

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: PERSONNEL & HIGHER EDUCATION

DATE: AUGUST 3, 2017

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS SEEBER
FRASIER
MCDEVITT
BROCK
MONTESI
LEGGETT
BRAYMER
GERAGHTY
SIMPSON
HYDE

COMMITTEE MEMBER ABSENT:

SUPERVISOR VANSELOW

OTHERS PRESENT:

REPRESENTING SUNY ADIRONDACK:
ANN MARIE SOMMA, VICE PRESIDENT FOR ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES &
TREASURER
REPRESENTING JAEGER & FLYNN ASSOCIATES, INC.
MATT SCHUETTE, AGENCY PARTNER
KURT JAEGER, EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT AND CHIEF MARKETING
DIRECTOR
RONALD CONOVER, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD
BRIAN REICHENBACH, COUNTY ATTORNEY
AMANDA ALLEN, CLERK OF THE BOARD
FRANK THOMAS, BUDGET OFFICER
SUPERVISORS BEATY
DICKINSON
MACDONALD
MERLINO
SOKOL
STROUGH
JOANN MCKINSTRY, ASSISTANT TO THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
JASON CARUSONE, ACTING DISTRICT ATTORNEY
MARCY FLORES, PUBLIC DEFENDER
PATRICIA NENNINGER, PERSONNEL OFFICER
JACKIE FIGUEROA, COUNTY HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR
MIKE SWAN, COUNTY TREASURER
BRIAN LAFLURE, DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF EMERGENCY SERVICES/FIRE
COORDINATOR
JEFFERY TENNYSON, SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
AMY CLUTE, SELF-INSURANCE ADMINISTRATOR
DAN DURKEE, HEALTH EDUCATOR
MICHAEL WILD, TOWN OF QUEENSBURY RESIDENT
DON LEHMAN, *THE POST STAR*
SARAH MCLENITHAN, DEPUTY CLERK OF THE BOARD

Please note, the following contains a summarization of the August 3, 2017 meeting of the Personnel & Higher Education Committee; the meeting in its entirety can be viewed on the Warren County website using the following link: <http://warrencountyny.gov/gov/comm/Archive/2017/personnel/>

Supervisor Seeber called the meeting of the Personnel & Higher Education Committee to order at 10:00 a.m.

Motion was made by Mrs. Frasier, seconded by Mr. Simpson and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the previous Committee meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk of the Board.

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

Commencing with the Agenda review, Ms. Seeber offered privilege of the floor to anyone present wishing to address the Committee on any matter. There being no response she moved on to Agenda Item 1 which pertained to SUNY Adirondack/Higher Education information. Ms. Seeber apprised she had asked Ann Marie Somma, *Vice President for Administrative Services & Treasurer*, to attend the

meeting today to provide a brief update on the College. Ms. Somma thanked the Committee members for their support

on the Colleges 2017-2018 Operating Budget, noting now that it had been approved by both Warren and Washington Counties, they were awaiting approval from SUNY (*State University of New York*), which generally occurred in September. She said she was pleased to report the NSTEM (*Nursing, Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics*) Project remained on time and on budget, with the ribbon cutting scheduled for September 8, 2017 at approximately 4:15 p.m. for which the invitations would be distributed shortly. She mentioned although there would still be a significant amount of finishing touches that had to be made on the building, classes were scheduled to take place there during the Fall semester. In regards to the WORC (*Workforce Readiness Center*) Project, Ms. Somma reported that work there was well underway and ahead of schedule and she added they had commenced the work on the existing science building, as well.

Ms. Somma thanked the Committee members for scheduling joint meetings with Washington County, as it allowed for the two sponsor Counties to come together with the representatives of the College to discuss some of the things going on there. She informed the next joint meeting was scheduled for September 8, 2017 at 9:30 a.m. in the Multipurpose Room of the Residents Hall which was located to the right of the front entrance of the building. She stated some of the items included on the agenda concerned their annual Capital Request to SUNY, as well as presenting the Education Support Personnel contract which they were currently in the process of negotiating.

Mr. Montesi advised that budget review for the Departments overseen by the Criminal Justice & Public Safety Committee were scheduled for September 8th from 9:00 a.m. to 11:15 a.m. and he noted several Supervisors would be participating. Ms. Somma questioned whether any of the members were also members of the Personnel & Higher Education Committee and Mr. Montesi replied in the affirmative. Ms. Somma apprised that she would have a representative from the College contact the County to determine whether the meeting time needed to be adjusted. Ms. Seeber requested that Mr. Montesi forward the meeting date and time to Amanda Allen, *Clerk of the Board*, so it could be added to the meeting calendar and then coordinate the meeting at the College with their representatives to ensure there was no scheduling conflict.

