/BUILDING

The division of code enforcement is responsible for the enforcement of the state mandated Uniform Construction Code (UCC), as well as local housing and zoning code enforcement. The township construction official manages the division.

Thirteen full-time personnel enforce the UCC in the Township of Old Bridge. The staff includes: a control person; two clerks, two plumbing inspectors, two electrical inspectors, three building inspectors, and two fire inspectors. Elevators are inspected by the construction official. In FY99, the Township of Old Bridge Code Enforcement Division issued 3,773 permits for new construction, major alterations, special projects, demolition and minor work and performed 12,505 inspections.

A Department of Community Affairs staffing analysis, based on the number of UCC permits granted in 1999, indicates that the increased number of permits issued and inspections performed by this division could require that staffing be adjusted. The analysis shows a need for 4.3 building inspectors while there are currently only three. On the other hand the analysis shows staffing level of one for the fire sub-code section and there are two fire inspectors. A reduction or re-certification of a fire inspector to building inspector is warranted. In all other areas the technical staffing level is adequate.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the number of fire sub-code officials be reduced by one and that there be a corresponding increase in the number of building inspectors.

In FY99, the city realized \$880,789 in UCC revenues. Expenditures totaled \$806,569 for salary, wages, other expenses and indirect costs; therefore, in FY99 the UCC revenues covered the costs for operations. This is in contrast to the previous two years where the costs of operations were not covered by the fees generated. FY97 revenues were \$506,030 versus expenditures of \$648,515 and FY98 revenues were \$688,419 against expenditures of \$706,822. This review of revenue versus expenditures also indicates that the fee schedule for the township is at the proper level at this time.

The UCC offices use the Uniform Construction Code Administration Records System (UCCARS). This is commendable because it facilitates state reporting.

Local Housing and Zoning Code Enforcement

Local code enforcement includes the housing and zoning bureaus. The housing bureau enforces local property maintenance codes. There are two zoning officers (one who serves as an administrative assistant to the construction official) and two housing inspectors in the township housing and zoning enforcement office. Salaries for FY99 totaled \$205,643. Benefits cost \$42,614 and overtime was \$2,409 for a total salary and wage expense of \$250,666.

In FY99, there were 2,441 housing inspections, which brought in revenues of \$163,911. The zoning bureau enforces the city zoning and property maintenance ordinances. \$4,840 was collected under these ordinances in FY99 for total revenue collections of \$168,751. At the present time fees are at the maximum but it would be consistent with common practice to charge a zoning fee prior to the issuance of a permit. The fee could be in the range of \$15 to \$25. This would cover partial expenses for the zoning officer's time.

Recommendation:

Institute a zoning fee of \$20 for permits reviewed by the zoning officer.

Revenue Enhancement: \$40,000

PUBLIC WORKS

ORGANIZATION/OPERATION

In FY99, the Old Bridge Public Works Department had 30 employees including one director, one superintendent, one head foreman, four foremen, two mechanics, four equipment operators, eight general laborers, two building maintenance employees, four full-time, two part-time custodians, one full-time secretary and one part-time clerk. The work is categorized in three separate areas: road repairs; public buildings; and recycling. Public works is also responsible for vehicle maintenance for several departments. Fuel is distributed at the facility and billed back to the using entity. As in any small department, employees have multiple responsibilities. This operation is vast in scope yet moderate in scale resulting in some under utilization of equipment. The recent and expected growth in the municipality will require a refocusing of the public works mission. The department functions as a small town public works department yet it has been quite some time since Old Bridge was a small town.

FINANCIAL

In FY99, the public works department, including the building and grounds section, expended \$1,920,981 for salaries and benefits, \$90,124 for overtime and a combined other expense of \$203,870. Sanitation and recycling contracts cost \$349,419. Snow removal expenditures are accounted for separately and totals \$89,148 for salt, vehicle parts and emergency snow plowing contracts. The total expense was \$2,653,542 for FY99.

FACILITY

The municipal garage is located within the area of the municipal complex on highway 516. This facility is both operations center and maintenance garage. Some vehicles and equipment operated by the public works department are stored indoors with the smaller equipment. The remaining public works vehicles are stored outdoors. The vehicle maintenance operation maintains 70 vehicles for various municipal departments.

MANAGEMENT

This department is managed and supervised by a director, an assistant superintendent, a head foreman and four working field foreman. Additionally, there is a chief mechanic to manage the vehicle maintenance function. The road repair section has the head foreman and the four field foremen who are responsible for field operations. The public building section has two building maintenance and four custodial personnel. The custodial personnel report to their assigned buildings and are accounted for by calling in to report their presence. Their work is observed at their work site by whichever department occupies that space. Recycling is primarily accomplished under a contract with Middlesex County to provide curbside pickup and there are drop-off receptacles at the public works site.

Span of Control

There are too many supervisory staff. A director or a superintendent with the head foreman would be sufficient for an operation of this size. In the field operations function there is one head foreman and four foremen per 14 employees. This is a span of control of 2.8 employees per foreman. A more appropriate span of control would be five or more workers to one supervisor. The appropriate span of control would require one less director or superintendent and one less foreman. This would save the municipality \$159,600 - \$195,835.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that, through attrition, the management of this operation be reduced by one manager and one foreman.

Cost Savings: \$159,600 - \$195,835

The municipality is in danger of losing a large portion of its experienced management and workers in a short span of time. Fourteen of the 30 employees have enough time on the job to retire; two of two managers, four of five foremen, the chief mechanic, one secretary and six of the field force. If all of these employees were to retire, most of the experience of the organization would be lost. This is especially critical since the records of this organization provide very little information about the activities accomplished. This creates the additional problem of the cost of accumulated sick time buyouts. If these employees were to retire at the same time the cost would be \$300,482. A negotiated change in the collective bargaining agreement caps sick time buyouts at \$7,500 per employee for personnel hired after July 1, 1993.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the department attempt to identify a means of phasing in the impending turnover of staff, in order to reduce the impact of the loss of a large number of experienced employees at once.

The township is commended for recognizing the serious problem with the sick time policy as it applies to purchasing unused sick time. The changes in the collective bargaining agreement will control the expense of these purchases.

Absenteeism

Attendance records are kept on a calendar year basis. Records for the first half of FY99 were available. In March, 2000, we requested records for the second half of FY99 and were told that they were unavailable because they had not yet been verified. To determine the level of absenteeism, an analysis was done on a 100% sample of the work assignment record. The public works employees for all categories of absence were off work with pay 1,076.75 days and were off collectively another 420 days for holidays in FY99. This is 19.19 % of the total workdays available in a year. At the average salary and benefit expense of \$246.28 per day this is a cost of \$368,619 for days off work with pay.

There were 355 sick days taken in FY99, on the average this is 11.83 days per employee, and this cost the department \$87,429. While management and clerical staff take very few sick days the average among the foremen is 15.5 days per year. In the experience of LGBR, the average sick time taken in most public works departments is eight days per employee. If this department could reduce sick absences to the average this would enhance productivity by 114.9 days for a value of \$28,298. The five most excessive users of sick time all with 12 to 28 years of service have accumulated a collective total of 1,515 sick days, and had a total of 39.45 days remaining. Another 14 employees in this department have used in excess of 70% of the days allotted. Additionally, the department paid for 41 bereavement days at a cost of \$10,097. The high number of bereavement days is due to the exceptionally liberal bereavement policy in the collective bargaining agreement (see collective bargaining section).

Recommendations:

It is recommended that there be a complete review of policy and practice in the area of sick time usage. It appears that management in the municipality has exercised very little control over the use of sick time. Apparently, some employees see sick time as an augment to vacation time. This makes this operation more expensive and is a policy that needs revision. Strict guidelines should be established and enforced to reduce sick usage to the average of eight days per employee.

Productivity Enhancement: \$28,298

It is recommended that the department revise its bereavement policy. (See collective bargaining section.)

WORK LOAD

The only way to accurately determine a cost per unit of work done is by analysis of work records. The public works department provided a daily list of work assignments. This department keeps manual daily work records. However, these records do not account for many of the tasks performed. There were 106 days during FY99 where various personnel were not accounted for, though listed as present. There were 13 days of records missing. The record shows that personnel assignments on 912 staff days were assigned to the letter W and a Number, W meaning with and the number meaning the vehicle assigned to that particular foreman with no delineation of work assigned or work accomplished. Annual compilation of the many types of work done could not be accomplished even after extensive processing of the data. This being the case, we requested the department to account for the activities of those personnel assigned work on a daily basis. Of the 3,640 staff days possible for the 14 personnel usually assigned to various tasks in the field, 712 days were taken as paid time off leaving 2,928 days available. The information prepared by the department accounted for 1,222 staff days. We observed that assigned personnel arrive on time and effectively proceed to their assigned tasks with a minimum of delay. We also observed that work is continually and systematically accomplished leading to the conclusion that the records do not account for work performed. This record keeping appears to have developed piecemeal over time and has not been specifically designed to account for the work performed by the department today.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the department develop a comprehensive record keeping system that tracks all of the major categories of work performed and the effort required to complete the tasks. The cost effectiveness could then be more accurately evaluated to determine the most efficient method to accomplish each task.

It is recommended that the municipality invest in a state of the art computer system and appropriate software, to track unit cost in all areas of public works and vehicle maintenance.

One-time Value Added Expense: \$4,500

A user-friendly method of tracking personnel and work accomplished is included as Appendix 11.

The department engages in the following major categories of work. Each major category will have several sub categories.

- | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------|------------------|
| 1. RoadWork | 7. Leaf Collection | 13. Snow Removal |
| 2. Drainage | 8. Brush and Tree Work | 14. Other |
| 3. Mowing | 9. Bus Shelters | |
| 4. Street Sweeping | 10. Custodial | |
| 5. Recycling | 11. Building Maintenance | |
| 6. White Goods | 12. Equipment Maintenance | |

The following information was obtained from interview, observation and available records. The following are quantifiable major categories of work performed on a daily or seasonal basis by this department.

CUSTODIAL

The department is responsible for the custodial functions in four of the buildings in the municipal complex, including the town hall/police station, the senior center, the health department building and the public works facility. The three buildings excluding the public works facility include 75,000 square foot of space, and are serviced by three full-time and two part-time custodians. The salary and benefit cost of this operation is \$149,435. This equates to approximately \$1.99 per square foot. This service is available in the market place at \$.95 to \$1.15 per square foot. If the municipality contracted this service at \$1.15 per square foot, the savings would be \$63,185.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the municipality competitively contract for this service.

