

**SALEM COUNTY BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS  
2016 REORGANIZATION MEETING  
JANUARY 6, 2016  
OLDE SALEM COURT HOUSE  
MINUTES**

The Salem County Sheriff's Office Honor Guard presented the American Flag in a Color Guard procession. President Protem led the assembled in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag followed by the National Anthem sung by Kim Wozunk.

The President Protem asked Father Robert Ngageno to deliver the invocation.

**OATH OF OFFICE TO FREEHOLDERS ELECT**

HONORABLE BENJAMIN H. LAURY  
by  
Lt. Governor and Secretary of State the Honorable Kim Guadagno  
Presiding

HONORABLE MELISSA L. DECASTRO  
by  
Lt. Governor and Secretary of State the Honorable Kim Guadagno  
Presiding

**OATH OF OFFICE TO SURROGATE ELECT**

HONORABLE NICKI A. BURKE  
by  
Honorable Judge Benjamin C. Telsey, Pj. Cr.  
Presiding

REMARKS

Honorable Lt. Governor Kimberly A. Guadagno  
Honorable John Burzichelli, Assemblyman  
Honorable Adam Taliaferro, Assemblyman

**6:00 P.M. RE-ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING**

Kevin L. Crouch, Clerk of the Board  
*Presiding Protem*

**CALL TO ORDER**

*Kevin L. Crouch*

**OPEN PUBLIC MEETING ACT STATEMENT**

Adequate notice pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act has been given of this meeting

1. By forwarding notice thereof to South Jersey Times and Elmer Times Co.
2. By posting notice thereof on the bulletin board in the Salem County Court House and County Administration Building.
3. By filing notice there in the Office of the Salem County Clerk and the Clerk of the Board all having been done at least 48 hours in advance.

**ROLL CALL**

The Presiding Protem read the roll call and the following Freeholders were present: Freeholders Dale Cross, Melissa DeCastro, Benjamin Laury, Doug Painter, Robert Vanderslice, Lee Ware, and Julie Acton.

**ELECTION CERTIFICATES FROM THE COUNTY CLERK**

The Presiding Protem presented the Election Certificates for Benjamin H. Laury elected for a three year term for Freeholder, Melissa L. DeCastro for a three year term as Freeholder, and Nicki A. Burke for a five year term as Surrogate.

**ELECTION OF THE FREEHOLDER DIRECTOR**

The Presiding Protem took nominations from the floor for Freeholder Director. Freeholder Vanderslice nominated Freeholder Acton with Freeholder Painter voicing the second. No other names were nominated. Nominations were closed on motion by Freeholder Vanderslice which was seconded by Freeholder Painter. On roll call, the Freeholders approved the election of Freeholder Julie A. Acton as Director with a 6/0 vote with Freeholder Acton abstaining.

**OATH OF OFFICE TO THE FREEHOLDER DIRECTOR**

Lt. Governor and Secretary of State the Honorable Kim Guadagno  
Presiding

**ELECTION OF THE DEPUTY FREEHOLDER DIRECTOR**

The Presiding Protem took nominations from the floor for Freeholder Deputy Director. Freeholder Laury nominated Freeholder Cross with Freeholder Vanderslice voicing the second. No other names were nominated. Nominations were closed on motion by Freeholder Laury which was seconded by Freeholder Vanderslice. On roll call, the Freeholders approved the election of Freeholder Dale A. Cross as Deputy Director with a 6/0 vote with Freeholder Cross abstaining.

**OATH OF OFFICE TO THE FREEHOLDER DEPUTY DIRECTOR**

Lt. Governor and Secretary of State the Honorable Kim Guadagno  
Presiding

Kim Wozunk did the honor of singing America the Beautiful

The following statement was read by Director Acton:

“Good evening and welcome to our annual reorganization meeting.

I would like to thank my colleagues for their continued confidence in me as the Director of our Freeholder Board and I am honored to again serve Salem County in this capacity.

I would like to welcome back Ben Laury and welcome to the Freeholder Board, Melissa DeCastro. Melissa is joining our team, as this Freeholder Board truly works together for the best interest of our residents.

Tonight is more than a re-organization and swearing-in rituals. This evening, represents an opportunity for each of us as individuals to make a commitment to work together as a team, strive to face the challenges jointly, and always make our decisions together for the betterment of Salem County while keeping in mind our goal to continue to move this county forward.

At the end of 2015, we wished Beth Timberman the best in her future endeavors as she chose not to seek re-election for another term. Beth was a dedicated Freeholder and served the county for twelve years, following in her father's footsteps to serve this county.

