

REORGANIZATION

HUNTERDON COUNTY BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS Hunterdon County Historic Court House Flemington, New Jersey 08822 JANUARY 02, 2008

The reorganization meeting of the Hunterdon County Board of Chosen Freeholders was called to order at 4:14 p.m., in accordance with the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act.

Clerk of the Board, Denise B. Doolan, welcomed everyone present to the annual reorganization meeting of the Board of Chosen Freeholders of the County of Hunterdon for 2008.

The Clerk of the Board of Chosen Freeholders read the following meeting notice: "This meeting is being held in accordance with the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act. Adequate notice has been posted by prominently posting and maintaining so posted throughout the year on the first and second floor of the County Administration Building, Main Street, Flemington, New Jersey, a public place reserved for such announcements, and by mailing on or before December 17, 2007, to the Hunterdon County Democrat, Lambertville Beacon, The Express, Courier News, Trenton Times, Hunterdon Review, and Star Ledger, newspapers designated to receive such notices and by filing with the Hunterdon County Clerk a schedule of time, date and place of the holding of these regular meetings."

Pledge Allegiance.

Mrs. Doolan introduced Father Timothy Christy of St. Magdalene's Church, Flemington, New Jersey to give the Invocation.

Mrs. Doolan thanked Father Christy.

Mrs. Doolan asked the Honorable Roger Mahon, JSC, to swear in Sheriff Elect Deborah Trout.

The Honorable Roger Mahon swore in Sheriff Elect, Deborah Trout.

Sheriff Trout thanked everyone for coming today and for all their support. Hunterdon County will have the best Sheriff's Department it has ever had.

Mrs. Doolan asked Freeholder Elect George B. Melick to come to the podium.

Mrs. Doolan swore in Freeholder Elect, George B. Melick as his children and grandchildren held the Bible.

Freeholder Melick thanked Henry Kuhl for his support over the years and for the support of all present today.

Mr. Melick noted that it takes all five freeholders to make decisions for the County. County government is really run by the senior staff at the director of the Board of Chosen Freeholders and Hunterdon County has a very good senior staff that makes a lot of decisions; they follow the guidelines of the Freeholders.

The County of Hunterdon started in 1714 and he got very involved in the year 1978 and feels the County is in good shape.

Mr. Melick thanked everyone for coming today and wished all a Happy New Year.

Mrs. Doolan asked Michael Rothpletz to swear in Freeholder Elect William G. Mennen.

Mr. Rothpletz swore in Freeholder Elect William G. Mennen as his wife and children held the Bible.

Freeholder Mennen wished everyone a Happy New Year, stating it is a new year with new beginnings with new opportunities. It is also an opportunity to reflect and take stock and express gratitude. He feels that he is truly blessed because he has had the support of a great team this last year and throughout his entire life. There isn't enough time today to begin to express the measurer of his gratitude.

Mr. Mennen stated he is grateful to the voters of Hunterdon County, not just for their support but for their time and willingness to discuss a vision for Hunterdon County. Those discussions many times took place on a front door step or in a living room. He is very grateful for everyone's open mindedness and support.

Mr. Mennen advised he is grateful to his fellow elected officials for their advice, counsel, support and time. Many gave up nights and weekends to campaign with him across the County.

Mr. Mennen stated he is grateful to his running mate, George Melick; not just for his support and friendship but for his unbridled service to the people of Hunterdon County.

Mr. Mennen expressed his gratefulness to his family; his mother who is here today, whose hand years ago gave him the push in the right direction; his sister for her friendship which grows deeper with each year and for her taking on the role of campaign manager; he is grateful to his grandparents, while no longer here physically, they are with him each day and the lessons they gave him of no matter what your station in life, you are obligated to give something back and that it is not acceptable to rely on the accomplishments of your fore parents; he is grateful to his in-laws, many of whom are here today, for their support and he is grateful to his wife, Lynn who is the glue that holds everything together. She is a partner and an ally who selflessly gave of herself. He thanked his children who knocked on doors with him and lobbied their friends and their friends' parents and gave him love and respect to fuel his drive to succeed.

Mr. Mennen stated this is the start of a new year and he has spent a lot of time over the past holiday season thinking about the upcoming year and what would make this year a success and he kept coming back to one simple word, respect. Without respect there truly can't be a success. This Board needs to respect the citizens of this County, no question should ever go unanswered, all suggestions should be considered and no member of the public should be turned away. Decisions should be made based upon facts presented and never upon political influence or prejudice. The qualified and dedicated staff must be respected. No point of view should be disregarded and this Board should never lose sight of the fact these are the people that make out County work.

