

JANUARY 1, 2012

COUNCIL PRESIDENT, MEMBERS OF THE BOROUGH COUNCIL, RESIDENTS, GUESTS, MY FAMILY,

WELCOME TO THE FIRST DAY OF 2012 -- JUST A WORD ABOUT THE CHOICE OF OUR LOCATION -- THE BOUND BROOK HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM -- THIS LOCATION IS A TESTAMENT TO THE SPIRIT OF BOUND BROOK AND WHAT A FEW HIGHLY MOTIVATED VOLUNTEERS CAN DO TO MAKE A POSITIVE DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF MANY OF OUR RESIDENTS OF BOUND BROOK. THIS AUDITORIUM WAS IN FAILING HEALTH AND ESTIMATES WERE THAT IT WOULD TAKE A SIGNIFICANT AMOUNT OF MONEY TO FIX IT -- BACK THEN IN THE EARLY PART OF 2000, BETWEEN HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS TO ALMOST A MILLION DOLLARS. A GROUP OF VOLUNTEERS SAID NO, WE WILL FIX IT AND WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE BOARD OF EDUCATION, THEY RAISED THE RESOURCES AND THE MANPOWER TO FULLY RENOVATE THIS AUDITORIUM AND MAKE IT A GEM FOR THE RESIDENTS OF BOUND BROOK.

FIRST AND FOREMOST, I WANT TO THANK MY WIFE STACEY, ISAAC, AND JANE FOR ALLOWING ME THE TIME TO DO THIS.

MY MOTHER ELAINE AND MY FATHER LOU INSTILLED IN ME A TREMENDOUS LIFE LESSON IN SELFLESS VOLUNTEERISM. MY MOM AND DAD ARRIVED IN BOUND BROOK IN THE EARLY 60S. ONCE THEY REACH 50 YEARS IN BOUND BROOK -- I MAY BE ABLE TO BESTOW UPON THEM CITIZENSHIP IN BOUND BROOK -- JOAN GLEASON -- YOU ARE ALMOST THERE!

I HAVE MANY COUSINS, AND FAMILY MEMBERS TO NUMEROUS TO NAME FROM THE PILATO, CARRIER, CALI AND TUMMINELLI CLANS FROM GREENVILLE AND DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA, TO ROCHESTER, NEW YORK, TO AIX EN PROVENCE, FRANCE TO CALTANISSETTA, SICILY AND TARANTO, ITAL. I ALSO WANT TO ESPECIALLY MENTION MY 90+ YEAR OLD GREAT UNCLES PAPA JOE, AND FRANK .

OUR SERVICE AS A MAYOR AND COUNCIL IN BOUND BROOK IS TRULY THAT -- SERVICE AND I THANK MY FELLOW COUNCIL MEMBERS (NOW OFFICIAL). I AM ALSO HAPPY TO INTRODUCE TO BOUND BROOK JOHN-PAUL LEVIN AND JOHN MILLER. J-P AND JOHN WILL BE TREMENDOUS ADDITIONS TO THE BOROUGH COUNCIL AND TO BOUND BROOK. THEY BOTH BRING CONSIDERABLE TALENTS AND EXCITEMENT AND ENERGY THAT WILL HELP MOVE BOUND BROOK FORWARD. THEY JOIN COUNCIL PRESIDENT HOWARD WAGNER AND COUNCILMAN MARK HASTING WHO WILL BECOME OUR POLICE COMMISSIONER.

WE SPENT A CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF TIME BETWEEN NOVEMBER AND TODAY TO MEET, DISCUSS AND ORGANIZE OUR AFFAIRS FOR THIS DAY. THERE IS NO PAY FOR WHAT WE DO, AND THERE NEVER SHOULD BE. OUR PAYMENT SHOULD BE TO CULTIVATE THE PROGRESS AND POSITIVE CHANGE FOR OUR FELLOW RESIDENTS.

I AM HONORED AND HUMBLERED TO BECOME BOUND BROOK'S MAYOR FOR ANOTHER FOUR YEARS. I WAS REMINDED THAT I WAS THE FIRST REPUBLICAN TO DO SO SINCE MAYOR SAM PATULLO WHO SERVED AS THE MAYOR OF BOUND BROOK UNTIL THE LATE SEVENTIES.

TODAY IS A NEW BEGINNING BECAUSE TOGETHER, AS A MAYOR AND COUNCIL AND TOGETHER WITH THE CITIZENS, WE CAN ACHIEVE THE GREATEST IN ACCOMPLISHMENTS OVER THESE NEXT COUPLE OF YEARS.

