

**ULSTER COUNTY LEGISLATURE
COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

NAME OF COMMITTEE: Administrative Services Committee

DATE: February 12, 2007

TIME: 6:00 P.M.

PLACE: Library Conference Room, 6th Floor

LEGISLATORS PRESENT: Chairman Brian Cahill, Legislators Robert Parete, Robert Aiello, and Gary Bischoff

LEGISLATORS ABSENT: Legislators Every (excused), Stoeckeler

OTHERS ATTENDING: Non-Committee Legislators Glenn Noonan, Minority Leader, Peter Liepmann, and Busick (on behalf of Highland Fire District); also Commissioners from Highland Fire District John Furaino, Steve Dilorenzo, Benjamin Bragg, Lindy Palladino and Chris Erichsen; Sylvia Wohlfahrt, Interim Director Information Services, Robin Peruso, Purchasing Agent, Tony Gallo, Maintenance Coordinator, Bob DiBella, Deputy Purchasing Agent, Dorothy Martin, Director Real Property, Diane Beitel, Safety Officer, Bonnie Szpulecki, Insurance Officer, County Attorney Joshua Koplovitz, UC Undersheriff Frank Faluotico and Nicolas Scott from UCSO, and Soni O'Bryan, Deputy Insurance Officer (attending to take minutes for meeting).

The first item on the agenda was the introduction of Commissioners from the Highland fire District that were invited to the meeting at the request of Legislator Busick to discuss their insurance settlement with the Ulster County Self Insurance Plan. Insurance Officer, Bonnie Szpulecki gave a brief synopsis of what had transpired with Highland Fire since their withdrawal from the plan as of 12/31/99, in which they ultimately joined in a lawsuit against the Self Insurance Plan to not pay the withdrawal fees they owed. The lawsuit was initially filed by four Fire Districts and joined later by Highland Fire District and then subsequently, at later dates, about thirteen more fire districts, all suing the county. After many years of litigation, a judgment was found in favor of the County and included the fees owed. A meeting was held on 12/14/06 between Highland Fire District Commissioners', our defense counsel Michael Catalinotto, Jr., Insurance Officer Bonnie Szpulecki, Deputy Insurance Officer Soni O'Bryan and County Attorney Joshua Koplovitz. A verbal proposal of repayment of the outstanding balance due was discussed and agreed upon. Because of unforeseen roofing costs needed to their firehouse that came up after the December meeting, the commissioners want to appeal the proposal, suggesting a lower interest rate the first year of five annual payments and waiving any interest the last four years. Opinions and discussion from both sides were heard by the committee and an Executive Session was called by Chairman Cahill with Bonnie and Josh in attendance. A motion by Legislator Robert Parete to adjourn the executive session and Chairman Cahill advised the district's commissioners that a decision was reached and they will be notified by mail by our attorney, Chairman Cahill thanked them for coming and excused them.

The next item was a Resolution that Minority Legislature Leader Glenn Noonan passed on to Real Property Director Dorothy Martin in reference to a taxing assessment on Condos in NYS. Dorothy briefly explained that currently condos are taxed on the rental income and not market value and in addition are eligible for

the Star Program. This resolution is both an Assembly and Senate bill and has come up because there are more benefits to owning a condo versus a home. Dorothy explained that they are trying to level the playing field and the bill would only start in 2008 with new construction; current condos would be grandfathered. Legislator Noonon would like Ulster County to memorialize this bill. Legislator Kraft requested some additional time to review the Resolution and would prefer to take a vote at the next meeting since there is time to do this. A motion to table this item until next month was made by Legislator Parete, seconded by Legislator Kraft and all were in favor.

Next, a motion was made by Legislator Parete, seconded by Legislator Kraft to go into another Executive Session regarding Personnel employment issues. Once this session ended, another motion was made by Legislator Parete, seconded by Legislator Aiello to adjourn from Executive Session. Chairman Cahill announced that a decision was made to offer the vacant position of Director of Information Services to Sylvia Wohlfahrt through the period of 12/31/09. A motion by Legislator Bischoff was made to appoint Sylvia and the committee vote was unanimous in favor of her appointment. A Resolution will be drawn up and sent to the entire legislature in regards to this.