Cost Savings: \$63,185

STREET SWEEPING

There were no records available to determine the cost effectiveness of this function. The department operates two street sweepers. Vehicle information indicates that one sweeper joined the fleet in 9/95 and had 13,671 miles and the other sweeper joined the fleet in 11/99 and had 2,485 miles for a total of 61 combined months of operation and 16,156 miles as of March, 2000. This is a combined average of 3,178 miles per year for the two sweepers. The sweeper schedule indicates that the sweeper is in each ward 25 days per year plus municipal properties. The staff indicated that the sweepers return to the public works facility each day. The shortest distance from this facility to the center of ward one is 5.06 miles, ward two is .52 miles, ward three is 2.9 miles, ward four is 0.5 miles, ward five is 1.84 miles and ward six is 4.11 miles. If the sweeper travels to and from each ward 25 times per year the miles traveled without sweeping is 755.5. While other "dead head" miles are likely for various things such as dumping, water, or lunch, etc., we could not quantify these areas with available information. As a result, the number of miles swept will be overstated and the cost per mile understated. The calculated number of miles swept is 2,422. This number represents total miles swept or curb miles, to determine street miles total miles are divided by two. The number of street miles swept is 1,211.

The cost of this operation involves two sweeper drivers at a combined salary and benefit cost of \$137,383 and a truck driver, part-time, at a cost of \$20,562. Equipment costs for the combined capital cost and debt service for two sweepers are \$284,000 for 10-year assets or \$28,400 per year for the two sweepers. This operation also uses a dump truck to empty the sweepers at an annual capital cost and debt service of \$7,800. The average vehicle maintenance cost is \$3,167 for each sweeper and the dump truck for a total of \$9,501, plus replacement brushes at \$1,200 per year. The total cost of this operation is \$204,846 to sweep 1,211.25 street miles or \$169 per mile.

It is LGBR's experience that some communities provide this service at \$45 per street mile, while some long-term, long-mile private sector contracts provide this service at \$35 per street mile, and short term short mile contracts are at \$105 per street mile.

One of the inefficiencies inherent in this operation is its organization by Ward. Street sweeping is most effective on curbed streets and marginally effective on uncurbed streets where ditch cleaning is more appropriate. The total road miles and the curbed road miles as well as the need for sweeping vary more than 70% from ward to ward. To develop a static schedule for machine sweeping based equally on wards is inherently inefficient and ignores the fact that that where uncurbed roads are predominant ditch cleaning is a more appropriate method to remove debris.

We suggest that this operation be reorganized to respond to the cleaning needs of the community by whatever method is most efficient and appropriate. We also suggest that detailed accurate records of miles swept and debris removed as well as debris removed in uncurbed areas be kept to determine cost effectiveness.

The alternative is to contract this service in the private sector. If the municipality contracted this service at \$70 per street mile the savings would be \$119,914.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the department reorganize this function based on the most efficient method of cleaning debris from roads and ditches and keep detailed records to determine cost effectiveness.

It is also recommended that, if this reorganization cannot be accomplished to function cost effectively, this service should be competitively bid to take advantage of market place efficiencies.

Cost Savings: \$119,914

BRUSH COLLECTION

Brush is collected once every other week except when Christmas trees are being collected. This is done with two crewmembers and one vehicle. The costs associated with this function are salary and benefit cost of \$13,048 and capital and debt service and maintenance cost for the time this vehicle is used in this function are \$1,412. This is a hauling cost of \$99.72 per ton. As of March 1, 2000, the disposal cost is \$15.48 per ton and as of March 1, 2002 this cost will be \$23.22 per ton. The hauling and disposal cost of this function is \$16,704 or \$115.20 per ton. This is more than it costs to haul and dispose of garbage.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the municipality encourage residents to compost brush.

Cost Savings: \$16,204

LEAF COLLECTION

Each residence is allotted 15 leaf bags free of charge; thereafter, there is a charge of four for \$1. In FY99, the municipality collected and transported 700 tons of leaves. The effort involved in this endeavor was 236 staff days at a salary and benefit cost of \$59,220. The vehicle capital cost and debt service for the time these vehicles were used was \$10,560. Maintenance fuel and insurance cost \$2,740 annually, bringing the total equipment cost of this function to \$13,300. As of March 1, 2000, the fee for leaves taken to the county compost site is \$6.94 or \$4,858 for 700 tons. This cost will increase to \$10.41 per unit or \$7,287 as of March 1, 2002. This brings the total cost to \$77,378 or \$110.54 per ton. This is not cost effective since garbage is hauled in central New Jersey for \$50 to \$60 per ton.

Some communities encourage the on site composting of vegetative waste by purchasing compost bins and selling them to residents for cost or a nominal fee. If the municipality could encourage the on-site composting of vegetative waste and reduce the necessity to haul this debris by 50% the municipality would accrue a productivity enhancement of \$38,689. During this year, the municipality issued 94,000 bags to the residents for leaf removal. At the hauling and disposal cost of \$77,378 this is \$.82 per bag. To encourage the on site composting of leaves, the municipality should reduce the number of free bags from 15 - 12 and charge the full cost of collection and disposal for any additional bags.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the municipality encourage residents to compost vegetative waste.

Productivity Enhancement: \$36,260

RECYCLING

The municipality is required to contract with Middlesex County for curbside pickup of recyclable materials. This contract also includes the bins for the recycle drop off center located in the yard behind the public works facility. The cost of the contract is \$101,000 and adjusted on the previous year volume.

SANITATION

The residents contract for their garbage removal individually.

VEHICLES

There are forty-one vehicles or specialized equipment operated by this organization.

Type of Equipment	Number of Units
Passenger Utility Vehicles	2
Utility Pick Up Trucks	2
Pick Up Trucks	10
Dump Trucks	9
Lift, Dig, Cut and Load Machines	7
Single Purpose Specialized Equipment	10

It is common for moderate scale operations to require various types of equipment that are not used on a continuous basis. An analysis of the vehicle and equipment needs of this operation indicate that there would be no effect on the operation if the department were to reduce the fleet by one dump truck and two pick up trucks. This would save the insurance and maintenance cost of these vehicles and generate a one-time revenue from the sale of the oldest vehicles.

Recommendation:

Reduce the public works fleet by one dump truck and two pickup trucks.

Cost Savings: \$8,175
One-time Revenue Enhancement: \$6,000

Vehicle Maintenance

The department repairs seventy vehicles assigned to public works, the office on aging, code enforcement, engineering, health and administration departments at the public works facility in the municipal complex. This building has four maintenance bays and two lifts. This function is staffed by two employees - the chief mechanic and a mechanic. Vehicles are well maintained, preventive maintenance is performed regularly and the maintenance availability is good. The salary and benefit cost for maintenance of this fleet is \$153,504. With over-time costs of \$11,922, the total salary and benefit cost is \$165,426. Other expenses, including parts, extended warranties and market place repairs, are \$56,236 for a total vehicle maintenance cost of \$221,662. The average cost to maintain the township's vehicles is \$3,167 per vehicle. This is marginally cost effective for a fleet this size. A fleet of 120 or more vehicles would improve the economy of scale of this operation. The market place charges approximately \$2,700 per vehicle for fleets of 120 or more. The municipality should consider a combined fleet (public works, parks, police) maintenance operation. This would save approximately \$467 per vehicle or \$32,690 for the 70 vehicles currently maintained by the public works department.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the municipality organize a combined fleet maintenance operation within public works, with the goal of economizing fleet maintenance cost to that of the market operators.

Cost Savings: \$32,690

PARKS

The township has over 186.93 acres for park area plus 138 acres of open space for future recreational development. Facilities within these parks include 16 parks/playgrounds, plus six soccer fields. The parks in the Township of Old Bridge are open for daily use and, in fact, are used frequently at night due to the fact that they are lighted. There is a constant flow of residents that utilize the township facilities and, therefore, there is a high demand for continuous care and maintenance. Salaries and wages for the full-time employees for fiscal year 1999 totaled \$525,813. Overtime totaled \$18,808 and other expenses were \$63,638 for a total of \$680,232. This is between two and three tax points and about \$11 per person.

Organization/Staffing

The parks maintenance staff consists of an assistant director, a foreman, 12 full-time laborers and a full-time mechanic. The department also utilizes volunteer help from various organizations such as the Boy Scouts of America.

The parks department is responsible for grass cutting, trimming and policing 27 locations in the township. In addition, they clean and perform minor repairs for 14 buildings. During the winter months, they remove snow and ice from 22 different locations. They repair and maintain the playground and athletic fields. They set up and break down all rental activities at the civic center, bush center, robin center, and all satellite buildings on an annual basis. They work special events in the township such as the summer concert series, holiday decorations set up and removal, wrestling festival set up and other special events.

In FY99, parks personnel spent 1,928 hours (9%) cutting grass, 7,328 hours (36.5%) on building maintenance-cleaning/repairs, 2,044 hours (10.2%) on playground maintenance, 5,027 hours (25.1%) with athletic field/facility maintenance, 928 hours (4.6%) on miscellaneous projects, 1,960 hours (9.7%) for snow and ice removal, 500 hours (2.4%) on building rental set-ups/breakdowns, and 305 hours (1.5%) on township special events including 3,840 hours in sick, vacation and holidays. Total hours accounted for are 23,860. The remaining 1,100 hours can be attributed to administrative tasks and miscellaneous absences for training, bereavement, workers' compensation, etc.

The majority of wintertime work hours are used for major repairs on buildings along with maintenance-cleaning and snow-ice removal. The majority of summer time work hours are used for athletic field/facility maintenance and grass cutting. Other projects performed on a continuous year round basis include playground maintenance, building rental set-ups/breakdowns, and township special projects and events.

Equipment

The parks department has 17 road vehicles, including four passenger vehicles, six dump trucks, six pick-up trucks (including a service vehicle), and one old school bus. They have five tractors, two backhoes, a bulldozer, six trailers and three "groundmasters." Additionally they have quantity of various grounds maintenance equipment such as grass cutters, trimmers etc.

The parks maintenance department has its own mechanics facilities for preventive maintenance and repairs. It is located next to the public works garages and affords the ability to share both the facility and the assistance of the public works department if necessary. The full-time mechanic is responsible for the repair and preventive maintenance on a total of 38 pieces of rolling equipment along with various motorized landscaping equipment.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Old Bridge Economic Development Corporation's mission is to expand ratables within the township, enhance existing businesses in town, and assist in the development of beneficial residential areas. A 17-member volunteer board leads the corporation. The board evaluates proposed projects and business activities and responds to developer inquiries. They also work with the township planning and engineering departments to design promotional strategies for proposed projects. The economic development corporation's plan to attract businesses in the future is to increase the marketing of community assets and identifying and focusing on available building sites. The office receives no grant monies and because there was no executive director until July 14, 1999, their FY99 cost of operations was \$34,273. 15. There was no approved budget for FY99, but as of January 1, 1999 there was a fund balance of \$81,152.

Staffing/Organization

The economic development corporation is staffed by an executive director who receives additional support from a township administration clerical staff member. The executive director is the fourth director in the last five years. He is an employee of the corporation and, therefore, does not receive any township benefits.

