

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: JOINT ECONOMIC GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT AND GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS & ADVOCACY

DATE: FEBRUARY 22, 2021

ECONOMIC GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT OTHERS PRESENT:

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS: HOGAN

WILD

STROUGH

LEGGETT

GERAGHTY

MERLINO

RACHEL E. SEEBER, CHAIRWOMAN OF THE BOARD

RYAN MOORE, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

MARY ELIZABETH KISSANE, COUNTY ATTORNEY

AMANDA ALLEN, CLERK OF THE BOARD

SUPERVISORS BRAYMER

DIAMOND

DRISCOLL

MAGOWAN

COMMITTEE MEMBER ABSENT:

SUPERVISOR: FRASIER

TAMMIE DELORENZO, ASSISTANT TO THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

MICHAEL SWAN, COUNTY TREASURER

ELIZABETH MCLAUGHLIN, COMMISSIONER OF THE BOARD OF ELECTIONS (D)

WILLIAM VANNESS, COMMISSIONER OF THE BOARD OF ELECTIONS (R)

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS & ADVOCACY MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS: BEATY

LEGGETT

WILD

CONOVER

SMITH

REPRESENTING THE TOURISM DEPARTMENT:

JOANNE CONLEY, DIRECTOR

LEISA GRANT, PRINCIPAL ACCOUNT CLERK

DON LEHMAN, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

JEREMY SCRIME, SENIOR COMPUTER SYSTEMS ANALYST/PROGRAMMER

HERMAN JOHNSON, WARREN COUNTY RESIDENT

MOLLY GANOTES-GLEASON, LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST

Please note, the following contains a summarization of the February 22, 2021 Joint meeting of the Economic Growth & Development and Governmental Operations & Advocacy Committee; the meeting in its entirety can be viewed on the Warren County website using the following link: <https://warrencountyny.gov/mma>

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". All of the Committee members in attendance participated via video or teleconference except for Supervisor Merlino who was physically present.

Copies of the Joint Economic Growth & Development and Governmental Operations & Advocacy Committee agenda was distributed to those in attendance and those participating virtually accessed the agenda via the Warren County website; a copy of the agenda is on file with the meeting minutes.

Mr. Beaty announced that he would be stepping down as Chair of the Governmental Operations & Advocacy Committee and Supervisor Leggett, as Vice-Chair, Governmental Operations & Advocacy Committee to order at 12:50 p.m. Ms. Hogan called the Economic Growth & Development Committee Meeting to order at 12:51 p.m.

Ms. Hogan informed she was asked to Chair the joint meeting, adding the purpose of which was to review two resolutions drafted by Mr. Strough. She commenced the meeting with discussions regarding the proposed resolution entitled "Warren County Board of Supervisors Resolution on Bridging Divisions and Working Together". She indicated she was moving the proposed resolution from action items to discussion items. She advised there was no urgency pertaining to the proposed resolutions and she suggested they take time to hear from as many voices as possible that could not be included in the meeting. She indicated she and Mr. Leggett had reached out to the Adirondack Diversity Initiative

for assistance with the proposed resolution to create a strong thoughtful resolution tailored to Warren County and to add meaningful action.

Regarding the proposed resolution entitled “*Resolution to Eliminate the Positions of Majority Leader and Minority Leader and the Compensation Appropriated for the Leaders of those positions*,” Ms. Hogan notified the proposed resolution was modified a half hour prior to the meeting. She said the proposed resolution did not address the issues of compensation for additional work done, adding since 1995 the Board had compensated the Chair of the Personnel and Finance Committees for the extra work they performed. She concluded that this item would be brought forward for discussion and not as a resolution from the floor to perfect the language and address the compensation issue and avoid the multiple amendments, motions and confusion it would cause if the resolution was advanced.

Mr. Strough introduced his proposed resolution “*Warren County Board of Supervisors Resolution on Bridging Divisions and Working Together*” indicating the resolution originated from ANCA (*Adirondack North Country Association*) who were working with the County’s northern communities and had a significant amount of support from the community. Ms. Hogan introduced Herman Johnson, *Warren County Resident*, who was in attendance to speak regarding this resolution. He said he would prefer the resolution to have action, informing there was substantial wording, but not much content and his big question was how this could be addressed. Mr. Strough advised he knew the resolution required more work and this was the first step and a great starting point. Mr. Leggett suggested creating a working group for matters like this and Ms. Braymer concurred. Mr. Diamond suggested to bring this resolution to the Glens Falls Common Council among others.

Following discussion, motion was made by Mr. Leggett, seconded by Mr. Wild and carried unanimously by the Governmental Operations & Advocacy Committee to authorize the resolution submitted by Supervisor Strough entitled “*Warren County Board of Supervisors Resolution on Bridging Divisions and Working Together*” and the necessary resolution was authorized for the March 19, 2021 Board Meeting.

Motion was made by Mr. Wild, seconded by Mr. Strough and carried unanimously by the Economic Growth & Development Committee to authorize the resolution submitted by Supervisor Strough entitled “*Warren County Board of Supervisors Resolution on Bridging Divisions and Working Together*” and the necessary resolution was authorized for the March 19, 2021 Board Meeting.

Mr. Beaty advised that as Majority Leader he would recuse himself from discussion on the next agenda item and he exited the meeting at 1:20 p.m.

