

## **Van Doren To Lead Hunterdon Freeholders In 2020**

### **New Director Says ‘Taxpayers’ Money Matters’**

Unanimously elected Freeholder Board Director by his colleagues at the January 6th Hunterdon County Freeholder Board Re-organization meeting, Shaun Van Doren called budget oversight and accountability and government transparency his primary goals for 2020, “because taxpayers' money matters.”

Freeholder Sue Soloway of Franklin Township was elected the Board's Deputy Director, while new Freeholder Zach Rich of West Amwell was sworn into office, and John E. Lanza was sworn in for his third term on the Board, during the Re-organization proceedings.

Sheriff Fred Brown, re-elected for a fourth term as the Hunterdon County Sheriff in November, took the oath of office on January 1st as is required for Constitutional Officers.

Van Doren, entering his third year as a Freeholder, told the crowd attending the Re-organization meeting at the Historic Courthouse in Flemington, “Careful scrutiny of spending, oversight of government operations, and accountability, are the characteristics that have resulted in holding the county tax rate steady, reducing the budget below that of a decade ago, and error-free financial audits, during the past few years.”

Our conservative approach to the use of taxpayers’ money has been successful and must continue. On my watch it will.”

Van Doren, a former member of the Tewksbury Township Committee for twenty-one years, also called for audio recordings of Freeholder meetings to be made available to the public on the County's website. “What transpires at the public meetings of the Freeholder Board is important to all residents and having recordings available is the right step in greater transparency.

Increased use of social media and other electronic and digital media for public awareness of the various County Departments’ programs and actions, for the notice of meetings of our public bodies, and for promoting the opportunities available for public comment on government activities, will also improve transparency.”

Deputy Director Soloway, who joined the Board in 2019, stated, “As Freeholders, we understand the grave responsibility we are given to be excellent stewards of the taxpayers’ dollars. The government must operate to serve the public, but it is our job to ensure it is done as efficiently as possible. I look forward to the challenges ahead of us in 2020.”

New Freeholder Zach Rich, a former Mayor of West Amwell, stated in his remarks, “I look forward to working together with the other Freeholders in maintaining Hunterdon County as a special place, a unique gem in what is the diverse setting that is New Jersey.”

Van Doren, Soloway, Lanza and Rich are joined on the Freeholder Board by veteran Freeholder Matt Holt.

Senator Tom Kean administered the oath of office to Van Doren and Senator Mike Doherty did the same for Soloway. Zach Rich was sworn in by New Jersey Republican State Committee Chairman Doug Steinhardt, while Lanza father's, John R. Lanza, performed the honors for the third term Freeholder.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Girl Scout Troops 81154 and 81292, and Boy Scout Troop 49, at the ceremony.