

Warren County Board of Supervisors

**BOARD MEETING
FRIDAY, JANUARY 15, 2021**



Note: As per Governor Cuomo's Executive Order 202.1: "Article 7 of the Public Officers Law, to the extent necessary to permit any public body to meet and take such actions authorized by the law without permitting in public in-person access to meetings and authorizing such meetings to be held remotely by conference call or similar service, provided that the public has the ability to view or listen to such proceeding and that such meetings are recorded and later transcribed".

The Board of Supervisors of the County of Warren convened at the Supervisors' Room in the Warren County Municipal Center, Lake George, New York, at 10:03 a.m.

Ms. Rachel E. Seeber presiding.

Salute to the flag was led by Supervisor Bruno.

Roll called, the following members present:

Supervisors Conover, Leggett, McDevitt, Braymer, Bruno, Driscoll, Frasier, Simpson, Hogan, Dickinson, Merlino, Strough, Wild, Magowan, Beaty, Thomas, Shepler, Geraghty and Seeber-19 Absent -1 Supervisor Diamond

Supervisors Leggett, McDevitt, Braymer, Driscoll, Frasier, Smith, Hogan, Merlino, Wild, Magowan, Thomas, Shepler, Geraghty and Seeber were present at the meeting, while Supervisors Conover, Bruno, Dickinson, Strough and Beaty attended via teleconference.

Chairwoman Seeber noted a motion was necessary to approve the minutes of the December 18, 2020 Board Meeting and the January 8, 2021 Organization Meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk of the Board. The motion was made by Supervisor Magowan, seconded by Supervisor Braymer and carried by majority vote, with Supervisor Smith abstaining from voting on the December 18th meeting minutes.

Chairwoman Seeber advised she would defer the floor to the Federal and State elected leaders when they joined the meeting to provide a brief update on their activities. She stated out of consideration for their busy schedules she was requesting that any questions for these individuals be withheld for today. She encouraged anyone with matters they would like to discuss with these individuals to contact them on their own in the coming days.

Chairwoman Seeber offered privilege of the floor to Congresswoman Stefanik, who indicated she would first like to make a statement regarding the horrific events that occurred in Washington D.C. last week at the Capital building. She remarked first and foremost she would like to make it very clear that she condemned the violence and destruction that occurred there, adding she was on the floor of the House of Representatives when it began. She stated this was a horrific moment for every American citizen and the acts of those who stormed the Capital building was unpatriotic. She informed everyone had the right to peacefully protest, but no one had the right to commit violence and destruction of federal property and she was working with law enforcement to ensure these individuals were prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. She advised she would also like to thank the United States Capital police officers for their tremendous service and courage, apprising one officer lost their life during the line of duty at this

horrific event and another succumbed at the hospital to the injuries they sustained while in the line of duty at this event. She indicated the Federal Legislators were committed to working with their law enforcement to ensure they had the resources they required. She said as they moved toward the inauguration for President Elect Biden their focus was ensuring a safe and secure inauguration was held.

In regard to the COVID-19 Economic relief package, Congresswoman Stefanik informed in December after many months of debate they were able to break through the gridlock and pass the COVID-19 Economic Relief Bill which included a number of provisions that would be essential for the region, the first of which pertained to school districts. She explained there was \$4 billion of elementary and secondary school relief funding which was required by law to be allocated to the local school districts by January of 2022. She apprised in addition there was Federal support for independent schools located in the region who were struggling, as well. She stated \$400 million had been included in this legislation for NYS DOT (*New York State Department of Transportation*) infrastructure projects which she would ensure a portion of was provided to Warren County. In regard to higher education and the importance of SUNY Adirondack, Congresswoman Stefanik advised she had just announced yesterday over \$45 million would be provided to the Higher Education Institutions of which SUNY Adirondack would receive \$4.8 million. She said in addition to that there was support being provided for childcare through a grant program, as well as additional funding for broadband which was in addition to the nearly \$100 million that New York would receive through the Rural Broadband funding the region was not initially eligible for, but through her work with the FCC (*Federal Communications Commission*) she was able to attain eligibility for the region. Congresswoman Stefanik indicated she had spoken to many of the Town Supervisors in Warren County regarding specific localities, neighborhoods and locations where that build out process would begin. She concluded by stating she had a significant amount of work ahead of her, apprising she was appreciative of being able to provide the Board with an update.

Chairwoman Seeber thanked Congresswoman Stefanik for taking the time to provide an update to the Board, apprising the County was appreciative of her efforts and advocacy on their behalf.

Chairwoman Seeber welcomed Assemblyman Simpson and offered privilege of the floor to him. Assemblyman Simpson congratulated Chairwoman Seeber on her appointment as Chairwoman of the Board for 2021. He advised as a result of the pandemic he was unable to see the Supervisors as much as he had in the past, but he wanted to ensure them he and his staff had been working diligently to respond to the substantial number of calls they received regarding COVID-19. He informed the issue most of these calls concerned related to the confusion regarding how to secure an appointment for a vaccination. He stated the main number to call at the State to secure an appointment for a vaccination was 1-833-697-4829; however, he noted, as per the Governors Office there was a limited amount of vaccines available, but in this first phase there was about seven million individuals eligible. He said it was necessary for them to determine how they could communicate more effectively with this group of individuals because a significant amount of seniors were struggling to manage the information as it came through social media. He said he was currently working on determining how to disseminate this information more effectively to this group, as this was what the majority of the phone calls to his office concerned.

Assemblyman Simpson stated he had attended two days of legislative sessions this past week, apprising he had been appointed as ranking Committee member of the Social Services Committee, as well as a member of the Environmental Conservation Committee, the Local Government Committee and the Tourism, Arts and Sports Development Committee. He encouraged everyone to visit his office and meet his staff, as well as to contact him with any concerns. Assemblyman Simpson informed he had been encouraged by the fact that the Governor mentioned broadband service in his State of the State address for 2021, as this was so critical now more than ever due to the pandemic because there were many

individuals in the northern portion of the County who did not have access to internet service to be able to access the information that was being communicated regarding the vaccine. He remarked he was grateful for Congresswomen Stefanik's work securing the funding to increase broadband service to the undeserved areas and he was looking forward to working hard to make this come to fruition in the northern portion of the County. He restated the phone number to call for information regarding the COVID-19 vaccine and appointment availability was 1-833-697-4829. He concluded by wishing everyone well and encouraging them to contact him with any questions they may have.

Chairwoman Seeber thanked Assemblyman Simpson for taking the time to provide an update to the Board and his advocacy efforts on behalf of the County, as well.

Chairwoman Seeber asked everyone to please bear with her, as some changes had been made to the agenda and the first item they would be addressing related to the County Administrator and a presentation from Supervisor Braymer, who was the newly appointed Chairwoman of the Personnel, Administration and Higher Education Committee.

Ryan Moore, *County Administrator*, advised he was pleased to announce the January 2021 Employee of the Month was Pat Belden, *Assistant Director, Public Health*, who was nominated by Ginelle Jones, *Director, Public Health/Patient Services*, and had been the County's 2020 Employee of the Year. He read aloud as follows the nomination that Ms. Jones had written: It is with pleasure that I nominate Ms. Belden as employee of the month. During these unprecedented times Ms. Belden has gone above and beyond each and every day to meet the needs of the residents of Warren County. She has worked tirelessly with State, regional and local stakeholders on Warren County's response. From early on in the COVID-19 pandemic the mind set had been we stay until the work is done which means working from the early morning hours until well in the evening to ensure that we as a County are on top of all the aspects of the COVID-19 response and we are very grateful for her effort. Whether it was putting in place the local contact tracing team, establishing COVID-19 testing, public education and most recently vaccine administration, we are fortunate to have Ms. Belden among us leading the charge. Ms. Belden had been employed by Public Health since 1990 and she has demonstrated passion, dedication, leadership and professionalism throughout her time with us. Her knowledge, experience and efforts have contributed to the success of Warren County's response to this pandemic. She has been and continues to be an inspiration for staff, leading them through each and every day.

