Long Island Regional Planning Council

LIRPC Meeting – June 22, 2026
Zoom Virtual Meeting Summary Minutes

LIPRC Members Present
John D. Cameron, Jr., Chair
Jeff Kraut, Treasurer
Theresa Sanders, Secretary
Elizabeth Custodio
Jeff Guillot
Mayor Barbara Donno
Mayor Robert Kennedy
Supervisor Ed Wehrheim

Staff and Guests Present
Richard V. Guardino, Jr., Executive Director
Elizabeth Cole, Deputy Executive Director
Missy Leder, Executive Assistant
Rachel Titus, Program Coordinator

Alan Belniak
Katherine Heaviside
Mark Smith

Meeting Commenced:
John D. Cameron, Jr., opened the meeting at approximately 10am.

At this time we will start with the Pledge of Allegiance. Supervisor Wehrheim, since you have a flag, could you please lead us in the Pledge.

Supervisor Wehrheim:
Pledge of Allegiance

Elizabeth Cole:
Good morning and welcome to the meeting of the Long Island Regional Planning Council. My name is Elizabeth Cole, and I'm the Deputy Executive Director of the Council. We have a very exciting presentation this morning, and we thank you all for joining us. And with that, I'd like to do a roll call of the council members.

John D. Cameron, Jr., Chair
Jeff Kraut, Treasurer
Theresa Sanders, Secretary
Elizabeth Custodio
Jeff Guillot
Mayor Barbara Donno
Mayor Robert Kennedy
Supervisor Ed Wehrheim

Elizabeth Cole:
Next, I am going to turn it over to Christiana Kastalek from VHB to talk about procedure for the meeting.

Christiana Kastalek:
Thank you for joining us this morning. My name is Christiana Kastalek with VHB. I am here to help support this meeting today. After some opening remarks and some orders of business, we'll have a presentation. After that, the comment and question opportunities are given to members of the LIRPC. After the members of the LIRPC, we will turn to the public to ask questions and share comments in one of two ways. You can use the Q&A function below. If you move your mouse to the lower section of zoom, the Q&A button will pop up and you can type in your comment, and I will read it aloud. Alternatively, you can use the raise hand feature, which is also below. That sends a signal to us that you'd like to speak or comment. I'll call out your name, send a command for you to unmute your microphone, and you'll then have a couple of seconds to share your comment or question. Please note, this meeting is being recorded. With that, I'll turn it back over to John and Liz.

Adoption of the Minutes from the March 10, 2026 Meeting.
All in favor.

Elizabeth Cole:
Resolution 2026-107 authorizes an agreement to transfer Long Island Nitrogen Action Plan (LINAP) funds to the Nassau County Soil and Water Conservation District (NCSWCD) for administration and management of the Septic Environmental Program to Improve Cleanliness (S.E.P.T.I.C.).

NCSWCD has received LINAP grant funding of $100,000 per year for the last four years. In an effort to incentivize the use of innovative alternative on site treatment systems and protect environmental health, Nassau County and New York State created a septic replacement fund for eligible properties. Today 203 innovative alternative systems have been installed and in addition 268 grant agreements have been executed. NCSWCD is requesting $100,000 transfer of LINAP funds for 2026.

Motion to Accept Resolution 2026-107: Supervisor Ed Wehrheim
Seconded: Jeff Kraut
All in Favor: So moved.

Elizabeth Cole:
Resolution 2026-108 authorizes grants to the schools with the top proposals submitted to the 2026 Long Island Water Quality Challenge.

In response to the 2026 Long Island Water Quality Challenge, we had 15 final project proposals. A selection committee was composed of representatives of the LIRPC, the DEC and Nassau County Soil and Water Conservation District. We reviewed and scored the proposals. The winning middle school was the Woodhull School on Fire Island, and the winning high schools were William Floyd High School, Schreiber High School, and Smithtown High School East.

Motion to Accept Resolution 2026-108: Jeff Kraut
Seconded: Jeff Guillot
All in Favor: So moved.