IN ORDER FOR BOUND BROOK TO MOVE FORWARD WE NEED TO BECOME ONE COMMUNITY WITH ONE DESTINY – TO WRESTLE SUCCESS FROM THE CONSTANT BAND OF NAYSAYERS THAT ALWAYS PROFESS THAT BOUND BROOK COULD BE GREAT, "BUT." THAT WORD OR RESERVATION AS BECOME A MILLSTONE THAT GRINDS AWAY AT OUR DESTINY OF BEING A GREAT TOWN.

I HAVE HEARD A NUMBER OF THESE "BUTS" OR RESERVATIONS IN MY SHORT TIME OF SERVICE:

WE CAN BE SUCCESSFUL -- BUT WE FLOOD; BUT WE HAVE HIGH TAXES; OR BUT WE HAVE A LOWER BUSINESS TAX BASE; OR FINALLY; BUT WE HAVE A DIVERSE POPULATION

THIS TEAM WILL WORK TIRELESSLY TO SMASH THIS MILLSTONE OF RESERVATIONS ABOUT BOUND BROOK AND ROOT OUT AND CORRECT THESE AND MANY OTHER NEGATIVE PERCEPTIONS OF BOUND BROOK.

WORD ALONE CANNOT DO THIS, BUT DEEDS CAN – AND THIS TEAM IS ONE THAT WILL BE JUDGED BY OUR DEEDS!

ABRAHAM LINCOLN HAD A LARGE OVERCOAT THAT WAS SPECIALLY TAILORED FOR HIM BECAUSE OF HIS GANGLY FRAME. INSIDE THE OVERCOAT WAS THE INSCRIPTION "ONE COUNTRY, ONE DESTINY." LINCOLN WILLED THE REUNIFICATION OF THE UNITED STATES THROUGH HIS SUCCESSFUL PERPETRATION OF THE CIVIL WAR ALL THE WAY THROUGH LEE'S SURRENDER TO GRANT AT APPOMATTOX. HIS SIMPLE WILL (TO BE POSITIVE THAT REUNIFICATION WILL OCCUR) IS ONE THAT WE SHOULD ADOPT FOR BOUND BROOK.

OUR HISTORY OF GREATNESS IN THE PAST FROM REVOLUTIONARY WAR TO THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION AND THE ADVENT OF THE TRAIN, A CROSSROADS OF MAJOR HIGHWAYS AS WELL AS ACCESS TO THE INFORMATION SUPERHIGHWAY PROVIDE US WITH THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF AN EVEN BETTER COMMUNITY TO COME.

FOR THE NAYSAYERS, PLEASE TELL ME HOW A TOWN WITH SUCH A DOWNSIDE IS ABLE TO BE KNOCKED DOWN BY TWO FLOODS IN TWO YEARS AND MAKE A COMEBACK, YET AGAIN. MOST OF OUR BUSINESSES, SAVE ONE, HAVE REOPENED – IN THE WORST NATIONAL AND STATE ECONOMIC SITUATION IN GENERATIONS.

LATER THIS YEAR – WE WILL CELEBRATE THE COMPLETION OF FLOOD CONTROL IN BOUND BROOK– THE COMPLETION CANNOT COME SOON ENOUGH, BUT IT WILL OCCUR IN THE SUMMER OR FALL. AND WITH IT SIGNIFICANT PROSPERITY FOR BOUND BROOK AWAITS!

BOUND BROOK CAN MOVE FROM A COMMUNITY THAT IS THREATENED BY THE RARITAN RIVER TO A COMMUNITY THAT IS COMPLEMENTED BY THE RARITAN RIVER.

THIS COUNCIL WILL TAKE ACTION ON HIGH TAXES. WHERE THERE IS WASTE, IT WILL BE ROOTED OUT, WHERE THERE ARE COST CAUSERS, THEY WILL BE CHARGED AND ASSESSED, WHERE THERE IS A PRACTICE THAT WASTES MONEY IT WILL BE CHANGED. LATER THIS MEETING WE WILL ASK AGAIN FOR A LOOK BACK OR REVIEW OF THE CURRENT GARBAGE USER FEE. WE WILL ALSO REQUEST A LOOK BACK ON THE NEW SEWER TAX.

