

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: PERSONNEL

DATE: MARCH 12, 2014

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COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS TAYLOR  
KENNY  
SOKOL  
MERLINO  
DICKINSON  
GIRARD  
WOOD  
SIMPSON

OTHERS PRESENT:

GRETCHEN STEFFAN, COUNTY HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR  
MARGIT LAWRENCE, PERSONNEL TECHNICIAN  
KEVIN GERAGHTY, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD  
PAUL DUSEK, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR  
MARTIN AUFFREDOU, COUNTY ATTORNEY  
JOAN SADY, CLERK OF THE BOARD  
FRANK THOMAS, BUDGET OFFICER

COMMITTEE MEMBER ABSENT:

SUPERVISOR VANSELOW

SUPERVISORS BROCK  
CONOVER  
FRASIER  
SEEBER

REPRESENTING SUNY ADIRONDACK:

KRISTINE DUFFY, PRESIDENT  
LARRY PALTROWITZ, LEGAL COUNSEL  
AMY CLUTE, SELF-INSURANCE ADMINISTRATOR  
LLOYD COTE, ADMINISTRATOR, WESTMOUNT HEALTH FACILITY  
ROBERT IUSI, PROBATION DIRECTOR  
MIKE SWAN, WARREN COUNTY TREASURER  
JEFFERY TENNYSON, SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC WORKS  
BUD YORK, WARREN COUNTY SHERIFF  
JENNA PIERSON, BLUE SHIELD OF NORTHEASTERN NY  
DON LEHMAN, *THE POST STAR*  
SARAH MCLLENITHAN, SECRETARY TO THE CLERK OF THE BOARD  
*Please see sign-in sheet for additional meeting attendees*

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Mr. Taylor called the meeting of the Personnel Committee to order at 9:02 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Merlino, seconded by Mr. Simpson and carried unanimously to approve the minutes from the prior Committee meeting, subject to approval by the Clerk of the Board.

Copies of the agenda were distributed to the Committee members and a copy of same is on file with the meeting minutes.

Commencing the agenda review with Section III, Action Agenda, Mr. Taylor announced Item 1 called for an executive session to discuss collective bargaining negotiations and a proposed agreement with SUNY Adirondack faculty.

Motion was made by Mr. Girard, seconded by Mr. Merlino and carried unanimously to enter into an executive session pursuant to Section 105(e) of the Public Officer's Law. Kristine Duffy, President of SUNY Adirondack, and Larry Paltrowitz, Legal Counsel for SUNY Adirondack, were invited to participate in the executive session.

Executive session was held from 9:03 a.m. until 9:23 a.m. Upon reconvening, Mr. Taylor announced that no action had been taken during the executive session.

Motion was made by Mr. Dickinson, seconded by Mr. Merlino and carried unanimously to approve the collective bargaining agreement with the SUNY Adirondack Faculty Association for the term commencing September 1, 2012 and terminating August 31, 2015, and the necessary resolution was

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authorized for the March 21<sup>st</sup> Board Meeting.

Mr. Dickinson thanked Mr. Paltrowitz for his dedication and efforts on behalf of SUNY Adirondack, as well as Warren and Washington Counties.

Moving on to Agenda Item 2, privilege of the floor was extended to Amy Clute, Self-Insurance Administrator, who was in attendance to address the Committee relative to the Employee Wellness Committee. Mrs. Clute advised she was making the presentation on behalf of Dan Durkee, Senior Health Educator for the Public Health Department, who was unable to attend the meeting due to other commitments. She noted the presence of Natasha Corcoran, of the Probation Department, who was a member of the Employee Wellness Committee, and Jenna Pierson, of Blue Shield of Northeastern NY, who had been working with the Employee Wellness Committee.

Mrs. Clute and Ms. Pierson proceeded to make a powerpoint presentation entitled "Warren County Employee Wellness Committee - Creating a culture of Health and Wellness @ Warren County", a copy of which is on file with the meeting minutes.

With regard to Agenda Item 2B, *request to authorize the Farm to Desk program*, Mrs. Clute distributed a packet of information pertaining to Juniper Hill Farm CSA, *a copy of which is on file with the meeting minutes*, explaining that if the request were approved, Juniper Hill Farm would be allowed to deliver fresh produce to employees one day per week. She explained this agreement would incur no cost to the County, as employees would order produce and pay Juniper Hill Farm directly; Mrs. Clute advised a similar food co-op program had been approved with Tri-City Foods via prior Resolution No. 568 of 2013. She further apprised there had been a lot of interest and excitement from County employees about the program and she advised that if the request was approved, a Lunch and Learn program would be scheduled in order to fully educate them about the program.

