

It is my honor!

Parting words from Supervisor Dominic Jacangelo

This meeting is my last general meeting of the Town Board. Only one meeting remains, the closeout of 2019 business. Since January 1, 2010 I have had the honor of serving the residents of the town.

I must start with a special thank you to my wife and family who put up with much over the years.

In a way I did not know what to expect when I first ran for Town Supervisor in the spring of 2009. Frankly, I did not know if the residents would accept me as steward of Town government. I worked very hard that year to get elected meeting every resident who would open their door to me. Five more times I repeated that journey. Frankly, as much as I hated campaigns, I enjoyed that part of running for office, meeting and talking with residents all over town.

That first year, I walked into office as almost all the contracts and paperwork for the water district had been completed except for funding and a few battles with Rural Resource to ensure our funding would stay in place. Construction was ahead and began in the spring. Every day there was a pile of sticky note on my desk with construction complaints from residents. We were more or less completed in the fall and it was time to turn the water on. Also it was during this period that we hired our first and still active water manager, Bob.

I talk about the water district not only because it was and will likely be the biggest project the town will undertake but also because it is also indicative of the town supervisor's job. Every day, every week, every year you are faced with new challenges that take your attention and dedication to resolve that challenge.

That first winter of the water district things did not go well. We had seven major water leaks. All of which were construction related. Working with the project engineers we came up with a solution, the contractor enacted the solution and knock on wood things got much better and stayed much better.

Near the end of the summer of 2011, we had Irene or should I say she had us. The central core of the town along the Poestenkill was devastated by a storm and

we were handed a second punch with Lee. Together they flooded a number of homes and wiped out several roads in the town.

My hat was off to the our small Fire Department for their response the day of the storm and to our highway crew who got into action getting to people in high water and getting them to safety. I will never forget the scene on the NY 351 bridge as tree after tree tumbled into the Poestenkill and came down what was then a river slamming into the bridge, crown first with many people standing on the bridge taking pictures. They never realized the danger they were in with the potential to be impaled by one of the branches.

The town supervisor is responsible for declaring a town emergency. So when in charge, take charge and I started to order people off the bridge. Needless to say they moved slowly until a Deputy Sheriff and State Police happened to arrive and they closed the bridge.

I learned something that day. While county emergency services can coordinate and disseminate information quickly, the pace of its response was frustrating. By the time they figured out what they were going to do, the town was already moving material to fill blowouts in town roads and reconnecting the eastern half of the town to civilization.

Good records all the way around allowed the town to get fully reimbursed by FEMA and SEMO disaster recovery efforts. For many residents it meant many months of home repairs. Some of those homes should not have been repaired because eventually it will only happen again. Sadly by the time the Federal Government came around with the flood hazard buyout plan the homes had already been mostly repaired. The lesson here is that Town government, the closest government to the residents can move at a lightning pace compared to the County, State or Federal governments.

Over the years I have had to initiate many projects and put up with some very ill advised state mandates. Twice we updated the town's computer infrastructure across the board with new hardware and software. Implemented a backup protocol and a disaster recovery plan for our digital files. A new website that is very accessible to the public. A Facebook page that I know Tiffany loves to post things to and my hats off to her for reinvigoration our youth program in the town along with an energetic Youth Board. . An interior paint job by two of our

seasonal summer workers accomplished. A modern highway fleet. Investments of our bank funds to generate in excess of \$20,000 in interest. A new way of posting property to alert the public of a land use matters taking place on it. I enjoyed working with the CAC in a small way to produce a Natural Resource Inventory which is an incredibly professional document produced with little to no cost to the town. Four highway union contracts. Five fire company agreements. A greatly expanded coverage for cable which means the east end of town also has internet. Reinstating host community fees at the transfer station. I am so pleased that we have been able to build a solid relationship with the Library, its Friends group and have made recent capital investments in the library building. It is a true community resource. Repairs to the bell tower where I learned about prevailing wages, a dumb state mandate in the way it is implemented. No lower threshold, so a \$1500 repair can end up costing twice as much.

So onto the other dumbest mandate, the 2% cap! Has anyone really felt a difference? It is not that the cap was a bad idea, it is the fact that we never before nor after went over the cap nor felt we needed one. What I do know is that there is a lot more paper work. So last spring I got a call from the Comptroller's office asking why we had not published our cap. They asked this after we had a "0" increase in the tax rate. So I asked a logical question, do the residents get a check from the state if I publish the cap and stay under it... no? Do the tax police show up if I don't publish the cap .... No? The fact is that after a couple of years the state eliminated the rebates to town residents that came from the town staying under the cap. We now have a useless mandate... Thank you New York State Government!

Over the years I have had the opportunity to participate in the hiring of many town employees. Three Zoning Board and Planning Board Clerks, four water managers, with one recycled, three youth directors, two code enforcement officers, one assessor, one bookkeeper, one town attorney. In fact from a personnel point of view town hall is a very different place. With the exception of Sue, Michelle, Lisa and Viv there are many new people. Together, I think we made a very good team.

Sadly, I have also seen several town officials pass, Gene Bouchard, Chet Roberts, Jeff Jackson, and Pat Tomaselli. Each of these public servants contributed to the character of the town.

I also think about the town board today. It is a whole new group of individuals. I think fondly of the board I started with but I also treasure the Board I am leaving. Four very different thinking members. Four truly independent individuals. I learned quickly that there is not much one can do without at least two of those town board members going along with the supervisor. In fact there is not much a town supervisor can do without a majority of the board. The current board is diligent and creative. I hope it continues to take a very active role in the management of town government.

I am disappointed that I will not be in office when the LED street lighting project is turned on and I am disappointed that we were unable to move forward with the solar project for the old landfill. I still think that the Barberville Falls should be in the “public trust” under town ownership but I am pleased that it is now owned by the Rensselaer Plateau Alliance. I look forward to that private group expanding its public use. I am pleased that we went from no town owned public space to at least we own the ball fields, a project which was very helpful to the Twin Town Little League and the School District. Town Hall’s phone system has to be updated at some point and there will be different ideas on how to do that. One again this year we will update the computer network infrastructure as Windows 7 goes away and a new operating system is demanded. I am disappointed that we did not receive a grant from NY Achieves to digitize our records but I am pleased that Lynn has taken to initiative to digitize the Planning and Zoning Records with the hope of getting to Building Department records next and consolidating them into a single searchable record.

After 10 years there are some things I will not miss and some I will. I won’t miss the 2 AM phone calls to come down to town hall to check on the alarm system that was triggered by a bat flying around my office. I won’t miss the phone calls by residents complaining about the bear in the garbage or the neighbor next door whose outside light is triggered by the raccoon walking through the yard. I won’t miss the occasional nasty irate phone call asking me to do something about

something town government has nothing to do with... they never really heard about honey and vinegar.

I will most definitely miss working with my very capable assistant Michelle Asquith. Many of you know that Michelle is very quiet but what you don't know is that she is very dedicated, responsible and professional. She has grown a great deal over the years that we have worked together. She is my assistant, now the town's bookkeeper, personnel administrator, anti-harassment trainer, procurement officer, and provides administrative assistance to the Highway Superintendent as well. She rarely misses work showing up even in major snow storms when I don't want to go out of the house. She is an asset to the town and I hope continues to serve the people of this town for many years.

I will miss my once a year visit with our Town Senior Citizens at their installation luncheon.

I will miss hearing from so many hard working, respectable residents who truly care about what happens in this town. Thank you, it has been my honor and privilege to serve.