

August 28, 2024

When I was elected Mayor, I was committed to being transparent and communicating clearly with residents. I was also optimistic that I could help find a solution for St. Paul's. The October 2023 Opinion Poll told us that a majority of the residents who participated supported assessing community needs and evaluating the affordability of adaptive reuse and the affordability of saving parts of the building. After 30 years of watching the building deteriorate and community frustration grow, I believed that it was time to come up with a path forward and I was up for the challenge.

Along with the last Board of Trustees and a group of dedicated volunteers on the Mayor's Advisory Committee, a consulting firm was hired in a unanimous vote to support us in the journey. Critical to the strategy was making sure that we listened to residents. This is important because any plan for St. Paul's requires a tax on residents and we have to make sure we know what the majority of residents are willing to spend.

"It's different this time" was the mantra. The difference was that the process would be driven by the community and not by any elected officials or committees. We would survey the community about recreational needs and about St. Paul's to understand community sentiment about the building and the degree of willingness to fund any project. Originally it was going to be one survey, but a decision was made with input from the newly elected trustees to separate recreation and St. Paul's sentiment into two surveys. After marrying the data from the two surveys, the plan was to present architectural concepts for the community to review. By engaging residents all along, our hope was that we would minimize any surprises at a bond vote and garner the widespread support needed for execution of a project.

As the summer draws to a close, the recreation survey has wrapped up, and in September there will be discussion about the St. Paul's survey. I remain committed to the community-driven approach and hope we are able to follow the advice of the highly qualified consultants we hired to assist us. I will not waiver in my commitment to transparency and to being completely honest with residents about costs associated with any proposed projects and about how the Board of Trustees plans to approach finding a solution for St. Paul's.

PROPOSED SANDS CASINO UPDATE

The SEQRA process will review all impacts of the proposed Sands Casino, such as traffic, pollution and crime. This process will take about six months and there will be multiple public hearings. The first hearing is Monday, Sept. 9, 2024 at 5 p.m. at 1550 Franklin Avenue in Mineola. Speakers will have up to three minutes to speak. Written comments can be sent to mpulitzer@nassaucountyny.gov. Earlier this month, the Legislature approved a lease agreement with Las Vegas Sands for 42 years solely to operate the Coliseum. This lease with Sands will give them control of the 72-acre property for 42 years even if they are not awarded a casino license. They also voted to start the environmental review (SEQRA) of Sands' proposal for a casino. If Sands gets through SEQRA and rezoning, the next step is the approval of a five-member Community Advisory Committee (sometime in the third quarter of 2025). Members will be chosen by Governor Kathy Hochul, County Executive Bruce Blakeman, Town Supervisor Donald Clavin, Assemblyman Edward Ra and a State Senator TBD.

ADJUSTED POOL HOURS

Thank you for another fun and exciting Pool season. Hours are now 12:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Monday to Friday and 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. So much is happening this holiday weekend at the Pool - enjoy the County Line Band at 2:00 p.m. Saturday, Melted Ed and Cousin Dan at 2:00 p.m. on Sunday and DJ Bob at 6:00 p.m. on Monday. The Pool will close for the season at 8:00 p.m. Monday, September 2, Labor Day.

CHESS4COMMUNITY

Chess4Community, the first volunteer chess program in Garden City, was founded by Mannat Jain, along with his sister Amanat and younger brother Armaan. The program started at the Garden City Senior Center in September 2022 and expanded to the Public Library in January 2023. Their mission, “paying this cultural and generational debt forward by teaching Seniors Chess,” required the Jain siblings to carefully establish the program’s framework and ensure its sustainability. The siblings all have FIDE/USCF Chess Ratings and started playing chess at age 5. The program’s first tournament was held in November 2022, with prizes awarded by Garden City High School Principal Mr. Kevin Steingruebner. In September 2023, Chess4Community returned with an E-Learning Chess Course for seniors. Mannat and Amanat led the marketing efforts, creating posters and managing social media, which generated significant community interest. The siblings’ dedication was evident in their professional handling of logistics and their ability to extend sessions due to high engagement. A second tournament was held on October 27, 2023, with prizes presented by Deputy Mayor Lawrence Marciano and Trustee Michele Beach Harrington. In February 2024, the Jain siblings launched the "Play & Learn" program at both the senior center and public library, further enriching seniors' lives through interactive chess sessions. Chess4Community will host its first multigenerational chess tournament on September 27, 2024, marking the start of their third season and fulfilling their vision of uniting the community through chess.