Motion was made by Mr. Girard, seconded by Mr. Merlino and carried unanimously to approve the request to authorize an agreement with Juniper Hill Farm to allow Warren County employees to participate in the Farm to Desk program, and the necessary resolution was authorized for the March 21<sup>st</sup> Board meeting.

Mr. Taylor advised Agenda Item 3 included two requests from the Human Resources/Civil Service/Personnel Office. Item 3A, he announced, included a request to reclassify the position of Human Resource Assistant (*Annual Salary \$38,300*) to County Human Resource Executive Assistant (*Annual Salary \$42,000*) effective March 24, 2014. Mr. Taylor noted this was a non-Union position that was not mandated and received no reimbursements. When asked for further clarification on this request, Gretchen Steffan, County Human Resources Director, explained that based on her reassessment of the initial position description offered to her for the Human Resource Assistant she had found that she would require assistance of a person with a higher level of skills and qualifications and she noted a revised listing of these requirements was included in the agenda packet. Ms. Steffan said she had reviewed existing Civil Service titles and position descriptions already approved across the State and determined that a job description and position established in Ithaca County closely aligned with the types of skills and qualifications she sought. In association with the enhanced skills, Ms. Steffan advised she had identified that a commensurate increase in salary would be necessary. She noted that although a position of this nature would likely command a higher salary than the one she had proposed, she was confident she would be able to find a good candidate for the position in light of the enhanced benefits package offered by the County.

Motion was made by Mr. Dickinson and seconded by Mr. Kenny to approve the request as presented.

Mr. Dickinson questioned if funding was available within the existing budget to fund the increased

salary and Ms. Steffan replied affirmatively, explaining that \$38,300 had been budgeted for the position and there were sufficient funds available within her budget to cover the increase. Ms. Wood asked how this position fit with the redesign of the Human Resources/Civil Service/Personnel Office structure and Paul Dusek, County Attorney, said he had reviewed the request and felt the reclassification fit well with the reorganization plans. He explained Ms. Steffan had found the workload in the Department was overwhelming, due to the lack of computerization and redundancy in some areas, and he said that in terms of where Ms. Steffan intended to take the position in the future, he believed this enhanced position was imperative. Mr. Girard asked if they would be seeking for a Human Resources Assistant position to be created in addition to the County Human Resources Executive Assistant in the near future. Ms. Steffan replied in the negative, but noted that she would be returning to present all of the reorganization plans for the Department at a future meeting to show the realignment of duties and responsibilities once a Personnel Officer was hired. Ms. Wood then asked if the position would have any impact on the Local Law adopted for establishment of the Human Resources Department and Mr. Dusek responded that he had reviewed the duties and responsibilities set forth in the Local Law and believed this new position seemed to be consistent and complimentary to them; however, he added, they might determine a need to make minor revisions to the Local Law in the future.

There being no further discussion on the matter, Mr. Taylor called the question and the aforementioned motion to reclassify the Human Resource Assistant to a County Human Resource Executive Assistant, thereby amending the Departmental Table of Organization, was approved unanimously and the necessary resolution was authorized for the March 21<sup>st</sup> Board Meeting.

Mr. Taylor announced Item 2B included a request to fill the Human Resource Executive Assistant position, *Annual Salary \$42,000*.

Motion was made by Mr. Dickinson, seconded by Mr. Merlino and carried unanimously to approve the request and the necessary resolution was authorized for the March 21<sup>st</sup> Board Meeting.

