

# MATTERS of APPEAL

## A TREASURY UPDATE ON THE BOARD OF FINANCE AND REVENUE

Pennsylvania Treasury | [www.patreasury.gov/bfr](http://www.patreasury.gov/bfr)

### Message from Treasurer Torsella

For many years, the proceedings of the Board of Finance and Revenue have garnered little public notice. However, over the past several years, the Board has undergone fundamental changes to become more independent, relevant and publicly accessible. Instrumental in this reform was the restructuring of the Board from members who were responsible for levying and collecting taxes and who represented the Commonwealth in tax appeals to members who are independently appointed, qualified members. Membership is now independent of the Department of Revenue and consists of 2 individuals nominated by the Governor and approved by the Senate, and the State Treasurer or my designee. The initial terms of the members appointed by the Governor are 4 and 6 years, respectively, after which both terms become 6 years. The initial 4-year term of Board Member R. Scott Shearer recently ended and Governor Wolf appointed Paul J. Gitnik to a 6-year term. As Chairman of the Board, I am pleased to welcome Attorney Gitnik to BFR. Each individual brings valuable experience and expertise to the table. Mr. Gitnik brings a deep community knowledge, a passion for philanthropy and an enthusiasm for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's tax community.

This edition of Matters of Appeal introduces you to Attorney Gitnik and provides more details of our initiative to further grow transparency at the Board of Finance and Revenue.

Your comments and feedback are welcome via [bfr@patreasury.gov](mailto:bfr@patreasury.gov).



### Get To Know Member Gitnik

Paul J. Gitnik was appointed a Member on June 22, 2018. Paul comes from the private practice of law where he had a concentration in tax. Paul not only founded his own law firm (on the same site that his maternal grandparents founded their first business in 1933), but also founded, operated and then sold several companies in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Paul brings both his professional experience as a tax professional, as well as a real understanding for taxpayers since he grew up in a multi-generational family business and was a business owner himself. Paul graduated cum laude from the Duquesne University School of Law and then from the Georgetown University Law Center with an LL.M. in Taxation. Member Gitnik lives in the Duquesne Heights community located in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.



### Q&A with Member Gitnik

#### What is the one thing about you that surprises people?

Since I was adopted by loving parents who were United States Citizens; with my last name being Gitnik, that I was born in Italy and I am a naturalized citizen.

#### If you could change your first name, what would it be?

Dominic, because of Saint Dominic Savio.

**What is the first career you dreamed of having as a child?** The Pope. I wanted to be the first Pope from the United States.

**What is the one thing your father taught you about business that completely changed your life?** You must know every aspect about your business, so that you can understand your employees, as well as the big picture.

**What is the one thing your mother taught you about business that completely changed your life?** You must have a passion about whatever you do.

**What businesses do you have a deep knowledge about that would surprise people?** Malt Beverage (Maternal Grandparents and Parents), Death Care (Paternal Grandfather), Health Payor Recovery and Oil and Gas Industry.

**What is your dream job?** Member of the Board of Finance & Revenue. Really!

Your comments and feedback are welcome via [bfr@patreasury.gov](mailto:bfr@patreasury.gov).

## DID YOU KNOW?

BFR Board Members must be:

- United States Citizens
- Residents of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
- An attorney in good standing before the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania or a certified public accountant in good standing before the State Board of Accountancy
- Experienced in a position requiring substantial knowledge of Pennsylvania tax law for 10 years
- Devoted to full time duties of the office and while a member may not engage in any other gainful employment

## BOARD OF FINANCE AND REVENUE 2019 HEARING DATES

January 15 & 16

February 26 & 27

April 2 & 3

May 7 & 8

June 11 & 12

July 16 & 17

August 20 & 21

September 24 & 25

October 29 & 30

December 10 & 11

## Board of Finance & Revenue:

### Who We Are

Jacqueline A. Cook (chair)  
 Designee for Joe Torsella, State Treasurer  
 Paul J. Gitnik (member)  
 David R. Kraus (member)

### BF&R Staff

#### Secretary of the Board

Thomas W. Watson

#### Docketing

Jodi Reed, Supervisor

#### Liquid Fuels

Eric Schreiner, Supervisor

#### Taxpayer Advocate

Nicole Zimmerman

## CONTACT BF&R

### BY MAIL:

Board of Finance and Revenue  
 Riverfront Office Center  
 1101 South Front Street  
 Suite 400  
 Harrisburg, PA 17104-2359

### HOURS OF OPERATION:

Mon.—Fri., 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

### BY PHONE:

Tax Appeals: (717) 787-2974  
 Liquid Fuels: (717) 787-6534  
 Taxpayer Advocate: (717) 787-2974

### BY FAX:

(717) 783-4499

### BY EMAIL:

bfr@patreasury.gov

