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2021 Environmental Questionnaire for Long Island Candidates

Thank you for taking the time to fill out the New York League of Conservation Voters Questionnaire.

To ensure your responses address the issues NYLCV and its partners are most concerned about, please consult [NYLCV's 2021 Long Island Policy Agenda](#) when answering the questions.

The New York League of Conservation Voters is the only non-partisan, statewide environmental organization in New York that fights for clean water, clean air, renewable energy, and open space through political action. This questionnaire is designed to elicit your views regarding what environmental, public health, clean energy and transit, and environmental justice groups consider to be the most important issues of the day. Responses may inform NYLCV's educational and legislative programs and actions NYLCV takes in the election cycle.

Responses should be considered public. Although NYLCV may choose not to publicize the responses to every question, verbatim responses may be reproduced and distributed publicly. If so, your responses may be shortened, if necessary, but will not be edited in substantive ways. If you choose to refer us to a position paper or website, please indicate exactly what text you would like us to cite. For candidates choosing not to respond to the questionnaire, NYLCV will note as much in its public materials.

NYLCV and its partners in the environmental policy arena believe that New York's voters are determined to make the environment a voting issue this year. Candidate positions on issues such as protecting public health, building a clean energy future, and mitigating climate change will help voters decide how to cast their ballots this election cycle. This questionnaire is one of the primary ways the public will get this information.

Here are a few guidelines:

- ☒ Questionnaires are due **Friday, April 30, 2021**
- ☒ The completed questionnaire is mandatory for endorsement consideration and must be submitted via e-mail as a Microsoft Word file to: politics@nylcv.org
- ☒ Questions or extension requests may be directed to Joshua Klainberg (jklainberg@nylcv.org)
- ☒ After receipt of the completed questionnaire, candidates will be invited to participate in a formal interview with a local Chapter Board.
- ☒ General election endorsements will be made by the NYLCV State Board on July 29, 2021.

CAMPAIGN CONTACT INFORMATION

Candidate name: Donald X. Clavin, Jr.

Office sought (& district number if applicable): Town of Hempstead Supervisor

Campaign e-mail: info@donclavin.com

Campaign phone:

Website: www.donclavin.com

Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/DonClavinTOH/>

Twitter handle:

Campaign manager's name and email:

Press Secretary's name and email:

Scheduler's name and email:

PERSONAL INFORMATION

1. Please share your accomplishments or experiences that indicate your commitment to advancing a pro-environment agenda. These experiences may be professional or personal.

The preservation of our natural resources and the improvement of our environment are imperatives to which I am deeply committed as the Supervisor of the Town of Hempstead. I am eager to build upon the legacy that I have established in the year and a half that I have been the chief executive of my local government, as well as the accomplishments that I achieved during my service as the Town's Receiver of Taxes.

While in the Receiver's Office, I succeeded in lobbying Albany for authorization to issue e-Bills for tax payments. As a result, my Receiver's Office was the first in the state to offer paperless tax bills (online). We also implemented credit card payments to reduce paper usage associated with mailing payments or the carbon footprint attendant with traveling to the office for in-person payments. I also initiated online newsletters to reduce paper usage and I produced web-based videos on tax grievance

issues so that people would not have to attend in person meetings or visit the office to have questions answered.

As Town Supervisor, I just introduced Vision 2040, which is an initiative that calls for all Town of Hempstead vehicles to be fully replaced with a clean-energy fleet by the year 2040. To kick-off the initiative, we have acquired one of only two electric garbage trucks in the world for sanitation collection on a trial basis. We have already ordered electric vehicles to be utilized at the Town's Conservation and Waterways Department.

I have just established monthly clean-ups at the Town's beaches in coordination with the Atlantic Marine Conservation Society. What's more, the Town's efforts along its beachfront in the area of plover management and habitat protection has earned our government the first ever "Share the Shore Award" from Audubon New York and Audubon Connecticut.

My administration is moving swiftly to install web cams at the Oceanside Marine Nature Study Area to promote the study of certain species of birds at the Town site.

Two more initiatives that I am in the process of pursuing are geared toward important conservation efforts. Our Town's Sanitation Department is poised to acquire rain barrels for distribution to the public at cost in an effort to promote water conservation. Another water conservation program is soon to take place at the Town's Water Department, which involves the distribution of home water conservation kits to reduce household water usage by the Town's 85,000 water customers.

I am proud to note that our Township will be presented with a New York State DEC's Climate Smart Community Award (Bronze) for its overall excellence in the areas of renewable energy programs and other progressive climate smart initiatives.

My administration is eager and excited to announce that it is expanding its hazardous household waste disposal program, as well as its e-Cycling program, offering more opportunities for the public to help keep our planet clean.

I have many other programs that I am eager to pursue, including the expansion of the government's robust solar energy program and the reinvigoration of our alternative energy park.

