



# New Castle Crier

The official newsletter of New Castle City

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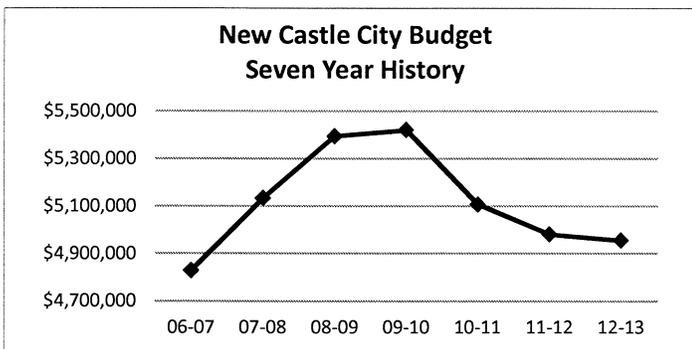
New Castle, Delaware

August 2012

## No tax rate increase a priority for Council members

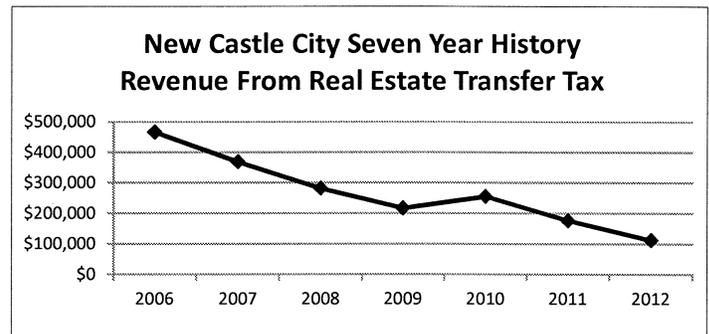
### History of City budget reflects bigger picture economic woes

Looking at the history of the City's fiscal situation for the past seven years, key indicators reflect what has been occurring in the economy throughout much of the



United States. The good news is, the City's ability to gauge and react to outside forces which impact its budget has resulted in the City maintaining a favorable financial outlook. This is in stark contrast to news around the nation of a number of local governments in severe fiscal stress, some even employing drastic measures such as declaring bankruptcy.

The City's fiscal year beginning July 1 saw no tax rate increase, as reflected in property tax bills recently mailed to residents. The current rate of \$1.20 per 100 of assessed value has remained the same since 2009. Since then, the total amount of the City budget has decreased each year, from more than \$5.4 million for the 2009/10 fiscal year, compared with close to \$4.95 mil-



lion for the current budget year. To maintain a level tax rate, it was necessary for the City Council to reduce the budget overall, in the face of declining revenues.

The chart above shows the steep decline in what had been a major revenue in the City budget — real estate transfer tax. Of course, this mirrors the decline in homes sales, which is another factor not unique to New Castle. Another required part of the

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**New Castle Antiques Show**  
**Sunday, August 26**  
**9 a.m. to 5 p.m.**  
**100± dealers in Battery**  
**Park on the Delaware River**  
**Admission \$7 (\$1 disc. avail. online)**  
**Sponsored by the**  
**New Castle Visitor's Bureau**  
 For more info. go to [www.dfshows.com](http://www.dfshows.com)

**The next**  
**regular**  
**City Council**  
**meeting is 7 p.m.,**  
**Tues., Aug. 14 at**  
**Town Hall**

**Summer Show Time**  
**Free Concerts in Battery**  
**Park, Wednesdays at 7**  
**Food Service starts at 6**

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <br><b>August 8</b><br>Desmond Kahn<br>& the Ace of Hearts<br>Band | <br><b>August 15</b><br>Brandywine<br>Jazz Band |
|--|---|

**CITY OFFICES CLOSED**  
**with No Trash Pickup**  
**Labor Day Holiday**  
**Monday, September 3**  
Revised Trash Pickup Schedule

|                            |                           |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b><u>Orig. Pickup</u></b> | <b><u>Rev. Pickup</u></b> |
| Mon., 9/3                  | Tues. 9/4                 |
| Tues., 9/4                 | Wed. 9/5                  |

## *New Castle – The First Capital City!*

The most picturesque and historic waterfront community on the East Coast!

