

# Press



# Release

11 New Hempstead Road, New City, NY (845) 638-5100 Fax: (845) 638-5675 e-mail [legclerk@co.rockland.ny.us](mailto:legclerk@co.rockland.ny.us).

## For Immediate Release

**Contact:**                    **Hon. Alden H. Wolfe, Chairman**                    **(845) 638-5269**  
   Laura Incalcaterra, Community Relations Coordinator                    (845) 638-5184

## **Rockland County Legislators Act To Protect County Workers, Patients & Residents At Summit Park Hospital And Nursing Care Center**

**New City, NY (Sept. 18, 2015)** – The Rockland County Legislature has approved several measures designed to help county workers who face layoffs once the Summit Park Hospital and Nursing Care Center is sold.

“Our hard-working and loyal county employees deserve answers as they try to make plans for themselves and their families as the sale date closes in,” Rockland County Legislature Chairman Alden H. Wolfe said. “By approving these resolutions, we are opening the way for vital information to be provided to our workers.”

A total of 458 people will be affected by the pending sale, including more than 250 who are eligible for retirement, county Personnel Commissioner Joan Silvestri told Legislators Wednesday.

Civil Service rules require positions to be abolished before the process of workforce reduction can occur. Part of the process includes providing information to workers about their possible benefits, including details about pensions, health care and other county job opportunities.

Workers have been in a state of limbo not knowing when their jobs might be eliminated as the Rockland County Health Facilities Corp., the local development corporation handling the \$32 million deal, works to close the pending sale.

At Wolfe's suggestion, the resolution concerning the abolishments was broadened to make it clear that the layoffs would only occur when and if the sale was finalized. No layoffs would take effect unless the sale was finalized. Legislators voted 11-5 on the measure.

Silvestri told Legislators that teams of people would be ready to meet with the workers starting Thursday. She said representatives from the state retirement system and the Rockland Career Center would also be on hand, and that information about health care coverage would also be made available.

Shalom Braunstein, who represents the buyers, Sympaticare, told Legislators that he offered jobs to several managers Wednesday and instructed them to make recommendations on which county workers to hire.

He also said he expects to hire one worker per resident and patient, for a total of just under 200 people. He noted the census at the 281-bed nursing home was at about 180 people as of Wednesday.

Braunstein said that as he improves the census, he expects to hire additional workers.

Legislators also voted 16-0 on resolutions establishing retention incentives for Summit Park workers in two unions – the Rockland Association of Management and the Civil Service Employees Association.

The resolutions preserve the workers' vacation and sick pay as long as they provide continuing care until the sale is finalized. The move is meant to retain workers who might otherwise opt to use up their vacation and sick days prior to being laid off and ensure that the patients receive necessary care through the transition.

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