



Westchester County Legislator
BEN BOYKIN
Addressing the Needs of District 5



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Playland Operator Chosen

On June 15, the Board of Legislators unanimously approved a 15-year management agreement with Standard Amusements, LLC (“Standard”) to run the amusement park at Playland. For the rest of the 2015 season, Standard will co-manage the park with the County, and will have until October 31 to make a final commitment.

Under this agreement, the County has already received a \$500,000 deposit, and will receive another \$1.75 million when Standard makes its final commitment. Thereafter, Standard will invest \$22.5 million in capital investments in the next five years, and will pay the County an annual management fee, which will amount to \$300,000 in 2016 and will escalate by at least 2% in each subsequent year. The County will receive 7.5% of

profits after Standard recoups its capital investment.

In addition to the main agreements, the Board approved side agreements to protect the jobs of the current Playland workforce, to commit to needed infrastructure repairs, and to provide for the input of local governments, environmental organizations and civic groups as plans for the park move forward.

This public-private partnership protects the workers at Playland that have been there for a long time. These em-



ployees oversee the park’s day to day functions and often have critical skills that we need. The financial investment by Standard will return Playland to one of the crown jewels in our park system and will enhance the visitor experience to this iconic landmark. ■

Westchester County Board of Legislators NEWS

Voice of the People of Westchester County for over 300 years

Summer 2015 Newsletter



Legislator Ben Boykin

District 5 ~ White Plains, Scarsdale, Harrison



Dear Friends and Neighbors:

I am very happy to report to you that many legislative successes have been achieved to date this year at the Westchester County Board of Legislators. I am working hard to ensure that District 5 constituents and all of the residents of Westchester County are served.

Among the successes is the creation of an Energy Director position. This position will be involved in issues and activities that protect our environment and save taxpayers money. In addition, the County entered into a consent decree with the EPA to comply with the Federal Clean Drinking Water Act on behalf of Water District 1 that will save taxpayers \$90 million. Legislation for Toxic Toys and E-Cigarettes was unanimously approved. Playland now has a new operator with a public-private partnership between the County and Standard Amusements, LLC. We also fought to restore funding to the Invest in Kids programs for organizations with a long history of service to our youth.

I will continue to fight to keep our taxes low, protect the most needy among us, create jobs, address flood mitigation issues, implement shared services programs with municipalities and school districts, invest in our infrastructure, dialogue to resolve the housing settlement, protect a woman’s right to reproductive health care, ensure a healthy environment and enhance our quality of life.

As the Appointments Committee Chairman, I am working to evaluate and recommend individuals to the Board of Legislators for confirmation to serve our County in various positions. It is important to have qualified candidates referred for these positions as they are involved in key issues and decisions that affect all the residents of Westchester County.

My work is ongoing and I appreciate your support and confidence. Working together, we will have a better Westchester County.

I wish you a wonderful and enjoyable summer.

Sincerely,

New Office of Energy and Sustainability Director will Safeguard Environment and Public Health, Save Taxpayers Money

Given the many tens of millions of dollars Westchester County spends on energy every year, it only made sense for us to join forward-thinking communities like New York City, Yonkers and Philadelphia, and create an office dedicated to energy efficiencies and related savings. The Board of Legislators looks forward to working with the new Director on putting state-of-the-art technology at the service of our residents and implementing shared services opportunities with local governments.

In the past decade, we have seen countless innovations in energy efficiency and alternative energy. These changes in the way we power our homes, workplaces and vehicles have the potential to reduce air pollution, mitigate global warming and reduce our energy bills. But it takes a laser focus, technical proficiency and an understanding of intergovernmental relations to apply technological expertise to a large entity like Westchester County. ■

Want E-News?

I regularly send out e-news letters, which include important information about different issues affecting residents, as well as notices about events that you may want to attend. To receive my e-news, please email me your full name, email address and mailing address and I will add you to my distribution list. My email address is Boykin@westchesterlegislators.com.

Nearly 200 Students from District 5 Participated in Mock Legislature

We have completed another successful year of the Student Legislature Program. Run by the Westchester County Board of Legislators, this program is offered to fifth grade students and complements the fifth grade study of government. Held in the Board's Legislative Chambers at the Michaelian Office Building in White Plains, the program gives students a chance to participate in a "Mock Legislature". The student "Legislators" are assigned to "committees" to discuss issues and then serve as legislators to debate and vote on these issues.

