

Warren County Board of Supervisors

BOARD MEETING
FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 20, 2024



Please note that the following is a summarization of the Board Meeting; the meeting, in its entirety, can be viewed using the following links on the Warren County website:
<https://warrencountyny.gov/mma>

Part 1 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NKLFzmz3-PM>

Part 2 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=32DN5FKwbyU>

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

Mr. Kevin B. Geraghty presiding.

Salute to the flag was led by Supervisor Crocitto

Roll called, the following members present:

Supervisors Conover, Maday, Diamond, Bruno, Driscoll, Patchett, Geraci, Crocitto, Merlino, Strough, Magowan, Strainer, Etu, Thomas, Runyon and Geraghty; Absent - 4 Supervisors Gilligan Turner, Bean and Wild.

A moment of silence was called for in recognition of the passing of Courtney Oswald, an employee of the Department of Social Services who worked within the Child Protective Services Division.

Motion was made by Supervisor Strough, seconded by Supervisor Merlino and carried by a unanimous vote of those present (*Supervisors Gilligan, Turner, Bean and Wild absent*), to approve the minutes of the August 16, 2024 Board Meeting and August 30, 2024 Special Board Meeting.

Proceeding with the Agenda review, Chairman Geraghty declared the Public Hearing on proposed Local Law No. 5 of 2024 entitled "*A Local Law Repealing Local Law No. 6 of 2011 'A Truth in Taxation Local Law to Delineate State Mandates and Property Taxes'*", open at 10:05 a.m. and requested the Clerk of the Board read the Notice of Public Hearing aloud.

Supervisor Thomas suggested revising the Local Law to make it more comprehensive for the taxpayers rather than repealing it and Supervisor Magowan concurred.

Supervisor Crocitto noted there would be a cost savings associated with the proposed Local Law No. 5 of 2024.

Supervisor Bruno voiced his support of Supervisor Thomas and Supervisor Magowan's comments regarding the proposed Local Law.

Supervisor Geraghty pointed out due to changes at the State level expenses would be increasing significantly; however, he noted, he concurred with the comments made by Supervisors Thomas and Magowan.

Chairman Geraghty once again called for public comment on proposed Local Law No. 5 of 2024 entitled "A Local Law Repealing Local Law No. 6 of 2011 'A Truth in Taxation Local Law to Delineate State Mandates and Property Taxes'"; there being no one wishing to speak, he closed the public hearing at 10:08 a.m.

Chairman Geraghty called for privilege of the floor/public comment.

Supervisor Magowan spoke regarding unfunded mandates, apprising he believed the State representatives should attend a Board Meeting to discuss the matter further.

Chairman Geraghty announced an executive session was required and requested the County Attorney advise of the purpose. Robert Terwilliger, *First Assistant County Attorney*, advised the purpose of the executive session was to discuss collective negotiations pursuant to article fourteen of the civil service law pursuant to Section 105(1)(e) of the Public Officer's Law.

Motion was made by Supervisor Diamond, seconded by Supervisor Driscoll and carried by a unanimous vote of those present (*Supervisors Gilligan, Turner, Bean and Wild absent*) to enter into an executive session pursuant to Section 105(1)(e) for the purposes outlined above.

Executive session was held from 10:11 until 10:35 a.m.; no action was taken during the executive session.

The Agenda review resumed with the Report by the Committee Chairs (including the Chairman of the Board's Report).

Report by the County Administrator was given.

No report was given by the County Attorney.

Reading of communications by Clerk of the Board was provided, as follows:

Reports from:

1. County Auditor - August 2024 Real Property Tax Corrections;
2. Adirondack North Country Association - 2023 Annual Report; and
3. Warren County Clerk - reporting of all monies received for fiscal year ended December 31, 2024.

Letters/emails from:

1. Lillian Hayes, Pottersville resident - regarding need for posted speed limit on Valentine Pond Road; and
2. Town of Moreau Planning & Zoning Office - Notice of Public Hearing regarding draft proposed Local Law No. 7 of 2024 - Solar Amendment to Chapter 149.

Reading of resolutions by the Clerk of the Board was announced as follows:

Resolution Nos. 301-326, were distributed to the Board and posted to the Warren County website on Monday, September 16, 2024, along with five Proclamations and a Certificate of Appointment, which met the deadline specified in the Rules of the Board. The five Proclamations were:

- Proclamation No. 30 - Preparedness Month
- Proclamation No. 31 - Suicide Prevention Month
- Proclamation No. 32 - Domestic Violence Awareness Month
- Proclamation No. 33 - 4-H Week
- Proclamation No. 34 - Special Olympics Support and Awareness Day

Floor Resolutions 1 and 2 were distributed and posted to the County website on Thursday,

September 19th; Amanda Allen, *Clerk of the Board*, indicated a motion was needed to bring each to the floor.

Motion was made by Supervisor Etu, seconded by Supervisor Diamond and carried by a unanimous vote of those present (*Supervisors Gilligan, Turner, Bean and Wild absent*) to bring proposed Floor Resolution No. 1 entitled "*Waiving the Standing Rule of the Board Relating to the Requirement that all Resolutions be Approved Through the Established Committee Structure in Advance of a Board Meeting in Order to Entertain a Resolution Introducing Proposed Local Law No. 6 of 2024, Entitled "A Local Law to Authorize Overriding the Property Tax Levy Limit Established by General Municipal Law § 3-C for the 2025 Warren County Budget," and Authorizing Public Hearing Thereon*" to the floor. Mrs. Allen announced Floor Resolution No. 1 would now be proposed Resolution No. 327.

