

COUNTY OF OCEAN
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
TOMS RIVER, NEW JERSEY 08754-2191



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February 2, 2023

Editor, Lakewood Scoop

LETTER VIA EMAIL ONLY: editor@thelakewoodscoop.com

After much soul-searching, today I am announcing that I will not seek re-election to the Ocean County Board of Commissioners. After more than 43 years of public service, I have decided to retire and devote more time to my family.

I am forever thankful to the people of Ocean County, who have seen fit to return me to office time and time again since 1981. Thanks to their enduring support, I will leave office as the longest serving Freeholder/Commissioner in the State of New Jersey. I have worked hard over these nearly five decades to serve the people of Ocean County. I have dedicated much of my life to improving the quality of life of our senior citizens and our younger families alike.

I first came to public office in 1979, when I was elected to the Dover Township Committee. I held office there until 1994, during which time I was also privileged to serve five years as mayor. During my long tenure, I witnessed Dover Township become Toms River Township and the Board of Chosen Freeholders morph into the Ocean County Board of Commissioners. What hasn't changed is my commitment to bringing our residents the best possible services at the most affordable cost.

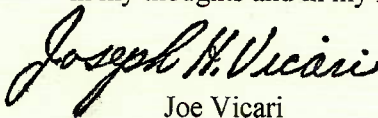
While serving in elected office, I also dedicated myself to educating our children. As a lifelong educator, I worked as a teacher, school principal, and a superintendent of schools.

Like everyone else, I've seen my share of good times and bad. Some of the worst times for us here in Ocean County were Super Storm Sandy and the COVID-19 pandemic. Our residents came through both disasters with resilience and fortitude. I truly believe Ocean County emerged stronger.

As I said, the time has come for me to devote more time to my wife of 51 years, Joyce, my children and my two beautiful grandchildren. Anyone who volunteers for public service is often forced to divide their time between that service and their family. That's a concession I'm no longer willing to make.

In closing, I would be remiss not to thank the many outstanding individuals, from both parties, that I have shared the dais with both as a committeeman and freeholder/commissioner. No elected official can do it alone. Public service requires teamwork, compromise and a willingness to hear opposing opinions. I also want to thank the many talented and dedicated professionals in Toms River Township and Ocean County's government who have assisted me over the years. My tenure would not have been possible without the hard work of these outstanding men and women.

Rest assured that although I will not seek re-election, the people of Ocean County will always be in my thoughts and in my heart. It has been my privilege to serve you all.


Joe Vicari

Attachment: *Accomplishments*