

County Legislator Ben Boykin

County Government 101

How You Can Make A Difference

March 29, 2017



The Speakers and Sponsors

- Ben Boykin, Public Safety and Social Services Committee Chairman
 - 5th Legislative District
- MaryJane Shimsky, Infrastructure Committee Chairwoman
 - 12th Legislative District
- Sponsors:
 - Greenburgh Town Democratic Committee
 - White Plains City Democratic Committee
 - Indivisible Westchester-Rivertowns
 - Indivisible White Plains
 - Immigration Justice Clinic At Pace Law School

Agenda

- County Government
- Role of County Government
- Role of Board of Legislators
- Ben Boykin Committees
- PSSS Committee Oversight
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To view presentation go to <http://westchesterlegislators.com/district-5.html>

County Government

- County Executive (CE), elected every 4 years
- County Board of Legislators, elected every 2 years (co-equal branch of government with CE)
- Seventeen County Legislators each representing about 54,000 people
- Commissioners, Department Heads
- 4,221 employees
- Volunteers who serve on various Boards and Commissions

Role of County Government

- Serve as the regional government between federal/state agencies and local municipalities
- Provide vital and essential services to Westchester County residents
- Provide safety and security and emergency protective measures
- Serve as the social safety net for those in need

Role of County Government (con't)

- Protect drinking water, air quality, manage wastewater treatment
- Manage transportation – bus mass transit, regional airport
- Work with businesses, local municipalities and state agencies to create jobs and improve regional economy
- Serve as the administrative arm of NY State for mandated services and advocate for mandate relief

Role of Board of Legislators

- Legislative, policy-making branch of Westchester County
- Co-equal branch with County Executive
- Approve budgets and spending
 - 12 votes for issuance of bonds
 - 9 votes for other items
 - 12 votes to override County Executive's veto
- Levy County taxes
- Approve appointments of County Executive
- Pass laws, acts and resolutions
- Serve constituents

Ben Boykin Committees

- Chairman, Public Safety & Social Services (PSSS)
- Co-chair, Minority Affairs Task Force
- Member :
 - Appointments, Vice-Chairman
 - Budget & Appropriations, Vice-Chairman
 - Environment & Health
 - Infrastructure
 - Legislation

PSSS Committee Oversight

- Oversight for 45% of Departments included in County's Operating Budget
- Areas of Responsibility:
 - Public Safety Department
 - Corrections Department
 - Emergency Services Department
 - Probation Department
 - Social Services Department
 - Mental Health Department
 - Youth Bureau
 - Human Rights Commission

The Budget Process

- Full year involvement
- Budgets for subsequent year submitted in October for Capital Budget and November for Operating and Special Districts Budgets
- Board of Legislators (BoL) reviews Budgets in November and December
- Public Hearings held in November and December
- BoL can add and delete items after the review process
- Budgets must be approved by BoL and signed by County Executive (CE) on or before December 27 including any override of CE vetoes

2017 Budgets

- Operating, Capital and Special Districts Budgets
- Operating Budget, \$1.81 billion; approved by vote of 10 to 7
- Capital Budget of \$303 million and Special Districts Budget approved by same margin
- I voted against all of the 2017 Budgets

Operating Budget Issues

- \$1.81 billion, a \$9 million increase from 2016
- No increase in County property tax levy of \$548.4 million
- No property tax increase in seven years
- 2017 Operating Budget is not balanced and is not sustainable
- No financial flexibility in budget

The Making of a Law

- Starts with an idea, request from citizens, issue in the community, new invention (Drone Legislation), etc. from either CE or Board of Legislators (BoL)
- Staff does research
- Proposed legislation is drafted by Law Department
- Proposed legislation referred to appropriate Committees
- Committees hold meetings and invite individuals to come speak for or against legislation
- Changes are made as appropriate; Proposed law is voted on in Committees

The Making of a Law (con't)

- If voted out of Committees, sent to full BoL for a vote
- If passed by BoL, sent to CE for signature or veto
- If CE signs, the Law will go into effect as required by the legislation
- If the Law is vetoed by CE, 12 votes are required by BoL to override the CE veto

Get Involved and Vote

- Register to vote in NY Elections
- Primary Elections in September
- General Election
 - Always first Tuesday in November
 - EXCEPT**
 - When first Tuesday is November 1; general election is second Tuesday in November
 - General Election in 2017 is Tuesday, November 7

