

**NOTICE OF MEETING**

Notice is hereby given that the Legislature of Rockland County will meet in its Chambers in the Allison-Parris Office Building, New City, New York on Wednesday, January 4, 2012 at 7:00 P.M., for the purpose of organizing said Legislature and selecting a Chairperson and such other items as may be required by law, contract or financial necessity.

Very truly yours,

LAURENCE O. TOOLE  
Clerk to the Legislature

Dated at New City, New York  
this 29<sup>th</sup> day of December 2011

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The Legislature of Rockland County convened in regular session pursuant to adjournment of the December 28, 2011 special meeting.

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Laurence O. Toole, Clerk to the Legislature

Good Evening, my name is Larry Toole, I am the Clerk to the Rockland County Legislature. It is my honor to chair this meeting until the selection of the Chairperson for 2012.

At this time I will call upon Deputy Clerk Mary Widmer to call the roll.

A Roll Call being taken, the following Legislators were present and answered to their names:

- Christopher J. Carey
- Harriet D. Cornell
- Edwin J. Day
- Toney L. Earl
- Michael M. Grant
- Jay Hood, Jr.
- Douglas J. Jobson
- Nancy Low-Hogan
- Joseph L. Meyers
- Patrick J. Moroney
- John A. Murphy
- Aney Paul
- Ilan S. Schoenberger
- Philip Soskin
- Aron B. Wieder
- Alden H. Wolfe

Late: Legislator Frank P. Sparaco (7:35 p.m.)

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Harriet D. Cornell led in the salute to the flag.  
Lindsay McCandlees, College of St. Rose, sang the *God Bless America*

Former Legislator Gerold M. Bierker delivered the invocation.

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The swearing-in of the Rockland County Legislature for 2012. The Honorable Rockland County Clerk, Paul Piperato administered the Oath of Office to all members of the Rockland County Legislature.

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Laurence O. Toole called up each Legislator individually to sign the book and to make their remarks.

Legislator Douglas J. Jobson, District 1

I just want to thank everyone for coming out tonight. I want to wish each of my colleagues, their families and everyone here a very happy and health 2012. I want to thank all the people who have supported and my endeavors to gain reelection and for their overwhelming support. I hope to represent them well over another term here in this Legislature with my colleagues that have been elected here also. Thank you.

Legislator Michael M. Grant, District 2

Legislator Grant signed the book and will be speaking later in the meeting.

Legislator Jay Hood, Jr., District 3

I would like to thank the people who put me here, the voters, for supporting me overwhelming on the last election. I hope that I can do the job in the way you will be proud of. I want to thank my family, my mother Kathy, my wife Julie and my two wonderful sons. I really rely on them a lot especially during an election where I am out a lot and go to a lot of night meetings. I rely so much on my wife to take care of our two kids. I always said that they are really good kids and she is doing a wonderful job. Lastly, it is hard to be here tonight and not think of my father. This is my first election period that he wasn't there to be my guide. I don't know how I made it through, but I did, without him. He was my guide, my mentor and my best friend and my thoughts are of him tonight. Thank you.

Legislator Ilan S. Schoenberger, District 4

Thank you all for coming tonight. I appreciate you coming out not just for me, but also for all of us and to show your support for all of us and be there to help us make good decisions for the people of Rockland County. I want to thank my wife and my children. I want to thank the people of my district who supported me. I hope that we can all work together, collectively, next year for the best interest of the people of Rockland County. I look forward to four more years with all of you together. Thank you.

Legislator Edwin J. Day, District 5

Good evening. I would like to extend my congratulations and best wishes to all my fellow Legislators and offer some acknowledgments to some very special people.

First and foremost, I need to thank my family, my true inner strength, beginning with my wife Jean. She has embodied for more than 30 years what a "cop's wife" needs to be to keep a family together, and her support of me has been unwavering, irrespective of danger, time or convenience. I am blessed to have her by my side.

When I was elected to my first full term four years ago, my eldest son Chris could not be here, because he was serving our country as an officer in the U.S. Army. I am thankful that he has successfully completed his combat missions and has come home safe to us. I am as proud as a father can be of the extraordinary accomplishments he has already achieved in his young life, and thank him for bringing us a most special gift, our first grandchild "CJ".

While my youngest son Mike was here with me back then, this time out it is he who is the one that the U.S. Army has. This evening I will hold a quiet thought within me of this special young man of whom I am immensely proud.

I want to thank my friends and supporters from varied backgrounds and political persuasions, including some leaders in the community, who took the time to be here with me tonight, and for again showing their faith in me. Some who I see here include Pete Vitro and Bob McLoughlin, President and Vice President of the Little Tor Neighborhood Association here in New City; Steve Weissblatt, President of the New City Chamber of Commerce; Diana Hess of Jawonio and Gillian Ballard of Big Brothers/Big Sisters, both organizations of which I serve as Legislative liaison; and Jim Kelly and Mike Fennessy, President and past President of the Rockland County PBA. These are some of the folks found within the true heart and spirit of my community, civic associations, our schools, law enforcement and emergency responders, youth sports organizations, and neighbors, all of whom understand the mantra of "people before party and politics".

To my neighbors in District 5, here in New City and Pomona, your overwhelming support of me at the ballot box brings to me both humility and a renewed vigor of purpose. I sincerely thank you all for the support, but most of all, I thank you for your trust. That trust is something I will always treasure for hereon in as long I serve you here in these chambers.

For sure these are difficult times. But it is imperative that we reject the negativity that does nothing, but cast a pall over this community. It is time to look forward, to believe that better things lie ahead for ourselves, our families, and our community. Why? Because deep down inside we all believe in this special place called Rockland County. It is worth fighting for, and it is worth believing in. We must believe. We owe that to those who we will leave Rockland County too, our children and grandchildren. Yes, for me this is personal. I am hopeful that it is personal for everybody in this room and everybody who can hear my voice.

My pledge to you is simple tonight. I will serve the people of Rockland tirelessly and to the absolute best of my ability. I will meet head on the challenges that confront our families and I will continue to provide the independence and leadership that you have come to expect of me as we address these challenges. Nothing will either divert me or distract me from this covenant, which I have accepted by virtue of serving in a position of public trust.

I close my comments with a good thought for the brave men and women who serve our country in the armed forces of the United States of America, and thank them for providing the very liberty that brings us all here tonight to celebrate the democracy that is our representative form of government. God bless each and every one of them, and may god bless this great country of ours. Thank you.

#### Legislator Alden H. Wolfe, District 6

Legislator Wolfe signed the book and will be speaking later in the meeting.

#### Legislator Philip Soskin, District 7

I am always told I speak to long so I prepared a very short speech. I want to thank all of you for coming here. I went to a swearing-in the other night and one of the candidates who was sworn-in as a Judge said that he assumed that everybody in the room was there for him. Well, I am going to make that same assumption. Not only all of you for me, but all seventeen of us, because we have to work as one unit to do the best we can for the County.

I want to thank the staff of the Legislature for putting everything together this evening and for all the hard work they have done not only for this event, but also all through the years. I have been here nine years and starting my third term. I want to welcome the new Legislators Chris Carey, Nancy Low-Hogan, Aney Paul and Aron Wieder.

I would like to thank my wife of 52 years who has put up with me that whole time. We have many meetings and many things going on and I am never home. Thank you for putting up with me.

I pledge to do my best for the County, my District 7 as well as the rest of the County. As I have said many times, if anybody has any problems please call me and it doesn't matter if you are in my district as long as you live in Rockland County.

We are a very diverse group here in the County. We have many races and many religions. We all have to learn to live together and that is the most important thing. Remember, what affects one of us one time may affect the rest of us at another time. If you read the newspapers you could see events that have occurred in one part of the world that have now spread to other parts of the world. So let's here in Rockland County work together. If you ever have any suggestions the only way we know what is going is if you speak out and let me know and we will see what we can do to help you, be it from taxes to fallen trees, no matter what.

Again, I thank all of you for coming. I wish you a Happy New Year. May the good Lord watch over us and guide us in everything we do. God Bless America and God bless our troops over seas.

Legislator Toney L. Earl, District 8

Madam Chair Cornell, fellow Legislators and distinguished guests, good evening.