BACK-TO-SCHOOL SAFETY MEASURES

The Garden City Police Department would like to bring to your attention the upcoming commencement of the 24/25 school year and the need to ensure back-to-school safety for all our students. As we approach the beginning of the academic year, it is crucial to remind drivers to be extra mindful of back-to-school safety measures. With this in mind, the Garden City Police Department will conduct increased traffic enforcement to promote safe driving practices. During this initiative, Officers will conduct traffic enforcement throughout the Village, concentrating on the vicinity of school zones, bus stop locations, and routes utilized by student walkers. Overtime for this initiative is subsidized by STEP (Selective Traffic Enforcement Program) grants. We urge parents and guardians to engage in discussions with their children about traffic safety, emphasizing the importance of observing traffic rules, using designated crosswalks, and being cautious around school buses. It is our collective responsibility to create a safe environment for our students as they commute to and from school. Commissioner Jackson states, “We appreciate your cooperation and support in spreading awareness about back-to-school safety within our community.”

FIRST RESPONDER AWARDS

I had the honor of attending Congressman D’Esposito’s First Responder Awards ceremony August 22 with Trustees Finneran and Torino. Thank you Congressman D’Esposito for recognizing members of our outstanding police department and volunteer fire department. The following officers and firefighters were honored:

- ex-Chief Len Rivera
- Det. Steven Roumeliotis
- Officer James Gunnels
- Officer Thomas Schade
- Detective Kevin Madden
- Detective Paul Hennessy
- Lt. Matthew Walsh
- Officer Michael Titterton
- PCO Dana Gasparec
- Detective Lieutenant William Grimes
- Police Officer Christopher Caiazza

- Police Officer Nicholas Pumilia
- Detective Kevin Madden
- Detective Lawrence Petraglia
- Officer Tiffany D'Alessandro

SANITATION COLLECTION - LABOR DAY HOLIDAY WEEK

Residents are reminded that there will be no garbage pickup on Monday, September 2, 2024. The Holiday Week Collection Schedule will be as follows:

GARBAGE

Western Half of Village: Tuesday and Friday

Eastern Half of Village: Wednesday and Saturday

RUBBISH

Entire Village: Thursday, September 5th

RECYCLING

Residents scheduled for recycling on Monday, September 2nd, are asked to put their recyclables out on Labor Day.

HAPPENING IN GARDEN CITY

FRIDAY, AUGUST 30 5:30 p.m. The Hambones will perform at the Pool for members and guests

SATURDAY, AUGUST 31 2:00 p.m. County Line Band will play country music for Pool members and guests

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 1 2:00 p.m. Music with Cousins Duo for Pool members and guests

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 2 6:00 p.m. DJ Bob will play music for Pool members and guests

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 3 4:00 p.m. Teen Advisory Board meeting at the Library. Must register.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 5 10:00 a.m. Mah-Jongg at the Library. Must register.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 6 3:30 p.m. Teen Gamers at the Library. Must register.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 9 1:30 p.m. Monday Movie Matinée: *Ezra* at the Library

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 9 7:30 p.m. Board of Library Trustees meeting at the Library

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10 10:00 a.m. Beginner Mah Jongg lessons with Chris Levchuck at the Senior Center, \$100 for eight weeks. Pay at the Recreation Office or see Felicia at the Senior Center.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10 11:00 a.m. Learn how to use Library services like Libby, Hoopla and Flipster at the Library. Must register.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 12 7:00 p.m. Make friendship bracelets for community service at the Library. Must register.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11 7:00 p.m. The Garden City FD will host its 9/11 remembrance ceremony at the September 11, 2001 monument

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 13 9:00 a.m. Adult Art class at Cluett Hall. Ten-week program. Must register at the Rec office on Rockaway Avenue or, if you have a password, online at gcreconline.net.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 14 1:00 p.m. The Carlyle Players will perform *Now and Then* at the Library

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 18 7:00 p.m. Lighting of the gold tree on the Village Green in honor of Pediatric Cancer Awareness Month