

# NEW JERSEY ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES

*County Government with a Unified Voice!*

SHAUN C. VAN DOREN  
NJAC President  
Hunterdon County Commissioner

JOHN G. DONNADIO, Esq.  
Executive Director

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

*March 15, 2024*

Virtual Meeting

10:00 a.m.

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### 1. CALL TO ORDER

- NJAC President Shaun C. Van Doren called the meeting to order at 10:01am. Executive Director John Donnadio took roll call with a quorum present and administered oaths of office to Somerset County Commissioner Director Shanel Robinson, Passaic County Administrator Matthew Jordan, and Cape May County Commissioner Bobby Barr.

### 2. ROLL CALL

Shaun Van Doren, NJAC President & Hunterdon County Commissioner  
Shanel Robinson, NJAC 1st VP & Somerset County Commissioner Director  
James Kern III, NJAC 2<sup>nd</sup> VP & Warren County Commissioner Director  
Alexander Mirabella, NJAC Secretary-Treasurer & Union County Commissioner  
Jonathan Young, NJAC Immediate Past President & Camden County Commissioner  
John Risley, Atlantic County Commissioner  
Maureen Kern, Atlantic County Commissioner Chairperson  
Tracy Zur, Bergen County Commissioner  
Eve Cullinan, Burlington County Administrator  
Bobby Barr, Cape May County Commissioner  
Brendan Gill, Essex County Commissioner  
Abe Antun, Hudson County Administrator  
John Cimino, Mercer County Commissioner Chair  
Dominick DiRocco, Monmouth County Commissioner  
Teri O'Connor, Monmouth County Administrator  
Christine Myers, Morris County Commissioner Director  
Douglas Cabana, Morris County Commissioner  
Deena Leary, Morris County Administrator  
Virginia Haines, Ocean County Commissioner  
Orlando Cruz, Passaic County Commissioner  
Matthew Jordan, Passaic County Administrator  
Jack DeGroot, Sussex County Commissioner

Ron Tappan, Sussex County Administrator  
Ed Oatman, Union County Manager  
Mary Melfi, Hunterdon County Clerk  
Claribel Cortes, Middlesex County Surrogate  
Nancy Pinkin, Middlesex County Clerk  
Shaun Golden, Monmouth County Sheriff  
George Strachan, Gloucester County Improvement Authority Executive Director  
Joseph Hannon, NJAC Labor Relations Counsel  
Bob Werkmeister, NJAC Transportation Consultant  
John Donnadio, NJAC Executive Director  
Loren Wizman, NJAC Business Development Director  
Allen Weston, NJAC Legislative Director  
Kim Nolan, NJAC Office Manager

3. HON. FRANCIS K. O’CONNOR – ACTING COMMISSIONER NJ DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

- President Van Doren introduced New Jersey Department of Transportation (DOT) Acting Commissioner Francis O’Connor who provided the Board with background on himself, including time spent at both DOT and in the private sector. Acting Commissioner O’Connor reviewed his first five weeks in office, which included multiple snowstorms. The Acting Commissioner also discussed the importance of DOT to the State’s economy and addressed several issues that impact local governments including the reauthorization of the Transportation Trust Fund (TTF). The previous renewal of the TTF increased Local Aid funding and the economic impact of another renewal was stressed to the Board. Acting Commissioner O’Connor presented a slideshow with project funding that has flowed through the DOT to local governments to stress the positive impact of Local Aid dollars and gave brief updates on major projects being undertaken by the Department.

4. SECRETARY TREASURER’S REPORT

- A. President Van Doren introduced NJAC Secretary/Treasurer Al Mirabella for presentation of the “Notes to File” for NJAC’s January 26<sup>th</sup> Reorganization Meeting. The Board unanimously approved the minutes on a Burlington County/Middlesex County Surrogate motion.
- B. Secretary/Treasurer Mirabella also presented NJAC Financials, which the Board unanimously approved on a Hudson County/Union County motion.

5. PRESIDENT’S REPORT

- A. President Van Doren presented two resolutions for discussion. The first resolution recognized “County Government Month,” was unanimously approved by the Board on Mercer County/Union County motion. The second

resolution finalized NJAC Committee Assignments, which the Board approved on a Union County/Somerset County motion.

- B. President Van Doren provided an update on his visits to the Northern New Jersey County Commissioner and Central New Jersey County Commissioner associations hosted in Bergen and Union counties. President Van Doren thanked Bergen County Commissioner Tracy Zur and Union County Commissioner Mirabella for their hard work in hosting two terrific meetings.

#### 6. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- A. Executive Director Donnadio led his report with great news regarding the NJAC Foundation. The Foundation is awaiting approval for a donation from one additional company that would push the Foundation to \$100,000.00 in annual giving for the first time in its history. The Foundation is honored to have awarded over \$600,000.00 in past the last 11 years.
- B. Mr. Donnadio requested the Board to consider potential topics for the Association's free virtual workshops and year-end Summit.
- C. The Executive Director shared the great news that the NJAC Conference had sold out of exhibit space 2 months before the event and that the Association is expecting over 700 attendees again this year.

#### 7. STATE HOUSE NEWS *1<sup>st</sup> VP Robinson and Executive Director Donnadio provided the following legislative update.*

- A. TRANSPORTATION TRUST FUND: the Legislature is moving legislation that would reauthorize the Transportation Trust Fund (TTF) and Local Aid Allocations as the Fund is set to on June 30, 2024.
- B. OPEN PUBLIC RECORDS ACT: the Legislature is also moving legislation that would modernize and streamline the open public records process by reigning in records requests for commercial purposes, encouraging local governments to post records online, and addressing the award reasonable attorney fees.
- C. LEGAL NOTICES: NJAC remains optimistic that in 2024 we'll see legislation to allow local governments to publish legal notices in a newspaper's website or digital publication.
- D. STATE BUDGET MATTERS: NJAC plans to testify at budget hearings in both houses concerning Governor Murphy's FY 2025 State Budget. At a minimum, the Association will address fully funding the pension system, boosting 911 dollars, and securing new funding for body worn cameras. Board members were encouraged to make additional recommendations.

#### 8. OLD & NEW BUSINESS

- A. The Executive Director reported that the Office of the State Comptroller (OSC) recently sent him an email, under threat of the OSC's subpoena powers, requesting all information relating to NJAC's recent testimony

before the Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee on legislation concerning OPRA. NJAC supported the legislation while the Comptroller testified in opposition to the bill. Several board members shared their concerns that the OSC was abusing its power and retaliating against the Executive Director for his public comments about how the Comptroller conducts its investigations. Board members also shared their troubling experiences with the OSC and how the Comptroller levies accusations of wrongdoing through social media, the press, or other means without due process of the law. The Board recommended that the Executive Director discuss the matter with NJAC's Labor Counsel, before responding to the Comptroller's email.

- B. President Van Doren requested NJAC to advocate for the Legislature to restore Governor Murphy's proposed budget cut of \$20.0 to the State's 18 community colleges. NJAC plans to include the request in its upcoming budget testimony before both houses of the Legislature.
- C. Sussex County Commissioner Jack DeGroot noted that he's been working with his County's legislative delegation to introduce a bill that would address unexcused absences by county commissioners at county commissioner meetings.

9. ADJOURNMENT *The meeting was adjourned at 11:14 am.*