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***First Fulop Administration Budget Adopted with 2.13% Tax Decrease; Taxes Lowered While Services & Programs Increased Including the Hiring of 42 Cops & 27 Firefighters, \$4 Million in Recreation Spending, and \$6 Million in Parks Improvements***

***Council Adoption was a 7-2 Vote With Yun & Boggiano Voting Against the Tax Decrease***

JERSEY CITY – Mayor Steven M. Fulop announced that City Council adopted at their meeting last night the **2014 Municipal Budget**, which includes a **2.13 percent tax decrease**. This is the first Fulop Administration budget and in addition to lowering taxes the budget also reflects a thoughtful allocation of resources to expand public safety, community programming and services.

“We made a commitment to hire more police officers and firefighters, improve our parks, add more recreational opportunities and provide an overall enhanced delivery of City services,” said **Mayor Fulop**. “But we also committed to lowering taxes. I am pleased to say we have done both – reduced taxes and provide residents with the high level of services they deserve.”

The budget was passed last night by a 7-2 vote of the City Council, with Councilmen Richard Boggiano (Ward C) and Councilman Michael Yun (Ward D) voting against the tax decrease.

In addition to a tax decrease for 2014, the budget establishes a fiscal framework for the next several years as the administration continues to streamline services, which includes removing the duplicative functions of autonomous agencies. Currently, the administration is finalizing the process of abolishing the Jersey City Parking Authority and folding that service into the Department of Public Safety.

Following the Parking Authority consolidation, the administration will complete the merger of the Jersey City Incinerator Authority into the Department of Public Works.

While reducing spending, the administration also hired 42 new police officers and 27 firefighters, with additional hiring anticipated next year. The city has aggressively sought federal grant funding to add more police officers and firefighters as improved public safety has been a priority of the administration.

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This year's budget reflects a 25 percent increase in recreation spending from last year, with the current budget allocating \$3.8 million toward a growing recreation lineup. The City has added such programs as scuba, boxing, cricket, fitness programs for adults, and programs for our special needs athletes such as soccer and an autism quiet swim.

Utilizing a combination of grants and capital funds, the administration this year tripled the annual number of park projects, with renovations slated for 13 parks across all wards. This is an investment of approximately \$3.9 million of capital funds and the allocation of \$1.475 million of Green Acres funding, as well as \$435,000 in Hudson County Open Space dollars. The City is also utilizing \$1.3 million of Green Acres funding to acquire the final parcels of lands to complete Berry Lane Park in Bergen-Lafayette.

“The budget process is about ensuring that the needs of the residents and taxpayers come first and that every dollar spent is working to improve the quality of life in our City,” said **Mayor Fulop**. “By aggressively seeking grants, increasing revenue streams, and ensuring that there are no duplications of government services, we are actually able to increase the number and quality of programs offered to our residents.”

**All media inquiries should be directed to Jennifer Morrill, Press Secretary to Mayor Steven M. Fulop at 201-547-4836 or 201-376-0699.////**