

ATLANTIC COUNTY GOVERNMENT
Legislative Branch
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

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Commissioner District 4
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Amy L. Gatto
Commissioner-at-Large
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Commissioner District 3
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John W. Risley, Jr.
Commissioner-at-Large
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CLERK OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Tara Silipena
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LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL

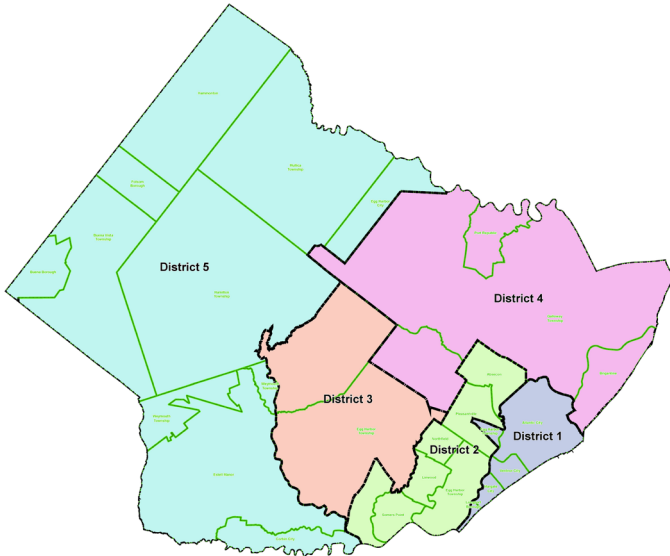
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ATLANTIC COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS



First Row: Commissioner Ernest D. Coursey, Commissioner Richard R. Dase, Chairwoman Maureen Kern, Vice Chairman James A. Bertino, Commissioner John W. Risley, Jr.

Second Row: Legislative Counsel Richard Andrien, Commissioner Andrew W. Parker, III, Commissioner Amy L. Gatto, Commissioner Frank X. Balles, Commissioner June Byrnes, Clerk of the Board Tara Silipena



MAUREEN KERN

Chairwoman

Term Expires 2024

COMMISSIONER DISTRICT 2

Absecon, Egg Harbor Township District 1, Linwood, Northfield, Pleasantville and Somers Point

AD HOC COMMITTEES

(Chairwoman Ex-Officio to all Committees)

Chairperson

Employment Compliance and Benefits, Facilities, Tourism/Economic Development

Member

Homeless, Jail, Public Safety, Veterans Affairs

ADVISORY BOARDS/COMMISSIONS

ACCC Board of School Estimates, ACIT/SSSD Board of School Estimates, Disability Advisory Board, Mental Health Advisory Board, NJAC, Public Health Emergency Preparedness Task Force, South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization (*Alternate*)

BIOGRAPHY

Maureen Kern, a lifelong resident of Somers Point, was elected District Two Commissioner in November 2015. She holds the distinction of being elected in 2018 as the first woman to hold the position of Commissioner Vice Chair in Atlantic County's 182-year history. A powerful voice for women's issues, Maureen is an advocate for those who suffer with mental health issues, addiction and the disabled. She currently serves as Chair of the Atlantic County Commissioner Board, a position she also held from 2020-2022. Maureen has been dedicated to community service throughout her life following in the footsteps of her late father Lawrence "Bud" Kern's legacy of commitment and betterment of the community. His outstanding example of volunteerism coupled with a strong work ethic resulted in the formation of the Somers Point Good Old Days Festival held annually in his memory. Maureen is a member and past co-chair of the Good Old Days Committee who awards scholarships to Somers Point youth that demonstrate prideful commitment to community involvement and the spirit of volunteerism. Maureen volunteered for many years on the Foundation for Education, raising awareness for the schools. She served on the Somers Point Recreation Commission from 2001 to 2008 and was elected to the Somers Point Board of Education from 2002 to 2009. Maureen launched her public service career in 2009 when elected to the Somers Point City Council and served as Council President from 2012 to 2015. Maureen, the only female on Council during her tenure, was an integral part of establishing the City's vision and master plan. She formed a strong economic development team and initiatives to promote Somers Point as a destination location at no additional cost to the taxpayers. Maureen graduated from ACCC with an AA degree and then from Montclair State University with a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration. She started her professional career in tourism at Caesar's Atlantic City and has been involved in promoting "Atlantic City," with focus on marketing conventions and corporate meetings since 1979. She currently holds the position of National Sales Manager at Tropicana Casino and Resort and is a member of Meeting Professionals International. A strong advocate for Economic Development in Atlantic County, Maureen's education and experience is an asset to the Commissioner's Tourism/Economic Development Committee. Married to Jay Phillips, they are the proud parents of three sons Buddy, David and Bryan and loving grandparents to Sienna, Bodie and Layton.