Mr. Mennen stated this Board needs to respect each other. There will be disagreements on this Freeholder Board this year but those disagreements should always be based on issues and never be personal.

Mr. Mennen advised this Board must never forget that it spends taxpayer money; money which the Board is entrusted with. He stands here today saying he is resolute to his commitment to this simple principal as he knows his colleagues are. This year, this Board will perform the people's business with dignity, with honor and integrity and with each one present, this Board will make Hunterdon County the best it can be.

Mr. Mennen thanked everyone for coming today and for their support. He looks forward to working with everyone.

Mrs. Doolan asked for nominations for Director of the Board of Chosen Freeholders. Mr. Mennen moved and Mr. Melick seconded a motion electing Erik C. Peterson as Freeholder Director.

**ROLL CALL: (AYES) MR. MENNEN, MR. MELICK, MR. HOLT, MR. SWOREN.
(ABSTAIN) MR. PETERSON.**

Mrs. Doolan asked for nominations for Deputy Director of the Board of Chosen Freeholders. Mr. Melick moved and Mr. Peterson seconded a motion electing William G. Mennen as Deputy Freeholder Director.

**ROLL CALL: (AYES) MR. MELICK, MR. HOLT, MR. SWOREN, MR. PETERSON.
(ABSTAIN) MR. MENNEN.**

Mrs. Doolan asked the Honorable Leonard Lance to swear in William G. Mennen as Deputy Director of the Board of Chosen Freeholders.

The Honorable Leonard Lance swore in William G. Mennen, as Deputy Director, of the Hunterdon County Board of Chosen Freeholders, as his wife, daughter and son held the Bible.

Deputy Director Mennen thanked the Board, saying he greatly appreciates this and is humbled by this honor being bestowed upon him by his colleagues and he looks forward to a productive year.

Mrs. Doolan asked the Honorable Leonard Lance to swear in Erik C. Peterson as Director of the Board of Chosen Freeholders.

The Honorable Leonard Lance sworn in Erik C. Peterson, as Director, of the Hunterdon County Board of Chosen Freeholders, as his wife, daughters and son held the Bible.

Director Peterson stated he is honored that his colleagues have chosen him to be the Director of the County Freeholder Board for 2008. It is a true compliment, when a Board which you are a member chooses you to a position of leadership. He thanked the Board.

Director Peterson congratulated George Melick saying he is the longest serving Freeholder in New Jersey and his service to the people of Hunterdon County is remarkable. His experience is invaluable to this relatively new Board.

Director Peterson welcomed Will Mennen to the Freeholder Board and stated he looks forward to working with everyone this year.

Director Peterson thanked his good friend, Leonard Lance, for swearing him in for the third time in three years. Senator Lance's integrity and ardent pursuit for fiscal responsibility is well known. He stated these are values they both share.

Director Peterson recognized his mother, who was present, saying not only did she push him, she also provided a kick and a shove when needed.

Director Peterson recognized his wife, Jennifer, the love of his life, and his children who are making themselves known. His wife has come to know if he says a meeting will end by 7:30 p.m. that he really means it will end around 9 or later. He thanks God for her support and understanding everyday.

Director Peterson stated as the Freeholder Board reorganizes for this new year, and this Board prepares to move forward on the people's business for 2008, the Board must look back to see where it came from in order to plan for the future. 2007 was a good year in Hunterdon County and he strongly believes that an open and accessible government is the keystone to good, fiscally responsible government. In 2007 the Freeholders began the arduous process, for the first time in 25 years, of releasing current executive session minutes and releasing prior years' executive session minutes. By timely releasing these minutes, the Board is allowing the public to see how and why decisions were made on the issues that could not be made in public at the time decisions were made.

Director Peterson advised in 2008, this Board is going to make the government more accessible by moving the starting time of the meetings from the afternoons to the evenings. Hopefully the change in time will result in more people from the public attending meetings and participating.

Director Peterson feels one of the most important accomplishments of 2007 was the opening of the Veteran's Service Office. Prior to the opening of the office, located at the Senior Services Center, this past May, the men and women who served our country had to travel to other counties to obtain the services they earned defending our country. This was a hardship on the older veterans, especially since there was no inter-county public transportation. The Veterans' Office is open on Wednesdays, from 9:00 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. This office has assisted over 300 veterans since May 2007.

