



Westchester County Legislator
SHEILA M. MARCOTTE
Proudly Serving the 10th District



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I Would Like to Hear From You



Much of the job of a county legislator is staying in touch with the residents - it is important that we hear from you so that we can continue to represent your best interests

Over the course of my legislative terms I have always held an "open door" policy. You can contact my office at - 914.995.2817 or email me at Marcotte@Westchesterlegislators.com.

Every Tuesday on WVOX I host a radio show from 10:30 AM -11:30 AM, you can call me then to discuss any county related topics. The call-in number at WVOX is 914.636.0110

Park Passes

We have finally turned the corner here in Westchester County from the long cold months of Winter into the beautiful warm days of Summer! Our parks are open year-round and with the season for golf, hiking, biking, swimming and nature walks just getting under way, now is the perfect time to get your Westchester County Parks Pass!

An individual pass costs \$60 for a three year pass. At just \$20/year, a parks pass is a tremendous value. Family rates are also available. Resident park passes are available year-round at a variety of locations throughout the county. A county Parks Pass is your key to 18,000 acres of parkland and 50 plus recreational areas, *your park pass will unlock the fun to:*

- All county-owned parks, pools and beaches where a park pass is required. For swimming, the pass admits the holder plus two adult guests and children under 12.
- The six all-weather tennis courts at Tibbetts Brook Park in Yonkers.
- The boat launch at Glen Island Park.

You'll also enjoy a treasure trove of discounts to:

- Golf at all six county-owned courses – for the park pass holder only. Guests of pass holders pay the full rate, and junior golfers pay junior rates and must be accompanied by an adult park pass holder.
- Parking – where parking is charged, park pass holders pay reduced rates, except Playland.
- Camping, boat launching at George's Island Park, at the Sportsman Center in Cortlandt.
- Tuition for our Westchester Summer Music Center, a six-week music instructional program for children entering grades 3 through 12.

For more information, visit <http://parks.westchestergov.com/park-passes>.



Westchester County Board of Legislators NEWS

Voice of the People of Westchester County for over 300 years



Summer 2013 Newsletter



Sheila M. Marcotte

District 10 ~ Eastchester, Tuckahoe, New Rochelle

Bipartisan Budget Passed with No Tax Increase

I am pleased to report that the 2013 budget has been approved by the Board of Legislators and signed into law by County Executive Robert P. Astorino. For the third consecutive year, the county portion of your property taxes will carry a zero-percent tax increase.

The finalized budget was ultimately a compromise between both political parties and both branches of government. No one party, individual, or branch of government received all of their initial requests. The final result was a responsible, balanced coalition spending plan. Unfortunately, when it came time to vote on the budget bill itself, eight legislators decided to walk out of the Board's chambers, refusing to compromise; however, two courageous Democrats chose to stay in the room, helping to finalize the plan. In the end, the 2013 budget is still able to provide residents with an optimal number of services, many of which County taxpayers have rightfully come to expect, in a most responsible way. Going into negotiations, I never wavered from my belief that both raising taxes and irresponsibly raiding reserve funds were non-negotiable. I am glad that the 2013 budget conforms to these two essential tenets.

The County continues to face ongoing fiscal challenges, such as the rising costs of unfunded state mandates, and spending and the unsettled contract with the county's largest union. Because of the latter issue in particular, some very difficult cuts had to be made, many of which could have been avoided had the CSEA union and the County been able to arrive at a mutually agreeable contract, particularly as it related to the rates for healthcare contributions. For the 2014 budget, I believe layoffs can potentially be avoided if such an agreement is reached. Ideally, negotiations must take place now rather than during the upcoming election season. Overall, it is my hope that there will be an agreement in place which incorporates concepts similar to the contracts reached with three of the County's other unions. The solution to these expired contracts can be achieved if we work together, as evidenced by the 2013 budget process.

As we approach the 2014 budget process in the coming months, I will again look to maintain essential services, such as in public safety, while joining County Executive Astorino in his pledge to not raise taxes for the fourth straight year. I encourage you to contact me via phone and/or email to let me know of any issues or concerns you may have.

Sincerely,

Sheila Marcotte

Highlights of the 2013 budget include:

- Subsidized day care will be funded at a 27% parent share, a 7% decrease from what had initially been proposed, yet slightly higher than last year's budget.
- Critical services provided by the departments of Public Safety, Emergency Services, Probation, and the District Attorney's Office, will all receive additional funding compared to initial estimates. The Parks Department will see the restoration of four positions, including three curators at nature preserves, including our own Cranberry Lake Preserve. Five engineering positions were also restored to the Department of Public Works.. In all, the coalition budget restored 30 positions (25 filled and five vacant).
- ArtsWestchester, which continues to be an economic engine for our entire County, will receive \$1.25 million, \$500,000 more than initially proposed. Cornell Cooperative will receive \$800,000, or \$200,000 more than initially proposed.
- Funding was also added for three programs included in the County's Office for Women related to Small Business Training, Domestic Violence Training, and Tot Drop & Human Trafficking. Community Capital Resources, a local District 3 organization dedicated to helping small businesses throughout the county, received restored funding, as did key senior citizen services for Elder Abuse Legal Services and training.