Mr. Moore informed both Ms. Jones and Ms. Belden were an inspiration to him and to all of the County's other Department Heads and employees, as well as everyone in the community who had collectively responded so well during this pandemic. He stated the two of them were irreplaceable and had been at the core and heart of every action the County had taken and there were not enough words to thank them for all of that. He congratulated Ms. Belden on receiving this well deserved award. A round of applause was given.

Supervisor Braymer stated she would like to reiterate how thankful the Board was for all of Ms. Belden and Ms. Jones's hard work, as this was an unprecedented time during which they had both gone above and beyond. She said Warren County was recognized in the State for its response to the pandemic which in part was due to Ms. Jones and Ms. Belden's tireless, ongoing efforts, as well as their staff and the volunteers that they had recruited to assist them. She and Mr. Moore then proceeded to present Ms. Belden with a Certificate of Appreciation from the Board. Another round of applause was given.

Chairwoman Seeber advised at this point she had no doubt that the Board would remain standing for a little bit longer as she requested a standing ovation and applause in extreme gratitude for Supervisor Thomas, who has served as Chairman of the Board in 2020 and was the current Budget Officer for 2021.

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She asked that they all join her in thanking Supervisor Thomas. A round of applause followed.

Supervisor Thomas thanked Chairwoman Seeber and the Board members for the recognition.

Chairwoman Seeber remarked how incredibly proud she was of the Board which had a change in leadership, but more importantly had come together unified. She said she had heard today from the Majority leader, the Minority leader and from Craig Leggett, the Supervisor from the Town of Chester who represented the Independent and unaffiliated electorate voters, and together they all agreed that they would like to submit a letter on behalf of the Board of Supervisors to our community and to our elected leaders and she asked Supervisor Leggett, Minority Leader Braymer and Majority Leader Beaty whether this was correct and they all responded in the affirmative. Once again she thanked the Board and then proceeded to read the letter aloud as follows for the record:

“The Warren County Board of Supervisors condemns all acts of violence. The Warren County Board of Supervisors condemns all the violent and destructive acts done by the people. Particularly those acts that were perpetrated by those that do not seek peaceful protest and those that have contributed to the violence and destruction in 2020 and 2021, including those acts that attacked the Capital of the United States of America on Wednesday, January 6, 2021. This implores all judicial and law enforcement agencies to administer swift and sure justice upon all who broke the law on behalf of all those who suffered from the acts of violence that occurred on that day and all of those days before us.

The Warren County Board of Supervisors acknowledges that President Elect Joseph Biden and Kamala Harris were elected and that the 2020 Presidential Election as determined by the United States Electoral College and accepted by the U.S. Congress just as we have as Americans as this great Country acknowledged the election results in all previous elections. And we express support and gratitude to our Warren County Board of Elections where we all serve the great County of Warren here at home.

The Warren County Board of Supervisors firmly desires to see a peaceful transition of power on January 20, 2021 and asks that all who have been elected by the people for the people support this desire with their words and actions in the same way that we are committed each individual Supervisor on this very Board to respect, communicate and our committed to the transition here before us today on January 15, 2021 in our hometown County, Warren County U.S.A. and the Warren County Board of Supervisors asks the Clerk of the Board to send this letter of support to Senator Schumer, Senator Gillibrand, Congresswoman Stefanik, State Senator Stec, State Assemblyman Simpson and to other persons and entities so desired by the Board, including, but not limited to all elected Supervisors and all elected regardless of political affiliation in the County of Warren in an effort to begin 2021 in unity and justice for all.

Sincerely, The Warren County Board of Supervisors.”

Continuing with the Agenda review, Chairwoman Seeber provided the following remarks:

“STATE OF THE COUNTY
JANUARY 15, 2021

“If we could please take a moment as we come together to reflect and to believe in all of the possibilities and hope for the new year keeping in mind who we work for and serve, the citizens of Warren County. Collectively we represent a diverse population from our most northern friends and neighbors in North River to our vibrant and iconic City of Glens Falls, affectionately known

as Hometown U.S.A. We represent not just one person and not just one political party. We represent all 65,597 individuals in our community. Let us come together as a Board of Supervisors to serve all in our beautiful County.

I stand before you as the newly elected Chairwoman of the Board to deliver the State of the County Address and I would like to welcome those of you joining us virtually, members of our Board, our employees and our invited guests. I would also like to especially welcome my family here today. Please welcome my husband Kevin Conine, my son Dylan and my brother and sister-in-law Ken and Trudy Seeber. With all of my heart I thank you and your support and patience which does not go unnoticed.

None of us could have imagined what 2020 could bring let alone predict what will lie ahead of us for 2021. I doubt any one of us would have expected that we would be here wearing masks, staying distant and all of that would become normal for us. We would monitor testing and contact tracing and depending on the results schools and businesses alike would learn how to keep going virtually. From kindergartners to grandparents we learn that Zoom is not just a sound that a car makes and was how we stayed connected with each other. We have endured a lot this year and we have learned how to thrive in our chaos. We have discovered how resilient we really are as a community, as a Country and as the Warren County Board of Supervisors.

I would like to thank our County team which was led by Supervisor Frank Thomas, County Administrator Ryan Moore and our incredible Clerk of the Board, Amanda Allen. And last, but not least Don Lehman, our incredible Director of Public Affairs, who was a liaison to the media and he continued to play one of the most important roles to show our citizens the most current information to make safe decisions.

Now beyond the administration, our departments have done an extraordinary job and I cannot think of a department that has risen higher to this relentless challenge than our employees in Public Health under the very capable leadership of Ginelle Jones. I know all of us are grateful for your tireless efforts to keep us safe and lead us to the day when we are all vaccinated. Thank you does not capture the full magnitude of our gratitude. All of our department heads have worked hard and were disciplined in migrating their operations so that we could continue their daily duty to our citizens without compromising our staffs health or public safety. Through this crisis not one employee was laid off and none of our offices stopped delivering on their responsibilities. I thank each and every person who worked for this County. We know it can be hard, but please know how much you are valued.

Now amidst these challenges you may expect that we would have terrible news financially, but that is just not the case. We have received 1.2% less in sales tax than the prior year which was reflective of our New York State shutdown; however, our sales tax still generated a surplus of \$271,576. This is a clear credit to our 2020 Board Chair, Supervisor Thomas, Budget Officer, Supervisor Geraghty, and is very much attributed to our hard working Treasurer Mike Swan.

With a change in the Chair and with Board leadership I want to build on the good solid work of our Budget Officer from 2021, Supervisor Thomas. I am happy to report that he will join our newly established Bi-Partisan leadership team as our Budget Officer. She thanked him for his leadership, his guidance and his friendship.

The 2021 Committee assignments were disseminated to the Supervisors yesterday and they are now available on our website. Each assignment was made with a goal of having balanced

representation by region and party and with a goal that we developed a cohesive approach that raises up every corner of our County. We are better when we work together and when we raise each other up we are Warren County strong. No one person will have all the answers and just as none of us could know what 2020 would bring and we did not know that we were facing a pandemic we do not know what 2021 will bring, but I can promise you this. I will make sure that every voice of every member of this Board is heard because each of you are important to our success.

I promise to every citizen that you will be able to see our meetings on Youtube so you can see the issues that we are addressing, the options that we are discussing and know that your voice can be heard. I have set up an email for your suggestions. Email any idea to warrencountystrong@warrencountyny.gov. And while we do not know what we will have to face I do not have a doubt in my mind that together we can handle whatever this year brings for we are Warren County strong. May god bless our County, our Country and her citizens.

Respectfully submitted,
Rachel E. Seeber, Chairwoman
Warren County Board of Supervisors"

Proceeding with the Agenda review, Chairwoman Seeber declared the Public Hearing on proposed Local Law No. 2 of 2021, "A Local Law Amending Local Law No. 5 of 2009, Establishing the Office of Emergency Services for Warren County" open at 10:29 a.m. and she asked Mrs. Allen to read the Notice of the Public Hearing aloud, which she proceeded to do. Mrs. Allen noted she had not received any comments or requests to be included on the invitation to attend the meeting via Zoom.

Chairwoman Seeber asked Mr. Lehman if he had received any public comments on this matter and he replied in the negative.