Continuing to Agenda Item 4, Mr. Taylor outlined several requests from the County Treasurer, as follows:

- 4A) Request to fill vacant position of Accountant, (*Annual Salary \$65,000*) due to resignation. This is a non-Union, position that is not mandated and receives no reimbursement; there will be no impact to the 2014 Budget as this is a budgeted position.
- 4B) Request to fill vacant position of Junior Accountant (*Annual Salary \$56,000*) due to promotion. This is a non-Union position that is not mandated and receives no reimbursement; there will be no impact to the 2014 Budget as this is a budgeted position.
- 4C) Request to fill vacant position of Accounting Technician (*Grade 19, Annual Base Salary \$41,881*) due to promotion. This is a Union position that is not mandated and receives no reimbursements; there will be no impact to the 2014 Budget as this is a budgeted position.
- 4D) Request to fill vacant position of Account Clerk #1 *19 hours (Grade 4, Annual Base Salary pro-rated to \$13,320)* due to resignation. This is a Union position that is not mandated and receives no reimbursements; there will be no impact to the 2014 Budget as this is a budgeted position. *The County Treasurer has advised this position will not be filled immediately to allow funding for possible temporary staffing.*
- 4E) Request for a new contract with Heber Associates Inc. to obtain temporary staffing to help with accounting functions during maternity leave and while training new staff members.

Motion was made by Mr. Dickinson and seconded by Mr. Merlino to approve Items 4A-D.

Mike Swan, County Treasurer, apprised that he had received two resignations during the prior week which would become effective on March 14<sup>th</sup> for the Accountant and Account Clerk positions and they had been trying to determine a way to fill the positions very quickly, as well as how they would cover a 12-week maternity leave during the upcoming summer. He advised that subsequent to submitting the documents included in the agenda packet he had discussed the salaries listed for the Accountant and Junior Accountant positions listed in Items 4A and 4B with Ms. Steffan and had since decided to lower those salaries to \$61,600 and \$50,000 respectively. Regarding Item 4E, Mr. Swan said he had determined Heber Associates was the only local temporary staffing company that had temporary assistance available for use during maternity leave, as well as during the time period when they would be training staff, and he assured the Committee that the temporary help would not incur any additional cost to the County as he intended to refrain from immediately filling the Account Clerk #1 position in order to use that funding for the Heber Associates contract. He continued that the temporary help would be used to address the more mundane accounting procedures addressed by the Department so that the work did not become backlogged. Mr. Swan concluded that the Accountant and Junior Accountant positions would be filled by promotion, while the Account Technician and Account Clerk #1 positions would be filled with new employees.

Mr. Dickinson questioned whether any prior notification about the two resignations had been received and Mr. Swan replied in the negative, advising that both had come as a surprise.

Messrs. Dickinson and Merlino amended their motion and second to include the lower salaries indicated by Mr. Swan for the Accountant (*\$61,600*) and Junior Accountant (*\$50,000*) positions. There being no further discussion, Mr. Taylor called the question and the aforementioned motion was unanimously approved, thereby authorizing the necessary resolutions for the March 21<sup>st</sup> Board Meeting.

With regard to Item 4E, Mr. Swan noted that Heber Associates had a preferential agreement with the State of New York for temporary staffing needs, and he reiterated they were the only local company that offered staffing with an accounting background that suited the Department's needs.

Motion was made by Mr. Sokol, seconded by Mr. Girard and carried unanimously to approve Item 4E and the necessary resolution was authorized for the March 21<sup>st</sup> Board Meeting. ***Note: Subsequent to the meeting, it was determined this resolution would be sponsored by the Finance Committee, as the Supervisory Committee for the Treasurer's Office, who also approved this request at their March 12<sup>th</sup> meeting.***

Mr. Taylor announced Item 5 consisted of a referral from the Criminal Justice Committee, *Probation*, requesting to fill the vacant position of Probation Officer, *Grade 19, Annual Base Salary of \$41,881*, due to termination. He noted that this request was initially to be presented at the February Committee meeting; however, he said, Robert Iusi, Probation Director, had withdrawn the request in order to explore alternative ways to supervise low risk Probation cases that may not require an additional Probation Officer. Privilege of the floor was extended to Mr. Iusi to provide an update on his findings.

Mr. Iusi apprised that he had reviewed the way in which his Department handled Probation caseloads and concluded that he would like to attempt to supervise low risk offenders in a different way. He explained that individuals on probation were classified using an evidence-based actuary instrument that determined risk assessment, following which each was assigned to a caseload depending on geographic region, although separate caseloads were used for sex offenders and domestic violence cases. Mr. Iusi reported on a new supervision regulation recently passed by the New York State Division of Probation (*NYS DP*) which provided flexibility in terms of how individuals were supervised, allowing more effort for high risk cases than for those considered to be of medium or low risk. He

stated that after some review with the NYSDP, he had developed a proposal for the remainder of 2014 to refrain from filling the Probation Officer position, and instead, increase the hours of the existing Probation Assistant #2 position from part-time to full-time with the intent being to develop a low risk caseload which the Probation Assistant would oversee using electronic technology means and oversight from a Senior Probation Officer. He added that by taking advantage of the new NYSDP supervision rules and implementing this more flexible approach, they could use their resources more efficiently and cost effectively. Mr. Iusi advised that at a future Criminal Justice Committee meeting he would report on the need for additional electronic equipment needs at a cost of about \$5,000, and he noted the decrease in salary costs by not filling the vacant Probation Officer position, advising that if this plan worked, they could potentially achieve a savings in the neighborhood of \$20,000 for the County while improving the functions of the Probation Department.

