

**NEW JERSEY ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES**  
*County Government with a Unified Voice!*

M. CLAIRE FRENCH  
NJAC President  
Monmouth County Clerk

JOHN G. DONNADIO  
Executive Director

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES**  
*Friday, September 26, 2014*  
**State House Annex - Committee Room 4**  
**Trenton, New Jersey 08608**

The meeting was called to order by Claire French, NJAC President and Monmouth County Clerk, at 10:14 a.m. After saluting the American flag, John G. Donnadio, NJAC Executive Director, called roll and a quorum was present.

**Voting & Alternate Members in Attendance:**

M. Claire French, *Monmouth County Clerk*  
Ann Cannon, *Mercer County Freeholder*  
Heather Simmons, *Gloucester County Freeholder*  
John King, *Hunterdon County Freeholder Deputy Director*  
E. Marie Hayes, *Cape May County Freeholder*  
Ken Mecouch, *Cumberland County Administrator*  
Carol Clark, *Essex County Freeholder*  
Abe Antun, *Hudson County Administrator*  
Blanquita Valenti, *Middlesex County Freeholder*  
Gary Rich, Sr., *Monmouth County Freeholder Deputy Director*  
John Bonanni, *Morris County Administrator*  
Peter Palmer, *Somerset County Freeholder*  
John Eskilson, *Sussex County Administrator*  
Vernell Wright, *Union County Freeholder*  
Richard D. Gardner, *Warren County Freeholder Deputy Director*  
Brian M. Hughes, *Mercer County Executive*  
Elaine M. Flynn, *Middlesex County Clerk*  
Donald De Leo, *Hudson County Surrogate*  
Frank Bruno, *Somerset County Surrogate*  
John Armeno, *Executive Director for the NJ Sheriffs' Association*  
Rob Garrison, *Bergen County Improvement Authority*

**Absent**

Atlantic County  
Bergen County  
Burlington County  
Camden County  
Ocean County  
Passaic County  
Salem County

**Staff**

John G. Donnadio, *NJAC Executive Director*  
Loren Wizman, *NJAC Director of Business Development*  
Kimberly Nolan, *NJAC Office Manager*

**NJAC Auditor, General Counsel, Labor Counsel, and Consultants**

Bob Butvilla, *Partner of Suplee Clooney & Company, and NJAC Auditor*  
Paul Anzano, Esq., *Partner of Pringle, Quinn & Anzano, PC and NJAC General Counsel*

Michael Barrett, Sr. Consultant of Greenman-Pedersen, Inc. & NJAC Transportation Consultant  
Richard Lane, Sr. Consultant of Greenman-Pedersen, Inc. & NJAC Transportation Consultant  
Robert Werkmeister, Sr. Consultant of Greenman-Pedersen, Inc. & NJAC Transportation Consultant

**Also in attendance:**

Eric Jackson, *Mayor of Trenton*  
Michael Walker, *Public Information Officer and Aide to Mayor Jackson*  
Susan Sheppard, *Cape May County Surrogate*  
Kim Wood, *Cumberland County Deputy Administrator*  
Jo Ann Povia, *Mercer County Director of Research & Special Projects for the Freeholder Board*  
Cathy Burd, *Morris County Deputy Administrator*  
Michael Schiller, *Financial Professional of AXA Equitable*  
Eric Savitsky, *Co-Founder of CrosStar Network Solutions*  
Mark Kataryniak, PE, *Senior Vice President for Traffic Engineering of French & Parrello Associates*  
Aida Sanchez, *Communications Manager for Millennium Communications Group*  
Robert Wright, *Business Development Director for Mutualink*  
Bina Kumar, *Managing Director – East Region for Nationwide Retirement Solutions*  
Timothy Mettlen, *President of the NJ State Association of County Engineers*  
Michael Cerra, *Director of Government Affairs for the NJ State League of Municipalities*  
Daniel Harmon, *Vice President of Sales for Oak Systems, Inc.*  
Theresa Harmon, *Account Executive for Oak Systems, Inc.*  
Rich Shaw, *Deputy Director of Government Affairs for Patch Management*  
Geoff Perselay, *President of Perselay Associates*  
Victor Scire, *Vice President of Marketing for Primepoint*  
Jim Jacobs, *Vice President of Business Development for Primepoint*  
George Galler, *Senior Account Executive for Specialty Systems*  
Jeff Mayer, *Director of Tradition Energy*  
John Szeliga, *Director of External Affairs for Verizon*  
Barry Gleissner, PLS, *Survey Manager of URS Corporation*

