

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: PERSONNEL & ADMINISTRATION

DATE: OCTOBER 1, 2020

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COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: OTHERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS SIMPSON  
GERAGHTY  
FRASIER  
BRAYMER  
MAGOWAN  
MCDEVITT  
MERLINO

AMANDA ALLEN, CLERK OF THE BOARD  
JACKIE FIGUEROA, HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR  
MARY ELIZABETH KISSANE, COUNTY ATTORNEY  
DON LEHMAN, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS  
RYAN MOORE, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR  
PATRICIA NENNINGER, PERSONNEL OFFICER  
FRANK THOMAS, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

SUPERVISORS CONOVER  
WILD

SUPERVISORS BEATY  
DRISCOLL  
HOGAN  
LEGGETT  
SEEBER  
STROUGH

TAMMIE DELORENZO, ASSISTANT TO THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR  
CHRISTIAN HANCHETT, COMMISSIONER, DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES  
BRIAN LAFLURE, FIRE COORDINATOR/DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF EMERGENCY SERVICES  
ROBERT LYNCH, DEPUTY COUNTY TREASURER  
ELIZABETH MCLAUGHLIN, COMMISSIONER, BOARD OF ELECTIONS (D)  
JEREMY SCRIME, SENIOR COMPUTER SYSTEMS ANALYST/PROGRAMMER  
WILLIAM VANNESS, COMMISSIONER, BOARD OF ELECTIONS (R)  
SARAH MCLENITHAN, DEPUTY CLERK OF THE BOARD

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*Please note, the following contains a summarization of the October 1, 2020 meeting of the Personnel & Administration Committee; the meeting in its entirety can be viewed on the Warren County website using the following link: <https://www.warrencountyny.gov/gov/comm/Archive/2020/personnel/>*

***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 Committee members were physically present, aside from Supervisor Braymer who participated by video conference.***

Mr. Simpson called the meeting of the Personnel & Administration Committee to order at 10:01 a.m.

Copies of the meeting agenda were distributed to those in attendance, those participating remotely accessed the agenda via the Warren County website; a copy of the agenda is on file with the meeting minutes.

Motion was made by Mrs. Frasier, seconded by Mr. McDevitt and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the previous Committee meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk of the Board.

Mr. Simpson offered privilege of the floor to anyone present wishing to address the Committee on any

matter, but there was no one wishing to speak.

Commencing the Agenda review, Mr. Simpson extended privilege of the floor to Amanda Allen, *Clerk of the Board*, to address Agenda Items 1A-B, Requests/Items to be Discussed by the Clerk of the Board. Mrs. Allen noted the agenda included copies of the various budgets she maintained, as well as a summary sheet outlining the changes to each. She asked if there were any questions on the budgets, and there being none, she moved on to Item 1B which included a Resolution Tracking Report requested by Mr. Simpson. Mrs. Allen noted that the Resolution Tracking Report pertained to the resolutions from the August Board Meeting and she advised this Report would be presented monthly and would run a month behind. Ms. Braymer thanked Mrs. Allen for pulling this Report together, opining it would be very useful.

Continuing with the Agenda review, Mr. Simpson extended privilege of the floor to Ryan Moore, *County Administrator*, to address Agenda Items 2A-B, concerning Requests/Items to be Discussed by the County Administrator. Beginning with Item 2A, Mr. Moore reviewed his Department's 2021 Budget Request. Moving on to Item 2B, Mr. Moore introduced Don Lehman, *Director of Public Affairs*, to present the report he had prepared with regard to his activities. Mr. Moore advised Mr. Lehman had commenced working for the County on March 23<sup>rd</sup> which was the 17<sup>th</sup> day from when the County started dealing with the pandemic; however, he noted, they had decided before then that this position was needed. He remarked he was grateful for the excellent job Mr. Lehman had done getting the status of the County out to the public which he equated somewhat to Mr. Lehman's knowledge of all the players in all of the various sectors here and had paid dividends to the County because of his familiarity with all of the reporters, especially during a time when Governor Cuomo had indicated confident government was necessary more so then it ever had been since the majority of the response to this pandemic had been through the State and local governments. He continued, the government could only accomplish so much if they did not hire individuals who lived there, understood and accepted what was being asked of them and went out and did the right thing. He mentioned getting all of the information and digesting what it meant was one aspect, but communicating it to the public was an entirely separate challenge which he believed Warren County had done well on and stood out among other Counties in the State. He stated the County had a good summer season, specifically around Lake George, with the business community being very proactive to ensure that occurred; however, he noted, the attitude of ensuring safety and looking out for your neighbors would not have occurred without good communication from government and he thanked Mr. Lehman for the role he played in pulling all of that together because he himself would not have had the time to so do. He remarked in hindsight the Board creating the position at that time was the appropriate thing to do.

