SCARSDALE FORUM INC.
Membership Meeting April 15, 2026
Attendance in Person and Live Streaming on Zoom

Introduction Jill Spielberg, President

Jill welcomed the members of the Forum and the community, newly elected Trustee Tim Foley, and distinguished state Assemblywoman Amy Paulin and Senator Shelley Mayer. Jill described the work of the Forum as a place where ideas are exchanged, perspectives are broadened, and meaningful dialogue shapes the future of Scarsdale. The legislators were complimented for their dedication to the region through their leadership, advocacy, and willingness to deal directly with the communities they represent. They frequently collaborate during the legislative process on a variety of issues, as was evident during their presentations.

Amy Paulin, NYS Assemblywoman, appeared in person and was introduced by Jill.

Noting the delayed budget, Assemblywoman Paulin related the history of and legislative impacts on budgets, which has become a negotiated process. These are just a few of her many topics covering a range of legislation under consideration and challenges, in particular health care which receives revenue from the state and federal government:

- Overcoming federal limitations on Medicaid coverage, poverty line eligibility, and the problem to obtain healthcare coverage for lower income and younger citizens, a problem which puts a burden on emergency rooms and hospital bottom lines, in particular city hospitals. Hospitals may not be reimbursed, among other repercussions.
- Pre-K school funding.
- Childhood vaccination challenges.
- Addressing unnecessary c-section operations.
- The ICE (U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement) detention involving a Scarsdale resident who was eventually released thanks to the efforts of our legislators, Village Mayor Arest, Deputy Mayor Gruenberg, and others.

Shelley Mayer, NYS Senator, appearing via Zoom live streaming from Albany, was introduced by Jill.

Assemblywoman Mayer, Chair of the Education Committee, gave her analysis of the following issues, many of which were preventing passage of a budget (several were issues also being addressed by Ms. Paulin):

- More money was needed for public schools across the state.
- Governor Hochul proposed changes that would lead to lower car insurance premium rates.
- Changes were planned for SEQRA (State Environmental Quality Review Act), which "requires all local, regional, and state government agencies to equally examine the environmental impacts along with the social and economic considerations for a certain project, or action, during their discretionary review." Ms. Mayer suggested that the law had been weaponized to restrict multiple resident housing. The Governor had proposed exempting certain projects outside of NYC with less than 100 units, although there were concerns that the change would weaken environmental protection.
- The Governor had proposed extending deadlines, lowering methane emissions to less stringent standards, and other changes that would delay progress in combating climate change under the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act of 2019 (CLCPA).
- NYC was short revenue to cover expenses. To compensate, a proposal was made to raise taxes on *pied a terre* owners in NYC, where the owners are not typically domiciled in the U.S.

- Action was underway to attract people to take public service jobs by amending pension laws.
- Legislation (as passed in other states) had been proposed allowing local police informal cooperation with ICE to limit detentions and deportations. Moreover, the law is that any child can enroll in public school regardless of heredity. The goal would be to limit ICE from removing children from their schools. New York State had done too little in these areas.
- Additional funding for non-public schools and especially religious schools because of their increased need for security.
- Additional funds for students with special needs, and transportation aid.
- Utility Rates: ConEd needed to change their exorbitant rate of return on services while the public suffers from higher charges. Legislators wanted a change in high utility rates in the state.
- The region was getting unfair treatment from the DOT (Department of Transportation) about road repairs, where there was a need for more money to repair major roads in terrible condition.
- A mental health and gun law amendment would allow a family member or law enforcement permission to modify a family member's gun possession permit.

Both legislators thanked the Village, Mayor Arest who was present, and Scarsdale residents for their active support on issues and understanding about the delayed budget. Public questions included concerns about the slowdown in implementing environmental protections, and reductions in federal government support/funding. Senator Mayer discussed two major offshore, Long Island Sound wind installations that had been blocked by the federal government. Modest plans like solar from residential apartment balconies and other infrastructure ideas could be created but it appeared large programs were unlikely for 2030-2040. Agreeing with Ms. Paulin that artificial turf decisions should be left to school boards or municipalities, Ms. Mayer concurred there would likely not be legislative support for change despite public push back.

At the end of the segment, Jill thanked Amy Paulin and Shelley Mayer, to audience applause, for their comprehensive and informative presentations, followed by a brief business meeting.

A motion to approve the minutes of the February 11, 2026 State of the Schools membership meeting featuring District Superintendent Dr. Drew Patrick and BOE President James Dugan was duly seconded and approved.

A motion to approve the "Report on Traffic Safety and Improvements to Signals and Signage" by the Municipal Services and Downtown Revitalization committees was duly seconded and approved. The Treasurer reported balances: Checking $7,337.90; Investment $225,966.90. Jill announced the date of the Annual Meeting on May 13, 2026 and that relevant documentation would be forwarded to membership timely prior to the meeting (notice, agenda, and proxy).

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Madelaine Eppenstein, Secretary