**GUEST SPEAKERS:**

**Trenton Mayor Eric Jackson**, who took office on July 1<sup>st</sup>, updated the board members on the new challenges his administration faces and goals to accomplish through the Trenton 250 Plan. The Plan is a community driven long-range effort that will guide Trenton through its 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2042. The elements of this plan will address issues such as land use, youth development, new housing construction, employment of more police force, repairs of infrastructure, and growth of the arts community as well as conduct meetings with non-profit organizations.

**OFFICIAL REPORTS**

1. **Nomination Committee Report** – NJAC Nomination Committee Chair Peter Palmer reported Ed Trawinski has stepped down as NJAC 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President and the Committee nominated Hunterdon County Freeholder Deputy Director John King as NJAC 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President. His appointment was unanimously approved on a Somerset/Cumberland County motion and he was sworn in by NJAC General Counsel Paul Anzano.

2. **Secretary/Treasurer's Report** - NJAC Secretary-Treasurer and Gloucester County Freeholder Heather Simmons presented the following reports:

- a. Meeting Minutes - The Board unanimously approved the meeting minutes of June 27, 2014 on a Middlesex/Warren County motion.
- b. NJAC Financials - The Board unanimously approved the NJAC financials, dated August 13, 2014, on a Mercer County motion.

**Robert Butvilla** of **Suplee, Clooney & Company** presented the 2013 Audit for NJAC. Mr. Butvilla reported that the accounting is in order and the organization is in good shape. The report was unanimously approved by voice vote on a Hunterdon/Mercer County motion.

3. **President's Report** - NJAC President French updated the board members on the following:

- a. Retirement Planning Workshop - On July 10<sup>th</sup>, NJAC hosted a free retirement planning workshop for county officials enrolled in the Public Employees Retirement System (PERS). The workshop took place at the Monmouth County Public Safety Center in Freehold thanks to Monmouth County Sheriff Shaun Golden. It was presented by Ken Hartman, who is now retired and has over 20 years of experience in management with the NJ Division of Pensions and Benefits. There were approximately 40 attendees which learned about the retirement application process, beneficiary options, group life insurance, and taxability of pension plans. Mr. Hartman also provided an overview of the State Health Benefit Plan, Social Security benefits, financial planning, outside investments, life insurance, and estate planning.
- b. Trenton Thunder Baseball Game - NJAC hosted a night of baseball at the Mercer County Arm & Hammer Ball Park on July 24<sup>th</sup> where Trenton Thunder rallied a win of 6 to 5 over the Binghamton Mets. The event was sponsored by NJAC Business Associates AXA Equitable, Primepoint, and ProAct. Trenton Mayor Eric Jackson threw a first pitch and visited NJAC's suite. This was an enjoyable and casual event for business associates and county officials to network and have a good time.
- c. Active Shooter Workshop - On September 19<sup>th</sup>, NJAC hosted a free workshop, which was conducted by Dr. Rick Celeste, Director of the Somerset County Police Academy. The Active Shooter Workshop was designed to create awareness from threats posed by an active shooter and others who may have harmed citizens. The presentation included a statistical analysis of the depth and breadth of the problem since 1966; what private citizens can do before an incident takes place; and, what individuals should do at the time of an actual incident no matter if they are in a work or casual environment. The three distinct parts of the program were wrapped in a history lesson addressing the very first recorded incident to the present day. Over 50 attendees participated in this workshop.

