

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: PERSONNEL

DATE: APRIL 8, 2015

---

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS TAYLOR  
KENNY  
SOKOL  
MERLINO  
DICKINSON  
WOOD  
SIMPSON

OTHERS PRESENT:

REPRESENTING THE HUMAN RESOURCES & CIVIL SERVICE ADMINISTRATION:  
GRETCHEN STEFFAN, COUNTY HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR  
PATRICIA NENNINGER, PERSONNEL OFFICER  
PAM VOGEL, COUNTY CLERK  
KEVIN GERAGHTY, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD  
PAUL DUSEK, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR  
MARTIN AUFFREDOU, COUNTY ATTORNEY  
JOAN SADY, CLERK OF THE BOARD  
FRANK THOMAS, BUDGET OFFICER  
SUPERVISORS BROCK  
CONOVER  
FRASIER  
MCDEVITT  
LLOYD COTÉ, ADMINISTRATOR, WESTMOUNT HEALTH FACILITY  
MIKE SWAN, COUNTY TREASURER  
JODI CENTERBAR, LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST  
DAVID STRAINER, TOWN OF QUEENSBURY RESIDENT  
DON LEHMAN, *THE POST STAR*  
AMANDA ALLEN, DEPUTY CLERK OF THE BOARD

---

---

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

SUPERVISORS GIRARD  
VANSELOW

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

Motion was made by Ms. Wood, seconded by Mr. Kenny and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the prior Committee meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk of the Board.

Copies of the meeting Agenda were distributed to the Committee members and a copy of same is on file with the meeting minutes.

Commencing the Agenda review, Mr. Taylor announced Items 1A-C consisted of requests/items to be discussed by the Human Resources Director; privilege of the floor was extended to Gretchen Steffan, *County Human Resources Director*, to address these items. Ms. Steffan proceeded to review Agenda Items 1A-C, as follows:

- 1A) Report on tracking of salary implications for positions filled - Ms. Steffan advised there was not much to report in relation to vacancies filled; however, she stated, she would like to point out that so far for 2015, 49 new employees had been hired by the County. Ms. Steffan displayed a packet of information provided to newly hired employees which included a considerable amount of paperwork to be completed and she noted this process generally took about 45 minutes to explain and complete. She continued that once the necessary paperwork was filled out, the forms had to be notarized, entered into the computerized personnel system and forwarded to the New York State Retirement System, which she estimated took her staff another 30 minutes to complete. Ms. Steffan advised that as per her calculations, the total time spent processing employee documentation for the 49 people hired in 2015 was about 61½ hours. Interestingly, she pointed out that 26 of the 49 new employees had been hired during the month of March. Ms. Steffan commented that the process for hiring new employees required a lot of logistics and generated a considerable amount of paperwork.
- 1B) Review of draft Family and Medical Leave (*FMLA*) Policy - Ms. Steffan indicated that the Agenda packet included a draft *FMLA* policy suggested for Warren County. She explained *FMLA* was a wonderful act for employees, or an employee's family member, with serious medical conditions, which offered 12 weeks of leave in a calendar year. Ms. Steffan advised the County had offered *FMLA* leave for many years; she added that this new policy was very comprehensive and included

some amendments to the previous version. She concluded that this new policy had been reviewed and approved by the County Attorney.

Ms. Wood advised she had reviewed the draft policy and noted it provided language pertaining to National Guard service and she questioned whether the draft policy would cover all such military contingencies. Ms. Steffan replied affirmatively, confirming that the policy mirrored the letter of the law and provided for any such occurrences.

Martin Auffredou, *County Attorney*, stated that during his tenure as County Attorney his Office had fielded many questions from various departments about FMLA regulations and he acknowledged that at times the law could be very difficult to read and apply. He commented that the policy drafted by Ms. Steffan would be very helpful in bringing needed resolution to any inconsistencies experienced with the application of FMLA regulations for Warren County. Mr. Auffredou commended Ms. Steffan's efforts to produce the FMLA policy and stated her work in this regard was extraordinary.

