

**ULSTER COUNTY LEGISLATURE
COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

NAME OF COMMITTEE: Administrative Services Committee

DATE: January 22, 2007

TIME: 6:12 P.M.

PLACE: Library Conference Room, 6th Floor

LEGISLATORS PRESENT: Chairman Brian Cahill, Legislators Robert Parete, Robert Aiello, and Joseph Stoeckeler

LEGISLATORS ABSENT: Legislators Bischoff(excused), Peter Kraft (excused), Joan Every

OTHERS ATTENDING: Sylvia Wohlfahrt, Interim Director Information Services, Robin Peruso, Purchasing Agent, Kathleen Mihm, Clerk of Legislature, Vic Works, Acting Building & Grounds Commissioner, Diane Beitzl, Safety Officer, Bonnie Szpulecki, Insurance Officer, Dorothy Martin, Director Real Property, and Soni O'Bryan, Deputy Insurance Officer (attending to take minutes for meeting).

A motion to accept the minutes from the October 16, 2006 meeting was made by Legislator Parete, seconded by Legislator Aiello with no objections.

Real Property Director Dorothy Martin presented a request to attend a NYSAC conference of which she is a member of the Board. Dorothy advised that the costs are all reimbursable by the State. Legislator Parete made a motion to accept and approve attendance at the conference, seconded by Legislator Stoeckler. All were in favor, motion passed.

The first item of business on the committee agenda was a report from each department on the **County Improvement Plan**.

INFORMATION SERVICES, Interim Director Sylvia Wohlfahrt, advised that her department is gathering server down time status to check for reliability and report the number of incidents processed per month to check the turn around time. Chairman Cahill indicated this was good progress and would now like to see it put in spreadsheet form. Sylvia will work on a spreadsheet.

PURCHASING: Purchasing Agent, Robin Peruso indicated that her measurable tasks are Bids and RFP turnaround time that can be measured by the Dept's request and bid schedule. Additionally, Requisitions to PO turnaround time that can be measured by the Financial System, Prices on req's before and after quoting, also can be measured by the Financial system, and Vendor/Commodity activity reports that can be measured by the Financial System and bid schedule. Committee members were pleased with what she had submitted and Chairman Cahill again reiterated that he would like her to set this up in spreadsheet form, which Sylvia will help Robin and other departments with.

REAL PROPERTY: Director, Dorothy Martin, handed out a copy of the tasks they are looking to improve with their current operations. They will be measuring and tracking deed and survey turn around time as well as developing changes to office procedure once the assessors have GRM capability. Once assessor's

can access the new system for deeds, her department will no longer have to do this for the assessors. Real Property will document any savings by tracking the number of hours they no longer need for copying deeds. Not only will they save on copying time, but she believes this will save quite a bit of money as well. They are also intending to initiate programs that would make them more efficient and accurate and update their record keeping with more automation through the use of scanning. Again, Chairman Cahill would like her to quantify anything that is being done and give it to Sylvia for the spreadsheet.

INSURANCE: Bonnie advised that they are now doing the Workers Compensation bi-weekly benefits on spreadsheets which has saved them a great deal of time and also is more accurate. As of 1/1/07 they are started using a new invoice number system so HTE will can kick out duplicate bills. With the assistance of the Auditing Department, Bonnie was shown some ways HTE could be used more efficiently so that each bill is tagged using the new number system. In the past there have been problems with duplicate payments, mostly because of the huge amount of paperwork that is received in the office for the four Workers Compensation Claim Examiners. Job functions have been slightly redefined so that the Claims Examiners have the proper time to spend on managing their caseloads and not pushing paper. One suggestion made was that Bonnie look at the claims from when they come into our office and track them from the time we set them up through paying bills and try to monitor accuracy and efficiency this way if as much as possible. Chairman Cahill requested that Bonnie work on putting this in spreadsheet format to Sylvia.

SAFETY: Safety Officer, Diane Beitel, advises they are doing training schedules targeting the number of presentations—they are in the process of converting everything to digital format. Diane advised that inspections are done on a regular basis for the driver permits by checking abstracts and monitoring on an annual date - they use state reports to assist with this. Diane also advised that they also have to do Workers Compensation reports for the state for all County employees to monitor the time lost. State reports must be done quarterly. As with other departments Diane will work on putting this in spreadsheet format.

At the end of the input session Chairman Cahill indicated that he felt departments were headed in the right direction and he would like to use the Administrative Services Committee as an example to the rest of the Legislature by showing how they are saving money and monitoring costs and eventually get all departments on board with this. This concluded the County Improvement System discussion.

