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WATCHING HISTORY...A large crowd watches as Mayor Shelley Brindle makes comments following her swearing-in on New Year's Day as Westfield's first woman mayor and the first Democrat to serve in the office in over 17 years.

Blumenstock

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sworn in to serve as borough council members after both prevailed in the November 2017 election.

Mr. McCormack said he wanted to "thank all those residents who stood behind me and gave me courage to do something I had a burning desire to do for quite a while now."

Mr. McCormack emphasized thankfulness for family member support and his running mate, Michael Collings. Mr. McCormack had his grandchildren hold the Bible as he was sworn in.

Ms. Todisco said her grandfather and longtime community leader Frank Todisco was a huge inspiration for her calling to serve the community.

"As a lifelong resident and volunteer for many organizations, I love this town deeply," said Ms. Todisco in her public address.

Ms. Todisco's grandfather's longtime childhood friends, Garwood resident for over 80 years Pat DiFabio and Mr. Alimonti, held the Bible for Ms. Todisco as she was sworn in.

Mayor Lombardo acknowledged

achievements in his mayor's address such as the parking committee concentrating on completing the parking permit program while respecting business owner input.

"The Green Team organized the beginnings of beautification of our downtown area with cleanup and seasonal plantings," said Mayor Lombardo of the 2017 program and its positive community impact.

Mayor Lombardo said he and the council are reviewing all borough roadways, with certain roads being prioritized for repairs with "(New Jersey) Department of Transportation and (Union) county funds."

"We also welcomed eight new businesses to our town in 2017," Mayor Lombardo said.

Ms. Blumenstock addressed the public, stating that community volunteerism, adhering to a capital plan by making long-term investments into the borough, and maximizing county grant opportunities is where the council should focus in 2018.

Mayor Smith Says Housing Litigation is Finalized

By FRED T. ROSSI
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

SCOTCH PLAINS — Mayor Alexander Smith said on Tuesday that the township has finally reached a settlement of its affordable-housing obligations with developers, although he expressed disappointment with the final numbers, which he said he hopes to share later this month.

At the township council's reorganization meeting, the mayor announced the settlement as part of his new year address, saying he did not agree with "the settlement figure being imposed on Scotch Plains," and adding that he thought the housing numbers should have been lower. The mayor paraphrased Clark Mayor Sal Bonaccorso, who said of his own town's affordable-housing settlement: "I had a knife to my throat and a gun to my head."

Over much of the past year, the mayor and other township officials have estimated that a settlement will result in about 3,000 new housing units — with about 450 of them deemed "affordable" — being built in Scotch Plains during the next eight years, with slightly less than half to be located in and around the downtown business district.

In his new year remarks, the mayor also touted some of the highlights and accomplishments of last year, including an upgrade in the township's bond rating, progress on the renovations to the Shady Rest clubhouse at Scotch

Hills Country Club and the Frazee House, upgraded communications with residents, investments in public safety, the more than \$200,000 in grants received and the progress in downtown redevelopment.

On the last point, the mayor said "2018 will be an exciting year" for downtown redevelopment efforts, stating that by mid-year, he hoped decisions will be made regarding the properties now occupied by the library and the municipal parking lot on Park Avenue, both of which have been the prime focus of the downtown redevelopment committee.

In other business, the council voted to reappoint Llewellyn Jones as deputy mayor for 2018. The law firm of DiFrancesco, Bateman, Kunzman, Davis, Lehrer and Flaum was reappointed as township attorney; the firm of Suplee Clooney was reappointed as township auditor, and Mott MacDonald was named as township engineer.

Several new members were appointed to land use boards, including Sonali Davli to the planning board and Richard Polhamus to the zoning board of adjustment.

The council's first business meeting of the new year will be on Tuesday, January 16.

MS Re-org

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staff for the recreation department.

Councilwoman Andre issued commendations to Annemarie Pires and Laura Rubino for their service to the rescue squad. Councilman Robert W. Messler recognized John Post, who has been the borough's attorney for 45 years.

Councilman Turner was elected council president, and Councilmen Turner, Glenn Mortimer and Rene Dierkes were appointed to the fire committee. Councilwomen Andre and Wendy Fech Caccamo and Councilman Mortimer were appointed to the media and information committee. James Foerst will continue to serve as borough prosecutor and JoAnn Neylan will serve as the community's public defender. The court administrator for the new year will continue to be Cynthia West.

During the public portion of the meeting a resident thanked all council members and police and fire department staff and stated it was a pleasure to live in Mountainside. Assemblyman Jon Bramnick (R-21st, Westfield) also attended the meeting and wished all those present a safe and prosperous 2018.

The council will continue to hold all its meetings on the first and third Tuesdays of the month, at 7:30 p.m., at Borough Hall.

Hannen

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Village, Municipal Alliance, Community Connection — that "celebrate family, friendship and neighborhood," she said.

"The greatest challenge facing Cranford is meeting its affordable-housing obligation without losing the character that drew us to our town. People leave urban centers and come to Cranford for a reason — to get away from the density and the pace of city life. Our approach to development has to bear that in mind. Using redevelopment, we can create affordable-housing opportunities...it needs to be a top priority for the township committee," Ms. O'Connor said.

