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**ANNUAL REORGANIZATION MEETING
FRIDAY, JANUARY 2, 2026 AT 3:00 P.M.
HISTORIC SUSSEX COUNTY COURTHOUSE
NJ ROUTE 94
NEWTON, NEW JERSEY 07860**

Item

1. **Call to Order by the Clerk Pro Tem** Clerk Pro Tem Linda Miller welcomed all and called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.
2. **Invocation and Moment of Silent Prayer** by Father Phillip-Michael Tangorra, Pastor Our Lady Queen of Peace, Frankford, NJ
3. **Salute to the Flag** Clerk Pro Tem Miller asked all to stand and salute the flag
4. **Public Statement**

"Pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231, P.L. 1975, Adequate Notice, as defined by Section 3D of Chapter 231, P.L. 1975, has been made on November 18, 2025 as per authorization of the Board, and per notice which was posted and emailed from the Administrative Offices of the County of Sussex, located in the Administrative Center, One Spring Street, Newton, New Jersey, to the following: New Jersey Herald, New Jersey Sunday Herald, and is also posted on the bulletin board maintained in the Administrative Center for public announcements, and has been submitted to the Sussex County Clerk in compliance with said Act." Please mute all devices.

5. **Jeffrey M. Parrott, County Clerk** - Determination Statement from the November 4, 2025 Election was read into the record by County Clerk Parrott. Clerk Parrott thanked all for attending.
6. **Jill Space** was asked to stand and was sworn in as a Member of the Sussex County Board of County Commissioners by Assemblywoman Dawn Fantasia for a three-year term; said term to begin immediately and expire December 31, 2028
7. **David J. Silverthorne** was invited to stand and was sworn in as a Member of the Sussex County Board of County Commissioners by Hal Wirths for a three-year term; said term to begin immediately and expire December 31, 2028

8. **Michael F. Strada** was invited to stand and was sworn in as the Sussex County Sheriff by County Clerk Jeff Parrott for a three year term; said term to begin immediately and expire December 31, 2028
9. **Christina Marks** was invited to stand and was sworn in as Administrator of the County of Sussex by Senator Parker Space for a three-year term; said term to begin immediately and expire December 31, 2028

Clerk Pro Tem Miller took roll call for the meeting: Commissioners Carney, DeGroot, Henderson, Silverthorne and Space were all present.

Clerk Pro Tem Miller asked for a nomination for Director of the Board of County Commissioners for Sussex County for 2026. Commissioner DeGroot nominated Jill Space to be director of the Board for 2026 with a second by Commissioner Silverthorne. There were no other nominations.

10. RESOLUTION RE: APPOINTING THE DIRECTOR OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS FOR THE YEAR 2026

Moved by Commissioner DeGroot with a second by Commissioner Henderson. No discussion was had.

Roll Call Vote

- Commissioner Carney – Yes**
- Commissioner DeGroot – Yes**
- Commissioner Henderson – Yes**
- Commissioner Silverthorne – Yes**
- Commissioner Space – Yes**

Clerk Pro Tem Miller asked Director Space to stand and was sworn in by Senator Parker Space.

Clerk Pro Tem Miller asked for a nomination for Deputy Director of the Board of County Commissioners for Sussex County for 2026. Commissioner Carey nominated Jack DeGroot with a second by Director Space. There were no other nominees.

11. RESOLUTION RE: APPOINTING THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS FOR THE YEAR 2026

Moved by Commissioner Carney with a second by Director Space. No discussion was had.

Roll Call Vote

- Commissioner Carney – Yes**

Commissioner DeGroot – Yes
Commissioner Henderson – No
Commissioner Silverthorne – Yes
Commissioner Space – Yes

Clerk Pro Tem Miller asked Commissioner DeGroot to stand and be sworn in as Deputy Director of the Board of County Commissioners for 2026. Deputy Director DeGroot was sworn in by Senator Parker Space.

Clerk Pro Tem Miller declared that Director Space is now chair of this meeting.

12. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION to approve the Agenda was moved by Commissioner Henderson with a second by Commissioner Silverthorne. No discussion was had and all members present voted in the affirmative.

13. RECOGNITION OF DIGNITARIES AND COMMISSIONER REMARKS

RECOGNITION OF DIGNITARIES – Sussex County Republican Chairman Joseph LaBarbera was called up to announce the elected officials, former elected officials, and other dignitaries in attendance.

