



## New Jersey Pinelands Commission **PRESS RELEASE**

**March 8, 2002**

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### **Pinelands Municipal Council Elects New Officers** *Pemberton Twp. Mayor Thalia C. Kay is New Chairperson*

BUENA VISTA, NJ - At its March 5<sup>th</sup> meeting, the Pinelands Municipal Council elected its 2002 Executive Committee, nominating Pemberton Township Mayor Thalia C. Kay as the Council's Chairperson. Kay replaces Buena Vista Township Mayor Chuck Chiarello, who announced earlier this year that he would not be seeking the chairmanship after serving in the post for the past six years. Kay previously held the posts of Vice Chair and Delegate at Large.

Also elected to serve on the Executive Committee were: Woodbine Borough Mayor William Pickolycky, who will serve his first term as Vice Chairman; Berkley Township designee Steven R. Ewing, who will serve his 6<sup>th</sup> term as Secretary; Bass River Township Mayor T. Richard Bethea, who will serve his 6<sup>th</sup> term as Treasurer; and Mullica Township Mayor Robert Hagaman, who will serve his 3<sup>rd</sup> term as Member at Large.

"I want to thank Mayor Chiarello for serving this Council so well during the past six years," said Mayor Kay. "Under his steady leadership, we have accomplished a lot of good things to the benefit of the communities and residents of the Pinelands."

Pinelands Commission Executive Director Annette Barbaccia said, "On behalf of the Pinelands Commission, I want to congratulate Mayor Kay and the entire Executive Committee and commend Mayor Chiarello for his dedication to developing cooperative approaches with the Commission on issues of importance to our local government leaders."

Kay has served as Mayor of Pemberton Township for 12 years, and is the Township's first independently elected Mayor, since the Township changed the way it elects a governing body in 1990. Kay is past President of the New Jersey Conference of Mayors, and presently serves as 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair of the New Jersey League of Municipalities. She also Chairs the League's General Legislative Committee.

The members of the the Pinelands Municipal Council Executive Committee were sworn in by Assemblyman Nicholas Asselta (Cape May, Cumberland, Atlantic). Assemblyman Asselta, who represents 22 municipalities including seven in the State-designated Pinelands Area, has supported the Pinelands Municipal Council through various legislative efforts.

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“I’m looking forward to serving as Chairperson and working with the excellent group of Mayors and designees who represent the Pinelands Municipal Council to ensure that the Pinelands Commission protects not only the region’s natural and cultural resources, but the viability of its communities as well,” said Mayor Kay. “I am also looking forward to working closely with the Executive Director and staff of the Pinelands Commission to develop innovative solutions to the challenges that lie ahead. We have a lot of work to do, and together we can continue to enhance and protect the high quality of life that we enjoy in the Pinelands.”

The Pinelands Municipal Council, created under the Pinelands Protection Act of 1979, is comprised of Mayors or their designees of the 53 municipalities in the Pinelands Area. The Council is empowered to review any changes to the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan, and advises the Pinelands Commission on matters of interest regarding the Pinelands.

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