

Mayor Bianchi's Reorganization Meeting Speech
01/02/2019

Thank you to all of you for coming tonight. I want to recognize our distinguished guests in attendance:

Thank you to my Township Committee colleagues for the honor of serving as Mayor in 2019 and to our staff, professionals, and volunteers for your good service. I also wish to thank our news writers, including Jake and Linda, for your coverage of Bernards Township.

Congratulations to Jim Baldassare as Deputy Mayor, to Joan and Joe on your election, and thank you to our outgoing Mayor and colleagues for your service.

A special thank you to my family--my husband Rich, my mom Rita, father in law Al, and my children, Rita, Nolan, Michael and Caroline.

Goals for 2019

In 2019, we will continue our fiscal policies of zero debt and pay as you go, which have made Bernards Township strong, while we remain committed to maintaining our roads and infrastructure and reopening our pedestrian bridges.

My colleagues and I are also committed to greater communication and opportunities for our residents to be engaged. To that end, we will be working on the following initiatives in the new year:

A Communications Task Force-This task force will promote and assist neighbors in utilizing township communications and make recommendations for improved communications with residents.

Vision 2020, "Planning for the Future"-This task force will be charged with creating a survey for residents to indicate their vision and priorities for the next decade. The results will create a roadmap for the future of Bernards Township.

Affordable housing task force – The affordable housing task force will be a group of staff members and residents whose mission will be to coordinate advocacy for legislative change, compile and share information with the township committee and residents on the various ways to meet our affordable housing obligations in the future, and to assess the costs and risks of these alternatives. In addition, professionals will recommend any ordinance changes to plan best for the future.

And last, a Quarry oversight committee to work with staff and ensure the rehabilitation plan is completed and to provide other relevant information to the township committee.

Residents are encouraged to complete a tap the talent form and indicate your interest in serving on one of these task forces. Selection will be based upon experience, broad representation of our population, and your commitment to public service.

The following initiatives will also improve communications and information sharing: a Mayor's newsletter; timely notifications on social media of township committee and land use agendas; public work sessions and a second public comment added to the agenda. Your questions will be answered at the township committee meetings or staff will follow up with you afterwards, if more information is needed. Staff will

also provide office hours, which will be announced, where residents can come in and ask questions and address concerns.

In summary, my colleagues and I are committed to continuing the policies which have made Bernards Township the best run town anywhere while improving our processes to ensure greater open government, communication, and the good government you deserve.

Peace to all of you in 2019 and may God bless our community and all of you.

Please join us at the Liberty Corner firehouse immediately afterwards for our celebration.