I must take a couple of minutes to thank a number of people. First, thank you to Paul Piperato for the swearing-in. And as I reflect on how I come to be before you tonight, I must again thank the Ramapo Democratic Committee members from Legislative District 8 who a little more than a year ago recommended that I be their representative on this Legislative body. Thank you to this Legislative body for sustaining that recommendation by voting to give me the opportunity to build the relationships to effectively serve the people of Rockland County as their representative from District 8. Thank you to my campaign committee and all those who worked with me to insure that my message to the voters for 2012 and beyond were heard and understood. Thanks especially to my wife Idette whose organizational skills were and are essential to my success. Thank you to my campaign leaders, Chris Sampson and Mike Reilly. I also want to thank a young man, Jarrett Oates, a young Democrat, who got members of his peer group committed to my campaign. I could not have done this without your help – George Darden, Larry Toole, Brenda Atkins, Fran Hunter and CSEA, just to name a few. And most of all, thank you to the voters of District 8 who put their trust in me at the ballot box this past November.

I am thankful for and proud to be a part of this Legislative body that has provided a 2012 budget that respects the values of each taxpayer's hard earned dollars while reassuring those community based organizations that supplement County services to the public that they too are vital partners with this Rockland County government.

Last, but not least, thanks to all of you for sharing this evening with me, and my fellow Legislators. May God bless you, may God bless Rockland County and my God bless America.

Legislator Christopher J. Carey

It is my honor and privilege to stand before you tonight as the new Rockland County Legislator for District 9. Accomplishments like this do not happen by accident. They are the result of a great deal of hard work and dedication by many people. For that, I owe the following people a great deal of thanks. Most importantly, I would like to thank the voters in Legislative District 9 for their trust and support. I will strive everyday to live up to that great responsibility.

I would like to thank my loving wife, Maureen, for all her support during the campaign. She is no fan of politics, but she stood by me every step of the way during this campaign and I can't thank her enough. As everybody up here knows, you are never around and someone has to keep things going and it was definitely my wife. To my beautiful daughters, Tara and Anna, it was your inspirational words of "Dad, don't embarrass us" that got me through the dog days of summer on the campaign trail. I have to say that I am choosing to spin them into something positive. To my mother who could not be here tonight due to health issues, I thank you for all your love, the insight you have given me as well as your generosity. To my father who was sworn into office thirty years ago as Councilman for Clarkstown Town Board, I know you are up there keeping an eye on me. I hope to make you very proud.

To my campaign manager and friend, Bob Zeiss. He put his life on hold for two years. I would not be standing up here tonight without him. Thank you. To my political partner George Hoehmann. We have come a long way since your basement in 2003. We lost that election we were working on together then, but more importantly we learned how to win.

To the party leaders that supported me: Vinne Reda and Bob Axelrod from the Republican Party, Thank you; Eddie Lettre and Mary Loeffler from the Conservative Party, thank you; and the Independence Party Leadership, thank you.

To the out going Legislators Gerry Bierker and Bob Jackson, your friendship, support and guidance meant a great deal to me. I have some very tough shoes to fill. Thank you for your support.

To the greatest grass-roots campaign team any candidate could ask for: Dave DeJoy, my Treasurer, Guy and Jeannine Festa, Maryann Collopy, Pierce and Cathy Redmond, Chris and Marybeth Maloney, Will and Maureen Riley, Laurie and Dan Sterns, Pete Huges, Anne Marie Smith, Jean Meehan, Ann Marie Meehan, Anthony Papa, Greg Manning, Pete McCormick, Bucky Berran, Karen McCombs, Christine McCarthy, Tom McKiernan, Ed and Joannie Hefe, Ray and Teri McCullagh, Gary Hughs, Trish Ranieri, Meredith Talisman and Pete Ahel. And to the many others that I have inadvertently left off the list, thank you.

In the coming days and weeks, we will engage in a bipartisan process to address the fiscal house of Rockland County. We all know that changes need to occur and difficult decisions will need to be made. Above all we will need to find a new and better way to govern. I pledge to the residents of District 9, the citizens of Rockland County and my fellow Legislators that I will work diligently these next four years to make Rockland County the best that it can possibly be.

I thank you for your support and look forward to serving you during the next four years.

Legislator Harriet D. Cornell, District 10

Legislator Cornell signed the book and will be speaking later in the meeting.

Legislator Frank P. Sparaco, District 11

Good evening ladies and gentlemen, what a great crowd. I want to thank the outgoing Legislators. I learned a lot from all of them. I worked fairly well with all of them. When I came into the Legislature and 30 years old I thought I knew everything, four years ago, and I still think I know everything, but the truth is I didn't. They opened my eyes and mind to many issues and taught me a lot. I just wanted to thank them. As far as the incoming Legislators, welcome. It is going to be great working with all of you. Congratulations on your wins.

I have to thank the residents of District 11 for supporting me. I took some pretty politically incorrect stances over the past four years taking a hard line on taxes and fiscal responsibility. It really meant a lot for the constituents to come out in overwhelming numbers and support me. To give me the confidence and the wind in my sails to tell me that, yes I am representing them and yes I am going in the right direction that they want me to go. Many times I would consult my constituents with email blasts and robocalls and it is really great feeling to have the support of your friends, neighbors and your whole community.

We have a long road ahead of us for the next four years. We are going to have to pull together, pull our ideas, compromise and find a solution to the disastrous position that County government currently finds itself. Nobody runs for this office, because they want to lay people off. Nobody runs for this office, because they want to raise property taxes 30%. When the political campaigning is over and it is time for us to all sit down and come up with real solutions that is when the difficult decisions need to be made on both sides of the isle. I am willing to do that this year and for this whole term and I am sure my colleagues are also.

Thank you.

Legislator Joseph L. Meyers, District 12

Thank you everyone for coming this evening. We work together as a body and I am sure we will continue to do that over the next four years.

I would first like to express my appreciation to the people of the 12<sup>th</sup> Legislative district in Suffern, Airmont and Hillburn for reelecting me as their Legislator. I am very proud that I have been returned to office with 84% of the vote and honored to have received the second highest vote total of any Legislative candidate in Rockland County. The first highest was Ed Day, of course, he was running unopposed.

There are a few key underlying issues that affect our County and threaten our future. One of them is the terrible polarization that exists in the Town of Ramapo and the underlying issues causing that polarization, which together threaten, not only, a positive future for my town, but also a positive future for the entire County. In the next four years I want to work with good people inside and outside of Ramapo to make a positive difference in these areas and to strike a balance. Working together, religious and secular, developers and residents, non-profit property owners and taxpayers, we can affect positive change if we are willing to do so and we can learn to live and work and raise families together. That will be my goal over the next four years.

There is a second issue, which has been a passion of mine, and that is the need to make the difficult decisions to restore our County's financial health. I pledge to continue to work towards that end over the next four years.

In closing, I hope that our newly elected County Legislature will bring an atmosphere of enthusiastic independence to this body. We need good people who realize that they are here to lead not to follow. Only then can we find real solutions to the most difficult problems that plague our County. Thank you.

Legislator Aron B. Wieder, District 13

I would like to thank all of you that have come here tonight. We all gather here tonight, because Rockland's have faith that this current body will be able to navigate the County and the stormy and rocky times ahead of us. The County is facing monumental challenges of historic proportions. Truth be told, we are not unique, the prevailing outlook for the State and elsewhere is as bleak as it gets. Unemployment is high, inflation is on the rise, the real estate market is depreciating, taxes are high and governmental services are constantly being cut. But we here in Rockland County are blessed with these wonderful people that have pledged tonight to do the very best they can to face these challenges. Let us also not forget that challenges are opportunities. In fact, sometimes the sole ingredient of our opportunity is challenge.

Being elected is a very humbling experience yet at the very same time it is an exhilarating and exciting adventure, which I am looking forward to. There is no way that this could have been accomplished without the help of truly wonderful people. It was only with the support of my wonderful family and the hard work and dedication of the team that I can stand here tonight as the first Hasidic Legislator. The wonderful team gathered signatures, fundraised, made phone calls, handed out flyers and worked hard to the wee hours of the night and for that I owe them a depth of gratitude. Of course, I would like to thank each and every vote of District 13 that made it possible for me to join this distinguished and esteemed Legislative body.

God bless you. May God bless the greatest country in the world, the United States of America. Thank you.

Legislator Aney Paul, District 14.