JAMES A. BERTINO

Vice Chairman

Term Expires 2024



COMMISSIONER DISTRICT 5

Buena Borough, Buena Vista Township,
Corbin City, Egg Harbor City, Estell Manor,
Folsom, Hamilton Township
Districts 1, 2, 3, 5, 6 & 12, Hammonton,
Mullica Township and Weymouth

AD HOC COMMITTEES

Chairperson

Pinelands Review, Roads, Bridges and Dams, Solid Waste Oversight

Member

Budget and Finance, County Code Review, Shared Services

ADVISORY BOARDS/COMMISSIONS

Agriculture Development Advisory Board, Atlantic County Utilities Authority (ACUA), Central Municipal Court Personnel Committee, Solid Waste Advisory Council (SWAC)

BIOGRAPHY

Commissioner James "Jimmy" Bertino was appointed Fifth District Commissioner in January 2011. Commissioner Bertino served as a Hammonton Councilman from 1997 to 2011 and Deputy Mayor. In 2000, Jim was honored with the American Hometown Leadership Award. He is currently a member of the NJ Farm Bureau, Hammonton Historical Society and Knights of Columbus. He serves on the Board of Trustees of the Oak Grove Cemetery and the Board of Directors of the Hammonton Recreation Club, Inc. Jim is a lifelong resident of Hammonton where he resides with his wife, Hope. They are the parents of three children, Jackie, Jimmy, Jr. and Michelle.

FRANK X. BALLES

Term Expires 2024

COMMISSIONER-AT-LARGE

AD HOC COMMITTEES

Chairperson

Jail, Veterans Affairs

Member

Education and Schools, Facilities, Pinelands Review, Public Health and Environment, Public Safety, Tourism/Economic Development



ADVISORY BOARDS/COMMISSIONS

Criminal Justice Advisory Board, Central Municipal Court Governance Committee, Planning Advisory Board, Police Training Advisory Board, Veterans Advisory Board

BIOGRAPHY

Born and raised in Atlantic County, Frank X. Balles has spent more than 32 years of his life in law enforcement protecting our local community. Frank served more than two decades as a police officer in Pleasantville, advancing through the ranks to Administrative Captain. In 2008, during his first bid for public office, Balles decisively defeated a fifteen-year incumbent and was elected Atlantic County Sheriff. Twice re-elected, Frank returned to his position as Captain with the Pleasantville Police Department on August 1, 2017 where he officially retired on December 1, 2018. Frank subsequently decided to serve his municipality and in 2019 was sworn-in as an Egg Harbor Township (EHT) Committeeman until October 2020 when he was elected to fill the Freeholder-at-Large seat vacated by Frank D. Formica.

Beginning his career as an Auxiliary Police Officer, Frank has a passion for volunteerism. He began Explorer Post #29 shortly after his election, which enables youth throughout the county to learn about the benefits of a career in law enforcement as well as a variety of public safety careers.

Frank currently serves on the Executive Board of Avanzar (formally the Women's Center), Crime Stoppers of Atlantic County, President of the April Christine Memorial Scholarship and is currently the President of the Pleasantville Police Foundation. Frank has served on many other boards previously including EHT Zoning Board and has served as a youth coach. During his distinguished law enforcement career, he has completed the FBI National Academy, the National Sheriff's Institute, the West Point Command and Leadership Program and more than 35 law enforcement related schools and seminars. As an instructor at the Atlantic County Police Academy, Frank has used his knowledge and experience to train the next generation of law enforcement professionals. Respected by his peers, Frank is the former Commander of both the Atlantic County and Pleasantville Emergency Response Teams.

Frank resides in Egg Harbor Township with his wife Cyndi. He is the father of two children, Michael and Kerri and four grandchildren.

JUNE BYRNES

Term Expires 2026

COMMISSIONER-AT-LARGE

AD HOC COMMITTEES

Member

Parks, Public Health and Environment, Veterans Affairs

ADVISORY BOARDS/COMMISSIONS

Commission on Women, Human Services
Advisory Council, Senior Citizens Advisory Board



BIOGRAPHY

A lifelong Atlantic County resident, June served as a Linwood City Council Representative from 2019 until winning her seat as County Commissioner-at-Large. Two of those years she performed the duties of Pro Tempore to the City Council President and currently holds an elected seat on Linwood’s Republican County Committee. She strongly believes in community engagement. Prior to holding her elected seat she was appointed to the Zoning Board of Adjustment.