Regarding the proposed resolution entitled “*Resolution to Eliminate the Positions of Majority Leader and Minority Leader and the Compensation Appropriated for the Leaders of those Positions*,” Mr. Strough read a portion of the resolution aloud. He suggested eliminating the positions to save the taxpayers money, insisting the positions were unwarranted and not needed. He said they were already two months into the year and they had not done any extra work. Ryan Moore, *County Administrator*, spoke to how and why the positions were created, reading aloud from County Law. He explained Resolution No. 21 of 2021, which was adopted at the February 19th Board Meeting and amended the Table of Organization & Salary Schedule to delete the stipends for the Vice-Chair and decrease the stipend for the Chair and the Budget Officer and create the positions of Majority Leader and Minority Leader at a salary of \$6,000 each; he noted this resolution also reduced the chairs salary to \$20,000 and the Budget Officers salary to \$6,000. He informed the positions were also included in the Rules of the Board that had been approved. He said the Rules of the Board would be reviewed again in September. He advised a portion of the stipend had already been paid to the positions, informing if this resolution went forward it would create an amount that was not authorized by the Board. Ms. Hogan asked Mr. Moore for his advice moving forward and Mr. Moore answered that he would leave the positions as they were and give it time to see if it worked out, adding they had a chance to review the Rules of the Board in September. Ms. Hogan recommended leaving the positions as they were and they could be addressed at a later date if they did not work out. Mr. Conover

apprised he was supportive of any resolution that deleted the positions, advising he had some serious concerns regarding them. Mr. Merlino suggest continuing on as they had for the past thirty years. Mr. Wild apprised he was not against compensation for the Finance and Personnel Chairs but, he had concerns with the Majority and Minority Leader positions. He informed it excluded a Supervisor that was not affiliated with either party and sent the wrong message. He suggested they move forward with the proposed resolution and then modify the compensation for those positions through a Local Law that would supercede the County Law. Mr. Moore informed that was not accurate, as the County would not override the State on this matter. Mr. Moore read aloud from the County Law regarding who could receive a stipend. Mr. Leggett notified he supported the elimination of the positions. Mr. Diamond said there were some privileges for the Chairwoman of the Board, one of which was that she had the right to select her team and he asked his fellow Board Members to give it a chance. He said this proposed action would strip the Chairwoman of her rights and he did not support it. Ms. Hogan inquired if other Counties had these positions and Mr. Moore replied that Columbia County had the same positions for many years. Mr. Wild stated they went against the law for many years by paying the Finance & Personnel Chairs and he inquired what the implication was continuing to pay these positions. Ms. Hogan proposed to reconvene at a different time and collect answers to the many questions that were proposed. Mr. Wild reiterated his question regarding a stipend being paid to the Finance and Personnel Chairs and Mary Elizabeth Kissane, *County Attorney*, replied continuing to pay the positions based on them being a Chair of a Committee was against the law. Mr. Strough advised he wanted to amend the resolution to remove compensation for the Finance & Personnel Committee Chairs. Ms. Hogan clarified that he wanted to remove the compensation for those two positions, conveying they had no legal path moving forward to compensate these position that have been compensated for the past thirty years. Chairwoman Seeber respectively asked that they eliminate the compensation for the Chair of the Board as well. She said they should focus on moving the Board forward. She advised if the resolution went forward they should remove all compensation for positions that fell under County Law 200. Mr. Geraghty voiced he was in favor of eliminating the position titles, but not the compensation. He said he did not understand why this had never been an issue until now. Ms. Kissane explained she suspected that the law may have changed since then, but she could not confirm because she did not have the information with her. Mr. Conover inquired what happened if the Rules of the Board were not approved in January and Ms. Kissane replied the Board would continue to operate as they did the year prior until new rules were passed. Ms. Hogan asked Mr. Moore if there was a path moving forward to compensate the Chairs of the Finance and Personnel Committees and Mr. Moore replied according to the County Law it would be required to go before the voters of Warren County. Michael Swan, *County Treasurer*, asked that if the resolution passed to provide him with a date to stop paying those positions. Mr. Wild suggested the date be the last pay period in March.

A discussion ensued, following which motion was made by Mr. Wild, seconded by Mr. Strough and carried unanimously by the Economic Growth & Development Committee to approve the proposed “*Resolution to Eliminate the Positions of Majority Leader and Minority Leader and the Compensation Appropriated for the Leaders of those Positions.*”

Motion made by Mr. Wild, seconded by Ms. Smith and carried unanimously by the Governmental Operations & Advocacy Committee to approve the proposed “*Resolution to Eliminate the Positions of Majority Leader and Minority Leader and the Compensation Appropriated for the Leaders of those Positions.*”

Ms. Hogan noted the proposed resolution to the Personnel, Administration & Higher Education Committee and Mr. Moore replied this was correct, explaining this was needed because the action required an amendment to the Salary & Compensation Plan. Ms. Hogan asked if Mr. Moore replied in the negative, as the refereed was not automatic.

Ms. Hogan inquired if there were any public comments and Don Lehman, *Director of Public Affairs*, replied in the positive, informing there were comments from June Maxam, *Warren County Resident*.

There being no further business before the Economic Growth & Development Committee, on motion made by Mr. Geraghty and seconded by Mr. Wild, Ms. Hogan adjourned the meeting at 2:26 p.m.

There being no further business before the Governmental Operations & Advocacy Committee, on motion made by Mr. Wild and seconded by Ms. Smith, Mr. Leggett adjourned the meeting at 2:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Molly Ganotes-Gleason, Legislative Office Specialist