

MONTHLY REPORT

FROM THE OFFICE OF

COUNCILMAN CURTIS JONES JR.

OFFICE: 215-686-3416/17
WEB: RUNCOUNCILMANJONES.NET
EMAIL: CURTISJONESJR@GMAIL.COM



“Ordinary People Can Do Extraordinary Things”

These are critical times that demand no less than our best effort to address the common tasks we face. This is a time when both the Executive and Legislative Branches must check their egos at the door, focus on the fiscal challenges before us and bring our “A” game to the table. All options should be on the table, with a comprehensive analysis of the implications of each. Without this kind of joint effort we will not be able to best resolve the current budget crisis.

The City of Philadelphia is in what looks to be the most significant budget session in recent history. According to our Mayor, if we are to balance our budget, we will have to make some difficult decisions. As a member of City Council, I must remember that my boss is the citizens of Philadelphia, and it is to you, the electorate, that we must answer. How the City meets its general obligations of \$3.839 Billion in fiscal 2010, will impact every citizen of Philadelphia.

With the proposed increases of 19% and 14.5% in 2010 and 2011 respectively, in real estate taxes, we must be mindful of the fact that our City real estate tax rate is already high. To increase the tax burden by \$272 million on a large portion of our citizens who are currently at risk of losing their homes due to the collapsing mortgage markets and declining economy, will surely increase our already disproportionately high rate of sheriff sales.

We in City Council must encourage the administration to consider alternatives. One such alternative is the wage tax. Simply by increasing the wage tax on non-residents equal to that of residents, would go a long way to closing the deficit while spreading the burden to all of those who earn a living in our city.

We must also focus on growing our economy as a way out of this recession. By directing the \$2.3 billion of federal stimulus ear-marked for Philadelphia, developing our waterfront and building casinos will expand the tax base while providing thousands of jobs for our citizens. Above all, we will not be eroding our property tax base by increasing the burden on home owners.

City Council has no desire to be at odds with our Mayor. However, good ideas must be considered on the merits of the idea, not the author of the idea. My colleagues and I have been hard at work developing sound proposals that are worthy of consideration (i.e. The Freshmen 15 with \$150 million in savings). We deserve creative solutions to deal with difficult situations.



Councilman Curtis Jones Jr. & staff: Standing- Josh Cohen; Deputy Chief of Staff; Michael Lane and Mark Taylor, Constituent Service Reps; Shoshana Bricklin, Legislative Counsel; Rhona Austin, Scheduler; Al Spivey Jr., Chief of Staff and Morgan Cephas, Legislative Aide.