Elizabeth Cole:

Resolution 2026-109 authorizes a Consulting Services Agreement with PFM Group Consulting LLC to provide a tax burden analysis for Nassau and Suffolk residents and businesses to focus on taxes and other revenue contributed versus expenditures provided by New York State and by the United States Federal Government.

The proposal from PFM for the balance of payments analysis also includes benchmarking key program expenditures to other large counties in New York State. PFM conducted a similar analysis in 2023 and prior to that, the Long Island Association Research Institute did an analysis in 2025. The cost of this analysis is not to exceed $192,300.

John Cameron:
A few years ago, PFM conducted a study that found Nassau County's tax imbalance with the federal government was approximately $25 billion annually, while the imbalance with New York State was about $14.6 billion. The County believes that a significant amount of tax revenue continues to flow out of Nassau without an equitable return in state and federal funding. One recent example is the $4.2 billion Environmental Bond Act approved by New York State. Of the funds appropriated to date, Long Island has received less than 4%, despite being the state's largest economic generator outside of New York City. This disparity reinforces the need to update the study with current data at both the federal and state levels.

The updated study will also expand its scope by comparing Nassau County's fiscal position with that of other major counties across New York State, including Westchester, Erie, Onondaga, and Monroe Counties. These comparisons will provide valuable context for evaluating how Nassau fares relative to other regions and may help inform future policy initiatives.

One idea previously discussed in the County's 2010 Sustainability Plan was whether Long Island should become its own metropolitan planning organization, particularly given the relatively limited amount of federal transportation funding the region receives. Because the federal government appropriates funding to the states, which it then allocates among local governments, the County believes it is important to have a current, data-driven analysis to strengthen its case for a more equitable distribution of resources. That need for updated and reliable information is the primary reason for undertaking this study.

Motion to Accept Resolution 2026-109: Theresa Sanders
Seconded: Jeff Kraut
All in Favor: So moved.

Elizabeth Cole:
Today we're delighted to have a presentation by Kalle Jahn of USGS. Kalle will be presenting on the USGS New York State DEC study to assess groundwater sustainability of the Long Island aquifer system.

SUMMARY OF PRESENTATION
The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) provided an overview of its ongoing project to support the assessment of groundwater sustainability in the Long Island aquifer system. The presentation summarized the overall study, highlighted drilling and geophysical logging efforts conducted by the USGS New York Water Science Center, provided an update on Phase Two of the groundwater modeling effort that builds on the model published in 2024, and outlined plans for Phase Three, including the development of subregional pumping optimization tools.

The objective of the study is to provide the information needed to assess groundwater quantity within the Long Island aquifer system, identify areas affected by saltwater intrusion, determine where and how much groundwater discharges to surface water bodies, and support long-term aquifer sustainability. The study includes updating the hydrogeologic framework through extensive borehole drilling and geophysical logging to identify changes in aquifer sediments across Long Island and to determine the approximate 2019 location of the freshwater-saltwater interface.

Using this data, together with numerous additional datasets, the USGS developed a groundwater flow model that simulates historical changes in aquifer conditions from 1900 through 2019. The model is also designed to evaluate how future management decisions and changing environmental conditions may affect the aquifer system.

The initial groundwater model and hydrogeologic framework for western Long Island were published in 2024. The hydrogeologic framework for eastern Long Island is being finalized and is expected to be published soon. Reports, publications, interactive maps, and related project materials are available through the project's online "Groundwater Sustainability of Long Island" landing page.

A significant portion of the project focused on drilling and data collection. Three drilling phases have been completed across Long Island. The first phase included 14 drilling sites in Kings, Queens, and Nassau Counties. The second phase added 12 sites in Suffolk County, and the third phase, completed within the past year, included seven additional boreholes to fill remaining gaps in the hydrogeologic framework.

More than 1,200 core samples were collected at approximately 10- to 20-foot intervals during the drilling program, and more than 22 miles of geophysical logging were completed. The boreholes were cased to serve as long-term monitoring wells, providing an ongoing resource for evaluating future changes in aquifer conditions.

