

NEWS RELEASE

County of Warren, New Jersey



Warren County Freeholder Board Reorganizes

(BELVIDERE, NJ – January 6, 2018) – The Warren County Board of Chosen Freeholders reorganized for the coming year, swearing in Freeholder Richard D. Gardner to a sixth term and naming Freeholder Edward J. Smith as the board’s Director for 2018.

Warren County Clerk Holly Mackey, elected to a five-year term after former Clerk Pat Kolb announced she would retire, was sworn in by state Sen. Michael Doherty. She then read the certification of election for Gardner, who becomes the longest-serving Warren County freeholder in a century, and Doherty administered the oath of office to the Franklin Township resident who now begins his 16th year on the board.

In Warren County’s 193-year history, only four freeholders have served longer than Gardner, and no one besides Gardner has served more than four terms since the three-member board elected at large was instituted in 1917. Prior to that, each municipality elected a freeholder to the board.

“I feel quite blessed to have this continued great support,” Gardner said.

Gardner and Freeholder Jason J. Sarnoski joined in designating Smith the director for the third time in six years, while Sarnoski will serve as deputy director.

“A couple of decades ago, I was told it would be a cold day before I got anywhere in politics,” Smith said, referring to the frigid weather that he quipped “must represent some kind of threshold as I begin my third term as Director.”

In remarks to the assortment of federal, state and local office-holders, family, friends and well-wishers assembled in Courtroom 1 of the Warren County Courthouse, Smith noted that the difficult choices and hard work of the freeholders over the past few years is paying off. “The county budget remains below where it was when I was elected to office,” Smith said, and the county has low debt and a healthy open space fund, while a number of capital projects have been completed and more are underway.

Smith was sworn in as director by Congressman Leonard Lance. In addition to Lance, Doherty, and Mackey, other officials attending the reorganization meeting were members of the legislative delegation representing Warren County in Trenton, state Sen. Steven Oroho, Assemblymen John DiMaio, Erik Peterson, and Assemblyman-Elect Harold Wirths; county constitutional officers Surrogate Kevin O’Neill, Sheriff James McDonald, Sr., and Prosecutor Richard T. Burke; and numerous municipal officials.



Warren County Clerk Holly Mackey is sworn in to a five-year term in office by state Sen. Michael Doherty, as her husband, Devlen, and son, Adam, hold the Bible

Freeholder Richard D. Gardner takes the oath of office for a sixth time, accompanied by his son, Daniel, and daughter, Stephanie. State Sen. Michael Doherty, whose final year on the freeholder board, 2003, was Gardner's first year, administered the oath of office.



Freeholder Edward J. Smith takes the oath of office at the board's Director for 2018, sworn in by Congressman Leonard Lance. With Smith are his wife, Eileen, and their granddaughter, Lily.