The corporation receives a contribution of \$50,000 from the township to offset expenses. The township supplies office space in the municipal building but that space is also shared with the environmental commission.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that additional funding be identified for the program through community support as well as through available grant funding including community development block grants. A goal of additional funding should be establishing stable staff leadership.

There is a cooperative relationship between the economic development corporation and the planning and zoning office, construction office and tax assessor, but these relationships could be better if there was more recognition of the economic development corporation as the lead agency for guiding, directing and supporting economic development in Old Bridge.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that mayor and council recognize the economic development corporation as a lead agency for planning and implementing economic development in Old Bridge.

It is recommended that the corporation form a focus group of municipal leaders and members of the business community to discuss obstacles to development in Old Bridge as well as remedies to those obstacles.

Status of Economic Development

Old Bridge Township is experiencing rapid growth in residential real estate and population. It is expected that the population will grow to over 70,000 in the next 15 years. Most of Old Bridge's population growth has occurred over the last 25 years. It is expected that the township will have over 7,000 housing units built in the next 25 years. This rapid growth is taxing municipal services and infrastructure. The school district, sewer, fire, and police departments particularly feel this.

Currently, the township does not have equilibrium between commercial and residential development. Local council members have actively pursued development plans that will have Old Bridge retaining a less commercially developed community because of the pressure from their constituency. At the same time, local residents acknowledge a lack of conveniently located retail outlets.

Old Bridge is competing for business with the neighboring communities of East Brunswick and Sayreville. Those communities provide better infrastructure, such as water and sewer. East Brunswick also has an outstanding school district. Both these townships have lower tax rates than Old Bridge.

No major corporation is located in Old Bridge. 75% of local businesses have fewer than 10 employees. Twenty percent have between 10 and 100; and 5% have over 100 employees. Twenty-five percent of local businesses have been in Old Bridge under five years. Twenty-five percent have been in Old Bridge between 5 and 10 years. Ten percent have been in Old Bridge between 10 and 15 years, and 40% have been in Old Bridge over 15 years.

The Old Bridge Economic Development Corporation conducted a business survey in 1997 to determine the needs and perceptions of the businesses within the township. Business representatives and residents who work and live within the township developed the questionnaire. Surveys were sent to all businesses and 600 businesses responded.

The survey identified impediments to the business expansion in Old Bridge. They include excessive regulations, tight labor force and high property taxes. Yet the business community also acknowledges the advantages of being located in the township, such as good roadway access, available land, good library and good police and fire departments.

Following the analysis of the survey, the corporation formulated a marketing plan to promote future business growth. This plan includes the development of brochures, videos and management training. They plan to monitor this plan by issuing another survey and tracking performance against county and state economic growth.

The township Economic Development Corporation is commended for creating a plan for tracking performance against county and state economic growth.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the township streamline regulations to create an atmosphere conducive to economic development.

OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

The office of emergency management for the Township of Old Bridge was established in 1991 according to N.J.S.A. Appendix. A:9-33 et. seq. The Old Bridge Township Office of Emergency Management is established by ordinance Section 2-14.4 to operate under the police department. This office is responsible for planning, activating, coordinating, and conducting emergency management operations within their municipality. The mayor of the township makes all appointments. It is common for the office of emergency management to fall under the police department and, in fact, it is common for the chief of police to be the OEM coordinator.

A municipal emergency management coordinator and two deputy municipal emergency management coordinators staff the Old Bridge Office of Emergency Management on a voluntary basis and are dedicated to the goal of being prepared for disasters.

The township has provided an OEM command center and communication office in the basement of the township police department.

Finance

The annual budget for the Office of Emergency Management for 1999 was \$8,500 but, for the year 2000, will rise to \$14,050 due to the increased need for more disaster preparedness drills to be performed in the township. The need for more drills is a product of the increased awareness of the dangers from various new situations such as terrorism, and school gun violence, to uncovering hazardous materials left behind from manufacturing and military operations in past years within the township. One particular case was the concern over military waste that may have been buried in the 1970s on an Evor Phillips Leasing Company site in the township. This incident caused a State of Emergency to be declared during the Environmental Protection Agency's investigation and excavation of this superfund site. In 1999, there were both a township-wide preparedness drill and a countywide drill. In the year 2000, both these drills will be held again plus individual exercises with local chemical manufacturers and transportation entities.

Although the budget for this office shows that expenses are incurred, the team was presented with documentation that, in many instances, the office of OEM actually recovered more monies than the overall cost of their operations. It had been mentioned to the team that over the past nine years there may have been as much as \$900,000 recovered from outside township sources to cover various emergency incidents that have occurred in the township. There were six cost recovery applications filed in 1999 totaling \$36,528. For FY99, the OEM office has recovered \$31,767 with four cases still pending. These pending cases are for Hazardous Material Incidents and amount to \$4,733.77. Some other documented costs recovered in the past few years were: \$30,348.08 from Hurricane Floyd, \$9,626 for costs incurred by the township during a snowstorm

in 1993; reimbursements for the blizzards of 1996 in the amount of \$248,854 through the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA). Presently, they are awaiting reimbursement of \$1,126 in expenses incurred by the township in response to a hazardous material incident on December 13, 1999. Also pending is an application to FEMA for additional reimbursements of costs related to Hurricane Floyd.

Duties and Functions

It is the responsibility of the emergency management coordinator to maintain the guidelines for the township emergency operations plans which outline the planning criteria, objectives, requirements, responsibilities and concepts of operation for the implementation of all necessary and appropriate protective or remedial measures to be taken in response to an actual or threatened emergency. He is also responsible for the operations plan to be reviewed and updated at least every two years. The State of New Jersey last approved the emergency operations plan for Old Bridge in 1997. It is presently under review for update to be completed in the year 2001. To this end, the coordinator has distributed all pertinent paperwork to all signatories. The coordinator also attends all monthly meetings of the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) to address community concerns and to inform the participants of upcoming drills or imminent emergency situations.

The personnel of the Office of Emergency Management respond to incidents within the township on an as requested basis. In 1998, OEM responded to approximately six incidents in the township and for 1999 there were over 20 responses. In January of 1999, a reporting/tracking system was put in place for OEM responses and reports. Over the past nine years, OEM has assisted with various emergencies within the township. Besides the numerous hazardous material spills on industrial properties and local highways, some of the circumstances that required their services were: Y2K preparedness, Hurricane Floyd, the blizzards of 1996, hospital diversions, concerns over a former military defense site and suspected hazardous materials buried at an abandoned manufacturing site. This last incident could have caused the evacuation of hundreds of residents from the surrounding areas.

In order to fulfill the required duty to provide for the protective or remedial measures that may be needed to be taken in response to an actual or threatened emergency, the office conducts annual disaster drills within town chemical companies. They assisted local schools in developing a school emergency operations plan following school shootings around the nation. They recommend changes in municipal ordinances that will assist the implementation of the emergency operation plan.

Accomplishments

The office of emergency management has been responsible for the adoption of an Interlocal Service Agreement with the County of Middlesex, titled "Hazardous Materials Recovery Costs." This agreement allows the township to be reimbursed for manpower, equipment and supplies when emergency response personnel respond to a hazardous materials incident. In order to ensure that the township recovers their expenses, they have implemented a procedure to be followed from the first responding emergency apparatus at a hazardous incident to the Middlesex

County Office of Emergency Response and Recovery. The volunteer members of the OEM office have been vigilant in pursuing recovery cost from hazardous incidents within the township. In 1999, there have been 18 such incidents.

They are very active in upgrading the OEM office to include an emergency operations center. They have added five new phone lines, a computer system and have occupied an adjacent room to the main office to use as a communications center during emergency situation. The township, as part of the overall communications system upgrade, provided a radio system. All other materials and labor were provided by the volunteer OEM staff through purchase orders and donations from town businesses.

They have created and maintained a consistent line of communication to the Middlesex County Office of Emergency Management that was useful in the township when there was a power outage that affected police, fire and EMS communication. In a matter of a half-hour, there was a mobile communications van from the county placed outside the police headquarters to receive and transmit all emergency information.

Issue

There is a concern that many department heads that have been appointed by the mayor to be on the Emergency Management Council (which is part of the LEPC) in the township do not take an active part or send representation to the Local Emergency Planning Commission meetings.

There are concerns over late notification or non-notification of an emergency incident, which may be eligible for reimbursement by the Emergency Response Recovery Agreement. This may be due to a misunderstanding of the purpose of the OEM office at an emergency scene. There should be more representation of upper management of the Police and Fire Departments at LEPC meetings. This would make clear that the office of emergency management is not in control of an emergency. It is there as an advisory office and to be a conduit to other emergency services in the county, state and federal organizations. Notification to the office of emergency management will give a "heads up" to allow the monitoring of a situation and make preliminary notifications in case other resources should be needed. The office needs to be notified of all incidents that require more resources than the on scene incident commander has at his command. Examples would be: multiple district fires, hazardous material incidents, multiple first aid squad requirements, incidents that may require evacuation of citizens, any communication failures and any incident that has the possibility of turning into a multi-agency/multi jurisdictional event. All these notifications would assist in the recovery of costs to the township for a covered incident. In December of 1999, a memorandum was sent to the Chief of Police for his approval as a protocol for the police dispatchers when receiving certain types of calls that need notification of OEM. If this is adopted it would create the start of the paperwork needed for recovery of township costs for services.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the mayor, council and administration make all involved entities aware of, and accountable for, appropriate notification regarding emergency incidents.

As was mentioned, volunteer personnel, including all paper work, filing, and phone calls, do all of the work of the office of emergency management. The increased involvement of the office creates more demand on time from these individuals. It was quite apparent that assistance should be given in the form of a part-time clerk to file, collate and perform general secretarial duties. This aid could be drawn from the police department staff and, thus, not financially impact the township. This person could also answer phones during an emergency management incident occurring in the township and begin the paperwork needed for emergency response recovery to Middlesex County HAZMAT office for processing.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that clerical support be committed to the OEM function by the police department using existing staff.

RECREATION

The recreation department establishes policy with guidance from an advisory board. The Old Bridge Recreation Department promotes a plethora of recreation activities for both children and adults that meet the varied needs of the community, to include a wide assortment of special events and holiday celebrations. The department has received many awards for their recreation programs. The community is, and should be, proud of the organization and the operation of these programs.

ORGANIZATION AND STAFFING

The department is headed by a director whose responsibilities include the parks and recreation department, the social service division and the arena utility. Staffing includes an assistant director for recreation, a program supervisor, an account control clerk and a part-time recreation coordinator. In FY99, the department ran 119 separate programs, with 3002 participants using 219 seasonal staff, for the various programs. This includes the ROBIN program for those with special needs.

