JOINT MEETING NEWS

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Meet the Board

The inception of the Joint Meeting of Essex and Union Counties began in the 1890's. With the passing of a special act through State legislation in 1898, the effort of the Joint Meeting's eleven (11) member municipalities to dispose of their community waste was realized. The current Board is a collection of highly motivated, dedicated, public servants, whose focus is ensuring that the Joint Meeting is providing optimal service to the communities we work hard for.

Our Distinguished Board Officers are as follows:

Councilman Anibal Ramos Jr., representing the City of Newark, serves as the Board's Chairperson. Mr. Ramos has been a member of the Board since 2018 and previously served as Chairman of the Personnel and Procurement Committee. Councilman Ramos has represented the North Ward since 2006. He is a forward-thinking leader with extensive experience in management, public service, and community development gained through his work with the Newark Public Schools (NPS) and the County of Essex.

Committeeman Joseph M. Florio, representing Union Township, serves as Vice Chairperson/Secretary. Mr. Florio has been a member of the Board since 2010 and previously served as Chairperson of the Board and of several committees within the Joint Meeting. He has been a loyal resident in the municipality for over forty-six (46) years. He was elected to the Township Committee in 1997 where he has served four (4) terms as Mayor and has had Commissioner assignments that included Police, Fire, DPW, Recreation and Senior Activities. The dedication of his civic service has resulted in decades of great work in Union Township and its surrounding communities.

Councilman Bill Rutherford, representing West Orange Township, serves as Treasurer. Mr. Rutherford has been a member of the Board since 2021. He is a Baptist Minister and became Pastor of Ebenezer Baptist Church in Orange, NJ in 2012. His professional background also includes work as a Trader, Financial Advisor, and for thirteen years he ran a Registered Investment Advisory Firm, Omega Financial Network. A man of many talents, his greatest passion is serving people, and he accomplishes this service through education, community service, and religious work.

The remaining Distinguished Board Members are listed below in alphabetical order of the municipality they represent (many of whom are in their first year of service to the Joint Meeting):

Councilman Bergson Leneus, East Orange, serving since 2022;

Councilman Craig Epps, Hillside, serving since 2022;

Councilwoman Renee C. Burgess, Irvington, serving since 2014;

Mayor Dean Dafis, Maplewood, serving since 2022;

Committeewoman Tara Prupis, Millburn, returning to service from 2020;

Councilman Joseph E. Petrosky, Roselle Park, serving since 2019;

Trustee William Haskins, South Orange, serving since 2021; and

Councilwoman Marjorie Fox, Summit, serving since 2021.

Your Service is Appreciated

A newsletter of the Joint Meeting of Essex and Union Counties, a wastewater treatment plant serving eleven member municipalities including Elizabeth, Livingston, New Providence, and Orange.

Executive Director
Hanifa Z. Johnson

www.jmeuc.com

Employee News

Retirements

Joel Altman began his career in November 1981 as a Utility Person. In a few years, as he gained experience, he moved into the Mechanical Maintenance department and stayed there for approximately ten years. Joel continued to expand his experience and moved into the position of Auto Mechanic.

It did not take long for him to move into a management position when he assumed the Assistant Maintenance Manager position. In Joel's position, he took on various roles as additional support for his employees. Joel was instrumental during special events such as a Storm Event in October 2005, Snow Emergency in December 2010, Hurricane Irene in August 2011, and Hurricane Sandy in October 2012.

We thank Joel for his tireless efforts and wish him and his family well.

Rick Stafford came to Joint Meeting in August of 2002 where he began his career as a Wastewater Operator. In 2005, he was promoted to the position of Operations Supervisor. Rick spent several years as an Operations Supervisor until he found his career position as Safety Officer in 2011.

Rick developed the Safety Program to the point where employees looked at the Program as a positive piece of the employee experience. Rick was instrumental in the administration and application of the Covid-19 protocols.

Rick also developed a positive relationship with the Elizabeth Fire Department by having the department conduct training exercises on Joint Meeting property. The training also is beneficial to Joint Meeting by permitting the Fire Department to learn and to keep updated various aspects of the facility.

Rick's efforts have positively affected the employees, vendors and visitors to Joint Meeting. We thank Rick for his tireless efforts and wish him well going forward.

Beatriz Rubio joined the organization in August 2003. Since day one, she had a positive impact on the employees of Joint Meeting. It is difficult to cite specific achievements because every day that Bea was here, she achieved greatness. She was always anxious to learn new methods and to suggest better ways to do things.

