

**STATE OF THE TOWN 2015
SUPERVISOR JUDI BOSWORTH
TOWN OF NORTH HEMPSTEAD**

Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen, honored guests.

“It’s hard to believe that when I stood before you last year at the beginning of my term as Supervisor, we were all struggling with the worst winter in memory.

Battling 17 snow storms is a rugged beginning, but it gave me basic training for what would be a tough and rewarding year.”

Wait a minute. That’s not my speech. (HOLD UP OLD SPEECH)

It’s actually one delivered by one of my illustrious predecessors, Supervisor May Newburger, in 1995. I couldn’t resist sharing that passage with you, since her words mirror exactly what I would say today! I guess some things don’t change, even 20 years later.

I am honored to stand here before you for my second State of the Town address.

You know, there’s a wonderful comfort and security in having been on the job for a full year. I’ve had the opportunity to see the cycle of life and of Town government here in North Hempstead, from the busy, snow-laden winter months and, yes, 17 – well now 18 snow storms – to the blooming of our parks and

recreational programs in the spring, to the non-stop activity of summer and, finally, to the tough decisions of budget season in the fall.

I would like to express my gratitude to the League of Women Voters, and particularly to Luncheon Chair Amy Bass, Marie Bellon, Co-Chair, Judy Jacobson and Nancy Cowles, for this opportunity to be with you all today. The League serves such an important function for our community and we are all better informed citizens because of your efforts. I also want to thank the Office of Community Services, led by Commissioner Kimberly Corcoran-Galante, Gina Sillitti, Rachel Brinn and Ryan Mulholland and the staff here at Harbor Links. And thank you to C.W. Post radio WCWP 88.1 FM, which is broadcasting this event today live.

I would like to recognize our Town of North Hempstead elected officials, each of whom is dedicated to making Town of North Hempstead government work efficiently, effectively and responsibly for the benefit of our residents. I value each one of them and their contributions greatly:

Receiver of Taxes Charles Berman

Town Clerk Wayne Wink

1st District Councilwoman Viviana Russell

2nd District Councilman Peter Zuckerman

3rd District Councilman Angelo Ferrara

4th District Councilwoman Anna Kaplan

5th District Councilwoman Lee Seeman

6th District Councilwoman Dina De Giorgio

The spirit of collaboration and bi-partisanship of our Town Board has been a big plus for our Town government – a true “breath of fresh air” in contentious times – and is a tribute to each of our six council members. Our Town officials always function with the best interests of the residents at heart and I think our colleagues in Washington could certainly take a page from the Town of North Hempstead’s book.

I would also like to recognize other distinguished elected officials who are here with us today: LIST

I am also pleased to welcome Mayor [NAME MAYORS], village trustees, special district commissioners, school board members and superintendents and union leaders, including our own CSEA local President Kevin Williams and CSEA Long Island Region President Nick LaMorte. And, of course, a special thank you to all our Town employees who are present today. It has been such an honor to work

with all of you in a collaborative way throughout my first year as Supervisor. I look forward to continuing to build on our relationships, as all of us work together – truly together – for our families, our seniors, our children, our local organizations and our entire community.

Today, as we end the first month of the New Year, I would like to outline for you some of what we accomplished in Town government during my first, very busy year, and to talk about some of our goals and vision for 2015 and beyond.

Two very big issues were the “bookends” of my first year as Supervisor.

At the very beginning of 2014, residents in Port Washington, Manhasset and Great Neck were shocked and distraught to see 80-foot utility poles springing up along the roadside almost overnight. Not taking “No” for an answer, I urged PSEG-LI officials to come to the table and pressed them to conduct a public forum in this very room. More than 400 people came out that night to express their displeasure not only with the unsightly poles, but with the process, or I should say lack of process, by which they had been installed – with no community input or warning. While the placement of the poles was really not within our jurisdiction, I believe having meetings and our insistence on community input made an impression on

PSEG that I hope will change the way they interact with North Hempstead in the future.

In response to this issue, the Town enacted legislation in September that requires the timely removal of any decommissioned or double poles that are left in place after the installation of new poles. I am pleased to report this legislation has been a success, as our most recent data shows that 137 decommissioned poles have been removed and another 30 more are soon to come down. We added to that an additional law – now being challenged in court by PSEG – requiring them to place warning signs on all new poles, to educate the public about the presence of penta, a carcinogen that is used on poles as a preservative and pesticide. I think it's reasonable to ask people to wash their hands should they come in contact with this. I have recently called on the EPA to ban penta altogether. There's no place in this community or any community for such a toxin to be used on an easily accessible object, within reach of school children, pedestrians and even pets. **It's time for penta to go and we will work towards this goal in 2015!**

And closing out 2014, last month, we learned that Nassau OTB had set its sights on using the vacant Fortunoff's Building in Westbury as the location for a casino, which would have 1,000 VLT and be open 20 hours a day from 10 a.m. to 6 a.m.