Groundwater modeling was conducted concurrently with the drilling program. The model incorporates the Lloyd Aquifer, Raritan confining unit, Magothy Aquifer, Upper Glacial Aquifer, and the freshwater-saltwater interface within a three-dimensional framework divided into nearly seven million cells measuring approximately 500 by 500 feet horizontally. The model contains 20 layers, nearly 350 rows, and approximately 1,300 columns. Groundwater flow and salt transport are calculated annually for every cell from 1900 through 2019, simulating groundwater movement throughout the aquifer system. Modeling the full 120-year period is necessary to reproduce historical conditions, improve confidence in future projections, account for the slow movement of the freshwater-saltwater interface in response to pumping and recharge over multiple decades, and better understand aquifer responses to increased pumping, drought, and changing hydrologic conditions.

Model development integrates extensive datasets, including the hydrogeologic framework, sediment characteristics used to estimate hydraulic conductivity and porosity, an initial estimate of the freshwater-saltwater interface, annual groundwater recharge, and groundwater withdrawal records from all four Long Island counties. Because no direct observations exist from before 1900, the initial freshwater-saltwater interface represents one of the greatest model uncertainties and is refined through calibration.

Since publication of the 2024 model, several updates have been completed. These include incorporation of the eastern Long Island hydrogeologic framework, additional agricultural and golf course pumping

data, improved representation of New York City's subsurface infrastructure, and revised estimates of urban recharge. These improvements significantly enhanced simulation of historical recharge, particularly in Nassau County, while calibration continues across the entire island.

The updated groundwater model has been completed, and the first draft of the accompanying report has been prepared. The USGS is also rerunning the management scenarios from the 2024 publication using the updated model. These revised results will be incorporated into the project's interactive online viewer, allowing comparison of future management scenarios using updated information.

The revised pumping dataset includes numerous agricultural and golf course wells not represented in the original model. Much of the new agricultural pumping information is concentrated on the North Fork, while golf course pumping data has been incorporated throughout portions of Suffolk County. Model calibration utilizes an extensive monitoring network that includes groundwater level measurements, streamflow records from USGS gaging stations, and borehole geophysical data collected during this project and previous investigations dating to the 1970s. Observations are distributed across Long Island and multiple aquifer depths, providing a comprehensive calibration dataset. Observation records become substantially more complete after the 1940s. Although the model simulates conditions beginning in 1900, greater uncertainty exists during the earliest decades because fewer observations are available for comparison.

Calibration compares simulated groundwater levels and stream base flows with observed conditions to minimize differences between modeled and measured values. While no model can perfectly reproduce observed conditions, calibration significantly improves agreement with available data. The updated model provides a closer match to observed groundwater levels and substantially improves simulation of stream base flows compared with the original version. Model performance is also evaluated qualitatively by comparing the simulated freshwater-saltwater interface with borehole geophysical data. Cross-sectional comparisons of simulated chloride concentrations and measured electromagnetic conductivity help confirm that the model accurately represents the location and shape of the freshwater-saltwater transition zone.

Completion of the updated 2019 model enables evaluation of future management scenarios while improving understanding of how the aquifer has historically responded to changing conditions. Both predictive scenarios and historical analyses provide valuable information for long-term groundwater management.

Historical simulations also provide insight into aquifer responses to pumping and drought. To support these analyses, a second model was developed representing a theoretical "no development" scenario from 1900 through 2019. This simulation removes human influences, including groundwater pumping, subsurface infrastructure, stream and wetland modifications, and anthropogenic recharge from septic systems and leaking infrastructure. Comparison of the historical and no-development models provides estimates of the effects of human development on the aquifer system. Comparisons indicate that groundwater pumping has lowered the water table throughout much of Kings, Queens, and Nassau Counties, with the greatest drawdowns beginning in Kings County and extending eastward over time. Pumping has also lowered water levels in portions of Suffolk County, although impacts are generally smaller. In some locations, water levels are higher than natural conditions because of hydrologic modifications and additional recharge associated with human activities. Overall impacts vary according to local conditions.

County by county analyses show that groundwater levels in Kings County declined substantially before 1950 because of heavy pumping for New York City water supply. Although levels recovered after pumping was reduced, they remain below estimated natural conditions. Queens County followed a similar pattern, with recovery occurring after pumping largely ceased in the 1980s. Nassau County experienced a slight increase in groundwater levels before 1960 due to anthropogenic recharge exceeding pumping impacts, followed by declines below natural conditions as withdrawals increased. Suffolk County experienced comparatively minor changes, although portions of the South Fork have experienced declines since approximately 2000 associated with increased groundwater pumping. Historical simulations also indicate that groundwater discharge to streams has generally declined since approximately 1960 in both Nassau and Suffolk Counties. Simulated results suggest groundwater discharge has decreased to roughly 90 percent of natural conditions in Suffolk County and approximately 40 percent of natural conditions in Nassau County.

The model also evaluates changes in freshwater storage within the aquifer system. Kings County experienced significant reductions in freshwater volumes within the Upper Glacial, Jameco, Magothy, North Shore, and Lloyd Aquifers during periods of intensive pumping. Although partial recovery has occurred, freshwater storage remains well below estimated natural levels. Queens County experienced similar but less severe impacts, with freshwater volumes in the Upper Glacial, Jameco, and Magothy Aquifers recovering to more than 90 percent of estimated natural conditions. Nassau and Suffolk Counties experienced comparatively small changes. Nassau County showed minimal changes in the Upper Glacial, Jameco, and Magothy Aquifers, while the Lloyd Aquifer declined by approximately 1.5 percent during the simulation period. Suffolk County experienced even smaller changes overall, although gradual declines in freshwater storage have occurred since the 1980s.

These findings will be included in the upcoming report. The USGS is also rerunning all future management scenarios from the 2024 study using the updated model. The project includes 13 scenarios evaluated against average conditions from 2010 through 2019, examining drought, changes in precipitation and groundwater recharge, groundwater pumping, and sea level rise. Results will continue to be made available through the project's interactive online mapping tool. The updated scenarios also incorporate new public supply wells and sewer infrastructure added after 2019, providing a more accurate representation of current conditions. Simulations of drought conditions comparable to those experienced during the 1960s indicate declining water table elevations across nearly the entire island, with some of the largest declines occurring near the Nassau-Suffolk County border.

The next phase of the project will focus on development of optimization tools to support groundwater management decisions. While the current model evaluates a limited number of future scenarios, the optimization phase will examine a broader range of management alternatives to help balance water supply demands with protection of groundwater resources and environmentally sensitive areas. Optimization will focus on groundwater pumping rates as the primary decision variable. Objectives include meeting water supply demands while minimizing reductions in stream base flow, limiting groundwater level declines in ecologically sensitive areas, and maximizing freshwater storage where feasible. The process will also incorporate operational constraints, including maintaining overall water demand while evaluating opportunities to shift pumping to locations with reduced environmental impacts. Rather than evaluating individual wells, pumping wells will generally be grouped into clusters based on geographic location, water supplier, proximity to the coast, or aquifer characteristics. This approach allows evaluation of pumping changes that produce measurable aquifer responses.

The optimization framework distinguishes between objectives and constraints. Objectives represent conditions the model seeks to maximize or minimize, such as reducing saltwater intrusion or increasing streamflow, while constraints establish limits that cannot be exceeded. Saltwater intrusion, for example, may be treated either as an objective to minimize or as a strict constraint where no additional intrusion is acceptable. An example of this methodology was presented from a recent USGS study of the Northrop Grumman groundwater plume in Bethpage. That project used optimization to identify remediation pumping strategies that reduced contamination reaching public supply wells while minimizing remediation costs. Thousands of model simulations were used to identify solutions that balanced competing objectives.