FINANCIAL

In FY99, the department expended \$261,109 in salaries and benefits for permanent staff both full and part-time dedicated to recreation activities, \$235,665 for seasonal staff dedicated to particular recreation programs and \$141,015 in other expenses for total expenditures of \$637,789. Program fees and permit fees collected by the department totaled \$96,148.

FACILITIES

There are extensive recreation areas and facilities in the municipality. These include twenty-five park and recreation areas, facilities and schools used for these programs. Fourteen of these areas are owned and maintained by the board of education. There are formal and informal agreements

with the board of education. These agreements include capital projects, facility usage and scheduling of activities. The township continually seeks grants for the expansion of both active and passive recreation areas and open space.

We commend Old Bridge Township for the cooperation between the municipality and the board of education for the promotion of these recreational activities.

PROGRAMS

The Pre-School Program

These programs are primarily for three and four year olds with some pre-kindergarten five years old. Programs include: Broadway Babies, Dance, Game Fun and Tiny Tumblers.

The Summer Playground Program

Each playground site offers a great deal of on site activities. This is accompanied by an extensive trip schedule. The program has over 1,200 participants, a success that speaks for itself.

The Mom & Me Program

Also, with separate sections for two, three, and four year olds; Arts and Crafts for Mom and Me and Cooking for Mom and Me.

Children's Programs

These activities are for children in grades K - 5 and include: Arts and Crafts, Artist Workshop, Basket Making, Candy Creations, Cheerleading, Chess, Dance, Little Gourmet Chefs, Plaster Crafts, Timber Time, Tiny Tumblers and Wrestling.

Teen Programs

These activities are for grades 5 - 12 and include: Arts and Crafts, Candle Creations, Fantastic Foods, Funk Aerobics and Great Adventure Trips. Also, the activities lounges at the South Old Bridge Community Center and the Laurence Harbor Activity Center are open Friday and Saturday Nights.

Adult Programs

Adult activities include: Aerobics, Arts and Crafts, Body Sculpting, Ceramics and Holiday Arts and Crafts. Also, Open Adult Gyms provide Basketball, Co-Ed Volleyball and a Women's Volleyball League.

ROBIN

The ROBIN program serves the needs of the handicapped. In FY99, this operation organized and ran seven programs plus camp ROBIN, serving 181 handicapped child and adult participants.

Child and Teen Programs

All ROBIN Programs are designed to meet the needs of Old Bridge children that are classified special education by the child study teams as: mentally retarded, emotionally disturbed, ADD,

neurologically impaired, slow learner or any other limiting disability. Activities include arts and crafts, basketball, computer enrichment, instructional soccer, T.I.P. (therapeutic ice program), teen Friday night program for social growth and peer interaction to include movies, games, sports and dance. Programs include: The Saturday night program arts and crafts, cooking, computers, horticulture, gym activities and ice skating at the arena.

Adult Programs

Adult activities include: arts and crafts, computer enrichment, cooking, fitness program, horticulture, music program and Friday night fun with games, movies, live entertainment and trips.

Special Events

The township held eight special events to include: the Camp ROBIN Benefit Golf Classic, the 4th Annual Old Bridge Day Celebration, Mat Rat Program, Wrestling Festival, Spring into Spring, Easter Egg Hunt, Volunteer Luncheon, Haunted Halloween Happenings, Letters to Santa, Trim a Tree Craft Show, Adopt an Angel, the township Holiday Party and the Menorah and Tree Lighting Event.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the municipality seek corporate sponsorship for special events and celebrations, which are appropriate means of creating community spirit. These activities promote a tremendous amount of good will in town, which would, in turn, benefit corporate sponsors.

Athletics

The township has sixteen youth athletic leagues to include a basketball league, eight baseball leagues, three football leagues, an ice hockey league, a roller hockey league and two soccer leagues. Of these, 12 received taxpayer subsidies in FY99.

The municipal expenditure report indicates that the department provided \$70,219 in subsidies, with payments ranging from \$60 for various fees, awards and tournaments, to \$8,400 for subsidy awards to leagues. In FY99, these allocations helped support 14 separate volunteer athletic organizations. Some organizations received as little as 4% of their revenue from the municipality while others received as much as 31%, there appears to be no pattern as to how much a league will receive. Additionally, the department provided \$9,999 to support various Old Bridge high school activities and competitions.

This stipend system developed many years ago when Old Bridge was a very small community where facilities were not available to meet the athletic needs of the community. The municipal stipend helped to offset the cost of leasing and developing field space for athletic activities. Over the years, many leagues have accumulated a considerable capital investment in these athletic facilities.

Each league recipient files a grant application requesting financial support from the recreation department. A review of these applications indicates that there is no standardization as to how

they are filled out and dollar amounts appear to be round numbers rather than specific amounts. We were able to discern from this information, that all of these leagues, except one, have been functioning for more than 20 years and as long as 60 years. Approximately 7,201 youth participated in these leagues guided by 2,144 volunteers who donated 75,900 hours of their time to these activities. Total expenditures were \$933,909 and total revenue, including the township contribution, was \$794,761. While these are round numbers and will not calculate to an actual expenditure, it should be close to reality. It appears that these leagues operate at a \$139,148 deficit. However, this cannot be verified. These applications also indicate that collectively these leagues spent \$34,688 on insurance, \$114,875 on field maintenance and \$31,042 on utilities. If these leagues, with the coordination of the recreation department, were to bulk purchase insurance and field maintenance through an association of the league, a savings of 10% to 15% could be realized. Additional savings could be realized through the bulk purchase of electricity in cooperation with the municipality. An exact dollar amount cannot be determined as separate electric costs are not clearly delineated in the grant applications.

The department and the municipality are commended for their dedication to the promotion of athletic activities in Old Bridge.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the council, the recreation advisory committee and the department develop a policy regarding the level of subsidy that is appropriate for athletic leagues and that continues to promote the self-sufficiency of these leagues. It is suggested that the relationship with these leagues be formalized in an agreement that gives the township access to financial and participation records. Given this information, the council and committee will be able to determine program cost and set policy for a level of subsidy appropriate for today's circumstances. Our recommendation is to decrease this subsidy by 50%.

Cost Avoidance: \$35,109

It is recommended that the department require the application process for league registration and support be standardized and that actual dollar amounts be used.

It is recommended that the municipality coordinate the formation of an association to promote economies of scale with the bulk purchase of insurance, electrical power and field maintenance.

Cost Savings: \$14,956 - \$22,434

ARENA UTILITY

The arena was built in 1975 and renovated in 1998 at a cost of \$1,850,000. The arena serves several hockey leagues and tennis groups as well as individual residents for ice skating, tennis and special events. In FY99, the gross revenue generated through fees, sales, services and sales taxes was \$549,930. Admissions data indicate that the peak activity for the arena is November to February with approximately 75% of the admissions revenue coming in that four month period

and no admissions revenue coming in from May through August. Tennis activity peaks in the summer months. Revenues are expected to increase for the summer months, since there has not been a full summer operation and schedule of events since the completion of the renovations in the last year.

Financial

In FY99, \$791,320 was budgeted for the arena utility and actual expenditures totaled \$681,481. Included in the expenditures were capital financing expenses totaling \$165,312 salaries, overtime and benefits totaling \$297,312 and other expenses of \$228,789. The arena collected \$549,930 for fees, pro shop sales, snack bar sales and sales taxes. Of the total collections, \$3,916 was from sales taxes remitted to the state leaving \$546,014 in revenue. As of February, 2000, total revenue is \$37,208 higher than February, 1999. In the summer months of CY2000, the increased activities include three antiques shows, a flea market and a motorcycle show.

Staffing

The arena is in operation more than 105 hours per week and is under the direction of the parks and recreation/social services director. The day to day functioning of this facility is guided by the arena supervisor with records and cash being managed by the assistant manager who also works part-time for the parks and recreation department. Thirty-one part-time temporary staff work in the pro shop, the snack bar, and run programs and events.

Programs/Events

Programs, activities, and events covered under the arena utility include:

- Roller Hockey
- High School Hockey
- Private Tennis Lessons
- Group Tennis Lessons
- Tennis Tournaments
- Ice Skating
- Party Rentals
- Car Show

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the municipality and the arena utility make every effort to expand the operations of the arena with the intention of expanding revenues to cover all of the arena cost including debt service and any additional capital improvements. This will require an increase of \$145,321 or 27.62%.

LIBRARY

Old Bridge Public Library serves an estimated 1996 population of 59,409 from its seven-year-old, 42,000 square foot building in the Old Bridge Municipal Complex. Total CY1999 attendance was 207,715, circulation was 342,574, reference transactions totaled more than 60,000 and 9,025 individuals attended 706 programs.

Its mission statement, which was revised on June 9, 1999 states that: "...the library is a community based service oriented library which supports life-long learning. We strive to provide our patrons with superior service while fulfilling their informational, recreational and reading needs. Our mission is to be responsive to our patrons' changing needs and to encourage innovation which will improve service to the community."

Old Bridge appropriated and expended \$1,384,628 on library services in FY99. The budgeted amount for FY00 is \$1,552,435. The minimum required library appropriation (N.J.S.A. 40:54-8) for FY99 was \$942,844. Therefore, the actual appropriation is \$441,784 or 47% higher than required by law. In addition, council expended \$24,410 for a survey relating to library services.

On the other hand, according to the New Jersey State Library Statistics for 1998, the per capita expenditure is \$27.93, which is close to the average per capita expenditure in the United States; is 35% lower than the average for the expenditure category of \$43.16; low in comparison to the population category which is \$29.43; and low in comparison to the average of selected similar communities which is \$34.44. Additionally, the tax support per \$100 of equalized valuation is .45, lower than that of the expenditure category, the population category and selected libraries which are .55, .67 and .53, respectively.

Services

Per capita circulation is 6.1 as compared to 7.2 for the same budget category, 4.4 for the same population category and 8.25 for selected similar libraries. The overall 1999 per circulation cost of library operations is \$4.04. The cost per circulation for the year of comparison was \$4.55, which is lower than the same expenditure category, which is \$5.95, the population category that is \$8.89 and the similar communities which is \$6.00.

The library is open 9:30 a.m. - 9:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday; 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Saturday; and 12:30 p.m.- 5:00 p.m. Sunday for a total of 65 hours per week which is comparable to all the comparison categories. The library is also open on eight minor holidays.

The circulation has decreased over the past two years. The director attributes this to a change in circulation policy limiting the number of renewals. Attendance also decreased from 1998 to 1999 indicating a decrease in service use overall.