Mr. Moore reiterated Mr. Lehman started on day 17 of the County's response to the Coronavirus and now they were on day 209; he added that Mr. Lehman had worked every day for 192 days, including holidays and weekends, which he was appreciative of. He mentioned Mr. Lehman had taken over the non-functioning Twitter and Facebook accounts for the County that no one followed and made them a success with 8,500 followers on Facebook and around 700 followers on Twitter, as well as a developing a daily newsletter which was distributed to 1,800 people; he added these were not just individuals who signed up and never gave it a second thought, as they used these sites as a trusted source of information everyday when information to the public was an absolute necessity. He apprised not only

would Mr. Lehman spend time posting updates, but also reading and responding to all of the comments. He said this had been yeoman's work and Mr. Lehman had done a great job which he wanted to ensure Mr. Lehman was aware of how appreciative he was of him and the work he was doing.

Mr. Lehman thanked Mr. Moore for the kind words and all of the support he had provided to him, adding he had benefitted from the fact he already knew many of the Department Heads and Supervisors, many of whom he had relationships with, as this allowed him to hit the ground running rather quickly. He stated while he had provided 192 days of updates on the COVID-19 pandemic, watching what Ginelle Jones, *Director of Public Health/Patient Services*, and her staff, Mr. Moore and everyone else who had been involved in the response to COVID had motivated him to attempt to keep up with them, apprising he was just doing his part. He informed included in the Agenda packet was a synopsis of some of his activities over the last six plus months during which he would like to think that he had been able to get the department heads to see the value of getting their message out to the public. He said he had been able to work with most of the department heads to assist them with publicizing what their departments were working on, such as the Department of Public Works, County Treasurer, County Clerk, Board of Elections, etc. He said his role here was similar to the one he had at *The Post Star* in that he kept the public informed, but as a reporter he did not have the time to cover the important work that was going on at the County that would not necessarily be published in a daily newspaper that he now kept the public informed of, such as what the Office for the Aging did for their meal delivery and how the different departments had responded during this pandemic and it had been great to work with them and get that information out to the public. He remarked there was significant amount of good work being done that the public was never made aware of before now.

Mr. Magowan stated he had turned to Mr. Lehman a number of times for assistance on several matters to which Mr. Lehman had graciously responded to. He added Mr. Lehman had face masks available to anyone in need of one or for those who would like to hand them out to their constituents. Mr. Lehman advised the Mask Up Program that he had worked on with the Tourism Department, Mr. Moore and Brian LaFlure, *Fire Coordinator/Director, Office of Emergency Services*, had been another great program he had the pleasure to work on. He mentioned he still had face masks available to give away and received requests for them upon occasion, apprising he had provided Christian Hanchett, *Commissioner, Department of Social Services*, with some yesterday.