Proceeding with the Agenda review, Ms. Seeber informed Agenda Item 2A-D consisted of the following Items/Requests to be Discussed by the Human Resources Director and/or Personnel Officer:

- 2A) Review of proposal prepared by Jaeger & Flynn Associates pertaining to self-insured option for the County's health insurance to include stop-loss coverage.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Matt Schuette, *Agency Partner, Jaeger & Flynn Associates*, who informed the County had a December renewal for its health and prescription plans which meant a decision needed to be made on whether to move forward with a self-insured arrangement or remain with the minimum premium arrangement for health insurance and to continue on with the self-insured plan for prescriptions. He mentioned they had been discussing the different options for self-insured plans and how they differed from the current coverage in place for several months now, as well as a review of the financial pros and cons associated with them. He reminded them their job as the County Health Insurance Broker was to be advisors and to ensure the Committee members were well informed on the topic; however, he noted, it was important to mention they were not pushing the County to move forward one way or another, as there was no benefit to them regardless of which option the County chose to move forward with.

In terms of risk, Mr. Schuette encouraged the Committee to keep in mind under the current arrangement with health insurance medical claims, the County currently owned the risk up to the first \$250,000 for each member but under prescription plan, the County was fully liable for the entire cost since there was no re-insurance or stop loss coverage in place which they had consistently conveyed was one of their concerns. He outlined the positive aspects of moving forward with a self-insured health plan as follows: Medical and Prescription plans would be covered under one re-insurance amount; the re-insurance they were proposing commenced as low as \$100,000 per member and was applicable to both medical and prescription which was an improvement from a risk perspective of where the County was currently; since it appeared the Affordable Care Act would not be done away with any time soon in 2018 the Health Insurance Tax would come back into play automatically adding plus 2.3% which was equivalent to about \$230,000 to the rates if the County were to remain with its current health plan; carrier trend and risk charged would be eliminated; claim avoidance programs would be put into place in the future; and the County would become more aggressive in terms of how to manage claims.

Mr. Schuette said it was necessary to clear up the confusion on how moving forward with a self-insured health plan would impact the employees. He explained the change would have no impact to the employee benefits, as the only change made would be to the way the County paid and covered claims. He pointed out the County could return to a fully insured health plan if they determined in a few years they were unhappy with how the self-insured plan was working out but this would depend on whether it was financially feasible to do so.

In regards to the negative aspects of moving forward with a self-insured plan, Mr. Schuette outlined them as follows: one individual in the group could be charged a higher stop loss limit (laser) such as \$150,000 instead of \$100,000; the stop loss carrier, Blue Shield of Northeastern New York in this case, would not be able to finalize what they could charge until mid to late September since they were waiting for the most recent claims to finalize; Blue Shield of Northeastern New York was monitoring a few members that could potentially have a stop loss laser; and there would be a few years when the cost of claims were significant.

Mr. Schuette stated that they had received a request to speak to the predictions regarding claims; however, he noted, even under the County's current arrangement it was nearly impossible to predict this but they did arrange it to ensure they were aware of what the worst case scenario would be in year one with the risk set low in this case with the stop loss level set at \$100,000. He noted the \$100,000 stop loss level was less than what the County had in place today.

A lengthy discussion ensued regarding the proposals distributed to the full Board during which Mr. Schuette and Kurt Jaeger, *Executive Vice President & Chief Marketing Director*, answered a number of questions posed by the Committee members. In the course of the discussion, Ms. Seeber asked Brian Reichenbach, *County Attorney*, to elaborate on what type of action was required in order to move forward with changing the County Health Plan to self-inured. Mr. Reichenbach apprised if the pleasure of the Committee was to change the course of the health plan a recommendation for a resolution for the full Board to entertain was required. Mike Swan, *County Treasurer*, added that a resolution was also required to authorize him to pay the termination fee to Blue Shield of Northeastern New York.

Motion was made by Mr. Simpson and seconded by Mr. Leggett to authorize self funded medical and prescription plans to include a \$100,000 specific stoploss deductible as presented by Jaeger & Flynn Associates, Inc.

