



Mayor David Runfeldt's Remarks from the 2018 Borough Council Reorganization Meeting.

I would like to begin by welcoming everyone here tonight for the annual re-organization meeting of the Borough of Lincoln Park. A special thank you to the elected officials from throughout the county and state who have joined us this evening. And, of course, a special thank you to all the residents of our great town who have taken the time to come here tonight.

As I enter the final year of my third term as Mayor, I remain honored and humbled to serve the people of Lincoln Park. This is a privilege that I continue to take seriously and I am grateful for the support and trust of this great community.

Congratulations to Councilman Lou Pepe on his election victory for the council seat which he helped to fill following the resignation of Councilman Cardillo. Congrats also on your election to the position of Council President. Your being named to this position again shows the faith your colleagues have in you. Likewise, I believe that you and I have created a very good working relationship in the past and I look forward to continuing that in the coming year.

Councilman Gemian, you should be proud of your accomplishments as last year's council president. I believe your term saw a few issues arise which in some ways were very polarizing to our community. You handled them very effectively and professionally. I hope that you will continue to lead from within this coming year as I truly value your insight and input.

It has been a pleasure working with Council members Wild, Kerwin, Ross, Thompson and Moeller as well this past year and I expect that we will continue to do so in 2018. I continue to challenge each of you, and myself, that with every decision made, to do what is in the best interest of this community now and for our future. I would encourage all of us in this community do the same. It is important to look past what is good for "each" of us and look towards what is good for "all" of us.

Unfortunately, social media has given a platform to a whole bunch of people who would like to tell you that what they want is more important than what you want. This has been especially true this year more than ever on a national scale, and regrettably, has filtered down to local government. I have long said that there is no place for "party" politics in small towns like Lincoln Park. Those involved in town government should be concerned with providing **most** of our residents the **most** amount of service, in the **most** efficient manner, to save the **most** amount of money. Taking it one step further, this should also be done with the goal of ensuring that these decisions also provide for the future of our town. I have lived in this great town for nearly 50 years. I have seen the loss of most of our farm land. I have seen the construction of every condominium complex and many residential communities. I have seen intersection improvements and the adding of traffic signals from the one that was here when I moved into town. As each of these losses, growths and additions occurred, the cry from some in the community was "I'm leaving", or "there goes the small town feel". After 40 years of that response, it somehow continues to be the response today. I think it is important to realize that

whenever change is introduced in town – our elected officials, professionals and various boards – have done a tremendous job to make sure that with each of these changes, the “feel” of our community is maintained. We are neither a “tiny hamlet” nor a “sleepy little village”. We are a vibrant, growing community, and as such must continue to do what needs to be done to guarantee that we carry on for future generations. It is time we put “common” back in “community” and work to achieve common results for the betterment of Lincoln Park now and in our future.

While it may seem like the sky is falling on Social Media, there were many great things that happened in 2017, usually with little fanfare. The borough continues to bring in more grant money on a yearly basis than ever before. Our Health Department was recognized for an empowerment award from Atlantic Health Systems. We continue to make improvements and additions to our recreational facilities and parks. This year we opened a walking trail along a portion of the Morris Canal. Upgrades have been made to our communications and internet security, which also help us protect you. We recertified with the FEMA Community Rating System in 2017 and have already achieved many goals that may help us reach an even better CRS rating in 2018 when we are due for our full cycle verification.

I am always happy to report...or not report...on natural disasters in town. Happily, there were none to report in 2017. However, do not underestimate how much effort goes into the protection of you, your family and your property. Chief Runfeldt and the men and women of our Police Department keep us safe at all times and do a tremendous job. Fire Chief Fede and Deputy Chief Royce along with the many officers and members of the Lincoln Park Fire Department likewise did a great job serving our community. I would like to thank Deputy Chief Royce for his dedication to the Fire Department last year and wish incoming Deputy Chief Koldyk the best of luck in the coming year. Chief Meisch and the members of the LPEMS have also done a fantastic job to keep us safe in times of emergencies. Thank you Chief Meisch for your service, and good luck to our new Chief Anderson for a safe and successful year. Those involved with our Office of Emergency Management and Community Emergency Response Teams, although not called into action much this year, are always ready to drop everything and serve you in times of need.

2017 was the 9th consecutive year that Lincoln Park’s budget had no appreciable increase in spending. In a time where we are mandated by the state to not increase municipal taxes more than 2% each year, last year’s budget for Lincoln Park was not even 2% more than it was in 2009. CFO Fabiana Mello, Administrator Perry Mayers, all of our department heads and each and every dedicated employee of the town deserve much of the credit for making sure that Lincoln Park is as financially efficient as we are.

During the course of 2017 we lost several dedicated Borough employees to retirement. Billy Fritz and Jim Mizeski from our Department of Public Works, Chris Scaramelli in the Water Department, Lieutenant Fred Mabey and Captain John Karback in the Police Department and our Court Administrator Patty Fritz. We wish all of you the best of luck and thank you for your years of dedicated service to the Borough of Lincoln Park.

Lincoln Park is truly blessed with great employees. Health Officer Kathy Skrobala, Sal Marino of the Building Department, Rick Beyer from DPW, CFO Fabiana Mello, Janet Cassidy from Parks and Recreation, Police Chief Mike Runfeldt, Borough Clerk Cindi Sloane, our new Court Administrator Ashley Fritz and in my office Borough Administrator Perry Mayers and my Aide Dina Stoel. Each of these people and every employee on their staff give so much of themselves to make Lincoln Park great. Likewise, all of our hired professionals and dedicated volunteers have my appreciation and they all deserve yours.

In closing I would like to say to every Lincoln Park resident, employee, volunteer, business owner, elected official and member of a civic organization...”Thank You for all you do, and I wish you a Happy, Healthy and Wealthy 2018!”