Motion was made by Ms. Wood, seconded by Mr. Dickinson and carried unanimously to approve the draft FMLA Policy, as presented by Ms. Steffan, and the necessary resolution was authorized for the April 17<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting.

1C) Review of Sick Leave Donation Policy for out-of-unit staff - Ms. Steffan pointed out that the Agenda packet included a memorandum from herself to the Personnel Committee with the objective being to create a Sick Leave Donation Policy for out-of-unit staff. She noted a recent situation where an employee experiencing a serious medical condition had triggered a sick leave donation movement where many who had desired to donate sick time had been unable to do so because they were not part of the CSEA; Ms. Steffan added that currently, there was no mechanism in place to allow out-of-unit staff to participate in these types of donations. In answer to this issue, Ms. Steffan stated she had prepared a memo seeking to introduce a new policy that would allow both in and out-of-unit staff to donate and receive donations of sick time if a need arose. She advised the language included in her memo had been reviewed by the County Attorney and was consistent with that included in both the CSEA and PBA Union agreements.

Ms. Wood noted the memo provided by Ms. Steffan indicated that sick time could be donated in "days" but she pointed out that while most employees worked an 8-hour day, some worked a 12-hour day and she questioned how this matter would be addressed. Ms. Steffan responded that the policy could be tailored to address this issue; as an example, she indicated that an 8-hour employee would donate 1.5 days to a 12-hour employee.

Chairman Geraghty asked if through this policy all employees, both in and out-of-unit, would be eligible to donate sick days and to receive donations and Ms. Steffan replied affirmatively.

A brief discussion ensued, following which it was determined to be the consensus of the Committee for Ms. Steffan to prepare a full draft policy to be reviewed and considered by the Personnel Committee at their next meeting.

Ms. Steffan indicated she had one additional item to present pertaining to a staffing issue at Westmount Health Facility which was not previously considered by the Health Services Committee. She distributed copies of a job description for a Health Facility Office Records Specialist position, *a copy of which is on file with the meeting minutes*, and she explained that due to a resignation without notice of a Health Facility Keyboard Specialist, there was now a gap in the administrative office operations at Westmount. Ms. Steffan stated Westmount was already very leanly staffed and the Health Facility Keyboard Specialist had been a key front desk position, answering phones and providing a lot of support work. She advised she had met with Lloyd Coté, *Administrator, Westmount Health Facility*, and Patricia Nenninger, *Personnel Officer*, to talk about the needs of the Facility and she acknowledged that

although the future of Westmount Health Facility was uncertain, there was still work that needed to be addressed. Ms. Steffan apprised they were seeking to delete the Health Facility Keyboard Specialist position (*Grade 5, \$27,435*) and create the new position of Health Facility Office Records Specialist #2 (*Grade 14, \$36,815*); she proceeded with a brief review of the job description for the new position which would include medical billing, processing employee payroll information, etc. Ms. Steffan said she felt the job description full encapsulated all of the duties that needed to be addressed at Westmount during the Facility's transition period.

Mr. Taylor commented that the longer the Westmount sale was delayed, the more of these types of situations they were likely to see and he said he appreciated the effort made by Ms. Steffan to address this matter so quickly. Mr. Sokol advised that as Chairman of the Health Services Committee he had been contacted about this issue earlier in the week. He stated that the Westmount staff continued to do a fantastic job regardless of the uncertain future of the Facility and he confirmed the position in question was key to Westmount operations.

Motion was made by Mr. Sokol, seconded by Mr. Simpson and carried unanimously to amend the Table of Organization to delete the position of Health Facility Keyboard Specialist (*Grade 5, \$27,435*) and create and fill the new position of Health Facility Office Records Specialist #2 (*Grade 14, \$36,815*) effective April 20, 2015, as well as to waive the Rules of the Board requiring prior authorization by the Health Services Committee, and the necessary resolutions were authorized for the April 17<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting.