Ms. Braymer pointed out more savings would be achieved if they raised the stop loss level to \$250,000 instead of \$100,000. Mr. Simpson stated he was taking into consideration the County's risk tolerance, as the County would be taking on more risk than they previously had. He commented he felt it would be more prudent to commence with the lower level and then raise it up in the future if they were comfortable doing so. Ms. Braymer asked Mr. Schuette whether raising the level at a future date was an option and he replied in the affirmative. Mr. Geraghty stated he felt it was more appropriate for them to commence by covering their losses to the maximum extent and then make an adjustment if there was a change to the trend.

Mr. Brock questioned what they planned on doing with the savings they accrued from the change and Mr. Swan responded the savings would be set aside in the Health Insurance Reserve Account to assist with paying for claims during the years when they were significant. Mr. Brock asked whether Mr. Schuette could estimate the cost of returning to full insured if they determined after a few years they wanted to do so and Mr. Schuette replied the only way the County would entertain changing back would be if the claims were exorbitantly high. As an example, he stated if claims were \$15 million in five years, the carriers were designed to cover the risk while still having some level of profit so they would have to reserve above and beyond \$15 million. He said his best guess would be that they would charge the County between \$17-\$18 million to cover the risk and administer the program.

A discussion ensued following which Ms. Seeber called the question and the motion was carried unanimously to authorize self funded medical and prescription plans to include a \$100,000 specific stoploss deductible as presented by Jaeger & Flynn Associates, Inc. and the necessary resolution was authorized for the August 18th Board meeting.

Ms. Seeber thanked Messrs. Schuette and Jaeger, the representatives of the Human Resources Department and the Supervisors who provided input to the process.

Ms. Seeber called for a motion to authorize the County Treasurer to pay the termination fee to Blue Shield of North Eastern New York. The motion was made by Mr. Simpson, seconded by Mr. Leggett and carried unanimously. The necessary resolution was authorized for the August 18th Board meeting.

2B) Jaeger & Flynn Associates to demonstrate the employee view of their benefits administration system, Employee Navigator, and a review of voluntary vision options.

No update was provided on this item.

Continuing with the Agenda review, Ms Seeber apprised that Agenda Items 3A-G pertained to the following referrals from the Criminal Justice & Public Safety Committee:

3A) *District Attorney*- Request to amend the Table of Organization and Salary Schedule to reclassify the position of Typist 1, *Grade 3, Annual Salary \$26,585 (currently budgeted at \$33,403)*, to Secretary, *Grade 4, Annual Salary \$27,824*, effective August 21, 2017

Motion was made by Mr. Montesi, seconded by Mrs. Frasier and carried unanimously to approve the request and the necessary resolution was authorized for the August 18th Board Meeting.

- 3B) *District Attorney*- Request to amend the Table of Organization and Salary Schedule to reclassify the position of Crime Victim Specialist, *Grade 14, Annual Salary \$38,848 (currently budgeted at \$46,423)*, to Senior Crime Victim Specialist, *Grade 16, Annual Salary \$41,158 (currently budgeted at \$50,414)*, effective August 21, 2017.

Jason Carusone, *Acting District Attorney*, apprised when he made the initial request before the Criminal Justice & Public Safety Committee, it was regarding the modification of the position of Crime Victim Specialist to a Senior Crime Victim Specialist based upon the work that was being done and the work required of the position. He said that he and the Personnel Officer had assigned the grade of the previous Senior position which was a 16; however, he noted, upon a closer review it was determined that the position needed to be reevaluated which he was in the process of working on with the Personnel Officer and the County Human Resources Director. He requested that the aforementioned request be tabled to allow them more time to determine the appropriate grade for the position which he would bring before the Criminal Justice & Public Safety Committee for approval prior to coming before the Personnel & Higher Education Committee.

Motion was made by Mr. Leggett, seconded by Mrs. Frasier and carried unanimously to table the request and refer back to the Criminal Justice & Public Safety Committee.

As a point of order, Ms. Seeber returned to Agenda Items 2C-D.

- 2C) Review of report on tracking of vacancies filled.

Ms. Seeber noted this pertained to review of tracking on vacancies that had been filled which was for informational purposes only.

- 2D) Request to amend Resolution No. 293 of 2017 to correct the salary listed for the Senior Typist position from \$34,270 to \$27,824.

Motion was made by Mr. Montesi, seconded by Mrs. Frasier and carried unanimously to approve the request and the necessary resolution was authorized for the August 18th Board Meeting.

