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**Nowakowski to**  
**resign as railroad's**  
**performance sinks**

**A8**



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**Trump warns**  
**Russians 'missiles**  
**are coming'**

**A4**

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**FOR FREE**  
**AT SINGH**  
**VENUES**

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# LIRR chief to resign

Calls it quits after railroad's on-time performance sinks

BY ALFONSO A. CASTILLO  
alfonso.castillo@newsday.com

Long Island Rail Road president Patrick Nowakowski will resign effective Friday, MTA officials said Wednesday.

Nowakowski's resignation comes amid growing calls from commuters, advocates, MTA board members and Metropolitan Transportation Authority Chairman Joseph Lhota for a shake-up at the LIRR, which has been beset by service and communications woes. Last year was the railroad's worst for on-time performance in 18 years and, January, its worst month in 22 years.

"I thank Pat for his service to LIRR customers and his steady and evenhanded leadership of the railroad at a time when external events caused challenges for the railroad, particularly Amtrak's renewal of tracks and infrastructure at Penn Station that the entire LIRR depends on," Lhota said in a statement Wednesday night.

Nowakowski, 64, recently proposed a comprehensive improvement plan for the railroad, which is expected to cost up to \$20 million and include dozens of initiatives to upgrade technology, harden infrastructure and boost communication



LIRR President Patrick Nowakowski, facing camera, at the January MTA committee meeting.

efforts. But the 39th president of the LIRR will not be around to see his plan through.

Nowakowski, who has served as the head of the LIRR for four years, said Wednesday his decision came after taking "a few days off to think about things."

"I'm pleased with the direction the railroad is headed under the Performance Improvement Plan, and I decided that now was

a good time to step aside and allow new leadership to continue the progress we've begun to make on improving customer service," Nowakowski said in a statement.

Critics have derided Nowakowski for what they deem questionable decisions, and not doing enough to keep the public in the loop about what's going wrong and how problems will be

fixed. He has kept a low public profile throughout the railroad's recent struggles — typically only surfacing at monthly MTA meetings to provide explanations and, face rebukes from some MTA Board members.

Kyle Strober, executive director of the Association for a Better Long Island, a nonprofit advocacy group, said last week that running the LIRR demands

both "professional expertise and public engagement," and that Nowakowski's failure to master the latter has hurt him.

"Pat is a skilled technocrat who understands the nuts and bolts of the railroad, but he has failed at understanding the LIRR commuter," Strober said. "Unlike his predecessor, Helena Williams, who had an omnipresence on Long Island, Pat has never publicly expressed empathy for the commuters' daily experience unless he was compelled to do so before the MTA Board."

"The LIRR has endured some very difficult times with many more challenges ahead," Anthony Simon, general chairman of the LIRR's largest union, the Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation Union, said. "We wish him luck in the future."

Nowakowski, with extensive experience leading rail systems in Pennsylvania and Washington, D.C., was cast as the antithesis of the politically smooth and image-conscious Williams: a sharp, albeit unpolished, engineer who would focus on fixing problems.

"LIRR riders deserve a new leader who will demand immediate reform and who will level with and speak directly to them," said State Sen. Todd Kaminsky (D-Long Beach) in a statement Wednesday night. "Tough and no-nonsense leadership is needed urgently for one of the most important commuter rail systems in the country."

## Old Westbury on richest places list

BY MAURA MCDERMOTT  
maura.mcdermott@newsday.com

The village of Old Westbury is one of the wealthiest communities in the nation, ranking among the most exclusive zones of Silicon Valley and coastal Florida, a new report shows.

The village's ZIP code, 11568, claimed 18th place among the country's highest-income ZIP codes, with residents earning an average household income of nearly \$640,000, an analysis by Bloomberg of 2015 Internal Revenue Service and census data shows. That marks a 36

percent increase from five years earlier, according to the report. Homes in Old Westbury sold for a median price of \$2.32 million in February, Bloomberg reported.

The village's residents probably have benefited from the stock market rebound, said Jonathan Miller, CEO of Manhattan-based appraisal company Miller Samuel. The S&P 500 index hit a closing low of 676.53 in March 2009, but it had rebounded to nearly 2,044 by the end of 2015. It was at 2,642 at the end of trading Wednesday.

With many Old Westbury families benefiting from generations of long-established wealth, their net worth "has risen substantially" as the market has surged, Miller said.

Many other communities on the list are centers of the technology, entertainment and finance industries, Miller said.

The nation's richest community was Fisher Island off Miami, where residents earned an average household income of \$2.54 million, Bloomberg reported. No. 4 on the list was Palo Alto, California, with an average income of \$1.175 million.

Westchester's Harrison ranked fifth, with an average income of about \$976,000. Los Angeles' Century City ranked seventh, with an average income of nearly \$906,000. No New York City ZIP codes made the list of top 20 communities.

Old Westbury landed two spots above Greenwich, Connecticut, where residents enjoyed an average income of \$626,000.

The new federal tax law, which offers fewer tax incentives for homeownership, could prompt more New Yorkers to move to Florida, which has no

state income tax, said Miller, who was set to speak at a seminar and property fair on Wednesday at the Garden City Hotel about relocating to or investing in real estate in Florida. Nearly 500 people have registered to attend, Miller said.

Of those decamping to Florida, Miller said, "there's certainly a possibility that that population will expand as a result of the tax law."

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