

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: **PERSONNEL**

DATE: **DECEMBER 11, 2008**

Committee Members Present:

Supervisors Thomas
Kenny
Belden
Stec
Sokol
Tessier

Others Present:

Fred Monroe, Chairman
Hal Payne, Commissioner of Administrative
and Fiscal Services
Joan Sady, Clerk of the Board
JoAnn McKinstry, Deputy Commissioner of
Administrative and Fiscal Services
Kevin Geraghty, Budget Officer
Supervisor Champagne
Supervisor Strainer
Supervisor Taylor
Supervisor VanNess
Rich Kelly, Personnel Officer
Todd Lunt, Director, Human Resources
Pat Auer, Director, Public Health
Brian LaFlure, Director, Office of
Emergency Services/Fire Coordinator
Mike Swan, Director, Real Property Tax
Services
Shane Ross, Chief Deputy
Bud York, Sheriff
William Lamy, DPW Superintendent
Sheila Weaver, Commissioner, Department
of Social Services
Alyson Martin, *The Post Star*
Nicole Livingston, Deputy Clerk

Committee Member Absent:

Vacant Town of Thurman

Mr. Thomas called the Personnel Committee meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Belden, seconded by Mr. Sokol and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the November 12, 2008 Committee meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk of the Board.

Copies of the Personnel Agenda were provided to the Committee members, and a copy of same is on file with the minutes.

Mr. Thomas commenced the Agenda review, and stated Items 1A and B were referrals from the Health Services Committee. Item 1A, he said, was referred from the Health Services Department, requesting to create the position of a Per Diem Health Educator, base salary of \$34,178 prorated to the hourly rate of \$16.15, Grade 14, effective January 1, 2009, and to delete the position of Health Educator, 30 hours per week; thereby amending the Department's Table of Organization. He noted that this position

was 100% funded by the Emergency Preparedness grant.

Motion was made by Mr. Sokol and seconded by Mr. Kenny to approve the request as presented.

Mr. Belden questioned if this position received benefits and Pat Auer, Director of Public Health, replied in the negative noting that the position was a Per Diem and for less than forty hours per week. Mr. Kenny confirmed that once the grant funding ended, this position would be eliminated and Mrs. Auer agreed. Mr. Belden added that during the budget process, two positions within the Health Services Department had been eliminated, which contributed to the creation of this position.

Following discussion, Mr. Thomas called the question and the motion was carried unanimously to approve Item 1A as outlined above, and the necessary resolution was authorized for the next board meeting.

Mr. Thomas added Item 1B was referred by the Westmount Health Facility, requesting for an employee to enroll in a job related course entitled "Principles of Chemistry" at Adirondack Community College from January 26, 2009 through May 8, 2009, at a cost of \$579.50.

Motion was made by Mr. Tessier, seconded by Mr. Belden and carried unanimously to approve Item 1B as outlined above, and the necessary resolution was authorized for the next board meeting.

Mr. Thomas advised Items 2A through C were referrals from the Public Safety Committee. He reported that Item 2A was referred from the Office of Emergency Services, requesting to fill the vacant position of Third Deputy Fire Coordinator, base salary of \$3,089, Employee No. 7011, due to promotion.

Motion was made by Mr. Belden and seconded by Mr. Kenny to approve the request as presented.

Mr. Belden asked if the funds were included in the budget to cover this position and Brian LaFlure, Director of the Office of Emergency Services and Fire Coordinator, replied affirmatively. Mr. Geraghty questioned if the Deputies received mileage reimbursements and Mr. LaFlure explained mileage reimbursement was only granted when the Deputies responded to a call or attended a County meeting. Mr. Geraghty wondered if Mr. LaFlure had an estimate as to what that mileage reimbursement equated to and Mr. LaFlure said approximately \$500 per year. He further stated that he reported to more calls and County meetings than his Deputies did and currently his mileage reimbursement totaled approximately \$900. Mr. Geraghty requested a report of the mileage reimbursement logs and Mr. LaFlure responded he would provide that information to Mr. Geraghty.

Following discussions, Mr. Thomas called the question and the motion was carried unanimously to approve Item 2A as outlined above. A copy of the Notice of Intent to Fill Vacant Position is on file with the minutes.

Mr. Thomas expounded Items 2B and C were referred from the Sheriff & Communications Office and 2B was a request to fill the vacant position of Correction Officer, base salary of \$32,400, Employee No. 9075, due to retirement.

Motion was made by Mr. Tessier and seconded by Mr. Kenny to approve the request as presented.

Mr. Kenny advised that staffing levels within the Corrections Division were mandated by the State.

Mr. Thomas called the question and the motion was carried unanimously to approve Item 2B as outlined above. A copy of the Notice of Intent to Fill Vacant Position is on file with the minutes.

Mr. Thomas added that Item 2C was a request to increase the salary of a Communication Officer, Employee No. 11531, from the 1st year salary step to the 5th year salary step of \$41,011 as per the Schedule A, Salary and Compensation Plan of the 2008 to 2011 Warren County Sheriff's Employees' Alliance agreement, effective January 1, 2009.