Continuing to the report by the County Administrator, Mr. Moore recognized the following people for their years of service to the County which he said he was greatly appreciative of

- * Rebecca Hill for 30 years of service to the Department of Social Services; and
- * Wayne Farmer for 20 years of service to the Sheriff's Office.

Chairwoman Seeber once again called for anyone wishing to speak on proposed Local Law No. 2 of 2021; there being no response she closed the Public Hearing at 10:32 a.m.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Mary Elizabeth Kissane, *County Attorney*, to provide a report from the County Attorney. Ms. Kissane indicated she did not have a substance report this morning; however, she noted, she would like to publicly thank her staff. She said regrettably she had been out sick since Christmas during which time every one of her staff had stepped up to ensure her office continued to run smoothly and efficiently. She apprised not only were her staff the most supportive group of individuals she had ever worked with, they were also the most competent and able employees she had ever had the pleasure of working with. She informed they had not only ensured her office continued to run smoothly, they also kept her and her family fed when they could not leave the house. She voiced how blessed she was to work with these individuals everyday and the County was fortunate to have them as employees. She apprised this concluded her report for today, adding she was excited to have returned to work and she was hoping 2021 only improved from here.

Continuing with the Agenda review, Chairwoman Seeber called for the reading of communications, which

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Mrs. Allen read aloud, as follows:

Other:

1. Capital District Regional Off Track Betting Corp. - November 2020 payment in the amount of \$2,249.
2. Capital District Regional Off Track Betting Corp. - 2020 Regional Benefit Distribution Installment #1 in the amount of \$2,408.

Mrs. Allen announced proposed Resolution No. 4 was distributed to the members of the Board of Supervisors and posted to the Warren County website on January 12th, meeting the distribution deadline specified in the current Rules of the Board and was therefore considered to be on the Floor. She informed Resolution Nos. 5 - 21 were distributed to the Board and posted to the Warren County website on January 14th; she said since this did not meet the mailing deadline specified in the Rules of the Board, a waiving of the Rules would be required to bring these resolutions to the floor. Chairwoman Seeber called for a motion to Waive the Rules of the Board; the necessary motion was made by Supervisor Geraghty, seconded by Supervisor Thomas and carried unanimously. She noted Resolution Nos. 5-21 were now considered to be on the floor.

Chairwoman Seeber called for discussion and public comment on the proposed resolutions, as well as requests for roll call votes.

Mr. Lehman advised no public comments had been received regarding proposed Resolution Nos. 5-21.

Chairwoman Seeber offered privilege of the floor to Supervisor Hogan to address a proposed Floor Resolution. Supervisor Hogan informed she had emailed the Board members last night requesting support of a proposed Floor Resolution to schedule a Public Hearing at the February 19th Board Meeting regarding a CBDG (*Community Block Development Grant*) that would be closing on March 5th. She explained in order to apply for this grant which could fund infrastructure projects in various locations throughout the County a Public Hearing was required and would have to be approved today to hold at the February 19th Board Meeting to meet the March 5th deadline. She stated a motion was required to Waive the Rules of the Board. The necessary motion was made by Supervisor Braymer, seconded by Supervisor Magowan and carried unanimously. Chairwoman Seeber called for a motion to bring the proposed Floor Resolution to the floor. The necessary motion was made by Supervisor McDevitt, seconded by Supervisor Magowan and carried unanimously. Ms. Allen announced the resolution pertaining to the Waiving of the Rules of the Board would now be referred to as proposed Resolution No. 22 and the proposed Floor Resolution which set the Public Hearing would now be referred to as proposed Resolution No. 23.

Supervisor Braymer apprised that she was not seeking a resolution, but she would like a motion from the Board relating to the demolition of the building on the Mullen's property in the Town of Queensbury. She explained while working on the demolition the contractor had determined more of the materials than what was originally anticipated could be classified as non-asbestos contaminated. She informed if they were able to wash this material they could haul some of the bricks and wood that were mostly intact in large pieces; however, she noted, in order for them to do so the County needed to submit a request to the NYS DOL (*New York State Department of Labor*) to amend the variance which meant receiving permission from them to not treat all of the material as asbestos contaminated.

Motion was made by Supervisor Braymer and seconded by Supervisor Magowan to authorize the County to submit a variance application to the NYS DOL.

Supervisor Braymer stated the County was requesting that the contractor pay for the cost of submitting

that variance application to the NYS DOL, but thus far they had not agreed on concept to do that. She indicated there could be an additional cost of up to \$2,000 associated with the additional days the County's consultant may have to remain on site to ensure the contractor was disposing of the asbestos contaminated material appropriately. She mentioned there was funding available within the Environmental Testing Reserve fund to cover this additional cost if needed.

Supervisor McDevitt voiced his support of Supervisor Braymer in this regard, as the building was an eyesore that rested at the crossroads of the City of Glens Falls and the Town of Queensbury and he believed the County would benefit once it was torn down.

Supervisor Beaty apprised he was fully supportive of moving forward and getting the building torn down to allow the County to sell it and get it back on the County Tax rolls as soon as possible for the benefit of the County taxpayers. He stated he looked forward to assisting the process permitted there was no additional cost.

Supervisor Magowan stated he had known all along that demolishing the building would cost more than they had anticipated; however, he noted, he believed the additional \$2,000 was an appropriate amount to get the job done.

Supervisor Dickinson inquired whether his assumption that the County was going to turn this property into a parking lot for the Warren County Bike Trail was incorrect. Supervisor Braymer responded it was her understanding the Board had not made a final decision regarding the future of that piece of property. She said her current focus was on ensuring the building was demolished even though her original concept for the property had been for the County to rehabilitate the building and try and sell it for use as something like a bike shop or an ice cream parlor, but this was not the will of the Board and they moved forward with the demolition. She acknowledged Lexie Delurey, *Director, Real Property Tax Services*, for her efforts on this process to ensure it was managed correctly. She informed as far as she was aware of there was no determined outcome for the future of this property, but it had been foreclosed on and was now County-owned.

Mike Swan, *County Treasurer*, apprised as a point of clarity the Mullen's property was currently included in the County Foreclosure Auction which was scheduled for October of this year per his instructions because this was the normal procedure for when properties, such as this one, were foreclosed on by the County. He said it was the discretion of the Board whether they would like to do something else with this property.

Supervisor Strough indicated he had been working tirelessly on getting the building located on the property demolished despite the opposition from some of the other County Supervisors and he was pleased that the demolition was moving forward. He acknowledged Ms. Delurey for her efforts assisting with ensuring the demolition work moved forward. He stated it had been suggested that the property could be used as a crossroads way station for bicyclists and pedestrians amongst the trails the City of Glens Falls and the Town of Queensbury were developing tying into Warren County's trail. He noted this location was an excellent location for a crossroads amongst these trails to be located. He suggested the County consider locating some sort of way station on this property, adding due to the triangular shape of the parcel, as well as the thirty foot set back that was required there rested a minimal amount of the parcel that could be developed which he felt would deter individuals from being interested in purchasing it. He added another thing that would deter individuals from wanting to purchase the property was the fact that some contamination remained in the soil. He advised as a result of this he believed the County should take the opportunity to create a great public amenity for this particular piece of property by creating a way station, parking area, bicycle repair station and so forth which could be made part of the

larger Empire Trail System.

Supervisor McDevitt remarked while he concurred that the property was not conducive to locating a business there due to its size he believed they needed to concentrate on getting it demolished before they began discussing the future of the property.

Supervisor Leggett asked whether a resolution was required and Supervisor Braymer replied in the negative, explaining only the motion, which they had yet to vote on was required. Chairwoman Seeber called the question and the motion to authorize the County to submit a variance application to the NYS DOL was carried unanimously.

Supervisor Leggett advised he had presented in front of the Board members a proposed Resolution he wanted them to act on regarding the actions that occurred last week in Washington D.C. which he had taken recommendations from both Democratic and Republican Supervisors on. He said he would no longer be requesting to bring the proposed Resolution to the floor because the substance and intent of it were carried on with the letter that was read into the record by the Chairwoman.

Chairwoman Seeber called for a vote on resolutions, following which Resolution Nos. 4-23 were approved as presented.