Good Evening. I want to congratulate all the Legislators that were sworn-in today. Thank you all for coming. It is all of you that we work for and dedicate our service to. I take this opportunity to thank all of you who helped me in my election. There is a big team behind my victory. I want to thank each one of them from the bottom of my heart. I may not be able to mention all the names, but I want to mention a few:

I want to thank my husband, Augustine Paul, who gave me full support and was working tirelessly throughout my election. My daughters: Marina, Shabana and Natasha for their support throughout my campaign. I thank Shabana for coming today; Marina and Natasha couldn't be here today.

Tom Ninan, who gave me the encouragement and insight for politics; Innocent Ulahannan, Larry Wiessmann, Mathews Ethaakkan, John Devasia, James Elampurayidathial, Matt Varghese, and Grant Valentine. I thank you all for your support and hard work.

My Democratic Party leaders: County Chair Kristen Stavisky who was there for me for my campaign, and Clarkstown Chair, Nicole Doliner - who always send me emails reminding me about power of ten throughout my election. I thank Ramapo Democratic Chair, Mona Mondal for her help.

I want to thank my brother-in-law Joseph and sister-in-law Tresa for sponsoring me to America, without them I may not have been able to come here.

I want to thank my friend Francis Pratt, a dynamic leader who gave me a lot of inspiration, support and guidance. I thank so many leaders who are here and so many organizations who was behind me. My New City library director and President are here and I thank them. Director David Fried from Nyack Hospital is here, thank you. I thank all the supporters here for their support.

If my mom was alive, she will be the happiest person in the world. My father used to say: "do your best wherever you are". That helped me a lot in my success. I want to thank all my brothers and sisters and nieces and nephews for their support. My nephew, Charlie James, a marine, who had been to Iraq twice, and came back a few weeks ago from Afganistan is here today. Thank you Charley.

I want to thank, Working Family Party and the CWA for their support. I thank all the associations and organizations for supporting me. To all my volunteers, who walked, put signs - yes - those big signs and small signs, thank you. To each of you who went door-to-door, walked through the winding neighborhoods, hamlets and roads that is District 14, thank you to all those who gave their time for this effort.

Above all, I want to thank all the residents of district 14, who helped me to win by voting for me.

Today I am so blessed with the presence of Father Mathias from St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church and Father Thadeus from the Syro Malabar Catholic Mission. Father Jerry from St. Anthony's Church could not make it today.

I am proud to say that I am the highest-ranking Indian woman to be elected in New York State.

As many of you have often heard me in the past say that I ran for the County Legislature, because I felt a great debt of gratitude to our community. Tonight we begin the journey to pay back. I will do my best for my community. Let us work together; together we can make a difference.

Thank you, thank you, and thank you.

Legislator Patrick J. Moroney, District 15

I really want to thank my committee for showing up here tonight. What a great audience. I am not going to get to political tonight, because there are other nights for that. I just want to thank the people of Orangetown, Ramapo and Clarkstown for giving me the privilege and honor to serve the people for another four years. It has been a delight for me. When I first got elected 22 years ago, just like my Hasidic friend who just got elected now, I was the first Irishman ever elected to the Rockland County. I am very proud of that. I am proud to have the privilege to serve the people of Rockland County. I thank Mr. St. Lawrence for heading up my committee. It is always nice of him to come down here and give me a hand. Mr. George Darden, who I used to have debate with years ago, told me just to remember the numbers. I never forgot those numbers. I see my colleague David Fried, who is now a Judge.

It is great to see all of the people here especially the Clergy who are here tonight. Monsignor Weber, thank you very much for being here. To our newly elected Sheriff, congratulations and good luck to you in your endeavors. To the outgoing Legislators who are all great friends of mine, I was very privileged to work with all of them no matter what side of the isle you came from. We faced and debated the problems we had in Rockland County and we left as friends. I wish my new colleagues joining us here the very best of luck. I thank you for your service to the County and community. I know everybody will be very proud of you. Now, I would have had all my family here tonight, but if I had all my family here most of you would have to leave. I have such a big family.

I want to thank the people that put me here for their consideration in making me their Legislator for the next four years. I will continue to work for the benefit of Rockland County and for all the citizens, because that is what we are here for. Whatever party you come from the party ends tonight. Tomorrow we work for the County and we work for the residents of Rockland County. Again, thank you for your support, friendship. Merry Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year to all of your. God bless. Thank you.

Legislator John A. Murphy, District 16

Tonight is a very special night for me. I begin my fifth decade as a Legislator. They say an image is worth a thousand words. This image right here, my grandchildren Mia and Madison, are the reasons I have devoted my entire adult life to public service. I want to leave a better world with them. I had to spend forty years in these chambers trying to build a kinder safer world, not only for these beautiful healthy children, but also for those not so lucky. I could thank hundreds of people, but I am only going to thank one tonight, my wife Eileen. She is my muse. She is my guardian angel. She is my spiritual strength. She came to America over fifty years ago leaving behind a world of turmoil in Northern Ireland. The town she left became the most bombed town in Ireland during those decades of troubles. She has become a great American. She is devoted to this country. Fortunately she shares my devotion to people who need the help of government – the hopelessly damaged people, which I will spend the next four years helping them, as well as every other person, because I actually believe that politics is a very noble profession. Politics is the power of the majority of the people to help the minority of people.

I thank everybody over the years who have helped me serve most of my adult life in these chambers. I want to point out one individual in particular, who has been my greatest source of strength, because he has been the most powerful and the smartest man on the Legislature and he is in the Majority. Me, living in the Minority, needed him and he came through for all the best human causes – Ilan Schoenberger. I know he is a Jewish Democrat and I am a Catholic Republican, but we came together in a very happy political marriage.

I do not want to leave without paying attention to my incredible son who was only one when I took office and today he is a Superintendent of schools. Now, considering the father he had and the way I ignored his upbringing I am extremely proud of my son. He was also the Principal of the Year for the entire State of New Jersey once. So Matthew, I love you and I am glad you are here. Thank you.

Legislator Nancy Low-Hogan, District 17

I am very excited to be here. I am honored to have been elected by the voters of District 17. I am looking forward to working for all of the citizens of Rockland County. Rockland County is a beautiful and diverse County. I will work to preserve its beauty and environment and to restore its affordability. We also face unusually significant fiscal challenges. Viable fiscal plans need to be developed and executed. Meeting these challenges and making the right decisions will require participation by all and sacrifices by everyone.

I would like to thank my husband Michael Hogan, my campaign manager Joseph Coe, and all the members of the Orangetown committee who were so supportive. I look forward to working with my new colleagues on the Legislature, with the County commissioners and department heads, with the County Executive and his office, with County employees and with all the citizens of Rockland County, and in particular the residents of District 17. Together we can restore our beloved County to fiscal health and community wellbeing. Thank you.

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**Nomination of Harriet D. Cornell for Chairwoman by Legislator Michael M. Grant, District 2**

Thank you for joining us here tonight on this very auspicious occasion. I would like to thank the public officials and private citizens, family members and supporters and interested bystanders who thought it were important enough to come here tonight.

The annual reorganization meeting of the Legislature always has an aura of excitement and optimism, made more so with the beginning of a new term and the welcoming of fresh faces and the prospect of fresh perspectives. Tonight all seventeen members of the Rockland County Legislature were sworn-in to serve here for the next four years. On behalf of the Legislature and staff, I would like to welcome our new colleagues, Christopher Cary, Nancy Low-Hogan, Aney Paul and Aron Wieder.

As County Legislators, each one of us and each of you were elected to represent not only the residents of our own districts, but all of the people of Rockland County.

Our first order of business as a new Legislature is to select a chairperson. It is an awesome responsibility and a decision that will set the tone for how we work together and interact with each other. The right choice is critical. It should come as no surprise that Harriet Cornell has been selected to lead the Rockland County Legislature as we begin his new term. With each passing year Harriet sets a new standard for leadership. 2012 will be Harriet's eighth consecutive term as Chair.

All of us gathered here tonight know that Harriet is a skillful leader with an extensive record of accomplishment on issues vital to the citizen's of Rockland County. Now in her 28<sup>th</sup> year in the Legislature, Harriet has initiated or participated in over seventy public hearings on a wide variety of issues, including the future of the Tappan Zee Bridget corridor, which Governor Cuomo mentioned would be fast tracked for construction and her stewardship here will be very important to us, the FAA redesign, women's and children's health care, HIV/Aids, domestic violence, the needs of seniors, land use planning and homeland security.

