

## **James D. O'Donnell Biography**

**James D. O'Donnell was born and raised in the Bronx and moved to Orange County in 1975.**

**He is currently an Orange County Legislator. Elected in 2016 in a Special Election and re-elected in 2017 to a full 4 year term.**

**He serves on the Ways and Means Committee, the Health and Mental Health Committee and the Education and Economic Development Committee.**

- 1. Vice Chair of the Newburgh Armory Unity Center**
- 2. President of the Goshen Rotary**
- 3. Board member of Safe Homes of Orange County**
- 4. Board member of the Kaplan Family Foundation**

**Mr. O'Donnell had a distinguished law enforcement career beginning in 1974 as a New York State Trooper. He subsequently advanced through the ranks of the New York State Police serving as Captain in charge of the state wide Violent Felony Warrant Squad and Major in charge of all State Police operations in New York City. In 1993, he returned to Orange County as Troop Commander of Troop F in Middletown. In 1995, he was appointed Lieutenant Colonel in charge of all Uniform Trooper patrol operations.**

**Throughout his career, Mr. O'Donnell has been recognized frequently for his outstanding service. He established the Troop "F" DARE Program and the "Trooper on Patrol" Program. He also established the annual statewide community day in each Troop. As well as the annual "member" and "civilian of the year" awards programs.**

Upon retiring from the New York State Police in 1997 he returned to his roots at Gaelic Park, Bronx, New York where he oversaw major renovations in 1998.

In February of 1999 Governor George Pataki appointed Mr. O'Donnell as Chief of Police of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority Police Department. In his role as Chief, Mr. O'Donnell initiated an aggressive reengineering of the former Long Island Rail Road and Metro-North Railroad Police Departments into the new MTA Police Department.

To ensure protection of MTA facilities and infrastructure against the threat of terrorism Chief O'Donnell improved planning for emergency preparedness. Chief O'Donnell secured assignment of his Deputy Chief to the International Association of Chief of Police Terrorism Committee and a Detective to the FBI-NYPD Joint Terrorist Task Force. Both of these assignments were proven to be critical after the World Trade Center Bombing on September 11, 2001. Chief O'Donnell oversaw the MTA's evacuation of New York City on that day and the police response during the months after the attack.

James D. O'Donnell joined Orange County Government in 2004 to serve as the Director of Operations for the County Executive's Office. In 2005, Orange County Executive Edward Diana nominated Mr. O'Donnell to the position of Deputy County Executive, and was confirmed by the Orange County Legislature.

Mr. O'Donnell served the citizens of Orange County as Deputy County Executive until 2013.

Mr. O'Donnell was in charge of Economic Development for Orange County. Mr. O'Donnell served as the Executive Director of the Foreign Trade Zone as well as Executive Director of the Orange County Industrial Development Agency where he created and retained thousands of jobs.

As Deputy County Executive, Mr. O'Donnell instituted a Lean Six Sigma Program saving the County over \$2 million to date. He instituted management training for senior management positions in the County. He oversaw the daily operations and activities of 35 County Departments and Divisions. He created the "Team Orange" identity for our 3000 employees who work hard daily for our over 375,000 citizens. He put his law enforcement background to work during the Emergency Operations of Hurricane's Lee and Irene and Super-Storm Sandy.

Mr. O'Donnell graduated from Tolentine High School and earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from Dominican College. He is a graduate of the FBI National Academy, and has attended the Harvard University John F. Kennedy School of Government as well as graduate level study at the University of Alabama.

Mr. O'Donnell is a member of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, Division 1, Orange County and enjoys a proud Irish Heritage. Mr. O'Donnell is the son of John Kerry and Helen O'Donnell. His father served in 1970 as the Grand Marshall to the

**New York City Saint Patrick's Day Parade. John Kerry and Helen O'Donnell were the proprietors of Gaelic Park for over 60 years.**

**Mr. O'Donnell is a member of the Knights of Columbus in St. John's Church in Goshen. He has been married to his lovely wife Margaret for 44 years. They have eight children: Christy, Joanne, Jamie, Maggie, Michael, Molly, Ellen, and John Kerry. They have seven grandchildren: Hudson, Luke, James, Cailyn, Keira, Maya and Grady.**