Collection

The collection totaled 158,226 items in 1998. This works out to 2.64 volumes per capita, lower than any of the other categories by between .5 and 1 volumes per capita. However, it is consistent with standards identified in library literature which indicates that 2.5 to 2.75 volumes per capita is appropriate for populations ranging from 50,000 to 100,000. The 1999 collection count is 178,486 or 3.0 per capita. Expenditures on materials were just 10% of the total budget, which was two and three percentage points lower than libraries in its expenditure, population and peer categories. The ideal materials expenditure amount is 15-18% according to experts in the library field. Volumes purchased in 1998 were 6,340 or .11 per capita. This is significantly lower than the average of each of the three comparison groups, which ranged from 7,524 to 10,656 or .16 to .21 per capita.

In spite of the library's weakness in expenditures and additions to the collection, there are indicators that the collection is relatively healthy. One is the fact that the Old Bridge Public Library is a net lender on Inter Library Loans through its library network. In addition, the average number of times an item circulates is 2.3, higher than all of the other comparison categories.

The collection development practices as described emphasize meeting patron requests first while maintaining a strong, well-weeded collection. They generally maintain a holds ratio of 5:1, so that one copy of a best seller is ordered for every five holds. This assures a limit on the length of time a patron must wait for a popular title. There are standing orders for very popular authors and for some reference and travel books. The librarian responsible for selection is familiar with the patrons' interests and orders based on that combined with reviews from standard sources.

Programs

The Old Bridge Public Library strives to be an active member of its community. This is apparent in small things done at the library, such as, being a location for battery drop-offs and having notaries available and, in not as small things, such as having a very useful and informative welcome kit for people new to Old Bridge and new to the library. In addition, they have very aggressive programming for children and adults, which generate high attendance. The adult programs include health, finance and arts topics and are directed to individual adults, parents and senior citizens. Total adult attendance in calendar year 1999 was more than 1,700 at 107 programs.

One of the most exciting and positive efforts undertaken by the library recently was the establishment of a computer-training center. An almost \$20,000 competitive grant and a \$25,000 noncompetitive grant funded the purchase of equipment, software, and handbooks and construction of classroom space. The library provides instructors by requiring each full-time professional librarian to conduct one class each week and the library also provides publicity for the program in the form of press releases, calendars and flyers. A total of 284 programs were offered in calendar year 1999 and attendance was 1,124.

The library is commended for identifying an appropriate service for which outside funding is available.

Laurence Harbor

The library operates one 2,600 square foot branch in Laurence Harbor. It is open 26 hours per week and is staffed by 1.8 FTE of library assistants. The branch hours are 1-5 Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday and 1-8 Tuesday and Thursday. The staffing allows for coverage by two people at all times in order to assure the safety of the staff. Materials selection, in depth reference and children's programming are provided by the Main Library staff, with input from the Laurence Harbor staff. The branch is connected by fax and also has materials delivery from the main library twice per week. Circulation at the Laurence Harbor Branch was 14,655 in CY1999. This is less than 4% of total circulation. Total estimated operating costs for CY1999 were \$68,171. Of this amount, \$54,771 is expended on staff and \$13,400 is dedicated to other expenses. This averages out to \$4.65 per circulation, which is 15% more costly than the average per circulation cost of the entire library.

It is the experience of this team that extra facilities seldom contribute enough in service to warrant their cost, however, it appears that the conservative manner in which the branch operates may prove it an exception.

The township council has contracted with a survey research firm for \$25,000 to identify the community's need for service delivery outside of the main facility.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that services be maintained at the current level at Laurence Harbor unless the results of the survey are such that there is no longer a mandate for the location. Until such time as services at the main facility have reached a point where they are adding to the collection in a manner similar to its comparison categories and the circulation and attendance are increasing steadily, no additional resources should be allocated to the branch operation.

Administration

The administrative staff consists of the library director, an assistant director and the administrative assistant. The director and assistant director both fill in at reference. Total salaries and benefits for this unit amount to \$178,578.

The new library director has made a concerted effort to save every dollar possible. Recent examples include changing the contractor for HVAC to save approximately \$1,500 or 21% over last year's expenditures; requiring the branch manager for Laurence Harbor to work at the main library when the Laurence Harbor branch is closed; and modifying the collective bargaining agreement to reduce compensation costs.

Public Services/Staffing

Old Bridge Public Library has 20 full-time staff members, eight of whom are professional librarians, and 20 part-time staff members and approximately 10 part-time student shelvers.

Reference

The reference staff consists of one librarian 2 as department head, two full-time librarians and an FTE of two part-time librarians. One of the full-time reference people is also responsible for adult services including programming, preparing a newsletter and public relations relating to programs and adult services. The other full-time reference librarian is responsible for most collection development. Total costs attributable to reference staffing are \$211,189. Reference transactions totaled 61,776.

Electronic Resources

The electronic resources librarian works half time on electronic resources and half time at the reference desk. The salary costs for this function include \$25,007 for the department head and the cost of additional staffing of programs by full-time librarians bringing the total cost for salaries and benefits to \$84,108. An additional person is in the FY01 to be shared between reference and electronic resources.

Youth Services

The youth services function is staffed by two full-time and two part-time librarians. A third part-time librarian was authorized in the FY00 budget to increase program offerings and expand weekend and evening coverage. Current salary and benefit costs total \$103,756. The new position will cost approximately \$20,000.

The youth services department is very successful, answering more than 19,000 reference questions and presenting 315 programs to 6,191 children. In addition, the staff maintains informative reading lists of books by genre and grade and makes them available to families in search of titles meeting their children's interests.

The children's programs are so popular that there is a very complex sign up procedure and waiting list. This process is designed to give everyone an opportunity to participate and to assure that the programs are filled the day of the session.

The library is commended for managing the demand for its programs well.

The youth services librarians participate in the regional network's book review program. This program serves two purposes. First, it creates an opportunity for youth services librarians for the region to get together and problem solve and, secondly, the book publishers give the region free copies of the reviewed books to the reviewers' library in appreciation for the time they spend on reviewing the books for the publisher. The library receives as many as thirty books per session in return for the time spent by its librarians reading and reviewing the books. There are about four review sessions per year.

The youth services staff is commended for participating in this program.

Circulation

The circulation staff is lead by a library assistant 2 as department head and includes two additional full-time and nine part-time library assistants. The FTE is 7.5. Total cost for salaries and benefits was \$138,691. This is approximately \$50,000 less than if the circulation function were staffed by all full-time people. Public libraries are an appropriate environment for using predominantly part-time people because of the nontraditional workweek. With circulations of 342,574, the staff handles an average of 27 circulations per hour.

Shelvers are supervised by the circulation department head and are responsible for sorting and shelving returned materials. Throughout FY99, approximately 30 students were hired to work a total full-time equivalent of three. Total salary and benefit expenditures for shelving were \$145,952. No significant shelving backlog was observed while we were there.

Technical Services

Technical services is staffed by one full-time library assistant 2 and two part-time library assistants whose hours equate to one full-time equivalent. In addition, a cataloguer works about ten hours per week doing original cataloging of about 1/6th of the items processed annually. The other items are processed by the library assistant staff using preexisting cataloging information.

The head of technical services processes orders, orders all supplies and maintains inventories, manages bindery shipments, processes the bulk loan from Newark Public Library, and makes corrections and adjustments to the database as necessary.

Audio Visual

This department is staffed with a library assistant 2 and the equivalent of two full-time library assistants. The staff processes, shelves and checks out videos and CDs, maintains sign up lists for computers and computer training as well as typewriters. Popular videos cost .50 per day and that money is used to purchase additional popular videos. This staff also maintains the copiers available for public use. 15,288 AV items were used in house and 21,892 circulated for a total of 38,180.

Periodicals/Inter Library Loans (ILLs)

One library assistant 2 staffs this function. It is supported with some time from three part-time library assistants, two of whom also support AV. All periodicals are checked in and shelved and ILLs are processed by this staff. The current year is shelved for the public and two years are maintained in the back office. All periodicals circulate except for the current issue. 9,490 periodicals circulated and 14,898 were used in house for a total use of 24,388. They use the State Access Center, LMXAC and Infolink all regional library networks. They do not use the national utility OCLC and still have a 90% fill rate.

Facility

The 42,000 square foot library building was built in 1992 and has been the target of criticism. It has taken the past several years to adequately furnish it and work out some operational difficulties. Simplistic formulas based on population indicate that 36,600 square feet of space is appropriate. The facility is open and spacious and welcoming and appears to make adequate use of the space. The annual capital costs of the building are currently approximately \$308,381 and are not included in the operating budget amounts outlined above.

Two part-time custodians maintain the main library and Laurence Harbor. They also transport materials between the branch and the main library twice per week. Total salary costs for the custodians in 1999 were \$15,624. It appears that the custodial services are cost efficient and actively maintain welcoming, clean facilities while handling other responsibilities as well.

Conclusion

The team concludes that the Old Bridge Public Library is successfully delivering services to its public. The staff is commended for identifying every means of reducing the library's operating costs and managing successfully the unmet demand for its programs. Any recommended changes are made with the understanding that savings be directed to addressing unmet needs such as increased materials expenditures and increased programming especially for children. The library is a fine example of an institution that has defined its mission and operated in fulfillment of it.

III. COLLECTIVE BARGAINING ISSUES

An area that frequently presents significant opportunities for savings is negotiated contracts. While they represent opportunities for savings, the savings and contract improvements are most likely to occur incrementally, through a well-conceived process of redeveloping compensation packages to be equitable and comprehensive. For this reason we present those issues subject to collective bargaining agreements separately in this section.

The Old Bridge Public Works and Sanitation Union (SEIU) and Old Bridge Municipal Employees Supervisors Association represent approximately 24 public works employees and five supervisors within the public works department. Provisions of these contracts cover July 1, 1996 through June 30, 1999, are similar and are, therefore, discussed together.

Sick Leave

Sick leave is considered an insurance type benefit. Employees covered by the contract receive 15 sick days per year. Of these fifteen sick days four may be designated by the employee as personal days. Any of the four personal days not taken by the end of each calendar year shall be accrued as part of the employees sick time bank.

Old Bridge is commended for negotiating a relatively conservative sick and personal leave policy. Once all employees hired before July 1, 1982 and before July 1, 1993 retire and are paid for their accrued sick time at the higher levels, the savings in pay-outs to the next generation of workers will be much less but dependent on the pay scales at the time of payment. If the current employees were all under the system in place since July 1, 1993 the current liability for these payments would be approximately \$216,000 less.

Bereavement Leave

The current contract allows five days bereavement leave for a death of a member of the immediate family. This is a very generous policy as most municipalities grant only three days. The policy of granting bereavement leave to other than immediate family is not commonly done by most municipalities. If bereavement leave had been reduced to three days in FY99, 17 fewer days off would have been used.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the municipality negotiate a reduction in bereavement leave to three days for immediate family and one day for an aunt or an uncle.