COMMISSIONER REMARKS

Commissioner Silverthorne

“I’m going to keep it short seeing father Phil, I just remember to thank God, thank my wife and family and voters of the county for giving this opportunity. I’m privileged to be in this position. So many great people have been in this role before me, and it’s just an honor to be here. I’m going to work hard and diligently and do the best I can, and hopefully I put my best foot forward and give the board an opportunity with a breath of fresh air to move forward and get away with some of the guards that’s been in the past. And that’s it. Thank you, everybody”

Commissioner Henderson

“First of all, I’d like to say, Happy New Year to all and welcome aboard, Commissioner Silverthorne. I look forward to working with you. It’s been an honor to serve as your commissioner in 2025. In my 42 and a half years of working in municipal government, this has been one of my most challenging. I need to thank the county staff and the employees for their patience, their incredible insight and assistance as I navigated my first year as commissioner. We are fortunate to have these valuable people working for us. I stand by my campaign promise of transparency, accountability and responsibility as we work together for Sussex County in good and positive ways. I am transparent. I’m accountable for my actions, and I’m responsible to you, my constituency. To that, I’ll add integrity and honesty cards on the table, no ace up my

sleeve, no hidden agenda. You will always know where I stand as we prepare for 2026 and whatever this coming year brings you, have my personal commitment to work for every resident of Sussex County. I look forward to 2026 it's another year of service, and thank you for all your support this past year.”

Deputy Director DeGroot

“Yes, glory to God and Happy New Year to all. It is tremendous blessing to begin my third year serving as one of your Sussex County Commissioners. As I reflect on 2025 I'm proud of the significant progress we achieved across multiple areas of county government.

For Sussex County agriculture, my top priority in 2025, was placing a public referendum on the November 4th general election ballot to extend the farmland preservation, recreation, open space trust fund for an additional 10 year period. Through extensive outreach, we successfully authorized the referendum. Voters responded with an overwhelming 81% approval, a clear vote of confidence that has already produced results. This year alone, we have two new farmland preservation applications that were submitted, bringing the total to four farmland preservation applications in the system, advancing a key goal I set in 2024 at this meeting two years ago.

Another exciting initiative was the launch of the Sussex County seed library through the Division of Senior Services in partnership with Rutgers Master Gardeners. Designed as a four phase program, in its inaugural year, successfully collected and delivered seeds county wide, offered six seasonal educational workshops and gathered valuable, valuable participant feedback. Most importantly, the county seed library brought seniors together in community, taught practical skills and sustainability, improved production and provided opportunities for connection, learning and purpose. The enthusiasm surrounding this program has been incredibly encouraging as it moves into its second year.

My commitment to education was also strengthened through a successful partnership between Checkpoint Software and Sussex County Community College through Checkpoint Secure Academy program, the college now offers a hands on cyber security curriculum that prepare students for careers in a high demand field, creating clear pathways to employment with Checkpoint and positioning Sussex County Community College as a leader in workforce driven education.

Looking ahead in 2026 I'm eager to build on this momentum by continuing support of our seniors, strengthening education and conserve the land God entrusted to us all. I'm especially excited for the completion of our updated farmland preservation plan and the launch of an upgraded four seasons of agriculture program to further support local farms and small businesses. As I continue this journey, I'm deeply grateful for the dedicated team of commissioners I sit next to and the county employees I have a privilege to serve alongside. A special thank you goes go the DPW for their tireless work this winter, keeping our roads safe through snow and ice. Together, we will continue working to ensure Sussex County remains a place of growth, opportunity and prosperity for all who call in home. Thank you all for your trust and support as deputy director and as commissioner, may God bless Sussex County and each and every one of you. Thank you.”

Commissioner Carney

"Thank you. Thank you everybody for coming today. I want to congratulate Dave Silverthorne and Jill Space for the win in November. I know your ability is going to bring some good stuff to the board, and I'm glad that you're here. It's been a while. We finally get to work together.

I also want to congratulate, Christina Marks. Over the last four years, you've been a right hand to the board, and without you, we wouldn't be in a position that the board is in, and that's a good position.