Motion was made by Mr. Kenny and seconded by Mr. Tessier to approve the request as presented.

Joan Sady, Clerk of the Board, stated this individual had come to the County with several years of prior experience related to this position. Todd Lunt, Director of Human Resources, further expounded that the individual had a misconception that he was being hired at a pay level equivalent to his experience; however, he noted, that was not the case. The level of experience, Mr. Lunt continued, only exempted the individual from having to take a Civil Service exam and be placed on an eligibility list. He added that Sheriff York brought this matter to his Committee and the Sheriff had expressed his opinion that the individual was worthy of the increase due to his experience.

Mr. Strainer entered the meeting at 9:11 a.m.

Discussion ensued regarding any departments that had provisions to pay employees based on experience. Following discussions, it was determined that this request was not precedent setting and any similar requests would be handled on a case by case basis.

Mr. VanNess and Shane Ross, Chief Deputy, entered the meeting at 9:13 a.m.

Chief Deputy Ross clarified that this individual came to the County with nine years experience as a Dispatcher with the Hudson Falls Police Department. He added that the employee required no additional training due to his experience. Mr. Thomas questioned how long the individual had been employed with Warren County and Chief Deputy Ross replied since August of 2008.

Mr. Thomas called the question and the motion was carried unanimously to approve Item 2C as outlined above, and the necessary resolution was authorized for the next board meeting.

Mr. Thomas apprised Items 3A and B were referrals from the Real Property Tax Services Committee. He said Item 3A was a request to fill the vacant position of Real Property Information Specialist, base salary of \$31,351, Grade 11, Employee No. 11420, due to termination.

Motion was made by Mr. Kenny and seconded by Mr. Belden to approve the request as presented.

Mr. Belden questioned why this position was vacant and Mike Swan, Director of Real Property Tax Services, responded that the individual that was in the position was on a six month probationary period and it was determined, based on the work performed, that the employee was not qualified. He explained that he was requesting to promote the employee currently in the position of Real Property Clerk to the Real Property Information Specialist and to hire a new employee to fill the vacated Clerk position. Hal Payne, Commissioner of Administrative & Fiscal Services, remarked that there had been two positions within the Real Property Tax Services Department that were eliminated over the past two years, thereby decreasing the staffing levels from five to three.

Mr. Thomas called the question and the motion was carried unanimously to approve Item 3A as outlined above. A copy of the Notice of Intent to Fill Vacant Position is on file with the minutes.

Mr. Thomas added that Item 3B was a request to fill the vacant position of Real Property Clerk, base salary of \$24,059, Grade 4, Employee No. 11437, due to promotion.

Motion was made by Mr. Tessier, seconded by Mr. Belden and carried unanimously to approve Item 3B as outlined above. A copy of the Notice of Intent to Fill vacant Position is on file with the minutes.

Concluding the Agenda review, Mr. Thomas said Item 4 was a referral from the Department of Civil Service, requesting a Transfer of Funds in the amount of \$2,691 to cover the over-budget salary codes.

Motion was made by Mr. Belden, seconded by Mr. Tessier and carried unanimously to approve Item 4 as outlined above and to refer same to the Finance Committee.

Sheriff York entered the meeting at 9:21 a.m.

Prior to adjournment, Mr. Thomas said an additional matter needed to be discussed. He reminded the Committee members of previous discussions regarding a hiring freeze for 2009. Mr. Lunt distributed a proposed policy concerning the hiring freeze policy. The Committee members reviewed the policy.

Mr. Stec entered the meeting at 9:23 a.m.

Mr. Belden commented that the proposed policy only outlined a hiring freeze for six months and thought the Committee members were in agreement that it should be for an entire year. Mr. Thomas remarked it was explained to him that the Committee would review the policy in six months to determine the effectiveness and could extend the implementation for an entire year at that time.

Mr. Thomas asked what constituted a 'supermajority' as outlined in the proposed policy. It was the opinion of the Committee that a 'supermajority' would require a 2/3 vote. Mr. Kenny related his concern with all the exemptions listed in the proposed policy.

Discussion ensued with regard to the proposed hiring freeze policy. Mr. Geraghty said the County would not do anything that would jeopardize health care or public safety. Mr. Taylor recommended that a hiring freeze be implemented for all positions except for those mandated by the State and any other request would require the aforementioned 'supermajority' vote of the Committee.

Following discussions, a motion was made by Mr. Stec, seconded by Mr. Belden and carried unanimously to amend the proposed policy to remove all exemptions listed, except for those mandated by law; thereby deleting paragraph numbers two and three of the proposed policy and that the policy shall be implemented from January 1, 2009 through July 1, 2009 and reviewed again after the six month time period.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, on motion made by Mr. Stec and seconded by Mr. Kenny, Mr. Thomas adjourned the meeting at 9:35 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicole Livingston, Deputy Clerk