I would also like to congratulate:

- ❖ Sheriff Chuck Miller on being elected to his fourth term
- ❖ Surrogate Nicki Burke on being elected to her third term
- ❖ Assemblyman John Burzichelli and Adam Taliaferro on their re-election.

Our beautiful Olde Courthouse continues to stand as a symbol of Salem County's rich history. This is the oldest courthouse in continuous use in New Jersey and the second oldest in the United States.

We often look at history to discover why things were done, how they were done, what we can borrow from those before us, and what we can develop to continue to advance this great county.

Although Government is similar to other businesses, there are restrictions and mandates that guide county government. The public may not understand why things are done in a particular format and want to know where their tax dollars are going.

We are continuing to strengthen and expand upon our communication and transparency. This past year we implemented County Government Works: Government 101 series.

We are elated to announce we will begin a video series to spotlight our department services and valuable program information that can be viewed on our website 24/7 and will be added to our social media page.

The brief video clips will provide the viewer with information to learn more about a department, program, or topic. This will be helpful for those who are unable to attend programs held during the regular working day or would like to learn more about a particular service.

We have exceptional employees who give 110% each day delivering services in our county and we do not want this to be the 'best kept secret.'

We will continue to listen to you, the resident, and make decisions with you in mind. It was stated before that we are faced with making tough decisions. We continue to do that, because YOU depend on us. They are not always the popular decisions, but we have heard you loud and clear that we must reduce taxes and we will continue to keep our county moving in the right direction.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank:

- ❖ Those who administered the oath of office this evening.
- ❖ Those who are a part of the evening's program.
- ❖ Prosecutor John Lenahan and his staff, as well as, Sheriff Chuck Miller and his staff for their exceptional law enforcement service to our county.

- ❖ Katie Coleman, CFO and Stacy Pennington, Director of Operations s for their oversight of the daily county business.
- ❖ Our county employees for their hard work and dedication.
- ❖ All those who have accepted to serve on one of our committees, boards, and authorities, as well as, those who volunteer in a number of our programs. YOUR VOLUNTEERISM and willingness to serve our great county is appreciative and very important to county government.

**What have we done over the last few years?**

Last year, we adopted a balanced budget and it reflected responsible spending for the County and its residents. By managing the budget and spending responsibly, the County is able to fund projects that impact the daily lives of residents. This year will be no different. We will, with the guidance of our CFO, work diligently to present a responsible budget. As we look around us, corporate and local businesses are struggling. County Government is no different. As we make decisions, the Freeholders and I will remember YOU, the private citizen, who are struggling to remain afloat.

The efforts over the past four years to reduce spending and increase revenue led to a substantial improvement in the county's financial state. Prior to 2012, we had a weak budgetary performance with six consecutive years of surplus decline. Due to the hard work of this Freeholder Board and our County CFO, our financial performance turnaround began with significant spending cuts in 2012 and 2013. Effective financial management and a strong bond rating allow the County to finance capital projects at lower interest rates, which means significant savings to the taxpayers. This is a win-win.

We have also reduced the county debt. The balance of the debt is approximately \$15.5 million LESS today, than it was just three years ago. We made this a priority and we succeeded.

Katie Coleman, please stand, as this is an accomplishment that we all should be proud to acknowledge.

Again, this year we will continue to rein in costs where we are able and continue to be diligent when reviewing budgets. Together, we will continue to keep Salem County moving forward and keep you the taxpayer top priority as we make our priorities in 2016.

It is my honor to serve you and to lead this Freeholder Board, which is made up of seven individuals with one goal: Doing what is best for the residents of Salem County. I do not take this job lightly nor do my fellow colleagues.

As I close this evening, I wish you, our residents, and our county a healthy, safe, and prosperous 2016.”

Director Acton asked if there was a waiver of the rules for tonight's meeting.

Presiding Protem stated that there are no waiver of the rules for tonight's meeting.

**RESOLUTIONS**

2016-1

ADMINISTRATIVE

Resolution for the Adoption of the Rules to Govern the Salem County Board of Chosen Freeholders for the Year 2016

Deputy Director Cross moved for adoption of this resolution, with Freeholder Laury seconding his motion. As there was no discussion, the motion for adoption of the foregoing resolution carried a hand vote of 7/0.

2016-2

ADMINISTRATIVE

Resolution for Compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act Law for the County of Salem

Freeholder Painter moved for adoption of this resolution, with Freeholder Laury seconding his motion. As there was no discussion, the motion for adoption of the foregoing resolution carried a hand vote of 7/0.

2016-3  
ADMINISTRATIVE  
Resolution Setting Job Classification Titles and Salary Ranges for 2016

Freeholder Laury moved for adoption of this resolution, with Freeholder Vanderslice seconding his motion. As there was no discussion, the motion for adoption of the foregoing resolution carried a hand vote of 7/0.

