

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: PERSONNEL & HIGHER EDUCATION

DATE: MARCH 1, 2018

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COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS GERAGHTY  
FRASIER  
MCDEVITT  
BRAYMER  
SIMPSON  
HYDE  
DIAMOND  
LOEB  
MERLINO  
SOKOL

OTHERS PRESENT:

JACKIE FIGUEROA, COUNTY HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR  
PATRICIA NENNINGER, PERSONNEL OFFICER  
RONALD CONOVER, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD  
MARY ELIZABETH KISSANE, COUNTY ATTORNEY  
AMANDA ALLEN, CLERK OF THE BOARD  
FRANK THOMAS, BUDGET OFFICER  
SUPERVISORS BEATY  
DRISCOLL  
MAGOWAN  
MIKE SWAN, COUNTY TREASURER  
KEVIN HAJOS, DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC WORKS  
JOANN MCKINSTRY, ASSISTANT TO THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR  
TRAVIS WHITEHEAD, TOWN OF QUEENSBURY RESIDENT  
DON LEHMAN, *THE POST STAR*  
SARAH MCLENITHAN, DEPUTY CLERK OF THE BOARD

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COMMITTEE MEMBER ABSENT:

SUPERVISOR LEGGETT

Please note, the following contains a summarization of the March 1, 2018 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://www.warrencountyny.gov/gov/comm/Archive/2018/personnel/>

Supervisor Geraghty called the meeting of the Personnel & Higher Education Committee to order at 10:02 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Loeb, seconded by Mr. Sokol 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, Mr. Geraghty offered privilege of the floor to anyone present wishing to address the Committee on any matter. There being no response, he moved on to Action Agenda Item 1 advising SUNY Adirondack did not have anything to discuss today and so representatives were not in attendance; he mentioned that he intended to visit the college to meet with Dr. Kristine Duffy, *President of SUNY Adirondack*, in the near future.

Continuing the Agenda review, Mr. Geraghty informed Agenda Items 2A-B consisted of the following Items/Requests to be Discussed by the Human Resources Director and/or Personnel Officer:

2A) *Human Resources*- Review of report on tracking of vacancies filled.

Jackie Figueroa, *County Human Resources Director*, indicated this was included as an informational item to reflect the positions authorized for filling since the last meeting. She encouraged anyone with questions to contact her after the meeting.

2B) *Human Resources*- Request to renew the contract with Alliance Worldwide to perform background checks for management level positions for a term commencing February 19, 2018 and terminating February 19, 2020.

Motion was made by Mr. Loeb, seconded by Mr. Simpson and carried unanimously to approve the request as outlined above and the necessary resolution was authorized for the March 16<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting.

Moving along, Mr. Geraghty stated Agenda Item 3 concerned a referral from the County Facilities Committee, *Airport*, regarding discussion pertaining to whether the County should move forward with hiring a full-time permanent Airport Manger.

Motion was made by Mr. Loeb and seconded by Mrs. Frasier to approve filling the vacant position of Airport Manager.

Mr. Loeb began the discussion, opining that the Airport was a nice facility and should be managed by a County employee on a full-time basis; therefore, he said, he was in support of hiring a new Airport Manager. He then proceeded to make a motion to advertise for the hiring of a full-time Airport Manager, and Mr. Simpson seconded the motion.

Mr. Diamond, speaking as Chairman of the County Facilities Committee which served as the oversight Committee for the Airport, apprised that he had recently spent some time at the Airport to become acclimated with the operations there. He said he had learned that the County had quite an investment in the Airport, and in light of the upcoming negotiation process for the Fixed Base Operator (FBO) contract, he felt there was a need to have an Airport Manager in place to continue to protect the County's investment in equipment, address public relations, and have the ability to provide the degree of knowledge needed to assist in selecting an FBO, as well as to deal with any other Airport issues as they may arise.

Mr. Geraghty stated that the County had hired Airport Managers in the past and could look back at previous hiring processes to develop a job posting and salary range which could be advertised in the next 30 days.