In regards to Agenda Items 3C-F, Ms. Seeber informed these requests had been previously discussed at this month's Criminal Justice & Public Safety Committee meeting following which she met with Marcy Flores, *Public Defender*, to discuss the conversation that took place there. She stated through the Performance Review Process, they were encouraging all Department Heads to review salary ranges with the Personnel and Human Resources Departments. She said while the dollar amounts for Agenda Items 3C-F had not been changed since being approved by the Criminal Justice & Public Safety Committee, there was a chart which was distributed that notified that there were salary ranges for the work that was being done for these particular positions. She continued, Ms. Flores intent was to make the justification for salary adjustments through the Budget and performance evaluation process based upon the job they were doing. She mentioned they were starting the process to tie in the non-union

positions into the performance evaluation budgeting process with the Budget Officer during the budget season.

- 3C) *Public Defender*- Request to amend the Table of Organization and Salary Schedule to decrease the salary of 1st Assistant Public Defender from \$82,620 to \$72,600, effective September 4, 2017.

- 3D) *Public Defender*- Request to amend the Table of Organization and Salary Schedule to decrease the salary of the 3rd Assistant Public Defender from \$59,353 to \$57,000, effective September 4, 2017.

- 3E) *Public Defender*- Request to amend the Table of Organization and Salary Schedule to decrease the salary of the 5th Assistant Public Defenders Salary from \$56,552 to \$55,000, effective September 4, 2017.

- 3F) *Public Defender*- Request to amend the Table of Organization and Salary Schedule to increase the salary of the 7th Assistant Public Defender from \$47,500 to \$52,405, effective September 4, 2017.

Motion was made by Mr. Geraghty, seconded by Mr. Leggett and carried unanimously to approve the requests as outlined above and the necessary resolutions were authorized for the August 18th Board Meeting.

- 3G) *Public Defender*- Discussion regarding proposed salary ranges for Public Defender positions.
Note: this item was not previously reviewed by the Criminal Justice & Public Safety Committee.

Ms. Seeber stated this particular item pertained to the discussion they just had regarding the chart that was distributed which she noted was only for informational purposes.

Moving along, Ms. Seeber stated that Agenda Items 4A-B pertained to the following referrals from the Health, Human & Social Services Committee, *Social Services*:

- 4A) Request to amend the Table of Organization and Salary schedule to increase the salary of Case Supervisor A from \$59,000 to \$63,000, effective August 21, 2017.

Motion was made by Mr. Simpson, seconded by Mrs. Frasier and carried unanimously to approve the request and the necessary resolution was authorized for the August 18th Board Meeting.

- 4B) Request to amend the Table of Organization and Salary Schedule to create and fill the new position of Resource Recovery Coordinator, *Grade 14, Annual Salary \$38,848*, and delete the position of Resource Assistant #2, *Grade 12, Annual Salary \$36,822*, effective August 21, 2017.

Motion was made by Mrs. Frasier, seconded by Mr. Leggett and carried unanimously to approve the request and the necessary resolution was authorized for the August 18th Board Meeting.

Continuing to Agenda Item 5, Ms. Seeber apprised that it concerned a request from the Self-Insurance Administrator on behalf of Warren County Wellness Committee to authorize the Warren County

Wellness Committee to offer on-site exercise classes through the Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Eastern New York Community Wellness Benefit.

A motion was made by Mr. Montesi and seconded by Ms. Braymer to approve the request as outlined above.

Amy Clute, *Self-Insurance Administrator*, advised as requested by employees the classes would be offered on-site and covered by the Blue Shield of Northeastern New York Wellness Benefit if they were members. She said the instructors would be contractors of Blueshield of Northeastern New York, all of

which would have the proper certifications and liability insurance, etc. as required by the County Attorney. She apprised the classes would be scheduled after work, noting there would be no cost to the County.

A discussion ensued following which Ms. Seeber called the question and the motion was carried unanimously to approve the request as outlined above. The necessary resolution was authorized for the August 18th Board meeting.

Ms. Seeber announced the next Wellness Committee meeting was scheduled for on August 15th at 11:00 a.m. and she encouraged the Committee members to attend, noting she would be there. She commented she felt the County was moving in the right direction in terms of wellness for the employees. She stated she would have Mrs. Allen distribute a notice to the full Board regarding the date, time and location of the meeting which was in the third floor conference room of the Human Services Building.

Agenda Item 6, Ms. Seeber advised, involved a request from the County Treasurer to amend the Table of Organization and Salary Schedule to amend the Table of Organization and Salary Schedule to reclassify the position of Senior Account Clerk #6, *Grade 7, Annual Salary \$31,872 (currently budgeted at \$37,302)*, to Principal Account Clerk #3, *Grade 10, Annual Salary \$35,698 (currently budgeted at \$41,712)*, effective August 21, 2017.