While this location is not in the Town of North Hempstead, it would negatively impact the nearby communities of Carle Place, Westbury and New Cassel. Once again, there had been NO community input regarding this plan. Councilwoman Viviana Russell and I sent a letter to all 9,000 households in Carle Place, Westbury and New Cassel, voicing our opposition to the proposal and asked OTB officials to immediately suspend negotiations towards acquisition of the Fortunoff property. I've spoken at two recent community meetings, attended by a total of almost 2,000 residents and, earlier this week, I addressed a meeting of the Nassau County Legislature, to advocate for an end to this ill-conceived plan. Today, I can report that the Town, together with the Village Of Westbury and its Mayor Peter Cavallaro, as well as the Town of Hempstead and Supervisor Kate Murray, is filing a lawsuit in State Supreme Court as we speak, seeking an injunction against any contract or lease between OTB and the owners of the Fortunoff's property from being finalized. Just last night, Presiding Officer of the Nassau County Legislature, Norma Gonsalves, stated, "We have arrived at the time when Off Track Betting must bow to the will of the people and consider abandoning its pursuit of the Fortunoff site." So stay tuned, as Councilwoman Russell and I, along with Legislator Siela Bynoe and all our local elected officials, continue our efforts to halt this project at this ill-conceived location! Contrary to what OTB officials say,

all the studies in the world can't turn a bad idea into a good idea and this is a colossally bad idea.

When we aren't wrangling with utility companies and OTB, we are working to strengthen the management and productivity of our Town government. We've made some changes over the past year -- changes that were implemented after thoughtful review and evaluation of each department and always with the goal of delivering the best services to our 226,000 residents.

It is well known that the Town has faced and continues to face significant challenges in our Building Department. The problems in the Building Department didn't develop overnight and they will not be corrected overnight. But solid progress has been made in the past year. And that progress begins with the goal I established at the beginning of my term -- that the Building Department must function as an ally of our residents, not an adversary. Achieving this goal has been and remains one of my top management priorities for our Town government.

In 2014, the Building Department made significant strides to improve customer service and confidence, and modernize the way it does business. We have restructured and re-designed the Department down to its foundation.

*We started by re-evaluating responsibilities, redirecting staff and reallocating work to make the Department run more smoothly and efficiently.

*Lauren Summa was appointed as Applicant Advocate, to work as my personal representative in the Building Department. This initiative has been a resounding success, as hundreds of Town residents have been assisted in obtaining their inspections, permits and certificates.

*Building Department mobile office hours were established, providing residents the opportunity to meet with Building Department staff in their home communities, bringing services to their own backyards.

*Special mobile office hours were instituted to help our seniors navigate the Building Department process.

*Wednesday evening office hours, by appointment, have been established for those who cannot get to Town Hall during regular daytime hours.

*Educational presentations are scheduled for later this year in a number of our local communities, to inform the residents about the requirements and processes of the Building Department.

*The Building Department website was redesigned, to make forms more easily accessible. In fact, we're close to being able to make it possible to fill out and submit most Building Department forms on line.

*We now accept credit card and debit card payments! This might seem like a given, but up until recently, it had been cash or check only!

*We are also close to finalizing a system that will enable residents to check the status of their applications on line.

And for all that has been accomplished, there is more to be done. In 2015, we will focus on further reducing the “wait time” for both residential and commercial plans review, final inspections and plumbing inspections. We are optimistic about achieving these goals, as more and more residents give us feedback that they are receiving better answers, more accurate information and real assistance from our Building Department. Yes, we have more work to do – but we are on our way to a Building Department that is user-friendly, thoroughly professional and more efficient and responsive.

Our Town is also seeing some significant building projects – a new hotel under construction in Carle Place and a second hotel here in Port Washington, off West Shore Road. North Hempstead IS a great place for building and development, so long as it is environmentally responsible and is a good fit with the community.

However, I am most enthusiastic about the recent appointment of John Niewender, as our new Building Department Commissioner. If there ever was a case of finding the person you were looking for in your own backyard, the appointment of John as Commissioner is it. He is truly an example of someone who has worked his way up through the ranks. He has held almost every position in the Building Department over his 11 years with the Town. What better person for the job than someone who literally knows the Department from the ground up? John, we are proud of the job you and your staff are doing every day to make the Building Department the very best it can be!

During 2014, the Department of Services for the Aging and our nationally-recognized Project Independence program got a new commissioner –our enthusiastic Community Services Department Commissioner Kimberly Corcoran-Galante, who is commissioner of this department as well.

Now celebrating ten years, credit for Project Independence goes to former Supervisor Jon Kaiman, who first had the vision to make this program a signature initiative for our Town. Its mission of allowing seniors to age with dignity and security in their own homes is one that I fully embrace. The services that North Hempstead provides for our seniors are unparalleled here on Long Island and we are, in fact, a national model for aging in place.