Beatriz stepped forward during the Covid-19 facility lockdown. Her handling of the payroll required great efforts despite challenges that were presented.

Bea will be missed by everyone at Joint Meeting. We thank her for everything she has done and wish her well in her retirement.

Joseph Ratz started at Joint Meeting in June 1996 as a Boiler Operator. During his career at Joint Meeting he played an important part in the "Blackout of 2003" as well as the "Snowstorm of 2003."

We appreciate Joe's efforts and wish him well in his retirement.

Promotions

Malika Johnson has been promoted to the position of Assistant Purchasing & Procurement Officer. Malika came to Joint Meeting in February 2010 beginning her career as a Secretary. Her duties were to support the very busy Operations and Maintenance Departments. Over the course of time she has taken on more responsibility. Throughout her busy schedule, she was able to complete her Masters' degree in Public Administration. In 2020, Malika stepped forward and took on additional responsibilities as Secretary to the Board of Directors, the position previously held by the late, great Pat Rufolo.

Michael Maffia has dedicated more than 28 years to Joint Meeting. In that time, Mike has served as the Supervisor of the Mechanical Maintenance Department as well as the Supervisor for the Site Services Department.

Joint Meeting is pleased to announce the promotion of Maintenance Mechanic **Jan Dmytrach** to the position of Mechanical Maintenance Supervisor. Jan has been with Joint Meeting since April 2012 assigned to the Mechanical Maintenance Department. Throughout his tenure, Jan has demonstrated excellent technical skills as well as his commitment to Joint Meeting and his coworkers.

Steven Van Deursen has been newly appointed to the position of Maintenance Mechanic. The appointment is a reflection of his qualifications, excellent performance record and dedication to Joint Meeting.

From left to right are some of the Lead Operators and Operations Foremen, **Darius Mayes**, **Lamar Shell**, **Jesse Ordner**, **Liam Campbell**, **Marlon Echeverria** and **Joe Polomeni**.

In an effort to support the Operations Management, additional resources in the form of Operations Forman and Lead Operators have been added.

Jesse Ordner has been promoted to the position of Operations Foreman. Jesse has been with Joint Meeting since June 2007 when he began his career as an Operator Trainee. Over the years, Jesse has been an integral part of the Operation and we will count on his knowledge to move forward in his new position.

Marlon Echeverria has been promoted to the position of Operations Foreman. Marlon has been with Joint Meeting since July 10, 2017.

Liam Campbell has been promoted to the position of Operations Foreman. Liam has been with Joint Meeting since July 9, 2019.

Additional Lead Operators are, left to right, **Yuval Ghitelman** and **Altarek Cummings**.

The following Operators have been designated "Lead Operators." They will assist the Operations Shift Supervisor in the day-to-day functions. They are:

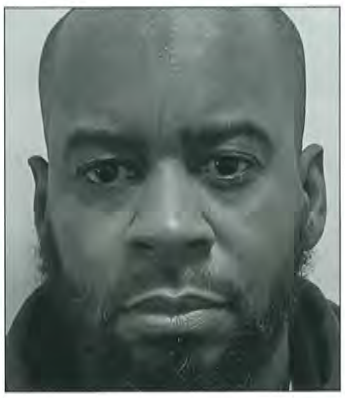
- **Altarek Cummings**, hired on September 17, 2018
- **Darius Mayes**, hired September 23, 2013
- **Lamar Shell**, hired June 30, 2011
- **Joe Polomene**, hired July 8, 2019, and
- **Yuval Ghitelman**, hired July 24, 2017.

New Employees

Angela Amanzo, Financial Analyst, brings close to 20 years of combined private sector and public sector experience to the position. Angela is a resident of Hopatcong, NJ.

Lauren Maffia, Lab Assistant, graduated from the New Jersey Institute of Technology where she received a B.S. Degree in Environmental Science. Lauren is a resident of Carteret, NJ.

Bakeer McQueen, Boiler Operator, worked for the Newark Housing Authority and the Newark Public Schools System prior to Joint Meeting. Bakeer is a resident of Roselle, NJ.



Giovanny Rodriguez, Site Services Worker, previously worked several years for Brazil Brothers in North Brunswick, NJ before joining Joint Meeting. Prior to that position, he was a Supervisor with Dollar General in Perth Amboy, NJ. Gio resides in Keasby, NJ.

