

Residents of Woodbury Heights,

I would like to take this opportunity as your Mayor to inform the residents of the current challenges facing our Police Department, and, more importantly, to outline the proactive measures taken by the Borough Council to address these ongoing concerns for the immediate future. More importantly, my office and Borough Council collectively, are committed to transparency for any and all issues concerning the Police Department and public safety in general, and I therefore believe it is important to dispel any misinformation that has apparently been circulated on social media. Due to a sudden and unexpected manpower shortage within our Police Department, the Borough was compelled to seek assistance in providing these public safety services until such time as these issues are resolved. During the Borough Council meeting this week, Council approved Resolution No. 64-2022, which authorizes a "Temporary Shared Services Agreement" with the City of Woodbury Police Department for administrative oversight and police department services. These services include the appointment of the City of Woodbury Chief of Police, Tom Ryan, who will be the "Officer in Charge" of the Woodbury Heights Police Department effective immediately. Chief Ryan shall be responsible for the day-to-day oversight and administrative operations of police functions in the Borough. Additionally, the shared services agreement provides for the City of Woodbury Police Department, at the discretion of Chief Ryan on an as needed basis, to supplement patrols within the Borough to assist our officers and ensure the required level of public safety for our residents and police officers is maintained at all times within the Borough. This means that it will be likely that Borough residents see City of Woodbury police cars patrolling our streets periodically as needed and providing other services as any police department is required to provide to the public. This temporary shared services agreement will remain in place for a period of 90 days and could be extended if the manpower shortage persists within the Borough.

During this time, the Borough will evaluate the long-term future of police services going forward because it is the responsibility of the Mayor and Borough Council to ensure these basic and critical services are maintained for our residents. The current status of our Police Department needs to be addressed and the reality is that in the past few years, the department has experienced a high rate of turnover, which is coupled with our more senior officers retiring or approaching retirement. Put simply, the level of experience and senior leadership within the department is under strain and these conditions are an ongoing public safety concern for the Borough that requires a careful examination of the best path forward.

The existing Woodbury Heights Police Department and its officers will continue to provide police services in addition to the supplemental police service provided by this agreement. The Woodbury Heights Police Department building will continue to be used, staffed, and operational during this time. For Police non-emergency assistance or questions, residents should continue to call our Police Department number at 856-848-6707. For any emergency, residents should continue to call 911.

In the meantime, the Borough is grateful and appreciative of the City of Woodbury for stepping in to provide this needed assistance. The City of Woodbury Police Department is recognized by the State of New Jersey as a fully accredited police department, which is a distinction only achieved by departments that meet specific performance requirements that are deemed to be best in class. The Borough Council and I are confident that this assistance will provide for the

continued level of public safety required to protect our residents, property, as well as the safety of our police officers going forward.

If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact the Borough offices at 856-848-2832.

Sincerely,

William C. Packer

Mayor, Borough of Woodbury Heights