Mr. Dickinson questioned what actions were necessary of the Committee and Mr. Iusi replied he would withdraw his request to fill the vacant Probation Officer position and instead seek authorization to increase the hours of the Probation Assistant #2 position from part-time to full-time, increasing the associated salary from \$14,806 to \$29,612.

Motion was made by Mr. Dickinson, seconded by Mr. Merlino and carried unanimously to increase the hours of the Probation Assistant #2 position from part-time to full-time, and the associated salary from \$14,806 to \$29,612, thereby amending the Departmental Table of Organization, and the necessary resolution was authorized for the March 21<sup>st</sup> Board Meeting.

Mr. Taylor apprised Agenda Item 6 consisted of a referral from the Health Services Committee, *Westmount Health Facility*, requesting authorization for the Administrator of Westmount Health Facility to develop a plan to create part-time LPN positions, contingent upon the utilization of funds budgeted in 2014 for per diem LPN's and with the approval of the County Administrator.

Mr. Kenny asked if there were any predictions with regards to the successful filling of the part-time LPN positions and Lloyd Cote, Administrator of Westmount Health Facility, responded right now Westmount had full-time per diem positions in place and he noted that two of these had been filled but both were vacated within less than a week in favor of part-time jobs in other facilities. Mr. Cote stated creating this new category of staff would help to attract per diem staff for Westmount.

Motion was made by Mr. Sokol, seconded by Ms. Wood and carried unanimously to authorize Mr. Cote to develop a plan to create part-time LPN positions, as outlined above, and the necessary resolution was authorized for the March 21<sup>st</sup> Board Meeting.

Moving on to Items 7A-C, referrals from the Public Safety Committee, Mr. Taylor advised Item 7A included a request from the Fire Prevention & Building Code Enforcement Department to fill the vacant position of Fire Prevention & Building Code Enforcement Officer #1, *Grade 17, Annual Base Salary of \$40,059*, due to retirement, as well as to fill any vacancies resulting from promotion. He noted this was a non-mandated, Union position which received no reimbursements and he said the filling of this position would result in a budgetary savings of approximately \$8,500 due to a decrease in longevity pay.

Motion was made by Mr. Girard, seconded by Mr. Sokol and carried unanimously to approve the request and the necessary resolution was authorized for the March 21<sup>st</sup> Board Meeting.

Mr. Taylor pointed out that Items 7B and 7C consisted of requests from the Sheriff & Communications Division. Item 7B, he stated, requested to fill the vacant position of Computer Programmer, *Annual Base Salary of \$36,954*, due to promotion; he added that this was a Union position which was not mandated and did not receive any reimbursements but would incur a budgetary savings of \$21,000 due

to a decrease in longevity pay. Mr. Taylor noted this was the position formerly held by Michael Colvin who was promoted to the Information Technology Director position.

Motion was made by Mr. Kenny, seconded by Mr. Sokol and carried unanimously to approve the previously mentioned request and the necessary resolution was authorized for the March 21<sup>st</sup> Board Meeting.

Item 7C, Mr. Taylor announced, included a request to increase the maximum accrual of sick leave days for non-Union employees of the Sheriff's Office from 180 to 200, but retain the 90-day limit for payout of sick days upon retirement.