Director Peterson stated in 2008, he will again seek the support of his colleagues of this Board to recognize and support the men and women from Hunterdon County who are currently serving the United States, through a program he is developing with the American Legion which will be called "Hunterdon's Heroes." The program will bring a little bit of hope and a little bit of Hunterdon to the County's troops and it will let them know, we support them. Although this program will cost the County nothing, he personally believes everyone should make a personal sacrifice to support our troops, who make the ultimate sacrifice for us.

Director Peterson stated another great success story of 2007 was the County's Farmland Preservation Program. In 2007, the County closed on 40 farms setting a record for the number of preserved farms in a year. By preserving those 40 farms, the County prevented 2300 acres from being developed. In 2005 the County closed on 6 key farms and in 2006, the County closed on 26 farms. It is quite an achievement to close on 40 farms. Director Peterson recognized the County Planning Board for all the hard work they do. This achievement was accomplishment along with the hard work of the state, the municipalities and County Counsel's Office. He noted that as a result of this achievement, Hunterdon County now ranks first in the State of New Jersey for the number of farms preserved at 262 and Hunterdon ranks second in total acres preserved at 22,678 acres and Hunterdon ranks first in the state in total state contributions spent at \$1,072,000. These dollars spent by the state, county and municipal governments represent an investment in the quality of life in Hunterdon, in agriculture and in the environment. This is money well spent.

Director Peterson stated in 2008 the Freeholder Board hopes to duplicate the success of the Farmland Preservation Program by reorganizing its Open Space and Parks Programs. The details of the current programs are being worked on for change it into a formalized application process which will provide a biannually application review, by a review board consisting of regional members including at least one person from a borough, one person from the Parks and Recreation Department and one person from a non-profit organization. The applications will be reviewed, ranked by the review board and assistance will be provided to applicants. This process will streamline the program and take the politics out of the process. He hopes by making these changes that the County will be able to strategically preserve open space and parkland that serves the regional needs of the County. Also, that by providing an open, non political process that all 26 municipalities will participate in the program, with confidence, that their applications will be given a fair opportunity to be funded and that the Freeholders will regain the confidence of the public, so that Hunterdon, can be counted among those counties that pass the next farmland and open space values.

Director Peterson asked the Board of Freeholders to rethink shared services, saying the time has come for Hunterdon County and all 26 municipalities to aggressively pursue shared services. The Board owes it to the taxpayers to investigate and try new and innovative ways to reduce spending. He proposed this Board create a Shared Services Committee that will work with the Hunterdon County Chamber of Commerce to move this forward and engage Hunterdon's municipal partners to do the same.

Director Peterson stated 2007 will be remembered for the success stores but it will also be remembered for the open and robust policy debates that took place at the meetings. 2007 also marks the end of 18 years of selfless service by George D. Muller. Mr. Muller is a gentleman and friend to this county and his legacy of good works will be reaped by the people of Hunterdon County for years to come.

Director Peterson stated four weeks before sitting in the Presidency of the United States, George Washington wrote this to Henry Knox: "Integrity and firmness are all I can promise, these be the voyage long or short will never forsake me, although I may be deserted by all my men, for all the consolations which are derived from these, under circumstances that were only not deprived."

Director Peterson said he, like Washington, promises that he will serve the people of Hunterdon County with integrity and purpose. As Director of the Freeholder Board he will always remember that he served at the pleasure of the people of Hunterdon County and above all, he will never forget his duty that their money is spent responsibly. He thanked everyone for this honor saying may God Bless you, the United States and Hunterdon County.

RESOLUTIONS:

Items #3 and 6 were held at this time.

Mr. Holt moved and Mr. Sworen seconded these:

See Page 01/02/08-4A

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approving 2008 Freeholder Departmental Chairmanship and Assignment Designations.

See Page 01/02/08-4B

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Authorizing the establishment of County Office hours.

See Page 01/02/08-4C

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Setting pay days and audit days.

See Page 01/02/08-4D

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Naming of Depositories of funds for the County of Hunterdon.

See Page 01/02/08-4E

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Authorizing the manual signature for checks drawn for penalties against the County.

See Page 01/02/08-4F

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approving 2008 salary and longevity payments for employees covered under the Hunterdon County Correction Line Officers' Association, FOP Lodge 29.

See Page 01/02/08-4G

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approving 2008 salary payments for eligible employees covered under the Hunterdon County Prosecutor's Investigators, PBA Local 358.

See Page 01/02/08-4H

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approving the hold over of 2007 salary and longevity payments for Sergeants in the Hunterdon County Sheriff's Office.

See Page 01/02/08-4I

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approving 2007 salaries for eligible employees covered under the Supervisory Communications Workers of America, Local 1034.

See Page 01/02/08-4J

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approving 2008 salaries for eligible employees covered under the Supervisory Communications Workers of America, Local 1034.

See Page 01/02/08-4K

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approving 2007 and 2008 supervisory longevity payments for eligible employees covered under the Supervisory Communications Workers of America, Local 1034.

See Page 01/02/08-4L

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approving 2008 longevity payment salaries for eligible employees covered under the Supervisory Communications Workers of America, Local 1034.

See Page 01/02/08-4M

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approving 2008 salaries for employees covered under the Hunterdon County Sheriff's Officers' Association, FOP Lodge 94.

See Page 01/02/08-4N

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approving the hold over of 2007 salaries for unclassified employees in the Board of Elections.

See Page 01/02/08-4O

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approving the hold over of 2007 salaries for elected, appointed and unclassified officials.

See Page 01/02/08-5A

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approving the hold over of 2007 salaries for unclassified employees in the Prosecutor's Office.

See Page 01/02/08-5B

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approving the hold over of 2007 salaries for eligible employees at the Correctional Facility, covered under FOP Lodge 133.

See Page 01/02/08-5C

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approving the hold over of 2007 salaries for unclassified employees in the Sheriff's Office.

See Page 01/02/08-5D

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approving the 2008 longevity payments for eligible employees covered under the non-supervisory CWA contract, Local 1034.

See Page 01/02/08-5E

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approving the 2008 salaries for eligible employees covered under the non-supervisory CWA contract, Local 1034.

See Page 01/02/08-5F

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approving appointments to the New Jersey Association of Counties, Board of Directors.

See Page 01/02/08-5G

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approving appointments to the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority, Inc.

See Page 01/02/08-5H

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approving the appointment of Cynthia J. Yard as the County's Public Compliance Officer.

See Page 01/02/08-5I

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approving the appointment of Denise B. Doolan as the County's Fair Housing Officer.

See Page 01/02/08-5J

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approving appointments to various Boards, Committees, Councils and Commissions.

See Page 01/02/08-5K

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approving appointments to the Emergency Services Council.

See Page 01/02/08-5L

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approving appointments to the Youth Services Commission.

See Page 01/02/08-5M

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approving the appointment of Charles Howard to the Raritan Valley Rail Coalition.

ROLL CALL: (AYES) MR. HOLT, MR. SWOREN, MR. MELICK, MR. MENNEN, MR. PETERSON.

Mr. Melick moved and Mr. Mennen seconded this:

See Page 01/02/08-5N

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Setting regular meeting time and days for the Board of Chosen Freeholders.

ROLL CALL: (AYES) MR. MELICK, MR. MENNEN, MR. HOLT, MR. SWOREN, MR. PETERSON.

Mr. Melick moved and Mr. Mennen seconded this:

See Page 01/02/08-5O

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Designating official newspapers for the publication of County items.

ROLL CALL: (AYES) MR. MELICK, MR. MENNEN, MR. HOLT, MR. SWOREN, MR. PETERSON.

INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS:

Director Peterson stated there are numerous municipal elected officials present and asked each to stand and be recognized.

Director Peterson stated there are a number of County employees present and he asked each one to stand and be recognized. He advised these are the hard working people who make the Freeholder Board look good.

Director Peterson asked if Senator Lance would like to say a few words.

Senator Lance congratulated the Freeholder Board on its reorganization. This is a Freeholder Board with four of its members, in their first term of office and one of the members, George Melick, is now the ranking Freeholder in New Jersey.

Senator Lance said Freeholder Melick has said he won't be a Freeholder in 2014, and he respectfully disagreed. George Melick will be the institutional member and the fiscal conscience of Hunterdon County when it celebrates its 300th Anniversary in 2014.

Senator Lance recognized the County's Constitutional Officers: County Clerk, County Sheriff and the County Surrogate saying they perform a marvelous service to the 130,000 residents of the County.

Senator Lance recognized the County's Judiciary which deals with issues based upon policy and he commended all judiciary across the state and in particular Judge Mahon who is with us today.

INVITATION TO RECEPTION:

Director Peterson invited everyone to Shaker's Café on Main Street in Flemington, for light refreshments.

There being no further business to come before the Board, Director Muller adjourned the meeting at 5:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise B. Doolan
Clerk of the Board.