During the roll call vote, Supervisor Strough voiced his opposition to Resolution No. 21, *Amending Tables of Organization and Warren County Salary and Compensation Plan for 2021*, due to the fact that it was creating two new positions that he believed were political in nature and were not needed. He added he would like to save the County taxpayers \$12,000 by voting in opposition. Chairwoman Seeber advised when the vote on resolutions was completed she would address those comments.

Chairwoman Seeber informed while no requests had been made to discuss Resolution No. 21, *Amending Tables of Organization and Warren County Salary and Compensation Plan for 2021*, she would like to address the concern expressed by Supervisor Strough for the matter of public information and transparency. She indicated throughout this process they had discussed modifying the Board's current structure during which many had suggested looking into whether there was a way to have two Vice-Chairs of the Board and whether it would be possible to have additional leadership positions. She advised she was appreciative of the County Attorney's Office, the County Administrator and the Clerk of the Board, all of whom worked tirelessly to review several decades of resolutions, Local Laws, State Laws out of which they determined in 1968 a resolution was adopted to establish the position of Vice-Chair of the Board and the Chair of the Finance Committee. She stated in 1994 a stipend was attached to the Vice-Chair of the Board and Finance Chair to begin in the 1995 County Budget. She mentioned at that point in time she felt the Board believed with good intention this was possible, adding there was additional language at some point which indicated there could be an additional stipend for a Fiscal Coordinator. She remarked to be clear the County Treasurer's Office had done an exceptional job with the County Budget and at that time their understanding was the Board had allocated that additional section in the Law to the County Treasurer's Office. She stated moving forward the Board continued to carry on the Vice-Chair of the Board and Finance Chair stipend; however, she noted, they had since determined this was the incorrect process when they were considering the restructuring of the Board. She remarked they were not perfect and often did not have the ability to go back decades and review all of the information, adding they were as good as the information that was before them and that they continued to seek. She advised this Board was committed to research, transparency, as well as accountability and as such they needed to step up the plate this year. She mentioned as a result of this what they did with full research and support from the County's legal team and the County Administrator was to move forward with speaking with members of the Board and they determined under the law it

was permissible to have a position of Chair, a position as Majority Leader, a position of Minority Leader and the Budget Officer. She stated this was done all throughout the State and was well within the guidelines of any type of legislative body like the Board of Supervisors was. She advised additional duties could be assigned to a Majority and Minority Leader and for the period of 2021 it was decided they would move forward with assigning the duties of Vice-Chair of the Board and Chair of the Finance Committee to the Majority Leader which was a Chair appointment, adding she had asked Supervisor Beaty to lead in that capacity. She continued, informing they had also established for the year 2021 the Minority Leaders additional responsibility would be to serve as the Chair of the Personnel, Administration and Higher Education Committee which was then appointed to Supervisor Braymer. She informed this was then established and requests were made for each political affiliation to caucus, adding the Board was legally permitted to do that and she once again thanked the County Attorney's Office for researching that and ensuring they had the proper documentation in front of them. She apprised they moved forward, informing they had held a civil, respectful and productive caucus on both of their behaviors last evening and she expressed her appreciation to everyone who participated in that. She stated in no way, shape or form was this structured to leave anyone out who was not affiliated with a party, as they represented the people. She indicated Supervisor Leggett was not affiliated with a party and as such they respected and were appreciative of the position he brought to the Board in his opinions. She mentioned in an effort for full transparency and cooperation she and Supervisor Leggett had communicated to each other that they would check in with one another on a weekly basis and he had conveyed to her some priorities he would like to see move forward with this Board. She added she had notified Supervisor Leggett regarding the caucus, had provided him with the information regarding the Committee structure, dates moving forward and a significant amount of information regarding how the appointments were made. She said at the same time she had followed up with Supervisor Leggett after the caucus, as well the Majority and Minority leaders to ensure those common grounds were provided to them, adding they were dedicated to meeting monthly as caucuses to ensure they always brought the information in front of one another. She remarked this was not a political move, but rather an effort for them to unify as a Board.

In regard to the finances behind the changes, Chairwoman Seeber apprised she was pleased to convey she was also not a fan of spending the taxpayers money when they did not have to. She said in that vein she had reduced the salaries permitted by law of the Chair of the Board, the Minority leader, the Majority leader and the Budget Officer with support not only from Supervisors Beaty, Braymer and Thomas, but also the County Administrator, Clerk of the Board and the County Attorney. She stated she was pleased to announce as a result of these changes there would be a savings of approximately \$3,000 which would be allocated back to the General Fund Unappropriated Surplus. She said their intent was to move forward and make those changes while also saving the County and its taxpayers money; she added they were communicating, unifying and leading by example. She advised she was appreciative of all of the feedback she had received regarding these changes, informing she contacted every Supervisor on Monday and continued to hold dialogue since last Friday. She assured everyone that the dialogue would not continue at the same level and frequency that it had been and she voiced her appreciation of each Supervisor who agreed to Chair, sit on Committees and work collaboratively. She said this was a general communication of a unified message from Supervisor Leggett, the majority part and the minority party and she was looking forward to moving forward in such a fashion.

Chairwoman Seeber asked if there were any questions concerning the changes in the Board's make up and the policies and procedures.

Supervisor McDevitt questioned if Chairwoman Seeber was indicating that the County was saving money by paying Supervisors Beaty and Braymer and additional \$6,000 each and Chairwoman Seeber replied in the negative. Chairwoman Seeber stated as a point of clarification prior to the changes made the Chair

of the Finance Committee had been provided a stipend of approximately \$8,900 and that figure had since been reduced to \$6,000. She added prior to these changes the Budget Officer had received a stipend around \$9,900, but this had also been reduced to \$6,000. She indicated the Chair of the Board's previous salary was approximately \$22,654, apprising they had taken the collective amount of about \$41,000 and reduced it thereby creating the position under the law which was permissible of the Minority leader who was charged with Chairing the Personnel, Administration and Higher Education Committee while recognizing the significant work associated with this, as well as the importance of having a Minority Leader. She informed this week she felt they had established the benefit of communication and collaboration and they would be returning approximately \$3,000 to the General Fund Unappropriated Surplus. Supervisor McDevitt started to ask a question, but Chairwoman Seeber interjected while she was appreciative of his question in transparency and full commitment to the Robert's Rules of Order she would return to him after other Supervisors were permitted to speak and/or ask a question.

Supervisor Braymer apprised one of the matters that Chairwoman Seeber did not address was the stipend to the Chair of the Personnel, Administration & Higher Education Committee prior to this year and she asked if Chairwoman Seeber could speak to this. Chairwoman Seeber informed up until 2017 that Personnel, Administration and Higher Education and Finance Chair positions were combined and in 2017 a resolution was adopted to separate them. She said with the intent of past practices to go back and also handle this in a legal, appropriate fashion under the accordance of the law that was how they moved forward into this.

Supervisor Strough questioned who decided who would be appointed as the Majority leader and Minority leader and Chairwoman Seeber replied she was happy to defer to the County Attorney under advice she had received from not only the members of the Board, the County Administrator and upon reviewing the law that each of those positions could be appointed Chair and then supported by the caucuses afterwards. She said because of the delegated duties to both of those decisions she asked either the County Administrator or County Attorney to weigh in on the matter. Mr. Moore informed he could speak to the statutes that Chairwoman Seeber had referenced regarding County Law Section 200, which was not a law that was adopted by Warren County, but rather a State law referred to as County Law and provided the umbrella under which Counties similar to this one that were non-chartered Counties operated. He said a number of the larger Counties, such as Westchester County were chartered Counties; however, he noted, because Warren County was considered to be a non-chartered County they were required to operate under the umbrella of County law. He indicated County Law 200 spoke to how members of the Board of Supervisors could be paid, all of whom were supposed to be paid the same salary unless they were the Chair of the Board, Majority leader or Minority leader in light of the extra workload associated with these positions. He informed this was the deficiency he believed this County had going back to when the Vice-Chair began being paid a stipend which they were unsure what the historical basis was for because it began about twenty-five years ago and there was no record of debate on that in all of the County files that were reviewed. He stated County Law 351 concerned the Budget Officer position which did not necessarily have to be a member of the Board, but the law indicated if a member of the Board was appointed to the position then it could either be the Chair of the Board or the Chair of the Budget Review Committee which in Warren County's case was the Budget Committee. He added County Law Section 351 also authorized an additional salary to be paid to the Budget Officer. He mentioned this was the legal structure they were referring to. Supervisor Strough apprised this did not answer his question. Chairwoman Seeber interjected that she wanted to provide anyone else with the opportunity to speak and/or ask a question. Supervisor Strough remarked his first question was not answered regarding who appointed the political positions which in this case were the Board Majority and Minority leaders. Chairwoman Seeber indicated at this point in time she was requesting point of order and follow Robert's Rules of Order, as there were other Supervisors who would like to be heard.