Requirements to Register to Vote in NY Elections

- Be a US citizen (or born in Puerto, Guam, or Virgin Islands)
- Be 18 years old by the date of the election in order to vote
- **Not** be in prison or on parole for a felony conviction
- **Not** be adjudged incompetent by a court
- **Not** claim the right to vote elsewhere

How to Register to Vote

- Pick up New York State Voter Registration Form at Board of Elections
- Register to vote online at the Department of Motor Vehicles website

<https://dmv.ny.gov/more-info/electronic-voter-registration-application>

- Download Voter Registration Form for Board of Elections at <http://citizenparticipation.westchestergov.com/register-to-vote>
- Must register in person, by mail or online 25 days prior to election to vote

How to Vote

- In person at your designated voting poll on election day
(NO EARLY VOTING CURRENTLY IN NY)
- By absentee ballot

Test Your Knowledge

- Facts:
 - Tuesday, November 7, 2017 is General Election Day
 - Westchester County Board of Elections - 25 Quarropas Street, White Plains, NY 10601
 - Jack Jones and Jake Jones are twins, born in New York on 6/30/1999
 - Nellie Rich, born in New York on 11/15/1999

Test Your Knowledge (con't)

1. Can Jack and Jake register to vote in NY in 2017 assuming they meet all voting requirements?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Don't know
2. Jack Jones registered to vote at the Board of Elections on Friday, October 13, 2017. Can he vote in the General Election on Tuesday, November 7, 2017?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Maybe
 - Don't know

Test Your Knowledge (con't)

3. Jake Jones was out of town and mailed his voter registration form to the Westchester County Board of Elections on October 13, 2017 and the form was received and date stamped at the Board of Elections on October 18, 2017. Can he vote in the General Election on Tuesday, November 7, 2017?
- Yes
 - No
 - Don't know
4. Same facts as in item 3 except that the form was received by the Westchester County Board of Elections and date stamped at the Board of Elections on October 19, 2017. Can he vote in the General Election on Tuesday, November 7, 2017?
- Yes
 - No
 - Don't know

Test Your Knowledge (con't)

5. Nellie Rich was born on 11/15/1999. Can she register to vote in NY during 2017?
- Yes
 - No
 - Don't Know
6. Nellie Rich registered to vote on August 15, 2017. Can she vote in the General Election on Tuesday, November 7, 2017?
- Yes
 - No
 - Don't know

Test Your Knowledge (con't)

Answers

- No 1 – **Yes**; Both Jack and Jake will be 18 years old by the General Election Day on Tuesday, November 7, 2017.
- No 2 – **Yes**; The last day to register in NY to vote in the General Election is Friday, October 13. You must register 25 days prior to the election day.
- No 3 – **Yes**; If you mail in your NY State Voter Registration Form, it **must** be received at the Board of Elections on or before the close of business on October 18, 2017.
- No 4 – **No**; If you mail in your NY State Voter Registration Form, it **must** be received at the Board of Elections on or before the close of business on October 18, 2017. The Board of Elections did not receive the NY State Voter Registration Form by the due date.
- No 5 – **Yes**; You can register to vote in NY State if you turn 18 on or by December 31.
- No 6 – **No**; To vote in the General Election (or any election), you must be 18 years of age by the Election Day.

Turn Words and Actions into Votes

- Get involved and stay involved
 - Attend and speak at public hearings at County meetings and in your municipalities
 - Write letters, emails and sign petitions advocating your positions
 - Talk with your County Legislator(s) and State and local elected officials
- Encourage your family, friends and neighbors to register to vote
- Make sure you **vote** on Election Day
- You can find your voting place by going to citizenparticipation.westchestergov.com/register-to-vote
scroll down to bottom of page and click on
Finding Polling Place
or call (914) 995-2000 or (914) 995-5700

Items Currently in Process

- North 60
- Airport Privatization
- Kensico Dam Skating Facility
- Immigration Bill
- BDS Legislation
- Ban Gun Shows on County Owned Property vetoed by CE
- Republican Gun Show Legislation
- Ban on Sale of Synthetic Drugs (K-2)
- Paid Family Sick Leave
- Other

Questions and Answers

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