REPORT ON THE STATE OF THE TOWN OF PELHAM – 2017

The state of our Town of Pelham remains robust with a bright future. Your Town Supervisor and members of the Town Council are honored to present this briefing on the strength of our Town and our Town's recent accomplishments.

THREE CONSECUTIVE ZERO-INCREASE TOWN TAX LEVIES WHILE MAINTAINING SERVICES

The Town is required by law to provide certain basic services that are not provided at the Village level. This includes certain services that the Villages choose to give up or to refrain from providing. Thus, your Town government is responsible for a host of services including: the Town criminal and civil court system; the Town Constable program for prisoner transport and court protection; property tax assessment and assessment review services; tax collection services for Westchester County, the Pelham Union Free School District, both Villages, and the Town; ambulance and emergency medical fly car services; the Town Library; town-wide recreation programs; recreational field maintenance and Glover field lighting services; town-wide senior programs; supervision of town-wide elections and election primaries; town-wide emergency preparedness and emergency management programs; Registrar of Vital Statistics services; marriage licenses; hunting and fishing licenses; dog licenses for the Village of Pelham; and much more.

Despite responsibility for such a wide variety of governmental services, and despite constantly-rising costs, we are pleased to report that for the third consecutive year, we have completed the 2017 Town Budget with a zero percent tax levy increase. In fact, the last increase of any sort in the tax levy by the Town of Pelham was authorized in December 2012 for the 2013 operating year when the budget resulted in a tax levy increase of 1.217% (well under the then-applicable New York State annual tax levy increase cap of 2% applicable to the Town). In short, while managing and providing a host of government services including many required by law and others to protect and better the lives and health of Town residents, the Town has worked tirelessly and with focused purpose to keep the taxes you pay for the services that the Town is required to provide as low as we can. Perhaps most importantly, the Town has achieved this careful stewardship of your tax dollars without taking on any debt of any sort.

FOCUS ON IMPROVING NON-TAX RELATED REVENUE STREAMS

To keep your Town taxes as low as possible while continuing to maintain service levels and to meet newly-emerging needs, the Town has paid careful attention to supplemental sources of revenue as well. For example, in the last four years, the Town has applied for, and received, grants totaling more than $471,000 to fund important infrastructure, security, and other projects without further increasing the tax burdens that we all already bear. Included in these grants have been: (1) a United States Department of Justice matching grant in the amount of about $5,000 to assist with replacement of 13 bullet proof vests that were beyond their recommended life used by Town Constables when providing prisoner transport and court protection services; (2) a

$145,000 State grant for emergency generators to be installed for Town Hall and the Richard J. Daronco Town House (awaiting receipt of the approved grant at any time); (3) a Westchester County Library System matching grant in the amount of $37,000 to fund doors for the handicapped and ramp construction at the Town of Pelham Public Library; (4) grant funding from a $50,000 grant for security and energy upgrades to permit the Town to upgrade the lighting in the Daronco Town House to "green energy efficient" LED lighting and to upgrade security; (5) $103,000 to fund critical replacement of the slate roof of the Town Library; (6) $22,200 in support of additional work at the Library including a new sign, repair of exterior stairs, exterior painting and repair; and replacement of damaged exterior lighting; (7) $19,000 grant to overhaul and improve the security of the Town criminal and civil courtroom; (8) two grants totaling $80,000 to repair, redesign, and refurbish Trotta Park (formerly Brick Park on Fifth Avenue next to Town Hall); and (9) the Town also took steps to secure a "FEMA 404 Grant" in the amount of $10,000 to recoup amounts expended by the Town in dealing with the emergency presented by super storm Sandy.

Continuing our focus on attracting grants to fund necessary expenses in lieu of raising the tax levy, as 2017 began news was delivered this month that the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services has approved the Town of Pelham's application for a grant in the amount of $6,350 to fund additional upgraded courthouse security projects at the Daronco Town House including installation of more advanced security cameras as well as furnishings for use in the newly-redesigned courtroom area.

The Town is engaged in a host of efforts to obtain such grants for a variety of other purposes in a continuing effort to ensure that monies available at the National, State, and County levels are returned to our community to every extent possible to increase the likelihood that taxes at the Town level can continue to be held flat (or to minimal tax levy increases) in the next few years. Additionally, the Town continues to encourage magnanimous philanthropic gestures such as bequests to the Town library that benefit all residents of our Town.

The Town also has improved its revenue stream in other ways. First, by expanding and improving the quality of town-wide recreational programs so as to attract many more participants in the last four years, the Town Recreation Department has increased the revenues received by the Town in connection with such programs. For example, from 2014 to 2015, the Town was able to grow the revenue stream from Town recreation programs by 8%. Likewise, in 2016 the Town grew the revenue stream from Town recreation programs over the previous year by 17.5% (from $620,434 in 2015 to more than $729,000 in 2016) ***with no material increase in the costs of administering such programs***. The Town recreation programs continue to expand to serve youth and adults within our Town. Indeed, the Town recently has begun to administer the local recreation football and soccer programs and has even expanded the local youth basketball program to serve more than four hundred young people, limited only by the availability of local basketball courts.