## City enlarges with annexation for new Seeds of Greatness Church location

Parishioners of the Seeds of Greatness Church won't have far to go next July when their new location opens for worship. For a few years, Church leaders had been searching for a more permanent home than the industrially-designed building where they have

been on Quigley Boulevard in the Airport Industrial Park.

They settled on a nearby property at 828 Frenchtown Road (Route 273), also with planned access to the Church through Quigley Boulevard. That property, however, had been just outside the City, abutting the last southwestern property in the incorporated City limits.

Still wanting to be included within the City, application was made for the site of the future Church to be annexed. The annexation process was employed and recently concluded, with the annexation finalized.

The entire lot and parcel is about 17 acres, upon which it is planned to build a 53,000 square foot Church, along with the necessary parking. The City has issued a building permit and construction has begun.

DelDOT has just constructed traffic improvements in the area and also has jurisdiction over what will be granted for ingress/egress for the Church.

As a property within the City, the Church will also be served by public utilities of electric and water service provided by the Municipal Services Commission.

## City budget history

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budget equation in recent years has been finding areas where expenses could be decreased. This has included negotiating contracts with Union employees with modest annual increases. The City is grateful for agreeable participation in this process from the negotiating teams and all the employee members in the City's two bargaining units.

Careful, conscientious and analytical monitoring of the City's fiscal state will continue as the budget year develops, so the City can plan and react, as needed, to the ever-changing economic landscape.

### City Property Tax Bills are being mailed.

**Property owners who pay directly (not through escrow and a mortgage company), who have not yet received a bill, should contact the tax office at 322-9811. A 2% discount applies to payments received by August 31. The full base amount is due for payments made in September. Beginning in October, all payments are subject to added interest and penalties.**

## Code Enforcement Corner

Code Enforcement helps maintain and improve the quality of life of New Castle City residents by administering an unbiased enforcement program to correct violations of City zoning, property maintenance and building codes. This includes working with residents, neighborhoods, public service agencies and other City offices.

Complaint forms are available at the City offices or on the City Web site at: [NewCastleCity.Delaware.gov](http://NewCastleCity.Delaware.gov). To reach the Code Enforcement Officer, call 323-6081.

Complaints are handled on a confidential basis. If feedback and/or updates are requested, however, a name, address and phone number need to be provided with the complaint.

### *Please help the City control wildlife problems...*

1. Make sure all garbage is secured in covered plastic or metal trash containers.
2. Do not feed wild animals.
3. Do not allow any water accumulation, especially overnight.
4. Keep yards clean and mowed and cleared of any debris including compost, piles of wood, lumber, rocks and junk. Also, clean outdoor grills regularly.

5. Eliminate all protective cover. Clear any brush areas or hedge rows.

6. Close up any open areas that provide access under structures, porches or decks that could be used as potential den sites.

7. Clean up any accumulated pet food, bird seed, fruits or vegetables.

8. If there is any evidence of a den, make sure the animals are gone and fill the hole with dirt and rocks. Sprinkle flour on the ground to detect tracks.

9. If your yard has a grub or other subsoil insect problem, these are a feast for skunks.



If you or your pet is sprayed by a skunk, there is an effective mix to clean the oil:

- baking soda, one quarter cup;
- dish soap or no-tears pet shampoo, one teaspoon;
- hydrogen peroxide, one quart of 3%.

Mix and apply while mixture is bubbling, then rinse. Repeat as needed. Do not try to store in a container. Baking soda-peroxide mix is volatile. This mixture can bleach fur and hair color.

Mild acid juices, such as tomato or lemon, are reportedly effective, as well as vinegar.

Raccoons and skunks may carry rabies and distemper. Keep pet vaccinations up-to-date.