



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

# Borough of Chambersburg

*A full service municipality in Franklin County celebrating over 65 years of consumer owned natural gas service over 120 years of community electric and a regional wastewater, water, storm sewer and municipal solid waste utility*

## CHAMBERSBURG TOWN COUNCIL HOLDS REORGANIZATION & SELECTS NEW PRESIDENT OF COUNCIL

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**Chambersburg, Pennsylvania** – As required by State Law, the Biennial Reorganization Meeting of Town Council was held on January 6, 2020. Five members of Town Council received the oath of office from Magisterial District Judge Glenn K. Manns, and one returning Member, Alice Elia, was elected as the new President of Town Council. She is the first woman to hold that position in the Borough's 216-year history.

According to Borough Manager Jeffrey Stonehill, "Heath Talhelm, who remains on Town Council, served as President for the past two years. Alice has served on Council for four years, with the last two as Vice President. I want to personally thank Mr. Talhelm for his service to his community," Mr. Stonehill added. "Under his leadership, the Borough and Borough utilities accomplished several successful projects."

Every two years, following a municipal election, Town Council must meet on the First Monday of January to elect their officers from among their members. The President of Town Council serves as the Chief Elected Officer of the Borough. Monday's meeting was officiated by Mayor Walt Bietsch, who served as chair until a Council President was selected. Mayor Bietsch is in the middle of his term of office, and therefore, he was not required to renew his oath of office prior to convening the meeting.

The first order of business was the oath of office for newly elected and re-elected Members of Council. Receiving the oath of office were Alice Elia (First Ward), Sharon Bigler (Fourth Ward), Bill Everly (Fifth Ward), John Huber (Second Ward), and Kathy Leedy (Third Ward).

In Chambersburg, there are five wards or designated neighborhoods. Each ward elects two Members of Council for a Town Council of ten members. Every two years, five members receive the oath of office.

After each Member of Town Council was seated, Mayor Bietsch chaired the election of the President of Town Council. Having received the majority of votes, Alice Elia was elected.

President Elia represents the First Ward in Chambersburg. In past years, she served as Vice-President of Town Council, on the Recreation Advisory Committee, and on the Storm Water Policy Compliance Committee. She also championed the hiring of the Borough's first Diversity and Employment Resources Coordinator, the push for sustainability in borough utilities, and the development of the successful Chambersburg Aquatic Center. President Elia was raised in South Florida, is a parent of children in the Chambersburg Area School District, and works as the Senior Director of Development for the Franklin County Library System.

Council Member Mike Herbert was elected as Vice-President of Town Council. He represents the Second Ward of Chambersburg. Council Member Allen Coffman, representing the First Ward, was elected as Council Personnel Liaison. Council Member John Huber, representing the Second Ward, was elected as Finance Chair of Town Council. Together, these Council Members represent the officers of the Borough government, but several other Members of Council were appointed to various advisory committees and boards.

In her remarks, Alice Elia made several points regarding her selection as Council President: "It is my hope that this Council will listen carefully, deliberate with civility, and make thoughtful decisions. We are privileged to serve our community and the people of Chambersburg."

Key positions on staff were re-appointed including Borough Manager Jeffrey Stonehill and Solicitor G. Bryan Salzmann.

Then, Town Council acted to fill positions on the various volunteer boards and committees. A full list of appointees will appear on the Borough website's Transparency Page.

Town Council next meets on Monday, January 13, 2020, at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers of City Hall. Please send any questions to Jamia Wright, Borough Secretary, at [jwright@chambersburgpa.gov](mailto:jwright@chambersburgpa.gov)

If you wish to contact President Elia, she is available by email at [aelia@chambersburgpa.gov](mailto:aelia@chambersburgpa.gov)

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 one 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 one of only two municipalities in PA to operate a natural gas utility. The other is Philadelphia, which does not operate an electric utility. Nationally, Chambersburg is one 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 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).