

2015-J3241

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION mourning the death of Anthony Gazzola, former Detective, distinguished citizen and devoted member of his community

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to pay tribute to citizens of the State of New York whose lifework and civic endeavor served to enhance the quality of life in their communities and the great State of New York; and

WHEREAS, Anthony Gazzola of Bellport, New York died on Sunday, December 27, 2015, at the age of 75; and

WHEREAS, Anthony "Tony" Gazzola distinguished himself in his profession and by his sincere dedication and substantial contribution to the welfare of his community; and

WHEREAS, Tony Gazzola began his illustrious law enforcement career with the New York Police Department (NYPD), where he rose through the ranks to the esteemed position of Detective; and

WHEREAS, He then went on to serve as an Undercover Detective in the 101st Precinct, Far Rockaway, New York, a position from which he officially retired in 1983; and

WHEREAS, Anthony Gazzola's commitment to excellence, and his spirit of humanity, carried over into all fields of enterprise, including charitable and civic endeavors; and

WHEREAS, After his retirement, Tony Gazzola, fondly remembered as the "unofficial mayor", was a friendly and ubiquitous presence in both East Patchogue and North Bellport, New York; and

WHEREAS, Whether it was gaining the trust and respect of the most-feared teenage gang member in the neighborhood, or pushing local officials to create safe spaces for kids to play, Tony Gazzola was always helping someone; and

WHEREAS, Many times Tony Gazzola would bring home strangers for

dinner, sometimes the homeless, or people who he was helping through his volunteer work with the Red Cross; he was also known as "The Cake Man", collecting day-old cakes from a local bakery and delivering them to retirement homes, churches and families in need; and

WHEREAS, Tony Gazzola also founded the South Country Community Conference, a regional nonprofit focused on quality of life issues ranging from potholes to drug intervention; and

WHEREAS, In addition, Tony Gazzola was the driving force behind establishing Martha Avenue Park and getting baseball and football fields there for kids; in the 1990s, he initiated the Safe Summer Youth Program; and

WHEREAS, Anthony Gazzola is survived by his loving wife of 54 years, Laura, his three sons, and eight grandchildren, as well as four great-grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, Armed with a humanistic spirit and imbued with a sense of compassion, Anthony Gazzola leaves behind a legacy which will long endure the passage of time and will remain as a comforting memory to all he served and befriended; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to mourn the death of Anthony Gazzola, former Detective, distinguished citizen and devoted member of his community; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the family of Anthony Gazzola.