June chaired Neighborhood Services and was a member of the Public Works and Finance Committees. In addition, June served as the liaison to the Linwood Library, the Linwood Public Schools, the Recreation Board and the Environmental Commission which has earned the honor of reaching the State of NJ Sustainable Jersey Bronze Certification. She had much success with starting the Senior Citizen Advisory Board and planning several community outreach programs encouraging seniors to stay active, informed and socially engaged. In January 2024 she was appointed to the Linwood Library Board of Trustees.

She spent her first two years of college working and attending Atlantic Community College (now ACCC) then went on to graduate from Glassboro State College (now Rowan University). Upon graduation, June started her career in Advertising and Public Relations in the casino industry, and then The Press of Atlantic City, before taking a break to run her household. Returning to the workforce, she earned her Real Estate License and currently holds it in the referral status.

A former member of the Board of Directors for Court Appointed Special Advocates and Chairperson for “CASA Go Blue” she helped to raise money and awareness for children living in foster care. She was awarded the CASA 2019 “Change Makers” award. June will continue her work countywide in helping to make a difference in people’s lives and making Atlantic County the best place to live, work and visit. Married to Jim Byrnes, they are the proud parents of Jessica, Julia and Jackson.

ERNEST D. COURSEY

Term Expires 2025

COMMISSIONER DISTRICT 1

Atlantic City, Egg Harbor Township District 13,
Longport, Margate and Ventnor

AD HOC COMMITTEES

Chairperson

Homeless, Human Services, Public Safety

Member

Budget and Finance, Employment Compliance and
Benefits, Facilities, Jail, Roads, Bridges and Dams,
Veterans Affairs



ADVISORY BOARDS/COMMISSIONS

Atlantic Cape Community College Board of School Estimates, Atlantic
County Institute of Technology and Special Services School District Board of
School Estimates, Emergency Management Advisory Board, Youth Services
Commission

BIOGRAPHY

Ernest D. Coursey, Sr. is a life-long Atlantic City resident. His political career started more than 30 years ago when he became Atlantic City’s Third Ward Councilmember. During his tenure on City Council, he was re-elected three times, serving from 1991 to 2002. He also served as both Council President and Council Vice President. Ernest continuously strived to make the Third Ward “a shining example of community spirit and pride.” He was the first Councilmember to operate under an “open door policy”, publish the first ward-wide newsletter; and establish the “Third Ward Eye-On-Crime”, to monitor criminal activity in the neighborhood. Ernest’s annual holiday events, food drives, Senior Citizen Day, and Youth Day at Steel Pier were enjoyed by many and served to unite the entire city. “Coursey Cares” is a sentiment that is echoed throughout the community. Ernest has earned a reputation as a fighter, non-conformist and “people person”. He brings a proven philosophy: that of leadership and respect for the people! In January 2002, Ernest accepted an administrative position for Atlantic City’s then newly elected Mayor, Lorenzo T. Langford. As Deputy Mayor, Ernest’s role was expanded to include the entire city. His job was to ensure that city government best served its most valuable and precious asset...its citizens! In 2006, he left city government and returned in 2011 as Superintendent of Surf Stadium and Bader Field. Ernest currently serves as Chief of Staff for Atlantic City Mayor Marty Small, Sr. Ernest also served as Staff Assistant to former U.S. Senator Robert Torricelli. He worked on former Governor James McGreevey’s Transition Committee and was a Commissioner for the South Jersey Transportation Authority. In 2018, he served as a member of Governor Phil Murphy’s Transition Committee. On June 4, 2013, Ernest overwhelmingly won the Democratic primary election for Atlantic County Commissioner (District 1). On November 5, 2013, he was victorious in the general election. In 2016, Ernest ran unopposed. He was re-elected in 2016 and 2019. Commissioner Coursey was re-elected for a fourth term in the general election held November 8, 2022. Ernest credits God Almighty and looks to Him for inspiration and guidance. His parents, Raymond and Hazel (both deceased), and his seven brothers and two sisters have given him a true sense of family. Ernest and his wife, Leslie, have two sons, Ernest Jr., and Ethan. In his spare time, Ernest enjoys boating, fishing and attending family gatherings and church functions.

