



Mayor Stuart K. Patrick 2020 Year-End Report

Introduction

I would like to welcome everyone to this, the 126th reorganizational meeting of the Borough Council of Glen Ridge. Tonight, we have sworn-in returning Councilors Deborah Mans and David Lefkovits, who have already served on this Council for 3 and 9 years, respectively. We have also appointed the numerous volunteers who so ably and unselfishly staff our various boards, commissions and committees while also recognizing any volunteers who have completed their valued service to the Borough.

Let me begin by first extending an official welcome back to Councilor Mans who will continue to ably and energetically Chair the Community Affairs and Public Relations Committee. I would also like to extend my congratulations and welcome back to Councilor Lefkovits, who is returning to the Council after a one-year hiatus in 2020, and who will Chair the Public Works Committee. Additionally, I would like to congratulate Erik DeLine on his well-earned appointment as Deputy Administrator. Erik joined us in 2019 as our Director of Planning and Development and his strong work ethic earned him this appointment. We look forward to working with him in 2021. Finally, I would like to extend our thanks and appreciation to Councilor Murphy who, along with his many other volunteer activities, has served this Council with distinction over the past 7 years.

I cannot thank you and all the members of the Council and your families enough for the service you render to the residents of Glen Ridge. You have proven yourselves to be excellent stewards of our community, and have given unselfishly of your time, energy, and personal talents to maintain and promote the high quality of life and standards of good government that we have all come to appreciate in Glen Ridge.

Finally, on behalf of myself and the Borough Council, I wish to acknowledge and commend James Ashenfelter who has completed his valued service, after 17 years, on the Board of Adjustment.

Year-End 2020 COVID-19 Remarks

I wish to begin this discussion of Covid-19 by sincerely thanking our residents for the ways in which they met and dealt with the horrors and unknowns of this deadly pandemic throughout the past 11 months. I believe our residents 1) displayed grace under tremendous pressure, especially in dealing with the tragic loss of Officer Roberts and the prolonged lockdown to which they were subjected, 2) demonstrated their understanding

in accepting numerous decisions, that many clearly disagreed with, such as the suspension of trick or treating and other normal Halloween events, suspension of the annual Thanksgiving Day Ashenfelter and Tom Fleming runs, suspension of all youth indoor and outdoor organized winter sports, the closure of all Borough rest rooms at the tennis courts and athletic fields, etc. 3) gave generously and engaged in numerous acts of kindness such as our residents who adopted seniors and did their grocery shopping for them, our ambulance squad which stayed the course and, despite the pandemic, continued to make house calls whereas many other squads ceased making such calls, and residents who contributed substantial amounts of money to fund gift cards for people in need of food and even one case where 13 residents individually volunteered to purchase a new refrigerator for a resident who could not afford to replace his refrigerator that was beyond repair and 4) exhibited their continuing cooperation by wearing masks, social distancing, washing their hands and adhering to the limitations on the size of gatherings, etc. Again, on behalf of myself, the Council and Borough Administration, I wish to express our profound appreciation to each and every one of our residents for your patience, understanding and cooperation. Your coming together, as a strongly united community, really did make our jobs, and the often tough decisions we were compelled to make, much easier for everyone concerned.

As we move into 2021, we now have vaccines that offer us a way out of this horrific pandemic which since inception has spawned 19.8 million total positive cases of COVID-19 in the United States and 82.8 million cases worldwide. Additionally, it has propagated at least 343,000 deaths in the United States and 1.81 million deaths worldwide. It should also be noted that this pandemic has also had devastating impacts on the previously normal lives of virtually every human being in the world. So, the containment or eradication of COVID-19 will also allow us to return to our previous personal normals. As recent statistics make clear, this pandemic is not over or even close to being contained. I therefore urge all our residents to now, more than ever, put Covid fatigue and despair aside, stay the course by remaining fully committed to practicing COVID-19 safe etiquette and avoiding high risk activities that make it less safe for everyone else. Finally, please give serious consideration to taking the Covid vaccine when it is made available to you.

On behalf of myself, the Borough Council and Administration I wish you all a very happy and healthy New Year.