Potential Productivity Enhancement: \$4,311

Salaries/Longevity

The municipality paid \$146,418 for longevity in FY99. Employees received annual increments of 3%, 3.5% and 3% in 1996, 1997, 1998, respectively. All members of both unions receive 2.5% longevity after five years with an additional 2.5% in five-year intervals. An employee with 30 years of service receives 15% longevity plus 3%, 3.5%, or 18%, 18.5% and 18% in each year of this three-year contract. In FY99, this benefit cost the taxpayers \$146,418. The annual raises

layered on a six step longevity scale mean that an employee with five years service at the inception of this contract, in the three year period of this contract would go from a 1996 base salary of \$28,665 to salary and longevity of \$47,270 in 1999. This is more than a doubling of salary every four years. This is not sustainable.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that longevity be negotiated out of the contract. It is further recommended that the impact of steps and cost of living increases and longevity be looked at together in order to encourage the development of a rational compensation package, that is fair to both the employee and the taxpayer. At the very least longevity should be paid as a lump sum bonus and not accrue as an addition to base pay.

Potential Cost Savings: \$146,418

Uniforms

The employees are given a \$700 clothing allowance paid directly to the employee. In FY99, this policy cost the taxpayers \$19,250. Other municipalities rent uniforms at a cost of \$430 per person for rental and cleaning.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the municipality negotiate a contract for the rental of uniforms.

Potential Cost Savings: \$7,425

Tool Allowance

Each mechanic or carpenter is allotted a \$400 tool allowance per year. This tool allowance policy is excessive. Most maintenance operations provide a complete set of tools and replace tools as needed.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the municipality move to a policy of replacing tools as needed rather than establishing a set amount.

IV. SHARED SERVICES

Tremendous potential for cost savings and operational efficiencies exists through the implementation of shared, cooperative services between local government entities. In every review, Local Government Budget Review strives to identify and quantify the existing and potential efficiencies available through the collaborative efforts of local officials in service delivery, in an effort to highlight shared services already in place and opportunities for their implementation.

Old Bridge Township is of a size that can be manageable and cost efficient. They have successfully made progress in sharing services with other government entities that operate within the township. Such cooperative efforts include:

- the Latch Key Program;
- providing gas for the school district;
- providing payroll services to the housing authority;
- including the library staff in the health benefits program;
- incorporating the library into the township phone system; and
- the township provides financial support to the school district for athletics and use of facilities.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT BUDGET REVIEW
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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Peter R. Lawrance, Deputy State Treasurer
Robert J. Mahon, Director, Local Government Budget Review
JoAnne M. Palmer, Deputy Director, Local Government Budget Review

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**TOWNSHIP OF OLD BRIDGE
Our Common Bond**

We treat each other with respect and dignity, valuing individual and cultural differences. Recognizing that exceptional quality begins with people, we give employees the authority to use their capabilities to the fullest to satisfy our residents, our people.

We truly care for our residents, our people. We build enduring relationships by understanding and anticipating our residents needs and by serving them better each time than the time before. Old Bridge residents can count on us to consistently deliver superior services at the least possible cost.

We strive to being the best at everything we do. We are committed to continuous improvement of governance services through our endless pursuit of searching for new ways to run government more efficiently and effectively.

We are honest and ethical in all our business dealing starting with how we trust each other. We keep our promises and admit our mistakes. Our personal conduct ensures that Old Bridge's name is always worthy of trust.

We believe that innovation is the engine that will keep us vital and growing. Our culture embraces creativity, seeks different perspectives and pursues new opportunities. Regardless of level or position, we are committed to excellence in everything we do.

We freely join with colleagues across public and private sector boundaries to advance the interests of our residents, our people.

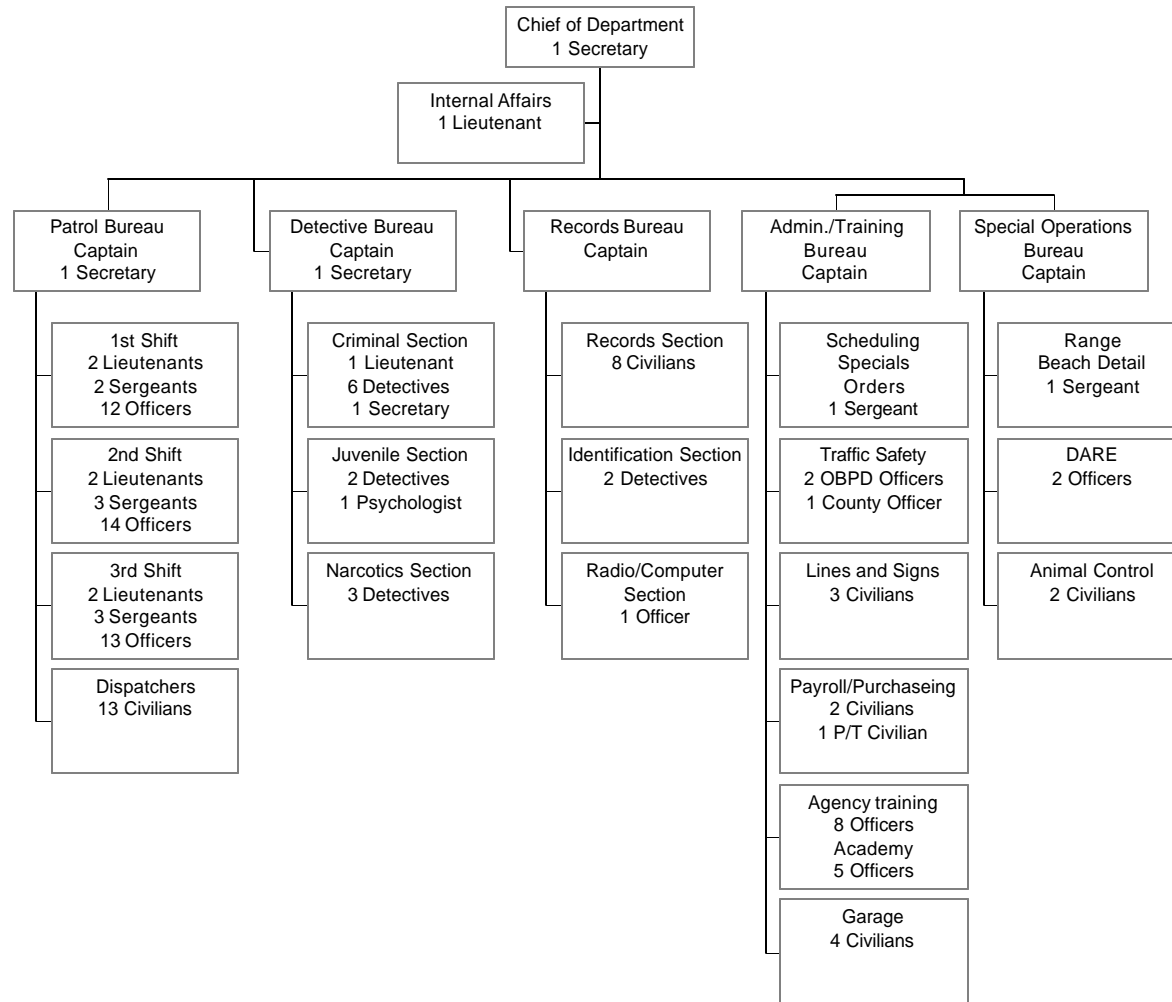
Our governance goal is citizenship satisfaction in the pursuit of quality services and economic return on taxpayer investments. By living these values, Old Bridge Governance aspires to set a standard of excellence that will reward our residents, our people, and our employees.

We the Governance of Old Bridge choose to adopt and enthusiastically live our common bond.

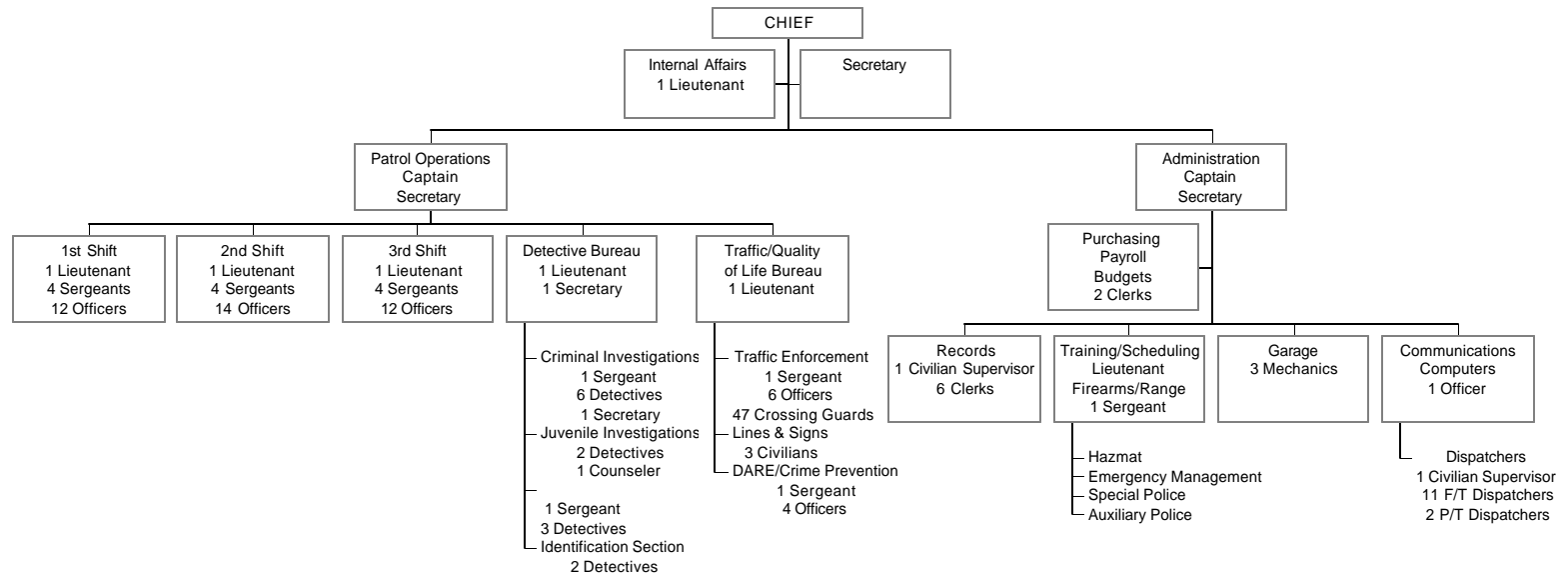
**Crime Comparison
Old Bridge Township**

