

PEN DISPENSERS RAISE SUSPICION

Glass pipes could be perceived as drug-related: police

BY DEON J. HAMPTON
deon.hampton@newsday.com

Brookhaven Town officials have removed two coin-operated dispensers selling pens inside ceramic glass pipes that they said could be perceived as makeshift crack pipes.

The dispensers were removed from near shopping centers.

Town Supervisor Edward P. Romaine said in a Monday news conference at Town Hall that officials became aware of the dispensers over the weekend through a Facebook post. He

said Brookhaven officials immediately investigated.

"We are going to address this and send a strong message," Romaine said. "We will remove [the dispensers] and turn them over to police to investigate."

He said he was shocked someone would commit such a bold act, especially one week into the school year. "You think you've heard of everything," he said.

Suffolk police released a statement saying they were working with town officials to investigate the "circumstances surrounding the installation of three pen dispensers in Coram and Farmingville."

The vending machines were found at Middle Country Road and Fife Drive near the Home Depot shopping center in Coram and on Mill Drive, just south of Middle Country Road

near another Home Depot. They required \$2 in quarters to dispense a pen/pipe.

Officials said there was no proof anyone purchased pipes from the machines before they were removed.

During the news conference, Brookhaven Town Councilman Michael Loguercio put eight quarters in one machine in an attempt to release the glass pipe. The money got stuck and remained that way.

Selling a glass pipe and pen isn't by itself illegal, officials said, but installing the machines without a permit and site plan is a town code violation.

Loguercio called the issue of legality "a fine line, a gray area."

"We believe this promotes drug paraphernalia, which I believe, is a criminal act," Romaine said. "I don't know what they



Officials are targeting coin-operated pen dispensers such as this one, seen Monday at a bus stop in Coram. ■ Video: [newsday.com/coram](https://www.newsday.com/coram)

[those who installed the devices]" were thinking, but I can imagine what they were doing."

David Moran, an attorney in Brookhaven's law department, said, "We believe it to be something more, but we will let law

enforcement handle it."

Police asked anyone with information about the dispensers to call Suffolk County Crime Stoppers at 800-220-TIPS.

With Chau Lam and Robert Brodsky

Riverhead police honor fallen K-9 Rocky

BY RACHEL UDA
rachel.uda@newsday.com

He was a good boy gone far too soon, mourners said Monday of Rocky, a Riverhead Town police K-9 that died while on duty last week.

Dozens of officers and residents gathered to pay their respects to the German shepherd, who was killed Sept. 2. The dog was ejected from a vehicle involved in the pursuit of a driver who fled a sobriety check, according to Riverhead police.

Rocky worked for the department for about seven years, assisting in everything from search and rescue to narcotics operations, said Riverhead Police Officer John Doscinski, whose partner, Officer John Morris, was Rocky's handler.

"He had a very successful career," Doscinski said of the dog. "He's apprehended robbery suspects, he's apprehended bur-



Police salute during a funeral procession for Rocky at headquarters. ■ Video: [newsday.com/riverhead](https://www.newsday.com/riverhead)

glary suspects. The list goes on and on and on. He was a very good dog."

After a private service for Rocky, police from several different agencies gathered at Veterans Memorial Park in Calverton for a funeral procession to Riverhead police headquarters. As the vehicles streamed past, residents beside their own dogs

bowed their heads and Suffolk County police officers saluted beside their K-9 partners.

"He's a member of our police agency and he's also a member of our family, so it's a tragic loss," Riverhead police Lt. David Lessard said. "We're all in mourning."

Doscinski said the bond between a K-9 and its handler is

exceptionally strong.

"A pet owner gets very dedicated to their pet. This takes it to the next level," Doscinski said. "I would say we spend more time with these dogs, without a doubt, than with our family."

Morris, who attended the private service, was not immediately available for comment,



Rocky, on the force since 2011.

Riverhead police said.

Lessard said the department is planning to erect a headstone for Rocky outside police headquarters with donations they've received from the community.

The stone will be near a granite marker for another police dog, Ace, who was shot and killed in the line of duty in 1993.