I'm pleased to say that this year nearly 2,000 new members were welcomed into the Project Independence family, for a total of 9,774 North Hempstead seniors who participate regularly in the **no cost services** and programs provided by the Town. In 2014, over 26,565 service requests were made by seniors, for everything from medical appointment trips to shopping at no or minimal cost. In addition, the Community Services Department brought Town residents over 30 events, enjoyed by tens of thousands of seniors. We also created additional and innovative programming for our seniors, including the launching of a Book Club at FunDay Mondays which has continued throughout the year and this summer we will add fitness classes!

Project Independence also launched a Virtual Health website for members in 2014, where they can register for senior programs online, including reservations for transportation to the supermarket or medical appointments and household maintenance through the Help at Home program. They also can view and RSVP to the full slate of social and recreational events held on a weekly basis by Project Independence.

In addition, I am excited about working with SelfHelp Community Services and the Kimmel Housing Development Foundation on an innovative program that uses

technology to easily connect the homebound elderly with live interactive classes and online activities. We are working to identify seniors in our Town who, at no cost to them, can participate in this Virtual Senior Center.

We also recently received news that the Town of North Hempstead is the first Town in Nassau County to receive the World Health Organization Global Network of Age-Friendly Communities designation, given by AARP, which in other words declares the Town an age-friendly place! AARP confers this designation on municipalities having progressive and forward-thinking public policies that serve older populations and that are friendly to all ages. Project Independence already partners with AARP on discounted defensive driving classes for seniors, and now we will have the opportunity to broaden our relationship and work together to respond to additional needs identified by North Hempstead seniors.

We ended 2014 and started the New Year with several key appointments that I am confident will energize and strengthen our Town. In October, I appointed Aline Khatchadourian Deputy Supervisor and we recently welcomed our new Parks and Recreation Commissioner, Jill Weber, and Chief Sustainability Officer Erin Reilley. What a great team we have in place to serve our residents!

This past year, my Administration's highly capable and professional finance team, led by Aline, Financial Consultant and former Nassau County Comptroller Howard Weitzman and the Comptroller's office team including Dennis Morgan and Diane Chambers, achieved several notable objectives to maintain and improve the Town's stable and strong finances.

Perhaps our biggest accomplishment was unanimous, bi-partisan approval of the 2015 Town budget, which I am proud to report is under the state tax cap and cuts expenses by \$600,000.

The vote on the budget by the Town Board was taken prior to Election Day for the first time since 1982 and I am committed to doing that in each future budget cycle. The initial draft budget was available for the public online, with little change made to it in the final adopted version, which is of course online as well. The entire budget process was accessible, open and transparent.

The 2015 budget is fiscally conservative, while taking into account some of the challenges we will face in the coming year, such as dipping sales tax revenue and decreasing mortgage tax receipts, while maintaining all Town services.

A key focus of our financial plan has been to reduce the Town's debt, which benefits not only the taxpayers of today, but future generations of our Town. We

have done this by slowing the rate of new borrowing, paying down existing debt, and refinancing debt at more favorable interest rates. The result is that, in just one year, we have reduced our outstanding total debt by 11% or \$22 million.

This past year, we received notification from Moody's that the Town has maintained our Aa1 bond rating, the highest in Town history, and that we have the highest rating attainable (MIG1) on our short-term notes. These distinctions were achieved, in part, through reducing both our overall debt and our reliance on structured borrowing to fund New York State Retirement System obligations.

For the fourth consecutive year, the Town was awarded the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting by the Government Finance Officers Association, in recognition of our comprehensive annual financial report for the fiscal year ended 2013.

In addition, working together with the Town Board, our finance team and our commissioners and department heads, we crafted a comprehensive five-year Capital Plan for the Town. The detailed plan is posted on line, along with the funding sources and bonding authorization. This plan demonstrates a bi-partisan commitment to maintaining and improving the Town's roads, parks and facilities

and maximizing grant funding sources. Much progress has been made in the past year!

One of the first projects we put in the Capital Plan was our commitment to Alvan Petrus Park, a very important initiative to the Port Washington community. I am very pleased our plans are moving forward and I thank Councilwoman Dina De Giorgio for her dedication to this project, along with the efforts of many interested residents. Last year, the Town took ownership of the property from the North Hempstead Housing Authority, so the land is ours. Once completed, Alvan Petrus Park will be more than just the original basketball court that once existed, but rather a Town park and recreational area for residents of all ages to enjoy. And now that this property is finally and officially a “park”, we can also apply for government and private sector grants. As community input has been so important in this process, we look forward to suggestions from local residents, as we move to the design phase for the park. We are in the process of reviewing the proposals of engineering firms that have responded to our RFP.

Some of the other projects that we can report on are:

*Repaving the walkways at Richard Provost Park in Garden City Park, spearheaded by Councilman Angelo Ferrara, as well as other improvements there.