1998 UCR Data	Old Bridge	Brick Township	Cherry Hill Township	Gloucester Township	Lakewood Township	Piscataway Township	West Orange Township
County	Middlesex	Ocean	Camden	Camden	Ocean	Middlesex	Essex
Population '96 Estimate	59,409	73,323	68,982	58,004	48,658	50,936	39,495
Area/Sq Mi	38	26.4	24.18	23.14	24.4	18.9	12.11
Density/Sq mi	1,551	2,777	2,853	2,507	1,194	2,695	3,624
Character	Suburban	Suburban	Suburban	Suburban	Suburban	Suburban	Suburban
Median Household Income 1989	\$47,482	\$38,742	\$54,432	\$41,224	\$29,211	\$50,451	\$49,777
State Equalized Value 1997	\$2,828,534,107	\$4,312,657,942	\$4,594,530,335	\$2,055,234,265	\$2,103,641,420	\$3,001,854,720	\$2,833,243,537
Equalized Value/Capita	\$47,611	\$58,817	\$66,604	\$35,433	\$43,233	\$58,934	\$71,737
Municipal Functions 1993	\$26,113,816	\$26,426,196	\$26,380,188	\$16,628,326	\$23,875,727	\$19,974,949	\$32,968,772
Tax Rate 1997	\$2.95	\$2.33	\$2.96	\$2.87	\$2.77	\$3.44	\$6.58
County Equalization Ratio 1997	97.66	96.35	91.44	100	95.09	71.81	51.12
Tax Levy/Capita	\$1,287.75	\$1,281.85	\$1,734.22	\$790.72	\$921.27	\$1,240	\$1,960.38
Sworn Officers	86	113	120	90	104	80	102
Civilian Employees	37	32	31	20	22	18	12
Department Total	123	145	151	110	126	98	114
Violent Total	54	166	126	232	237	119	123
Non-Violent Total	1,135	1,762	2,949	1,849	2,056	940	1,635
Crime Index Total	1,189	1,928	3,075	2,081	2,293	1,059	1,758
Crime/1,000	20	26.3	44.6	35.9	47.1	20.8	44.5
Violent Crime/1,000	0.9	2.3	1.8	4	4.9	2.3	3.1
Non-Violent Crime/1,000	19.1	24	42.8	31.9	42.3	18.5	41.4
Population/Officer	691	649	575	644	468	637	388
Officer/Sq. Mile	2.25	4.28	4.96	3.89	4.26	4.2	8.4
Crime/Officer	13.8	17.06	25.63	23.12	22.04	13.2	17.24
Detective Captain	1	1		1	1	1	1
Detective Lieutenant	1		1		1		2
Detective Sergeant Adult		2	1		3	2	3
Detective Sergeant Juvenile						1	2
Detective Adult	9	13	10	7	10	7	5
Detective Juvenile	2	2	2	2	1	3	2
Total Detectives	11	17	13	9	14	13	15
Crime/Detective	108	113	237	231	164	81	117
Uniform Officer/Detective	8	7	9	10	7	6	7
Population/Detective	5,401	4,313	5,306	6,445	3,476	3,918	2,633

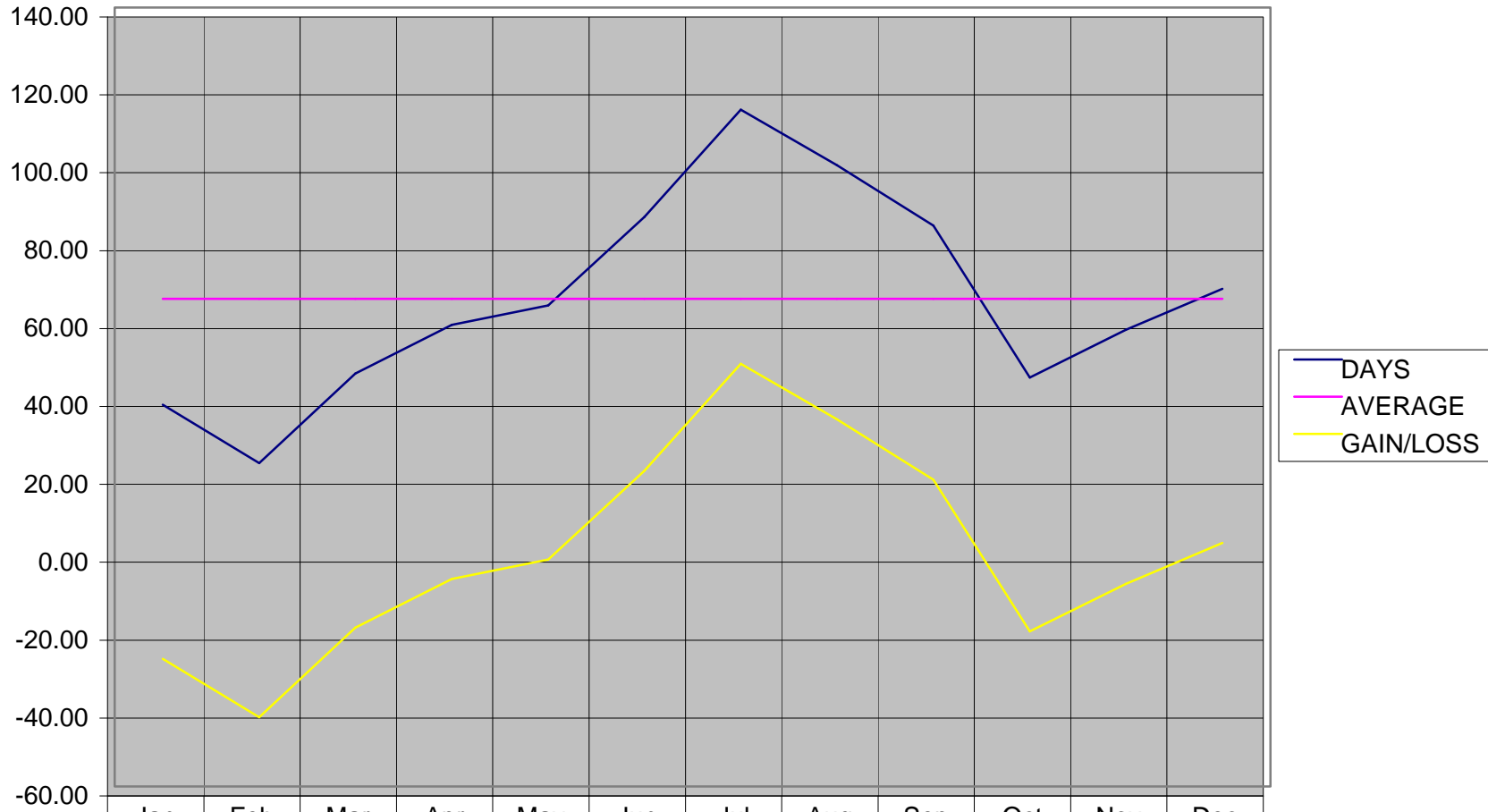
Old Bridge Police 1999/2000



Old Bridge Police (Proposed)



Old Bridge Police Patrol Vacation Days 1999



DAYS	38.00	23.00	46.00	58.50	63.50	86.25	113.75	99.50	84.00	45.00	57.25	67.75
AVERAGE	65.21	65.21	65.21	65.21	65.21	65.21	65.21	65.21	65.21	65.21	65.21	65.21
GAIN/LOSS	-27.21	-42.21	-19.21	-6.71	-1.71	21.04	48.54	34.29	18.79	-20.21	-7.96	2.54

OLD BRIDGE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Officer Availability

Patrol Schedule		Days	Hours
Base Year	10-hour shift	365	3,650
Scheduled Days Off		182.5	1,825
Scheduled Work Days		182.5	1,825
Vacation		21.15	211.5
Sick		11.34	113.4
Personal		0	0
Compensatory		0	0
Training		1	10
Holiday		0	0
Average Availability		149.01	1,490.1

12 Months of Jobs, 11/1/98 to 11/30/98

Total Calls	46,525	
Response to Scene Time/Call (tenths of an hour)	4.06	
At Scene	19.13	
	23.19	0.39 (tenths of an hour)

Beat Analysis

Calculation #1

1. Total patrol activities multiplied by Average Consumed Time.
2. Total patrol consumed time multiplied by a factor of three. The factor of three represents preventive patrol (unobligated time), answering calls, and administrative time used by patrol officers on every patrol shift.
3. Total patrol time divided by Average Officer Availability.

CFS	46,525	Total Time	18,144.75	Patrol Time	54,434.25
Time/Call	0.39	Factor	3	Availability	1,490.1
Total Time	18,144.75	Patrol Time	54,434.25	Officers	36.53

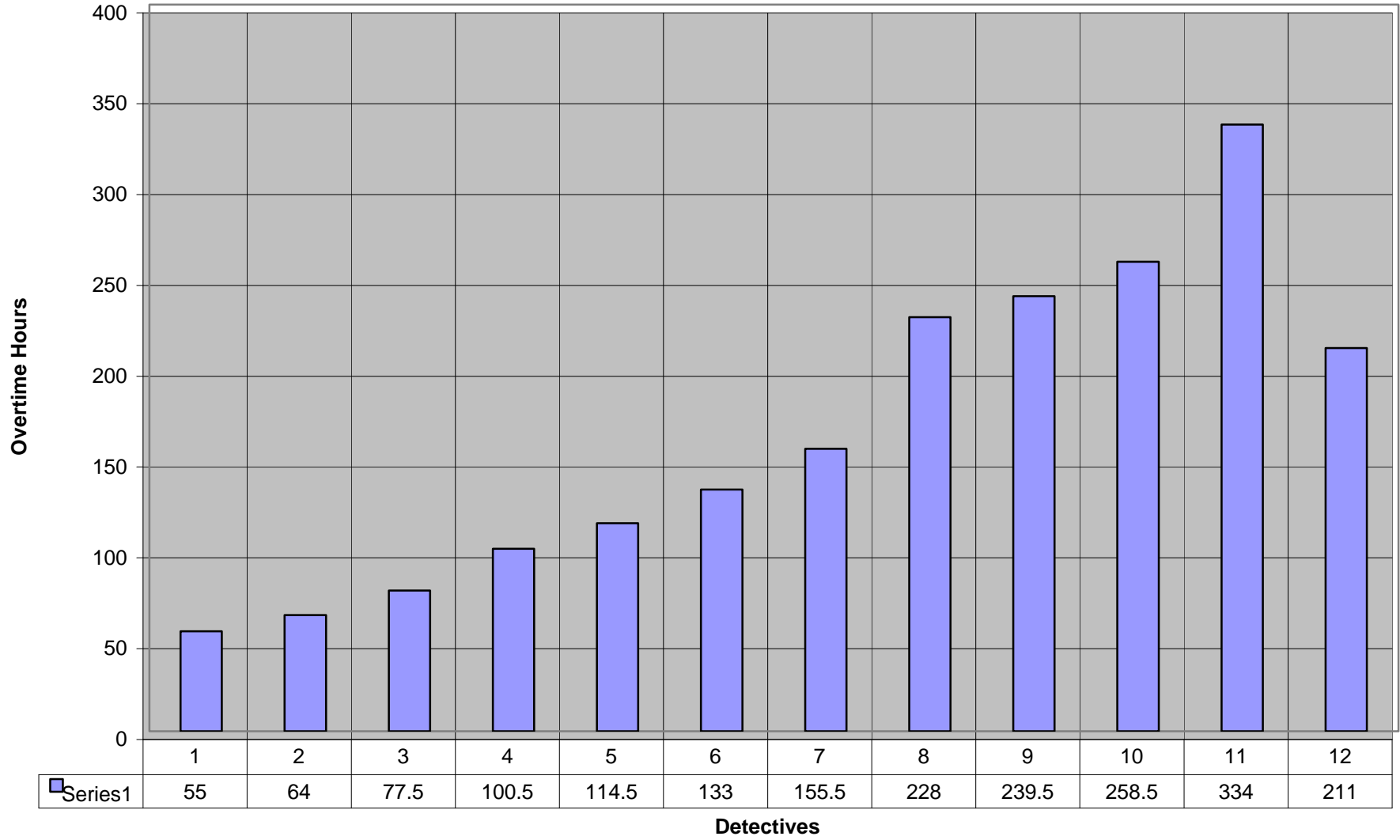
During the time of the review, they had 38 officers assigned to patrol.