Old/New business updates were the next items on the meeting agenda.

INFORMATION SERVICES: Sylvia Wohlfahrt, Interim Director, next went over her list of requests and equipment. **First** item was a Digital Camera and Accessories purchase in the amount of \$531.00 for the Sheriff's Department. They would like to do testing on it first at one of the Sheriff substations. Item was approved for purchase by all. The **second** item is a Live Scan Fingerprint System that consists of 1 server unit and 1 client unit at the UCLEC with a cost of \$88,195.00. The cost includes a 24-hr maintenance agreement for \$11,000. Sylvia explained that we have options of purchasing a Mon-Fri 8 hr. maintenance agreement at a cost of \$8,000 or we could look at a telephone only maintenance agreement. The scanner would take fingerprints of potential prisoners/inmates. The system would be tied in with state and federal systems and within 20 minutes it would produce a complete record of convictions that have previously been missed using an older manual system which also took much longer to get records. There were concerns expressed by Legislator Aiello regarding the towns being able to utilize this system as well, to be more effective, and also as to whether the Sheriff has fully checked out if there are any state grants available to help cut some of our costs. He would like to see if they can do a cost analysis using the current method versus the cost of getting a new system to justify the cost, before deciding. Sylvia advised that we can get connections with the municipalities and possibly charge them back for the use of these services and recoup some of our maintenance costs. Legislator Stoeckeler suggested that he would like a two week window amendment attached to any motion pending an exploration to find grants for this equipment through State or Federal means. A motion by Legislator Parete was made to purchase this

equipment with the lesser \$8,000 maintenance agreement option and with the two-week amendment attachment; this was seconded by Legislator Stoeckeler and was approved by all. The **final** equipment items for purchase was a software license and media to extend an existing program at Probation and a business computer and software package for Board of Elections which is mandatory for compliance with the Voter II Project. A motion was made by Legislator Stoeckeler, seconded by Legislator Parete to approve the purchase of these items. Motion was approved by all. Sylvia presented a request for three employees to attend a conference, sharing all transportation, room and meal costs. The conference will also include UC Sheriff Personnel (at their own request to attend) and is called the New World System's Executive Conference lasting two days. A motion to approve their attendance was made by Legislator Stoeckler and seconded by Legislator Parete. Motion was approved by all. Sylvia next spoke about a business operating as Pictometry. This business has made a request to offer their wares to us through a state grant. They take aerial views of the County looking down at a 45 degree angle which will give them a 3-D pictures of buildings. They had previously looked for Congressman Hinchey to help push this through, but it fell through the cracks with other priorities. The data that is collected can be used by anyone in the County and also outlying areas. Chairman Cahill suggested we contact Hinchey's office again. Sylvia explained that the window to do this is very short and Pictometry is just looking for a letter of support from the Sheriff, Emergency Communications/Management and Information Services Departments. Chairman Cahill suggested that Sylvia do up a letter of support and send him a copy to use and he will in turn send a letter of support on behalf of the Administrative Services committee to go with each of the other letters. The next item of discussion for Information Services was an update on how well the e-mail system in place for all Legislators. Chairman Cahill believes that we need to utilize the County e-mail system as much as possible and will send out another e-mail to encourage participation in this. He also suggested the possibility of broadening the users by offering it to Department heads and key personnel as well. Sylvia also mentioned that the Legislators have the ability to develop their own Web Page if they would like and she could give a standard template to all 33 Legislators to use. The last item for discussion was swapping off desk tops and laptops within the Legislative Clerks office; it would be easier to bring laptops to the County Legislative meeting to take minutes and Sylvia advised that they could put docking stations in Chambers and at the Legislative Clerk and Deputy Clerk desks. She will look into getting them set up with lap tops at a cost not to exceed \$6,500. It was also suggested to have a spare one that can be signed out for use in taking other meeting minutes. A motion to allow IS to proceed with the above changes and purchase three port replicators was made by Legislator Stoeckeler and seconded by Legislator Parete. Motion was passed by all.