You know this is the first time in four years that I haven't been a deputy director and or a director. To me, that doesn't matter. I am who I am. I don't need a title to prove that I'm going to work as hard as I did five years ago when I got here, and that's going to continue. This is a nice board to see around. You know, I know everybody brings something to the table. Last few years has been tough because we've only had four people to actually do anything. So having Dave on this board, it's going to go in the right direction. New administrator, I feel like we're starting over, but I would be remiss if I didn't say thank you to our employees here at Sussex, because without them, it doesn't matter what we do, Sussex doesn't work the way it does.

I also want to thank our constitutional officers. You know, they've been mentors to me, and we work in concert, as Jeff Parrott likes to say, but that works very well too with our constituents time and time again. So thank you guys for that, and thank you for the support.

As always, I say my door is open. You can email me, call me whatever. I'm always here. Doesn't even matter if you're a Democrat, you still can call me. It's fine. I don't ask that question. I just, I want to point out something that's very, very important, and it's been very important to Jill. I know she doesn't like to read stuff about her husband, but this is an accolade that Parker Space needs to get. He secured some money for our food pantry. A lot of you have heard, if you haven't read, that our angel donor, which produces around \$500,000 a year for the past, Jeff 10 years, 12 years. The angel donor has been around more than that for how many years? For a long time. Anyway, it's not there anymore. So Nevertheless, I'm just going to read you so he secured 500,000 for the Sussex County Food Bank coming up this year, after many years of generous support to the county's Food Bank, our angel donor unfortunately severed ties after being subjected to unsavory political shenanigans by some of our people in our community, Knowing of the absolute need, Parker, was able to work with the state and impress upon them the dire straits this put many vulnerable families in throughout the county, and was able to secure, like I said, the \$500,000 in state funding. This will help make it a much happier new year for our families moving forward this year. So again, thank you Parker Space for that. It means a lot to Sussex County. It means a lot to this board. Thank you all for the support."

Administrator Marks advised that she received notification from the County's Department of Health and Human Services and finance team that the wire transfer was completed and received today.

Director Space

“Happy New Year everyone. Thank you all for being here today, I would first like to thank the voters of Sussex County for entrusting me with another term as Sussex County Commissioner. Thank you, Assemblywoman Dawn Fantasia, for coming here on your birthday to swear me in. Having you swear me in today is such an honor, because you’re such a good role model and you’re a friend and you served on the board with me, so it’s very nice that you swear me in, and I thank you. Thank you to my husband, Parker, for also swearing me in as director. Unfortunately, my kids couldn’t be here. One lives in Florida, and the other two are sick, but my sister Jamie and her husband Paul, were able to come and hold the Bible for me. I appreciate and love you. To Parker, I always turn to you for advice. You’re the first person, and I love you, and you mean the world to me, and your support and guidance is always helpful. Congratulations, Sheriff Strada, on your reelection, I want to welcome my running mate, Commissioner Silverthorne, to the board. I know you’re going to bring a lot. I’ve gotten to know you very well the last year, and your work ethic is very much needed and appreciated here on this board, there’s no doubt in my mind that you’re going to be an asset of Sussex County. Thank you to my fellow Commissioners for allowing me to serve as director in 2026.

I might be the only woman serving on this board, but today we made Sussex County history. We swore, in our very first female County Administrator, Christina marks. In fact, Sussex County administration is now run by a fantastic group of women, including County Deputy Administrator, Lorraine hence CFO, county treasurer, Elke Yetter, a clerk of the board, Linda Miller, Christina Florio from Health and Human Services. And I’m not a feminist, but it’s just pretty, pretty proud that we do have some women around here that should have recognition. Christina is not new to the county of Sussex. She’s been with the County for over 18 years, and most recently served as the board’s Chief of Staff for the last three and a half years. Her experience and dedication to Sussex County will undoubtedly move Sussex County forward. She has proven to us that there is no problem that she cannot handle, and all our personalities to go along with it.

I’m looking forward to a launch of a new county website later this month. As someone who prides themselves on being accessible, I feel we need a website that is user friendly and easy to navigate, showing our constituents everything the county of Sussex has to offer.

We’ve begun our 2026 budget process. This year proved very challenging with rising health insurance costs at the top, we will do our due diligence to keep the tax rate increase as low as possible while supporting county employees, public safety, maintaining our infrastructure, the county, college, Sussex tech, and the high level of services our residents deserve. We will continue a strong working relationship between the county, the college and Sussex Tech. I want to mention how pleased we have been with Dr. Corey Homer at the helm of the college. I’m sure he’ll continue to support Sussex Tech in all ways he possibly can, as they will be seeking a new school superintendent with the upcoming retirement of Gus Modla.