Calculation #2

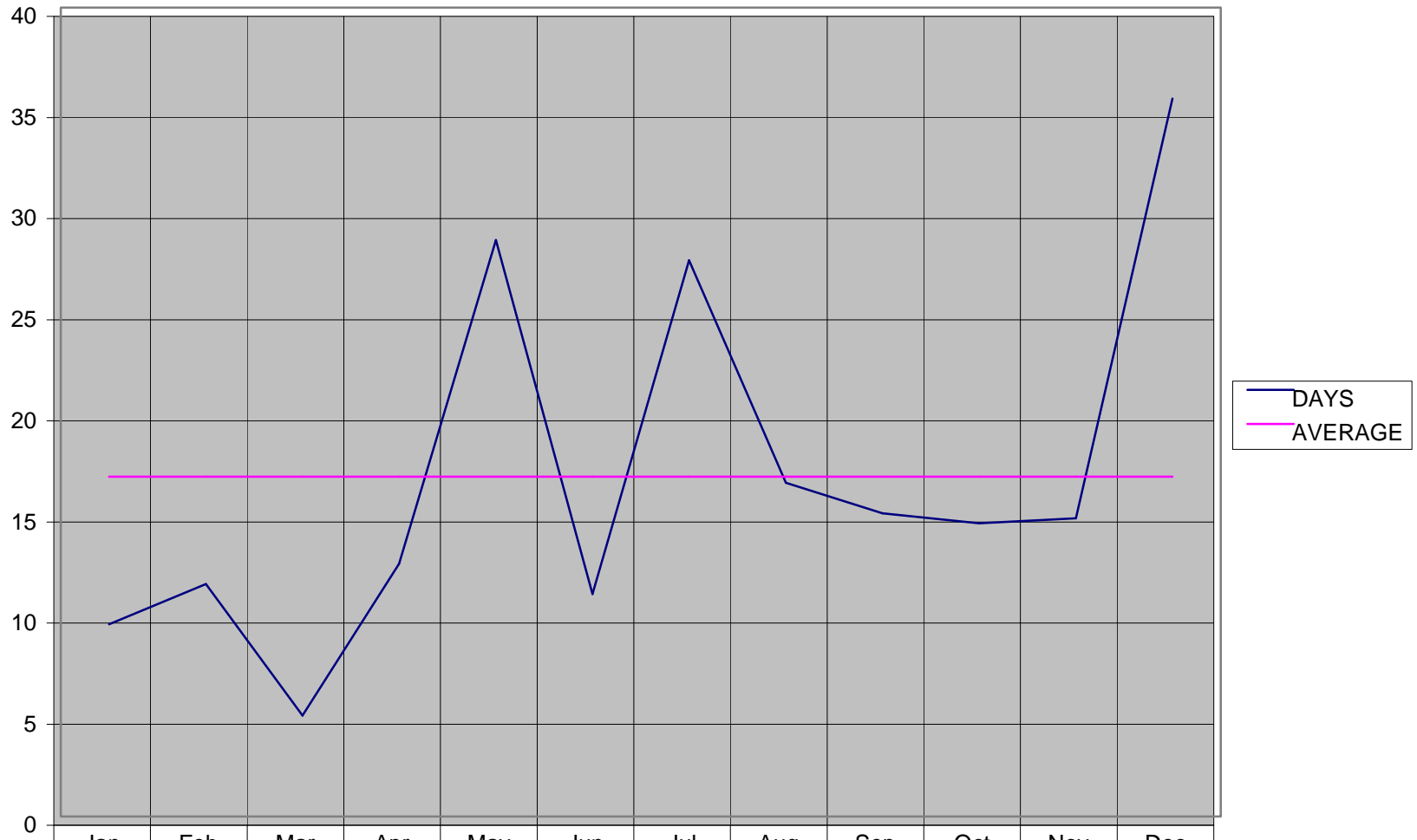
The number of beats/officers per day times; the number of hours per beat/shift; times 365. This is then divided by officer availability.

Beat/Day	15	Hours/Day	150	Hours/Year	54,750
Hour/Shift	10	Days	365	Availability	1,490.1
Hours/Day	150	Hours/Year	54,750	Officers	36.74
[5x3] 15 x 10 x 365/1,490 = 36.7 = 37 officers					

Old Bridge Detective Bureau



Old Bridge Police Dispatcher Vacation Days 1999

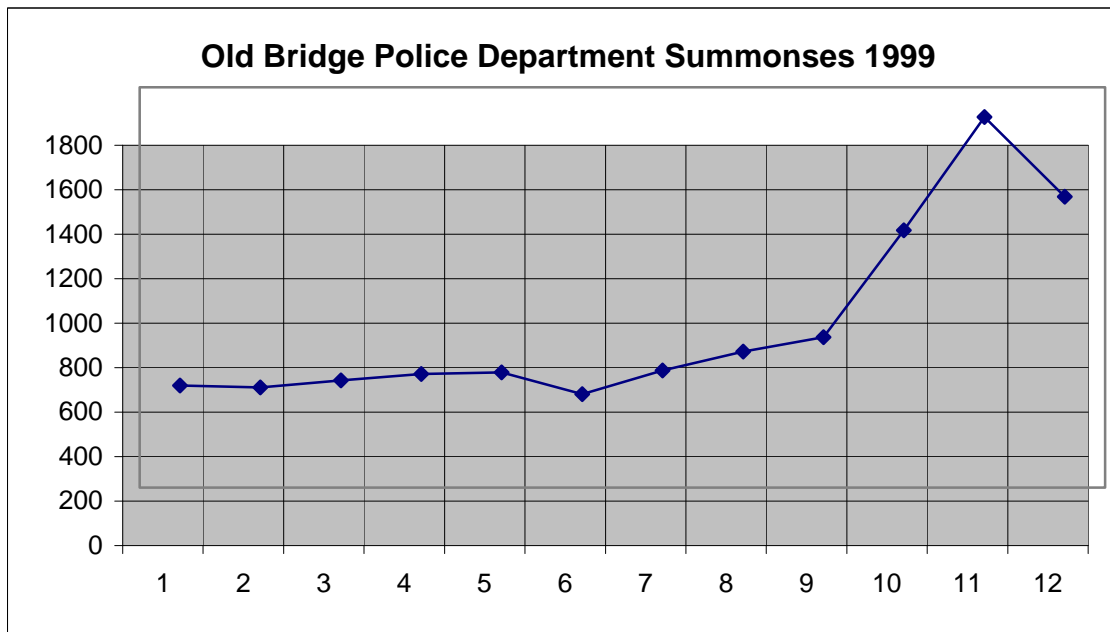


	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
— DAYS	9.5	11.5	5	12.5	28.5	11	27.5	16.5	15	14.5	14.75	35.5
— AVERAGE	16.81	16.81	16.81	16.81	16.81	16.81	16.81	16.81	16.81	16.81	16.81	16.81

Old Bridge Police Traffic Summonses

Year	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Total	4,357	4,718	4,061	5,639	8,785

1999	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Total Written	459	450	482	511	518	420	527	611	676	1,157	1,666	1,308
Traffic Average	111	109	117	124	126	102	128	148	164	0	0	0
Patrol Average	348	341	365	387	392	318	399	463	512	1,157	1,666	1,308
Average Per Patrol Officer	9	9	10	10	10	8	11	12	13	30	44	34
% of Total by Traffic	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.00	0.00	0.00
Average Per Traffic Officer	56	55	58	62	63	51	64	74	82	0	0	0



OLD BRIDGE EMS

Laurence Harbor First Aid and Safety Squad with one building, two basic life support units and received revenue of \$57,256, as reported on their 1998 financial balance sheet. This is broken down as \$35,000 from the township, \$18,820 from direct public support and \$3,409 from interest earned on savings. Total expenses for the same year were \$24,860. Their accumulated assets, which include an \$81,122 fund balance, land, buildings and equipment, amounted to \$441,562.

Madison Park First Aid Squad has one building, two basic life support units, and received revenue of a budget of \$47,116, as reported on their 1997 financial balance sheet. This is broken down as \$35,000 from the township, \$10,292 from direct public support and \$1,824 from interest earned on savings. Total expenses for the same year were \$41,951. Their accumulated assets, which include a \$96,527 fund balance, land, buildings and equipment, amounted to \$198,192.

Old Bridge First Aid and Rescue Squad has one building, three basic life support units and received revenue of \$78,983, as reported on their 1997 financial balance sheet. This is broken down as \$35,000 from the township, \$24,694 from direct public support, \$14,500 from hall rental, and \$4,789 from interest earned on savings. Total expenses for the same year were \$79,245. Their accumulated assets, which include a \$233,236 fund balance, land, buildings and equipment, amounted to \$418,274.

Cheesequake First Aid and Rescue Squad has one building, two basic life support units and received revenue of \$60,187, as reported on their 1997 financial balance sheet. This is broken down as \$31,000 from the township, \$19,557 from direct public support, \$8,506 from hall rentals, \$749 from miscellaneous income and \$374 from interest earned on savings. Total expenses for the same year were \$60,591. Their accumulated assets, which include an \$117,486 fund balance, land, buildings and equipment, amounted to \$269,086.

Old Bridge Volunteer Emergency Medical Service, Inc. has one building, two basic life support units and received revenue of \$42,221 as reported on their 1997 financial balance sheet. This is broken down as \$34,366 from the township, \$829 from direct public support and \$7,026 from interest earned on savings. Total expenses for the same year were \$141,616 their assets includes a \$261,147 fund balance. Land, buildings and equipment were not listed in 1997 balance sheet.