2016-4  
ADMINISTRATIVE  
Resolution Awarding a Contract for Auditor Services for the County of Salem  
(Nightlinger, Colavita & Volpa, PA.)

Deputy Director Laury moved for adoption of this resolution, with Freeholder Painter seconding his motion. As there was no discussion, the motion for adoption of the foregoing resolution carried a hand vote of 7/0.

2016-5  
ADMINISTRATIVE  
Resolution Awarding a Contract for Bond Counsel Services for the County of Salem  
(Archer & Greiner, P.C.)

Deputy Director Cross moved for adoption of this resolution, with Freeholder Vanderslice seconding his motion. As there was no discussion, the motion for adoption of the foregoing resolution carried a hand vote of 7/0.

2016-6  
ADMINISTRATIVE  
Resolution Awarding a Contract for Labor Counsel Services for the County of Salem  
(Gilmore & Monahan, P.A.)

Freeholder Vanderslice moved for adoption of this resolution, with Freeholder Painter seconding his motion. As there was no discussion, the motion for adoption of the foregoing resolution carried a hand vote of 7/0.

2016-7  
ADMINISTRATIVE  
Resolution Awarding a Contract for Engineer for the County of Salem (Alaimo Group - James McKelvie)

Freeholder Laury moved for adoption of this resolution, with Deputy Director Cross seconding his motion. As there was no discussion, the motion for adoption of the foregoing resolution carried a hand vote of 7/0.

2016-8  
ADMINISTRATIVE  
Resolution Awarding a Contract for Planner for the County of Salem (Alaimo Group- Kevin Rijs)

Freeholder Painter moved for adoption of this resolution, with Freeholder Vanderslice seconding his motion. As there was no discussion, the motion for adoption of the foregoing resolution carried a hand vote of 7/0.

2016-9  
Resolution Awarding a Contract for Financial Advisor for the County of Salem  
(Phoenix Advisors, LLC)

Freeholder Vanderslice moved for adoption of this resolution, with Deputy Director Cross seconding his motion. As there was no discussion, the motion for adoption of the foregoing resolution carried a hand vote of 7/0.

2016-10  
ADMINISTRATIVE

Resolution Awarding a Contract for Grant Writer Services for the County of Salem (Triad Associates)

Freeholder Painter moved for adoption of this resolution, with Freeholder Vanderslice seconding his motion. As there was no discussion, the motion for adoption of the foregoing resolution carried a hand vote of 7/0.

2016-11

ADMINISTRATIVE

Resolution Awarding a Contract for Nurse Practitioner Services for the Salem County Correctional Facility (Catherine E. Sheridan)

Deputy Director Cross moved for adoption of this resolution, with Freeholder Painter seconding his motion. As there was no discussion, the motion for adoption of the foregoing resolution carried a hand vote of 7/0.

2016-12

ADMINISTRATIVE

Resolution Awarding a Contract for Psychological and Psychiatric Services for the County of Salem (CGF Health Systems, LLC)

Freeholder Vanderslice moved for adoption of this resolution, with Freeholder Painter seconding his motion. As there was no discussion, the motion for adoption of the foregoing resolution carried a hand vote of 7/0.

Presiding Protem read the following resolutions were read in bulk. 2016-13 thru 2016-21

2016-13

ADMINISTRATIVE

Resolution Appointing County Counsel for the County of Salem (Michael M. Mulligan, Esq.)

2016-14

ADMINISTRATIVE

Resolution Appointing County Adjuster for the County of Salem (Michael M. Mulligan, Esq.)

2016-15

ADMINISTRATIVE

Resolution Appointing County Supervisor Of Bridges (William Miller)

2016-16

ADMINISTRATIVE

Resolution Appointing The Executive Director Of Emergency Services/Emergency Management Coordinator For The County Of Salem (Scott Haines)

2016-17

ADMINISTRATIVE

Resolution Appointing a Deputy Emergency Management Coordinator (Dale A. Cross)

2016-18

ADMINISTRATIVE

Resolution for the Appointment of an Additional Deputy Emergency Management Coordinator (Jeff Pompper)

2016-19

ADMINISTRATIVE

Resolution Appointing a Mental Health Administrator for the County of Salem (Becky Foraker)

2016-20

ADMINISTRATIVE

Resolution Appointing a Mental Health Administrator for the County of Salem (Becky Foraker)

2016-21

ADMINISTRATIVE

Resolution Appointing a Traffic Safety Coordinator (Francis Grenier)

Freeholder Laury made a motion to adopt Resolutions 13 through 21 with Freeholder Vanderslice seconding his motion. Deputy Director Cross abstained from #17 Resolution Appointing a Deputy Emergency Management Coordinator. As there was no further discussion, the motion to adopt Resolutions 13 through 21 carried by hand vote of 7/0.