PURCHASING: Robin Peruso, Purchasing Officer, gave a progress report on the new Fleet Management Program now in place. The site where Central Auto is has been cleaned out and organized. All fleet vehicles are being numbered as they come in for service, all parts have been inventoried and sorted in bins, all tools will be inventoried on 2/3/07. In addition, preventative maintenance guidelines are being installed as vehicles come to him - departments have been apprised of new procedures. A focus group with six departments was held to introduce Tony Gallo the new fleet Manager and introduce new policies. New SOP revisions were reviewed as well as introducing new forms for use most especially Daily Trip Logs. The six departments included in the focus group will primarily be using the Daily Trip Logs and they must be turned into the Fleet Manager via interoffice and cannot be faxed. The program seems to be rolling along well. Robin next brought up the Procurement Process that under General Municipal Law must be reviewed. She was instructed by Assistant County Attorney Bea Havranek to go to the Ways and Means Committee to discuss any changes needed, however, Robin is questioning whether this is necessary. By Resolution, Purchasing (Robin) reports to the Administrative Services Committee. She is not really making any changes to the Procurement Process, just clarifying what is already in the manual. Robin reviewed the clarifications with Committee and they agreed that they did not feel she should have to do this with the Ways and Means Committee. Chairman Cahill will contact the Deputy County Attorney and see why this has to go through Ways and Means and let Robin know. Robin did advise that on page 21 of the manual, 2006 approvals for equipment over \$1,000 went through Committee, however, the limit is actually \$500. She advises that the manual states \$1,000, but if the actual limit amount is continued through 2007, then they will need to

update the manual—it should be added to the manual so that it is procedurally there. On this same topic, Robin brought up a point to the Committee that they are reviewing every \$500.+ item, but not even looking at contractual agreements we enter into that are sometimes at millions of dollars. She feels that maybe they could look at establishing thresholds as to what should go to Committee to look at. Legislator Cahill will bring this item to Caucus and see what their thoughts are. A motion to approve the amendments to the Procurement Process Manual was made by Legislator Parete and seconded by Legislator Stoeckler and approved by all. Robin next presented two requests she received from the Fleet Manager and the Fleet Mechanic to be allowed the use of a pick-up truck and an auto to take home at night in case there was an incident that occurred they might need to respond to after work hours. Due to the fact that our Safety Office and Sheriff usually respond to these calls the requests for use of County vehicles to take home was denied unanimously by the committee. On a last note, Chairman Cahill could not really get into specifics, but advised that the Central Auto Roof situation is almost resolved and will be getting fixed and when all is said and done the deal should satisfy what we owe them, as rent has not been paid in more than a year on this building due to its condition.

REAL PROPERTY: Director Dorothy Martin advised that the Realtor/Assessor's Information Sharing group is pretty much at a stalemate. The Realtors are taking a letter from the Assessors back to their group. The issues are still ongoing. Dorothy really feels that this is a win-win situation for both, but is longer involving herself in this since they can't seem to come to any agreeable terms. The next item Dorothy brought up was a request for Alternative Work Schedule for three employees in their group. This request is merely to extend the services that are currently going on and a request to continue this schedule so that they are available. A motion by Legislator Parete was made to accept the continuing Alternative Work Schedule Request, seconded by Legislator Stoeckler and approved by all. Dorothy distributed copies to everyone in attendance a Summary of 2006 Real Property Tax Legislation. This information was put together by the State Board of Real Property Services and encouraged everyone to read through it as it contained some good information.

INSURANCE: Bonnie Szpulecki, Insurance Officer indicated that there is a Public Hearing scheduled on February 7, 2007 to change the withdrawal date of the Ulster County Self Insurance Plan participants from August first to July first of each year. This is being done mostly at the request of the various fire companies throughout the County who have expressed their wish for an earlier withdrawal date. On the subject of the fire companies, Chairman Cahill asked Bonnie for a status of the withdrawal fees from the fire companies involved in the lawsuit against the County of Ulster. Bonnie explained that a tentative proposal is being drawn up with Highland Fire allowing them to repay the withdrawal fee over a period of 5 equal payments at an interest rate of 7%, starting on March 1, 2008. The interest rate was negotiated down from 9% current rate as Highland Fire originally had a proposal put out on the table to them effective April 1, 2005, but they allege that their attorney did not present the offer to them. With regards to East Kingston, they withdrew as of 1/1/02 and there is no dispute over the amount that they owe - since this fire company is quite small and poor we will most likely be negotiating a lower interest rate with them as well. Chairman Cahill requested that Bonnie let him know what the cost would be for East Kingston to re-join should they decide to do so, at her earliest convenience.

SAFETY: Diane Beitel, Safety Officer, did not really have anything to report.

A motion to adjourn at 7:50 p.m. was made by Legislator Parete, seconded by Legislator Aiello and approved by all. Chairman Cahill immediately called an Executive Session that adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

**Brian Cahill, Chairman
Administrative Services Committee**