Additionally, the Town Justices and court staff have continued their successful program to improve the efficiency of the judicial fine-collection systems to ensure that more fines are paid and are paid in a more timely fashion. Although by law all monies paid in judicial fines are turned over to the State of New York, a very small portion is returned to the Town by the State. That sum has grown in the last four years, adding to the Town's improved revenue stream from sources other than the tax levy.

Finally, in 2016 the Town successfully completed a program aggressively to pursue payment of outstanding and overdue property taxes including associated penalties and collection fees to ensure that the Town's revenue stream would be maximized and, thus, minimize the need for raising the tax levy to maintain services.

In short, as your elected Town officials, we reaffirm that we are stewards of your tax dollars and take that fiduciary duty extremely seriously. With this in mind, we have worked tirelessly to reduce costs, to keep expenses low, to manage monies effectively, to secure grants, to improve revenue streams and, yet, to continue to provide the governmental services to which residents of the Town are accustomed and to expand services as necessary. Efforts such as these have enabled the Town to pass three consecutive annual budgets with zero percent tax levy increases while maintaining and improving the quality of Town services.

EMERGENCY PLANNING AND TOWN RESIDENT SAFETY

As your elected Town officials, we understand that among the most important services that local governments must provide is effective emergency response, emergency planning and citizen safety services. Although the Villages provide state-of-the-art police and fire services to our residents, the Town continues to provide state-of-the-art first medical responder fly car services, ambulance services, town-wide emergency shelter services, and emergency-preparedness planning.

Recently, the Town replaced two aging but critically-important pieces of emergency medical response equipment: (1) the fly car emergency medical technician (EMT) vehicle; and (2) the "Lifepak" heart monitor and defibrillator. The new state-of-the-art fly car was purchased via a State contract at the best possible price in 2014. Along with the fly car, the Town purchased a new, state-of-the-art Zoll cardiac monitor that is able to monitor all vital signs and to communicate in real time with emergency room personnel to ensure that there is no delay in patients receiving proper emergency care including proper doses of emergency medication. These purchases have been literal life savers.

During the last decade, the fly car and associated emergency medical equipment have become critically important to our Town. For example, in 2016 the Town's fly car responded to 820 medical emergencies (roughly seventy per month). In the vast majority of cases in 2016, the fly car arrived in under six minutes after the initial call. The number of emergency fly car calls has been increasing slowly in recent years with 790 in 2014, 799 in 2015, and 820 in 2016.

The Town continues to expand and refine its Emergency Shelter Program, first implemented in connection with super storm Sandy in 2012. The Town has secured grants of additional cots, blankets, flashlights, and basic food supplies for use in the early stages of an emergency. Although we have been able to secure temporary generators in times of need for our emergency shelter at the Richard J. Daronco Town House, we have a project underway to secure and install permanent generators for both the Daronco Town House and Town Hall. We recently have received approvals of our New York State grant requests for $145,000 to fund permanent generators, but are awaiting receipt of the funds from the State of New York to permit the purchase and installation of the planned generators. It is anticipated that such funds will be received this year and that the generator work can be completed shortly thereafter.

The Town also has constructed in Daronco Town House a "FEMA Room" for the secure and appropriate storage of emergency and shelter equipment and supplies. The Town further has offered a free disaster preparedness class at the Daronco Town House given by the National Guard, and plans to continue such classes.

The Town further administers the "R.E.A.L." program (Resident Emergency Assistance List). The program is intended to improve tracking and communicating with seniors and challenged individuals who might have difficulty fulfilling their basic needs during an emergency or who have special medical needs. The Town has solicited the Seniors Program, various community organizations and houses of worship to help identify seniors and challenged individuals who voluntarily wish to sign up for the R.E.A.L. program to permit the Town to communicate with them, monitor them, and help meet their needs during an emergency. The confidential contact list is maintained by the Town's Senior Advocate and the police and fire departments of both Villages. If you or a family member would like to register for R.E.A.L. but are not certain if the necessary name or contact information has been provided to the R.E.A.L. program, please contact Caroline Veith, Director of the Senior Advocates Office, with questions on eligibility and to register (914-738-5004 or SrAdvocate@TownOfPelham.com).

Finally the Town has joined a coalition of Westchester County municipalities to improve hazard mitigation strategies that, under The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (Public Law 106-390) will make the Town of Pelham eligible for FEMA aid in the event of an emergency.