- *Demolition of the old Grand Street School in New Cassel – FINALLY!
- *The long-awaited drainage improvements on Allen and Brian Streets in Herricks, a project I initiated when I represented that area in the County Legislature.
- *Roof replacement at Caemmerer Park in Albertson.
- *Fence replacement at the Asbury Avenue Ball Field in Carle Place.
- *The Shields parking lot in Port Washington will provide 28 much-needed additional merchant parking spaces and will include a small green space for benches.
- *Continuing improvements to the Town’s Gold Coast Arts Center in Great Neck.
- *The Essex Court drainage project in Port Washington.
- *A one-mile extension of the Hempstead Harbor Shoreline Trail in Port Washington and Roslyn!
- *Roof replacement at Clinton G. Martin Park in New Hyde Park.
- *The widening of Manhasset Avenue, which happened due to the tenacity of Councilwoman Anna Kaplan.
- * And let’s not forget our Town Historian Howard Kroplick who devotes so much effort to restoring our local cemeteries and preserving our history here at the Town Aquatic sand removal projects at Gerry Pond Park in Roslyn, Plandome Pond Park in Plandome Heights and North Sheets Creek in Port Washington are slated for

2015. The work on North Sheets Creek will create a deeper bay that will attract more business via our waterways and help make it better suited for recreational water sports. For our smaller ponds, the removal of sediment will improve ecosystems and filtration systems, with the goal of turning these ponds into a more hospitable environment for wildlife and making them more aesthetically pleasing for visitors. Improvements to the Manorhaven boat ramp are also slated for this year.

Having an aggressive and fully-integrated grants program is critical to our Town's finances. We must access every possible funding source and leverage every tax dollar. In our 2014 capital plan, we pressed to complete projects before funding expired and in total last year the Town received nearly \$7.8 million in grants. It was this kind of persistence that made 2014 an extremely successful year for us and I'd especially like to thank our dedicated Grants Management Director, Tom Devaney for his outstanding work.

In November, we received the exciting news that the Town had been awarded a \$625,000 grant as part of Governor Andrew Cuomo's Annual New York State Regional Economic Development Council Awards. The Town will be the project manager for seven other Long Island towns and Suffolk County, in creating an

East-West corridor of electric vehicle charging stations along the Long Island Expressway. The goal is to encourage more widespread use of electric vehicles and reduce auto emissions, by providing convenient charging locations for motorists.

We received a \$75,000 grant through the Market NY Program that will be utilized to promote the Gold Coast International Film Festival, an important collaboration between the Town and the Gold Coast Arts Center, now in its fourth year. This grant serves as recognition of this important arts initiative, brainchild of Executive Director Regina Gil, and underscores its value to the community. The additional funding will enable us to broaden awareness of the exciting programs and events we are presenting right here in the Town of North Hempstead, which are open to all residents, as well as visitors to our Town.

We are also reinvesting in our beautiful Clark Botanic Garden in Albertson, which we are committed to restoring to its pre-Superstorm Sandy splendor. We have received a \$45,000 grant from the New York State Parks, Zoos, Botanical Gardens and Aquariums program to improve the classroom at Clark and \$250,000, secured with the help of Assemblywoman Michelle Schimel, to construct a new greenhouse on the garden grounds.

In addition, the Town is partnering with the Great Neck Historical Society and the Great Neck Park District to restore our own Stepping Stones Lighthouse, situated just a short distance off of Kings Point. While only minimal Town funds will be used for this project, we are providing support and services in an effort to move this project forward. The town has applied for a \$330,000 grant from the National Park Service's National Maritime Heritage Grants program and has helped with some minor repairs, as well as promoting fundraising efforts for the Lighthouse.

Our State Senator, Jack Martins, has secured \$1.5 million in funding for the Leeds Pond culvert project in the Village of Plandome Manor, ensuring this important initiative will move forward. Plandome Road is so vital in the daily life of our Town – and a key evacuation route in the event of an emergency – so we thank Senator Martins for working with the Town and the Village on this project. And let's give Senator Martins another "shout-out" for the \$100,000 grant he obtained for us from the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services for radar detection speed signs for our Town and Villages.

Many of our capital projects are funded through FEMA grants, along with Town funds, making our partnership with the federal government so important. Our advocacy efforts in Washington continue to be very successful. I would especially

like to thank Senator Chuck Schumer, who has been a strong and forceful advocate for our Town, as well as Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, former Congresswoman Carolyn McCarthy and Congressman Steve Israel – all of whom are good friends of our Town and have supported our efforts to bring federal dollars to North Hempstead. I am also looking forward to working with our new Congresswoman Kathleen Rice, who has pledged to advocate strongly for us.

Also, we learned just recently the great news that North Hempstead will be receiving \$5.8 million from FEMA for repairs and upgrades at North Hempstead Beach Park. This will enable us to build a sturdier and more durable parking lot so that the Park can be used again as an additional debris management site, should the need arise.

