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Joshua Lipsman, M.D., J.D., M.P.H. Commissioner of Health Westchester County Department of Health 145 Huguenot Street – 8<sup>th</sup> Floor New Rochelle, New York 10801

Dear Dr. Lipsman:

I am writing you today with regard to Hen Island's past "inspections" that Deputy Commissioner Meyerson had conducted with relation to potable water, sewage treatment and mosquito infestations. From the onset, Commissioner Meyerson was aware that all the homes on Hen Island used bird feces infected water collected from rooftops for domestic use. It should be noted that children use this water on a regular basis to bath and for personal hygiene.

In July of 2007 the first inspection/investigation was conducted. In addition to Westchester County Health Department inspectors, the inspection included representatives from the Rye Building Department, Rye Marine Police as well as, County Environmental enforcement officials. The original mutually agreed consensus was to bring the Island inhabitants into compliance. A few weeks after the original inspection in August of 2007 Commissioner Meyerson was charged with leading the Hen Island investigation. Although Commissioner Meyerson identified all of the serious health conditions that existed on Hen Island, he chose to abate enforcement and acknowledgement of the conditions.

His duty should have been to develop a policy and a plan to remove the health threats instead; he chose to develop a policy and a plan that would lead enforcement officials including you and County Executive Spano into believing that no such threats ever existed on the island.

Rather than inform and educate residents and officials relating to the dangerous

conditions that existed, Commissioner Meyerson negated his duties and suppressed exposure to the public health threats that were present and plentiful.

It was Commissioner Meyerson's duty to mobilize government enforcement officials to identify and solve the health concerns present on Hen Island. Rather then, solve the health issues he swept them under the carpet leaving an entire community exposed to non-potable water, extreme mosquito infestations and sewage systems leeching into the Long Island Sound.

In 2008 after I reported to Commissioner Meyerson that a home was being constructed on Hen Island without the proper Health Department approvals and permits, he once again negated his responsibilities and allowed the home to be constructed with a new unapproved grey water disposal pit and a rooftop water collection system. He was well aware that the home in question added an additional bedroom and had only been serviced previously by an outhouse.

On April 1<sup>st</sup> of 2009 after the termination of Rye City Manager Paul Shew, the City of Rye conducted another inspection/investigation of Hen Island. That inspection revealed the previous information supplied by then City manager Paul Shew to say the least was inaccurate. As a result of the second inspection the City of Rye issued two pages of Building Department violations previously suppressed. In a letter dated April 9, 2009 (attached) acting Rye City manager Frank Culross requested Deputy Commissioner Meyerson to review, re-inspect and reconsider the Health Department's original position and findings with regard to the inspection of Hen Island conducted in 2007. Once again Deputy Commissioner Meyerson refused to enforce compliance, negated his duties and suppressed exposure to the public health threats.

At this time, I would ask you to review Commissioner Meyerson's actions in regard to Hen Island and take the appropriate actions necessary to rectify his failures. I am hopeful it will not be necessary to bring this series of irresponsible events to the attention of the new County administration.

Very truly yours,

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Ray Tartaglione