Supervisor Geraghty apprised the Chair of the Board was permitted to appoint those positions.

There being no other Supervisors who wished to be heard, Chairwoman Seeber offered privilege of the floor to Supervisor McDevitt for his second opportunity to address the Board on this matter. Supervisor McDevitt advised he was attempting to be provided with an answer regarding whether the new system in place was costing the County more or less than the old system and Chairwoman Seeber replied the new procedure in place was less expensive. Mr. Moore referred to Resolution No. 21, *Amending Tables of Organization and Warren County Salary and Compensation Plan for 2021*, which indicated the salaries of the Chair of the Board, Vice-Chair and Budget Officer that were currently included in the salary schedule that was adopted into the 2021 County Budget totaled \$41,050 and the proposed changes equaled \$38,000 resulting in a savings of \$3,050.

Supervisor Strough remarked he did not believe Chairwoman Seeber would have appointed anyone to the positions of Majority leader or Minority leader who would disagree with her. He stated his point was the County could save \$12,000 by not moving forward with the changes and he was supportive of saving that money.

Chairwoman Seeber apprised she was appreciative of Supervisor Strough's comment and she believed Supervisor Braymer, who was the Minority leader, could speak about her ability to discuss this with her caucus and she could ask Supervisor Beaty, as the Minority leader to speak about the discussion he had with his caucus; however, she noted, they had all met so she was unsure that was necessary at this point in time.

Supervisor Braymer indicated she would like to decline discussing the internal workings of the Democratic caucus at this time. She said they had caucused yesterday and would look to move forward with their caucus meetings in an appropriate manner to discuss legal matters just as they had yesterday. She advised she would like to ensure the Board that she had the opportunity to meet with the Department Heads yesterday during the Department Head meeting with Chairwoman Seeber; she added she was appreciative of Chairwoman Seeber inviting her to attend. She mentioned she intended to do a substantial amount of hard work which would require her to take time away from her private law practice and she was grateful for the opportunity to serve the Board and move forward.

Supervisor Beaty advised he felt it had been clearly stated there would be a savings of \$3,000 as compared to the prior years which he believed was unprecedented that there would be funds returned to the General Fund Unappropriated Surplus and the taxpayers were being well served by that. He mentioned he felt Chairwoman Seeber and Supervisor Braymer's comments communicated clearly the purpose of this and the savings that would result from this.

Chairwoman Seeber remarked at this point and without objection she would like to close discussion; however, she would wait until those with their hands raised had the opportunity to speak. She advised she would like to remind the Board members while the Majority and Minority leaders were now established, the Board could determine at anytime to have different duties associated with them. She informed both positions had been asked to take on a significant amount of work and she could assure everyone that this week they had both been incredibly busy. She acknowledged Supervisor Strough for bringing up such an important discussion here today, adding she did recognize that there were other questions in the Board Room.

Supervisor Geraghty indicated he would like to make a statement regarding Supervisor Beaty's remark that it was unprecedented to save this County money. He advised he had saved the County over \$200,000 when he was required by law to serve as Acting County Administrator while he was the

Chairman of the Board and then he remained as the Acting County Administrator for about a year and a half. He asked that they not indicate that it was unprecedented and state the facts. He apprised the County was saving money as a result of the changes being made which were appointed by the Chair of the Board which he was agreeable to.

Chairwoman Seeber thanked Supervisor Geraghty for his comments, apprising in some instances Zoom made it difficult to hear what individuals were stating and she believed Supervisor Beaty was referring specifically to the \$3,000 in savings that was a result of reducing those stipends and given back to the County Budget. She said she was excited to hear many of the Supervisors state that they had all had a collective role in saving money, but working together which was what she believed the intent of Supervisor Beaty's statement was. She restated that she was enthusiastic about the commitment of this Board to move forward respectfully.

Supervisor Leggett pointed out the Vice-Chair used to serve as Chair in the absence of the Chair and he asked who would do that now and Chairwoman Seeber replied according to the statutory requirements the Vice-Chair would be within that position of the Majority leader because her understanding was the County may not have the legal authority to appoint that Vice-Chair. Mr. Moore added it was his understanding in the 1968 Local Law which was adopted by the Board of Supervisors, equated the Vice-Chair position to the Chair of the Finance Committee. He stated the portions he referenced earlier in the County Law related strictly to the stipends paid. Supervisor Seeber apprised moving forward she felt they needed to review a number of the different resolutions that may be out of date, as she believed there were other parts of that resolution that would need to go before them in the form of a Public Hearing to notify the public about some of those changes; however, she noted, those changes had not yet been made. She stated she looked forward with Supervisor Leggett's appointment and involvement to NACo (*National Association of Counties*) which would allow him to assist the County with some of that legislation this year and clean some of those things up.

Supervisor Conover advised he took no issue with the changes being made, as it brought the County into compliance; however, he noted, going forward he did not believe it was appropriate for the Majority leader to select the Minority leader and this was something the Minority caucus should provide to them. He said he did not feel this necessarily needed to be changed today because there appeared to be a general consensus from all of them regarding how they were going to move forward at this moment in time. He said they could assume the Majority Chair would have a significant amount of influence within the Majority caucus as to who the Majority leader should be, but in terms of the Minority he thought the Minority party should select its own Minority leader and going forward this issue should be revisited to consider this being amended to allow the Minority party to select its own leader.

Chairwoman Seeber thanked Supervisor Conover for his comments, apprising there had been discussion regarding that in both caucuses. She said she could only speak to the Majority Caucus where no formal vote was taken, but she was more than happy to move forward in the future with the Majority Caucus to help mediate that dialogue which she believed would also be committed to being completed with the Minority party, as well. She stated she hoped that the Board could rely on Supervisor Conover working with Supervisor Leggett as they reviewed restructuring and reviewed some of the older documents, as she believed he brought an incredible amount of attention to detail to that and she was looking forward to the input from him.

Supervisor McDevitt remarked he was unsure how he felt about all of the changes and would require some more time to think about it and he would like to change his vote in support of Resolution No. 21, *Amending Tables of Organization and Warren County Salary and Compensation Plan for 2021*, to opposition. Chairwoman Seeber apprised since Resolution No. 21 had already been voted on they could

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not make changes to the roll call vote; however, she noted, the minutes would reflect for the record Supervisor McDevitt's intent.

Chairwoman Seeber voiced her appreciation of the Board for their support which was unprecedented in regard to changing the leadership structure so that it was reflected in accordance with the law, as she did not believe this had been done previously. She said this was no reflection regarding the attention they had previously given this matter and was merely that they were all reviewing the information in an attempt to be as compliant and effective as they could be. She acknowledged Supervisor Geraghty and the input and work he had done to assist with achieving this.

Chairwoman Seeber apprised she was looking forward to further discussing the Rules of the Board and the organizational structure in 2022. She indicated 2021 would have a significant amount of productive dialogue to assist the Chair of the Board next year with coordinating those efforts and moving forward.

Supervisor Conover advised he would like to state to his colleagues while he was comfortable at this moment in time he would like the Minority party to be receptive to changing the Rules of the Board in the future as to how the Minority leader was selected. He apprised it appeared as if they were currently in concurrence which he was comfortable with; however, he noted, going forward the logical thing to do was allow the Minority Caucus select the Minority leader. He stated he would be receptive to an amendment to the Rules of the Board at the appropriate time.