Presiding Protem read the following resolutions were read in bulk. 2016-22 thru 2016-51

2016-22

ADMINISTRATIVE

Resolution Appointing Members To The Salem County Insurance Fund Commission

2016-23

ADMINISTRATIVE

Resolution for the Appointment of Members to the Salem County Advisory Council, Office on Aging

2016-24

ADMINISTRATIVE

Resolution for the Appointment of Members to the Salem County Advisory Council for the Office of the Disabled

2016-25

ADMINISTRATIVE

Resolution Appointing Members to the Salem County Agriculture Development Board

2016-26

ADMINISTRATIVE

Resolution Appointing Members to the Citizens Local Advisory Committee on Alcoholism & Drug Abuse

Deputy Director Laury made a motion to adopt Resolutions 11 through 26 with Freeholder Cross seconding his motion. As there was no discussion, the motion to adopt Resolutions 11 through 26 carried by hand vote of 7/0.

Presiding Protem read the following resolutions were read in bulk.

2016-27

ADMINISTRATIVE

Resolution Appointing Members to the Salem Community College Trustee Search Committee

2016-28

ADMINISTRATIVE

Resolution for the Appointment of Members to the Salem County Construction Board of Appeals

2016-29

ADMINISTRATIVE

Resolution Appointing Members to the Cultural and Heritage Commission

2016-30

ADMINISTRATIVE

Resolution Appointing Members to the Salem County Economic Development Council

2016-31

ADMINISTRATIVE

Resolution Appointing Members to the South Jersey Economic Development District for the County of Salem

2016-32

ADMINISTRATIVE

Resolution Appointing Members to the Human Relations Advisory Board for the County of Salem

2016-33

ADMINISTRATIVE  
Resolution for the Appointment of Members to the Salem County Library Commission

2016-34  
ADMINISTRATIVE  
Resolution Appointing Medical Investigators for the County of Salem

2016-35  
ADMINISTRATIVE  
Resolution Appointing Pathologists for the County of Salem

2016-36  
ADMINISTRATIVE  
Resolution For The Appointment Of Members To The Salem County Mental Health Board

2016-37  
ADMINISTRATIVE  
Resolution for the Appointment of Members to the Salem County Open Space Advisory Committee

2016-38  
ADMINISTRATIVE  
Resolution Appointing Members to the Salem County Planning Board

2016-39  
ADMINISTRATIVE  
Resolution Appointing Members to the Salem County Right-of-Way Commission

2016-40  
ADMINISTRATIVE  
Resolution Appointing Members to the Shared Services Working Group

2016-41  
ADMINISTRATIVE  
Resolution Appointing Members to the Salem County Board of Social Services

2016-42  
ADMINISTRATIVE  
Resolution Appointing Members to the Salem County Tourism Advisory Council

2016-43  
ADMINISTRATIVE  
Resolution Appointing Representatives of the County of Salem to the South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization

2016-44  
ADMINISTRATIVE  
Resolution for the Appointment of Members to the Salem County Veteran Advisory Board

2016-45  
ADMINISTRATIVE  
Resolution for the Appointment of Members to the Commission on Women

2016-46  
ADMINISTRATIVE  
Resolution for the Appointment of Members to the Cumberland/Salem Workforce Investment Board (WIB)

2016-47  
ADMINISTRATIVE  
Resolution Appointing Members to the Salem County Youth Services Commission

2016-48



ADMINISTRATIVE

Resolution Appointing Members To The Salem County Transportation Advisory Council For Casino Revenues

2016-49

ADMINISTRATIVE

Resolution Appointing Freeholder Members To Various Committees And Commissions

2016-50

ADMINISTRATIVE

Resolution Appointing Freeholder Liaison To The Salem County Improvement Authority

2016-51

ADMINISTRATIVE

Resolution Appointing Freeholder Representatives to the County of Salem Pollution Control Financing Authority

Freeholder Laury made a motion to adopt Resolutions 13 through 21 with Deputy Director Cross seconding his motion. As there was no discussion, the motion to adopt Resolutions 22 through 51 carried by hand vote of 7/0.

Presiding Protem read the following resolutions were read in bulk. 2016-52 thru 2016-54

2016-52

ADMINISTRATIVE

Resolution To Accept Benistar Pharmacy Benefits For Retirees Over Age 65

2016-53

ADMINISTRATIVE

Resolution To Accept Aetna Dental Benefits For 2016

2016-54

ADMINISTRATIVE

Resolution To Accept Amerihealth New Jersey Health Benefits For 2016

Freeholder Vanderslice made a motion to adopt Resolutions 52 through 54 with Freeholder Painter seconding his motion. As there was no discussion, the motion to adopt Resolutions 52 through 54 carried by hand vote of 7/0.