ISSUES

Each year, NYLCV works closely with New York’s leading environmental, public health, conservation, energy, environmental justice, and transportation organizations to identify the most pressing priorities on fighting climate change, conserving land and water, and protecting public health. These issues drive NYLCV’s advocacy work throughout the legislative session, influence the bills we select for NYLCV’s Environmental Scorecards, and informs the decision on the candidates we choose to endorse. To ensure your responses are in alignment with the issues NYLCV and its partners are most concerned about, please review [NYLCV’s 2021 Long Island Policy Agenda](#) when formulating your responses.

Please indicate your level of commitment to, and if applicable your recent personal and professional activity concerning, all the policy priorities of our partners per the following issues:

Combating Climate Change

The time to act on climate is now. We must make radical changes in short order to avoid catastrophic climate change. New York’s Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act will require action at all levels of government to achieve its ambitious goal of reducing economy wide emissions 85% by 2050 and achieving 70% renewable energy by 2030. By allocating resources wisely, local governments can have a significant impact on energy use and the environment. Localities must also adapt to a changing climate and include resiliency planning in all aspects of future governance.

2. Energy (p. 5)

We are meeting the challenge of climate change “head on” in Hempstead Town, working hard to reduce our carbon footprint. We have undergone a full energy audit at Town facilities, replacing the lighting and other electrical components with fixtures

that dramatically reduce energy usage. The units also have a longer useful life, reducing the energy needed to produce replacement lighting. We have also replaced approximately 50,000 streetlights with LED units, which boast a 20-year useful life and offer a 50% reduction in energy usage.

As mentioned in a previous answer, Hempstead Town is leading the way on reducing its carbon emissions with the adoption of a plan to implement a clean energy fleet of Town vehicles, as well as its experimentation with a ground-breaking electric garbage truck.

Hempstead Town is proud to be home to Long Island's only Renewable Energy Park, which boasts several clean energy installations, including solar, wind, geothermal and hydrogen. In fact, our hydrogen fueling station is powered by our 100kw wind turbine. And our shellfish nursery is seeding the local bays with shellfish that are nurtured with the use of solar and wind energy. Solar carports are awaiting the delivery of new electric cars at the Town's Conservation and Waterways facility. The Renewable Energy Park includes solar trackers, a 100kw solar field, several other solar installations, as well as a geo-thermal system, which controls energy usage at park offices. Finally, the facility boasts the only municipal building on Long Island that is entirely energy self-reliant.

There are many other Town of Hempstead facilities that use photo-voltaic power. A 100kw unit is at work at the Town's Highway yard, a 40kw system sits atop Town Hall and numerous smaller installations are at parks and other Town facilities.

I am excited to start my second term as Supervisor to expand the renewable energy legacy that Hempstead Town has established.

3. Transportation (p. 6)

Aside from my work to build a clean energy fleet to serve Hempstead Town's government, I am working with the Town Board to take steps to address transportation needs in the Town in a thoughtful and energy efficient way. The approval of several transit-oriented developments is encouraging workers to leave cars at home and utilize mass transit instead. And, we have installed solar powered charging stations for electric vehicles, promoting public usage of electric vehicles. Our government's installation of dozens of bike lockers at local train stations has prompted more commuters to bicycle to LIRR train stations instead of driving. Additionally, the Town is committed to creating walkable communities in several locations in our jurisdiction. These destinations are generally near train stations or major bus routes, creating viable alternatives to car usage. At the same time, we fought for the new commuter train station at the Belmont Park facility in Elmont.

Finally, I am an advocate for major capital investment by Nassau County in its public bus transportation system.

4. Resiliency (p. 6 - 7)

Hurricane Sandy caused many to recognize just how vulnerable our coastline is. Hempstead Town has been intently focused on the resiliency of our coastal communities and the hardening of our coastline. We worked with local communities on strategies to address issues related to storm surges and flooding. The Town utilized federal and state monies to initiate many of the strategies. From working with neighbors who needed to elevate their homes in the flood plain to fortifying our elevated sand dunes, replete with cord grass planting, we have made a commitment to the future of our south shore communities.

We have worked with utilities to press for greater energy resiliency, and we have revised the way in which our building department deals with construction in the flood plain. Indeed, we are committed to sustainable development that will not compromise the hardening of our coastline.

It is worth noting that the Town of Hempstead was the first community to approve the Long Beach Island Project for Coastal Hardening and Storm Resiliency...before Hurricane Sandy. Further, our Town's policy of building up the sand dune structure saved the communities of Lido and Point Lookout from the total devastation that was visited upon the City of Long Beach.

Finally, the need to expand open space initiatives is critical to the resiliency of our sole source aquifer and the reduction of storm water runoff and non-point source pollution.