Chairwoman Seeber thanked Supervisor Conover for his remarks, adding she believed they were all agreeable to make amendments and have discussions as they moved forward throughout this year in a unified, respectful manner. She stated her understanding regarding the appointment of the Chair of the Personnel, Administration and Higher Education Committee was that it was made in accordance with the law by assigning it to the Minority leader. She said there were discussions taking place in that party, as well and should something change the Board was more than willing to hear that because here on this Board this year they would be remain open to these discussions. She addressed Supervisor Leggett directly, informing she did not want him to feel as if they were leaving him out of those discussions when they referred to the term bi-partisan and she restated that she as the Chair of the Board had the ability to indicate that the Board would continue to meet and discuss matters.

Chairwoman Seeber called for public comments from anyone wishing to address the Board on any matter and she asked Mr. Lehman if he had received comments from anyone.

Beginning with the comments received from Youtube, Mr. Lehman advised that Gina Mintzer, *Executive Director, Lake George Chamber of Commerce and CVB*, would like to wish the Board members a Happy New Year. He said there was another comment from Zayne Belden congratulating his mom, Ms. Belden, on her award and another comment from Alexander Belden complimenting Ms. Belden on her award. Mr. Lehman noted Alexander Belden, was Ms. Belden's daughter, and had also played a significant part with the work being done by Public Health, as she was employed with the Department, as well. Ms. Mintzer thanked Ms. Belden for her service and all the ways she had met each and every challenge this pandemic has presented. Karen Durose congratulated Ms. Hill on her thirty years of service.

Next, Mr. Lehman reviewed the comments that were received via email, the first of which was from Beecher Baker, *Superintendent, Hadley-Luzerne Central School District*, who indicated he would like to publicly acknowledge the Warren County Public Health Department for their professional expertise, incredible work ethic and compassion in working with Warren County School's during this pandemic. He said they at Hadley-Luzerne Central School District were grateful for the relationship that had developed and the trust they had in each other to do the right things for their children and staff. He apprised he could not state enough great things about the department and specifically Ms. Jones and

Ms. Belden, who were incredible people to work with and their school was eternally grateful.

Mr. Lehman advised a number of emails had been received regarding Supervisor Leggett's letter and *The Post Star* article about the potential resolution, the first of which was from Bernice Mennis which stated she fully supported Supervisor Leggett's clear, simple and important resolution condemning the terrible violence at the Capital and the simple, necessary affirmation of the fair election of Biden and Harris. She said to think of this issue as divisive or unnecessary because it was not directly involved with Warren County which was almost unreal, as Warren County was part of the Country going through dangerous times. She advised simple statements like this must be spoke aloud and to silence their voice or see it as divisive felt immoral.

Mr. Lehman read aloud a comment from Diane Collins which indicated she would like to share with the Board of Supervisors her strong endorsement of the resolution written by Supervisor Leggett and her request to pass it on. She stated they could not look away from the violent insurrection attack on the Capital of the United States and their elected officials by misinformed lawbreakers.

Mr. Lehman apprised the next comment regarding this matter was from Paul Nasrani, who stated he resided in Lake George and founded his business, Adirondack Creamery, in Warren County. He indicated the horrific attack on the Capital last week had shaken this Countries democracy to its core. He mentioned January 6, 2021 was the only time outside of the War of 1812 that this Countries Government had been directly attacked and its processes attempted to be physically overthrown. He advised the emerging photographic evidence revealed members of far right, anti-government and Neo Nazis groups murdering a police officer and directly threatening the lives of the Vice-President and Congressional leadership. He said these groups had been given legitimacy to act and as a direct result of President Donald John Trump's claims of a fraudulent election based on information and conspiracy theories, all of which had been disproved in multiple court cases and dismissed by State election officials, as well as his own Director of Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security. He apprised for the sake of the Country and for the safety and interests of all people in the Country, including our election officials and law enforcement, please issue a formal statement denouncing the violent attacks on the Capital, affirming the legitimacy of the November of 2020 elections locally and nationally and expressing the need for a peaceful transfer of power on January 20, 2021.

Mr. Lehman indicated he had received a comment from Mary Beth Mylafacano, *Town of Bolton Resident*, who indicated she would like to express her support for Supervisor Leggett's resolution at the County Board of Supervisors meeting today January 15, 2021. She apprised she believed the County election officials worked tirelessly in the last election and their work should be acknowledged for the safe process they completed for voters of Warren County. She informed it was necessary to acknowledge the winners locally and nationally because Warren County election officials were professional and they maintained integrity at every step of the election process and national election officials did the same. Secondly, she stated she believed the Board should condemn the violence that occurred last week in the nations Capital. She indicated the people who caused the violence could not accept the results of a fair and safe election and should be prosecuted for the crimes they committed. Furthermore, she indicated she felt there should be a peaceful transfer of power next week and she asked that they vote to support Supervisor Leggett's resolution and let Warren County stand for democracy.

Mr. Lehman advised the next comment was from Jane Kana, who stated these were times to stand tall and to be courageous. She apprised she was fully supportive of the opinion of taking a position against the rebellion group who attacked the Capital Building recently and she encouraged the Board as a group to do so and stand for what was right and good in the United States.

Mr. Lehman notified the next comment was from Ginger Henry Kuenzel, who was addressing Supervisor Frasier and Chairwoman Seeber and she congratulated Chairwoman Seeber on being elected to her new role as Chair of the Board. She apprised today she was writing about an urgent matter. She stated now was not the time for Warren County to engage in partisan politics, as it was time to show the residents of the County that Warren County was taking a stand in favor of uniting the Country. She advised Supervisor Leggett's resolution which would hopefully be considered on Friday should be voted upon immediately. She indicated the Town's and County leaders needed to take an immediate and public stand to demonstrate that they unequivocally stand by the 2020 election process and results conducted by Warren County and that they acknowledge the election of President-Elect Joe Biden. She mentioned representatives who continued to contest the results of that election despite all evidence needed to hear that Warren County did not support these efforts which only served to divide the Country and threaten its democracy. She stated the resolutions language expressing appreciation to election officials and poll workers in our County who worked hard to ensure our free and fair elections was also something the Board should be able to support. Furthermore, she advised since she could assume that neither of them condoned the violence and destruction that occurred at the Capital Building on January 6th, this should not be a prop for the Board to approve the language in Supervisor Leggett's resolution. She informed while she was a firm believer in process as Supervisor Frasier was aware of from the time they had served together on the Hague Town Board it should never be used as a convenient excuse to delay an urgent resolution. She stated she hoped she could count on both of them to carefully consider and then support Supervisor Leggett's resolution which would certainly shed a positive light on the County and its leaders, as well as demonstrate a commitment to unifying the people of this County and the Country.

Mr. Lehman read aloud a comment from Christine Strough regarding the appointments that had just been discussed as follows: At-Large Supervisor Beaty now refers to himself as Majority Leader and there were other references to Minority Leader. If the title Majority Leader/Minority Leader refers to the make up of the Board gender could that not be considered sexist. If the title Majority Leader/Minority Leader refers to the political affiliation of the Board of Supervisors could that not be considered partisan. Chairwoman Seeber has touted bipartisanship, would that not under mind bipartisanship. Also did that not create another layer of government. Also were there stipends with the newly created positions. Mr. Lehman asked Chairwoman Seeber if she would like to address these questions now or wait until he read the additional comment which included similar questions. Chairwoman Seeber responded as it related to that particular question she believed they had been addressed in detail during the record of this meeting and she asked him to proceed with reading aloud Ms. Strough's next comment.

Mr. Lehman apprised this comment was again from Ms. Strough who stated the following: I understand the selection of the Committee Chairs was the decision of the Chairperson of the Board of Supervisor; however, I would like to point out in the 2019 election At-Large Supervisor Beaty snagged the last seat on the Board with 3,203 votes, At-Large Supervisor Wild received the most votes for a seat on the Board of Supervisors with 3,504 votes and Town Supervisor and member of the Board of Supervisors, Supervisor Strough received the most votes of any sitting Supervisor with 4,311. Supervisor Beaty chaired three Committees, Supervisor Wild chaired no Committees and Town Supervisor Strough chaired no Committees. Can Chairperson Seeber take this question.

