



News

# SENIOR BROOKLYN DEMS ELECT CARLO SCISSURA TO CEREMONIAL LEADERSHIP ROLE

By Kevin Duggan 1 Posted on January 16, 2020



Brooklyn Democratic leaders elected New York Building Congress President Carlo Scissura to the chairmanship of the party's Kings County Committee on Jan. 15. Courtesy of New York Building Congress

As Brooklyn Democratic party boss Frank Seddio prepares to step down, political honchos elected veteran businessman and former political staffer Carlo Scissura to the largely ceremonial chairmanship of the Kings County Democratic Committee vacated last fall.

"I'm excited," Scissura said. "I love Brooklyn and I love to organize."

The party's 42 district leaders voted to appoint Scissura — who was nominated for the position by Seddio — at a closed-door meeting on Wednesday. The role, which was vacated by Joseph Bova last September, comes with the responsibility of chairing the county committee's

frequently-chaotic twice-yearly meetings, which one politico hopes will be run better under his leadership.

"He's somebody that is kind of outside the traditional power structure of the party," said Park Slope District Leader Doug Schneider. "I think we're going to see regular financial reports, a secretary that publishes regular public minutes — just basic good government things that have inexplicably been missing and that we've spent decades fighting for."

Scissura currently heads the construction industry trade group the New York Building Congress, as well as Mayor Bill de Blasio's expert panel studying the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway repairs plan.

He previously was the president and chief executive officer of the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce. He has served as former Borough President Marty Markowitz's chief of staff and ran for his boss's position in 2012, before dropping out to take over the Brooklyn Chamber gig.

While Scissura said it was too early to say what specific changes he would make to the county meetings, he said he would use his longtime management experience in and out of government to amplify all voices within the party, something reform-minded groups have long demanded.

"In anything I've taken on, whether on a school board or as chief of staff to Borough President Marty Markowitz ... I've always tackled it the same: meetings should be organized, everyone should have the opportunity to have a voice," he said. "We may not agree on all things but we agree that people's voices should be heard."

Despite not being an elected politician, Scissura is now also a member of and will have a vote on the party's executive committee. Disgraced former party boss Vito Lopez, who preceded Seddio, used to pad his vote by stocking that role and other officer positions in the party with unelected loyalists, according to Carroll Gardens District Leader Josh Skaller, but Scissura assured his colleagues that he would abstain from committee votes.

"I will not be voting on the executive committee," he said. "It's not my job."

The Bay Ridgite is also a board member of the Brooklyn Navy Yard Development Corporation, a vice chair of the advocacy group Friends of the Brooklyn Queens Connector, and the head of several Italian-American cultural groups, and one southern Brooklyn pol said

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Scissura's background was a welcome addition to the party's top ranks.

"He's a well known community leader and knows a lot of the district leaders," said District Leader Ari Kagan (D-Brighton Beach), who also voted for him.

Scissura's election came the same night that Seddio officially announced his plan to [resign from his much more powerful position](#) as party leader Wednesday. Seddio has endorsed Flatbush Assemblywoman Rodneyse Bichotte as his interim successor, although it's up to the legislator's fellow district leaders to elect her at yet another closed-door session on Jan. 20.

Echoing concerns about the short timeframe for Seddio's likely succession, Skaller said that, while he voted for Scissura, he would like to see a broader ballot on the position from rank-and-file Democrats at their next general meeting.

"I believe that there will be an opportunity at the next county-wide meeting to reassess that and I would be more than happy to entertain a more democratically elected person," he said.

Frank Seddio could not be reached for comment.

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