

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: SUPPORT SERVICES

DATE: AUGUST 29, 2019

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**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

SUPERVISORS LOEB  
LEGETT  
SOKOL  
MAGOWAN  
HOGAN  
WILD  
DRISCOLL

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

ELIZABETH McLAUGHLIN, COMMISSIONER (D) BOARD OF ELECTIONS  
WILLIAM VANNESS, COMMISSIONER (R) BOARD OF ELECTIONS  
RONALD F. CONOVER, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD  
RYAN MOORE, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR  
AMANDA ALLEN, CLERK OF THE BOARD  
FRANK THOMAS, BUDGET OFFICER  
SUPERVISORS DIAMOND  
GERAGHTY  
MCDEVITT  
MERLINO  
SIMPSON  
TAMMIE DELORENZO, ASSISTANT TO THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR  
MICHAEL SWAN, COUNTY TREASURER  
SARAH McLENITHAN, DEPUTY CLERK OF THE BOARD

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:**

SUPERVISORS HYDE  
DICKINSON

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Please note, the following contains a summarization of the August 29, 2019 meeting of the Support Services 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/2019/support/>

Mr. Loeb called the meeting of the Support Services Committee to order at 9:03 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Wild, seconded by Mr. Sokol and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the previous Support Services Committee Meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk of the Board.

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

Mr. Loeb apprised the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the early voting grant funding which had been approved at the July 22, 2019 Support Services meeting. He asked the Committee to keep the merits of early voting in mind whether it would be funded through a grant or not.

Privilege of the floor was extended to William VanNess, *Commissioner (R), Board of Elections*, who apprised there was no change to the \$51,050.34 grant funding, but he had received an e-mail from the Directors of the New York State Board Of Elections informing the \$37,084 localities grant funding had been drastically reduced to \$15,000 for Warren County which would leave a deficit for the purchase of the ten e-poll (*electronic-poll*) books. He apprised the \$15,000 funding was in question and not guaranteed. He explained both he and Elizabeth McLaughlin, *Commissioner (D), Board of Elections*, had spent a large amount of time preparing for the early voting and purchase of the e-poll books. Ms. McLaughlin stated they were requesting a decision from the Board whether they may proceed with the purchase. Ryan Moore, *County Administrator*, confirmed the reason for scheduling this meeting was to explain the situation and seek authorization to proceed with the purchase without a guarantee of funding from the Localities Grant.

A lengthy discussion ensued regarding the consequences of not accepting the grant money and not moving forward with the purchase.

Ms. McLaughlin said they had requested better pricing from Tenex, the provider of the e-poll books, several times but the amount quoted could not be lowered as the units were already being offered at cost; therefore she said, the only place left to reduce cost was with the software which Tenex was looking into, but had yet provided an answer.

Mr. Leggett entered the meeting at 9:21 a.m.

Discussion ensued in regards to the e-poll book order deadline and the possibility of writing letters and putting pressure on the State to fund the original grant amount. Mr. Moore apprised he had spent a significant amount of time making contact with State officials to try and secure information regarding the grant funding but had been unable to secure a firm answer on the grant amount. He stated that at this point, the Committee needed to make a decision on whether to move forward or reject the e-poll books.

Mr. Sokol inquired how other Counties were handling the shortfall and Mr. VanNess explained some of the other Counties who were facing the same funding issue had remaining HAVA (*Help America Vote Act*) funding to offset the reduction, but Warren County did not. He advised some Counties had requested funding for additional polling sites, rather than only the number they needed as Warren County had; because of this, he explained, the NYS DOB (*Division of Budget*), who had the final say on the disbursement of the total \$10 million grant funding, decided they would only fund \$15,000 then consider funding additional amounts above the \$15,000 to each County based on the County's voting population. He stressed there had been nothing in writing guaranteeing the \$15,000 in funding, but he felt comfortable that they would receive the amount, regardless.

Mr. VanNess said due to the upcoming Presidential Election, it was important that the poll workers receive training on the e-poll books to make for a smooth transition. As one possible alternative, he suggested funding the purchase of the e-poll books from the Capital Reserve established the purchase of voting machines, although he admitted he was not in favor of using that money. In response to a question posed by Mr. Loeb, Frank Thomas, *Budget Officer*, confirmed the \$21,188.60 needed to complete the e-poll books purchase was available in the Board of Elections' Capital Reserve.

Mr. VanNess noted the agenda included a request to ratify the actions of the Chairman of the Board in executing a contract with the New York State Capital Projects Grant to be administered though the New York State Board of Elections for the purchase of e-poll books, associated software, on-demand ballot printers and related cyber-security.

Motion was made by Mr. Leggett, seconded by Mr. Driscoll and carried unanimously to approve the request and the necessary resolution was authorized for the September 20<sup>th</sup> Board meeting. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Discussion ensued in regards to doing a similar ratification for the Aid to Localities grant funding, following which a motion was made by Mr. Leggett, seconded by Mr. Magowan and carried unanimously to authorize the Chairman of the Board in signing acceptance of funding from the Localities Grant through the New York State Board of Elections and the necessary resolution was authorized for the September 20<sup>th</sup> Board meeting.

Motion was made by Mr. Wild, seconded by Mr. Sokol and carried by majority vote, with Mr. Magowan and Ms. Hogan voting in opposition, to appropriate funds in an amount not to exceed \$21,188.60 from Budget Code A.898.00, *Reserve Election Equipment*, to the Board of Elections budget to cover any gap in funding for the purchase of e-poll books caused by a possible reduction

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in New York State Aid to Localities grant funding and refer same to the Finance Committee.

Mr. VanNess requested clarification that Mr. Magowan and Ms. Hogan were opposed to using the reserve funds, not opposed to purchasing the e-poll books and they both replied affirmatively.

As there was no further business to come before the Support Services Committee, on motion made by Mr. Wild and seconded by Mr. Magowan, Mr. Loeb adjourned the meeting at 9:57 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sarah McLenithan, Deputy Clerk of the Board  
*Transcribed by Leslie Lovelace, Secretary to the Clerk of the Board*