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County of Berks – Press Release

County of Berks names new Chief Operations Officer and Deputy Chief Operations Officer

Reading, PA— 12/13/2022 — After a nearly six-month hiring process, the Berks County Commissioners on Tuesday announced the selection of the County’s new Chief Operations Officer and Deputy Chief Operations Officer. Current County Commissioner Kevin S. Barnhardt will take over the reins as COO from Ronald Seaman, who plans to retire in the spring of 2023. Larry Medaglia, the current Register of Wills, will be the new Deputy COO to work in tandem with Barnhardt. Since both men are elected officials, they plan to resign from their current positions in January to then work alongside Seaman for a few months before he retires.

The selections follow a hiring process that began this past summer shortly after Seaman informed county leaders of his plans to retire. Barnhardt and Medaglia both submitted applications for the position in July and were among dozens of applicants that were reviewed and interviewed by County officials and Herbein/Mosteller, a third-party HR consulting firm.

“The work of Berks County Government is extremely diverse and demanding,” Commissioners Chair Christian Y. Leinbach said. “Today’s introduction of our new COO and Deputy COO is a major step forward in bolstering leadership among County departments, programs and partners. When we began this process last summer, I could not have foreseen this outcome and, frankly, I’m thrilled. Both men are committed to strengthening County government and I am confident they are the right team for the job.”

Leinbach emphasized the breadth of experience both men bring to their new roles. Barnhardt, 63, of South Heidelberg Township, has been a County Commissioner for the last 15 years and before that served as West Reading mayor and on Borough Council for a total of 39 years of public service. Prior to that, Barnhardt spent about 30 years in the private sector working in the wholesale food industry where he oversaw logistics for various departments and operations. Medaglia, 59, of Wyomissing, has been Berks County’s Register of Wills and Clerk of Orphan’s Court since 1996. Prior to that, he spent four years as the Administrator of the

District Attorney's Office and served as the Vice President of Borough Council for the former borough of Wyomissing Hills.

Commissioner Michael Rivera said it was critically important for the hiring team to make sure they selected the right candidates for these key leadership positions.

"I am very happy with the hires we made," he said. "Both of these gentleman have extensive experience in County government and will be able to help Berks County continue to move forward in a positive direction. I am looking forward to working with Kevin and Larry."

Barnhardt said he knows he will never truly replace Seaman, but he believes that the last 15 years in County government have prepared him well for role. He wants to bring stability to County leadership and hopes his hiring provides a level of comfort for the County's department heads, many of which he helped interview and hire.

"I look at this as going from a decision maker to a decision implementer," he said. "My door has always been open and will continue to be. We have about 44 different projects in motion here, in addition to day-to-day departmental operations. Our team is ready to go."

Medaglia said he's privileged to have served the citizens of Berks County as the Register of Wills and was fortunate to work across departments and responsibilities with many talented professionals in County government.

"That experience, along with the opportunity to work with Commissioners Leinbach and Rivera and alongside new COO Kevin Barnhardt, made this opportunity to continue serving our community an easy decision," he said. "I coached for more than 20 years and working in a team-oriented organization with our depth of professionals across all departments is an exciting prospect."

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