

NORTH HEMPSTEAD

Moody's gives town's top rating on bonds

The Town of North Hempstead has received Moody's Investors Service's highest possible rating on its \$7.3 million in short-term bonds.

The Moody's MIG 1 rating "reflects the town's strong underlying credit quality" and its "history of balanced operations," according to the report, released last week.

Moody's ratings assess credit risk and fiscal management, and influence the interest rates the town will receive upon borrowing funds.

The rating follows last month's Moody's AAA bond rating on the town's \$60.7 million in public improvement serial bonds from 2016. This is the top grade a municipality can receive.

Town Supervisor Judi Bosworth said in a news release that the rating "affirms that the town is vigilant and conservative in our short-term borrowing procedures, which enables us to minimize interest rates on our debt, thus lowering costs for taxpayers."

— CHRISTINE CHUNG

MILLER PLACE

Rails to trails plan to be discussed

Suffolk County's plan to convert an old railroad bed into hiking trails will be discussed at a public meeting tomorrow in Miller Place.

County officials plan to acquire a 10-mile right-of-way from Wading River to Port Jefferson that is owned by the Long Island Power Authority, Legis. Sarah Anker (D-Mount Sinai) said in an interview. The county legislature last month cleared a key hurdle for the project when lawmakers determined that acquiring the land poses no significant environmental impact to communities along the proposed hiking trail.

"Currently, the county is into the conceptual design phase," Anker said in a statement. "There has been a large amount of support from the community, but I look forward to continuing to work with residents who have questions or concerns."

The proposal is scheduled to be discussed at 6 p.m. at Miller Place High School, 15 Memorial Dr. The meeting is open to

the public. For information, call 631-854-1600.

— CARL MACGOWAN

BABYLON

Lottery for Copiague apartments

The Town of Babylon will hold a lottery tomorrow for apartments in Copiague Commons, a 90-unit mixed-income development near the Copiague train station slated to open this summer.

More than 350 applications for the units have been submitted, according to Paul Fink, a spokesman for the Community Development Corporation of Long Island, one of the project's developers.

The lottery drawing will determine the order in which applicants will be considered, Fink said, adding that a preference will be given to those displaced by superstorm Sandy.

The event will include speeches by Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone, Presiding Officer DuWayne Gregory (D-Amityville), Babylon Town Supervisor Rich Schaffer and others, according to a news release from the Community Development Corporation.

The pair of four-story apartment buildings is a centerpiece of Babylon Town's protracted campaign to revitalize downtown Copiague as a walkable, transit-oriented community.

The drawing, which is open to the public, will be held at Babylon Town Hall, 200 E. Sunrise Hwy., at 11:30 a.m.

— JESSE COBURN

OCEANSIDE

Counseling center gets state grant

The Oceanside Counseling Center has been awarded a \$149,000 state grant to combat substance abuse with a community coalition, according to state Sen. Todd Kaminsky.

Kaminsky (D-Long Beach) announced the grant Saturday in a news release. The grant was funded through the state Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services.

The counseling center will use the funds to support the Oceanside Substance Abuse Free Environment (S.A.F.E.) Coalition, which is made up of schools, police departments, local officials and civic organizations, according to Kaminsky.

"I am proud to have advocated for and helped secure this funding to advance the great work the Oceanside Counseling Center and all members of the Oceanside S.A.F.E. Coalition are doing to combat substance abuse and support impacted families," Kaminsky said in a statement. "I will continue fighting to secure the necessary funding

to tackle the growing drug epidemic across Long Island and New York."

The Oceanside Counseling Center is at 71 Homecrest Court.

For more information, call Kaminsky's office at 516-766-8383 or visit bit.ly/2ozMtUr.

— STEFANIE DAZIO

BROOKHAVEN

Town gets top S&P credit rating

Standard & Poor's has reaffirmed Brookhaven's AAA credit rating — the highest designation the financial agency issues — citing the town's strong fiscal position and commitment.

In an interview Monday, Town Supervisor Edward P. Romaine said he was pleased with the rating and helping taxpayers save money.

"It further solidifies the fact that the Town of Brookhaven is on the right track financially," Romaine said. "We're managing our debt and managing our budget."

A municipality's credit rating is a reliable indicator of its financial health and saves money on borrowing in the form of lower interest costs.

"Our conservative fiscal policies have proven to be successful once again," Town Councilwoman Jane Bonner, the town board's liaison to finance, said in a statement.

The outlook reflects Brookhaven's strong budgetary flexibility, liquidity, management and ability to improve budgetary performance. As such, the agency doesn't expect the rating to change over the next two years.

S&P reported Brookhaven has a "very strong economy" with "an available fund balance in fiscal 2015 of \$42.9 million."

The report said Brookhaven has a stellar institutional framework in addition to having a well-defined five-year capital improvement plan.

In January 2014, the town established a pension contribution reserve fund for revenue stemming from the sale of selected town property and other revenues to offset pension contributions, the report cited.

In fiscal 2015, the town paid off its retirement system debt with reserves in the fund, which ultimately saved the town money, the report said.

— DEON J. HAMPTON

EAST END REPORTER



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What I cover

I cover the East End of Long Island with my colleague Jean-Paul Salamanca. Follow me for stories about government, schools, businesses and beaches. My task is to capture the stories and characters that define the South Fork, which includes Southampton, East Hampton and Shelter Island. Please share your story, or suggest tips and story ideas.

Coming up

I plan to attend tomorrow's meeting of the East Hampton Town Board at 6:30 p.m. at Town Hall.

Find community stories at newsday.com/towns

GLEN COVE

Meet the mayor, and a slew of city reps

Glen Cove Mayor Reginald Spinello is holding a town hall meeting Thursday with city department heads and Susan Kwiatek, executive director at Glen Cove Hospital.

"This is a great opportunity to introduce our residents to the leaders of our city's departments for an open dialogue," Spinello said in a statement.

The meeting is from 7 to 9 p.m. at Landing Elementary School, 60 McLoughlin St. Another town hall meeting is scheduled for April 24 at Conolly Elementary School, 100 Ridge Dr.

Representatives from the police department, volunteer fire department, mayor's office, senior center, Emergency Medical Services, Community Development Agency and other departments, including public works and parks and recreation will attend.

Residents can either ask questions at the meeting or email them in advance to sgtripp@cityofglencoveny.org.

— DAVID OLSON



A rendering of the 90-unit mixed-income Copiague Commons. The Town of Babylon will hold a lottery tomorrow for apartments.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION