



Board of County Commissioners

County of Hunterdon
71 Main Street, Building #1
PO Box 2900
Flemington, NJ 08822-2900

MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: January 4, 2022

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**New Hunterdon Board Director John Lanza Says
County Residents Can Have ‘Great Faith In Our Future’**

**Zach Rich To Serve As Deputy Director
Melfi, Holt and Soloway Sworn-in**

Stating that County residents can have “great faith in our future, as the Commissioner Board looks ahead and continues to ensure that Hunterdon County is the safest, healthiest and best place to live, not only in New Jersey, but in the nation,” John E. Lanza was unanimously elected as Director of the Hunterdon County Board of Commissioners, at the annual re-organization meeting held in the Historic Courthouse in Flemington, on January 4th.

Lanza, a Raritan Township resident who previously served as the Board Director in 2017, was joined in leadership of the Board by third year Commissioner Zachary T. Rich of West Amwell, who was unanimously selected to serve as Deputy Director.

County Clerk Mary Melfi and County Commissioners Matt Holt and Susan J. Soloway, all re-elected by the voters in November, took their oaths of office during the ceremonies.

Lanza, who was sworn in by former Assemblyman Jack Ciattarelli, said during remarks, “2022 begins year 3 of the COVID-19 pandemic. And as difficult and challenging as the pandemic has made governing, Hunterdon County has never faltered in our conservative fiscal philosophy, nor in delivering services to the public. And we never will.”

More Covid-19 Testing With Quicker Results

Lanza praised the County Health Department’s pandemic response and stated, “Our County has been recognized as the healthiest place to live and the work by the Health Department team is a major part of earning that distinction.



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Let's continue that high level of service in 2022 by recognizing the public's need for more access to Covid-19 testing, with quicker turnaround times. I ask the Board to join me in directing the Department of Health to bring online a program of increased PCR and rapid testing opportunities."

Focus On Tourism For Economic Growth

Lanza also called for the elevation of the County's economic development office to the Department level, renaming the agency the Department of Economic Development and Tourism, "To emphasize the significance and importance of tourism to our county's economic growth and to encourage the development of a fully comprehensive tourism effort."

The new Director noted, "The elevation of this initiative to the Department level sends the message that recovery from the pandemic is a priority and is important for our growth, as we look to our future. Continuing to make Hunterdon County one of the best places to live."

Start Phase 2 of Emergency Services Facility Upgrade

Lanza said, "To continue to be one of the safest places to live the county needs to provide the opportunity for the best training and preparedness of our first responders, therefore, I am recommending that the County move to phase two of the Emergency Services Training Center upgrade project this year.

The pandemic and Hurricane Ida could not have been more instructive on the need to train, prepare, and equip the County's volunteer first responders at the highest level."

Phase one of that project, a new burn training facility, is under construction at the Clinton Township site, replacing the existing more than 25-year-old facility that is near the end of its useful life.



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Faith In The Future

Lanza concluded, “Hunterdon County is charged with delivering many services; preserving farmland and open space, maintaining thousands of acres of parks, providing 9-1-1 services to 26 municipalities and 63 responder agencies, and assisting those with mental health or drug issues, just to name a few.

But unlike the stock market disclaimer that past performance is no guarantee of future results, I can emphatically state that when it comes to this Board, our Constitutional Officers, and the county’s workforce, past performance is an indicator that our Hunterdon County residents and taxpayers can have great faith in our future.”

New Jersey Senators Mike Doherty, Kip Bateman, Tom Kean and Assembly member Erik Peterson joined Hunterdon County Constitutional Officers County Clerk Mary Melfi, Sheriff Fred W. Brown, Surrogate Susan Hoffman, and Prosecutor Renee Robeson, and former Assembly member Jack Ciattarelli, at the Re-organization ceremonies.

Senator Bateman, who has represented a portion of Hunterdon County since 2012 and is retiring from the State Senate, was recognized by the Board of Commissioners with a Proclamation honoring his service to the people of the County and the State.

Reverend David Errickson performed the invocation and benediction and the county’s Veterans Services Officer, Rich Booth, led the flag salute.

Due the space limitations in the Historic Courthouse resulting from the pandemic health concerns, the meeting was livestreamed and is available [here](#).