Safety Officer Diane Beitel next submitted a request for a three day conference that she and two of her employees need to attend from 4/18-4/20/07. The conference is required to meet a mandatory minimum in-service hours to maintain the County's NYS Code Enforcement Licenses. These hours will accumulate towards the hours required, but other courses will have to be attended throughout the year to meet the total. A motion by Legislator Bischoff, seconded by Legislator Parete was made to authorize the conference. All were in favor.

Dorothy Martin, Real Property Director, next spoke regarding the Flood Assessment Relief Act of 2007. This legislation is modeled after the 2005 Flood Assessment Relief Act that would allow homeowners affected by the flooding to have a reassessment done and issued refunds for the 2006 real property tax rolls. Dorothy explained that the County must adopt this by March 1, 2007. A Resolution will be drawn up by the County Attorney this month to be submitted. A motion by Legislator Parete, seconded by Legislator Aiello was made to support this act and have a resolution drawn up. Along the same lines, Legislator Bischoff questioned Dorothy regarding the law that was enacted by the State to enable tax exemptions for EMS and Volunteer Firefighters and why this was not enabled in Ulster County. Dorothy advised that in order to be effective these laws need local law or resolution. Legislator asked for a motion to start moving on this action to adopt this as a local law; motion was seconded by Legislator Parete with all in favor.

Sheriff Department employees, Undersheriff Frank Faluotico and Deputy Nicholas Scott spoke next with a request for the committee to re-visit the maintenance costs that were approved at last month's committee meeting for the Live Scan equipment to be purchased. The Jail Transition Committee is concerned that if they were to lose the Live Scan over the weekends it could take four weeks or more to get finger print records on an inmate and by that time they could have made bail and be out in the general public. Inmates are also giving false names and the finger prints give them more positive ID. By having the fingerprints readily available they can be assured not to place inmates in cells with another inmate that they could have problems with. Undersheriff Faluotico indicates that there can be some legal liability issues with not having access to immediate ID's. He does not feel for the \$3,000 difference in service options, 24/7 versus 9-5 M-F only, warrants putting the public in jeopardy by putting a potentially dangerous person back on the streets without knowing their complete criminal background. Legislator Bischoff questioned the Undersheriff on the reliability of the equipment - if it is that good do they pay for a service agreement they may never use? The Sheriff personnel explained that they could hold someone for 4-5 hours waiting for someone to show up and make system repairs, but not over 24 hours. This equipment takes more use than others do. Legislator Bischoff understands this but expressed that he feels one of the profits of software companies is in the maintenance area. A motion was made by Legislator Kraft, seconded by Legislator Parete to amend the maintenance agreement by \$3,000 to reflect 24/7 maintenance service. All were in favor.