Thank you Senator Schumer for coming to our Town to see first-hand the damage to *our* waterfront caused by Superstorm Sandy and advocating so strongly for us, and thank you Senator Gillibrand for your support, as well.

We regularly meet and communicate with our local mayors – and explore ways we can collaborate with villages to save money – on emergency management issues, highway services and the like. Over this past year, we have seen a number of

positive results from these inter-municipal efforts that benefit us all. Thank you to Rachel Brinn, our Director of Intergovernmental Affairs.

In 2014, I was privileged to work with some of our Town's veterans to whom we owe so much for their sacrifices. I reactivated our Veterans Advisory Committee to enhance dialogue between the Town and veterans, and to better serve these greatly valued members of our community. The committee is a diverse group, with representatives from all parts of the Town, and each member brings a unique perspective and experience to the committee's mission. After an initial meeting in August, the committee got to work quickly on several projects. One was a veterans donation drive for items needed by vets at the Northport's Veterans Hospital. I am proud and pleased to say that the drive was a huge success, and the week before Christmas, Councilman Peter Zuckerman, Councilwoman Lee Seeman, committee members and I personally delivered more than 80 boxes full of personal items and clothing to the Hospital. This new committee is assuring that our veterans' voices are heard and that we are in a better position to address their needs and give them the recognition they so rightly deserve. Special thanks to Nick Guariglia and Artie Peltz of my staff for their efforts in helping to make the Veterans Advisory Committee a success this past year.

Now, I would now like to ask the members of the Veterans Committee who are here today to stand so we can recognize you for your service.

In June, North Hempstead was proclaimed a “Purple Heart Town,” joining other communities throughout Long Island and the nation that give special recognition to those heroes who were injured or killed in combat while serving our country. Our Town has a proud tradition of military service and many of our residents have earned the Purple Heart Medal as a result of being wounded in combat. I hope the sign placed at Mary Jane Davies Park in Manhasset and at other locations around the Town will serve as a reminder to residents of the dedication and service of all our veterans.

I have to tell you that one of the best parts of this job is getting out to meet with the dozens of senior groups in our Town. In 2014, I made close to 100 visits to senior groups, special senior events and FunDay Mondays at North Hempstead Beach Park! Every day, we strive to show our seniors how much we value them and that we owe them all a huge debt of gratitude for what they have done – and continue to do – for our Town.

During my visits, again and again I have heard our seniors express concern about the same issue – the need for affordable senior housing. It’s so important to be able

to provide our aging residents with safe and secure places to live, so they are not priced out of the community that they themselves helped build. So I am proud to say that we are currently studying two important senior housing initiatives in the Town – one on Community Drive near North Shore Hospital and another at the old Grand Street School property in New Cassel. I would like to thank our wonderful partner in this effort, the North Hempstead Housing Authority, especially Board Chair Matthew Cuomo and Executive Director Sean Rainey, not only for helping develop more opportunities for senior housing, but also for their dedication on behalf of all our residents in public housing in Great Neck, Manhasset, Roslyn, Port Washington and New Cassel.

In September, our outstanding North Hempstead Community Development Agency, led by Executive Director Dermot Kelly and Board Chair Lamont Bailey, together with Nassau County and the Long Island Housing Partnership, announced a home ownership lottery for the North Hempstead Housing Workforce Program, consisting of 15 affordable newly-constructed homes in New Cassel, for those eligible households that meet certain income requirements. I had the opportunity to attend the lottery and meet with the prospective homeowners, which was really thrilling. North Hempstead remains committed to creating more opportunities for

affordable housing, to make the dream of home ownership a reality for as many families as possible.

North Hempstead has a great tradition, going to back to the days when the legendary May Newburger represented our Town in the New York State Assembly, of strengthening laws, improving regulations and raising awareness to safeguard our aquifers and our drinking water. This is an effort to which I was dedicated as a County Legislator, holding a series of bi-partisan, bi-county aquifer meetings with Legislator William Spencer of Suffolk County to raise awareness about our aquifers and calling for the formation of a Long Island water compact to manage our shared water resources. Protecting and preserving the integrity of our underground aquifers will continue to be a top priority of this Administration, and I will continue to work in partnership with the Great Neck-Port Washington Aquifer Committee, with environmental advocates, and with our water suppliers.

In the coming year, we will focus on two issues of vital importance to protecting our water resources.

First, the time has come for establishment of a state oversight and enforcement mechanism, to ensure the sustainability of our water supply here on Long Island and I will press strongly at every opportunity to achieve this goal.