Presiding Protem read the following resolutions were read in bulk. 2016-55 thru 2016-57

2016-55

ADMINISTRATIVE

Resolution Adopting a Cash Management Plan for the County of Salem

2016-56

ADMINISTRATIVE

Finance Resolution Designating a Custodian of Funds and the Depositories for Municipal Moneys, and Authorizing Investment of Funds at Interest for the County of Salem

2016-57

ADMINISTRATIVE

Resolution Approving Signatories for Required Bank Accounts for the County of Salem (Fulton Bank of New Jersey)

Deputy Director Cross made a motion to adopt Resolutions 52 through 54 with Freeholder Laury seconding his motion. Freeholder Painter abstained from #55 Resolution Adopting a Cash Management Plan for the County of Salem and # 56 Finance Resolution Designating a Custodian of Funds and the Depositories for Municipal Moneys, and Authorizing Investment of Funds at Interest for the County of Salem. As there was no further discussion, the motion to adopt Resolutions 55 through 57 carried by hand vote of 7/0.

Presiding Protem read the following resolution individually:

2016-58  
ADMINISTRATIVE  
Resolution Adopting the 2016 Temporary Budget

Freeholder Laury moved for adoption of this resolution, with Freeholder Vanderslice seconding his motion. As there was no discussion, the motion for adoption of the foregoing resolution carried a roll call vote. Deputy Director Cross, for; Freeholder DeCastro, for, Freeholder Laury, for, Freeholder Painter, for, Freeholder Vanderslice, for Freeholder Ware, for and Director Acton, for.

**2016 COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS**

<b>FH Committee</b>	<b>Chairperson</b>	<b>FH 1</b>	<b>FH 2</b>
Administrative	Julie A. Acton	Robert J. Vanderslice	Douglass Painter
Education/Employment	Douglass H. Painter	Melissa L. DeCastro	Julie A. Acton
Health & Human Services	Robert J. Vanderslice	Douglass H. Painter	Benjamin H. Laury
Community Services	Melissa L. DeCastro	Dale A. Cross	Lee R. Ware
Public Safety	Dale A. Cross	Benjamin H. Laury	Robert J. Vanderslice
Transportation, Agriculture	Lee R. Ware	Melissa L. DeCastro	Dale A. Cross
Public Works	Benjamin H. Laury	Lee R. Ware	Julie A. Acton

**The following Minority Freeholder Report was read by Freeholder Ware:**

“Good evening and Happy New Year to everyone!

This is the first minority address that I have given since January 3, 2001. On that night, my brother passed away as I was giving my speech. Please bear with me if I seem to be a little rusty in giving the minority address.

I was a Freeholder for two months; Chuck Sullivan was my mentor and said it was my turn to give the Minority Speech. Ben Timberman saved me and wrote my speech. I was grateful for the assistance. I have served alongside Beth Timberman for twelve years. Beth, I am going to miss you. The last 38 out of 45 years there was a Timberman and Ware serving on this Freeholder Board.

I would also like to congratulate Ben Laury and Melissa DeCastro on their swearing in this evening and look forward to working together in moving Salem County forward.

And, of course, my congratulations go to Sheriff Chuck Miller and Surrogate Nicki Burke. I look forward to working with you both as well. They both do exceptional jobs as our constitutional officers.

There is a reason that our law enforcement community is second to none, it is because of the leadership of my two good friends, Sheriff Miller and Prosecutor Lenahan, and we thank you.

I stand here this evening giving a speech representing the minority party. This speech is really the easiest one that I have ever given; I did not have to get anyone else’s buy-in, since I am the lone minority member. There were no drawing straws this year as had been done in the past.

Salem County, I have always believed, is a County of cycles. Politically, we go in a great circle. It was not that long ago that I stood here as Director when Freeholder Acton was the lone minority member. The Republicans battled their way back, as will the Democrats in time. As you all know, I have been a coach for many, many years. I have seen great teams that should have won, lose; and I have seen the worst teams that you can imagine, pull off a big win. When you are in a certain cycle, it just does not matter. It is the same in politics. There was a time when the Democrats just could not lose, no matter what we did. Now, it is the Republicans turn. You have to ride the wave.