Elizabeth Rosario, Human Resources Assistant, brings more than 30 years of Human Resource and Payroll experience to Joint Meeting. Elizabeth resides in Perth Amboy, NJ.

Felipe Rabulan, Electrician, comes to Joint Meeting with experience that includes 16 years as a Senior Engineering Service Representative with ASCO Services in Florham Park, NJ. Felipe received his Bachelor of Science degree in Electrical Engineering from the Technological Institute of the Philippines. Felipe resides in Somerville, NJ.

Sandra Caceres, Health & Safety Manager, brings with her more than 15 years of experience in the engineering field. She obtained her B.S. degree in Civil Engineering from the New Jersey Institute of Technology. Sandra is a Licensed Professional Engineer (PE), a Certified Municipal Engineer (CME) as well as a Certified Public Works Manager (CPWM). She is a Westfield, NJ resident.

Joint Meeting Staff Honored

Three members of the JMEUC Staff; **Sorin Astalus**, **Antoni Wyczesany**, and **Michael Foster** (pictured above left to right); were recently honored with their induction into The Select Society of Sanitary Sludge Shovelers (5-S). The Select Society of Sanitary Sludge Shovelers is used by water environment associations to honor those who have made a particular contribution to the industry.

Pennsylvania started the High Hat Society in 1937 and used the words "Sludge Shovelers Society" in its initiation ceremony. Later, this became known as the Ted Moses Sludge Shovelers Society. The second Chapter of the Five S Society was formed in Arizona in October 1940, the idea being conceived by A.W. "Dusty" Miller and F. Carlyle Roberts, Jr. There are chapters in the United States and in Canada, as well as in the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand.

Select Society of Sanitary Sludge Shovelers chapters do not accept applications, but select potential members. Each inductee receives a badge in the form of a gold tie bar in the shape of a round-nosed shovel.

The Select Society of Sanitary Sludge Shovelers was originated to encourage members to "get involved." You cannot join the Society. You must be "selected" on the basis of merit. It is often asked by nonmembers, how they can get a shovel. The reply is simply, "You do not seek the shovel, the shovel seeks you."

New Family Members

Manisha Patel, Laboratory Technician, and Jignesh Patel welcomed their daughter Kiara into the world at 5:04 p.m. on December 19, 2021. Kiara weighed 6.2 lbs. Pictured are Manisha holding the new baby. Mom and baby are both doing well. Congratulations to the proud parents.

Djavana Menter, Laboratory Technician, and Leonard Harris celebrated the birth of their daughter, Brielle Harris, on March 19, 2022. Brielle weighed 8 lbs. 2 oz. and was 20 and ¼ inches long. She joins siblings Brandon and Briana Harris. We wish them much happiness!

Executive Director Shares Family News

Darryl V. Johnson, uncle of the Executive Director, Hanifa Z. Johnson, was appointed principal of Rocky Hill Middle School in Maryland by the Montgomery County Board of Education in April of this year. He is an accomplished product of the Newark Public Schools system and a graduate of St. Benedict's Prep., the University of Maryland Eastern Shore, McDaniel College and Columbia University. He has always had a desire to be a transformational leader and his leadership is grounded in his core values of excellence, meaningful relationships, opportunity, and collaboration. He is the doting Dad of Bella, a Pug/Bulldog mix, and son David, who is expecting his first child.

Aleem N. Huff, the nephew of the Executive Director, Hanifa Z. Johnson, was honored as Public Broadcasting Service's (PBS) March 2022 Artist of the Month. He is a high achieving student at Lore Elementary in Ewing, NJ. Aleem also excels in a variety of youth sports, including swimming, baseball, soccer, football, and basketball. He loves his family, especially his little brother, a pit bull named Ace.

Pensions and Benefits

If you have not done so, all employees must register in **MBOS** (Member Benefits Online System) in order to apply for loans, obtain pre-retirement estimates and apply for retirement. Paper retirement applications are no longer accepted by the state.

To register for MBOS, go to:

https://www.state.nj.us/treasury/pensions/mbos-register.shtml

Registration requires several steps — new users should read and carefully follow the MBOS Registration Instructions. You may call the MBOS Help desk at 609-292-7524.

If further assistance is required, please contact Human Resources.