Resuming the Agenda review with Item 2, Mr. Taylor outlined a referral from the County Clerk/Motor Vehicles Committee, requesting to amend the Table of Organization to delete the position of Motor Vehicle License Registration Clerk, *Grade 6, Annual Base Salary \$30,139*, and to create and fill the new position of Motor Vehicle License/Registration Clerk part-time, *Grade 6, \$13.75 hourly, not to exceed \$14,300 per year*, effective June 1, 2015.

Pam Vogel, *County Clerk*, advised that due to a resignation of an employee in the DMV Office following a long-term illness, she had determined it was a good opportunity to review the status of the Office and to consider a restructure. She explained that following this review they had determined it was best to delete the vacant full-time position and to create a part-time position that would allow more flexibility in staffing in accordance with the needs of the DMV Office. Mrs. Vogel stated that there was a list of tested eligible candidates for DMV positions which the Civil Service Office would canvass to determine whether there was any interest in the part-time position.

Motion was made by Mr. Merlino, seconded by Mr. Dickinson and carried unanimously to approve the request and the necessary resolution was authorized for the April 17<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting.

Mrs. Vogel advised the County Clerk-Motor Vehicles Committee had also discussed and approved the creation of a temporary Senior Account Clerk position to cover for a long-term medical leave in the DMV Office. She further advised that after this approval was provided, she had learned that the employee had taken a medical retirement and would not be returning to the position. Therefore, Mrs. Vogel stated, she had subsequently withdrawn her request to create the temporary position and had instead sought authorization to fill the vacant Senior Account Clerk position; she added that the position was listed under Section IV of the Agenda with the other vacancies filled since the last Personnel Committee meeting, having already been approved by both the County Administrator and Human Resources Director.

Mr. Taylor announced Agenda Item 3 pertained to a referral from the Criminal Justice Committee, *Assigned Counsel*, requesting to amend the Table of Organization to create and fill the new position of Assistant to Assigned Counsel Administrator, *part-time, not to exceed 20 hours per week, annual salary \$15,128*, effective April 20, 2015. He noted there would be no cost to the County as this position was funded through the New York State Office of Indigent Legal Services grant.

Motion was made by Mr. Sokol, seconded by Ms. Wood and carried unanimously to approve the request and the necessary resolution was authorized for the April 17<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting.

Continuing to Agenda Item 4, Mr. Taylor outlined a referral from the Economic Growth & Development Committee, *Planning & Community Development*, requesting to amend Resolution No. 147 of 2015, *Retaining Temporary Position of GIS Technician*, to increase the number of hours per year from 200 to 1,040 and to increase the salary from \$15.00 per hour to \$20.00 per hour as the result of a grant award, as well as to amend the Table of Organization accordingly.

Motion was made by Ms. Wood, seconded by Mr. Merlino and carried unanimously to approve the request and the necessary resolution was authorized for the April 17<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting.

Mr. Taylor advised Agenda Items 5A-C included several referrals from the Support Services Committee. He proceeded to outline Agenda Items 5A-B, requests from the Clerk of the Board, as follows:

- 5A) Request to appoint Amanda Allen, *Deputy Clerk of the Board*, as Clerk of the Board, effective May 1, 2015, Annual Salary of \$58,500 due to the retirement of Joan Sady on April 30, 2015.

Ms. Wood recalled that at the last Support Services Committee meeting there had been some discussion about the salary for the Clerk of the Board position and the desire by some to set the salary higher than the \$58,500 requested. She noted a suggestion had been made to raise the salary through the 2016 Budget process; however, she said, subsequent discussions with Mr. Thomas, *Budget Officer*, had indicated that salary increases in the 2016 Budget would be limited to 2%. Given the fact that Mrs. Allen had already covered the Clerk position for Joan Sady, *Clerk of the Board*, when she was out of the Office, and they were comfortable that she could do the job, Ms. Wood said she saw no reason not to increase the salary now if the Committee was in agreement; she then suggested that the starting salary be increased from \$58,500 to \$60,000.

