NYC 9/11 Public Portal Document

NEWSDAY, FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2001

He Takes a Shine To LIPA Exec

Bloomberg's girlfriend a business success

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On election night, one of the first people Michael Bloomberg thanked for helping him on the road to City Hall was his girlfriend, Diana Taylor.

During Tuesday night's celebration, Taylor, 46, stood behind Bloomberg on the crowded stage, jumped up and down with glee, and beamed her gigantic smile in his direction.

Bloomberg, who is divorced and has two children, boasted a few years ago about the dating opportunities for a "single, straight billionaire in Manhattan." But he seems charmed by Taylor, who is chief financial officer for the Long Island Power Authority.

Taylor, who is taller than the 59-year-old Bloomberg, met him about a year ago. She is divorced, hails from Greenwich, Conn., and lives in Manhattan.

Throughout the campaign, the pair often supped in restaurants across the city and have joined Mayor Rudolph Giuliani and his "good friend" Judith Nathan for dinner. As part of the Bloomberg campaign's final 24-hour city tour, Taylor joined Giuliani, Nathan, aides and reporters at an 11 p.m. stop at the Empire State Building. She and Nathan chatted excitedly and then said warm good-byes.

The campaign trail was an exciting switch for the soft-spoken LIPA executive. When Taylor addresses the power authority board, chairman Richard Kessel sometimes has to remind her to speak loudly enough to be heard.

As LIPA's money manager since February, Taylor oversees yearly revenues of about $2 billion and a debt of more than $7 billion. She is on leave from her job this week and could not be reached for comment.

Kessel would speak only of Taylor's official duties. "She's an outstanding employee at LIPA and that's the only thing that counts," he said.

Taylor earned her bachelor's degree in finance at Dartmouth in 1977, when the university's student body was composed of 3,000 men and just 500 women.

In a 1990 interview with Newsday Magazine, Taylor said Dartmouth taught her to survive in a man's world.

"Just work hard," she said. "Don't make waves, don't complain, and gradually things change. [The men] don't even realize what's happening."

Taylor worked as an analyst with the city's Department of Social Services before earning an MBA from Columbia University Business School in 1980. She has worked at a number of investment banking firms, including a stint at Donaldson, Lufkin & Jenrette as a senior vice president specializing in municipal finance. She left that firm in 1988 to become a co-founder of the investment banking firm M.R. Beal & Co.

In 1996, Taylor joined Gov. George Pataki's administration and helped put together the $7 billion deal in 1998 transferring ownership of Long Island Lighting Co. to the state-created power authority.

Before joining LIPA last winter, Taylor was a vice president at the energy company KeySpan.

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