RICHARD R. DASE

Term Expires 2025

COMMISSIONER DISTRICT 4

Brigantine, Egg Harbor Township Districts 10, 14, 15 and 16, Galloway Township and Port Republic

AD HOC COMMITTEES

Chairperson

County Code Review

Member

Education and Schools, Human Services, Parks, Pinelands Review, Roads, Bridges and Dams



ADVISORY BOARDS/COMMISSIONS

Fire Training Advisory Board

BIOGRAPHY

Rich Dase has dedicated a great deal of his life to public service. As a former member of the staff of U.S. Congressman Frank LoBiondo, he worked toward resolving constituent concerns and problems. He is currently a seventh grade Social Studies teacher at the Galloway Township Middle School where he advises several activities. Prior to his career in education, Rich worked as an advertising copywriter for three Atlantic City casinos and as a freelance advertising copywriter. He enjoys volunteering with the Galloway Township Police Athletic League, Galloway Township Athletic Association and the Galloway Township Elks Lodge. In 2005, Rich was elected to Galloway Township Council with the highest vote total. He is also a past member of the Galloway Township Planning Board. Rich was first elected District Four Freeholder in November 2007. Rich has been a resident of Galloway Township his entire life and currently lives there with his wife Andrea and children Nicholas, Ayden and Kylie.

AMY L. GATTO

Term Expires 2025

COMMISSIONER-AT-LARGE

AD HOC COMMITTEES

Chairperson

Budget and Finance, Parks, Shared Services

Member

County Code Review, Employment
Compliance and Benefits, Facilities,
Homeless, Public Safety, Roads, Bridges and
Dams, Solid Waste Oversight,
Tourism/Economic Development



ADVISORY BOARDS/COMMISSIONS

Local Advisory Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, Workforce
Development Board

BIOGRAPHY

Amy Gatto, 42, was first elected to the Hamilton Township Committee in 2007 at the age of 24 and at 29 years old, became the youngest and only the third woman to hold the office of Mayor in the Township's several hundred-year history. In 2019, Freeholder Gatto was proudly selected to serve as the first female to Chair the Board of Freeholders in its 182-year history. Despite the tough times facing our region, during Gatto's tenure on Township Committee, the governing body was able to eliminate its \$2.4 million structural deficit by encouraging economic development and making government more efficient as well as paying down millions in municipal debt without raising taxes several years following. She was honored to be elected to the Atlantic County Board of Chosen Freeholders in 2016 and 2019. A lifelong resident of Mays Landing, Gatto graduated from Oakcrest High School in 2000. She attended Widener University in Chester, PA, graduating in 2004 with a Bachelor of Science degree in International Business and a Bachelor of Arts degree in French. Following graduation, Gatto committed herself to public service, becoming a graduate of the Christine Todd Whitman Excellence in Public Service Series and becoming an elected member of the local school board in 2005. She also went to work for PECO Energy, an Exelon Company, in Philadelphia, PA as an Executive Assistant to the Chief Operating Officer. In 2008, Gatto was honored as one of Atlantic City Weekly's "Top 40 Under 40." As her career progressed, she went to work as a Project Manager and Manager of Service Operations at AtlantiCare in Hammonton, NJ, at Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of NJ in Mount Laurel, NJ and Equitable in Secaucus, NJ. Currently, she serves as an Assistant Vice President of Business Operations for Lincoln Financial Group in Philadelphia, PA. Gatto is proud to be the daughter of Dr. Jeri-Lynn Vernon, a retired educator who currently resides in Galloway, NJ with her husband Walter Vernon, retired Army Major; and Bill Gatto, a retired union Laborer, Local 172 and 40-year employee of the Atlantic City Race Course. He passed away in 2024. She has one brother, Billy Gatto. Gatto has long battled Crohn's Disease and is an active advocate for the disease. She is a proud member of the Italian American Service Organization, UNICO – Greater Atlantic City Chapter and currently serves as the President. She also serves on the Parish Council for St. Vincent de Paul Church. Gatto has organized and participated in many community service initiatives throughout the years including "Rock-N-Vote," Martin Luther King, Jr. "Day of Service," public speaker for local high school and college assemblies; member, OHS 50th Anniversary Celebration Committee; member, Township's 200th Anniversary Celebration Committee; fundraiser for Crohn's and Colitis Foundation of America, MS WALK, American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, Hamilton Township PAL, HERO Campaign, Susan G. Koman Breast Cancer Foundation and she fondly volunteers at various events at area schools and local organizations.