Second, Long Island is facing a real threat due to New York City's troubling plan to re-open dozens of now-dormant Jamaica wells in Queens, while repairs are being made elsewhere to the City's water supply infrastructure. These wells are expected to draw up to 40 million gallons of water per day from our Long Island aquifers. This proposal raises numerous questions and concerns at a time when our aquifer system is already under tremendous stress. The re-activation of wells in Queens, where ocean water has already invaded the aquifer system, could cause further saltwater intrusion, threatening the viability of our water supply. It could shift the trajectory of existing plumes of groundwater contamination, costing taxpayers millions of dollars in additional cleanup costs – and could create new pathways for groundwater contamination to enter the deeper aquifer system. Most troublingly, the City does not plan to examine the impacts to Long Island's water supply before it goes ahead with this project.

I am adamantly opposed to reactivating the Jamaica wells until a rigorous and impartial scientific study is performed and I will continue to be a strong voice in opposition to this project until we have the assurances to which we are entitled -- that our water supply will not be compromised by this plan.

I believe that the future of water conservation begins with educating our children. This past year, our t-shirt contest through the Community Services Department and our annual video contest through the Office of Sustainability, both had the theme of “Slow the Flow, Save H2O”. We will continue this theme with our students in the coming year and the video contest will focus on smart irrigation and reducing outdoor water usage.

Our Office of Sustainability continues to build on our existing partnerships with local school districts and last year established a new program to educate our young people regarding the importance of energy efficiency, adding to our established educational efforts in recycling, waste reduction and water conservation. Last year, our Environmental Education Program reached over 3,000 students and now includes an online environmental education presentation for use by civic groups, senior centers and individual households. The Office of Sustainability also does a great job on our Annual Trashion Show and Recycled Art Contest, two enjoyable learning events for our children in which they show their creativity with recycled materials.

North Hempstead is truly a “Recycling Town”! Our innovative School Recycling Partnership Program, guided by our Solid Waste Management Authority and the

Office of Sustainability, recycled an estimated 160 tons of paper and 28 tons of “co-mingled” waste last year, while helping to create lifelong recycling habits in our young people. In addition, the Town’s S.T.O.P. program accepted 30 tons of “e-waste” and two TONS of pharmaceuticals.

We’ve made great strides in taking the Yes We Can Community Center to the next level, in terms of its programming, utilization and community involvement and I can report that the Center is taking its rightful place as a vibrant and integral focal point of the community. In 2014, Yes We Can saw 1,683 new memberships and 2,437 renewed memberships. Rental uses of the facility have increased. The Center also hosted a wide variety of new recreation programs for children in the summer, during the Thanksgiving recess, and other holidays during the school year, providing activities when school is not in session. In addition, the Center runs an after-school activity program throughout the year. The Center has also hosted a number of prestigious organizations and events, including the New York State Workforce Partnership and the Long Island Green Infrastructure Conference. In addition, the Center was recently chosen as the location of Congresswoman Kathleen Rice’s swearing-in ceremony, a wonderful opportunity to showcase this state-of-the-art, Platinum LEED certified facility--one of the crown jewels of our Town and part of the great legacy of former Supervisor Kaiman.

Our Town's Animal Shelter is managed by a group of compassionate and dedicated employees – Shelter Director Jenna Givargidze and her team. Last year, the shelter saw 145 dogs adopted and 96 lost dogs reunited with their owners. During the snow storm this past week, employees slept there to care for the dogs. This past May, the Shelter benefitted from a long overdue investment in new kennels, which included upgraded indoor runs that provide a safer environment for the dogs.

I am pleased to report that a plan for the abandoned Roslyn Country Club property in Roslyn Heights is finally moving forward, thanks to the commitment and hard work of Councilman Peter Zuckerman, the Roslyn Country Club Civic Association and our Town staff. In November, we co-sponsored two community forums with the civic association to roll out detailed plans for a special district park. The community has been receptive and supportive of the plan to build a pool and tennis facility that will truly be the centerpiece of the Roslyn Country Club neighborhood and restore the heart of that community. We hope to see the opening of the park's tennis courts in the fall of this year.

Our Business and Tourism Development Corporation, under the excellent leadership of Executive Director Kim Kaiman, continues to broaden its mission

and do great work to promote business in our Town. We were recognized for the first time as a “Small Business Saturday” municipality and we are currently pursuing and supporting several business incubator initiatives. And we love watching “Business Buzz” on our own North Hempstead TV, produced by our talented studio director Alan Ginsberg, which highlights our local businesses. More and more people are visiting North Hempstead, as we continue to promote places of interest and great destinations. In 2014, the Town took in a record-breaking \$86,000 in permit fees for television and film productions, as we continue to promote the beautiful shoreline, waterfronts and areas in our spectacular Town.

I am proud that North Hempstead is part of President Obama’s initiative “My Brother’s Keeper” Challenge (MBK), which focuses on efforts to eliminate opportunity gaps, barriers and challenges facing youth in our community and to ensure that all young people can achieve their full potential. To this end, we held a Local Action Summit in November and we are now working with dozens of community leaders and stakeholders to identify effective strategies toward reaching several of the goals set for this program. Our team is meeting next week with MBK stakeholders to plan our next steps. My thanks to Chief of Staff Cindy Cardinal, who has been spearheading this project for us.