Committee Report

I believe that the most important vote we take on a yearly basis is on our annual county budget which is I was very honored to serve as a Vice-Chair of the Budget and Appropriations Committee for this term. In 2012 we spent literally hundreds of hours in budget meetings and public hearings.

As the result of our work on the Budget and Appropriations Committee, I was able to make recommendations that led to a 2013 budget that was a compromise between a bi-partisan, coalition of Legislators and the County Executive. I look forward to continuing in my role on the Budget and Appropriations Committee with the same spirit of bipartisanship and hard work to deliver another sound and responsible budget for 2014.

I also serve on the Environment and Energy Committee and the Legislation Committee. This year in the Legislation Committee we tackled the very important and complex issue of establishing a Local Development Corporation or LDC. An LDC is an entity that gives non-profit organizations the borrowing power of a municipal government, in this case, Westchester County. That means that non-profits that help provide the services and programs that serve our residents can finance capitol projects at very low interest rates. The creation of the LDC will mean more jobs and a more robust and effective non-profit sector. The LDC Legislation eventually passed in a vote by the entire Board of Legislators. ■

Progress on Affordable Housing Settlement



The terms outlined in the 2009 Affordable Housing Settlement continue to be dutifully fulfilled by the Astorino administration. The requirement to build 750 units is currently ahead-of-schedule. While the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has looked to go beyond the “four corners” of the original agreement, both the county executive and I have remained steadfast in opposition to any federal government overreach. HUD’s claim that Westchester’s zoning

is discriminatory, is simply baseless, as has been concluded by third-party, non-partisan professionals. HUD’s “grand experiment” to dismantle local zoning would potentially create a situation where high-rise, high-density structures could be built in absolutely any neighborhood. Rest assured, County Executive Astorino and I will continue to work tirelessly to protect our local communities by ensuring that the federal government does not irresponsibly overreach on the original settlement terms. ■

Animal Abuse Registry

Late last year, the Board of Legislators approved legislation to establish an animal abuse registry in the County to effectively “speak up for those who cannot.” The registry database will consist of a list of animal abusers so as to ensure that they do not have access to another pet. In addition, the evidence linking animal abuse to domestic violence was quite remarkable, and it is my hope that such a registry will significantly curtail abuse of any kind. ■



New Traffic Enforcement Provides New Revenue

Last year I worked diligently for Legislation designed to make our local roads safer while creating a significant revenue stream for our communities in the coming years.

The legislation allowed the county to establish inter-municipal agreements (IMA) with local municipalities in an effort to enforce the county’s regulations governing “For Hire Vehicles” (FHV). FHVs are commonly known as, livery cars, black cars or car services. This enterprising partnership and sharing of services and benefits is a smart and

innovative way to make government work better and make tax dollars go farther. Under the terms of the agreement, the Westchester County Department of Public Safety would train municipal police forces in the enforcement of the Westchester County TLC’s laws governing FHVs, allowing municipal police to begin enforcing the laws within their municipalities. The revenue derived from the fines associated with enforcement of the TLC’s laws would then be shared with 75% going to the county and 25% going to the municipalities. Because

County Police do not patrol local municipal streets, the TLC’s laws are not being enforced in our towns and villages.

Tuckahoe is one of the municipal police forces has already been trained to enforce the FHV laws. The Village of Tuckahoe Police Department has been issuing violations to offenders since that department’s officers were trained in January.

Tuckahoe is also engaging in joint patrols with the Taxi and Limousine Commission for ongoing training and enforcement. ■

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

ARBOR DAY EVENT TAKES ROOT

This past Arbor Day, I spent the day planting saplings and educating local youth about the importance of planting trees in our communities.

I have been distributing saplings and planting trees in Eastchester since my time as Village Trustee in 2002. The need to replenish our trees took on special meaning this year as Superstorm Sandy destroyed thousands of mature and beautiful trees throughout our region.

We distributed over 100 saplings to youth in Eastchester and Tuckahoe. I talked to them about why trees play a vital role in our communities as well as how to carefully plant and take care of the saplings. The children, after assisting the department of public works plant and water a tree, each got to take home a Norway Spruce Sapling of their own.



ST. PATRICK’S DAY PARADE

I love a parade! One of the great unifying traditions in our communities are parades and I never miss one. Contact my office for a schedule of parades and other community events in District 10, bring the family for a fun day or reserve a spot for your community group to march.



IN THE NEWS

The main objective in my legislative agenda is to reform the way county government spends your tax dollars. If you’ve seen me on News12 or quoted in local newspapers, you know, I am almost always talking about fiscal responsibility, transparency and reform. Currently I have legislation in committees that would reform how we award contracts in Westchester County. I also have proposed legislation that would require the county to post details of all contracts under \$20,000. Contracts under \$20,000 are exempt from the formal Board of Acquisition and Contracts approval process. Keep an eye on your local news for updates.

