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## **Pompton Lakes enacts public smoking ban**

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BY LESLIE SCOTT, STAFF WRITER

POMPTON LAKES - Everyone can now breathe easy in all parks and recreation areas in Pompton Lakes.

At its Feb. 12 meeting, the Borough Council unanimously adopted an ordinance that bans smoking in all publically-owned parks and recreation areas in the borough.

The governing body was guided by the group Global Advisors on Smokefree Policies (GASP) as it planned this ordinance.

According to GASP, with the exception of Totowa, every community in Passaic County has agreed to implement a ban on smoking in publically-owned parks and recreations areas since 2012.

When Pompton Lakes' council first introduced this ordinance in October 2013, the original draft banned smoking outside on all publically-owned properties. This final revised ordinance limited the ban to the parks and recreation areas.

At the Feb. 12 meeting, Councilman Lloyd Kent said the purpose of establishing the smoking ban was to limit the visibility of cigarette smoking in places where children often gather.

"I think one of the reasons I would like to see this ordinance passed is for that reason," said Kent.

At the Feb. 12 meeting, one resident came out to express some reservations about the ordinance.

Resident John Arnold said this ordinance is "unenforceable," and it will put "an unnecessary burden on the Police Department that already has its hands full."

Council President Mike Simone said the primary purpose of the ordinance is to "keep the public parks smoke free," adding that the ban would be "self-enforced."

"I don't think anybody is going to jump out of the woodwork and issue summonses. So I think good judgment is what is going to be called for," Simone also said.

Alan Kantz, program manager for GASP, said the ban does not have to be enforced by authorities, and smokers and non-smokers alike have been enforcing smoking bans in other towns on their own.

"What we see in other municipalities is that as long as the policy is clear, smokers

tend to abide by them," he said. "And since nonsmokers can see what the policy is, they tend to remind smokers if they forget."

"If we were expecting police officers to run around pulling cigarettes out of out of people's mouths, this kind of policy would never work, but luckily that is not the way it works," Kantz added.

Resident Ronald Baugh spoke out in favor of the ordinance. Baugh said smoking should not be allowed.

"It's not good for you, and you can get cancer easily (from smoking)," he said.

GASP supplied Pompton Lakes with a dozen metal information signs that will be placed in local parks to make visitors aware of the new law.

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