- d. Summit on the Transportation Trust Fund - The NJAC Year-End Conference will pertain to the Transportation Trust Fund (TTF). There will be two sets of panel discussions moderated by State House Correspondent and NJ 101.5 FM radio host Kevin McArdle. The panelists will discuss the need to establish a stable, reliable, and long-term source of funding for the TTF. Board members and those sitting in the audience were reminded of the importance of the TTF and encouraged to participate.

President French informed members of the Board that the COANJ Conference recently took place from September 16<sup>th</sup> through the 19<sup>th</sup> at Harrah's in Atlantic City. On behalf of COANJ, President French presented Mr. Donnadio with a tie for his hard work and efforts.

4. **Executive Director's Report** - NJAC Executive Director John G. Donnadio recognized Freeholder Clark, Surrogate De Leo, and Michael Barrett for their dedication and commitment to NJAC over the years. Freeholder Clark will not be running for re-election this November nor will she serve on the NJAC Board of Directors in 2015. She served 11 years on the NJAC Board of Directors and in 2009 reigned as President. Surrogate De Leo is retiring from Hudson County in December. He served 17 years on the NJAC Board of Directors, and this year will be his last. However, the Honorable De Leo will continue working with NJAC through its Foundation as President. NJAC Transportation Consultant and Senior Consultant of Greenman-Pedersen, Inc., Michael Barrett, is retiring at the end of 2014.

Mr. Donnadio informed the board members that the office space rental lease is due for renewal in October 2015. Currently, NJAC pays \$6,000.00 monthly for rent. He proposed not to renew the lease at the current location and possibly purchase a building which should result in a lower expense to NJAC. In regard to timing, it would be best to move over the summer months. Mr. Donnadio suggested forming a sub-committee for this matter. Surrogate De Leo, Administrator Antun, and Surrogate Bruno volunteered to serve on this sub-committee. A new and improved NJAC website is being created by Ms. Nolan, who volunteered take on this task. It should be online within the next few months.

- a. NJAC Foundation Scholarships - This year the NJAC Foundation received \$33,000.00 in grant funding, which was all distributed to 2014 New Jersey County Vocational-Technical School graduates. Mr. Donnadio thanked the contributors of NJM Insurance Group, Investors Bank, and PSEG, He also thanked the board members for presenting students with their awards during their board meetings and inviting NJAC to participate in the presentations. Surrogate De Leo complimented the NJAC staff members for their efforts and diligence with the scholarships. He encouraged board members to speak with the NJAC staff about possible new sources for grants. Administrator Antun suggested creating a section on the NJAC (Foundation) website for anyone to make donations in any denomination toward the scholarship program. Freeholder Clark suggested coordinating a fundraiser during April, which is designated as National County Government Month.