Motion was made by Ms. Wood, seconded by Mr. Dickinson and carried unanimously to approve Item 5A, appointing Amanda Allen as Clerk of the Board effective May 1, 2015 at a salary of \$60,000 and the necessary resolution was authorized for the April 17<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting.

- 5B) Request to amend the table of organization and salary schedule as indicated below to reflect salary adjustment for several positions within the Office of the Clerk of the Board effective May 1, 2015:

1. Clerk of the Board - Decrease from \$67,314 to \$60,000;
2. Deputy Clerk of the Board - Decrease from \$50,000 to \$44,500;
3. Secretary to the Clerk of the Board - Decrease from \$38,760 to \$37,000;
4. Assistant Secretary to Clerk of the Board - Decrease from \$35,374 to -0-.\*

\*Note: This position will remain unfunded for possible future consideration as an unclassified, part-time position.

Motion was made by Mr. Sokol, seconded by Mr. Kenny and carried unanimously to approve Item 5B and to amend the Table of Organization accordingly, and the necessary resolution was authorized for the April 17<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting.

Returning to Agenda Item 4, Mr. Dickinson questioned whether the grant funds relating to the increase in hours for the Planning & Community Development Department's GIS Technician position was only for one year or if it would continue to be received in subsequent years. Paul Dusek, *County Administrator*, responded that this was a one-time grant and that at the end of the grant term the GIS Technician position's hours would return to 200 per year. In response to a second question posed by Mr. Dickinson, Mr. Dusek confirmed that the current GIS Technician's hours would be increased and that this was not a new employee. Ms. Steffan interjected it was her understanding that the current GIS Technician was very highly skilled and the Planning & Community Development Department was very happy to have the opportunity to continue to benefit from those skills.

Mr. Taylor noted Agenda Item 5C included a request from the County Attorney for discussion and recommendation of appointments to the County Board of Ethics. Privilege of the floor was extended to Mr. Auffredou to address this item. Mr. Auffredou apprised the County's Board of Ethics would be comprised of two non-government and one government members. He explained that he and Mr. McDevitt had worked closely over the last several months to identify candidates to serve on the Board of Ethics who would be appointed by the Board of Supervisors and would serve at their pleasure, receiving no compensation for their services. Mr. Auffredou further explained that to discharge their duties, the individuals serving the Board of Ethics would be encouraged to utilize the services of his Office with respect to use of meeting rooms, telephones, photocopying, computer service, typing, etc. He commented that the Board of Supervisors had adopted their Ethics Law late last year, and the appointment of the Board of Ethics was the last step to complete the process. Mr. Auffredou announced the candidates chosen for the non-governmental positions were Dr. James Morrissey and Dr. Bill Tedesco, with Chris Scoville serving as an alternate member; he added that the candidate for the governmental position was Gail Seaman, *Town of Thurman*, and he advised Edna Wells, *Town of Chester*, would serve as an alternate member. Mr. Auffredou stated both he and Mr. McDevitt were happy with the candidates they had brought forward and they agreed that all would make exceptional Ethics Board Members. He said that while they did not expect the Board of Ethics member to incur any incidental expenses in relation to their duties, there may be some cases where mileage, copying or long-distance telephone charges were incurred and he would ask the Committee to consider allowing reimbursement for reasonable expenses. Mr. Auffredou indicated that he believed his existing departmental budget was sufficient to absorb these minimal costs so that there would not be any new expense to the County. In closing, he requested that the Committee introduce a resolution appointing the individuals he had mentioned as members of the Ethics Board for approval at the April 17<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting.

Motion was made by Mr. Sokol and seconded by Ms. Wood to make appointments to the Warren County Ethics Board as suggested by Mr. Auffredou.

Mr. Kenny apprised that Dr. Tedesco had been his personal physician for 45 years and he could think of no one with higher ethical standards to serve the Board of Ethics.

