

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: **DPW**

DATE: OCTOBER 23, 2006

Committee Members Present:

Supervisors Belden  
Bentley  
Haskell  
Mason  
Geraghty  
Merlino

Others Present:

William Lamy, Superintendent, Dept. of  
Public Works  
Joan Parsons, Commissioner of  
Administrative & Fiscal Services  
Joan Sady, Clerk  
Supervisor Caimano  
Carlene Ramsey, Sr. Legislative Office  
Specialist

Committee Member Absent:

Supervisor Stec

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Mr. Belden called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Geraghty, seconded by Mr. Mason, and carried unanimously to accept the minutes of the previous meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk.

Privilege of the floor was extended to William Lamy, Superintendent of the Department of Public Works (DPW), who distributed an Agenda packet to each of the Committee members and a copy is on file with the minutes.

Mr. Lamy began his report with New Business, Agenda Item 2. He reminded the Committee members that a number of staff members had recently retired, and the positions had remained vacant while the Superintendent's position was in transition. He explained that he met with the DPW Administrative Team (Deputy Superintendent, Chief Administrative Officer, and General Foreman) to review the particular vacancies. Consequently, he said a "Personnel October 23, 2006" summary chart had been prepared and was included with the Agenda Packet.

Mr. Lamy said he would like to fill each of the vacant positions via promotions within the Department, which would result in entry-level vacancies. He said he felt the promotions would enable the various departments to maintain their daily operations.

Mr. Belden queried whether or not any of the entry-level positions could be left vacant, as a cost saving measure.

Mr. Lamy stated the payroll had not shown a drastic fluctuation since lower-title employees have been "paid out of title" while filling the vacant positions. As for leaving the entry-level positions vacant, he said that could mean the road crews may be working without the proper number of flagmen at the site.

Mr. Caimano, as Budget Officer, pointed out that the total salary for the vacant positions was approximately \$300,000. He urged the Committee members to carefully

consider the request to fill the various vacant positions.

Mr. Lamy pointed out the Sign Maintenance Supervisor and Sign Maintenance Worker positions were imperative to ensure road safety throughout the County. In addition, he said, the laborers provided valuable assistance to the equipment operators.

Mr. Caimano stated he had no doubt that every one of the staff members were needed, although he expressed his concerns over the growth in the County budget over the past year.

Responding to Mr. Mason's question regarding the expected retirements within the next few years, Mr. Belden said he understood Mr. Remington had predicted 50% of the staff members would retire within the next four years.

Mr. Lamy further pointed out the total reduction in salary expenses could not be determined until all of the positions had been filled. He noted the longevity amounts were specific to each employee.

Mr. Caimano left the meeting at 9:40 a.m.

Mr. Mason, as Chairman of the Insurance Committee and member of the Safety Committee, explained the Workmens' Compensation costs were directly related to safety issues. He expressed his concerns over budget cuts that might impact any safety on the job, in any of the County departments.

Mr. Geraghty concurred with the idea that safety should never be compromised and he noted the Budget Officer's earlier statements suggested the County departments needed to "do with less." He said he felt the suggestion should be across the board, County-wide, and not just for one department. In addition, he commented, that a safety violation would cost Warren County much more than the \$300,000 to fill the aforementioned vacancies.

General discussion ensued.

Mr. Lamy acknowledged that flagmen could be called in from other road crews to maintain the proper safety level. However, he noted, such measures would maintain a safe environment, although less work would be completed with fewer road crews.

Motion was made by Mr. Bentley, seconded by Mr. Geraghty and carried unanimously to authorize the Notice of Intent to Fill Vacant Positions (for all positions listed on the Personnel October 23, 2006 summary chart) and to forward same to the Personnel Committee. Copies of the various request forms are on file with the minutes.

Next, Mr. Lamy reported Agenda Item 3 was a request for transfer of funds. He mentioned the Parks, Recreation and Railroad Division needed to transfer \$25,000 from Personal Services-Regular into Other Equipment towards the purchase of the

caboose at the Riparius Station. (Note: the purchase price was \$50,000 and \$25,000 had previously been authorized from the Contingent Fund.)

Motion was made by Mr. Bentley, seconded by Mr. Geraghty and carried unanimously to authorize the Request for Transfer of Funds as presented and to forward same to the Finance Committee. A copy of the request form is on file with the minutes.

