

## Ex-supervisor to lead agency

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### Former top official from Huntington to head Suffolk TPVA

#### FIRST IN NEWSDAY

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Suffolk County Executive Edward P. Romaine appointed former Huntington Supervisor Chad Lupinacci as director of the county's Traffic and Parking Violations Agency.

Lupinacci, who ran unsuccessfully for the county legislature last year, began the role this month on a provisional basis pending formal confirmation by the Suffolk County Legislature. He replaces Bryan Browns, who was elected county court judge in November.

"Chad's extensive governmental experience and knowledge of the rule of law ensures that the reforms my administration has implemented in TPVA will continue moving forward,"

Romaine, a Republican, said in a statement to Newsday.

Lupinacci, 46, can serve in the role for 90 days prior to his confirmation, according to Mike Martino, spokesperson for the county executive. The legislature can vote to approve his appointment as soon as its Feb. 3 meeting. The GOP holds an 11-7 majority in the legislature.

Lupinacci will earn the same salary as his predecessor, which was \$171,296, Martino said.

Lupinacci, a Republican, challenged incumbent Rebecca Sanin (D-Huntington Station), who was reelected in November with 58.5% of the votes in the 16th District, which covers parts of Huntington Station, Dix Hills, Elwood and Greenlawn. He previously served as a New York State assemblyman and is a part-time professor at Farmingdale State College. He was elected to a four-year term as supervisor of Huntington in 2017. He announced in early 2021 he would not seek reelection.

Lupinacci's tenure in elected office was marred by contro-



Chad Lupinacci

DANIELLE SILVERMAN

versy. In 2021 he struck a pole while driving a town-assigned SUV. The crash led to investigations by the Town of Huntington and Suffolk County police after Lupinacci left the vehicle unattended, Newsday previously reported. A former staffer accused Lupinacci, then an assemblyman, of sexual harassment in a 2018 lawsuit. The two sides reached a settlement in 2023, according to court records.

Martino deferred an interview

request with Lupinacci until after he's confirmed by the legislature.

The county's traffic agency was formed in 2013 under then-County Executive Steve Belone as a way to generate new revenue, Newsday previously reported. The agency adjudicates parking summonses and moving violations in the five western towns and had been responsible for the controversial red light camera citations and school bus camera citations. The county ended the 14-year-old red light camera program in December 2024 after collecting more than \$289 million in fines, Newsday previously reported. Litigation over red light camera fees remains pending.

The department's staff for 2026 includes 49 positions, some of which are part time, according to the county's 2026 budget. A department summary in the budget said the agency's efforts "to maintain a fair and efficient process" has helped "decrease significantly" the amount of time motorists and attorneys spend at the agency.