Bud York, Warren County Sheriff, advised this change had been recommended by Mr. Dusek in response to a request from the non-Union employees working in the Sheriff's Office. He advised that when this issue was discussed at the last Public Safety Committee Meeting, Chairman Geraghty had questioned how this would affect the County and he asked Mr. Dusek to comment on that inquiry. Mr. Dusek advised that the Sheriff's Office had very few non-Union employees and he noted the PBA Agreement stated that those Sheriff's employees covered thereunder could earn up to 200 sick days but could only "cash out" (*receive payment for*) 90 of them upon retirement. He explained that this modification had been made to the PBA agreement a number of years ago in response to the argument that staff would like to be able to accrue sick days beyond the previous limit of 180 days for use in the event that a serious illness arose. Mr. Dusek further explained that the previous agreement had allowed for PBA employees to "cash out" half of their sick time upon retirement, which would have been 90 days in accordance with the previous 180 day accrual limit, and while the County had agreed to expand the accrual limit to 200 days, they had maintained the 90-day "cash-out" limits. He commented that in this case, the discussion he had with Sheriff York, was that his staff generally rose through the ranks by promotion and supervised those at lower levels and while those lower level staff received this benefit, it seemed the higher level employees should receive the same benefits. Mr. Dusek apprised that this change would only be for the Sheriff's Office and would not affect any other County staff; he added that the CSEA contract included different sick time accrual limitations of a 165-day maximum accrual limit and a 70-day "cash out" limit.

Motion was made by Mr. Sokol, seconded by Mr. Simpson and carried unanimously to approve the request, as outlined above, and the necessary resolution was authorized for the March 21<sup>st</sup> Board Meeting.

Mr. Taylor pointed out that Agenda Items 8A-C included referrals from the Social Services Committee. Item 8A, he said, was a request from Countryside Adult Home to fill the vacant position of Laborer #1, *Grade 2, Base Annual Salary of \$24,180*, due to retirement. He noted this was a mandated, Union position which received 50% State reimbursements, the filling of which would result in a budgetary savings of \$8,198 due to a decrease in longevity pay.

Motion was made by Mr. Kenny, seconded by Mr. Simpson and carried unanimously to approve the request and the necessary resolution was authorized for the March 21<sup>st</sup> Board Meeting.

Continuing, Mr. Taylor advised Agenda Items 7B and C consisted of requests from the Department of Social Services. He explained Item 7B requested to fill the vacant position of Social Services Investigator #3, *Grade 11, Annual Base Salary of \$33,687*, due to resignation, as well as any vacancies created by promotion. He apprised this was a mandated, Union position that received 77% Federal and State reimbursements and he pointed out that the filling of this position would result in a budgetary savings of \$8,967, due to a decrease in longevity pay.

Motion was made by Mr. Girard, seconded by Ms. Wood and carried unanimously to approve the

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request, thereby authorizing the necessary resolution for the March 21<sup>st</sup> Board Meeting.

Addressing Item 7C, Mr. Taylor presented a request to authorize the Commissioner of the Department of Social Services to fill any future vacancies for Caseworker positions in the Child Protective, Adoption/Foster Care, Preventive and Adult Protective Units without Committee approval for the time period commencing retroactive to the February 28<sup>th</sup> Social Services Committee meeting and terminating March 28, 2014, and ratifying the actions of the Commissioner of the Department of Social Services in filling any vacancies prior to the March 21<sup>st</sup> Board Meeting.

Motion was made by Mr. Simpson and seconded by Mr. Kenny to approve the request.

Mr. Girard questioned the premise of this request, stating that while he understood the need for expediency and efficiency in filling Social Services positions, the history of vacancies occurring within the Social Services Division had led the Personnel Committee to require exit interview be performed to determine what reasons had caused the vacancies to occur and he said he believed providing this authorization would preempt those efforts. Mr. Taylor said he concurred with this opinion, but noted he had discussed this issue with Mr. Dusek, who agreed that this action might be a good idea. Mr. Dusek stated that when the County was having financial difficulties which led them to adopt a hiring freeze policy stating that before positions could be filled, regardless of whether funding was included in the County Budget, a 2/3 majority vote in favor of filling a position needed to be secured from the Supervisory, Personnel and Finance Committees, as well as a 2/3 majority vote of the full Board of Supervisors before a position could be filled. He said that at the time this policy had been adopted, he understood the value of the process because the County needed to seriously consider the level of staffing for County Departments and he noted this process had led to a number of staffing reductions. However, Mr. Dusek stated, he believed the County was now at minimum staffing and policies had been put in place to ensure reviews were being undertaken to determine whether vacancies needed to be filled and at what levels, as exemplified by the authorizations sought by Mr. Iusi earlier in the meeting. He continued that because he felt the County had reached minimum staffing levels, it was his opinion that the policy requiring successive approvals to fill positions was becoming more of a hindrance than a help. Mr. Dusek noted one of the first places this problem was addressed was in the Sheriff's Office where authorization had been requested to automatically fill Corrections Officer positions in order to maintain minimum mandated staffing levels in the County Jail; he added that these same issues were happening in other Departments, such as in the Department of Social Services. Mr. Dusek pointed out that in some cases, it took more than a month to attain the necessary approvals to fill a vacancy, depending on where they were in the meeting cycle when the vacancy was announced, and in many cases overtime costs were incurred for those employees working extra hours to cover the vacancy.