Motion was made by Mr. Montesi, seconded by Mr. Leggett and carried unanimously to approve the request and the necessary resolution was authorized for the August 18th Board Meeting.

Proceeding to Agenda Item 7, Ms. Seeber stated they had discussed having an executive session but instead determined a joint meeting of the Personnel & Higher Education and Finance Committees would be scheduled at 9:00 a.m. before the August 18th Board Meeting specifically for the purpose of discussing negotiations with the union which she asked Mr. Reichenbach to elaborate on. Mr. Reichenbach apprised the negotiating team on behalf of the County had arrived at an agreement in principle and a memorandum of agreement with the Sheriff's Alliance which they now had the opportunity to ratify. He continued, if as anticipated the Sheriff's Alliance ratified the agreement then it would be up to the Board to determine whether they wanted to approve it. He said as part of the process and to provide the Sheriff's Alliance some time, he was proposing that the joint meeting of the two Committees be scheduled prior to the August 18th Board Meeting to allow Larry Paltrowitz, *Legal Counsel for the County*, to brief the Committees on the parameters of the agreement and the proposal. He added this was a proper subject to hold an executive session for.

Ms. Seeber informed Agenda Item 8 pertained to a Request/Item to be Discussed by the County Administrator regarding discussion pertaining to the County Administrator job description. She stated her hope was to get a consensus of the Committee as to how to move forward with the position. She reminded them that Local Law No. 3 of 2010, which was distributed to them, dealt specifically with the job description for the position. She thanked Ms. Braymer for the written comments and suggestions she had submitted regarding the job description, as they had been very helpful. She mentioned there had been a significant amount of discussion amongst the members of the Board regarding what form they would like to see the position as in the path moving forward. She said they hoped to have a new County Administrator in place by January 1, 2018 and she thanked Mr. Geraghty for filling in until the position was filled, as well as agreeing to assist with the transition when someone was hired.

A discussion ensued during which Patricia Nenninger, *Personnel Officer*, noted a specific process was required in order to change the title of the position which required them to go before the State Commission and get approval to have that title taken out of the competitive class. Ms. Seeber asked whether the Committee was comfortable keeping the title of the position as County Administrator and they all replied in the affirmative.

Following a lengthy discussion regarding the job description, Ms. Seeber requested that Mr. Reichenbach explain what was required in order to amend Local Law No. 2 of 2010 to modify the job description which could impact their ability to advertise. Mr. Reichenbach advised because the qualifications were set by Local Law in order to change them the Local Law would need to be amended. He said he did not believe this would hold up making the changes agreed upon and conducting interviews; however, he noted, when they were ready to hire someone the law would have to have been amended. He added it could be argued that what was contained in the current Local Law was flexible enough to allow them to move forward with what they wanted to do and then to amend it, but he would suggest once the changes were made his Office could prepare a proposed amendment to the Local Law.

Ms. Seeber informed she would work with the Human Resources Department and take into consideration all of the comments made today, as well as the written ones from Ms. Braymer to develop a proposed job description which would be distributed prior to the Board meeting so they could move forward with the hiring process. She added she would have Jackie Figueroa, *County Human Resources Director*, distribute the salary range for the position from the salary study she received from NYSAC (*New York State Association of Counties*).

Prior to adjourning, Ms. Seeber noted there were no pending items to discuss this month and Agenda Item VI consisted of a listing of vacancies approved for filling by other Committees since the last Personnel & Higher Education Committee meeting, which included the following:

- Public Works-** Building Maintenance Mechanic, *Grade 13, Annual Salary \$37,946*, due to lateral transfer.
Motor Equipment Operator -Light #2, *Grade 5, Annual Salary \$28,951*, due to resignation.
- Sheriff-** Patrol Officer #12, *Annual Salary \$40,390*, due to resignation.
- Social Services-** Case Worker #20, *Grade 16, Annual Salary \$41,158*, due to resignation.
Case Worker #22, *Grade 16, Annual Salary \$41,158*, due to resignation.
Keyboard Specialist #6, *Grade 3, Annual Salary \$26,585*, due to resignation.

Social Welfare Examiner #41, *Grade 8, Annual Salary \$33,189*, due to resignation.

There being no further business to come before the Personnel & Higher Education Committee, on motion made by Mr. Montesi and seconded by Mr. Brock, Ms. Seeber adjourned the meeting at 11:17 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah McLenithan, Deputy Clerk of the Board