REPORT ON THE STATE OF THE TOWN OF PELHAM – 2019

The state of our Town of Pelham remains strongly positive with a very bright outlook. Your Town Supervisor and members of the Town Board are honored to present this summary of the continued strength of our Town and a listing of some of your Town's recent accomplishments.

FOUR CONSECUTIVE ZERO-INCREASE TOWN TAX LEVIES AND A SINGLE 1.79% INCREASE WHILE GROWING SERVICES

The Town is required by law to provide certain services that are not provided at the Village level including services that each of the two Villages choose to give up. 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; town-wide emergency sheltering programs, emergency preparedness, and emergency management programs; 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; 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 four consecutive years, we completed the Town Budget with a zero percent tax levy increase followed by a fifth year with a 1.79% increase due to mandated health care and pension cost increases – well below even the rate of inflation during each of the last five years. Your Town Board has never had to vote to authorize a tax levy increase in excess of the New York State property tax cap of 2%. Despite all this, the Town has expanded the services it provides (and has expanded many of its pre-existing programs including recreation and library services).

Your Town Board continues to work 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 continues to achieve this careful stewardship of your tax dollars without burdening Town taxpayers with any debt of any sort.

CONTINUED FOCUS ON IMPROVING NON-TAX RELATED REVENUE STREAMS

To keep your Town taxes as low as possible while continuing to expand service levels and to meet newly-emerging needs, your Town Board has paid careful attention to supplemental sources of revenue as well. For example, in the last six years, the Town has applied for, and received approvals for, grants totaling upwards of $1,000,000 to fund important infrastructure, security, emergency preparedness, and other projects without further increasing the tax burdens that we all already bear. To highlight only a few of

these successes, approved grants have included: (1) $325,000 State grant to fund installation of an elevator at Town Hall for the benefit of handicapped and senior citizen residents; (2) 2018 J-Cap Grant of up to $30,000 to fund necessary Town Court security programs; (3) New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services grant of $6,350 for Town Court security cameras; (4) $125,000 New York State grant to fund infrastructure project at Library in the event an expansion can be authorized (including FEMA authorization due to flood plain issues); (5) 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; (6) a $145,000 State grant for emergency generators to be installed for Town Hall and the Richard J. Daronco Town House; (7) 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; (8) 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; (9) $103,000 to fund critical replacement of the slate roof of the Town Library; (10) $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; (11) $19,000 grant to overhaul and improve the security of the Town criminal and civil courtroom; (12) two grants totaling $80,000 to repair, redesign, and refurbish Trotta Park (formerly Brick Park on Fifth Avenue next to Town Hall); and (13) 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.

Your Town Board is engaged in a host of efforts to obtain additional 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. For example, there recently has been a magnanimous bequest by esteemed and well-loved Pelham resident Ted Mayer to fund Library projects that included a recent necessary redesign of the Town Library Web site.

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***. Indeed, this trend has continued for the last two years as well. The Town recreation programs continue to expand to serve youth and adults within our Town. The Town now administers the local recreation football and soccer programs and has

expanded the local youth basketball program and summer recreation programs, limited only by the availability of local recreation facilities.

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 six years adding, once again, to the Town's improved revenue stream from sources other than the tax levy.

The Town continues aggressively to pursue payment of outstanding and overdue property taxes including associated penalties and collection fees to ensure that the Town's revenue stream is maximized and, thus, further reduces pressures toward raising the tax levy to maintain services. This program has successfully reduced such outstanding overdue payments to a *de minimis* amount.

Once again, your Town Board reaffirms that we remain stewards of your tax dollars and take that fiduciary duty extremely seriously. With this in mind, we continue to work 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 such services as necessary). Efforts such as these have enabled the Town to pass four consecutive annual budgets with zero percent tax levy increases (and a fifth with a 1.79% levy increase) 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.

In recent years your Town Board has 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, the Town's fly car responds to

more than 800 medical emergencies per year with roughly half in Pelham Manor and the other half in the Village of Pelham. In the vast majority of cases, the fly car arrives in under six minutes, followed by the Town's ambulance service. The number of emergency fly car calls has been increasing in recent years with this trend expected to continue. Moreover, your Town Board reviews fly car and ambulance performance (and arrival times) constantly including public analysis of monthly reports to ensure that the Town's emergency medical response system remains state-of-the-art. The Town Fly Car has responded to more than 4,900 calls in our little Town since 2014.

Between 2014 and the present, the

The Town continues to expand and refine its Emergency Shelter Program first implemented in connection with super storm Sandy in 2012. During the last year the Town completed installation of an emergency generator (funded with a State grant) to provide power to the Daronco Town House which has repeatedly been used as an emergency shelter during the last six years. The Town also secured grants of additional cots, blankets, flashlights, and basic food supplies for use in the early stages of such emergencies. We have a current project, also using State grant monies, to install a similar permanent generator for the Town Hall with siting considerations now underway. The Town also constructed in Daronco Town House a "FEMA Room" for the secure and appropriate storage of emergency and shelter equipment and supplies.