In May, for her continuing efforts on behalf of children, Harriet received the *Excellence in Leadership Award* from the Early Care and Learning Council, a statewide organization, based in Albany, that works to increase the equality, affordability and capacity of the early care and learning field.

Chairwoman Cornell has also staked out clear and consistent positions, on behalf of all Rocklanders, fighting the detrimental impacts of the MTA payroll tax, opposing the Port Authority toll and fare hikes for the George Washington Bridge, tunnel crossings and PATH rails and holding public and private water companies accountable for damages caused by inadequate storm water management.

In recent year, the challenges facing this Legislature have been difficult and abundant. Fortunately, Harriet has seen every challenge as an opportunity. In 2011, Harriet set a demanding agenda for the Legislature including: the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, completing a timely transparent and inclusive Legislative redistricting process, deficit reduction initiatives, departmental budget reviews and advancing financial planning Legislation. Along the way, she recruited subject matter experts in the private and public sector to help tackle the thorniest of these issues. Along the way, she transformed opportunity into accomplishments.

Perhaps most significantly, in September the Legislature adopted the "Rockland County Multi-Year Finance Plan Law." The plan was proposed and introduced by Chairwoman Cornell and received the unanimous support of this Legislative body. This new multi-year planning approach will help to give a true picture of the County's financial situation, allowing residents and local government officials to see the impact of fiscal decisions over time.

Harriet is a compassionate policymaker and a thoughtful and innovative lawmaker. She is caring and committed to our community. Harriet connects with the people of Rockland County. She listens attentively to the constituents, community leaders and colleagues alike. She acts with clarity and with conviction.

Now more than ever it is imperative that this Legislative body have a leader of the class and caliber of Harriet Cornell. A leader showing the way for others, either by example or by advocating a new direction. A leader who is respected by both sides of the isle, here in Rockland, in Albany and in Washington, as well as the towns and villages of the Rockland County she treasures.

I is my honor and my pleasure to nominate Harriet D. Cornell to serve an unparalleled eighth consecutive term as Chairperson of the Rockland County Legislature.

Thank you.

**Second the Nomination of Harriet D. Cornell for Chairwoman by Legislator Nancy Low-Hogan, District 17**

It is a great honor and privilege to second the nomination of Harriet Cornell as Chair of the Rockland County Legislature. We all know that Harriet's list of accomplishments is extensive and would fill many pages. So what I would like to do is take this opportunity to salute Harriet for her special personal qualities, which include here warmth, her character, her elegance, her determination, her intelligence, her ability to get things done and her long standing commitment to our County.

Harriet, you are an outstanding role model for me and for all women elected officials. In fact, you are a role model for all elected officials not just women. I know I speak for all of the newly elected officials when I say that I look forward to working closely with you and learning from you. With that I enthusiastically second the nomination of Harriet D. Cornell for Chair of the Rockland County Legislature.

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**RESOLUTION NO. 1 OF 2012  
SELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON OF THE  
ROCKLAND COUNTY LEGISLATURE**

Mr. Grant offered the following resolution, which was seconded by Mrs. Low-Hogan and unanimously adopted:

RESOLVED, that pursuant to Section 151 of the County Law, Hon. Harriet D. Cornell Legislative District 10, be and is hereby selected Chairperson of the Rockland County Legislature.

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Honorable Harriet D. Cornell, with her family at her side, took her oath of office, which was administered by her son Keith Cornell, President of the Rockland County Bar Association.

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**Harriet Cornell, Chairwoman  
Rockland County Legislature**

**Annual Address to the Legislature**

Good evening. I want to thank all of my Legislative colleagues, for giving me the honor once again to serve the public as Chair of the Rockland County Legislature. There is no place I'd rather be!

I want to thank Michael Grant so much for the beautiful nominating speech and for being such a wonderful colleague all these many years. Thank you very much. Nancy, I certainly look forward to working with you. Thank you so much for your beautiful seconding speech.

I certainly want to thank the staff of the Legislature, Larry Toole. I am not going to mention everyone's name here. I want to thank my prior colleagues, Gerry Bierker, who gave the invocation at my invitation, Connie Coker, Bob Jackson, and Jacques Michel. The past Legislature was wonderful and we are going to miss those members of our group.

The musicians who played as you walked in this evening are from the East Ramapo Jazz Band. They are part of the jazz band under the auspices of Michael Smith and we want to thank them very much. They will be playing at the conclusion.

Also, Lindsay McCandless who was here and sang so beautifully with a gorgeous voice, *God Bless America*, we thank you.

My family, I am so blessed with a wonder family - my son Keith, daughter-in-law Carrie, my grandsons Skyler and Robin. Robin went door to door campaigning with me. How many grandmothers can do that or say that their grandson went campaigning with them. And of course my daughters who live in the City who couldn't be here tonight. This is the kind of event that makes me think about the wonderful parents that I had from whom I came. Learning my values from my mother and father who would be so proud tonight. Not a day goes by that I don't remember my husband Martin who was the most wonderful partner anyone can have and it has been nine years now that he is no longer with us, but I think of him every day. I know he also would be very proud.

Let me congratulate all my fellow Legislators. I look forward to working with all of you.

My full speech will be available online tomorrow, but I do want to make some important comments tonight. I want to highlight a little bit the strength of our Rockland community and some of our pressing priorities for 2012 and beyond.

With the economic recession, we see many, many more people needing government assistance. Many of these are newly poor, some are out of work for the first time in their lives, forced to visit the food pantries and soup kitchens of Rockland in order to feed their families. Can you imagine what this means to families and the stresses when they lose their homes, can't find jobs and have to move in with relatives or seek shelter elsewhere? Government agencies, religious institutions and private not-for-profit private organizations all provide food and shelter and other assistance.

Almost all of Rockland's not-for-profit agencies were started by residents to meet a need. A mother began Camp Venture to serve a small number of children with development disabilities; it now serves 1200 children and adults. A group of residents created a shelter for battered women in 1979 that became Rockland Family Shelter.

Over the years, County government recognized the value in these and other specialized services, which contribute to the health, safety and well-being of county residents and found government support of these agencies to be a cost-effective way to provide services.

Not-for-profit agencies are businesses. A survey revealed that the economic impact of 208 Rockland County not-for-profit agencies that deliver social services, enrich the arts and cultural landscape, and protect the environment bring in more than \$1 billion dollars annually.

Our 2012 budget restored funding to agencies, which serve children, and youth, 14,000 of whom live below the poverty level and 24% are on food stamps. Children can't wait! Brain development takes place in infancy and early childhood. If they are to become productive adults, they need a healthy childhood, acquiring social, emotional, physical and cognitive skills.

I first came to Rockland as a ten-year old Girl Scout, to spend two weeks at a camp in the Palisades Park system. It cost \$7.00 a week, which I thought was a fortune and didn't know if my parents could afford it. I have never forgotten that experience or the importance of making a difference in a child's life. Children count on adults to protect them and help them develop in constructive ways. What kind of a County, what kind of a nation are we if we don't prepare today's children to be tomorrow's leaders.

And then there are the dedicated public servants who work for County government, performing all kinds of services to safeguard your families. You may not know they're there, protecting your children from on-line predators, bringing evildoers to justice, cleaning up oil spills and inspecting food establishments. Many have jobs that put them in harm's way every single day. These workers are your neighbors who pay taxes, attend your church or temple, and volunteer for local organizations.

There should be no drumbeat to eliminate public sector personnel while cheering growth in private sector jobs. Of course government should constantly seek to do things better and smarter and leaner. And we have worked to diminish numbers and control costs through attrition and retirements. Today we have many hundred fewer employees than we had in 2005, while demand for services increases.

Recently we witnessed the end of the longest war in American history and while we grieve for those who were lost, we greet with open arms the return home of our local heroes in military uniforms—and part of that greeting includes the services to veterans provided by the County of Rockland. This Legislature restored the position of Veterans Specialist in the 2012 budget, a position critical in ensuring that veterans receive the federal benefits owed to them, as they make the often-difficult transition to civilian life.

