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# MAKIN' A RUN

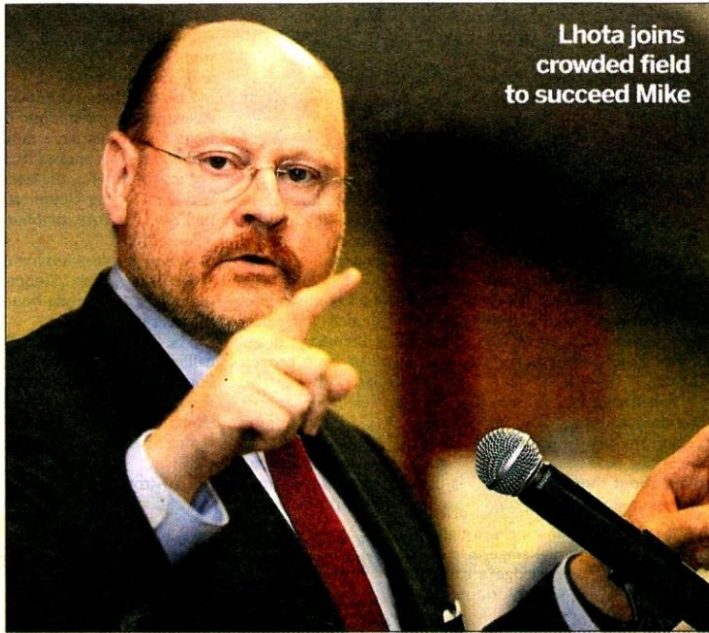
Ex-MTA chief Lhota says  
he's in mayor's race

Page 3



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# Ex-MTA chief running for mayor



Lhota joins crowded field to succeed Mike

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Former MTA Chief Joe Lhota confirmed the worst-kept secret in the city's political scene yesterday when he said he's filing the paperwork for his mayoral run at the end of the week.

Lhota told the members of the New York Building Congress during its annual membership meeting his decision to resign from the MTA last month was a tough one, but he aims to help the city move forward.

"I would not have left the MTA, a job and position that I loved, if I was not going to run for mayor of New York," Lhota said yesterday.

Lhota, 57, touted the

MTA's protecting of the subway system during superstorm Sandy and its round-the-clock efforts to get the system back running.

Experts say Lhota, who will likely run as a Republican, is taking the right steps in his bid.

Andrew Moesel, a political consultant for Sheinkopf Communications, said the candidate has to give voters an idea of who he is and raise money quickly.

Lhota's speech at the NY-BC's luncheon would help him play catch-up in fundraising with other potential candidates including City Council Speaker Christine Quinn, Moesel added.

Lhota served many high-level positions before begin-

ning his term at the MTA, which lasted less than one year. The positions included deputy mayor under Rudy Giuliani.

Giuliani told CBS 2 last month he thinks Lhota would make a good mayor.

But Joe Reubens, a political director at consulting firm The Parkside Group, said the support might have a downside: Many voters aren't fans of the ex-mayor.

"While it may be helpful in a Republican primary, I don't think it's positive in the general election," Reubens said of Giuliani's support.

Despite his GOP ties, Lhota has expressed support for same-sex marriages and the legalization of marijuana.

Christina Greer, an assistant professor of political science at Fordham University, said voters should expect to see more of Lhota promoting his moderate views and his time managing the MTA in order to counter the negativity surrounding the March fare hikes.

**"I WOULD NOT HAVE LEFT THE MTA, A JOB AND POSITION THAT I LOVED, IF I WAS NOT GOING TO RUN FOR MAYOR"**

— Joe Lhota speaking to members of the New York Building Congress yesterday

Joe Lhota served as a deputy mayor under Rudy Giuliani.

(AUDREY C. TIERNAN)