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Supervisor is likely to face predecessor in primary

Henning Holmgaard will run against Robert Fretz in Forks Twp.

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Forks Township Supervisor Henning Holmgaard said Friday that he'll seek a second term, but a May 17 primary battle is likely against at least one person, Robert Fretz, the man Holmgaard replaced six years ago.



Holmgaard, 61, of Dogwood Terrace is the liaison to the Police Department and serves on the sewer authority. Before moving to Forks in 1989 from Hunterdon County, N.J., he served on the Alexandria Township Committee for five years and for three years was a Hunterdon County freeholder, a post similar to a county commissioner in Pennsylvania.

A Republican, Holmgaard probably will be pitted against Fretz, a fellow Republican who served as supervisor for 12 years before deciding not to seek re-election in 1999. Fretz, 75, of Mitman Road has said he intends to begin circulating nominating petitions as soon as they're available. "I am running," he said.

Holmgaard, who moved to the United States from Denmark in 1969, is the co-owner of a Century 21 real estate franchise in Clinton, N.J., and deals in commercial real estate.

He said he is running again to see several projects to completion, including the \$10 million municipal complex and accreditation for the Police Department. He also said he wants to monitor technological improvements, which include recently installed computer software to process and monitor finances.

"The other reason that I am running is because of all the development that we have," he said. "The horse is out of that barn. It doesn't help slamming the door after the horse has left. What I would like to see is that we have some say in having that horse run in the direction that we want."

Fretz is a retired mechanic and shop manager for the Roger Penske organization's Porsche-Audi agency in Allentown, and formerly ran Bob's Foreign Cars in Phillipsburg. He has lived in Forks since 1940.

"I thought I could retire with peace of mind," he said Friday. "But the job the five supervisors have done over there, everybody has their own agenda instead of worrying about the people of the township."

Fretz, who said he was heavily involved in creating farmland preservation areas in the township, noted he is concerned about development in Forks. Housing development is trying to infringe on the farmland zones, he said. "That's sacrilege. I'm sorry."

There could be at least one other candidate in the race if a township citizens group, Forks Action Committee, is successful in recruiting efforts. The group, formed about six months ago, describes itself as an ad hoc watchdog and political action group.

"We have been very pleased with the interest level and response to our call for candidates and we have been formally approached by several different persons who are seeking our counsel and support," the group said in a statement. "The Forks Action Committee is eager to field a candidate for election that will bring energy, knowledge, decency, common sense, and a solid work ethic to this office at this critical time in our township's history."

Holmgaard's six-year term is the only one among the five supervisors that expires this year.

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