Mr. Dusek stated that he fully understood concerns that employee turnovers should continue to be monitored in order to detect issues that might be causing them and he felt the more effective way to do this would be to include a category on the appropriate meeting agendas listing any positions filled. For instance, he continued, if five Department of Social Services Caseworker positions were filled, the Social Services, Personnel and Finance Committee agendas would list the five positions filled in order to the members of each updated. Mr. Dusek stated that right now, they were reviewing each position individually but were not seeing the cumulative results and he said he felt the approach he proposed would provide a clearer picture of the vacancies occurring as the agendas would provide a defined listing; he added that in the event they were in favor of modifying the policies relating to the filling of vacant positions, a 2/3 majority vote of the Board of Supervisors would be required. Mr. Dusek advised that if they were hesitant to make this change, they could alternately approve a policy similar to the one adopted for the hiring of Corrections Officer positions, for the filling of vacant Caseworker positions within the Department of Social Services as the delay caused by the Committee process hindered the hiring and training of new staff. Mr. Dusek reported that, through no fault of her own, Suzanne Wheeler, Commissioner of the Department of Social Services, was regularly losing Caseworker

positions to the State of New York in association with the Medicaid changeover because the State wage rates were higher than the County's; additionally, he pointed out that many Social Services Caseworkers also qualified to work in the Probation divisions, which also offered higher pay rates. He commented that the Department of Social Services employed about 135 staff members and the different things impacting operations could vary for a number of reasons. Finally, Mr. Dusek emphasized, because the County was at a minimum staffing level, all Departments were negatively impacted by any vacancies; however, he added, the negative effects to the Department of Social Services were especially difficult because they had responsibilities to address cases with children and the elderly, as well as to provide service programs to residents.

Ms. Wood stated that she served on the Social Services Committee and she admitted she had voted against this request. She noted that when Ms. Wheeler had initially made this proposal, she had done so indicating that she did not have any vacant Caseworker positions to fill at that time. Ms. Wood said she understood that the current policy was sometimes difficult for the Departments, but she felt it was better to research the positions before they were filled, rather than finding out they were unnecessary after they were filled. She stated that if the policy required changes, it was preferable to review it as a whole and as it applied on a County-wide basis and she said she did not see any pressing need to approve changes at the current meeting. Ms. Wood apprised that as per information presented at the last Budget Committee meeting, there were still some tough financial issues ahead for Warren County and this was not the time to reduce oversight as it was a good thing to keep a firm grasp on where expenditures were being incurred. She agreed that the process was cumbersome and could be streamlined in some areas; however, that review should be undertaken before making small changes that might be more difficult to address later.

Mr. Merlino said he agreed with Mr. Dusek's comments, but questioned why the request was to provide authorization retroactive to February 28<sup>th</sup>, rather than from the current date; Joan Sady, Clerk of the Board, answered that the Committee had approved the request to become effective from the date of the meeting (*February 28<sup>th</sup>*) until the next Committee Meeting which would be held on March 28<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Wheeler interjected she had been trying to take a proactive approach by requesting a policy that would allow her to fill vacant Caseworker positions without prior Committee/Board of Supervisors authorization and the Social Services Committee had elected to approve the policy, but only for the restrictive term provided. She said that because there were currently no Caseworker vacancies to fill, she was not objective to withdrawing the request in favor of bringing the issue back to the Social Services Committee for further discussion and review.

Mr. Dickinson said he concurred with Ms. Wood's opinions, and he stated that as the County's elected representatives they should be looking at all of these positions before they were filled. He advised that he was not opposed to reviewing the current policies to determine if revisions could be made to improve the process, but stated he was not in favor of the current proposal and would vote against it. Mr. Conover commented that if a situation involving public safety concerns requiring immediate attention arose in any Department, the Committee Chairman and the County Administrator could be contacted to determine how the situation could be addressed on an emergency basis.