The important thing to remember is that it will change, and it will circle back. I like the old line "treat people well on the way up, so they'll treat you well when you're headed down." That is why, whether in the majority or the minority, I believe in treating all folks the same, with respect and kindness. As an old friend of mine once said, "the sun doesn't shine on the same dog's tail all the time." It is important to keep your values the same no matter if you are up or down. What matters is that we put the people of Salem County first. Salem County is very unique in that everyone knows or is related to each other. There is not much difference in the two political parties in Salem County except for the D or R in front of their names. We, as a Freeholder Board, all want to do what is best for our residents. It is just a matter of how we go about it.

As the ranking minority member.... Now that is a surprise.... I feel that it is my duty to accomplish two objectives:

- 1) Continue to voice my views on what's important to the people of Salem County, and
- 2) To work with the majority when possible for the betterment of Salem County.

As a County, we are still in uncertain waters financially, facing back-to-back years of tax rate increases. Our senior and disabled populations are struggling. We have lost industry, which means jobs, such as Anchor in Salem, layoffs at DuPont, and the closing of many small businesses. Per the census, our population is not growing, but our unemployment numbers are. We need an aggressive economic development plan, we need an Improvement Authority willing to invest in the communities, and we need a willingness to put Salem County on the map. After many years of study, the Pascal Sykes Foundation has stepped forward with grants for the South Jersey region. It is my hope that we take full advantage of this funding and it can go all out to market Salem County. Salem County is truly a gem, which has so much to offer. We know that, but we want the rest of the region to see what we have. At one time, we were on the right track in marketing our county. We must take full advantage of the Pascal Sykes Grants.

What I want most from this majority is transparency. The people of this county deserve transparency and not spin. We all make mistakes. I have been Director, and I know what it is like. We make mistakes in both policy and implantation. Do not say that we are trimming or reducing expenses when we are just shuffling the deck. Do not say we are reducing taxes when the taxes are going up.

My goals are the same as they have always been: control taxes, fix the roads and bridges, serve the less fortunate, and preserve our special way of life here in Salem County. We, here in this County, are often called unique, and I could not agree more. In Salem County, a handshake is still as good as a contract, and people care about each other. I believe that 2016 is going to be a struggle in County government. Our biggest challenge will be the financial stability of our County, both in government, and in the private sector. We need strong leadership with a soft hand. Martin Luther King stated, "The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at time of challenge and controversy." We need to stand strong to our core values as we attempt to lead this County back to prosperity.

My role, as the lone minority member, is to support what is right and good for Salem County, and to point out what is not. The keys to success are forming strong partnership within the community, listening to all, and supporting our seniors, our poor, our churches, and our small businesses.

Together, we can make a difference! Like a family, we need to treat all of our citizens with kindness, respect, and integrity. We are blessed to live in Salem County, and what we do with that blessing is solely on us. "To those that are given much, much is expected." Rest assured that I will challenge every member of this board to live up to that every day, and on every decision that we make.

Thank you and God Bless!"

**The following Majority Freeholder Report was read by Freeholder Douglass H. Painter:**

"Good evening. A very special thank you to Lieutenant Governor Kim Guadagno for joining us tonight! Assembly Deputy Speaker John Burzichelli and Assemblyman Adam Taliaferro, thank you for being with us.

To all members of our military and first responders, our gratitude for your service is beyond measure, we are forever indebted to you for your commitment and sacrifice.

Thank you to the ROTC Cadets, Father Roberts, and Kim Wozunk for being a part of tonight's meeting. Thank you to Sheriff Miller, Prosecutor Lenahan, and all your staff for your efforts in keeping us all safe last

year! To **ALL** of the County employees that work on behalf of our residents and represent us so well, thank you for your service over the past year!

Congratulations to Sheriff Chuck Miller on being re-elected to his fourth term in office, unopposed for the second time... that speaks volumes. Congratulations and welcome Freeholder Melissa DeCastro, we look forward to working with you. Freeholder Laury...Welcome Back! We appreciate the faith and trust that the residents of Salem County are placing in us. We will continue to work on your behalf to ensure Salem County is a safe and prosperous place to live and raise a family.

**What is A PUZZLE?...**A problem to be solved by ingenuity or patient effort.

As in all areas of government, resources continue to diminish and the demand for services increases.

We were sure to spend within our means, as you do in your home or business. We covered all of our operating expenses without the need to borrow. Our balanced budget met our fiduciary responsibility and moral obligation to prudently manage the resources you have provided. The 2015 budget reflected the hard work of our administration and the promise we made when we took office!

Through the leadership of County Department Heads and the support of staff, we were able to reduce wasteful spending.

Decisions made throughout the year were based on a long-term vision, a fiscally responsible government, fiscally stable government and to protect the taxpayers and their assets.

