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Borough of Chambersburg

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CHAMBERSBURG COUNCIL MEMBER RESIGNS AS FAMILY MOVES FROM WARD

Chambersburg – On Monday, November 9, Chambersburg Town Council reluctantly accepted the resignation of Council Member Amer Chaudhry. Council Member Chaudhry had represented the Borough’s Fourth Ward for the last three years and his term was not due to expire until December 31, 2021. Recently, Council Member Chaudhry purchased a new home with his family in a different neighborhood of the Borough. Under Pennsylvania State law, if an elected official relocates their primary place of residence outside of their elected ward or neighborhood, they must unfortunately vacate their seat.

Amer Chaudhry had the distinction of being both the first Muslim Council Member and the first of south Asian descent in Chambersburg’s history. He is a local entrepreneur, who together with his wife, Jasmina Ademovic, operates the Falafel Shack Restaurant, a popular local eatery on Chambersburg’s Memorial Square. An active member of the community, Mr. Chaudhry was instrumental at representing Town Council in downtown civic affairs, on the Borough Planning and Zoning Commission, and a Member of the Board of Downtown Chambersburg, Inc.

Mr. Chaudhry explained to Town Council in an email: “For the last three years, I have learned so much about our wonderful Borough of Chambersburg and it was an honor to serve as a Council Member for the 4th ward. My family and I moved yesterday to our new home in the 2nd Ward and the time has come for me to step down.”

Council Vice-President Michael Herbert stated, “It was an honor to serve with Amer, and I look forward to a continuous friendship.” He urged Amer “Please consider trying for office again, when the time is right for you and your family.”

Council President Alice Elia echoed the sentiment of Council when she added, “I consider it a true honor to have served with Amer. He has brought so much to Council and has represented the Fourth Ward and our community well. It is my hope that at some point in the future, he will consider running for office again.”

At the Council Meeting, Borough Manager Jeffrey Stonehill summarized the replacement process pursuant to State law. “The Council has until December 2020 to name a replacement for Mr. Chaudhry to complete the balance of his term.”

Council authorized an advertisement, which seeks volunteers to replace Council Member Chaudhry through December 31, 2021. Per the Borough Code, at the December 14 Regular Meeting of Town Council, by majority vote of those members present, the Town Council will select one of the volunteers to take the open seat.

Stonehill went on to explain, “Council must act to appoint a successor by December. If they fail to appoint a replacement in December, there will be a second opportunity in January 2021, but local citizen, Robert Schollaert, attorney and appointed Chair of the Vacancy Board, would be present to attempt to reach a consensus. I have every reason to believe that Council will fill the seat on December 14, without Mr. Schollaert’s assistance.”

Volunteers must be age 18 or older and be a legal resident of the Borough's 4th Ward for one year prior to appointment. The Borough's Ward map is available on the Borough's website, at www.borough.chambersburg.pa.us/government/maps.html

Chambersburg Borough elected officials receive \$4,125 per year and the Mayor or President receive \$5,625 per year pursuant to State law. It is a stipend, not wages, and otherwise, no other benefits are provided. Finally, it has been set at the maximum permitted since 1997.

Applicants interested in applying should send their resume and letter of interest to the Borough Secretary at boroughsecretariesoffice@chambersburgpa.gov or call the Borough Secretary at (717) 264-5151.

The December 14 discussion on the replacement will be conducted in public and citizens are welcome to attend on Monday, December 14, at 7:00 p.m., at Chambersburg City Hall. If you have any questions about this information, contact Jeffrey Stonehill, Chambersburg Borough Manager at jstonehill@chambersburgpa.gov.

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About The Borough of Chambersburg

Chambersburg is a unique community. Chambersburg supplies more services than any other municipality in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. In addition to typical town functions, Chambersburg is Pennsylvania's only municipality supplying electric and gas. Chambersburg is 1 of 35 Boroughs to operate a municipal non-profit electric utility. Chambersburg is the largest municipal electric utility in the State, twice as large as the second largest, Ephrata, Lancaster County; and, the only one to operate generation stations. Chambersburg is 1 of 2 municipalities in PA to operate a natural gas utility. The other is Philadelphia, which does not operate an electric utility. Nationally, Chambersburg is 1 of 2,000 communities to have its own electric system and 1 of 800 communities to have a natural gas system but 1 of only about 50 to operate both. Chambersburg manages a regional water system, a regional sanitary sewer system (not through an independent Authority), and a new storm sewer utility; one of the first storm sewer utilities to form under the new Federal mandate to regulate stormwater. Chambersburg currently has 20,508 residents (2013).