The 311 Call Center is the heartbeat of North Hempstead government and continues to be an invaluable resource for residents to report concerns, and have them recorded, tracked and responded to. At no time is the importance of 311 more evident than during a weather event, such as this week's blizzard. Special thanks to Deputy IT Commissioner for 311 Vinny Malizia and all the dedicated 311 staff members, who worked through the night this past Monday, logging more than 1,000 calls for information and assistance related to the storm. In 2014, the 311 Call Center answered 168,280 calls, an average of more than 3,000 a week! During times of emergency, it's comforting to know that you can reach out by phone and connect to an actual person who is there to give information and address your concerns.

Our IT department, led by our dedicated Commissioner Frank Prisciandaro, has been busy working on several initiatives that have improved efficiency and transparency in our government. Our meeting agendas are now paperless, saving money and our trees. Our residents now have the ability to watch Town Board meetings live on their computers, tablets and smart phones. Our new Webtrac system makes viewing and registering for our parks programs easy and convenient.

The "My North Hempstead" mobile app is up and running and allows users to make tee time reservations at the Harbor Links golf course, check on their

recycling schedule, or report a pothole. Now 311 services can be accessed 24/7 and you will receive email confirmation and a tracking number, so you can follow up on your request.

We have more forms available online than ever before, so residents can enter and, more importantly, check the status of a service request. We will be adding even more user-friendly initiatives, such as credit card payments, to the Town Clerk's Office, Animal Shelter and Building Department. We're always looking for ways to make your interactions with Town government easier and more efficient!

The Highway Department continues to be the backbone of our Town. The quality of life of our residents is so impacted by the hard work and commitment of our Highway Superintendent Tom Tiernan and his staff. Last year, Highway crews filled 888 potholes brought to our attention by residents using the 311 system and repaired nearly 500 more, as part of our regular road maintenance program. We continue to live up to our promise of filling potholes within two business days after they are reported to 311. The Town also resurfaced 15 lane-miles of our roads.

We've had only one big storm so far this winter, but the dedicated workers of our Highway Department, under the extraordinary leadership of Superintendent Tiernan, are ready for whatever challenges come our way and we can always count on them to keep our roads plowed, cleaned, maintained, open and safe throughout

all four seasons. We appreciate that, as well as the myriad of other things that they do.

Our parks are another extraordinary resource of our town. We are continuing long-term investment in our parks, while at the same time enhancing programs, particularly for younger families.

Let's look at a few highlights. The Town sponsored 30 successful concerts and a magnificent Memorial Day weekend fireworks display that was viewed by one of the largest crowds ever at North Hempstead Beach Park. In the milder weather, our Town parks were a beehive of skateboarding, swimming, tennis, golf and we even offered a boot camp! The Town's parks and pools saw over 5,000 new memberships and 12,333 renewed memberships. North Hempstead Beach Park had a total of 9,081 total daily passes and annual parking permits issued, up from last year's 8,171. We really had it going on in our parks during 2014 and it's only going to get better in 2015! In the coming year, look for increased programming on the water, including expanded kayaking, paddle boarding and sailing programs, as well as new fitness and family activities. We know our new parks Commissioner Jill Weber will bring so much to our residents. I would also like to give a special

thanks to former Commissioner Jerry Olsen for watching over our Parks Department with great care the past year.

Our Community Services Department should be renamed “The Office of Fun,” as they brought us our very first BeachFeast 2014, which was a huge success.

Ecofest, Kidstock and Asian Fest were also some of the highlights of this year’s social calendar. All this in addition to supporting every event hosted by the Town.

Kim and her staff are everywhere demonstrating care and love for our residents.

Going to an event is like attending a family reunion. Of course these efforts are all inter-departmental in nature and couldn’t succeed without the hard work of our Public Safety, Parks and Highway departments, as well as the cooperation of our police and fire departments.

Our Public Safety Department, under the leadership of Commissioner Andrew DeMartin, does an outstanding job watching over our parks and facilities and is instrumental in our emergency management efforts. We are continuing to expand our security camera program at all our Town facilities, in order to keep our residents safe and to prevent theft and graffiti. The Department keeps careful watch over our waterways and boaters with our wonderful Bay Constables. The Port Washington Parking District is now part of our Public Safety Department and

Deputy Commissioner Shawn Brown is off to a great start in making it more responsive and efficient for our residents.

Our beautiful waterfront and shoreline are among our Town's most valued – and valuable – resources. Waterfront property along Hempstead Harbor, in Glenwood Landing, Roslyn Harbor, Roslyn and Port Washington is second to none. However, the reality is that beautiful residences, businesses, Town parks and municipal facilities co-exist along with industrial uses that have been there for decades. We can't turn the clock back, but we can – and must – make the most of our incredible Hempstead Harbor waterfront for the future.