Motion was made by Supervisor Etu, seconded by Supervisor Diamond and carried by a unanimous vote of those present (*Supervisors Gilligan, Turner, Bean and Wild absent*) to bring proposed Floor Resolution 2 entitled "*Introducing Proposed Local Law No. 6 of 2024, Entitled "A Local Law to Authorize Overriding the Property Tax Levy Limit Established by General Municipal Law § 3-C for the 2025 Warren County Budget," and Authorizing Public Hearing Thereon*" to the floor. Mrs. Allen announced Floor Resolution No. 2 would now be proposed Resolution No. 328.

Discussion and public comment on proposed resolutions was called for:

Supervisor Crocitto apprised he would be recusing himself from voting on proposed Resolution No. 323, *Authorizing the Appropriation of Funds from the Occupancy Tax Reserve to the Tourism Budget; and Amending 2024 Warren County Budget*.

Supervisor Driscoll exited the meeting at 11:03 a.m.

A discussion ensued regarding proposed Resolution No. 323, *Authorizing the Appropriation of Funds from the Occupancy Tax Reserve to the Tourism Budget; and Amending 2024 Warren County Budget*, following which motion was made by Supervisor Diamond, seconded by Supervisor Runyon and carried by a unanimous vote of those present (*Supervisors Gilligan, Turner, Driscoll, Bean and Wild absent*) to amend proposed Resolution No. 323 to remove the appropriations totaling \$400,000 for the Winter's Dream event.

Supervisor Driscoll re-entered the meeting at 11:05 a.m.

Motion was made by Supervisor Conover, seconded by Supervisor Merlino and carried by a unanimous vote of those present (*Supervisors Gilligan, Turner, Bean and Wild absent*) to waive the Standing Rule of the Board relating to the requirement that all resolutions be distributed to the members of the Board of Supervisors and posted to the Warren County website no later than the Tuesday prior to the Regular Board Meeting, in order to entertain a resolution authorizing the appropriation of funds from the Occupancy Tax Reserve to the Tourism Budget; and amending 2024 Warren County Budget.

Motion was made by Supervisor Diamond, seconded by Supervisor Bruno and carried by a unanimous vote of those present (*Supervisors Gilligan, Turner, Bean and Wild absent*) to authorize the appropriation of funds from the Occupancy Tax Reserve to the Tourism Budget; and amend the 2024 Warren County Budget accordingly.

Mrs. Allen announced the waiving of the Rules resolution would be proposed Resolution No. 329 and the resolution authorizing the appropriation of funds from the Occupancy Tax Reserve would be proposed Resolution No. 330.

Supervisor Patchett asked for clarification that proposed Resolution No. 328, *Introducing Proposed Local Law No. 6 of 2024, Entitled "A Local Law to Authorize Overriding the Property Tax Levy Limit Established by General Municipal Law § 3-c for the 2025 Warren County Budget," and Authorizing Public Hearing Thereon*, would essentially be placing the tax burden upon the property owners within Warren County in lieu of an increase in the sales tax rate within the County would share the burden with visitors to the region. John Taflan, *County Administrator*, explained the purpose of proposed Resolution No. 328 was to have the proper authority in place should the County need to override the property tax limit, noting even if a sales tax increase was approved by the County this year it would not be in effect until 2026 due to it not going before the State Legislature for approval of Home Rule legislation following which the Governor would need to sign off on. He added they were working diligently on the County Budget in hopes that they would not have to override the tax cap, but it was proving to be difficult due to the increasing costs.

Voting on resolutions occurred. Resolution Nos. 301-330 were approved as presented, with the exception of proposed Resolution No. 323 which was approved as amended from the floor. During the roll call vote on proposed Resolution No. 330, Supervisor Crocitto exited the meeting and then re-entered following the vote.

Chairman Geraghty offered privilege of the floor:

In regard to the infrastructure that the County had appropriated \$3+ million to that was owned by a Not-for-Profit, Supervisor Conover suggested the County Attorney and County Administrator's Offices research what would occur if that not-for-profit ceased to exist to determine whether the County had a residual or position on that infrastructure.

Supervisor Driscoll requested an update from Kevin Hajos, *Superintendent of Public Works*, regarding the Adirondack Balloon Festival event this weekend. Mr. Hajos provided brief summary of the event, noting the weather forecast for the weekend looked promising. He then voiced his displeasure with the organizers of the event for publicly criticizing the Sheriff's Office and County Department of Public Works employees regarding their traffic control efforts which he believed was not justified.

Mr. Taflan also voiced his disappointment with the organizers of the Adirondack Balloon Festival for essentially "bashing" the County to the media for the lack of support they provided to the event, noting the County had only decreased their financial contribution to the event one year. He added this year they had been allocated more funding than they had requested. He concluded by commending the Sheriff's Office and Department of Public Works employees for the assistance they provided to the event.

Supervisor Merlino advised he was also upset to learn of the negative remarks regarding the County made by the organizers of the Adirondack Balloon Festival, indicating he was the one who had advocated for them to be provided \$100,000 which was \$25,000 more than the \$75,000 they had requested.

Supervisor Strainer recognized Richard Keys, *Director, Physical Education, Health and Athletics, Queensbury Union Free School District*, for securing the Section II Cross Country Championship event for years 2024-2026, noting the event this year had resulted in around 700 hotel rooms being booked.

Chairman Geraghty acknowledged the Town of Queensbury for providing the Queensbury Union Free School District with \$28,000 in occupancy tax funding for the Section II Cross Country Championship event over the three year period.

Mr. Tafaan apprised he would work ClearGov, which was an online format, to determine whether they could provide the taxpayers with the County budget information to ensure they had access to same information they had in prior years.

There being no further business to come before the Board of Supervisors, on motion made by Supervisor Bruno and seconded by Supervisor Diamond, Chairman Geraghty adjourned the Board Meeting at 11:27 a.m.