Perfect Attendance

During calendar year 2021, seven employees had a perfect attendance record. Those individuals achieving a record of no sick time and no absences are:

Francis Bonaccorso, Operations
James Paluch, Collections
Grace Quintero, Administration
John Petito, Industrial Pretreatment
Christine Ginn, Laboratory
Donald Heminghaus, Safety
Daniel Gonzalez, Administration

Seventeen employees have achieved a perfect attendance record for the 4th Quarter of 2021. Those individuals achieving a record of no sick time and no absences are:

Paul Hunt, Industrial Pretreatment
John Petito, Industrial Pretreatment
Elijah Bueno, Laboratory
Jane Martynova, Laboratory
Adris Hariprasad, Electrical
Hector Reveron, Mechanical Maintenance
Maurice Clark, Operations
Marlon Echeverria, Operations
Ocquan Morris, Operations
Jesse Ordner, Operations
Jason Ball, Operations
Altarek Cummings, Operations
Harby Guerrero, Operations
Samuel McGhee, Operations
Allen Patterson, Operations
Andre Williams, Operations
Darrell Finley, Security

Seven employees have achieved a perfect attendance record for the 1st Quarter of 2022. Those individuals achieving a record of no sick time and no absences are:

Jean Cabral, Laboratory
Bill Forrai, Mechanical Maintenance
Harby Guerrero, Operations
Brian Hernandez, Operations
Samuel McGhee, Operations
Lamar Shell, Operations
Kyle Lewis, Operations

Congratulations to all of the above listed employees for their excellent attendance records.

Help is Available

Joint Meeting maintains an Employee Assistance Program administered by Barnabas Health. The program provides assistance to employees and their families. The program is called **ONESOURCE** and can be reached at 1-800-300-0628. The service is confidential and is available 24 hours, seven days per week, 365 days a year. The clinicians offer referral, counseling and crisis intervention.

Employees needing assistance obtaining these services may also contact Human Resources.

Celebrating Milestone Years of Service

Congratulations to the following dedicated employees for their years of hard work and for reaching service milestones.

25 YEARS

James Paluch, Collections

15 YEARS

William Anderson, Operations
Maurice Clark, Operations
Jesse Ordner, Operations
Humbertt Mortola, I.T. Department
Yevgeniya Martynova, Laboratory

10 YEARS

Patricia Fraga, Laboratory
Christopher Stafford, Collections
Jan Dmytrach, Mechanical Maintenance
Charles Guest, Site Services
James Bunkiewicz, Industrial Pretreatment

5 YEARS

Coyyona Smallwood, Operations
Paul Orazi, Boiler Department
Paul Hunt, Industrial Pretreatment
Andres Gallego-Sanchez, Collections
Mathew Ellis, Operations
Marlon Echeverria, Operations
Yuval Ghitelman, Operations

Upcoming Events

July 24-27, 2022. National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA) Annual Summer Conference, Seattle, WA.

October 8-12, 2022. Water Environment Federation (WEFTEC) Annual Conference, New Orleans, LA.

www.jmeuc.com

Joint Meeting of Essex and Union Counties

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Joint Meeting Administrative Staff

Executive Director
Hanifa Z. Johnson

Chief Engineer
Position Vacant

Superintendent
Stephen Dowhan

Director of Admin. and Finance
Daniel Gonzalez

Director of Human Resources
Robert Barry

Industrial Pretreatment Manager
Michael Phillips

Project Manager
Christopher Pabst

Purchasing Officer
Position Vacant

Asst. Board Secretary
Malika Johnson

Financial Assistant
Angela Amanzo

Asst. Superintendent Operations/Maint.
Francis Bonaccorso

Asst. Superintendent Collection System
Jim Paluch

Operations Manager
Bart Brophy

Maintenance Manager
Roman Wisniewski

Safety Officer
Sandra Caceres

Administrative Office Manager
Grace Quintero

IT Manager
Ray Jimenez

Board Committees 2022

The Board of Directors committee assignments for the 1st half of 2022 are:

Operations Committee
Chair: William Haskins
Craig Epps
Tara Prupis
Bill Rutherford

Public Relations Committee
Chair: Joseph E. Petrosky
Craig Epps
William Haskins
Tara Prupis

Finance and Budget Committee
Chair: Bill Rutherford
Dean Dafis
Joseph M. Florio
Bergson Leneus

Personnel and Procurement Committee
Chair: Joseph M. Florio
Renee C. Burgess
Dean Dafis
Marjorie Fox