- b. Transportation Summit - NJAC is hosting its year-end summit on the Transportation Trust Fund (TTF) on December 12<sup>th</sup> at the Trenton Country Club. Board members were encouraged to attend this importantly and timely event where State, county, municipal, and other transportation industry experts will discuss the need to establish a stable, dependable, and long-term-source of funding for the TTF. Panelists include the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA) Chair Thomas DeGise, NJTPA Immediate Past Chair Matthew Holt, Monmouth County Engineer Joseph Ettore, Jackson Township Engineer Daniel Burke, Former DOT Commissioner Jack Lettiere, NJ Petroleum Council Executive Director Jim Benton, NJ Alliance for Action President Philip, NJ Laborers-Employers Cooperation & Education Trust Director Joseph McNamara, and Utility Contractors Association of NJ CEO Robert Briant, Jr. Senate President Stephen M. Sweeney has been invited to make welcoming remarks. United States Secretary of Transportation Anthony Foxx has been invited to speak while New Jersey Department of Transportation Commissioner Jaime Fox has confirmed to be the keynote speaker.
5. **Legislative Committee Report** - NJAC 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President and Mercer County Freeholder Ann Cannon informed all board members that a copy of the *State House News*, dated September 12, 2014, was enclosed in the provided packets prior to asking Mr. Donnadio to update the board members on legislation in which NJAC is active.
- a. Pension Study Commission - NJAC and the New Jersey State League of Municipalities are collaborating on a letter to send to the New Jersey Pension and Health Benefits Study Commission established pursuant to Executive Order No. 161. The correspondence will respectfully request the Commission to recognize that the local pension systems are healthy, and counties and municipalities have met their obligations as employers. Freeholder Palmer and Administrator Antun stated that a message needs to be sent that county governments have been contributing into the pension and making the required adjustments. The State of New Jersey needs to address this issue. Administrator Eskilson agreed and suggested that NJAC send a statewide message with bullet points through the use of media.
  - b. Transportation Trust Fund - The 2014 County Overview was discussed touching on topics such as county government facts, NJ State Budget for Fiscal Year 2015, county aid formula, history and current status of the TTF, various tax and user fees, and recent funding solutions in other states. It was noted that NJAC has long advocated for a stable, dependable, and long-term source of transportation funding that would enhance Local Aid allocations to the levels recommended by the Transportation Blue Ribbon Commission in 2003 at \$300.00 million per year as a significant means to mitigate the reliance on the collections of local property taxes. Mr. Barrett remarked that New Jersey counties need \$565 million in their TTF. Freeholder Deputy Director King pointed out that New Jersey has one of the highest costs in repairs of infrastructures and maintenance. Freeholder Deputy Director Gardner suggested that legislators should be cautious about implementing a gas tax. Route 78 in Warren County is heavily traveled by out-of-state truck drivers, who fuel up before leaving New Jersey and entering Pennsylvania where there is a gas tax. Mr.

Donnadio mentioned that NJAC is an affiliate of ForwardNJ, which is a coalition of NJ-based organizations focused on reforming the State's transportation system.

- c. State of Emergencies - NJAC reviewed S-1717 (*Barnes, D-Middlesex*) with the county directors of human resources, emergency management coordinators, and administrators. This bill prohibits an employer from taking any adverse employment actions against an employee who is unable to actively work or perform regular duties at the employer's place of business due to a declared State of Emergency by the New Jersey State Governor or municipal emergency management coordinator. It also prohibits an employer from requiring an employee to use any sick, personal, or other leave, paid or unpaid, for an absence from work due to a State of Emergency. NJAC testified on Monday, September 15<sup>th</sup>, in opposition of S-1717 as the measure does not take into consideration the complexities of how each county handles emergency closing, does not consider the fact that counties may declare a State of Emergency for the county and designated municipalities within the county, and is generally vague and ambiguous on what constitutes a State of Emergency.
- d. County Inmate and Presumptive Eligibility - Last month the New Jersey Department of Human Services hosted a workshop titled, "NJ FamilyCare and Hospitalized Inmates." It was well attended by jail wardens throughout the State. It covered the standard operating procedures and Medicaid expansion as well as proposed long range and short term plans.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Freeholder Clark mentioned the Northeast County Caucus (NECC) had a conference call meeting requesting each representative to solicit their board about which legislative matter is a priority so that they may also support and take action. NJAC Board of Directors agreed that aging infrastructure and transportation in the Northeast is a major concern. Freeholder Clark also encouraged other board members to represent New Jersey on NECC.

*The next board meeting is scheduled for December 12, 2014 at 8:30 a.m. in the Oakland Room of the Trenton Country Club.*

ADIJOURNMENT

The board adjourned on a County Surrogate/Monmouth County motion at 12: 50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:



John G. Donnadio, Esq.  
NJAC Executive Director