

NEWS RELEASE

County of Warren, New Jersey



Sarnoski Sworn to Fourth Term as Freeholder Board Reorganizes

(BELVIDERE, NJ – January 4, 2020) – Freeholder Jason J. Sarnoski was sworn in for fourth term as the Warren County Board of Chosen Freeholders reorganized, naming Freeholder Richard D. Gardner as board director for his final year in office.

Sarnoski becomes just the fifth freeholder to win a fourth term since Warren County instituted a three-member board in 1917. Prior to that, freeholders were elected from each municipality.

Gardner, who has announced he will not seek re-election, is in the final year of his sixth, three-year term, and is the only freeholder since 1917 to serve five, let alone, six, terms on the board. But don't call him a lame duck, he cautioned with a grin, or "you will light my fuse!" Gardner noted the board has much work ahead to accomplish in the coming year, with one priority being to formulate a plan to refurbish the historic Courtroom 1 of the Warren County Courthouse, where the reorganization meeting was held.



Freeholder Jason J. Sarnoski takes the oath of office for a fourth term, becoming only the fifth freeholder to do so since Warren County instituted a three-member board in 1917. With him are his daughter Skyler, son Jason, and wife, Tammi, as state Sen. Michael Doherty administers the oath.

The Courthouse was the first building project undertaken when Warren County was formed in 1825, and while other sections of the building have been added to or renovated over the decades, Courtroom 1 is in need of upgrades.

Gardner noted the County's 200th birthday is just a few years away, and that "with the blessing from my colleagues" he recently established a new Bicentennial Cultural and Heritage Advisory Board. "This group is already coming up with great ideas about the bicentennial celebration," Gardner added.

The freeholders named Freeholder James R. Kern, III, who began his second year on the board, as Deputy Director for 2020. Kern noted the board at his urging created the Technology and Transparency Task Force in 2019 "to bring Warren County into the 21st century" and that the county will be working on a new government website this year while enhancing its social media presence.

Kern also recognized the county’s employees, asking those in attendance to stand and be applauded. “You truly do a great job for Warren County,” he told them.

Sarnoski began his remarks with praise for Gardner and his lengthy service, noting that his colleague’s knowledge “is irreplaceable.”



Former Lopatcong Mayor Douglas Steinhardt, the county and state Republican chairman, administers the oath of office as Freeholder Richard D. Gardner becomes freeholder director for his 18th and final year on the board. With Gardner are his daughters, Stephanie Horan and Dr. Kristen Gardner.

But Sarnoski noted “The only thing we have that’s constant is change.” He said the freeholders are working with neighboring counties and with local officials to look for cost efficiencies with shared services, which will lead to lower taxes.

Sarnoski thanked the voters for putting their trust in him, and said that by working with “those who want to work hard for the right reasons... I know we’re going to have a better future.”

In addition to seating Sarnoski for another term, the meeting began with

the oath of office for Sheriff James McDonald, Sr. to begin his second three-year term. Former Lopatcong Mayor Douglas Steinhardt, who is chair of both the Warren County Republican Committee and the New Jersey Republican Committee, administered the oath as McDonald’s wife, Brenda, held the Bible.



Sheriff James McDonald, Sr. is sworn in for a second three-year term as his wife, Brenda, holds the Bible and Douglas Steinhardt administers the oath of office.



Freeholders James R. Kern, III, Richard D. Gardner, and Jason J. Sarnoski start the meeting. Also pictured are County Counsel Joseph J. Bell and county Administrator Alex J. Lazorisak.