

BY: M. of A. Garbarino

COMMEMORATING the 125th Anniversary of the Bohemia
Fire Department to be celebrated on March 10, 2018

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is proud to commemorate the 125th Anniversary of the Bohemia Fire Department and to honor its past and present firefighting members for 125 years of fire protection to the citizens of Bohemia and its surrounding communities; and

WHEREAS, To celebrate this milestone, the Board of Fire Commissioners of the Bohemia Fire District will host the 125th Anniversary Inspection and Installation Dinner of Chief Brian O'Neill on Saturday, March 10, 2018, at Atlantis Banquets and Events, Riverhead, New York; and

WHEREAS, Fire departments are an integral part of community protection services in every locality of our State; during the past 125 years, the courageous and devoted firefighters of Bohemia Fire Department have valiantly responded to all types of fire emergencies and have won the praise and respect of the community which they serve; and

WHEREAS, The hamlet of Bohemia was settled in the 1850s; at the time, the area was heavily wooded and area homes and farms needed protection from disastrous brush (forest) fires that often swept through the region; and

WHEREAS, On January 31, 1893, 13 men held an organizational meeting to form the Bohemia Hook and Ladder Company No. 1; those present included: Joseph Novotny, John Wild, Theodore Gross, Joseph Fisher, Charles Sebek, Joseph Thuma, Louis Ruzicka, Reverend John H. Prescott, Judge John Z. O'Brien, William Swanda, Charles Ruzicka, Thomas Bartick and Louis Kautsky; and

WHEREAS, The Department's first fire truck was a Ramsey hand-drawn hook and ladder truck purchased in 1893 for \$375; and

WHEREAS, A dress code was established at the Company's second meeting to consist of: black pants, red shirts, fireman's caps and belts; and strict by-laws were formulated; and

WHEREAS, On May 19, 1893, Joseph Novotny was elected the first Foreman of the Bohemia Hook and Ladder Company No. 1; and

WHEREAS, The first fire house was constructed in 1894, on the Corner of Church Street and Walnut Avenue; in 1915, a chemical engine was purchased; it had a tank filled with soda acid for small fires, but was hand drawn; in addition, a motorized fire apparatus was purchased in 1920; the truck carried hooks, ladders and axes in addition to the soda acid delivered via a hose reel; and

WHEREAS, During 1921, there was a name change from the Bohemia Hook

and Ladder Company No. 1 to the Bohemia Fire Department; and

WHEREAS, The Community Ambulance Company was created in 1950 to increase response time for medical emergencies; Bohemia members voted to join the ambulance district, with many members also joining and assisting the new ambulance company; today, Bohemia Fire Department responds to EMS calls as a certified first responder agency to stabilize the patient and assist Community Ambulance members upon their arrival; and

WHEREAS, The first meeting of the Bohemia Fire Department in its present Main firehouse was held on February 21, 1961, and, under the direction of Chief Allen "Bones" Behounek, a substation was constructed in 1975, due to the fact that the population of fire district doubled within the past decade; and

WHEREAS, During the first hours and days after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, the Bohemia Fire Department was called in for mutual aide to staff a FDNY firehouse and members assisted in the recovery efforts at Ground Zero; and

WHEREAS, The Bohemia Fire Department continues to be a key organization in serving the residents of Bohemia; the department holds annual parades for Memorial Day and its very popular Christmas Parade with Santa; it also hosts blood drives, Adopt-A-Family programs, scholarships for college bound seniors, fire prevention training and First Aid & CPR classes to further help the community, as well as remains very active in the Bohemia Civic Association and is a member of the Friends of the Connetquot River State Park; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body cannot express sufficient gratitude to those devoted individuals who recognize that the preservation of life and property is a sacred responsibility and who make that responsibility their own by serving as firefighters; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body that we should give special recognition to those who work so assiduously for the betterment of their communities, and acknowledge publicly the heroic good works performed by the volunteer fire departments of this great Empire State, their officers and auxiliaries; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to proudly commemorate the 125th Anniversary of the Bohemia Fire Department to be celebrated on March 10, 2018; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Chief Brian O'Neill, Bohemia Fire Department.