



Westchester County Legislator
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Westchester County Board of Legislators NEWS

Voice of the People of Westchester County for over 300 years

Summer 2015 Newsletter



David B. Gelfarb

District 6 ~ Harrison, Rye Brook, Port Chester

Board of Legislators Pass Playland Management Agreement

On June 15, 2015, the Westchester County Board of Legislators (BOL) unanimously passed legislation authorizing the County Executive to enter into a 15- year Management Agreement with Standard Amusements, LLC to operate Playland Amusement Park. With the passage of the agreement, Standard Amusements will now begin co-managing Playland with the County for the remainder of the 2015 season. Following the co-management period, Standard has until October 31, 2015 to finalize the deal.



The BOL performed its review and discussion process through two committees, the Labor, Parks, Planning and Housing Committee and the Budget and Appropriations Committee, of which I am a member. To accommodate the co-management period for the 2015 season, the BOL completed a very comprehensive review process in just 60 days.

During the review and discussion process, Legislators sought clarifications and commitments from Standard and the Astorino administration on certain aspects of the plan. The BOL, the County Executive and Standard signed

a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which was passed as a resolution to memorialize those negotiated commitments. Among the issues addressed in the MOU are job security for Playland employees, financial and attendance reporting to the BOL from Standard, prioritization of the county's capital project plans for Playland, and a declaration that Standard would not undertake the construction of athletic fields.

Following the vote, County Executive Rob Astorino said, "This deal meets our three goals for preserving Playland by reversing the losses for taxpayers, putting the park in the hands of a top-flight operator, and revitalizing Playland as a must-visit destination for families for years to come." ■



Budget

In December, the Board of Legislators passed a budget for 2015 that provides for no property tax increase or layoffs of County workers, while protecting vital social services for our neediest residents.



Legislator Gelfarb with his son Daniel and daughters Lauren and Allison

Community Events

As always, I have enjoyed meeting my constituents while attending events throughout our community. In June, I attended a lecture at Congregation KTI in Port Chester on “Confronting Hate on College Campuses”. I recently presented a proclamation to Cerebral Palsy of Westchester on King Street at its Building Dedication and Grand Opening of the William “Bill” Hallenbeck Learning Center. In May, I attended the Westchester County Leadership Prayer Breakfast at the Crowne Plaza, which brought together so many people in the spirit of fellowship, and the Arts Bash at Arts Westchester in White Plains, where, as usual, the artists and their studios were great. I also attended the Port Chester Police and Firefighter Memorial Mass at Our Lady of Mercy followed by a breakfast reception at the Port Chester Senior Center. At the Port Chester Old Timers Dinner at Halstead Grill in Harrison, I spoke and presented proclamations to the honorees, including Harrison Mayor Ron Belmont. The special guest at the dinner was Cousin Brucie (pictured below).



I also attended a presentation by students who participate in a program called Tools for Change. This program, which is supported by the County, provides seminars to local high school students to teach them college-level social science research skills. This year, the students presented their findings and conclusions, supported by their research and surveys, with respect to whether 16-

and 17-year-olds should vote in village and school board elections. In March, I spoke to students in Ms. Mediate’s Student Leadership Seminar at Blind Brook High School. We had a great discussion about leadership, and I was pleased to address the students’ insightful questions. I also spoke to the League of Women Voters of Rye, Rye Brook and Port Chester at their meeting in February.

I attended the Rye African American Cemetery Committee Veterans’ Day Ceremony at Greenwood Union Cemetery in Rye, spoke at the Interfaith Wellness Conference at St Peter’s Episcopal

Church in Port Chester, and presented a proclamation and spoke to the many congregants, friends and supporters attending a celebration at Willow Ridge Country Club in Harrison honoring Rabbi Yaakov Bienenfeld and his wife Faygie of Young Israel of Harrison.

At the ASIS Westchester Chapter Public Safety Appreciation Reception, I spoke to the members and supporters in attendance to celebrate the chapter’s 55th anniversary. They presented me with a beautiful plaque in recognition of my work as Chairman of the Public Safety Committee of the Board of Legislators. ■



Mock Legislature Program

The Mock Legislature Program is a hands-on opportunity for students to learn about County Government. The students learn about the workings of government, and are given an opportunity to act as legislators, where they debate and vote on various topics in the committee room as well as the legislative chambers. This year, we hosted members of the Girls Scouts troop from Blind Brook Middle School, several classes of 5th graders from Parsons Memorial School in Harrison, and two groups of students from Ms. Camac’s IMPACT class at Ridge Street School. The students were articulate and thoughtful in their debates, and enjoyed hands-on insight into how the county legislature works. (Pictured above: Students from Ms. Camac’s IMPACT class at Ridge Street School participate in the mock legislature program)

Public Safety Committee



I have been honored to serve as the Chairperson of the Public Safety Committee at the Board of Legislators, dealing with a wide range of issues to ensure the safety and security of the residents of Westchester County. In May, the Board unanimously passed an act authorizing the County to take over law enforcement for Mt. Kisco, creating a tax savings for its residents while remaining tax neutral for the County taxpayers. I led an extensive hearing in the Public Safety Committee on the proposed agreement, with testimony from the County Commissioner of Public Safety. The measure was passed through Committee unanimously, along with the Budget Committee, and was then approved by the full Board of Legislators. ■

Board of Legislators Events



In May, the Board of Legislators celebrated Jewish History & Heritage Month, and I presented a proclamation to Marilyn Gottlieb, President of the Jewish Women’s Foundation of New York, in recognition of the important work that the organization does to ensure equal opportunity for economic, religious, social and political achievement for all women and girls in the Jewish community here and abroad. ■



In April, the Board of Legislators honored Westchester high school seniors who have been recognized in the Intel Science Competition. It was my pleasure to present a certificate to Stanley Vuong, a senior at Blind Brook High School who was named a semifinalist. His mother and Blind Brook High School Principal Patricia Lambert were both in attendance to support Stanley. ■