BOTH LOOK BACKS HAVE A SIMPLE PURPOSE – TO LOWER THE OVERALL TAX LEVY THAT OUR RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES FACE. DESPITE WHAT OTHERS BELIEVE – AND DESPITE OUR CURRENT GOVERNMENT FRUGALITY – AND WE ARE FRUGAL ALREADY! WE BELIEVE THAT THE RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES ARE MORE EFFICIENT INVESTORS OR THEIR MONEY THAN GOVERNMENT. WE SHOULD NOT TAKE A PENNY MORE THAN WHAT WE NEED.

IN MCCULLOCH V. MARYLAND, CHIEF JUSTICE JOHN MARSHALL WROTE THE OPINION FOR A UNANIMOUS COURT AND STATED "THE POWER TO TAX INVOLVES THE POWER TO DESTROY." WELL IN BOUND BROOK THAT STATEMENT IS MORE EVIDENT TODAY THAN EVER. WE ARE DESTROYING THE FOUNDATION OF OUR TOWN. FAMILIES HAVE TO WORK EXTRA HARD TO AFFORD OUR TAXES. SENIORS ARE HAVING TO TAKE OUT LOANS, COME OUT OF RETIREMENT AND WORK AGAIN, RISKING THEIR PENSIONS, AND EVEN WORSE, TAKE OUT REVERSE MORTGAGES JUST TO PAY THE TAXES.

OUR POWER OF TAXATION IS LEADING TO SOME OF THE UNPLEASANT THINGS THAT CAUSE DECAY IN A TOWN: MORE RENTAL UNITS INSTEAD OF SINGLE FAMILY HOMES, LESS OWNERSHIP AND PARTICIPATION IN OUR COMMUNITY AND MORE OVERCROWDING, HIGHER CRIME, AND EVEN ILLEGAL ROOMING HOUSES IN THE MOST PROMINENT NEIGHBORHOOD SINGLE FAMILY HOMES.

WE HAVE A NEW SPIRIT OF COOPERATION IN A NEW JUDGE AND NEW APPROACH TO QUALITATIVE BASED ENFORCEMENT. OUR NO-NONSENSE APPROACH TO WHAT WE CHERISH – A HIGH STANDARD AND HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE WILL BE EMPHASIZED IN ALL THAT WE DO.

WORKING IN COOPERATION WITH OUR NEW CHIEF OF POLICE, I ONCE AGAIN CONGRATULATE CHIEF OF POLICE MICHAEL JANNONE – AS I STATED LAST MONTH WHEN WE APPOINTED HIM HE IS THE EQUIVALENT OF A DOUGLAS MACARTHUR FOR BOUND BROOK AND THIS MAYOR AND THIS COUNCIL HAS THE UTMOST RESPECT AND SUPPORT FOR HIS AGENDA.

OUR POLICE COMMISSIONER, OUR PROPERTY MAINTENANCE AND FIRE OFFICIALS, AND OUR PROSECUTOR, AND OUR JUDGE WILL MAKE OUR COURTS A MODEL TO BE EMULATED – I WANT TO CONGRATULATE JUDGE HOWES! JUDGE SERVED IN RARITAN AND WE ARE HAPPY TO WELCOME HER TO BOUND BROOK.

WE ARE A LEADER IN SHARED SERVICES AND REGIONALIZATION AND WE WILL NOT REST UNTIL WE CAN DO MORE – SOMERSET COUNTY IS A GREAT PARTNER AND WE WILL LOOK AT EVERY SERVICE THAT WE PROVIDE! WE WILL ASK ONE QUESTION – WHAT IS THE COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS? DOES IT HELP BOUND BROOK OR HOLD US BACK?

BUILDING A BROADER BUSINESS TAX BASE WILL BE A HUGE ISSUE FOR BOUND BROOK. WE HAVE A PARTNER WHO WILL BEGIN SHORTLY – REDEVELOPMENT OF THE BOLMER SITE IN THE DOWNTOWN. THE GOAL OF THIS REDEVELOPMENT IS VERY SIMPLE – PROVIDE A BUSINESS FRIENDLY CLIMATE WHERE THIS DEVELOPER IN THIS PARCEL OF DOWNTOWN PROPERTY CAN BE SUCCESSFUL. THIS COUNCIL IS DETERMINED TO DO SO, BUT WITH LIMITS TO ENSURE THAT THE TAXPAYERS SEE THE BENEFITS OF THIS DEVELOPMENT.