Because optimization requires thousands of simulations, the full groundwater model is too computationally intensive for direct application, with individual simulations requiring five to six hours. To address this limitation, the project will develop machine learning emulators trained using thousands of MODFLOW 6 simulations. These computationally efficient surrogate models will establish statistical relationships between pumping rates and aquifer responses, including groundwater levels, stream base flow, and saltwater intrusion. The emulators will focus on the aquifer responses identified by stakeholders as most important rather than reproducing every model output. Decision variables and response variables will therefore be identified early to ensure the training datasets encompass the range of conditions expected to be evaluated.

The project will also include regional analyses to improve understanding of aquifer connectivity by evaluating how pumping changes affect groundwater levels, capture areas, and other aquifer responses throughout Long Island. Results will assist in grouping pumping wells for optimization and improve understanding of regional groundwater interactions. The project will ultimately produce a regional database containing approximately 1,000 model simulations representing varying pumping conditions and aquifer responses. This database will support development of local machine learning emulators for specific regions and water suppliers. The resulting workflow will be published and made available for application to local groundwater management decisions.

The USGS is currently assembling the information needed to develop the emulator training datasets. In coordination with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, input will be sought from water suppliers and other stakeholders throughout Long Island regarding the aquifer responses to be included in the optimization process, including groundwater levels, salinity, stream base flow, and other locally significant conditions. Stakeholders will also be asked to identify operational constraints, such as pumping system limitations and opportunities for water sharing among suppliers, to help ensure that future optimization scenarios are practical, realistic, and useful for local water management decisions.

Questions and Answers

Question: Jeff Kraut asked whether the historical groundwater model accounted for major remediation pumping associated with Superfund sites, such as the Bethpage plume, noting that remediation pumping at Bethpage alone removes approximately 10 million gallons per day from the aquifer.

Response: The presenter explained that the model does not include every remediation site, but it does incorporate major remediation systems, including the Bethpage project and several other significant sites.

Question: Mr. Kraut also asked about the machine learning "emulator" described during the presentation and whether it represented a specific artificial intelligence model or a newly developed algorithm.

Response: The presenter explained that the emulator uses Bayesian statistical methods rather than large language model artificial intelligence. Several Bayesian algorithms will be evaluated, similar to those already used during the groundwater model calibration process through the PEST software package. The emulator is intended to provide a computationally efficient representation of the regional groundwater model, allowing thousands of simulations to be completed much more quickly.
Mr. Kraut asked whether the emulator would provide greater precision for evaluating localized development impacts.

Response: The presenter clarified that the emulator does not increase the precision or spatial resolution of the regional groundwater model. It reproduces the results of the existing model more efficiently while retaining the same 500-by-500-foot grid resolution and associated limitations.

Question: Council Member John Cameron asked whether differences in sewer infrastructure between Nassau and Suffolk Counties could be evaluated through the model to better understand long-term impacts on groundwater levels, water supply, and recharge. He noted that Nassau County is largely sewered while much of Suffolk County remains unsewered and asked whether the model could help inform policy discussions regarding recharge, groundwater quantity, and water quality.
Response: The presenter stated that while the model is not intended to make policy decisions, it clearly demonstrates the historical impacts of increased pumping and reduced recharge associated with sewering. Historical simulations show measurable groundwater level declines and reduced stream base flow corresponding to these changes.

The presenter noted that the model can also evaluate additional future scenarios if they would be useful to decision-makers. For example, hypothetical scenarios could examine the effects of expanding sewer infrastructure into currently unsewered areas to estimate resulting changes in groundwater levels.
Mr. Cameron emphasized that ongoing discussions regarding wastewater treatment, groundwater recharge, and discharge to surface waters make these modeling capabilities particularly valuable for regional planning and infrastructure decisions.

The presenter agreed that the groundwater model is well suited to evaluate these types of management alternatives.

The discussion also highlighted an ongoing USGS project with Nassau County evaluating the effectiveness of recharge basins. That effort combines field investigations and groundwater modeling to better understand both the quantity and quality of recharge, including how infiltrated water moves through the aquifer and contributes to nearby public supply wells. The presenter noted that the regional groundwater model provides the scientific foundation for these and future studies.

