

July 19, 2013

Dear Fellow Residents of New Castle:

When I last posted an open letter to you at the end of June, I said that I would continue to address different topics every few weeks. This time I'd like to respond to some of the questions that people have been asking me as I walk around both hamlets and during the kick-off event for our Conversation Tour. I'll preface this letter by saying that some of the questions have been more personal in nature as opposed to the issues facing our town, but they were nevertheless important.

Here we go:

“Do you plan to continue to work for the Town of New Castle if you are not elected?”

The answer is no. As I mentioned in my last letter, the Town Board appoints its Town Administrator each year and my current term will end in December. But, as an empty nester with boundless energy, and the desire to make a difference, I definitely plan to continue working in some capacity. Those of you who know me can attest to my endless desire to take on new challenges.

“How do you handle having a son who also works for the town?”

First, let me tell you a little more about my family. My husband of 30 years, Allan Bednowitz, is a Chemical Physicist Ph.D. and works for Regeneron Pharmaceuticals. We raised our three children here in New Castle and they are now grown and making their own way in the world. My eldest is Jared, who turned 29 last week. Noah, who will be 28 in August, is finishing up his Ph.D. in Engineering. My daughter, Mia, 24, is a Costume Designer on Broadway, and is currently working with the musical Annie. Jared began working for the town in 2000 as a part-time worker. During this time, I was the Comptroller and it was several years before I became Town Administrator in 2011. He has worked for several departments over the years and applied for full time work many times. In 2006, he was hired in the Department of Public Works as a full-time employee—a Laborer—a position he has held since. As you may also recall from my last letter, I explained that the Town Administrator does not have the authority to hire or fire—the Town Board has that authority. Earlier this year, Jared applied for a promotion to a Motor Equipment Operator and was passed over by a less senior employee. And, while he has held the title of Laborer longer than anyone, I think this demonstrates that he has not benefitted from favoritism because I work here. When he hasn't performed up to expectations, it has been documented accordingly. Jared has faced many challenges over the years, but we are proud that he has worked so hard to overcome them. Recently, Jared applied for a promotion. I was asked if he should be put off until after the election. I said absolutely not. If he is the right person for the job and deserving of the position, I would never want—nor should—my decision to run for office stand in his way just as I would never have any involvement in his evaluations or promotions. Like my other children, Jared should be evaluated on his own merit. We are, in some ways, like many other small towns. In fact, not many people know that it's fairly common for there to be

members of families who work for the town. There are more than 15 people who are related as husbands and wives, brothers, nieces, uncles, cousins, etc. But, I have never nor would I ever let my son's position with the Town interfere with making the best recommendations to the Board. My family is most important to me and I want our privacy respected, but I understand the question.

I wanted to be open about this so it would not become a campaign issue but rather to allow the real issues that face this Town be the focus of the discussions. Ultimately, the residents are the judge.

“Penny, you’ve done a great job in roles as Comptroller, Deputy Town Administrator and Town Administrator but why do you think you can step into the leadership role as the Supervisor?”

This is a great question. First and foremost, I have had a lot of training both by example and by experience. During the past 28+ years, I have worked under eight Town Supervisors from bi-partisan backgrounds. This has been an incredible opportunity to learn about what works and what doesn't. In addition, I've held leadership positions both within and outside of my profession. This has included serving as President for the Chappaqua School Foundation. Leading this group was a wonderful opportunity to develop ideas and think outside the box to benefit our wonderful school system. The innovative ideas and resultant fund raising this organization has done has helped our whole community.

Another example is taking the helm of a 500+ membership Synagogue. During my tenure there, I helped oversee the plans for a large expansion and to bring people together for a common goal. I have the passion, desire, commitment and energy to do that for New Castle. We have a lot of important issues to address and I am confident that I have the experience and background to guide the ship.

These questions were among the many I've been asked and I promise to be back to you soon with others. Keep the questions coming!

Thank you, again, to those of you who have shared your support, asked questions or presented an idea that you think should be considered. I will continue to respond to all of them with a commitment to serve all of the residents of New Castle the best that I can.

Very Sincerely,

Penny

Penelle M. Paderewski

ppaderew@town.new-castle.ny.us (town)

penellem@aol.com (home)