

WHAT TO Watch

SOUTHAMPTON TOWN

WORK SESSION. The Southampton Town Board will hold a work session tomorrow at 9:30 a.m. at Town Hall (116 Hampton Rd.) to prepare for next week's regular town board meeting. Check Stacey Altherr's **Twitter updates** @staceyaltherr.

STONY BROOK

YEAR OF DRAGON. The beginning of the Chinese New Year will be celebrated Sunday from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. at the Ward Melville Heritage Organization Educational and Cultural Center (97 Main St., Stony Brook Village Center). Check Patrick Whittle's **Twitter updates** @pxwhittle.

ISLIP

APPOINTMENTS. The Islip Town Board meets Tuesday at 2 p.m. at Town Hall (655 Main St.) to consider resolutions appointing recently retired Suffolk County Police Officer Gregory Byrne as commissioner of public safety and former Suffolk commissioner of parks Joseph Montuori as town parks department commissioner. Check Sarah Crichton's **Twitter updates** @scrichton.

NOW ONLINE
Catch up with these stories today at newsday.com/towns

TOPtweet

If Congress wants to honor Gabby Giffords they should pass some reasonable gun control laws.

@EJAndersen

OYSTER BAY / COLD SPRING HARBOR



Members of the Oyster Bay/Cold Spring Harbor Protection Committee need help from counties, towns and villages for their work to continue.

THE FIGHT TO STAY AFLOAT

Watershed protectors ask municipalities for financial help

BY EMILY NGO
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A fledgling environmental group formed to help protect a 40-square-mile watershed in northern Nassau and Suffolk counties will soon see its funds dry up — unless its municipal members step up.

The Oyster Bay/Cold Spring Harbor Protection Committee, launched in January 2010 and operating under a \$60,000 federal grant that will be exhausted by June, is appealing to the counties, the towns of Oyster Bay and Huntington, the city of Glen Cove and 13 villages to help it continue.

"It's obvious that our water and our harbors are important to us," committee chairman Eric Swenson, also superintendent of environmental control for Oyster Bay Town, told the Mill Neck Village board last week. "We've got to work to-

gether to solve problems in the most economic way possible."

The group is asking for \$9,750 from the counties, \$6,500 from the towns and \$1,250 from the city and villages for a proposed \$50,000 annual budget, including a \$37,500 coordinator's salary.

In exchange for what they're calling annual dues, the committee would help the municipalities coordinate education initiatives, meet federal and state mandates to avoid fines, and secure grants.

"All of these things, if they had to be done on [a municipality's] own, would be cumbersome and challenging," said Rob Crafa, the committee's coordinator.

Committee leaders this month are seeking village input on an intermunicipal agreement to cooperate on protecting the harbors. The document is similar to agreements for Hempstead Harbor and Man-

Their goals

Oyster Bay/Cold Spring Harbor Protection Committee's priorities:

- Help municipalities curb pollution from stormwater and runoff, and meet federal and state pollution-control mandates.
- Identify model codes, best management practices and effective approaches used by other governments.
- Offer public outreach and education programs on proper use of fertilizers, pet waste cleanup and other issues.
- Provide environmental training for municipal employees and consultants.

hasset Bay, Swenson said.

Laurel Hollow Trustee Nicholas Bartilucci said at a village board meeting this month that helping fund the group seemed sensible.

He called the committee's focus on identifying pathogens and implementing a watershed improvement strategy "some-

thing I don't know how you'd get your arms around alone."

Bayville in November passed a resolution to sign the agreement. Mayor Doug Watson said earlier this month he hopes other municipalities will see the benefits, especially when it comes to meeting federal and state regulations.

"If you're doing it by yourself, you might make mistakes. If you're doing it in a group, you'll get a chance to catch mistakes," he said. "I see it as a very worthy group to get things done for water quality."

No municipalities have officially signed the agreement, but only because it's still in draft form, Swenson said.

The Oyster Bay/Cold Spring Harbor Protection Committee, in an alliance with other environmental groups, in December secured a \$45,000 state grant for septic system maintenance education.

Tackling polluted stormwater runoff is a next step, said Patricia Aitken, deputy chairwoman and executive director of the non-profit Friends of the Bay.

NEWSDAY PHOTO / ALEANDRA VILLA