I would like to invite everyone after over to O’Reilly’s. We’re just having a small reception of appetizers and a cash bar, and that is courtesy of Sheriff Strada, Commissioner Silverthorne and myself. I want to wish everyone a happy and healthy New Year thank you for coming.

14. PROCLAMATIONS - None

15. PUBLIC SESSION FROM THE FLOOR

This Public Session is for questions or comments pertaining to Agenda Items only. Comments are limited to 3 minutes or less. Please state your name, municipality and Agenda Topic.

MOTION to open the floor for public comment was moved by Commissioner Henderson with a second by Commissioner Silverthorne. No discussion was had and all members present voted in the affirmative.

No one spoke during this public session.

MOTION to close the floor for public comment was moved by Deputy Director DeGroot with a second by Commissioner Henderson. No discussion was had and all members present voted in the affirmative.

Commissioner asked to speak before the next item on the agenda. Commissioner Henderson recognized Administrator Marks for the work she has done since November 1st and wished her the best of luck.

16. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

A. RESOLUTION RE:

ADOPTION OF A 2026 TEMPORARY OPERATING BUDGET BY THE COUNTY OF SUSSEX

B. RESOLUTION RE:

ADOPTION OF 2026 TEMPORARY OPERATING BUDGETS FOR THE LIBRARY AND SOCIAL SERVICES FUNDS BY THE COUNTY OF SUSSEX

C. RESOLUTION RE:

DATE AND TIME OF 2026 MEETINGS OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

D. RESOLUTION RE:

HOLIDAY SCHEDULE FOR 2026

E. RESOLUTION RE:

PROVIDING THE COMMISSIONER DIRECTOR WITH VETO POWER OVER COUNTY AUTHORITIES PURSUANT TO N.J.S.A. 40:20-71.3

F. RESOLUTION RE:

DESIGNATION OF OFFICIAL NEWSPAPERS IN CONFORMANCE WITH THE OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT

- G. RESOLUTION RE:**
FILING OF SURETY BONDS
- H. RESOLUTION RE:**
FILING OF OATHS
- I. RESOLUTION RE:**
CLERK OF THE BOARD AUTHORIZED TO CHARGE FEES FOR COPIES OF PUBLIC RECORDS
- J. RESOLUTION RE:**
ESTABLISHING POLICY RELATIVE TO EMERGENCY PURCHASES GOODS AND SERVICES IN ACCORDANCE WITH N.J.S.A. 40A:11-6 AND N.J.A.C. 5:34-6.1
- K. RESOLUTION RE:**
APPROVING A CASH MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR 2026
- L. RESOLUTION RE:**
BANKS AS DEPOSITORIES
- M. RESOLUTION RE:**
PAYMENT OF BILLS
- N. RESOLUTION RE:**
AUTHORIZATION FOR THE SUSSEX COUNTY TREASURER TO PAY BILLS ON THE SECOND AND FOURTH WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH WHEN THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS DOES NOT MEET ON THE SECOND AND/OR FOURTH WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH
- O. RESOLUTION RE:**
PAYMENT OF SALARIES
- P. RESOLUTION RE:**
REAUTHORIZING PETTY CASH FUNDS FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2026

The Board of County Commissioners of the County of Sussex has reviewed the Consent Agenda consisting of various proposed Resolutions and determined that adoption of the said Resolutions is in and will further the public interest. If any Commissioner would like to remove an item to be considered separately, please do so now.

MOTION to approve the Consent Agenda Resolutions A-P was moved by Commissioner Henderson with a second by Deputy Director DeGroot. No discussion was had.

Roll Call Vote

Commissioner Carney – Yes

Deputy Director DeGroot – Yes

Commissioner Henderson – Yes
Commissioner Silverthorne – Yes
Director Space - Yes

17. **APPOINTMENTS**

A. RESOLUTION RE:

REAPPOINTMENT OF WILLIAM JOSEPH AS THE OFFICIAL TOWN CRIER FOR THE COUNTY OF SUSSEX FOR 2026

B. RESOLUTION RE:

APPOINTMENT OF CARRIE SYLVESTER AS PUBLIC AGENCY COMPLIANCE OFFICER, (P.A.C.O.) IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF SUSSEX FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2026, PURSUANT TO PUBLIC LAW 1975 C. 127 (N.J.A.C. 17:27)