As challenges were presented and dealt with, goals were also accomplished:

**Administration Committee...**Stacy Pennington was named the Director of Operations. This change in responsibility has provided the time needed for our CFO to focus solely on the demands of the Treasury Department. Katie Coleman became a Certified County Financial Officer through the Division of Local Government Services. This same agency also approved the application of Jessica Bishop to become a Qualified Purchasing Agent.

The Clerk of the Board, Kevin Crouch, implemented paperless board meetings, saving both time and money in the collating of the packets and subsequent mailing. We hosted our first military enlistee ceremony, where graduating seniors and their families were invited to a Board of Chosen Freeholder meeting to be honored before they leave for basic training.

This past year Joe Hannagan, the County's Veterans Service Officer, served over 2,500 Veterans; providing counseling and visits to those that are disabled or homebound to inform them of programs that are available.

Mr. Hannagan coordinated private and public sector support for our County Veterans Cemetery to continually improve the grounds.

**Education and Employment Committee...** 2015 has proven to be a year of transition. We have partnered with the Salem County Chamber of Commerce on an outreach initiative. We take this opportunity to share the programs that are available through Jobs 4 Jersey, the One Stop and to build relationships between the County and the business community. Stakeholders from Salem County Vocational Technical High School, Salem Community College, Social Services, One Stop, Chamber of Commerce, County Superintendent of Schools, and Department of Labor meet monthly to be sure we are implementing programs that meet the needs of our employers.

**Health and Human Services Committee...** The primary goal in 2015 was to begin right sizing the department by realigning staff for more efficient service and a reduction of overall costs. Office on Aging continued to facilitate grant funded programs for seniors. The exercise program "It's All About You" is also working well.

In 2015, an STD outreach grant was obtained and programs implemented.

This past year the Economic Development Council recommended the funding of two studies, the revitalization of Spitfire Airport, and the rebuilding of the old Wilson Line Pier. We welcomed Five Below to the growing Gateway Business Park, joining JE Berkowitz, Goya and others. Additional buildings are currently under construction.

**Community Services Committee...** The Board designated the Inter Agency Council as the Human Services Advisory Council for Salem County. As such, Inter Agency Council became responsible for comprehensive human service planning.

Community based human services planning and advocacy remained a major function of the Inter Agency Council through 2015.

**Public Safety Committee...** In 2015, our correctional facility generated approximately 7.5 million dollars in revenue by providing services to our neighboring states and counties. We continued our efforts to enhance emergency field communication throughout the County, with significant improvement in Pittsgrove. Thank you to Sheriff Miller and Undersheriff John Cuzzupe.

Last year, the Office of Emergency Management partnered with the Career and Technical High School to secure a grant for Public Safety Training. This program teaches students the skills necessary to become a 911 operator.

In 2015, with support from the Freeholders, the Prosecutors office initiated the utilization of body cameras and expanded the implementation of Motor Vehicle Recorders to every police vehicle in Salem County.

**Transportation, Agriculture and Cultural Affairs...**The County transit system serviced over 131,000 passengers. We continue to invest in the railroad, a contract was awarded for 3 million dollars to replace Oldmans trestle, federal funds were received for this project. The Rutgers Cooperative extension supported 27 4-H Clubs, reaching 360 young people across the County. We continued the very popular Arts in Bloom this past May and launched the campaign, "Salem County, the Road Less Traveled."

**Public Works Committee...**In 2015 a grant was awarded for \$300,000 for repairs needed at the ARC facility in Mannington. Over 14 million dollars in federal and state grants were received for road and bridge projects. We received \$1,823,000 dollars for the construction of ADA ramps. Office of Facilities Management worked throughout the year maintaining County owned buildings and the road infrastructure. The roof was replaced on the Administration Building and the Courthouse. The Highway Department applied over 12 tons of salt and 800 gallons of brine over 655 miles of our County roadways.

The seven of us are much like puzzle pieces, unique in wisdom and foresight with independent thoughts and ideals. Just like puzzle pieces, when we come together, we can solve problems, set goals, accomplish them, and create a unique picture.

Each Freeholder has a piece of a puzzle that represents themselves and the committee, which they chair for this year. Each piece is unlike any other and requires a connection with the one next to it to create the BIG picture!

#### **We have set a bold course for 2016....**

Through the efforts of the **Administrative** Committee, we will continue to push for additional tax relief, improve efficiencies, and reduce costs without compromising or sacrificing programs. We will negotiate realistic and fair contracts with staff that reflects the current economic realities. We will capitalize on the County not seeing an increase in medical or prescription premiums. The administrative offices will complete the move to the Fifth Street Complex, making key offices more accessible to the public. Processes will be put in place to ensure same day response to inquiries from the public. Throughout 2016, Mr. Hannagan will continue his outreach and transportation programs for our Veterans. Additional projects are planned for the cemetery that includes walkways, granite section markers, and new signs.