And, yes, our most recent, hard-won accomplishment was the passage of that 2012 budget by a vote of 12 to 4. We owe a vote of thanks to Budget and Finance Chair Ilan Schoenberger for his leadership in developing a plan to eliminate the deficit. We listened to the concerns of all and balanced them with the fiscal reality of limited resources. The budget saved human care jobs in order to deliver vital services to pregnant mothers and babies, the mentally ill and the elderly giving time to plan for the future. It restored the Narcotics Task Force and the Intelligence Unit - collaborative law enforcement services to better protect our citizens. Millions of dollars in forfeiture assets are brought into the County by the successful crime-fighting actions of these professionals and the public will be forever grateful.

It is very confusing for the public to know what functions are performed by which local government. But most County functions are unique to the county - running the jail, serving as prime sponsor of Rockland Community College, and thank you Dr. Wood for being here, acting as an agent of the state with regard to social services, and transportation of handicapped children, just to name a few.

As elected representatives, we have a legal and even moral responsibility to ensure that these services are provided and at a cost that does not overburden our taxpayers. This is a challenge considering that 100% of property taxes raised, plus other revenues, goes to pay for just one state-mandated program – Medicaid - and there are many other mandates. New York State is one of only two states in the nation requiring counties to pay Medicaid costs.

It is ironic that Rockland County has the sad distinction of having the 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> highest property taxes in the nation when such a minute portion of the tax bill is actually for County services. Only 7% of a homeowner's total annual property taxes are county taxes. School taxes account for 65%, 20% for town and village taxes, and 8% are for other taxes such as sewer and solid waste. No one likes to pay taxes, but it is useful to know where your taxes are going and what you are getting for them.

The recession continues, but we are finally beginning to see some improvement in the unemployment rate. Hopefully, industries will thrive and good jobs will grow. But we will remain vigilant to control spending, pay off our deficit, and continue to provide the services County residents need and expect.

The Deficit Reduction Committee I appointed last year provided us with the expertise of accomplished professionals in finance and the law who served pro bono and helped the Legislature identify ways to tackle a growing deficit. As Michael indicated, we adopted a detailed plan and passed the Multi-Year Financial Plan Law, which will give us a true picture of our long-term financial situation. The County Executive will also report every June with a Financial Improvement Plan so of course corrections can be made quickly. We are working closely with the Executive Branch and our State Legislators to ensure that our deficit reduction plan is accepted by Albany. It is strong medicine, but essential for fiscal health. This is surely our major priority.

The great thing I have found about growing older is the wisdom to recognize that I will not become a size 4 in 2012. Actually I have far more important priorities, such as seeing a new Tappan Zee Bridge become a reality. No, it won't be built in 2012, but it is now one of five transportation projects nationwide to be listed for expedited treatment by the Obama Administration. Governor Cuomo saw the opportunity to make the case for this vital national project and should be applauded. Yes, I am disappointed that mass transit seems to be stymied by lack of funding, but I will hold another Tappan Zee Summit early this year, and our voices will continue to make an impact on this subject.

The future of Summit Park Nursing Home and Hospital is also a top priority. Few issues have been more contentious or painful. We expect a phase 1 report next month from our consultants. Who will forget the heartfelt pleas of residents in wheelchairs who spoke at our public hearings about the quality of care they receive at the nursing home. One elderly woman said, "I am in the last chapter of my life. Please don't make me leave my home."

The County Comprehensive Plan includes a raft of recommendations regarding County water use and many residents sadly did need rafts to survive devastating floods. So this year we are going to further develop a County water policy to address water quality, supply, flood control, drought, and conservation. I thank Legislator Connie Coker who chaired our Environmental Committee for her work on all of this as well. There are dilemmas that need reconciled: the contradictory objectives of water supply, which United Water sees as its sole responsibility and flood control a major concern of residents. There is also the burning question of whether or not our current water supply is sufficient for County needs, including economic development. So developing a policy is going to involve a host of stakeholders, including residents and our own County Department of Health, which has also started a study of its water conservation policy.

Another environmental issue is the explosion in the deer population. I am not going to talk about that, because you can all look out your windows every day and see the issues having to do with deer. I am forming a Deer Management Committee this month to build on research already done by the State DEC. I have asked former Legislator Gerry Bierker to serve on this committee.

There are a number of other things that I just wanted to mention. I won't go into too much.

If the Legislature is to be a true partner with the Executive Branch for financial planning and fiscal oversight there need to be changes made in the Charter with regard to the time in which we have to study the budget and also in the ability to receive full information throughout the course of the year from the Executive Branch. The Legislature also has no role in labor negotiations with the County's ten bargaining units, and we are generally unhappy with the snail's pace of negotiations, which often take years. These are issues that need to be rectified. I think it is fair to say that both labor and management recognize that Labor agreements must result in shared sacrifice by all. I will be working with Legislative leadership to set up committees to examine those areas; particularly those, which require charter changes.

The Regional Economic Development Committees created by Governor Cuomo offers a very significant opportunity for Rockland, because there are funds available to create jobs and enhance services. In the first go-round \$67 million was allocated to seven counties in the Hudson Valley but Rockland County only received a little more than \$1,000,000 for four projects. Towns and villages have a vital role to play in developing "shovel-ready" projects for future funding applications. Since a number of Rockland leaders serve on the regional committee, I will ask our Economic Committee to request ongoing reports and seek ways in which the county can encourage projects worthy of funding.

I want to thank all of my colleagues from the past Legislature, with regard to what they have done to help pass the Rockland County Comprehensive Plan. Michael Grant and Legislative Counsel Ric McKay deserve great thanks for their hard work, together with the Rockland County Department of Planning. It will be incumbent upon all County and municipal government officials to embrace the goals and recommendations of the Plan and incorporate them in future planning.

And then of course in 2011, we came together in a bipartisan effort to redistrict as we were mandated under the 2010 census figures. The Redistricting Committee was also quite amazing led by Michael Grant and Ilan Schoenberger. They successfully ensured that every Legislative district has minimal population deviation and adheres to federal standards. This created a smooth election process, and I welcome my new colleagues who were elected in these new districts, Chris, Nancy, Aney and Aron. I truly look forward to working with you.

The Rockland County Legislature has faced many challenges in the past few years, and will face many more. It is not the challenges we encounter, but our joint commitment to respond to those challenges that will determine how we move forward. When we work together on behalf of the men, women and children of this diverse County, we can fulfill their hopes and dreams. In the words of Robert F. Kennedy:

*Each time we stand up for an ideal, or act to improve the lot of others, or strike out against injustice, we send forth a tiny ripple of hope... and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring, these ripples build a current that can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance.*

Thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to serve.

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**RESOLUTION NO. 2 OF 2012  
SELECTION OF VICE CHAIRPERSON OF THE  
ROCKLAND COUNTY LEGISLATURE**

Mr. Schoenberger offered the following resolution, which was seconded by Mr. Grant and Mr. Day and unanimously adopted:

RESOLVED, that Hon. Alden H. Wolfe, Legislative District 6, be and he is hereby selected Vice Chairperson of the Rockland County Legislature.

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**Nomination of Alden H. Wolfe for Vice Chairman by Legislator Ilan S. Schoenberger, District 4**

Alden Wolfe's ascension to the Vice Chair of the Rockland County Legislature followed the unfortunate passing of our good friend and fellow Legislator William Darden, who held that position for many years and who remains in our hearts and thoughts tonight.

Alden brings his love of government and his love of community to Rockland County. Alden has an extensive education with a Bachelor's Degree in Management and Finance from Binghamton University, a Masters Degree in Public Administration and a Juris Doctorate Degree from Syracuse University School of Law. Alden is a practicing attorney.

Alden also has a distinguished record of service and achievement in community. In 2002 he was recognized by the Rockland Economic Development Corporation as a business and community leader in Rockland County. Alden is also a graduate of Leadership Rockland and a member of the Rockland Business Association. In 2007 he was nominated by the EPA for the Environmental Quality Achievement Award in recognition of his advocacy on environmental issues. He has served for over a decade as a panel member and Chair of the New York State Surrogates Decision-making Committee to ensure that disabled persons receive proper and adequate health care.