"Serving the residents of Cranford is the best job I have ever had," Ms. O'Connor said in her closing remarks.

Commissioner Giblin highlighted the downtown and the 27 years of service Kathleen Prunty, who is retiring, gave as DMC director. "Our downtown is a highlight as to why people move here, stay here and come here from other towns," Mr. Giblin said.

He noted the Teen Advisory Board is being reignited.

"Trying to meet our affordable-housing obligations with the infrastructure and space we have...it is something Cranford needs to address, and the problem needs to be addressed in Trenton," Mr. Giblin said.

About \$7.5 million in tax dollars was paid in advance by township residents before the end of the year, Mr. Giblin said, in hopes of saving some tax dollars due to the State and Local Tax (SALT) deduction being capped at \$10,000 for federal tax returns. "The State of New Jersey is in a property-tax crisis," he said. Mr. Giblin suggested the township committee do its part to address the issue at the county and state levels.

Deputy Mayor Dooley said the township has seen "profound costs savings" in the five months since Cranford hired a full-time engineer, replacing the consultant engineer it had hired. She also talked about flood-control efforts. Gates have been purchased for dams in the Rahway River, while desilting is to take place, "for the first time in a number of years," she said. Phase 2B of the Flood Mitigation project is to begin in 2018, and the committee, she said, is "poised to move that ball" towards making improvements to Orchard Brook.

Mayoral appointments to the planning board are Christopher Chapman, Andrew Cossa, Bobbi Anderson and Julie Didzbalis. Mayor Hannen and Deputy Mayor Dooley will serve on the planning board as official township representatives.

Mary Ann Hay, Christine Daly and David Salomon were appointed to the zoning board of adjustment.

The establishment of a Green Team was authorized as well as the members who will serve.

A resolution was passed that would authorize a cash incentive to employees wishing to waive health benefits.

Pastor Thomas Rice of the Cranford Alliance Church gave the invocation, followed by the flag salute led by the police and fire honorary color guard.



WELCOME ABOARD...Commissioner Patrick Giblin, second from left, is sworn in as Cranford Commissioner by Freeholder Bette Jane Kowalski, left, a Cranford resident.

Mayor Brindle

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at the right time," Rabbi Sagal said. He ended his invocation with the blessing, "May G-d bless the work of your hands."

Former Mayor Andy Skibitsky was recognized by both spiritual leaders and Mayor Brindle, who thanked her predecessor for his leadership of the town and the kindness he showed her after the election, "including the note he left for me in the desk that I found this (Tuesday) morning."

Mayor Brindle said that the four Republican council members, "have all been so gracious and kind to us since we've been elected."

Second Ward Councilwoman JoAnn Neylan spoke "on behalf of the other side of the aisle," welcoming the new mayor and council members. "We are excited to work with you," she stated.

During the business portion of Tuesday night's meeting, former Mayor Tom Jardim was appointed as town attorney for a term not to exceed 60 days. He is a partner at the Jardim, Meisner and Susser firm in Florham Park.

Town Administrator James Gildea and Town Engineer Kris McAloon were reappointed until December 31, 2020. Scott Olsen, the town's CFO, was appointed as tax collector until December 31, 2021.

A new "Green Team" was created, being led by Medea Villere and Tim Van Epp.

Gary Fox has been named chairman of the recreation commission and will be joined by Brad Rothenberg, Ruth Maloney and Monica Bergin.

Michael LaPlace and Anastasia Harrison were appointed to the planning board, along with Alternate member Ann Freedman.

Eldy Pavon, Carla Bonacci and Frank Fusaro were all appointed to the board of adjustment.

In a departure from the previous administration, Mayor Brindle will fill the mayor's designee spots on both the planning board and the Special Improvement District board.

Councilwoman Habgood will chair the Finance Policy Committee with Councilwoman Neylan as vice-chair and committee members Councilman Contract and Fourth Ward Councilman Stokes.

The Public Safety Transportation and Parking Committee will be chaired by Councilman Dardia with First Ward Frank Arena as vice-chair and committee members Mark LoGrippe and Councilwoman Mackey.

Councilwoman Mackey will chair the Code Review and Town Property Committee with Third Ward Councilman LoGrippe serving as vice-chair. The committee members are Councilwoman Habgood and Councilwoman Neylan.

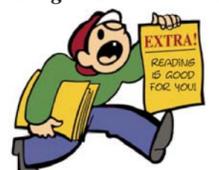
Councilman Contract will chair the Public Works Committee with Councilman Stokes as vice-chair and Councilmen Arena and Dardia as members.

The next meeting of the Westfield Town Council will be on Tuesday, January 16, at 7 p.m.



LOOKING ON...Senator Tom Kean, Jr. (R-21st, Westfield) and Assemblyman Jon Bramnick (R-21st, Westfield), in back, look on during Monday's Westfield swearing-in ceremony.

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MAKING AN ENTRANCE...First Ward Councilwoman Linda Habgood, Second Ward Councilman Michael Dardia, Third Ward Councilman David Contract, Fourth Ward Councilwoman Dawn Mackey and Mayor Shelley Brindle exit town hall to a cheering crowd at the New Year's Day swearing in ceremony.

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