

January 27, 2016

Last Tuesday, January 12, was one of those magical moments in Floral Park. The Floral Park Village Belmont Task Force is the manifestation of the best that is Floral Park: dedicated individuals who generously share their time and talents focused on one goal – simply - the betterment of the quality of life we all enjoy. The Belmont Task Force's efforts were extraordinary: Uniting our community, informing and educating our residents and neighbors to join as one voice in opposition to OTB's proposed VLT Slot Machine Casino at Belmont Park. Over 2,000 concerned residents from our community and beyond attended. The Village of Floral Park Belmont Task Force, an all-volunteer committee, was reconstituted by its Chairman, Trustee Kevin Fitzgerald, and in less than two weeks, hosted an event unlike any yet seen on Long Island in opposition to the ill-conceived VLT proposal by Nassau OTB. *Newsday* reported that this kickoff rally greatly exceeded the best numbers in Westbury's opposition rally at St. Brigid's. It was Harry Truman who famously said, "it is amazing how much you can get done when you don't worry about who gets the credit." The living embodiment of that quote was witnessed and expressed by so many last Tuesday at Floral Park Memorial High School; a special night in a special place – Floral Park.

The Floral Park Belmont Task Force's efforts made for an amazingly spectacular Floral Park night! Residents were met by a host of volunteers from the Wednesday's Mothers Club, both Active and Alumni Members, Belmont Task Force members Christy Reisig, Heather McClintock, Kevin Flood were distributing information, collecting questions, contact information and directing people to seats in the Auditorium or to the overflow seating in the Library. Belmont Task Force member and WECA VP Marc Mullen along with other WECA members were accepting donations and coordinating sign distributions, Gerry Bambrick and Susan Walsh were coordinating the press, when requested volunteers were cheerfully at the ready to help with the overflow crowd. Dignitaries included, Bellerose Village Mayor Hank Schreiber, BV Trustee John Tweedy, SFP Trustee Elton McCabe, former FPBS & SCHSD President Archie Cheng, representatives for Congresswoman Kathleen Rice and Assemblywoman Michaelle Solages were in attendance, Community Bd 13 Chairman Bryan Block, Elmont Library Trustee Tammie Williams, all our civic association presidents and officers, youth organization leaders, as well as many of our neighbors and leaders from South Floral Park, Elmont, Stewart Manor, Bellerose Terrace and even OTB Casino opponents from Medford in Suffolk County.

Trustee and Chairman Kevin Fitzgerald and Belmont Task Force member Bernadette Smith acted as our MC's for the night. Members of the Floral Park Belmont Task Force who spoke included me, FPBS Board President Laura Ferone, FPPD Commissioner Stephen McAllister, WECA President Perry Criscitelli, as well as SCHD President Dave Fowler, FP Chamber of Commerce President Mike Jakob, heartfelt words from NC Legislator Carrie Solages, OLV School Bd President Kerry Boyle and WMC President Terry Binkley-Paterno. We were joined on the stage with Task Force Members Dennis McEnery, Doug Vigo and children from our local schools who were fabulous displaying their signs and great enthusiasm. Rounding out the dignitaries onstage was Trustee Lynn Pombonyo who earlier that afternoon, together with Trustee Dom Longobardi, gave testimony at the NEC Scoping hearing at NC Executive

Building. Lynn joined us onstage showing her support opposing the VLT Slot Machine Casino at Belmont Park.

The Floral Park Belmont Task Force is a formidable alliance lead by Chairman Trustee Kevin Fitzgerald. There are other grass root efforts working in opposition to the VLT Slot Machine Casino and we applaud their good works. While we may occasionally be working on different fronts, I can assure you we are all fighting the same battle. The Floral Park Belmont Task Force is comprised of a cross section of some of the more talented and involved individuals in our Village. I am very proud to serve with them and ask you to follow the latest information, FAQs and updates of the Floral Park Belmont Task Force at our great new website: Nobelmontcasino.org. Stay engaged – stay informed and thank you to the thousands who came to the Floral Park Belmont Task Force Kickoff Rally last Tuesday night. The roar was heard all the way to Albany!