We are working to develop a comprehensive vision for our Hempstead Harbor waterfront that could include dining facilities, a marina, tennis, paddleboard, Jet Ski rentals, and an extended shoreline trail, improved rowing facilities and enhanced recreational opportunities for all residents. Next month, I will be meeting with officials from the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation to tour several of their successful waterfront park facilities, as we look to other municipalities for inspiration for our waterfront.

We recently issued a “Request for Expressions of Interest” from qualified proposers for a restaurant at North Hempstead Beach Park. Working with our

villages, civic and environmental groups, and interested citizens, we will take the lead in making the 34 acres of North Hempstead Beach Park a true destination spot in our Town!

I want to take this opportunity to acknowledge the dedication and professionalism of our department heads. Their work makes it possible for our Town government to function in the outstanding manner that it does and helps us serve you better. It is a pleasure to recognize and thank each one of them, and I will ask you to stand if you are present:

Kimberly Corcoran-Galante - Commissioner of Community Services AND the Commissioner of Department of Services for the Aging

Andrew DeMartin - Commissioner of Public Safety

Paul DiMaria - Commissioner of Public Works

Peter Hoda - Commissioner of Administrative Services. He and his staff have been quiet heroes throughout our storms.

Kim Kaiman - Executive Director of BTDC

Dermot Kelly - Executive Director of CDA

Michael Levine - Commissioner of Planning. Thanks for doing double duty this year as Acting Commissioner of the Building Department

John Niewender - Commissioner of Buildings, Safety and Enforcement. It's wonderful to see the new spirit of cooperation between these two departments.

Frank Prisciandaro - Commissioner of IT & Telecommunications

Sean Rainey - Executive Director of North Hempstead Housing Authority

Igor Sikiric – Executive Director of SWMA

Tom Tiernan - Superintendent of Highways

Carole Trottere - Director of Communications

Jill Weber - Commissioner of Parks and Recreation

Howard Weitzman - Financial Consultant

Bob Weitzner - Commissioner of Finance. No one does employee training programs better than Mayor Bob.

Two other department heads are elected officials and they deserve special recognition for their many years of service to our community. Receiver of Taxes Charles Berman and his staff collect and disburse over \$1 billion each year without missing a beat – or a dollar! Town Clerk Wayne Wink and his staff oversee vital records, licensing, towing, taxis and a host of other important functions and they do an exemplary job keeping all of the Town's official records in order and accessible to our staff and the public.

I also want to express my deep appreciation to our outstanding unionized work force. When I speak about our great highway, parks and public safety employees, these are our CSEA members and they are always on the job for us! That goes for all 400-plus workers in our Town! Let's acknowledge and thank all the dedicated employees of our Town!

We strive to maintain our excellent relations with CSEA, under the leadership of CSEA Unit President Kevin Williams, and I look forward to continuing our positive working relationship in the coming year.

I also want to thank those who serve on our Town government boards and commissions, including the Board of Zoning Appeals, Community Development Agency Board of Directors, Housing Authority Board of Commissioners, Ethics Board, Historic Landmarks Commission and many others. Your dedication to our Town is acknowledged and much appreciated. Please thank all the members of our boards and commissions!

Finally, I would like to acknowledge my management team and Supervisor's staff, each one of them highly capable, professional and dedicated to doing the very best for North Hempstead: Deputy Supervisor Aline Khatchadourian, Director of Operations Robert Troiano, Town Attorney Elizabeth Botwin, Chief of Staff Cindy

Cardinal, Deputy Chief of Staff Nick Guariglia, Director of Intergovernmental Affairs Rachel Brinn, Director of Communications Carole Trottere and the Communications Office staff, as well as Stephanie Ciaccio, Artie Peltz, Rob Cohen and Estefany Garay. And a special thank you to our TownStat Director Steve Pollack, who provided all the statistics I shared with you today. Steve does such a great job of helping us keep track of how we're doing!

Each transition to a new Administration brings with it unique and special Challenges – and I readily admit that was the case for me at the beginning of 2014.

Now, having just completed a busy, energizing, exciting and accomplishment-filled first year as your Town Supervisor, I can share with you what I've found is really the best part of the job – having the opportunity to work together every day – and I have to tell you, that's sometimes literally seven days a week – with our elected officials, Town staff, community and civic groups and individual citizens in a cooperative, collaborative, caring and inclusive way, to get positive things done for our Town and for our residents.

Our new North Hempstead Team has come together. I am so honored and humbled to have been given the privilege to lead it and I look forward with anticipation to another great year for our Town in 2015!

(Pick up May Newburger speech again and read the marked paragraph)

“As tough as it sometimes was, this has been a wonderful and challenging job for me, and I hope to continue. There’s still so much to do—some of it tough, some of it easy—but all of it rewarding.”

That’s another line or two from former Supervisor May Newburger. And I have to say once again, May, twenty years later, I couldn’t agree more!

Thank you.

And now it’s time for questions!