ANDREW W. PARKER, III

Term Expires 2026

COMMISSIONER DISTRICT 3

Egg Harbor Township Districts 2, 3, 4, 5, 6,
7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21 & 22, Hamilton
Township Districts 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 & 13

AD HOC COMMITTEES

Chairperson

Education and Schools

Member

Homeless, Human Services, Parks, Public Health and
Environment, Shared Services, Solid Waste Oversight, Tourism/Economic
Development



ADVISORY BOARDS/COMMISSIONS

Atlantic County Utilities Authority (*Alternate*), Cultural and Heritage
Advisory Board, Library Advisory Commission, NJAC (*Second Alternate*),
Parks and Environment

BIOGRAPHY

Andrew W. Parker, III was born in Atlantic City, NJ to Andrew and Pearletha Parker. Shortly after Parker was born, his parents moved to Egg Harbor Township (EHT). Parker graduated from EHT High School, where he received many athletic honors, including the Athletic Hall of Fame. Parker began his education on an athletic scholarship at the University of New Haven, CT. Parker was featured as a success story during his undergraduate study as an Alpha Sigma Lambda National Honor Society member. He is a Walden University-Summa Cum Laude graduate with a Master's degree in Science Education, specializing in middle school mathematics. He was featured in the 2019 Summer/Fall Walden University magazine edition. Parker is currently a teacher in the Atlantic City School District. He is a 2013 Siemens STEM Institute/Discovery Education Fellow, a nationwide program recognizing 50 of the country's top mathematics and science teachers. Parker is also a 2021 DENSI STAR and a Discovery Education Leadership Committee member. Parker got elected for a second term as a National Education Association Representative Assembly for the NEA. He serves on the Political Candidates Screening Committee and is the former Collective Bargaining and Advocacy Chairperson for the Atlantic County Council on Education Associations, ACCEA. Parker is the Atlantic City Education Association Legislative Action Team Chair, where he is responsible for activating his local union to take action on local, state and federal legislative issues pertaining to education. Parker served on the EHT Zoning Board of Adjustments for ten years before being elected as the first African American Township Committeemen in 2018. While serving on EHT Committee, Parker served as an EHT Economic Development Commission member, including the Cannabis Transition Committee, County Municipal Court Personnel Committee and the EHT Police Athletic League. Parker proudly continues to serve on the EHT Economic Development Commission and loves helping business owners find a home in South Jersey. Parker is a member of the Mainland/Pleasantville Branch NAACP. He is a lifetime member of the NJ Second Amendment Association and a certified NRA range instructor. Parker is the first African American to serve as Vice Chair in the County's history. Parker's volunteerism and dedication to our community has earned him leadership awards and various accolades from the Atlantic County Board of Freeholders, the Atlantic County Executive, National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc. (2019 Community Service Award) and the United States Congress. Whether spending time with his children, or coaching youth on the football field, Parker enjoys serving his community and recognizes the team effort it takes to build a true community.

JOHN W. RISLEY, JR.

Term Expires 2026



COMMISSIONER-AT-LARGE

AD HOC COMMITTEES

Chairperson

Public Health and Environment

Member

Budget and Finance, Jail, Shared Services, Solid Waste Oversight

ADVISORY BOARDS/COMMISSIONS

Atlantic Cape Community College Board of School Estimates, Atlantic County Institute of Technology and Special Services School District Board of School Estimates, New Jersey Association of Counties (*First Alternate*), South Jersey Economic Development District (SJEDD), South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization (SJTPO)

BIOGRAPHY

John Risley was re-elected Commissioner-at-Large in November 2023 and served as Vice Chairman in 2014, 2017, 2020, 2021, 2022 and as Chairman to the Board in 2023. He previously served on the Board of Freeholders from 1995 to 2004. Commissioner Risley has devoted a lifetime of public service as a past president of the Mainland Regional Board of Education, a Linwood City Councilman, former President of Somers Point City Council and most recently, past Deputy Mayor for Egg Harbor Township. John is the owner and President of L. O. Thomas and Company, Inc. a FINRA/SIPC member investment firm founded in 1929. He has been guiding clients with investment advice for over 45 years. John is a member of M. B. Taylor Lodge in Hammonton and a Past Master of Keystone Lodge in Linwood. John resides in Egg Harbor Township with his wife, Dawn and children Ashley, John, III and Harold.