WE HAVE A STALLED TRANSIT VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT – AN EFFORT TO BRING MORE CONCENTRATED RETAIL ESTABLISHMENT TO THE DOWNTOWN. WE WILL WORK WITH THE HEAD OF THE NJ RETAIL MERCHANTS ASSOCIATION AND EXPERTS IN REDEVELOPMENT TO ASSESS AND RETHINK OUR EFFORTS IN ORDER TO HARNESS THE CONSIDERABLE RETAIL POTENTIAL OF OUR TRANSIT VILLAGE AND ADJOINING PROPERTIES.

ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WE BELIEVE THAT ALL OF OUR BUSINESS TAX BASE AND RATABLE EGGS SHOULD NOT BE IN DOWNTOWN BOUND BROOK, BUT RATHER DEVELOPING TAX RATABLES IN ALL OF BOUND BROOK – INCLUDING ROUTE 28, 22, AND 287 CORRIDORS – SO WE WILL RE-TASK OUR CITIZEN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (EDAC) WITH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF ALL OF BOUND BROOK

SOME HAVE STATED “OUR DIVERSE POPULATION.” IS A CAUSE THAT BOUND BROOK CANNOT MOVE FORWARD. AGAIN OUR HISTORY OFFERS SOME INSIGHT INTO THIS DISCUSSION. OUR FIRST SETTLERS WERE DUTCH, ENGLISH, JEWISH, GERMAN, AND THEN FOLLOWED WITH POLISH, ITALIAN, PUERTO RICAN, COSTA RICAN, ASIAN, COLOMBIAN, AND MEXICAN.

WHEN I PICK UP MY CHILDREN AT SCHOOL, MY SON AND DAUGHTER’S CLASSMATES ARE JUST THAT – BOUND BROOK CLASSMATES

THERE ARE MANY UNIQUE THINGS THAT DEFINE BOUND BROOK. WE THE CITIZENS ARE INTERWOVEN INTO A FABRIC THAT BINDS US TOGETHER AND MAKES US ABLE TO TAKE ON THE TREMENDOUS CHALLENGES AHEAD. IN OUR MOST RECENT FLOODS OUR TOWN (PAID AND VOLUNTEERS OF POLICE, FIRE, RESCUE SQUAD, AND OEM) DID NOT CARE WHAT A PERSON’S ETHNICITY WAS – WE BANDED TOGETHER AND HELPED OUR FELLOW BROOKERS – LIKE IN TIMES IN OUR RECENT PAST

WE HAVE A SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGE BEFORE US AND IF WE WANT TO SEIZE THE PROGRESS THAT WE SEEK -- WE NEED THE BEST IDEAS AND INPUT NOT JUST FROM ME AND MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL BUT FROM MANY OF THE CITIZENS THAT ARE HERE TODAY

LET ME END. WITH A FINAL THOUGHT, TOGETHER, AND WITH YOUR HELP, AND UNDERSTANDING ALL OF THE STRENGTHS THAT WE CURRENTLY HAVE, I BELIEVE THAT BOUND BROOK CAN TRULY PROGRESS FORWARD.

WE ARE IN A SIMILAR SITUATION TO WHAT WE FACED AS A NATION IN 1980. THE UNITED STATES HAD BECOME A SUPERPOWER AFRAID OF ITS OWN DESTINY AS A GREAT NATION. IN 2012, I BELIEVE AFTER THIS RECENT DOWN TURN IN THE ECONOMY; WE HAVE SOME OF THE SAME INCLINATIONS.

IN 1980, RONALD REAGAN LAID OUT A CHALLENGE TO ALL LEADERS – INTERNATIONAL, NATIONAL, STATE AND LOCAL. HE PROCLAIMED,

“IF YOU'RE AFRAID OF THE FUTURE, THEN GET OUT OF THE WAY, STAND ASIDE. THE PEOPLE OF THIS COUNTRY ARE READY TO MOVE AGAIN.”

IN ORDER FOR BOUND BROOK TO MOVE FORWARD AGAIN WE NEED TO WORK TIRELESSLY TO ERASE THE NAYSAYERS RESERVATIONS THAT HOLD US BACK. TRULY THEY ARE JUST EXCUSES FOR NOT DOING THE HARD WORK, NOT TOILING FOR THE BETTER ANGELS IN ALL OF US; THEY ARE CRUTCHES THAT ALLOW US TO FIND AN EASY WAY OUT INSTEAD OF THE DILIGENCE OF LEADERSHIP.

IN ORDER TO BECOME ONE COMMUNITY WITH ONE DESTINY – THIS MAYOR AND COUNCIL WILL NEED TO EMBARK ON AN ERA OF GREAT PROGRESS FOR BOUND BROOK.