Mr. Lamy explained the second request for transfer of funds was necessary to bring the Budget in line with the actual payroll expenses throughout the year.

Motion was made by Mr. Mason, seconded by Mr. Merlino and carried unanimously to authorize the Request for Transfer of Funds as presented and to forward same to the Finance Committee. A copy of the request form is on file with the minutes.

Agenda review resumed at Item 4, as Mr. Lamy directed attention to a letter dated October 12, 2006 from the State of New York Department of Transportation (DOT). He explained the State had reviewed the speed limit on West Mountain Road and agreed with the County, that the speed limit should be reduced to 45 mph (miles per hour).

Mr. Lamy pointed out the Secretary of State would process a Notice of Order to reduce the speed limit. Once his Office received the order, he said, the new signs could be installed.

Continuing with Agenda review at Item 5, Mr. Lamy apprised the Committee members the Fuel Farm in Lake Luzerne had been sited for violations related to inventory control, by the State of New York Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC). Given the new information he has received from DEC, he said he anticipated the other County Fuel Farms would have similar issues. Consequently, he reported, he spoke with the Commissioner of Administrative and Fiscal Services, Joan Parsons, to discuss a new capital project for improvements to fuel inventory and record keeping. However, he said, his staff had identified some intermediate steps the County could take to comply with the new DEC regulations, before incurring any major expenses.

Therefore, Mr. Lamy said, he did not anticipate an immediate need to purchase new metering equipment, at this time.

Mr. Lamy reported Agenda Item 6, was an FYI (for information only) regarding the updates to the telephone system at the DPW headquarters in Warrensburg. He said the Information Technology staff had recently met with the DPW staff and he learned the internet capabilities could be upgraded at the same time, for an additional \$7,000. The improved internet, he said, would allow DPW to tie in with the County's New World Accounting System. He mentioned, that to cover the additional costs, he planned to review the open road projects to determine if any funds might be available. He noted he would report back to the Committee at the next meeting.

Next, Mr. Lamy reported on Agenda Item 7, Low Sulphur Diesel Fuel. He said Bruce Belden, an Auto Mechanic Supervisor with DPW, had attended several training courses and informed him the low sulphur fuels will be good for the environment, yet bad for the County Budget. The new fuels, he explained, would decrease the fuel efficiency by 10% and the old motors would need special additives in order to handle the new fuel. He cautioned the cost impact was not yet known and he urged the Committee members to review the information provided in the Agenda packet.

General discussion ensued as Mr. Lamy explained the use of low sulphur diesel fuels was a Federal mandate. He said he would confirm the effective date for the conversion and report back to the Committee.

Mr. Lamy resumed his Agenda review at Item 8, Budget Update, and he directed attention to the list of Budget Reductions - 2007 (included in the Agenda packet). He explained that certain aspects of the Budget had been reviewed and reduced at the request of the County Budget Officer. However, he noted a 7% (\$439,917) reduction in the .4 accounts had also been requested, although he had eliminated only \$89,600 thus far. For any further cuts, he said, he would need direction from the Committee, since some services may be reduced to achieve the cuts.

Responding to questions from Mr. Belden, Mrs. Parsons explained that every department had been asked to reduce their proposed budgets. She said there were 18 pages worth of cuts, so far.

Mr. Lamy further noted there were several issues that would need to be addressed in 2007, although the 2007 Budget had no funds allocated for any of the them. He said the items were listed underneath the 2007 Budget Reductions, as follows:

- ✓ GASBY 34 was a Federal Accounting process that required the complete line of assets to be assigned a dollar value. He said he had conferred with the Deputy Treasurer on the requirements, and determined the project was beyond the DPW staff's capabilities. Therefore, he said he would like to issue an RFP (Request For Proposal) and hire a consultant. He cautioned that an estimated cost of the project was not yet available.
- ✓ Improvements to the Fleet Management System had been discussed with the Commissioner of Administrative and Fiscal Services.
- ✓ Improvements to the Gasboy System: some of the fuel pumps had been converted, while others were still on the old system.
- ✓ Low Sulphur Fuels, as reported above.
- ✓ The new shop's furnace was not functioning properly and would need to be serviced.