5. Solid Waste (p. 7)

Hempstead Town has been a leader in its approach to dealing with solid waste. Our Levy Park Nature Preserve turned a former landfill into an ecological showcase. It includes interpretive signage at the facility and incorporates renewable wind energy at the Park. Furthermore, the facility is the home to a variety of vulnerable species, including the diamondback terrapin. And, we have restored the once trash-clogged Meadow Brook.

The Town is expanding its e-Cycling programs under my watch, as well as its household hazardous waste disposal programs. We have a robust recycling program, and we have even incorporated schools into the recycling agenda.

I am eager to expand recycling, reuse and conservation initiatives to reduce the materials that enter our waste stream.

Protecting People and Natural Resources

All New Yorkers deserve indoor and outdoor environments that are free of contamination and pollution.

6. Clean Water (p. 8 - 9)

My administration is dedicated to clean and pure drinking water. In fact, we were at the forefront of pushing for legislation to address the 1, 4-dioxane issue. We are also working diligently to prevent non-point source pollutants from entering our waste stream and polluting local bays. Finally, we have helped to monitor the bay waters in our jurisdiction, gauging the impacts of Nassau County's discharge of sanitary sewage into our bays.

On the issue of drinking water, our government sued the U.S. Navy and Grumman to force these polluters to clean up the toxic plume that threatens neighbor's drinking water. Our aggressive water treatment and monitoring has ensured that all drinking water exceeds state standards for purity.

On the issue of storm water runoff, the Town's administration has installed thousands of storm drain filters to keep non-point source pollution from reaching local bays and waterways. We have worked with scouts and other groups to mark storm drains with medallions, which advise neighbors that nothing but rainwater should enter the drains.

Our government has been acutely focused on ensuring that major development projects are sustainable and do not threaten the health of our sole-source aquifer. We also have sought to maintain open space, which serves a vital filtering function for rainwater and runoff.

Keeping our bays clean and pure has been a major commitment of my administration. The Town has acquired wetlands in Lido Beach that were threatened with development. We also have restored wetlands and uplands. Additionally, we have developed educational programs at our 3 nature preserves to help young people understand the importance of being good stewards of the environment.

In short, the Town of Hempstead's team of elected officials are focused on clean and pure drinking water, as well as the protection of the waters in our bays and waterways.

7. Sustainable Development (p. 9)

The need to accommodate growth in our region must be balanced with sustainability and the health of our environment. A major challenge for Long Island, which does not confront New York City and some other areas, is the fact that we rely on our sole-source aquifer for drinking water. Unsustainable development could threaten our aquifer with salt intrusion and could possibly exacerbate the spread of toxic water plumes, depending on the location of the development. In addition, the need for open space to facilitate the recharge and filtration of water into our aquifer must be recognized and addressed. In addition, the development of our area also places increased demands on the sanitary sewage system. The adverse impacts of sanitary sewage discharge can be seen in rising nitrogen levels in local bays and waterways. As a result, oxygen levels in the bays have dropped, algae blooms have increased and fish die-offs have become more prevalent.

When our Town Board considers development proposals, we need to ensure that development considers impacts on the aquifer, sanitary sewage systems and local bays and waterways. Furthermore, we work to ensure that buildings are efficient, incorporate renewable energy technology and reduce carbon emissions.

Our government has also looked at new types of development. We have promoted zoning that encourages efficiency and the use of mass transportation. For example, the Town of Hempstead has done an impressive job with its commitment to transit-oriented development.

Moreover, I am working hard to make certain that our development in the Town respects the planet and strives to achieve sustainability goals for our families and future generations.

8. Parks and Open Spaces (p.11)



One need only to look at Hempstead Town's Levy Park and Preserve, which was formerly a landfill, to understand that the promotion of parks and open spaces is high on our priority list. Our government has taken 40 acres of wetlands in Lido that were threatened with development and restored the property in harmony with the ecosystem. Further, we are enhancing the educational facilities at the Oceanside Marine Nature Study Area to afford more learning opportunities without adversely impacting this wetland and upland site. I am proud of the work that we are doing to expand our dune system along the barrier island to increase the natural habitat for piping plovers. We will continue to look for opportunities to expand our open spaces, especially in areas that are environmentally sensitive. Finally, our parks have been maintained in a manner that minimizes the use of toxic chemicals that are toxic or could increase nitrogen levels in area waterways.

9. Farms and Local Food (p. 11)

Unfortunately, there is only one farm left in the Town of Hempstead. The Grossman's Farm in Malverne was acquired by Nassau County and has been preserved as Crossroads Farm at Grossmann's. The farm specializes in biointensive organic farming methods, and the facility serves as an education center. Crossroads endeavors to inspire families to adopt and embrace small-scale agriculture and sustainable growing. The Town has also partnered with girl scouts to utilize Town park property to grow and harvest vegetables. I am eager to expand the use of Town property for projects that teach and encourage agricultural education. I am also excited at the prospect of facilitating the sale of Long Island produce at sites across the Town.