Mr. Lehman proceeded to display the County Twitter account which had been dormant for years before he came on board and started using it as a means to communicate with the public. He then displayed the County Facebook account and he highlighted a post that promoted this morning's Committee meetings, as well as a post from yesterday concerning the upcoming election where there was some good interaction with the public who had questions regarding absentee ballots and other matters that he was able to respond to with answers to their inquiries which assisted the Board of Elections, who were being inundated with phone calls regarding these types of questions. He advised, as mentioned by Jim Siplon, *Interim President, Warren County Economic Development Corporation*, at the September 28<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Economic Growth & Development and Higher Education Committee meeting, social media was a means that a number of individuals used to get their information from right now and could be used to reach individuals who were not likely to be reached before due to having easy access to it on their cell phones, laptops and tablets. He referred to a post regarding the 2020 Census, which he had

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been working with the Planning & Community Development Department on in an attempt to notify people about it.

In regard to the daily email newsletter, Mr. Lehman stated there were a little over 1,700 subscribers. He said prior to working here he did not know much about emailed newsletters; however, he noted, following his conversations with Joanne Conley, *Director of Tourism*, he learned a newsletter with an open rate between 10% to 20% was a success. He apprised the County newsletter generally dealt with COVID and other County data and had an average opening rate between 50% to 60%. He said these were the methods he was using to keep the public informed, but he was open to suggestions from the Supervisors and he encouraged them to contact him with any thoughts they had or assistance they needed from him.

Mr. Simpson thanked Mr. Lehman for the update and all of the hard work he was doing which the Board was appreciative of.

Mr. Moore added during normal times the purpose of this position was to keep the public informed regarding how the County government impacted them. He said the idea was to keep the residents better informed of what the County's purpose was and how it impacted them and he was looking forward to when things returned to normal to utilize Mr. Lehman to strengthen the County in that respect.

Mr. Simpson apprised Agenda Items 3A-D concerned the following Requests/Items to be Discussed by the County Attorney and he extended privilege of the floor to Mary Elizabeth Kissane, *County Attorney*, to address them. Beginning with Item 3A, Ms. Kissan reviewed her Department's 2021 Budget request. Next, she addressed Item 3B, which included a request for an executive session to discuss: a report on pending litigation pursuant to Public Officer's Law Section 105(1)(d); Vincellette arbitration request pursuant to Public Officer's Law Section 105(1)(d); and an employee termination (on behalf of the Department of Social Services) pursuant to Public Officer's Law Section 105(1)(f).

Motion was made by Mr. Magowan, seconded by Mr. McDevitt and carried unanimously to enter into executive session pursuant to Sections 105(1)(d) and 105(1)(f) of the Public Officer's Law.

Executive session was held from 10:22 a.m. to 11:04 a.m.

Upon reconvening Mr. Simpson announced no action was taken during the executive session.

Mr. Simpson called for a motion to authorize the termination of an employee within the Department of Social Services. The necessary motion was made by Mr. Geraghty, seconded by Mr. McDevitt and carried by majority vote, with Ms. Braymer abstaining, and the necessary resolution was authorized for the October 14<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting.

Ms. Kissane advised Agenda Item 3C was presented on behalf of the Department of Public Works and consisted of a request to rescind Resolution No. 287 of 2020, *Authorizing Continuation of the Agreement with Henderson Products, Inc. to Purchase Mobile Brine Unit for the Department of Public Works*, and authorize Memorandums of Understanding with the municipalities that will use the Unit. She explained Resolution No. 287 of 2020 indicated the Department of Public Works needed a contract in order to

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purchase the mobile brine unit, but this was not the case because it was a commodity and they could just move forward with the purchase without a contract. She said she was requesting that the Board rescind Resolution No. 287 of 2020 and then approve a resolution that authorized the MOU's (*Memorandums of Understanding*) with the municipalities that would use that unit.

Motion was made by Mr. Magowan, seconded by Mr. McDevitt and carried unanimously to approve the request and the necessary resolution was authorized for the October 14<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting.

