

MIDDLETOWN

Board to decide on Marseglia's replacement

The likely appointee to the township supervisor post is a former newspaper reporter and editor and political speechwriter.

By CHRIS ENGLISH COURIER TIMES

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The appointment of Democrat Chuck Thompson to the Middletown Board of Supervisors is almost certain.

A vacancy board will meet Tuesday night to decide on a replacement for Bucks County commissioner-elect Diane Marseglia, who resigned as supervisor last month to get ready for her new job. The vacancy board consists of the four remaining supervisors — Republicans John J. Kelly III, Jasper Caro and Lisa Pflaumer and Democrat Robert McMonagle — plus vacancy board Chairman Bill Cosen, a Democrat.

Pflaumer and McMonagle already have said they favor Thompson, who narrowly missed his bid for a supervisor seat in the November election. Cosen also recently said he would likely vote for Thompson.

"At this time, that's the direction I'm leaning, yes," said Cosen. "It's obvious the guy [Thompson] wants the job, and like Mrs. Pflaumer said, he was almost elected so it seems like the will of the people that he be appointed."

If he gets the job as expected, Thompson said he's looking forward to starting his time as a public servant.

"I ran for office to serve the people of the township and I'll still be able to serve as an appointee as well as if I'd been elected," he said. "I'm honored Lisa Pflaumer was the one who originally nominated me, since she is a Republican."

Pflaumer's motion at a meeting last month to appoint Thompson to fill the vacancy failed 2-2, with Kelly and Caro both voting against. They wanted to interview candidates and said there might be someone better qualified than Thompson.

A former newspaper reporter and editor and speechwriter for a New Jersey state senator, Thompson, 61, runs a marketing company with his wife, Christine, from their home in the Deep Dale West section of Middletown. A 1964 Neshaminy High School graduate, Thompson lives in the house he grew up in.

Thompson's running mate, McMonagle, and Republican George Leonhauser won the election for two supervisor seats, with Thompson finishing just 28 votes behind Leonhauser.

Both McMonagle and Pflaumer said Thompson is the logical choice as a replacement for Marseglia because he finished third in the election.

Kelly and Caro disagreed. At last Tuesday's meeting, they nominated former county commissioner and PennDOT administrator Andy Warren, and former township supervisors Ray Mongillo and Joe Wenda to replace Marseglia, but the motions failed after McMonagle and Pflaumer voted against them.

"Those were three qualified names out there who have all served and done it before," said Kelly. "If we wanted someone with experience, those three people all had it. I think more people should have been looked at than just one."

Caro agreed but also looked ahead.

"If [Thompson] gets on, I'll work with him," said Caro. "Once he's on, he's a member of the board and we'll all try to do our best for the township."

If Thompson is appointed, he will serve until the next municipal election in 2009 and would then have to run and win in order to keep his place on the board. There will be a two-year supervisor seat up for election in 2009, and whoever is elected to it would serve out the remainder of Marseglia's term, which was scheduled to run through 2011.



Chuck Thompson