Motion was made by Mr. Sokol, seconded by Mr. Kenny and carried unanimously to withdraw the request and refer the issue back to the Social Services Committee for further review.

Mr. Taylor questioned whether a proposal could be prepared regarding revisions to the current policies relating to the filling of vacant positions to streamline the process and Mr. Dusek responded he was unsure whether the Committee was in favor of doing this. Ms. Wood said that while she did not mind making revisions to the policy to make it less cumbersome, she preferred to look at it as a whole before changes were made for each individual Department; she added that they should make sure the changes considered fit the needs of the County. Mr. Girard agreed with this opinion, stating he felt it was better

to review the policy and bring information to the Board of Supervisors as to how the policy could be revised to streamline the process and remove any redundancies while maintaining the current systems of checks and balances. Based on this information, Mr. Dusek stated that he would review the policy to determine what changes could be made to improve the policy while maintaining the need for supervisory review and presenting his findings at the next Personnel Committee meeting.

Mr. Taylor noted that Jeffery Tennyson, Superintendent of Public Works, was in attendance to present items not included on the meeting agenda, relating to reorganization of staff within his Department. Mr. Tennyson apologized for not first presenting this request at the Public Works Committee, but said he had discussed the initiative with some members of the Board of Supervisors. He apprised that the DPW had been in transition for the past six years, becoming more engineering centric and moving more responsibility for project management, oversight and quality management to the Engineering division. Mr. Tennyson explained that as part of this effort, he was recommending a reorganization of staff that would change how the Operations (*Highway*) Division interacted with the Engineering Division and himself. He said he recommended that the current Deputy Superintendent of Operations position be deleted and the new positions of Highway Manager #2 (*Annual Salary \$67,426*) and Engineer I #2 (*Annual Salary \$57,426*). Mr. Tennyson advised the duties of the Deputy Superintendent of Operations would be split with the operations specific to routine maintenance and management of resources to be retained by the Highway Manager while the others would be moved to the Engineering Division. He said he would recommend funding the Engineering I #2 position by un-funding another position of the same title, but said he would like to retain the unfunded position within the organizational structure. Mr. Tennyson stated they had reached a critical point in transitioning to construction season and he would reassess the Departmental structure again in September, at which point he would present any additional adjustments necessary. He noted that a larger restructuring plan for the Department was being prepared that would support the requested changes, which he intended to present at an upcoming Public Works Committee Meeting.

Mr. Dickinson questioned if this reorganization included the removal of current employees or hiring of new and Mr. Tennyson replied they would be adjusting current employees. Mr. Sokol questioned the budget impact of these changes and Mr. Tennyson estimated there would be an immediate reduction in salary expenses of about \$7,000. Mr. Girard questioned how this change would effect the person currently filling the Deputy Superintendent of Operations and Mr. Tennyson advised that employee would be moved to the Engineering Division.

Motion was made by Mr. Merlino and seconded by Mr. Dickinson to delete the position of Deputy Superintendent of Operations and create the position of Highway Manager #2, *Annual Salary \$67,426*, effective March 24, 2014, thereby amending the Departmental Table of Organization, and the necessary resolution was authorized for the March 21<sup>st</sup> Board Meeting.

Resuming the agenda review with Item 9, items to be discussed by the County Administrator, Mr. Dusek advised Item 9A pertained to the revised Code of Ethics, as mentioned at the last Committee meeting. He noted that Warren County's Code of Ethics had not been revised since 1990 and they were long overdue for an update since the laws had changed since that time. Mr. Dusek said Martin Auffredou, County Attorney, had spent a considerable amount of time working on the Code of Ethics revisions and he asked Mr. Auffredou to explain them to the Committee.

Mr. Auffredou distributed two documents to the Committee members, one of which was a draft Local Law encompassing the Warren County Ethics and Disclosure Law, while the other was a draft version of a document entitled "Rules of the Warren County Board of Ethics"; *copies of both documents are on file with the meeting minutes*. He pointed out that adoption of these documents would bring Warren County into compliance with Article 18 of the General Municipal Law. Mr. Auffredou reiterated Mr.