Chairwoman Seeber thanked Ms. Strough, as she was appreciative of her for taking the time to contact the Board. She stated she believed the first question pertained to Supervisor Wild, whom she had spent a considerable amount of time together with this week. She informed Supervisor Wild had worked hard with the Economic Task Force that had brought together the private/public sector in the community, but given the time that he had spent on that it was his suggestion which was appropriate that the size of the Committees be reduced. She said the number of Committees that they gave to their members of the Board certainly recognized as Supervisor Geraghty had stated earlier that they all had obligations

in the private sector and approximately 50% of the Board members also worked very hard managing their municipalities. She apprised the Board was looking forward to that continued relationship.

Chairwoman Seeber apprised the next question pertained to Supervisor Leggett with whom she had also had many conversations about Board appointments, adding she had called and spoke to every single member of the Board with the exception of Supervisor Strough, who did email her back which she was appreciative of his input on those Committee selections, as well. She indicated it was difficult for her to reduce Committees while trying to meet the wishes of all of the Board members, but she believed they had done an incredible job at being able to communicate mostly due to those leadership positions, as well as the hard work of everyone all week long. She voiced her appreciation of that unity, adding she believed she had addressed those questions and since it was during the public comment she would request that Mr. Lehman continue to read the public comments.

Mr. Lehman indicated that was all the public comments that had been received at this time.

Chairwoman Seeber offered privilege of the floor to members of the Board of Supervisors.

Supervisor Geraghty informed wristbands were now on sale for the Lake George Area Winterfest event, apprising he hoped a copy of the flyer would be distributed to all of the Board members. He mentioned he still had concerns regarding the County promoting this event which was scheduled for the month of February due to the continuous increase in the number COVID-19 cases and the fact that the purpose of this event was to attract tourists from outside the region here. He said while he wanted to assist businesses and increase their sales he was unsure if it was appropriate to hold the event when the number of positive COVID cases were still significant and the number of vaccines available in the region was so limited. He stated he would be requesting that the organizers of this event continue to keep the safety concerns the Supervisors had expressed in mind.

Chairwoman Seeber apprised she would like to take this one step further after hearing concerns from Supervisor Shepler this past week, as well and inquire whether it would be permissible to schedule an additional meeting of the Tourism & Occupancy Tax Coordination in the coming days so they could hear directly from the event organizers on the COVID-19 safety plans which had yet to be filed with the County. Supervisor Geraghty advised there was a Committee meeting scheduled for January 25th and he asked if Chairwoman Seeber would like to hold this meeting sooner. Chairwoman Seeber responded given the grave concerns expressed she believed the meeting should be held sooner. Supervisor Geraghty informed he would work with Mrs. Allen to schedule the meeting accordingly. Chairwoman Seeber asked Supervisor Shepler if she was agreeable to the change and Supervisor Shepler replied affirmatively. Chairwoman Seeber stated without objection from the Board they would work on getting this meeting scheduled.

Supervisor Wild stated he did not object to inviting the organizers of the Lake George Area Winterfest event to attend a meeting for the purpose of conveying their plans, as he believed it was appropriate considering what was occurring in the region with the number of COVID-19 cases. He apprised he would like to make a comment on Chairwoman Seeber's State of the County address in regard to the County's sales tax collections. He informed it was necessary to recognize the individuals who were involved in the County Budget process and the efforts they made in an attempt to maintain County revenues and keep the budget in line and there was a large group of individuals in the private sector that were not mentioned who had come together and communicated with one another and there may be questions about the value they added to the local economy this summer which he believed was significant. He said he would like to call out and recognize them for their hard work, their lack of political desire, how they communicated with one another and the fact that they had taken time away from their own businesses

to assist with supporting the regions economy and the revenue this County received. He commended them for the assistance they provided and would extended his support to them going forward.

In response to Supervisor Wild's remarks, Chairwoman Seeber advised her only hope with the State of the County was that she did not go on for too long, as she had read the last ten State of the County addresses all of which included information regarding why past Chairs of the Board had created different Committees and how they had changed structure. She said she had also promised everyone she had talked to over the past week that she would attempt to keep her address to a minimum. She apprised notwithstanding that she had great appreciation for the members of the community and she was looking forward to that private/public relationship. She indicated to Supervisor Wild's point, she was appreciative of his passion and energy that he brought to this, as well. She asked Mr. Swan to address the Board regarding the impact of occupancy tax and its current status because it was imperative for them to be watchful not just on tourism, but also on the overall growth here in the County.

Mr. Swan apprised he did not have concrete figures regarding occupancy tax collections which was down around 18% the last time they did a review; however, he noted, on the positive side his staff was overwhelmed with processing the payments that had been received from the short-term rentals because they went from receiving 250 checks to obtaining over 1,000. He said he was waiting for his staff to process all of the checks before he could provide the Board with a solid figure regarding the total amount of occupancy tax collected in 2020. He stated the total amount would be available in March, but he hoped to be able to provide the Board with a figure in February. He indicated the total amount of occupancy tax collected in 2020 would be less then the prior years total, but it would not be as much of a decline as they had originally anticipated. In regard to sales tax, he thanked Chairwoman Seeber for reiterating they were down 1.2% which was phenomenal considering everything that occurred during 2020, as his only hope had been that the decrease would amount to 2%, but it was an even smaller decline than that.

Supervisor Braymer stated in light of all of the public comments that she had received over this past week and in particular those that they heard today she would like to express how proud she was of this Board for their bipartisan statement that condemned the violence around the Country and in particular what occurred last week at the Capital which was troubling to all of them. She remarked she was pleased they were all able to come together and put forward a statement about that and that they stood by and were grateful for the County's Board of Elections, as well as the fact that they were acknowledging the election of President Joseph Biden and Kamala Harris as Vice-President on January 20, 2021. She voiced her appreciation of their ability to come together and compromise to make that statement coming out of Warren County, as she felt this was significant and she was proud of this. Supervisor Braymer apprised she would also like to take a moment to state that she was aware that all of the Board members, regardless of their party affiliation, were committed to a fair and efficient distribution of the vaccine in Warren County, as well as working with the Governor's Office to rectify obstacles that may hinder their ability to maximize distribution to their residents. She informed one manner in which she planned to contribute to the Board this year was to confer with Ms. Jones, Messrs. Moore and Lehman, Ann Marie Mason, *Director, Office of Emergency Services*, and Chairwoman Seeber, as well as all of her colleagues on this Board to identify and understand issues with the vaccine processes and procedures coming from the State and actively convey them to the Governor's Office with the goal of assisting the State in finding solutions to those problems. She said as they were already aware of, as they had heard it from their senior citizen residents in particular, there was a high demand for vaccines and the information transmitted by the State regarding Warren County vaccination sites and appointments needed to be timely and accurate, as there had been errors in the information that was communicated. She informed it was necessary for the County to identify these errors and work with their State officials

to correct this information as soon as possible. She advised she was committed to working with the County's dedicated staff and the Board members on rectifying those issues, as well as the County's business partners and more importantly all of the County constituents.

Supervisor McDevitt informed one of the most powerful and significant positions in the United States Senate was Majority Leader whom he believed they should contact. He mentioned he and Jim Siplon, *Interim President, Economic Development Corporation*, both concurred that developing a positive relationship with the new United States Senate Majority Leader as they moved forward was imperative, as he believed there was an opportunity to assist this County moving forward in a positive manner and obtaining economic assistance for development in the County due to the new leadership. He recognized Supervisor Leggett for having the courage in bringing forth his resolution, as this is what started the ball rolling and he thanked him for that. He added this was important and he believed Supervisor Leggett had done an excellent job on it.

Chairwoman Seeber thanked Supervisor McDevitt for those comments which she believed they were all supportive of, as well as working with both Senators Schumer and Gillibrand.

Supervisor Conover stated in accordance with the Rules of the Board, the Chair of Finance was not only the Majority Leader, but they were also the Vice-Chair of the Board and he wanted to congratulate Supervisor Beaty on that position as part of the Board's reorganization efforts.

Chairwoman Seeber recognized Supervisor Conover for his remarks and she congratulated Supervisor Beaty on his new position. She said typically they would have discussed this more at the Organization Meeting which was why she was appreciative of the fact that they could hold this in depth dialogue today.