Mr. Dickinson questioned whether Mr. Auffredou would review and approve the vouchers submitted for the reasonable expenses and Mr. Auffredou responded that although he was capable of doing this, the vouchers would be submitted to the Treasurer's Office for payment. He indicated the reason he had requested consideration of this reimbursement was because he did not feel it was fair to expect the Board of Ethics members to incur expenses for this volunteer work. Mr. McDevitt opined it was unlikely that any vouchers would be submitted by the Ethics Board Members. He added the objective of his and Mr. Auffredou's search for candidates had been to identify candidates whose reputations were impeccable and who had time to serve the Board. Mr. McDevitt opined that once the Board of Ethics was seated, there would likely be an initial flurry of activity.

There being no further discussion on the matter, Mr. Taylor called the question and the aforementioned motion to appoint members of the Warren County Ethics Board as suggested by Mr. Auffredou was carried by a unanimous vote, thereby authorizing the necessary resolution for the April 17<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting.

Concluding the Agenda review, Mr. Taylor noted Item IV included a listing of vacancies filled since the last Personnel Committee meeting, as follows:

IV. Vacancies Filled:

**County Clerk/Motor Vehicles -**

- 1) Senior Account Clerk, Grade 7, Annual Salary \$30,204, due to retirement. This is a non-mandated Union position which receives no reimbursement, but generates revenue through Motor Vehicle transactions.

***Criminal Justice-***

- 1) Assistant to Assigned Counsel Administrator, part-time, Annual Salary of \$15,218, due to creation. This is a non-mandated, Non-union position, which is 100% reimbursed through the NYS Office of Legal Indigent Services Grant. Continuity of employment is contingent on grant funding.

***Health Services - Public Health***

- 1) Public Health Liaison, Grade 7, Annual Salary of \$30,204, pro-rated to 24 hours per week, due to retirement. This is a non-mandated, Union position, which is 100% reimbursable through the Emergency Preparedness Grant. Continuity of employment is contingent on grant funding.

***Public Works -***

- 1) Auto Mechanic #6, Grade 9, Annual Salary of \$32,553, due to retirement. This is a non-mandated Union position and receives no reimbursement.
- 2) Assistant Engineer #2, Annual Salary of \$43,000, due to resignation. This is a non-mandated, Non-Union position, and receives no reimbursement.
- 3) Sign Maintenance Worker #2, Grade 9, Annual Salary of \$32,553, due to retirement. This is a non-mandated, Union position and receives no reimbursement.

***Support Services - Clerk of the Board***

- 1) Deputy Clerk of the Board, Annual salary of \$44,500, due to promotion. This is a non-mandated, non-Union position, and receives no reimbursement.

Mr. Auffredou advised the need for an executive session to discuss the employment history of a particular person within the Human Resources Department.

Motion was made by Mr. Simpson, seconded by Mr. Sokol and carried unanimously to enter into an executive session pursuant to Section 105(f) of the Public Officer's Law.

An executive session was held from 9:33 a.m. until 9:40 a.m.

Upon reconvening, Mr. Taylor advised no action had been taken during the executive session; however, he added, Ms. Steffan had submitted her resignation. He stated that Ms. Steffan was going to be missed and he said she had brought a high level of professionalism to her position and he was sorry to see her leave the County's employ.

Mr. Dusek stated the development of the Human Resources Department had been very important to him and he had encouraged the Board of Supervisors to approve its establishment. From his prospective, he said he could not have asked for a better person to head the Human Resources Department than Ms. Steffan and he commented that she had done an outstanding job for the County during her tenure. Mr. Dusek noted that Ms. Steffan had worked to build the Human Resources Department from the ground up, which was a lot of work, and he noted that even today she had submitted new policies for the Board's review. He concluded that there was still much more work to be done in the Human Resources Department and he would sorely miss Ms. Steffan and the expertise she had brought to both the Department and to the County.

There being no further business to come before the Personnel Committee, on motion made by Mr. Sokol and seconded by Mr. Kenny, Mr. Taylor adjourned the meeting at 9:43 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Amanda Allen, Deputy Clerk of the Board