



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

John J. Flanagan

## Flanagan and Fitzpatrick Call for Immediate Appointment of Vecchio and Nowick

JOHN J. FLANAGAN February 11, 2014

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Today, Senator John J. Flanagan (2<sup>nd</sup> Senate District) and Assemblyman Michael J. Fitzpatrick (8<sup>th</sup> Assembly District) announced their full support for Smithtown Supervisor Patrick Vecchio and Councilwoman Lynne C. Nowick, and jointly called on current Town Board members to immediately appoint Vecchio and Nowick to the offices that voters elected them to in November 2013.

In addition, Senator Flanagan and Assemblyman Fitzpatrick stated their intention to introduce state legislation that would allow Supervisor Vecchio and Councilwoman Nowick to serve out their full terms, instead of having to run again in the upcoming November elections.

“The time for politics is over,” said Senator Flanagan. “This past November, Smithtown voters spoke loud and clear by re-electing Supervisor Pat Vecchio and electing Councilwoman Lynne Nowick to the Town Board. Voters understood and expected these dedicated public officials to serve and act on their behalf for the next four years. To now prevent them from taking office because of a clerical mistake is to thwart the will of the people.”

“It is time to take the high road in Smithtown Town Hall. The will of the people must be respected, and there is no justifiable reason to saddle Smithtown taxpayers with the cost of a special election,” stated Assemblyman Fitzpatrick. “I urge the members of the Town Council to appoint Supervisor Vecchio and Councilwoman Nowick to the positions they were elected to perform as soon as possible. This is Smithtown; we are better than this.”

On January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2014, Supervisor Patrick Vecchio and Councilwoman Lynne C. Nowick were sworn into office by a judge on the front steps of Town Hall. Recently, however, the Town

Clerk of Smithtown informed Vecchio and Nowick they could not serve in their official capacities because of missing a statutory deadline of January 31<sup>st</sup> for filing their oaths of office.

This unintended error and technical oversight has created two vacancies that must now be filled by an appointment of the Town Board. In addition, existing law would require that another election be held to fill the unexpired term for these offices in November, 2014, potentially costing taxpayers tens of thousands of dollars.

“This debacle should have never occurred,” stated Senator Flanagan. “As the official winners of this past town election, Supervisor Vecchio and Councilwoman Nowick deserved the courtesy and respect of being notified that there was a deadline for filing an oath of office with the Town Clerk. The Town Board should take immediate corrective action by appointing Supervisor Vecchio and Councilwoman Nowick to their respective offices and carry out the wishes of Smithtown voters. In the interim, we will advocate at the state level for legislation that will protect taxpayers from having to finance yet another election in November for these town offices.”