In reference to the remarks made by Ms. Strough, Supervisor Strough stated there was a County Supervisor who understood things in greater depth than any other Supervisor regarding the issues the Town of Queensbury was faced with and yet this Supervisor was not afforded the opportunity to Chair a Committee. He stated this would be difficult to defend when another Supervisor had been appointed the Chair of three separate Committees, as well as the fact that he was not reappointed to represent Warren County on the Adirondack Balloon Festival Committee. Supervisor Strough advised there was a more central topic to deal with which concerned Supervisor Leggett's resolution. He informed Supervisor Leggett's resolution provided the Board with the opportunity to vote unanimously in favor of it and show unity, as voting in any other fashion would indicate something different. He read aloud a quote from Joseph Warren, who was the County's namesake, apprising he believed Mr. Warren would have voted in favor of this resolution. He informed the Civil War Monument located in the City of Glens Falls was dedicated to soldiers who did not run from injustice, nor did they hide from lawfulness, but rather they gave their lives defending their truth. He advised there had been a slurry of emails amongst the County Supervisors requesting that the resolution not to be brought to the floor for a vote; however, he noted, the appropriate thing for them to have done was to bring it to the floor so it could be voted on. He added each of those 644 soldiers listed on that Civil War Monument would have voted in favor of Supervisor Leggett's resolution. He indicated he was perplexed how anyone could be opposed to it, as it contained three truthful statements, the first of which was the Board was opposed to the January 6, 2021 storming of the Capital of the United States. Next, that the Board recognized that the election was valid and last was that they recognized the nation's President as of January 20th would be Joseph Biden. He questioned who would disagree with that. He apprised making this a proclamation to avoid a vote was not the appropriate action to take. He said if they had wanted to vote in opposition they would of had the opportunity to do so and he felt the rest of the Board of Supervisors should have joined him, Mr. Warren and the 644 Civil War soldiers to vote in support of Supervisor Leggett's

resolution and stand together and stand for truth. He indicated the Proclamation was better than no action at all, but he believed the resolution should have been brought to a vote.

Chairwoman Seeber advised she felt they were all appreciative of those passionate comments, but she would like to provide a few points of clarification, the first of which was this was not a Proclamation, but rather a letter had been written which was read into the record and supported by the Board. She said this letter would be distributed to those individuals that were listed previously on that letter and were Senator Schumer, Senator Gillibrand, Congresswoman Stefanik, State Senator Stec, State Assemblyman Simpson and to all other persons or entities desired by the Board including, but not limited to all elected Supervisors and elected officials regardless of political affiliation in Warren County. That being said, she apologized to Supervisor Strough for not being able to connect by phone, adding she was appreciative of the email she received from him requesting to be Chair of County Facilities, adding at that time several Supervisors had requested to be Chair of that Committee, but Supervisor Magowan had been appointed given his private business and expertise in that particular area, as well as his involvement with the previous Chair of the County Facilities Committee. She stated Supervisor Strough had requested to be a member of the Tourism & Occupancy Tax Coordination Committee which he was appointed to and the only other Committee he had requested to be appointed to was County Facilities which he was. She added she had appointed him to a few other Committees and regarding the special appointment to the Adirondack Balloon Festival Committee, while this was not included in her conversations with him via email that decision was made because she believed the Town of Queensbury did have him representing them. She advised following her discussions with Kevin Hajos, *Superintendent of Public Works*, it was determined that it was imperative for Supervisor Magowan, as Chair of the County Facilities Committee, particularly under the Airport and because he showed up early to assist with parking and coordination efforts for the entire Adirondack Balloon Festival event, to be appointed to the Adirondack Balloon Festival Committee. She apologized if she did not get to all of the questions posed by Ms. Strough and hopefully now that did address those remaining questions.

Supervisor Driscoll stated in response to the request from Chairwoman Seeber he copied every Supervisor on his email regarding what he was looking for in 2021. He advised either directly or indirectly COVID-19 would impact a number of the decisions that the Board made. He said it had already been mentioned how individuals were upset about the formula being used for the distribution of the vaccine and how they needed to work on getting them in a more timely and efficient manner; he added he believed this would occur. He apprised there were still a number of individuals remaining who were not interested in getting vaccinated and in the spirit of attempting to flatten the virus in the County Ms. Jones had set the goal for the vaccination rate in the County at 100%, but he would be satisfied with 90% while others would be pleased with 75-80%. He suggested they aim for the 100% goal set by Ms. Jones, as this was in the best interest of County residents, adding he believed they had a responsibility as Supervisors to find creative ways to help educate and inform the residents of their communities.

Chairwoman Seeber advised she was aware the Board members were committed to achieving the highest vaccination rate that was possible. In terms of the appointments, she stated she would like to mention that per Supervisor Driscoll's request they had corrected the potential conflict he had with the appointment to the Board of Directors of Warren-Hamilton Counties Action Committee for Economic Opportunity, Inc., by appointing Supervisor McDevitt in his place. In regard to the changes made to the appointments to the Warren-Washington Counties Industrial Development Agency and Civic Development Corporation, Chairwoman Seeber stated the County worked collaboratively with Washington County on the appointments to this organization. She said Assemblyman Simpson had resigned from his appointment to this organization prior to being elected to the State Assembly and the clerical error has since been corrected and upon Supervisor Wild's request she removed him from the listing of appointments which resulted in a vacant position. She apprised she and the Chairman of the

Washington County Board of Supervisors had decided to work collaboratively to fill the vacancy on this organization.

Chairwoman Seeber thanked the Board members for agreeing to her request to remain in their appointments for a minimum of three months and if after that timeframe they felt they were not a good fit then they could discuss it with her and if needed she had the ability as Chairwoman of the Board to make changes.

Supervisor Wild advised he did not believe what Chairwoman Seeber had indicated in regards to his request to not be reappointed to the Warren-Washington Counties Industrial Development Agency and Civic Development Corporation. He explained what his intent was, as he had agreed to remain a member of their organization for a few months. He stated having said that there were a few things that were occurring here that were troubling and concerned politics which was not what they were present for. He informed their purpose was to handle County business on behalf of its residents during which they could argue about language and many other matters; however, he noted, what they were really doing was setting an example for the rest of their community and the County. He remarked it was imperative for them to be able to set aside some of these political differences and do the best job they could for their constituents. He mentioned while passion was notable, anger did not fall into that same category and he felt they needed to control their rage while pursuing their passions. He stated he was hopeful moving forward the Board members could support their new Chairwoman and handle the County's business to the best of their abilities, adding in all honesty he was tired of all of the politics.

Chairwoman Seeber acknowledged Supervisor Wild for his remarks, apprising in light of that passion she felt they could all agree they were all sick of the politics and they would like to move forward and get busy working on what the citizens elected them for. She mentioned she was unsure of the procedure, but she would be more than content to amend Resolution No. 20, *Appointing Members to the Warren-Washington Counties Industrial Development Agency and Civic Development Corporation*, if there was a misunderstanding to ensure Supervisor Wild was appointed to that organization to continue to serve the important work he had been doing since he was elected. She asked Mrs. Allen what action was required in order to amend the resolution and Mrs. Allen replied since it had already been voted on a motion was required to amend Resolution No. 20 of 2021 to change the vacancy on the Warren-Washington Counties Industrial Development Agency and Civic Development Corporation to Supervisor Wild. The necessary motion was made by Supervisor Leggett, seconded by Supervisor Magowan and carried unanimously.

Chairwoman Seeber expressed gratitude on behalf of the Board to Supervisor Wild for his continued service as a member of the Warren-Washington Counties Industrial Development Agency and Civic Development Corporation.

She once again asked Mr. Lehman if there were any additional public comments and he replied in the negative.

Chairwoman Seeber called for announcements; there being none she advised at this point in time she would like to thank everyone. She said on this Board they were all County Supervisors and they represented their constituents as County Supervisors. She indicated she was impressed with all of their courage to stand tall and to be Warren County strong.

There being no further business to come before the Board of Supervisors, on motion made by Supervisor Leggett and seconded by Supervisor Magowan, Chairwoman Seeber adjourned the Board Meeting at 11:53 a.m.