Alden has authored many laws for Rockland County in his service as a Legislator. Alden authored the law that prohibits the sale of drop-sided cribs, the BPA Free Children's and Babies Law prohibiting the sale in Rockland County of children's beverages and teething products containing Bisphenol A. Alden also supported the Truth in Budgeting Law, which was a resolution to ensure that salaries for elected officials and those appointed for a fixed term conform to the Budget adopted for that fiscal year. In 2010, the County Legislature passed Alden's Local Law to restrict the use of trans fats in local food establishments. Alden also sponsored the law that allows food establishments that generate grease and oil to opt to use biological methods to pretreat and breakdown the captured waste.

Alden has strong local roots in Rockland County and the Town of Ramapo. I know Alden's father for many years and I knew his late mother, who were she alive today, would be very proud of Alden and all that he has accomplished.

Alden has worked hard and devoted his time and energy on behalf of the Rockland Community College Foundation and the College itself.

With Alden tonight is his beautiful daughter, Morgan, who Alden loves very much, and is here to support her father.

I am honored to nominate Alden Wolfe as Vice Chair of the Rockland County Legislature for 2012.

**Second the Nomination of Alden H. Wolfe for Vice Chairman by Legislator Michael M. Grant, District 2.**

It is my honor tonight to second the nomination of my friend and colleague Legislature Alden Wolfe as Vice Chairman of the Rockland County Legislature for 2012. During his tenure in this chamber Alden has consistently demonstrated his Legislative and political skill in his role as Vice Chair, Deputy Majority Leader and Chairman of Government Operations and Rules Committees. Alden is known in the Legislature as a thoughtful and productive lawmaker. I mentioned in 2010 the several Laws that he sponsored and shepherded through this Legislature. Alden also in 2011 continued his productive role as lawmaker and he saw the passage of the amendment of the County Health Heart Act and the adoption of the Local Law to require smoking policies in multiple dwelling units. In addition, Alden fought for the approval of the Mayer Drive Bridge rehabilitation and adding the flood remediation study to the capital projects budget.

Most importantly Alden Wolfe is a descent human being with a keen understanding of the needs of all Rocklander's. He is a man with a sharp intellect, a generous heart and a calm even demeanor. Alden has proven to be an active and vocal engaged member of this Legislature on the important committees in which he serves.

I am proud to have had the opportunity to work with Alden and I am equally proud to nominate him for another term as Vice Chairman of the Rockland County Legislature.

**Second the Nomination of Alden H. Wolfe for Vice Chairman by Legislator Edwin J. Day, District 5.**

As we contemplate the election for the Vice Chair of the Legislature I cannot help my mind's eye drifts back precisely 14 months to this very day. It was at that legislative meeting that we, as an entire body, publicly mourned the passing of the then Vice Chair of the Legislature the honorable Bill Darden who passed away only 5 days earlier.

We all spoke from the heart that night in honor and remembrance of a special man, a colleague and a friend. It was quite clear that there was a set of shoes that would be most difficult to fill.

Like Bill and I, Alden and I are on opposite sides of the political aisle. Much like Bill and I, Alden and I disagreed on issues, but like Bill and I, we both learned much from those disagreements, and as should be the case in a deliberative body we found issues of common passion that we could work on. Most recently, and while we disagreed on the Trans Fat Law he sponsored, we worked to ensure that one of those common passions, helping the hungry of our County, would not be compromised as part of that law. That speaks volumes as to what Alden is truly all about.

While no one man could ever fill Bill's shoes, I see in Alden a man who instead brought a very good set of shoes with him and he has worn them quite well during his first year as Vice Chairman. He should be quite proud of that, and I am honored to second his nomination as Vice Chairman of the Rockland County Legislature for 2012.

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Honorable Alden H. Wolfe, with his family at his side, took his oath of office, which was administered by Honorable David Fried, Spring Valley Justice.

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**Statement by the Honorable Alden H. Wolfe, Vice Chairman**

Good evening. I apologize to those who are going to be watching this on TV mouthing words to Morgan in the front row all night. She has been very patient and I am very thankful. It is truly humbling to be standing here before you at the beginning of a new term on the County Legislature. It goes without saying that I relied heavily on the support of my family and my friends, and for this support I am very grateful. But I really wouldn't be here without the support of my constituents, because it is they who've placed their confidence in my ability to represent them in public debate on issues affecting our County. This is an honor and a privilege that will not soon be forgotten.

2011 was a challenging year for me, both personally and professionally. I don't think that I could have gotten through it without the love of my daughter Morgan. She is simply the most important thing in my life and I am so happy that she's here standing next to me tonight. I love you, Morgan.

I am particularly honored and humbled by the confidence placed in me by my colleagues, and I offer my sincere gratitude to Ilan, Michael and Ed for their kind words extended tonight. It is always difficult to hear nice things said about ones self. I also want to thank Justice David Fried for his friendship and for giving of his time this evening to administer the Oath of Office.

To my new colleagues, I welcome you and wish you all the best for a successful and fulfilling experience on the Legislature. My door is always open to you, for any reason. To Chairwoman Cornell, congratulations on being chosen to lead us for another year. I particularly appreciate your spirit of collaboration as we grapple to find ways to solve the serious problems facing our County. You are always a lady, and I'm looking forward to continuing our work together.

The past few years have seen our nation facing the most challenging economic conditions in generations. In Rockland, we have struggled to find the right balance between providing services to our residents and generating the revenues needed to pay for them. Developing a realistic budget for 2012 was the hardest challenge I've faced in my five years in public service. Faced with an impossible situation, we took drastic, but necessary measures to put Rockland County back on the path toward financial security. We have a plan that would eliminate our deficit, and for the first time in years I am sensing that there's real commitment from the County Executive to work together to make it happen. Because of this, I have proposed the creation of a Joint Task Force on Fiscal Improvement made up of representatives from both branches of County government. This Task Force would not only allow for a better flow of information amongst all of the stakeholders, but would ensure that all concerned can understand how we are doing and respond in a way that's both timely and appropriate.

I have also proposed that we implement a Fund Balance Management Policy. Once our deficit is eliminated, such a policy would ensure that we maintain a fiscally prudent cushion that would act as a safety net to help us through challenging times in the future.

I certainly don't have all the answers. But I am hopeful that together, my colleagues and I can explore ways of making Rockland County government work better for our residents.

During my post-graduate studies, I had the honor of attending Maxwell School at Syracuse University. Inscribed in the lobby of Maxwell Hall is an excerpt from the Oath of the Athenian City State, which I believe reflects what should be the ultimate aspiration of all public officials. The Oath has become somewhat of a mantra for me. I often refer to it in these chambers, because I think it is appropriate at times like this and I think it is appropriate to read it tonight.

*"We will ever strive for the ideals and sacred things of the city, both alone and with many; we will unceasingly seek to quicken the sense of public duty; we will revere and obey the city's laws; we will transmit this city not only not less, but greater, better and more beautiful than it was transmitted to us."*

This Legislature has the unique ability to put politics aside when it must, and focus, as a body, on doing what is right for our citizens. I look forward to working with all of my colleagues, as well as the County Executive and his staff, so that when we leave public service, it can be said of us that our beloved County is better for us having served it. Thank you.

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**Statement by Harriet D. Cornell, Chairwoman**

I see we have been joined by Congressman Eliot Engel, thank you so very much. Would you like to say a word, we would love to hear from you.

**Statement by Congressman Eliot Engel**

I just came down from Albany where the Governor did his State of the State Message today. I want you all to know that Ellen Jaffe, Ken Zebrowski and David Carlucci are working very hard for Rockland County in Albany. I just left all of them. I want to congratulate all of the Legislators for being reelected, elected and being sworn-in. It has been an honor and pleasure for me to represent Rockland County and to work with all of you. I think Rockland County is a shining star not only in New York but across the nation and in no small part, because of the people that we elect on the local level and all the concerned wonderful citizens we have in Rockland.

So thank you. We will work together. We will continue to bring those Federal dollars to Rockland County and I am just happy to be here.

**Statement by Harriet D. Cornell, Chairwoman**

I want to thank the County Deputy Executive for being here, Sean Mathews. Thank you Sean. We also have the Supervisor of the Town of Ramapo here, Christopher St. Lawrence. We have here our new Supervisor, Andy Stewart, Town of Orangetown. I did see Mayor Jasmine from Spring Valley earlier. I would like to indicate that the Deputy Mayor of New Square is here, Izzy Spitzer.