C. RESOLUTION RE:

REAPPOINTMENT OF DR. WILLIAM TRURAN, SUSSEX COUNTY HISTORIAN FOR TERM EXPIRING DECEMBER 31, 2026

D. RESOLUTION RE:

REAPPOINTMENT OF JOAN BRUSEO AND MELISSA MCCURRY, REPRESENTATIVES TO THE SUSSEX COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR TERMS OF THREE (3) YEARS EACH. SAID TERMS TO BEGIN IMMEDIATELY AND EXPIRE DECEMBER 31, 2028

E. RESOLUTION RE:

REAPPOINTMENT OF BRIAN FORD AS A MEMBER OF THE SUSSEX COUNTY LOCAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ALCOHOLISM AND DRUG ABUSE FOR TERMS OF THREE (3) YEARS EACH; SAID TERM TO BEGIN IMMEDIATELY AND EXPIRE DECEMBER 31, 2028

F. RESOLUTION RE:

REAPPOINTMENT OF TOM DRABIC, STAFF REPRESENTATIVE, RAYMOND LINES (SENIOR CITIZEN REPRESENTATIVE), AS MEMBERS OF THE SUSSEX COUNTY COMMUNITY TRANSIT CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR THREE (3) YEAR TERMS; SAID TERMS TO BEGIN IMMEDIATELY AND EXPIRE DECEMBER 31, 2028

G. RESOLUTION RE:

REAPPOINTMENT OF DIAHANN DERUGGIERO, INGRID VACA-BULLARO, AND DEBORAH BERRY-TOON AS COMMUNITY PROVIDERS TO THE SUSSEX COUNTY YOUTH SERVICES COMMISSION FOR TERMS OF THREE (3) YEARS EACH; SAID TERMS TO BEGIN IMMEDIATELY AND TO EXPIRE DECEMBER 31, 2028

H. RESOLUTION RE:

REAPPOINTMENT OF MARIANNE DILWORTH AND MAUREEN M. CIANCI AS MEMBERS OF THE ADVISORY COUNCIL OF THE SUSSEX COUNTY DIVISION OF SENIOR SERVICES FOR TERMS OF THREE (3) YEARS EACH; SAID TERMS TO BEGIN IMMEDIATELY AND EXPIRE DECEMBER 31, 2028

I. RESOLUTION RE:

APPOINTMENT OF LINDA MILLER AS CLERK OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS PURSUANT TO N.J.S.A. 40a:9-26

MOTION to adopt Appointments A-I was moved by Commissioner Carney with a second by Commissioner Silverthorne. No discussion was had.

Roll Call Vote

Commissioner Carney – Yes

Deputy Director DeGroot – Yes

Commissioner Henderson – Yes

Commissioner Silverthorne – Yes

Director Space - Yes

18. **RESOLUTIONS- None**

19. **AWARDS OF CONTRACT/CHANGE ORDERS/BID – None**

20. **PERSONNEL-NONE**

21. **PUBLIC SESSION FROM THE FLOOR**

Please Note: Everyone is asked to keep their comments to 3 minutes or less. Please state your name and your municipality.

MOTION to open the floor for public comment was moved by Commissioner Henderson with a second by Deputy Director DeGroot. No discussion was had and all members present voted in the affirmative.

Dr. Corey Homer – Sussex County Community College

Dr. Homer stated that the college looked to continue the partnership with the commissioners and that he believes things are moving in a really great direction and they appreciate all of the support.

Neil Clark, Sparta, NJ

Mr. Clark congratulated Commissioner Silverthorne and thanked Commissioner DeGroot on all of his efforts regarding farmland preservation. Mr. Clark further thanked Commissioner Carney on the film and entertainment that he has been spearheading in Sussex County and stated that

he looked forward with working together on initiatives, particularly the trails initiative.

Tammie Horsfield

Ms. Horsfield congratulated everyone and that she was looking forward to working with everyone.

MOTION to close the floor for public comment and return to regular business was moved by Commissioner Henderson with a second by Commissioner Silverthorne. No discussion was had and all members present voted in the affirmative.

22. REMINDERS

Please visit the County website for all meeting dates and times. www.sussex.nj.us.

23. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION to adjourn the meeting was moved by Commissioner Carney with a second by Deputy Director DeGroot. No discussion was had and all members present voted in the affirmative.