



Mayoral Community Message

March 29, 2023

Dear Scarsdale Community,

As spring approaches and we look forward to beautiful weather and new beginnings, my term is coming to an end. It has been a pleasure working with the Scarsdale community over the years in various roles, but serving as your Mayor has been my greatest joy. I took my seat as Mayor at a point of inflection for Scarsdale. We were reeling from the pain and suffering of COVID, and our community was stretched to the brink both emotionally and physically. The Village was operating under austerity budget measures, deferring maintenance and investments just to get by.



After convening on zoom, then embracing hybrid meeting technology, we made a firm commitment to chart the course for a brighter future. We found new ways to gather and enjoy community events. Over these past two years, our Village has emerged stronger and better. Board and staff have made significant strides in advancing three priority goals:

1. Model for 21st Century Governance Excellence

At the beginning of my term, we introduced a Strategic and Financial Planning Framework, to increase accountability, transparency, and knowledge transfer. We held more public work sessions to afford the board and public increased opportunity to openly discuss key issues. We ignited a digital transformation, reengineered our budget process, and identified outsourcing opportunities. With newly hired Village Manager Cole at the helm, we fostered a culture of innovation and process improvement. Adding to an already superb staff, we welcomed new Deputy Village Manager Marshall, Village Attorney Ward-Willis, Labor Counsel Zuckerman, Village Clerk Emanuel, Fire Chief Mytych, Water Superintendent Gonnella, Personnel Administrator Sage, and Administrative Aide Morzello. As markers of our successes, we earned GFOA recognition for Village Treasurer Scaglione's financial statement advancements and County citation for Scarsdale Volunteer Ambulance Corps' COVID response led by President David Raizen. We also achieved our tenth straight CALEA national accreditation, underscoring Chief Matturro's stellar leadership and the Scarsdale Police Department's service excellence. In short order, we have laid the foundation for model governance.

2. What Matters Most: Public Safety, Quality of Life, & Economic Vitality

Public Safety

To enjoy all that Scarsdale has to offer, residents must always feel safe and secure. We have the most dedicated and professional public safety officials around, and we recognize that we do not operate in

a silo. Advocating for collaboration, the Public Safety pillar formalized our relationship with the Board of Education and School Administration, and our relationship is at an all-time high. We elevated school safety as top priority for every 2x2 agenda and passed an MOU to ensure video streaming could be accessed directly by the police. Most recently, we worked together to close telecom coverage gaps around the high school, on the fields, and at Fox Meadow school. To protect all our residents and visitors, we instituted a Village-wide reduction in the speed limit to 25 mph, noting that a 5-mile decrease leads to far better accident outcomes. We will also be implementing recommendations from our consultants to enhance traffic safety as part of our Strategic Mobility and Placemaking study.



Quality of Life

The pandemic changed the way we live, and with more of us working remotely, residents have higher continuing expectations for the place they call home. They seek natural beauty and peaceful enjoyment. We planted trees, implemented gas-powered leaf blower bans, restricted smoking in public areas, reexamined noise ordinances, and updated land use and stormwater codes. Our community simultaneously yearns for plentiful recreation opportunities, and we have delivered with enhanced programming, a full-time Naturalist at the Weinberg Nature Center, and new pickleball courts set to arrive in the near future.

Economic Vitality

A strong Village depends upon strong local economies, and we have been a municipal leader in revitalizing our retail hubs. During COVID, we instituted a multi-stakeholder task force, and our innovative collaboration led to codified outdoor dining, the adoption of the piloted Dine the 'Dale tent, and annual Scarsdale High School student public art projects. The Scarsdale Concours d'Elegance attracts car enthusiasts near and far to our Village Center. Our family and friends gathered on Memorial Day, the Halloween parade, and finished the year with a better-than-ever Light the 'Dale celebration. We've seen the return of the Scarsdale Music Festival and shopped local businesses at the annual sidewalk sale. Together, the Village and the Scarsdale Business Alliance have built a lasting legacy, recently strengthened by a new MOU.

3. Investing for Today and for Tomorrow

While we are incredibly proud of these achievements, and our Board would not rest until we rekindled investment in Scarsdale's infrastructure for today and tomorrow. We heard you loud and clear and are designating more funds to accelerate the improvement of our roads. We also prioritized funding for necessary sewer and water upgrades and to address important stormwater code changes. After the great success of our newly renovated and expanded library, we swiftly articulated the need



to reinvest in our pool complex with a reimagined seasonal facility. We upgraded the Girl Scout House and purchased new vehicles for our fleet. We have made a joint decision with the schools to advance a field study for the entirety of Scarsdale so we can better assess our community-wide needs.

Investment in the future comes in many forms. We doubled down on our partnership with Scarsdale Edgemont Family Counseling to provide a community mental health safety net. We created a new brand identity and logo that reflect the ethos of our beloved Scarsdale. We have strengthened our training on diversity, equity, and inclusion. We've embraced new technology to support future leadership in making data-driven decisions. We continue to do the hard work in open conversation with our community. We pursue continuous process improvement. At the end of the day, what truly distinguishes us is how we strive to create a welcoming and inclusive community, the place where we want to be now and forever.



It has been a privilege to work with a Board and staff who embrace this philosophy. I am regularly amazed by my colleagues' dedication, determination, smarts, and compassion. As Trustee Lewis and I leave the Board, we do so knowing our community is in good hands. I am glad to welcome new Mayor Justin Arest and new Trustee Dara Gruenberg, who have done and will continue to do amazing things for Scarsdale.

Though I will no longer be your Mayor, I'll still be here as your neighbor and friend, Jane.

Sincerely,

Jane E. Veron
Mayor