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Former Water Authority commissioner to lead Erie County GOP

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Karl Simmeth. (Provided photo)

Karl J. Simmeth, the Town of Boston Republican leader and former Erie County Water Authority commissioner, is expected to be named new Erie County GOP chairman at a Saturday Executive Committee meeting in Williamsville.

Nicholas A. Langworthy, the outgoing county leader elected state chairman in July, said Thursday his successor will assume the county reins immediately after the morning election at the Wyndham Garden hotel. Langworthy will officially resign his county post on Saturday to concentrate on new statewide duties, he said, while veteran Vice Chairman Carmen Vacco also will retire.

Former Assemblyman Raymond W. Walter, the party's unsuccessful candidate for county executive in 2015, will take over as vice chairman. Erin Baker, Langworthy's wife and former chief of staff to Walter in the Assembly, becomes the party's finance chairwoman.

Langworthy acknowledged that Simmeth, who is 63 and retired, is not a household name in local Republican circles. But he noted that Simmeth serves in the important post of state

committeeman, and insisted the new chairman brings a wealth of experience and local familiarity to immediately take over and succeed.

Simmeth is expected to draw a salary from the county committee, but Langworthy said that figure has yet to be determined.

“He’s done an effective job over the years and is very well respected by the other town leaders,” he said. “I feel the team taking over brings to the table strong skills, many successes, and its own set of contacts.