Nearly all the elementary schools in the White Plains Public School District, as well as all the public elementary schools in Scarsdale and in West Harrison participate in the program each year, along with the Solomon Schechter School in White Plains.



Samuel J. Preston Elementary School 5th Grade Class

I want to take this opportunity to thank the dedicated teachers who, despite their ever increasing responsibilities, take time to bring their students to the Board of Legislators to have them learn how their county govern-

ment works. I also thank the teacher assistants and parents who came with the students. And of course, thanks to nearly 200 students who participated in the program. Enjoy the summer and keep up the good work! ■

Fiscal Condition of County



The forecasted County budget deficit for calendar year 2015 is \$16 million as of March 31, 2015. In recent discussion with various Board committees, the County Budget Director stated that the expected budget deficit for 2016 is \$56 million. These deficits will require cost cutting, additional borrowing and/or revenue enhancements to cover these shortfalls. I will be working with my colleagues to find ways to address our financial challenges. ■

E-Cigarette Legislation Approved

During the June 1st Board of Legislators Meeting, the County's Smoke Free Work Site Laws were updated to include electronic cigarettes and other nicotine delivery devices.

The County's Smoke Free Work Site Laws prohibit smoking in dining areas of all restaurants including bars and bar areas. This law, passed in 2003, was intended to safeguard non-smokers from the negative impacts of second hand smoke.

I sponsored this legislation because it is important for electronic cigarette users to follow the same rules as cigarette smokers and not unwillingly put people in contact with the vapors from electronic cigarettes and other nicotine delivery devices. The legislation passed the Board of Legislators unanimously.

This law does not prohibit adults from using electronic cigarettes. However people working in the next cubi-



cle, or eating at a restaurant next to a person using an electronic cigarette, or workers in food establishments should not be exposed to the potentially dangerous products being emitted from these devices.

The Legislation went into effect immediately and will be enforced by the County's Department of Health. ■

Safe Drinking Water

Nothing is more important than ensuring that residents of Westchester County continue to have clean air and water.

Westchester County recently announced that it received the approval of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to move forward with a \$10 million water treatment facility that will bring the County into compliance with the Federal Clean Drinking Water Act. This is welcomed news for Westchester taxpayers who live in Water District 1 (Mount Vernon, Scars-

dale, White Plains and Yonkers). This legislation sets the County on a path of compliance with Federal Law while saving County taxpayers \$90 million.

The consent decree requires the County to pay a civil penalty of \$1.1 million. There is still work to do in mitigating this fine but the substantial financial risks faced by the County have now been removed.

Having this consent decree in advance of construction provides assurance that the County can build the water treatment facility within the spec-



ified timeframe without the uncertainty of it being in compliance with Federal Law and still save taxpayers money. ■

"Toxic Toys" Legislation Passes Board of Legislators



The Children's Product Safety Act, which unanimously passed the Board of Legislators this May, bans the sale within Westchester County of children's products that contain formaldehyde, benzene, lead, mercury, antimony, arsenic, cadmium or cobalt. These chemicals have been linked to serious medical problems, including learning disabilities, asthma, cancer, fertility problems and obesity. Most of these chemicals are not regulated by our federal or state governments.

The County Department of Consumer Protection will undertake a 12-month campaign to alert and educate retailers about the new law. ■

Crane Road Bridge Update

The replacement of the Crane Road Bridge, a section of the Bronx River Parkway crossing the Bronx River and Metro-North railroad tracks near the Greenburgh-Scarsdale border, is nearing completion. At \$39.4 million, it is the largest bridge



rehabilitation project in County history. There has been some slippage in the anticipated completion date, which will likely happen this fall. We'll then have a four lane bridge again, as well as a safe, new structure, improved pedestrian access to the Bronx River reservation, and a new Metro North platform. ■

Inland Waterway Designations in Process

The Saw Mill River Stormwater Advisory Board (SWAB), the Bronx River Advisory Board (BRAB) and most members of the Board of Legislators supported efforts by our State legislators to grant inland waterway designation to the Saw Mill and Bronx Rivers. These designations will help communities become eligible for additional funding for flood reduction projects. ■