Finally, Ms. Kissane addressed Item 3D which was a request presented on behalf of the Sheriff's Office to rescind Resolution No. 332 of 2020, *Authorizing Continuation of the Agreement with Nemer Ford as Proprietary dealer for Repairs of Various Ford Makes and Models for the Warren County Sheriff's Office*, and award bid/authorize agreement with Nemer Ford under bid WC 34-20. Ms. Kissane apprised the way this request was presented at Committee was to authorize an extension of a prior contract; however, she said, this is not what was needed and instead a request to authorize a new contract should have been requested in line with the new bid. She said she was requesting to rescind Resolution No. 332 of 2020, which authorized an extension of the contract with Nemer Ford, and to authorize a new resolution permitting the Purchasing Agent to award the bid and authorize a new contract with Nemer Ford in connection with the new bid.

Mr. Geraghty asked whether Nemer Ford's bid amount was the same and Ms. Kissane replied affirmatively, explaining the only difference was the new bid number.

Motion was made by Mr. Magowan, seconded by Mr. McDevitt and carried unanimously to approve the request and the necessary resolution was authorized for the October 14<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting.

Moving along, Mr. Simpson extended privilege of the floor to Jackie Figueroa, *County Human Resources Director*, who addressed Agenda Items 4A-C, Items/Requests to be Discussed by the Human Resources Director. Beginning with Item 4A, Ms. Figueroa provided a review of her Department's 2021 Budget request. She then addressed Item 4B, presenting her report on tracking of vacancies filled, and Item 4C, presenting her report on terminations and exit interviews, copies of which were included in the agenda packet for informational purposes.

Ms. Seeber inquired whether there was a way to incorporate month to month comparisons in the report on terminations and exit interviews and Ms. Figueroa replied affirmatively. Ms. Figueroa apprised this month's report looked similar to the prior months because she had included some statistics last month that should not have been since they concerned per diem positions which she was not including in the turnover rates because they anticipated these. She added going forward she would include a section depicting the change from month to month.

Proceeding to Agenda Item 5, Mr. Simpson extended privilege of the floor to Patricia Nenninger, *Personnel Officer*, who provided a review of her Department's 2021 Budget request and she answered questions posed by the Committee.

Continuing, Mr. Simpson informed Agenda Item 6 concerned a referral from the County Facilities

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Committee, *Buildings and Grounds*, regarding a request to reclassify the position of Building Maintenance Mechanic, *Annual Salary \$53,234*, to Senior Building Maintenance #4, *Annual Salary \$58,171*, in light of expanded work duties, as well as to fill the reclassified position.

Motion was made by Mr. Magowan, seconded by Mrs. Frasier and carried unanimously to approve the request and the necessary resolution was authorized for the October 14<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting.

Concluding the agenda review, Mr. Simpson noted Agenda Item VI consisted of a listing of vacancies approved for filling by other Committees since the last Personnel & Administration Committee meeting, which included the following:

- Office for the Aging** - Meal Site Cook #2, *Grade 2, Base Annual Salary \$27,438 (25 hrs/week)*, due to retirement.
- Office of Emergency Services** - County Fire Coordinator - Temp, *\$45.6093/hr.*, due to creation. *Note the previous authorization provided has expired and the Public Safety Committee has re-approved the filling of this position.*
- Department of Public Works** - Highway Construction Supervisor II #1, *Grade 18, Base Annual Salary \$46,492*, due to retirement.

In regard to the County Fire Coordinator position for the Office of Emergency Services, Ms. Braymer inquired if it would be appropriate to rescind filling the position given what was occurring within that Department and Mr. Simpson replied as per the direction of the Budget Officer it was not appropriate to do so at this time. A brief discussion ensued at the conclusion of which Mr. Leggett advised, as the Chairman of the Public Safety Committee, that he believed it would be premature to make any changes to the position at this time.

Mr. Simpson asked Mr. Lehman if any comments from the public had been received and Mr. Lehman replied in the negative.

There being no further business to come before the Personnel & Administration Committee, on motion made by Mr. Magowan, seconded by Mr. McDevitt and carried unanimously, Mr. Simpson adjourned the meeting at 11:19 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sarah McLenithan, Deputy Clerk of the Board