- ✓ The roof on the building at the Toney Pit in Warrensburg was in need of repairs;
- ✓ A drainage issue at the new shop (in Warrensburg) has created problems for an adjacent property owner, and would need to be remedied.

Following a brief discussion, Mr. Lamy agreed to speak with the Director of the Lake George Watershed Conference, David Decker, PE, to determine if storm water grant funds might be available to help address the drainage issue mentioned above.

Returning to Agenda review at Item 9, Mr. Lamy reported that during his five weeks as Superintendent, he had visited every remote location listed under the DPW umbrella. Along the way, he said, he met with 90% of the staff and all of the construction supervisors and observed a spirit of cooperation from everyone. He promised to report back to the Committee, as new issues were identified.

Mrs. Parsons left the meeting at 10:02 a.m.

Mr. Belden commended Mr. Lamy for the additional hours and extra effort he has invested into the Department within the past few weeks. Mr. Merlino, Supervisor for the Town of Lake Luzerne, extended the Town's appreciation for the DPW's efforts within the past six weeks, as well.

Mr. Lamy commented that his Deputy, Brian Humphrey, had assumed an enormous amount of the workload for him, including management of the highway program. In addition, he mentioned that William Remington, Deputy Superintendent of Public Works, Environmental and Engineering Services, had been a tremendous help with his review of the Capital Projects.

Mr. Caimano re-entered the meeting at 10:04 a.m.

Mr. Bentley pointed out the 2007 DPW Budget had been reduced by approximately one million dollars. He said he felt the time had come for the County to increase the sales tax to prevent each and every department's budget from being "butchered."

Mr. Haskell and Mr. Mason echoed the same concerns.

Mr. Caimano said he felt if the County raised the sales tax, it would only delay the inevitable and the County would then be faced with spending \$12 million more.

Mr. Caimano left the meeting at 10:05 a.m.

Mr. Belden acknowledged that the 2006 County Budget was the first time the full salaries had been reported. In addition, he said, the Department of Social Services expenses had never been adequately budgeted, which meant additional funds had to be allocated in prior years.

Mr. Lamy turned to Agenda review of Old Business, Item 1 Referrals, and he reported as follows:

Printing of new County maps were in progress;

Alder Brook Bridge - the agreement with property owners pending Court Order on Consent to Acquire; although he said, the property owners would have a maximum of one year to file papers with the Courts if they can demonstrate additional compensation from the County would be justified;

Gas Boy demonstration - from his conversations with Mrs. Parsons, Mr. Lamy said he realized the Supervisors would be more interested in what type of paper trail would be available, rather than how the pumps actually work;

Six Month review of the shop shall be conducted in early November, at the convenience of Committee Chairman Belden and Committee members would be welcome to attend, as well.

Big Hollow Road Bridge - was visited with Chairman Belden. Mr. Belden said he would recommend the Town of Lake George should retain the responsibility. Mr. Lamy stated that he would like to have DOT clarify the definition of a 25-foot span, before a final decision was made.

Radio update - the new equipment had been activated and any "dead areas" should be reported to either his Office, or Brian LaFlure, Systems Coordinator with the Sheriff's Office.

Town of Queensbury's inventory of meter/panel boxes along the Corinth Road Reconstruction Project - no new information was available at this time.

Mr. Haskell entered the meeting at 10:15 a.m.

Mr. Lamy reported the 2006 Budget had included \$55-\$60,000 for the purchase of a truck via State contract. However, he said, the State contract would not be "out" until 2007 and he was concerned the funds would be lost. Therefore, he suggested the 2006 equipment purchase could be swapped for other 2007 equipment purchases.

Discussion ensued.

Mr. Bentley reported, as Supervisor for the Town of Horicon, that his Town had recently purchased a sand/plow truck via the bid process, for approximately \$53,000.

Mr. Lamy said he would like to obtain additional information from Mr. Bentley and the Town of Horicon in hopes the County could make use of the same bid structure.

Following further discussion, motion was made by Mr. Haskell, seconded by Mr. Mason and carried unanimously to authorize Mr. Lamy to proceed with the truck purchase via the bid process, using 2006 budgeted funds.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, on motion by Mr. Bentley and seconded by Mr. Mason, Mr. Belden adjourned the meeting at 10:20 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Carlene A. Ramsey, Sr. Legislative Office Specialist