

Press



Release

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For Immediate Release

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Hood Chairs Rockland County Legislature For 2023

Paul Returns As Vice Chairwoman

Democrats Elect Wolfe As Majority Leader; Republicans Elect Hofstein As Minority Leader; Soskin Appointed Deputy Majority Leader; Tyer Appointed Deputy Minority Leader

New Position To Be Created To Honor Legislator Cornell In Her Final Year Of Legislative Service

New City, NY (Jan. 5, 2023) - The Rockland County Legislature filled its leadership posts Wednesday night, reelecting Jay Hood Jr. as Chairman and returning Aney Paul as Vice Chairwoman. Democrats reelected Alden H. Wolfe as Majority Leader and Republicans reelected Lon M. Hofstein as Minority Leader. Philip Soskin was reappointed Deputy Majority Leader and Vincent D. Tyer was reappointed Deputy Minority Leader.

"I'm humbled and honored to receive the backing of my colleagues once again as I begin a second term as Chairman of the Rockland County Legislature," Chairman Hood said. "It's a leadership position I take seriously, and I plan to again serve for the good of all Rockland County residents and businesses. Thank you for your confidence and support in me.

"The past year was one of such tremendous accomplishment, made all the sweeter because it followed a decade of difficult, deliberate and detailed efforts to turn the county's finances around," Chairman Hood said. "Thanks to the efforts of my Legislative colleagues and County Executive Ed Day and his administration, We. Are. Back."

Chairman Hood discussed some of the highlights of the past year:

- There will be no county property tax increase in 2023, just as there was no property tax increase in 2022. "Two zeroes in a row and hopefully more are coming going forward," Chairman Hood said. "It's quite an accomplishment especially with rising costs in health care, and construction among other lines in the budget.

- The county motor vehicle tax and residential energy sales tax were both cut out completely. “Together representing the equivalent of a 9.54 percent property tax cut for our residents.”
- Seeing the struggles families are going through and to help, the county’s portion of sales tax on gasoline was reduced, resulting in a savings of about \$5 for a typical fill-up.
- The income eligibility for seniors seeking a reduction in property taxes has been increased, from \$29,000 to \$50,000 for people aged 65 and older.
- Work is underway to implement a 10 percent exemption on the assessed value of a volunteer firefighter or ambulance corps worker’s primary home. “We need to show appreciation for our first responders and lower taxes is a great way to show just that,” Chairman Hood said.

Also on the list for 2023 are capital projects and open space preservation, he said.

The Legislature has approved the funding to purchase two parcels on South Mountain Road and two others in Pomona, which are in line to be completed this year.

The opening of the new County Highway Garage is expected, a facility sorely needed to protect the investment that has been made in highway equipment over the years, everything from snowplows to dump trucks, together with a better working environment for highway workers.

Chairman Hood also announced that he will take special action in recognition of long-time County Legislator Harriet Cornell.

“I want to properly honor a member of our board, a person who has been here over 39 years and has put her heart and soul into all things Rockland,” Chairman Hood said. “Harriet Cornell has done so much for all of us and for the people of Rockland. We’re putting forth a rule change for 2023 creating a 2nd vice chair position which I will nominate her for later this month. As Harriet completes her final year as legislator, it is only fitting she has such a position.”

This marks Hood’s second term serving as Chairman of the County Legislature. He previously served as Vice Chairman and Majority Leader. He has served in the Legislature since being appointed in 2007. He previously served on the Haverstraw Town Board and currently serves as Haverstraw Village Attorney.

Also an attorney in private practice, Hood earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Mathematics from St. Bonaventure University and is a graduate of Villanova School of Law. He and his wife, Julie Meyers, are parents of two sons, Avery and Quinlan. He was sworn in by Rockland County District Attorney Thomas Walsh. County Clerk Donna Silberman oversaw the signing into the elected officials’ registry.

Legislators also voted to elect Legislator Paul as Vice Chairwoman for a fourth time. She was first elected in 2020 and previously served as Majority Leader. She was sworn in by District Attorney Walsh.

Democrats voted to elect Legislator Alden Wolfe as Majority Leader. He appointed Legislator Phil Soskin as Deputy Majority Leader. Republicans voted to elect Legislator Lon Hofstein as Minority Leader. He appointed Legislator Vince Tyer as Deputy Minority Leader.

Laurence O. Toole, the Clerk to the Legislature, was unanimously reappointed to a one-year term. He named Mary Widmer as Deputy Clerk to the Legislature. He was also sworn in by D.A. Walsh.

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