The **Education and Employment** Committee will work closely with County partners to be sure that industry workforce needs are being met. We will expand our business outreach initiative with Salem County Chamber of Commerce. Our support of the Special Services School District, the Career and Technical High School and the College will remain a priority. We will identify shared service opportunities with the Board of Social Services. Our commitment to doing our part in strengthening the partnership and involvement with the Cumberland/Salem Workforce Development Board is critical. It will be through our participation, contributions and collaboration with others that our residents will be best served. Our County One Stop has plans to reach out to all non-profits and government agency to explain the Community Work Experience Program. This program teaches clients the necessary skills to become gainfully employed. With a renewed enthusiasm that only the New Year can usher in, we look forward to building a more prosperous county, where those residents seeking employment can find it here.

**Health and Human Services** will continue working on right sizing the department. The department has plans to expand their community outreach, host additional Narcan trainings, and Hidden in Plain Site events.

The Economic Development Council will work to market Salem County as a viable place for businesses to locate, capitalizing on the strength of our workforce and our road, rail, and port infrastructure. We will do our part to support the efforts of Chemours, as they look on a global scale to secure tenants at the Chambers Work site. The council will review the results of the two studies performed last year and develop plans that support our economic development goals.

The **Community Services** Committee has challenged itself to work more closely with the Inter Agency Council as they work to foster coordination among local, state, and national public and private organizations serving the citizens of Salem County.

Community based human services planning and advocacy remains a major function of the Inter Agency Council, and we will continue to support them.

**Public Safety** Committee will work with the Office of Emergency Management to reinstitute a fall Fire Fighter One program and expand private sector industry training, increasing revenue of the Fire Academy. The Sheriff's Department and Prosecutors Office will be preparing for the drastically different practices that are associated with Bail Reform and Speedy Trial Programs so we are ready for implementation on January 1, 2017. We recognize that we have no greater obligation to the public than that of ensuring for your safety. We will plan for the continued protection of all of our residents.

The **Transportation, Agriculture and Cultural Affairs** Committee has set goals that include the County 4-H increasing programming through school enrichment, after school programs and summer day camps.

By identifying niche markets, value added products may be produced and sold. Micro-distilleries and micro-breweries fulfill such a market of craft spirits and beers, locally grown grains can be used to create these products and the "Jersey Fresh" label may be used as an added bonus. There has been contact made with four micro-breweries and three micro-distilleries.

**Public Works** Committee.... The rehabilitation of the Willow Grove Bridge and Water Control Structure in Pittsgrove Township is expected to be complete in the spring of this year. Federal funding was authorized in the amount of 80% of construction costs, which is close to 3.8 million dollars.

The County's Weights and Measures have plans to acquire and implement the use of new software streamlining the data collection and reporting process, saving the taxpayers time and money. In 2016, the Office of Facilities Management will continue to provide the residents and employees of the County safe access along our roadways and clean, compliant facilities.

Although we have all put our piece into the puzzle, it is not finished! The most important piece needs to be put in to make the picture complete. It is the piece that represents you, our constituents...The Community! We have chosen the County seal to represent you; it is missing from the very center of the puzzle. It is being placed in the center by Joe O 'Donald to serve as a constant symbol that you are at the forefront of our minds in all that we deliberate and act on. It is also in the center to serve as a reminder that it takes an army of volunteers, from you, the community to participate, to make Salem County the **BEST** it can be!

With God's help and yours, we will achieve our Goals and Prosper together!

As our address draws to a close...

"Let's turn from spectators into participants. Let us recall the inspiring words of President Theodore Roosevelt who said:

'Far better it is to dare mighty things, to win glorious triumphs even though checkered by failure, than to remain with those poor spirits who neither enjoy much nor suffer much because they live in the gray twilight that knows not victory nor defeat.' We have too much to do to sit on the sidelines. We need you to step out of the gray twilight into the bright sunshine so that we can all see the dawn of a new day."

Become your own puzzle piece and add it to this wonderful picture that we all call Home!"

Director Acton thanked everyone for their comments and announced the next meeting will be held on January 20, 2016, at 7:00 PM at the Olde Salem Courthouse located at 104 Market Street. Salem, New Jersey 08079. Workshop meeting will be held at 6:00pm.

Director Acton called upon Chaplain Joe Farro to give the Benediction.

Deputy Director Cross made a motion to adjourn seconded by Freeholder Laury and carried by hand vote 7/0 at 7:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kevin Crouch  
Clerk of the Board