

APRIL 5, 2002

Cammarata out as head of youth panel

■ Mayor Bloomberg appoints a new director for agency that Islander led

Jerry Cammarata, Staten Island's representative to the city Board of Education who doubled as the city commissioner of the Department of Youth and Community Development, has been replaced as the city's \$133,000-per-year youth commissioner.

Jeanne Mullgrav — director of a nonprofit group that finances after-school programs called the After-School Corporation — will take over.



Cammarata

Mayor Michael Bloomberg also named a new commissioner of the city's Office of Emergency Management, a post that won national prominence after the

terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center.

John Odermatt, the agency's first deputy director and a 20-year veteran of the Police Department, will replace Richard Sheirer of Dongan Hills. Sheirer retired March 31.

Immediately after the terrorist attack, Sheirer directed emergency operations at the Ground Zero alongside former Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani, including coordinating evacuations and overseeing rescues and triage.

Odermatt served as Sheirer's top deputy.

"Having served New Yorkers during the city's darkest day, John Odermatt is the right person to guide this invaluable agency," said Bloomberg.

Last month, insiders said Cammarata, appointed youth commissioner in June 2000 by Giuliani, was battling deputy commissioner Carlton Mitchell to keep his job, but that the Bloomberg transition team had turned thumbs down on both men.

At the time, Bloomberg said no decision had been made yet on the agency, which he said was "running well" under Cammarata.

In December, Cammarata reportedly submitted his resume for a deputy mayor's post with the incoming Bloomberg administra-

tion.

Cammarata said this morning he does not expect to leave the administration, saying "it is with the best intentions that I now move to assist Mayor Bloomberg in other areas of government." Cammarata could not say what his next move would be, but said he expects to remain as the youth and community development commissioner for the next two weeks to help Ms. Mullgrav "ease into her position."

A former member of the Staten Island Community School Board, Cammarata was named to the Board of Ed by former Borough President Guy V. Molinari in 1995.

Controversy swirled around Cammarata earlier this year when some parents and the Staten Island Community School Board accused him of not being responsive in his role on the city's Board of Education.

"All we were trying to do was to advise...of our needs, and that is to have some sort of communication between the Board of Education representative and the school board," said board chairwoman Eleanor Conforti in February.

She appealed to Borough President James Molinaro to intercede. Molinaro ordered Cammarata to be more responsive and to have a presence at every Community School Board meeting.

Cammarata was hailed at the time of his appointment as Youth Services commissioner as perfect for the job.

"Jerry Cammarata has spent his life helping our children," then-Mayor Giuliani said at the time of Cammarata's appointment. Then-Borough President Guy Molinari, Molinaro and Herman Badillo, chairman of the City University board of trustees, also hailed the appointment.

The Department of Youth and Community Development supports a variety of youth service programs, and administers the city's Community Services Block Grant Funds.

Cammarata, active in Republican politics in New York, serves as the New York City area director of the New York State School Board Association and is an adjunct faculty member of City University. He enjoys faculty privileges at Wagner Colleges, where he has been associated since the early 1970s. He chairs the Selective Service System civilian review board of New York City and the Big Five School District of New York State.

Cammarata is the third Staten Islander to head Youth Services. New Springville resident Alfred Curtis Jr. headed it until his appointment as director of development for the United Nations Cor-

poration. Oakwood resident Martin Osterreich headed it before that. Curtis lost the United Nations position — another political appointment — in January.

In other appointments yesterday, Bloomberg named Sayu Bhowani commissioner of the Office of Immigrant Affairs, and Hector Gonzalez as chairman of the Civilian Complaint Review Board.