In addition, the Town administers the "R.E.A.L." program (Resident Emergency Assistance List). The program is intended to improve tracking and communications with seniors and challenged individuals who might have difficulty fulfilling their basic needs during an emergency or who have special medical needs. Indeed, during a major snow emergency last winter, when the Daronco Town House shelter was opened to Town residents, the R.E.A.L. Program Coordinator successfully contacted all senior, urgent care, and other residents on the R.E.A.L. list to confirm their safety and determine their needs. This 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).

The Town also 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) has made 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

completed a number of special projects in the last few years and has developed plans for upcoming projects.

Responding to valued feedback from Town residents who asked for an expanded ability to register and pay for Town recreation programs online, the Town successfully implemented an online Recreation Department signup system using RecPro software. Feedback on the new online registration and payment system has been uniformly and strongly positive.

The Town has completed a host of repairs and improvements at the Town Library for the benefit of Pelham residents. 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 also replaced various Library sidewalks and damaged pavers, arranging for the work to be done at a very substantial discount for the benefit of Pelham taxpayers. Such work has become particularly necessary because the Town Library has experienced 15-20% ANNUAL increases in Library program attendance during each of the last three years.

The Town has also completed a host of repairs and improvements at the Daronco Town House. In addition to the previously-mentioned installation of an emergency generator, there have been a number of other such projects. For example, the Town has updated the electrical system of the Town House. It has installed more efficient lighting there (see "Green Initiatives" below). It 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. It has constructed a new modular Town Court environment to permit the ever-increasing activities and proceedings of the Town Court to be conducted in the Town House (with virtually all such work funded by grant monies). In addition, the Town recently replaced a metal detector Court security system there with a more modern system.

The Town has completed analogous repairs and improvements at Town Hall with others planned. For example, in addition to repainting, the Town has installed new doors for the Police Department. Moreover, through grant funding there now are two major additional projects planned: (1) the previously-mentioned installation of an emergency generator; and (2) use of a State grant to fund installation of an elevator at Town Hall for the benefit of handicapped and senior citizen Town residents. Plans for that elevator installation have been completed and approved by the Town Engineer.

The Town continues its aggressive program to expand 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).

GREEN INITIATIVES

The Town successfully partnered with the Pelham Children's Center to work with ConEd and fund installation of "green energy efficient" LED lighting not only for its environmental benefits but also its cost savings, all for the long-term benefit of Pelham taxpayers. This follows previous Town improvements to the lighting system in the Daronco Town House (our Town's *de facto* community center) after receiving grant funding to upgrade the lighting there to "green energy efficient" LED lighting. Not only was this latter project funded with grant monies without cost to taxpayers, it will likewise result in cost savings for the long-term benefit of Pelham taxpayers.

The Town recently worked successfully with Solarize Pelham to make available to commercial and residential property owners within the Town a discounted solar panel installation program. Thanks to this important Solarize Pelham initiative, 42 homes in the Town of Pelham will be generating their own solar power in the coming months – and some already are. These 42 homes will produce a combined 276 kW of clean, renewable energy annually, significantly reducing demand from the electric grid and acting as the equivalent of removing the carbon footprint of 50 or so cars each year.

The Town has become a member of Sustainable Westchester and has participated in and facilitated that program. Sustainable Westchester is a collaboration of Westchester County local governments that empowers municipalities, concerned citizens, businesses, and local organizations to partner in the development of sustainability initiatives and share tools, resources, and incentives involving energy programs, transportation and land use initiatives, waste management, food, and water.

The Town has been responsible for the planting of over 400 trees in recent years. Such plantings, of course, improve air quality, reduce the amount of storm water runoff which reduces erosion and pollution in our waterways, and may reduce the effects of flooding – all in addition to providing habitat for wildlife including many types of birds and small mammals.

The Town has been an active and vocal participant in the battle to halt construction of a 130-foot radio and cell-phone broadcast "monopole" on New York State Department of Transportation lands east of Hutchinson River Parkway Exit 9 at East Sandford Boulevard adjacent to the Town Library, Middle School and High School – only yards away from some of the most highly-trafficked destinations of virtually all children in the Town of Pelham. The Town continues its vigilance and has communicated with a host of local and State officials to oppose the project.

The Town successfully moved overhead utility wires between the Daronco Town House and the Town Hall facility underground. This reduced unsightly lines and further secured such lines in the event of storms.

Other Successes

Your Town Board recently enacted an extension of the Real Property Tax Exemption for the benefit of qualifying property owners who are Cold War Veterans.

The Town Board also has completed a "train-the-trainers" program to reduce substantially the cost of State-mandated training for Town Constables who perform Town Court security and prisoner transport duties.

Your Town Board also has recently completed a five-year process to facilitate the combination of PACT with Community Cares to form Pelham Together. This has resulted in substantial savings to Pelham taxpayers as PACT, as part of Pelham Together, became part of a fully privately-funded organization.

Conclusion

In closing, the State of the Town of Pelham is strong and the future of our Town remains as bright as ever. We, your elected Town Board, remain profoundly optimistic about the future of the Town 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.

Your entire Town Board considers 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
October 7, 2019

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