Mr. Geraghty acknowledged Travis Whitehead, *Town of Queensbury Resident*, who commented that while he agreed with all that had been said, he felt the Committee may be getting ahead of themselves by choosing to advertise for this position before it was ultimately decided whether the County intended to allow the FBO to take a larger role at the Airport, similar to the Saratoga County Airport. He noted that while Saratoga County did have employees who worked at the Airport, it was not on a full-time basis due to increased involvement by their FBO. He cautioned that it would be difficult to openly consider these types of FBO proposals when they had already decided to proceed in another direction by hiring a full-time Airport Manager.

Mr. Loeb clarified for the record that he was not in favor of another entity taking over management of the County Airport and preferred that role to be filled by a County employee serving as the Airport Manager.

There being no further discussion, Mr. Geraghty called the question and the motion was carried unanimously.

Ms. Braymer entered the meeting at 10:08 a.m.

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Resuming the agenda review, Mr. Geraghty advised Agenda Items 4A-B pertained to the following referrals from the Health, Human & Social Services Committee:

- 4A) *Countryside*- Request to amend the Table of Organization and Salary Schedule to create the new position of Per Diem Institutional Aide, *Grade 3, Annual Salary \$27,316*, effective March 19, 2018.

Motion was made by Mr. Simpson, seconded by Mrs. Frasier and carried unanimously to approve the request as outlined above and the necessary resolution was authorized for the March 16<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting.

- 4B) *Office for the Aging*- Request to amend the Table of Organization and Salary Schedule to reduce the hours of Meal Site Cook #9 to twenty-five hours per week at the Warrensburg Meal Site effective February 26, 2018.

Motion was made by Mrs. Frasier, seconded by Mr. Sokol and carried unanimously to approve the request as outlined above and the necessary resolution was authorized for the March 16<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting.

Next, Mr. Geraghty apprised Agenda Items 5A-C pertained to the following referrals from the Support Services Committee, *County Attorney*:

- 5A) Request to amend the Table of Organization and Salary Schedule to decrease the salary of the 1<sup>st</sup> Assistant County Attorney from \$73,567 to \$65,000 effective March 19, 2018.

Mr. McDevitt questioned what the appropriate pay scale for an attorney working for Warren County was; he pointed out an increase was recently approved for a Department of Social Services (DSS) Assistant Attorney position to raise the salary to \$73,567 and he questioned whether it was fair for a DSS Assistant Attorney to be paid more than an Assistant County Attorney. Mary Elizabeth Kissane, *County Attorney*, responded that while she did not think this was fair, she did not want to ask for an increase in her budget in order to maintain the higher salary. Mr. Loeb suggested that possibly the best way to address this salary issue would be through the 2019 Budget process.

Ms. Hyde entered the meeting at 10:11 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Simpson, seconded by Mr. Loeb and carried by majority vote, with Mr. McDevitt voting in opposition, to approve the request as outlined above and the necessary resolution was authorized for the March 16<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting.

- 5B) Request to amend the Table of Organization and Salary Schedule to increase the salary of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Assistant County Attorney from \$52,000 to \$60,567 effective March 19, 2018.

Ms. Braymer stated she was not in favor of making this change right now; she noted that the 1<sup>st</sup> Assistant position had yet to be filled and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Assistant would not be filled until later in the year so there would be no harm in waiting.

Motion was made by Mr. Loeb, seconded by Mr. Merlino and carried by majority vote, with Ms. Braymer and Messrs. Diamond and McDevitt voting in opposition, to approve the request as outlined above and the necessary resolution was authorized for the March 16<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting.

- 5C) Request to amend the Table of Organization and Salary Schedule to create the temporary position of Attorney Intern, *Annual Salary \$48,000*, effective August 1, 2018 through January 31, 2019.

Motion was made by Mr. Loeb, seconded by Mr. Simpson and carried by majority vote, with Ms. Braymer voting in opposition, to approve the request as outlined above and the necessary resolution was authorized for the March 16<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting.

