

NEWS RELEASE

Public Information Department
County of Warren



Kern Sworn in, Sarnoski Named Director as Freeholder Board Reorganizes

(BELVIDERE, NJ, January 1, 2019) – Freeholder James R. Kern, III, of Pohatcong, surrounded by family members and standing in front of a crowd of well-wishers in the Warren County Courthouse, took the oath of office for a three-year term on the Warren County Board of Chosen Freeholders during the annual Reorganization Meeting.



New Warren County Freeholder James R. Kern, III is sworn in by State Sen. Michael Doherty at the Warren County Courthouse during the freeholder board's annual reorganization meeting. With Kern are his father, James R. Kern, Jr. sister Elizabeth McGuinness, brother John Kern (not visible), mother Joan Kern, and his girlfriend, Carina Sitkus.

Once officially seated, he and Freeholder Richard D. Gardner moved to name Freeholder Jason J. Sarnoski as the board's director for 2019. A freeholder since 2011 who is now in the third year of his third term, Sarnoski is taking up the director's gavel for the third time.

Kern was sworn in by State Sen. Michael Doherty, a former Warren County freeholder, as he family stood with him:

parents Joan and James R. Kern, Jr., brother John Kern, sister Elizabeth McGuinness, and his girlfriend, Carina Sitkus.

In his first remarks as a freeholder, Kern thanked his family and friends, and highlighted some of the areas where he hopes to steer county government. He said the county should continue to forge a strong relationship with Warren County Community College, noting, "This institution is a tremendous asset and continues to be an example of what happens when proper

funds are allocated. As a graduate of Warren County Community College, I can personally attest to the great work that these educators do each day, and I look forward to working with them closely in the upcoming year.”

Kern also said he wants the county to increase its efforts to inform residents about what county government does, and the services it offers. Explaining that government at all levels must adapt to the changing technology around us, Kern said, “With new media tools at our disposal, agencies can communicate and share information quicker than ever. This is about improving communication with our residents and providing a high level of transparent government. Once we are successful, people will be able to see our government in action, and learn of the many great services Warren County already provides.”

Sarnoski began his

remarks by praising newly retired freeholder Edward J. Smith, who the board surprised with a plaque commemorating his service. “He will be sorely missed by this board and all that worked with him,” Sarnoski said of Smith.

Sarnoski said his focus for the coming year will be to assure that Warren County continues to have the low debt, low taxes and stable government that was been brought about by the hard work of the freeholder board and county staff.

He also said the county workforce is aging and seeing many retirements, and county government’s practices need modernization. Sarnoski is working on an organizational plan to meet the needs of the future and hire the best talent, all while keeping the taxpayer in mind.

“We must look at every aspect of county government that we can control to guarantee that our goals and values are aligned with our policies and procedures,” Sarnoski said. Attracting



Freeholder Director Jason J. Sarnoski presents a plaque to former freeholder Edward J. Smith in recognition of his two terms on the board.

and retaining businesses will help to lower taxes, and so “we must make it easier for the businesses we seek to be able to establish and grow in Warren County,” he remarked.

Gardner pointed to the progress the county has achieved, including the opening of the new Southwest Branch of the Warren County Library system in Greenwich Township last year. “We have to modernize, look at things when we can, and when we can afford to do it,” he said.



Freeholder Richard D. Gardner addresses the reorganization meeting.

In reorganization business, the freeholders set a meeting schedule for the year – regular meetings for the most part will be on the second and fourth Wednesday of each month – and continued to designate The Star-Ledger as the official newspaper for posting advertisements and notices required by law, with the Daily Record as the alternate official newspaper.

With Smith’s departure, the board switched up liaison responsibilities for its three members. The full list of which departments, boards and commissions each freeholder will be responsible for, and the municipalities to which each will be the

liaison, is published on the Warren County official website at

www.co.warren.nj.us/freeholders.html.



The Warren County Board of Chosen Freeholders: Freeholder Deputy Director Richard D. Gardner, Freeholder Director Jason J. Sarnoski, and newly seated Freeholder James R. Kern, III.