

# NEWS

TOWNSHIP OF WOODBRIDGE



**MAYOR JOHN E. McCORMAC**

**1 Main Street, Woodbridge, NJ 07095**

Phone: (732) 634-4500 ♦ Fax: (732) 602-6016

Web: [www.twp.woodbridge.nj.us](http://www.twp.woodbridge.nj.us)

## Woodbridge Township

Ten Towns



One Community



### **MAYOR JOHN E. McCORMAC REPORTS: CHS/BTF HEALTH INFORMATION JUNE 30, 2022**

Over a month ago, the Township of Woodbridge in conjunction with the Woodbridge Board of Education, held a press conference with the New Jersey State Departments of Health and Environmental Protection to announce the results of testing done throughout the building and grounds of Colonia High School in response to concerns raised about the high numbers of primary brain tumors among former students and staff at the school.

It is widely known that ionizing radiation is the main cause of primary brain tumors. We tested the inside and outside of the building and found no such signs of radiation. The DEP approved our testing plan and analyzed the results and agreed that the level of testing was proper and sufficient and that no additional testing needed to be performed based on these negative results.

The State Health Department further provided an analysis of the numbers of primary brain tumor cases that would normally be expected in this situation based on historical data. Though no scientific study was done to measure the amount or validity of cases that have been publicized, numbers that were discussed relative to Colonia High School were within these normal ranges.

The Township and the Board now consider this case to be closed and we have been supported by not only the State entities noted, but also the Office of Governor Phil Murphy and Congressman Frank Pallone, Jr. (NJ-06 and Chairman of the House Energy and Commerce Committee), the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Center for Disease Control (CDC), the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) and the Woodbridge Township Department of Health & Human Services.

We spent \$211,350 on the testing so far and we expect full reimbursement of those funds from the State. We are not afraid to spend additional moneys if necessary knowing we are likely to continue to be reimbursed. Simply put, this is not a financial issue.

During the process we became aware of a plan by certain individuals to obtain free MRI brain scans from the National Brain Tumor Foundation which was a concept that we fully supported. We even offered the use of our Evergreen Senior Center on weekends before being notified by our attorneys and State officials that

we would be assuming too much risk and liability by doing so. We simply cannot subject our Woodbridge taxpayers to any risk regardless of our favorable opinion of the project.

The organizers of the effort then arranged for another site at a dance studio in the Fords section of Woodbridge. No attempt was made to contact Woodbridge Township building or health officials by the organizers of the effort, the owner of the business or the Foundation itself. We learned about the plan from a neighbor who called to report seeing medical equipment and medical personnel on the site and as a result of having knowledge about this plan we looked into the situation.

We visited the site and spoke with the building owner and indicated that the Township needed more information about the operation and that a permit was likely to be needed. The Township, as anyone would expect, would need many questions answered prior to issuing a permit, such as:

- Is the provider of the testing licensed in the State of New Jersey?
- Were the machines properly inspected and is there documentation of such inspection to ensure the safety of the participants?
- Are the technicians operating the machines licensed currently?
- Is there sufficient electricity in the building for the equipment to operate or will generators be needed?
- Is there sufficient parking on site for the employees and visitors?
- Will the testing be performed inside the building or outside within a truck or other vehicle?
- Will the dance studio be open during the testing and if so what steps will be taken to ensure the safety of those students?
- Since the study appeared to not be limited to just current and former Colonia High School students and staff – does this make it a research project and not just a community service?
- Has approval been granted to perform this research by State agencies or through an affiliation with a health care institution?
- Will participants be notified that they are part of this research project if they are outside of the Colonia connection?

We as Woodbridge officials have an obligation to ensure the public safety of our residents and visitors. It is completely baffling that anyone could think they could just perform medical testing in a non-medical facility in our Township without some type of permit.

We still support the concept of testing and we even had discussions with a local religious organization that volunteered their building and grounds for the effort. However, they reached out to us first before contacting anyone else and we let them know what questions we had and what information we would need to approve such an effort. That is the process that should have been followed by all involved in the dance school situation.

We should now be thankful that there is no evidence that any primary brain tumors were caused by radiation in or around Colonia High School. We sympathize with victims of this awful disease and stand ready, willing and able to assist should any additional testing be suggested by those in authority. For months people said they hoped we would find nothing and we in fact found nothing and we are thrilled that we didn't and we hope that everybody else is also.

Thank you.

###