Dusek's prior comment that Warren County had a Code of Ethics which was adopted in 1990 and had not be updated since, and was in need of revision. He explained the updates would essentially codify the provisions of Article 18 of the General Municipal Law regarding ethics and ethics disclosure, as well as formally establish a Board of Ethics comprised of non-supervisor members who were appointed by the Board of Supervisors for specific terms. Mr. Auffredou advised much of the disclosure and the disclosure form were primarily the same as the version currently in place and continued the annual disclosure requirements. He stated that the newer documents did a much better job of clarifying what constituted a conflict and those that needed to be disclosed, as well as what to do in the event of an ethics complaint. Mr. Auffredou continued that the Rules document established the procedure for filing a complaint, how the Board of Ethics adjudicated complaints and the penalties that could be imposed, etc. He said the documents were being presented for the Committee's independent review and he said they expected to review the documents further in the coming months and when the Committee developed a comfort level with them, a public hearing would be scheduled in advance of adopting the Local Law. Mr. Auffredou apprised he had distributed these documents to the Department Head staff asking them to review and respond as he felt this was a process that everyone should be participating in as almost everyone employed by the County was subject to these disclosure requirements. He commented that the documents were modeled after those adopted by many other counties, but noted that modifications could be made. Mr. Auffredou stated that although the documents might seem a bit overwhelming, in order to achieve what they were trying to accomplish, they needed to be very specific with this Local Law. He concluded that anyone with questions or concerns should contact him directly.

Returning to the requests presented by Mr. Tennyson, Mr. Taylor noted the Committee had not acted on the request to create the position of Engineer I #2, as previously discussed.

Motion was made by Mr. Sokol and seconded by Mr. Simpson to approve the creation of Engineer I #2, *Annual Salary \$57,426*, effective March 24, 2014, thereby amending the Departmental Table of Organization.

A brief discussion ensued, following which Mr. Taylor called the question and the aforementioned motion was carried by unanimous vote.

Mr. Dusek advised Item 9B requested an executive session to discuss Union negotiations, but suggested delaying this until after the remainder of the agenda review was completed.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Ms. Steffan and Margit Lawrence, Personnel Technician, who were in attendance to present the 2013 Municipal Civil Service Agency Report; *copies of the Report were distributed to the Committee members and a copy is also on file with the meeting minutes*. Ms. Steffan advised Section 26.1 of the Civil Service Law required each Municipal Civil Service Agency to report their merit system activities to the Civil Service Commission; she added that the report had to be made annually with a deadline of March 1<sup>st</sup> and she advised that Kathy Barrie, former Personnel Officer, had submitted the required report prior to her recent retirement. Ms. Steffan explained the State used this report to evaluate the kind of activities the Civil Service Departments across the State were using for merit system administration, but also provided an opportunity to look at the activity engaged in.

Ms. Steffan then introduced Ms. Lawrence, who she said was responsible for a number of Civil Service related activities represented by the report, and she asked Ms. Lawrence to provide an overview of the Report distributed, which she proceeded to do. At the conclusion of her review, Ms. Lawrence invited any Committee members interested to visit her Office to see the volume of paperwork involved in this process. Ms. Steffan commended Ms. Lawrence, stating that she did an excellent job of collecting all of the data included in the Report. At Ms. Steffan's prompting, Ms. Lawrence then gave a brief overview

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of the application and testing process, specifically highlighting a recent testing for Corrections Officers; she noted that test results could take up to two months to receive from the State of New York, at which time letters were sent to those that had taken the test and the agility portion of the test was scheduled.

Mr. Taylor thanked Ms. Steffan and Ms. Lawrence for their report, stating this was the first time he had received this information. Ms. Steffan responded she felt it was important for the Committee to see the types of activities performed by the Civil Service Department which included several functions including recruiting of employees for Warren County.

Concluding the agenda review, Mr. Taylor advised there were no Pending Items to address.

Returning to Item 9B, Mr. Taylor noted the need for an executive session to discuss collective bargaining negotiations.

Motion was made by Mr. Merlino, seconded by Mr. Sokol and carried unanimously to enter into an executive session, pursuant to Section 105(e) of the Public Officer's Law.

Executive session was held from 10:40 a.m. until 11:23 a.m.

Upon reconvening, Mr. Taylor announced that no action had been taken during the executive session.

There being no further business to come before the Personnel Committee, on motion made by Mr. Kenny and seconded by Mr. Dickinson, Mr. Taylor adjourned the meeting at 11:24 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sarah McLenithan, Secretary to the Clerk of the Board  
*Written by Amanda Allen, Deputy Clerk of the Board*