Proceeding to Agenda Item 6, Request/Item to be Discussed by the County Administrator, Mr. Geraghty apprised he had been approached by staff to consider implementing an Employee of the Month Program, similar to those used in private industry. He noted that ideas for the Program were included in the attachment provided within the agenda; he asked the Committee to look this over for review and possible revision at their next meeting. Mr. Geraghty acknowledged that because they were not permitted to expend municipal funds for this incentive program, it would have to be based upon donations made by members of the Board within the confines of what was determined to be legally allowable.

With regard to the one pending item listed, Mrs. Figueroa advised there was no update to be provided relative to Jaeger & Flynn Associates, Inc. preparing an analysis on possible incentives the County could offer to encourage retirees to change their health plan from Empire Blue Cross to CDPHP.

Mr. Geraghty said they would he would be asking Jaeger & Flynn Associates, Inc. to reach out to officials in Tompkins County to get some information about the expanded shared services health insurance plan they had implemented which he believed was a self-insured plan. He said he had learned about this program from a recent NYSAC (*New York State Association of Counties*) meeting but had not had an opportunity to do any research on the plan.

With regard to the County's self-insured health insurance program, Mr. Thomas suggested that a working group be identified which could meet with Jaeger & Flynn Associates, Inc. on at least a quarterly basis to determine ways to save the County money and maintain the self-insured plan, as was the intent when they first discussed converting to this type of program. Mr. Geraghty asked Chairman Conover if he was agreeable to establishing this working group, and Chairman Conover responded if this was the desire of the Committee he had no objection. Mr. Geraghty asked who would like to serve on this working group and Messrs. Sokol, Simpson and Thomas, as well as Mike Swan, *Warren County Treasurer*, volunteered. Mr. Geraghty asked these gentlemen to begin their work and provide an update to the Personnel & Higher Education Committee at their April Meeting.

Concluding the agenda review, Mr. Geraghty noted 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:

- Health Services* - Nurse Technician, *Grade 11, Annual Salary \$37,526*, due to retirement (Emergency Fill).  
Public Health Program Coordinator, *Grade 18, Annual Salary \$45,313*, due to creation.
- Public Works*- Confidential Assistant to Superintendent of Public Works, *Annual Salary \$44,872*, due to resignation.
- Tourism*- Assistant Tourism Coordinator, *Annual Salary \$44,082*, due to resignation.

*County Attorney-* 2<sup>nd</sup> Assistant County Attorney, Annual Salary \$60,567, due to resignation (Note: includes salary change requested in Item 5A above).

Mr. Geraghty reported on action taken at a special meeting of the Personnel & Higher Education Committee held yesterday noting the Committee had decided to offer the County Administrator position to their selected candidate, subject to review of background checks, at a salary not to exceed \$110,000, and had also acted to extend the position of Special Council to the Board of Supervisors by another 30 days.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Mr. Whitehead who pointed out that the decision to extend the Special Counsel to the Board of Supervisors position and bring this before the Board of Supervisors was made based on the Committee voting system which was different from the weighted voting system used at Board of Supervisors meetings. He said that the residents of the Town of Queensbury represented roughly 40% of Warren County's population and were commensurately represented by the weighted voting process used at Board meetings; he added that he did not feel the people were fairly represented in decisions like this at the Committee level.

Mr. Beaty commented on the filling of the County Administrator position, stating he felt the process was being addressed backwards as they would be offering the position to someone without having already received the full support of the Board. He noted that if the position were accepted and the Board subsequently rejected the appointment, it could be quite embarrassing for the candidate. He said the correct process would be to obtain Board approval before offering the position and he noted they had been without a full-time County Administrator for some time and delaying the process for another month would not be detrimental.

Mr. Loeb responded he felt the current path was the appropriate one to follow as the Personnel & Higher Education Committee was responsible for making these decisions and taking action to recommend them to the Board. Mr. Beaty pointed out it was the full Board that would ultimately approve this decision and not the Committee.

There being no further business to come before the Personnel & Higher Education Committee, on motion made by Mr. Loeb and seconded by Mr. Simpson, Mr. Geraghty adjourned the meeting at 10:22 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sarah McLenithan, Deputy Clerk of the Board  
*As transcribed by Amanda Allen, Clerk of the Board*