

Doria Begins Commissioner Job; Lo Re Acting Mayor

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BAYONNE -- Now it's official.

Bayonne Mayor Joseph V. Doria Jr. has tendered his resignation as the city's chief executive, which was effective midnight Monday, Columbus Day.

And, like the famous explorer, Doria will be setting off for new territory in the world of state bureaucracy. On Tuesday, he became acting commissioner of the state Department of Community Affairs.

"It has been an honor to serve you as mayor since 1998," Doria said, in a brief valedictory to city residents. "I am very grateful for the opportunity that you gave me to lead Bayonne. I wish all of you the best, and look forward to seeing you around town for the rest of my life."

In a letter filed with the City Clerk's Office, Doria thanked City Council members and city employees for their service, and added: "I believe that during my time in office, Bayonne has moved forward in a positive and progressive manner."

Doria has previously said that he and his family expect to continue living in Bayonne and that he will be commuting to his new job in Trenton.

On Tuesday, City Council President Vincent Lo Re Jr. became acting mayor. At that point, the council has 30 days to decide, by simple majority vote, who should serve as mayor until the general election in November 2008, when voters will elect someone to fill out the remainder of Doria's unexpired term through July 1, 2010, City Law Director John Coffey II said.

If the council fails to choose someone, then Lo Re will continue as both acting mayor and City Council president through November 2008, Coffey said.

If the council chooses Lo Re to continue as acting mayor, then the council would have to select - again, by simple majority vote of all five council members - a replacement for Lo Re to serve as an at-large council member through November 2008. In the event of a 2-2 tie, Lo Re could cast the deciding vote, Coffey said.