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**RESOLUTION NO. 3 OF 2012  
APPOINTMENT OF CLERK TO THE  
ROCKLAND COUNTY LEGISLATURE**

Mr. Schoenberger offered the following resolution, which was seconded by Chairwoman Cornell and unanimously adopted:

RESOLVED, that Laurence O. Toole, Town of Ramapo, be and he is hereby appointed Clerk to the Rockland County Legislature at a salary to be established by the Legislature.

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**Nomination of Laurence O. Toole for Clerk to the Legislature by Legislator Ilan S. Schoenberger, District 4.**

All of us in our capacity as Legislators have constituents who we attempt to serve to the best of our abilities. Often that requires us to have research done to make sure we are acting correctly and appropriately and to have our referrals created and ultimately Legislative resolutions. The person we rely upon to help us and to get our research and Legislative work accomplished is Laurence O. Toole. Larry has been our Clerk for the last eleven years. Larry knows the inner workings of County government, in particularly the Legislative branch. Larry is instrumental in making sure that the needs of Legislators are met so we can fulfill our responsibilities to the public and provide Legislators with research and documentation information so we may better serve our constituents. Larry helps each and every one of us regardless of political affiliation or geographical location to be better elected representatives to the people of Rockland County. Larry also supervises the day-to-day staff and makes sure that resolutions that come from the Executive staff are thoroughly vetted and complete for committee and Legislative review. Whenever someone from the public wants information regarding our branch of government Larry is always there to help. He answers the public questions and provides documentation and information regarding County government.

Larry works for all seventeen Legislators without regard for their political affiliation or what district they represent. Having seventeen different bosses at the same time can be an extremely difficult task. Larry manages to balance all the egos, wants and needs and different points of view from seventeen elected officials representing seventeen different districts to keep this office operating and serving not just us, but the public as well.

Larry is good hearted, warm and a friendly person who deeply cares about people and the quality of people's lives in Rockland County. It is a great pleasure for me to nominate Laurence O. Toole as Clerk to the Legislature of Rockland County for calendar year 2012.

**Second the Nomination of Laurence O. Toole for Clerk to the Legislature by Legislator Chairwoman Harriet D. Cornell**

It is my pleasure to second the nomination of Laurence O. Toole. I had the opportunity to have Larry work with me years ago when he served as a Constituent Representative. As Clerk to the Legislature it is hard to think of a more perfect person than Larry, because he is so professional, he is so courtesy to the public and so welcoming to anyone who comes to the Legislature. He is indeed the face of the Legislature. He also is painstaking in the way he approaches the work of the Legislature to be sure that everything is always perfect and is done perfectly so none of us should ever be embarrassed by the work that we put out from the Legislature. He is always looking for ways to do things better. Digitizing the Legislative records was a great accomplishment, which Larry sought and carried to completion. He leads by example and it is a great pleasure for me to second his nomination.

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Laurence O. Toole took the oath of office, which was administered by the Honorable Rhoda Schoenberger, Justice, Town of Ramapo.

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**Statement by Laurence O. Toole, Clerk to the Legislature**

Congratulations to each County Legislature on your recent election victories this past November and on your swearing-in this evening.

Thank you to Legislator Schoenberger and Chairwoman Cornell for your kind words in nominating me. Your leadership, support and guidance with our staff and County employees are sincerely appreciated. To the members of this body and prior Legislators, I thank you for your support.

It is, and has been an honor, to work with all of you in serving our County residents.

Many thanks to Judge Rhode Schoenberger for administering the Oath of Office this evening. As the first and only woman to serve on the Ramapo town bench dating back to 1791, I thank you for your distinguished and historical service in the Town of Ramapo. All the best to you in 2012.

In closing, again congratulations to each County Legislator. I wish you the very best in tackling the issues that lie ahead in 2012. Thank you.

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**RESOLUTION NO. 4 OF 2012  
AUTHORIZING THE CLERK TO THE LEGISLATURE  
TO APPOINT A DEPUTY CLERK**

Mr. Hood, Jr. offered the following resolution, which was seconded by Mr. Grant and unanimously adopted:

RESOLVED, that the Clerk to the Legislature be and he is hereby authorized to appoint a Deputy Clerk to the Legislature at a salary to be established by the Legislature.

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**Statement by Legislator Michael M. Grant, District 2.**

It is my pleasure and my privilege to move this resolution authorizing Clerk Laurence Toole to appoint a Deputy. It is my understanding that he selected Mary Widmer for an eleventh term as Deputy Clerk to the Legislature. We couldn't be more pleased. Mary, like Larry, is an accomplished administrator and a consummate professional. Together they direct the staff without which we wouldn't be able to do what we as a Legislature do for the people of Rockland County. She and the staff are always eager to assist the public in matters large and small. Jay and I are more than happy to move and second the resolution for Larry to appoint a Deputy Clerk.

**Statement by Laurence O. Toole, Clerk to the Legislature**

It is my honor to again appoint, as in the previous ten years, Mary Widmer as Deputy Clerk to the Rockland County Legislature for the upcoming 2012 Legislative session. Mary's dedicated service is well known to most of us in this room and to those in need of assistance that contact our good offices. Her work along with the rest of the support staff is of the highest professional caliber. I am very pleased that she will serve in this role again for the coming year. Congratulations Mary.

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**RESOLUTION NO 5 OF 2012  
PROVIDING FOR BLANKET BOND FOR ALL  
PUBLIC OFFICERS OF ROCKLAND COUNTY  
AND FIXING AMOUNT OF COVERAGE**

Mr. Schoenberger offered the following resolution, which was seconded by Mr. Jobson and unanimously adopted:

WHEREAS, in accordance with Section 2.01 (h) and 3.02 (d) of the Charter, all officers, clerks or employees of the County of Rockland shall be included in a blanket bond issued in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 813 of the Laws of 1972; and

WHEREAS, the coverage for said blanket bond have previously been reviewed by the County Executive's Office and the Legislature in 2008; and

WHEREAS, sufficient funds exist within the 2012 Budget to fund the premium for said blanket bond, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Legislature of Rockland County hereby approves a blanket bond to provide faithful performance blanket bond coverage in the amount of \$1,000,000, except that bonds for the following positions are hereby fixed at \$1,750,000:

- A. Commissioner of Finance
- B. Deputy Budget Director
- C. Accountant III
- D. Operations Analyst (HSP)
- E. Commissioner of Social Services
- F. County Clerk
- G. Director of Purchasing
- H. Commissioner of Hospitals
- I. Commissioner of Mental Health
- J. Superintendent of Highways
- K. Rockland Community College President
- L. Rockland Community College Executive Vice President
- M. Rockland Community College Associate Vice President for Finance/Controller

and; be it further

RESOLVED, that the Clerk to the Legislature is directed to send a copy of this resolution to the Rockland County Insurance Coordinator, and; be it further

RESOLVED, that the County Executive is hereby requested to endorse his approval on said blanket bond and to sign any and all documents in furtherance of this resolution.

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Introduced by:  
Hon. Harriet D. Cornell, Sponsor

Referral No. 9156

**RESOLUTION NO. 6 OF 2012  
DESIGNATION OF THE OFFICIAL NEWSPAPERS AND SUPPLEMENTAL  
PUBLICATIONS OF THE COUNTY OF ROCKLAND**

Chairwoman Cornell offered the following resolution, which was seconded by Mr. Grant and unanimously adopted:

WHEREAS, the Legislature of Rockland County having heretofore appointed the *Rockland Journal News* and the *Rockland County Times* as the official newspapers of the County of Rockland; and

WHEREAS, the Legislature of Rockland County has previously designated several newspapers as supplemental publications; and

WHEREAS, the Legislature of Rockland County having determined that the due process rights of the people of Rockland County will be enhanced by the occasional supplemental publication of legal advertising of the County of Rockland in supplemental publications, as aforesaid; and

WHEREAS, the publication of Rockland County legal notices in said supplemental publication shall be discretionary and for informational purposes only, said papers are not designated as an official publication of the county and need not be used in every instance of the County giving official notice; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the *Rockland Journal News* and *The Rockland County Times* are designated the official newspapers of the County of Rockland for the purpose of publishing all local laws, notices and other matters required by law to be published and that the following:

*The Monsey Advocate*  
*The Monsey Bulletin*  
*El Sol de New York*  
*Our Town*  
*Rockland Review*  
*El Clarin Inc.*

are appointed as a supplemental publications, for informational purposes of the County of Rockland for the purpose of discretionary publication of legal advertising for the County of Rockland and all its departments and any other advertising authorized by the Legislature.