Brian Schneider added that the recharge basin study will evaluate how effectively Nassau County recharge basins replenish the aquifer by installing monitoring wells and collecting groundwater quality data. He noted that similar work throughout Suffolk County would also be valuable as wastewater infrastructure continues to expand.

Mr. Schneider emphasized that the updated groundwater model represents a major advancement in understanding Long Island's aquifer system. Developed using approximately 45 years of additional scientific knowledge since the previous regional model, it demonstrates that the aquifer system is considerably more complex than previously understood. Extensive drilling to bedrock has significantly improved understanding of the island's hydrogeology.

He stated that the model should not be viewed as producing a single "safe yield" number for Long Island. Instead, groundwater management must recognize regional and site-specific differences, including varying conditions along the North Shore, South Shore, and interior portions of the island. Mr. Schneider also noted that the optimization phase is being developed in consultation with water suppliers and regional water managers to ensure it addresses practical management questions. He added that emerging demands, including potential water use associated with future data centers, further demonstrate the need for advanced regional planning tools.

Public Comment: Mark noted that additional historical groundwater datasets exist prior to 1900, including extensive investigations completed by the New York City Board of Water Supply, which documented groundwater conditions along the South Shore.
Response: The presenter responded that while earlier datasets do exist, only records meeting consistent quality and temporal requirements were incorporated into model calibration because annual observations over long periods were necessary.

Mark also referenced examples from Orange County, California, where treated wastewater is used extensively for groundwater recharge and saltwater intrusion prevention. He suggested similar approaches could be evaluated for Long Island and encouraged consideration of additional historical datasets and recharge basin studies as groundwater management strategies continue to evolve.
Question: An audience member asked whether the optimization process would evaluate how relocating pumping could affect saltwater intrusion as well as contaminated groundwater plumes. The question also asked whether conservation scenarios reducing overall pumping would be evaluated and what had been learned from incorporating golf course pumping data.

Response: The presenter explained that optimization scenarios can incorporate known contaminant plumes as objectives or constraints so groundwater flow directions can be maintained or undesirable changes minimized. This flexibility allows optimization analyses to address local conditions where contamination is a concern.

Regarding golf course pumping, the presenter noted that additional pumping records have been incorporated into the updated model. However, agricultural and golf course pumping data generally contain greater uncertainty than public supply records with respect to both pumping rates and well locations. While these withdrawals can have important localized impacts, their overall pumping volumes are generally much smaller than those associated with public water supply.

Question: Michelle S. asked whether the Long Island Regional Planning Council intends to take a larger role in regional groundwater management.

Response: Council leadership responded that the Planning Council serves primarily as a planning and advocacy organization rather than a regulatory agency. However, regional groundwater management is an appropriate topic for future discussion because groundwater resources extend across political boundaries and benefit from coordinated regional planning.

Michelle also noted that a growing coalition of water suppliers and stakeholders is advocating for groundwater conservation measures and regional green infrastructure planning.

Question: Mimi P. asked whether groundwater flooding issues in Elmont are being evaluated, noting that flooding has affected homes and businesses and that several public supply wells have been replaced.

Response: Brian Schneider explained that groundwater flooding in portions of southwestern Nassau County and southeastern Queens largely resulted from the cessation of New York City groundwater pumping during the late 1980s. Although pumping ended decades ago, groundwater levels recovered gradually over time, leading to elevated groundwater levels and flooding in low-lying neighborhoods. He noted that New York City has considered potential mitigation measures involving shallow groundwater pumping, although he was uncertain about the current status of those efforts.

The presenter also noted that the USGS recently completed a separate study on compound flooding across Long Island that evaluates flooding resulting from groundwater, precipitation, and coastal influences. A link to that study will be shared with the Council.