RECENT SPECIAL PROJECTS AND PLANS

In addition to the routine performance of Town services such as property tax assessment, assessment review, tax collection, ambulance and emergency medical fly car services, Town Library services, town-wide recreation programs, and the like, the Town also has recently completed a number of special projects and has developed plans for upcoming projects.

The Town has improved the lighting system in the Daronco Town House, our Town's de facto community center, after receiving grant funding to upgrade the lighting in the Daronco Town House to "green energy efficient" LED lighting.

The Town has constructed additional secure space on the second floor of the Daronco Town House to serve as a Town Constable locker room and secure storage space as well as an archival storage area for historic Town records.

Using a $37,000 matching grant from the Westchester County Library System, the Town successfully completed installation of doors for the handicapped and construction of new ramps at the library. The Town also upgraded exterior lighting and the Library sign and arranged exterior painting and repairs to the clapboard siding. In addition, the Town identified the origins of, and successfully repaired, a stubborn library roof leak.

The Town has undertaken a study of what would be required, and what grants would be available to fund or help fund, the replacement of Glover Field lighting with "green energy efficient" LED lighting while improving the quality of the field lighting as well.

The Town has undertaken an aggressive program to expand its use of social media (including Facebook and Twitter) to improve communications with Town residents and to serve as additional means of communicating with Town residents in times of emergency. We strongly urge you, please, to like the Town Facebook page at http://www.facebook.com/TownOfPelham and to follow the Town on Twitter (@TownPelham1788).

Responding to valued feedback from Town residents asking for an expanded ability to register and pay for Town recreation programs online, the Town is engaged in an extensive effort to identify, analyze, and test several competing online systems that would permit the Town to offer such services online via the Town website. Important to this analysis, of course, is a determination of the most cost effective system for providing the requested service. As your elected Town officials, we genuinely value such feedback and input regarding ways to improve Town services. We encourage Town residents to attend Town Council meetings at the Daronco Town House (typically held at 7 p.m. on the first Monday of each month, though you can call Town Hall at 914-738-1021 to confirm meeting dates). Every effort is made to accommodate members of the public at such meetings so that comments, feedback, suggestions, proposals, and communications with the Town Council can be heard early in the meeting so that residents do not have to remain for any remaining portions of the meetings (unless they would like, which also is encouraged).

The Town has continued its work with Pelham PACT Coalition and its new director, Ms. Laura Caruso, in an ongoing effort to sustain the organization's important mission and its future events and programs. The Town also has worked with Pelham's Community Care Center that provides referral services and support to Pelham youth and their families when dealing with depression, anxiety, substance abuse, eating disorders, and self-harm. The CCC has sponsored important events supported by the Town regarding

teen suicide, on-campus sexual assaults, fostering a friendlier community and reducing isolation, providing social opportunities for special-needs students, and much more.

We have continued to improve the Town's criminal and civil court facility through grants. The initial grant of $19,000, secured with the assistance of State Senator Jeff Klein, allowed the successful construction of a bullet resistant judicial bench, staircases that have been reconfigured for safety so that prisoners remain separated from court personnel, and cabinetry to secure upgraded court equipment. As noted above, we have recently been advised that tireless work by Town employees has resulted in securing an additional grant of $6,350 for court furnishings and to improve security further through, for example, installation of additional security cameras including cameras in the hallway leading to the Court Clerk's office where fines are paid and installation of motion-detection lighting and additional security cameras on the outside of the Town House, if possible. Such court-based improvements will also benefit all who use the Town House including members of our Seniors Program who spend many hours in the main room of the Town House.

Finally, with the departure of Town Clerk Colleen Walsh to Connecticut this year after performing her work professionally, successfully, and with aplomb, your Town Council conducted a search for a replacement and were pleased to announce last December that Pelham native Michael Recca agreed to serve in the role. He has been appointed (and sworn) into the position. He will serve in the position at least until January 1, 2018. The Town Clerk position will be on the ballot in the November 2017 election. Michael was born and raised in Pelham and recently served a three-year term as an elected member of the Pelham School Board.

CONCLUSION

In closing, the State of the Town of Pelham is strong and the future of our Town is bright. We, your elected Town Board, are profoundly optimistic about the future of Pelham and its continued strength (fiscal and otherwise). We welcome Town residents to our monthly meetings held at Town Hall typically on the first Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m.

We consider it an honor and a privilege to serve the residents of the Town of Pelham. We perform our fiduciary obligations, our committee work, and all of our Town business on your behalf with honesty, sincerity, and with serious and diligent attention to the needs of all Town residents. We pledge to continue to do so. After all, as Pelham residents we are all friends, neighbors, colleagues, and acquaintances.

Pelham, New York
January 19, 2017

Peter D. DiPaola, Town Supervisor
Daniel McLaughlin, Deputy Town Supervisor
Rae Szymanski, Member of the Town Board

Blake A. Bell, Member of the Town Board
Timothy Case, Member of the Town Board