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Introduced by:  
Hon. Harriet D. Cornell, Sponsor

**RESOLUTION NO. 7 OF 2012  
ELECTION OF MAJORITY LEADER  
(TO BE VOTED ON BY MAJORITY MEMBERS ONLY)**

Mr. Hood, Jr. offered the following resolution, which was seconded by Mr. Wolfe and unanimously adopted:

RESOLVED, that Hon. Michael Grant, Legislative District 2, be and he is hereby elected Majority Leader of the Rockland County Legislature for the year 2012.

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**Nomination of Majority Leader by Legislator Jay Hood, Jr., District 3.**

It is with great pleasure to nominate my friend and colleague Michael Grant. He knows how much I think of him and how much I think of the hard work he does here. He is so important to this body and with that I will nominate Michael Grant as our Majority Leader.

**Second the Nomination of Majority Leader by Legislator Alden H. Wolfe, District 6.**

In December of 2005, I was recommended to the Legislature for appointment to fill a vacancy. At that point I had never set foot in the Legislative Chambers and as a designee I came to one of the last meetings of 2005 to get a sense of what I could expect. As it turned out, it was a doozy, because the Legislature was debating the proposed Living Wage Law. The public hearing went on for hours, and then the debate started. It was the first time that I had ever seen many of my now colleagues, and in that debate there was one Legislator that stood out to me. That person was Michael Grant. When it was his turn to speak, I was amazed at the way he was able to not only clearly state his position on the issue, but back it up as well.

Since then, I've come to know many things about Michael Grant. He is a person of tremendous conviction. He has strong ethical principles. He listens first and talks later. Most importantly, he cares deeply about our County and the people who live here. It's these qualities that have made him particularly effective as Majority Leader, and it is my honor to second his nomination for another term.

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Introduced by:

Hon. Frank Sparaco, Sponsor

**RESOLUTION NO. 8 OF 2012  
ELECTION OF MINORITY LEADER  
(TO BE VOTED ON BY MINORITY MEMBERS ONLY)**

Mr. Murphy offered the following resolution, which was seconded by Mr. Carey and unanimously adopted:

RESOLVED, that Hon. Frank Sparaco, Legislative District 11, be and he is hereby elected Minority Leader of the Rockland County Legislature for the year 2012.

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**Nomination of Minority Leader by Legislator John A. Murphy, District 16.**

Since January 1, 1970, forty-two years ago, when the very first County Legislature was sworn-in, over 100 ladies and gentlemen have occupied these seats. They have represented every gender, age, race, national origin, religion, political party, income bracket, profession, life experience and points of view. They have accurately reflected the diversity of Rockland County. It is the strength of democracy that this be such.

Four years ago a gentleman and veteran of our Armed Forces, the Navy, who served aboard a ship in foreign hostile waters, joined us. From the onset, there was and is something very different about Frank Sparaco. He was totally irrepressible and unintimidated by the culture of excessive political correctness and pandering to every current popular whim and unwilling to be intimidated at all frankly or to take the path of least resistance. Frank is a man who believes he must be true to himself.

Frank also exposed his willingness to say the Emperor wore no clothes. He is willing to address the elephant in the room and willing to say what would incur the wrath of others. Frank was very quick to warn us of the approaching tsunami that struck last year. He stood fast against spending and for very unpopular cuts before they became popular. In reality, many found this very offensive and I warned Frank to hire a food tester and have someone else start his car.

Even I, a veteran of forty-five years of combat, none in the Marine Corps, but all in local politics. I suggested more tack, diplomacy and sensitivity. It was like telling John Wayne to be more like Gregory Peck. I came to realize how very individualistic and American he is and I did so in the face of our totally divergent views about human care and the Human Rights Commission's mission. We have many very strong passionate differences, but I am quite used to that and I am energized by the challenge of making a conversion, as I have had to do here in the past.

A study of American history shows that there were Frank Sparaco's among our Founding Fathers. Thank God otherwise we might still be British subjects. I began to see Frank as a breath of fresh air and very much an essential ingredient of Rockland's diversity. I guess his constituents thought so also, because they overwhelmingly reelected Frank, which we must respect, and now has our Legislative Minority. While everyone on the Minority doesn't think like Frank, they appreciate that he lives in the American spirit of free speech and political courage and that Frank is an American political and government iconoclast, which is becoming very popular these days.

And speaking only for myself, I love diversity, diversity of thought and willingness to take unpopular positions. I came to this Legislature as the spokesperson for the most unpopular thing that ever hit Rockland County and that was having a group home next-door to you. So I love unpopular positions.

From my heart I profoundly respect all veterans who volunteered for the Armed Forces and served in harm's way. I am proud to nominate such a gentleman. I move the entire Legislature, differences not withstanding, I appoint him the Republican Minority Leader for 2012. Thank you.

**Second the Nomination of Minority Leader by Legislator Christopher J. Carey, District 9.**

It is my honor to second the nomination of Frank Sparaco for Minority Leader of the Rockland County Legislature. Legislator Sparaco is passionate about what he believes and is a strong advocate for fiscal discipline and responsibility. He will work to safeguard taxpayer dollars.

I look forward to working with Legislator Sparaco and the entire Legislature to get the County's fiscal house in order. Thank you.

**Statement by Frank P. Sparaco, Minority Leader**

I want to thank my Republican colleagues for placing their faith and trust in me to be the Minority Leader for the coming year. In the midst of this financial storm, the only option we have is to work together to weather it. Doing so will require us to come up with new ideas; not new taxes. The Republicans in the Legislature are committed to working with the Democratic Majority to achieve real change so that we can address this crisis without shifting more of the burden to our taxpayers. It is my hope that we can make real progress to reach the goal of a financial balanced County government.

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**Statement by Michael M. Grant, Majority Leader**

The Majority Leader has the privilege of appointing a Deputy and I have selected Toney Earl to be my Deputy this year.

This Legislature spent a lot of time working on the budget during the last couple of months and I was very impressed with Legislator Earl's focus and attention to the budget process and our deliberations. I was equally impressed with his calm demeanor and his easy rapport with his colleagues. I look forward to working with Toney and with Chairwoman Cornell, Vice Chairman Wolfe, and the Committee Chairs as we move forward in 2012. It will be a very challenging year.

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**ADJOURNMENT IN MEMORY OF  
ERNEST SCHMIDT**

Mr. Hood, Jr. offered the following memorial, which was seconded by Mr. Jobson and unanimously approved:

RESOLVED, that the Legislature of Rockland County adjourn this meeting in memory of Ernest Schmidt.

**ADJOURNMENT IN MEMORY OF  
DANA MARIE SASSANO**

Mr. Day offered the following memorial, which was seconded by Mr. Bierker and unanimously approved:

RESOLVED, that the Legislature of Rockland County adjourn this meeting in memory of Dana Marie Sassano.

**ADJOURNMENT IN MEMORY OF  
ROBERT "GREGORY" RYAN**

Mr. Murphy offered the following memorial, which was seconded by Mr. Moroney and unanimously approved:

RESOLVED, that the Legislature of Rockland County adjourn this meeting in memory of Robert "Gregory" Ryan.

**ADJOURNMENT IN MEMORY OF  
MARY KEIR COLLINS**

Mr. Grant offered the following memorial, which was seconded by Mr. Day and unanimously approved:

RESOLVED, that the Legislature of Rockland County adjourn this meeting in memory of Mary Keir Collins.

**ADJOURNMENT IN MEMORY OF  
ANN AXELROD**

Chairwoman Cornell offered the following memorial, which was seconded by the Entire Legislature and unanimously approved:

RESOLVED, that the Legislature of Rockland County adjourn this meeting in memory of Ann Axelrod.

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**RESOLUTION NO. 9 OF 2012  
ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Wolfe offered the following resolution, which was seconded by Mr. Jobson and unanimously adopted (8:20 p.m.)

RESOLVED, that the meeting of the Legislature is hereby adjourned to Tuesday, January 17, 2012 at seven o'clock in the evening.

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Respectfully Submitted,

DARCY M. GREENBERG  
Proceedings Clerk