The Council thanked the presenters for an informative presentation and discussion. Members noted that the study raises important questions regarding the future management of Long Island's groundwater resources and expressed appreciation for the continued collaboration between the USGS, local governments, and regional stakeholders.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

John Cameron:

As we all know, in addition to groundwater, the Council deals with a lot of other issues, and I'd like to reflect a little bit today on another critical issue.

While our global, national, city and state news dominate the media, it should not and cannot distract us Long Islanders from the real challenges we are facing today.

Long Island's unaffordability is not only continuing but also worsening. The median price of homes in Nassau County is approaching $900,000, with Suffolk County not being far behind. The lack of a sufficient number of rental homes and the high cost of renting and available units makes it virtually impossible for young people to be able to save enough money for a down payment on a home. The high mortgage interest rates just exacerbate the high mortgage payments and with some of the highest property taxes and energy costs in the nation. The American dream of owning a home is virtually unattainable for most young Long Islanders.

For those Long Islanders who think that this problem has just surfaced, let me remind everyone that back in 2010, the Planning Council conducted a 25-year sustainability plan entitled LI2035. The plan identified the 2 greatest impediments to Long Island's future sustainability as a lack of diversity in housing and an unsustainable tax burden. Well, here we are in 2026, rapidly approaching 2035, with the same 2 impediments remaining as our greatest threats.

One has only to ask themself why we haven’t been able to make more progress on these critical issues. I suggest that we only have ourselves to blame. As Long Islanders do a great job of talking about our problems, but doing something about them is another story. We all know what the issues are but are not willing to address them.

When it comes to increasing the housing supply or supporting an economic development project, we say that we know it's all critical, it's all necessary, but just not near me. We continue to elect and reelect politicians who tell us what we want to hear rather than what we need to hear. For many elected officials, the next difficult decision they make will be that first one. I honestly don't know if the electorate or the elected leaders understand simple civic economics. In order to keep the taxes down, we must grow the economy while containing escalating costs of government. Many people talk about this. It is not sufficient to control the tax burden.

We have numerous examples of failure on Long Island to capitalize on major opportunities. We have shuttered malls near major train stations such as the Sunrise Mall in Massapequa Park and the Sears Mall in Hicksville as well as numerous failing strip malls.

We also have major governmental failures on transformative projects such as the Nassau Coliseum site where the county and town failed to work together for a viable solution. It appears that history may be repeating itself with the former Midway Crossing project site in Ronkonkoma. The site is at the nexus of Suffolk's busiest Long Island Railroad train station and MacArthur Airport. It is the best economic development site in New York State. The county and town each appear unwilling to work together and are waiting for the other to move forward before they initiate their actions. This standoff puts at risk the greatest economic development potential project here on Long Island in a lifetime. These are just a few examples of Long Island's paralysis.

We all know that in society, just like in the human body, without progressive movement, the body fails to exist. Are we willing to risk these failures? It's up to us.

DEPUTY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Elizabeth Cole:
Now in its 7th year, Long Island Water Quality Challenge (LIWQC) is a STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Math) initiative under the Long Island Watershed Program (LIWP). The competition encourages students in grades 5-12 to use their critical thinking, problem-solving, and collaborative skills to solve real world problems and become the next generation of environmental stewards.

The Selection Committee reviewed 14 project proposals focusing on green infrastructure designs to reduce nitrogen pollution from stormwater runoff. The winning teams include 3 high schools: Smithtown High School East (3 siblings made up the team), Paul D. Schreiber High School, and William Floyd High School (for the 2nd year in a row). The winning middle school team is The Woodhull School on Fire Island.

All 4 winning schools are accepting the grant award up to $2,500 to implement their project on school grounds.

All award ceremonies have taken place where teams were presented with an oversized check and a glass award for the school to display. The winning teams and the project designs will be the topic of the June LIWP Newsletter.

John Cameron:
New Business?

Christiana, any comments or hands raised.

Alan Belniak:
No hands raised and there is nothing in the Q&A at the moment.

John Cameron:
With that, we will close the meeting for today. Thank you everyone.

Motion to adjourn. So moved. All in favor.