Purchasing Agent, Robin Peruso introduced Tony Gallo, Maintenance Coordinator for the Fleet Management Program, to the committee. Tony gave a report of how things were going and how they are handling repairs, breakdowns, and the tracking of every dollar that is put into each vehicle. He has a full running parts inventory that flags low stock areas. There is an employee activity report and every piece of equipment that is worked on there is a number that has to do with each function done on a vehicle. It will give the total at the end of a year. There is also a running inventory of all vehicles and a complete tool inventory of what is in stock. This helps give them an idea of what is spent and returned. Tony then brought up the cost of lettering and vinyl costs to County vehicles. It costs \$500.00 each car and he would like to purchase a machine costing around \$1,7000.00 for the machine, \$300.00 for materials, so that we can do our own lettering and vinyl's. The cost to do it ourselves is \$100.00 per car and this amount can be charged back to the departments. The County would see an approximate 80% decrease per vehicle. The machine can also do the buses, our building doors, signs, etc. All were in agreement to allow the purchase of this machine. Chairman Cahill then questioned Tony and Robin regarding the 16 pt. plan that was presented when Vic works originally started work on the Fleet Management Program. Tony indicated that we now have on call and call out logs in place. If an employee is issued a vehicle due to a call or being on call, procedures are now in place and are now part of the new proposed SOP manual as it relates to Fleet Management. Also the minimum Mileage rules for employees who are issued cars are now in the SOP manual. Per Tony, employees have been very compliant with daily trip logs and indicated that the form is also on the Intranet. Tony also indicated what departments are included from this project and they are UCAT and Highways and Bridges. When questioned on when cars need to be replaced, Tony indicated that usually, depending on the make of the vehicle, at 100, 000 miles or when repairs are continually over \$1,000.00 or more. When transmissions and rear ends start to go and need repairing it is best to replace this vehicle. Legislator Leipmann then brought up the fact that there will now be more Deputies out on the road - will this increase costs? Tony indicated that it probably would as far as maintenance goes. This led to a discussion on the type of vehicles we are purchasing, would one make of vehicle last longer than another? Robin indicated that most cars come from a state bid list. Chairman Cahill would like to see the County go more towards Hybrids, and even though they are more costly to purchase initially, they would be more cost effective in the end. Legislator Bischoff also agreed we should start to move more towards Hybrids and would like to see this done immediately. Tony will look further into how other municipalities' are faring with the hybrids. Legislator Kraft feels that a monthly report from Tony would be most helpful. Legislators' questioned Tony on the Pool Car Program and would like to know what is the procedure is for getting a vehicle from a department who is underutilizing a vehicle. Robin explained that until the vehicle gets our of State/Federal and into the County's hands, really can't do much of anything and if they got them from the State/Federal bids then only that department can use them. Chairman Cahill believes that this may be a matter for our future Comptroller to handle, but in the meantime Robin and Tony should contact County Administrator, Michael Hein, to get some answers.

Sylvia Wohlfahrt, Director IS, reviewed her list of equipment for purchase over \$500.00. The Sheriff's Department needs 5 replacement keyboards for patrol car laptops that are no longer under warranty along with additional hardware and software upgrades for printers, network components and port replicators. This was approved. The audit department needs a new printer as they are currently sharing an old one with the new CM department. This printer, which would continue to be shared, was approved for purchase. There is also a request for a computer needed for the new Deputy Auditor. This purchase was approved only with department funding. Since auditing does not have a budget for equipment, Chairman Cahill suggested this purchase go through the Administrators office which Sylvia will do. The cost for this Business Class Computer brought up the issue of cost as some of the Committee thought the cost was high for this computer, especially since it was coming off of a State bid. Concerns were expressed that we were not getting the best prices and suggested we look at other bids. Sylvia will definitely draw up other options on purchasing equipment including upgrading units in all departments. They would also like Sylvia to look into the possibility of selling the old units, E-Bay, or? She will look at this for the future. The last few items for purchase were various maintenance upgrades needed in DSS and a new printer for GHHCC since

the one they have is not repairable. The final piece of equipment is a dictation system for the Public Defender's office. All items were approved for purchase. Chairman Cahill advised Sylvia that he has a list of legislators and six employees that would like e-mail at home. He gave this list to Sylvia and she will make contact with them via e-mail. Legislator Kraft questioned Sylvia on incorporating wireless capabilities to become more efficient and generate less paperwork. He is concerned due to a lack of a long term plan and would like Sylvia to take a look at the County as a whole and figure out where we fit in and where we are going in the technology field and internet. Legislator Kraft wants to ensure that Government gets preferential amounts in relationship to technology improvements. He also was concerned that within the County's Improvement System the County's Intranet be more organized - such as all job postings in one place, personnel by department positions, all forms, database applications', etc. Sylvia advised that each department designs their own websites and includes what they want in it. She will supply them with the tools to help them to design it, but doesn't feel that IS should be designing department websites. Sylvia's last item was a presentation in regards to the Capstat Implementation. Sylvia showed how she linked departments by setting them up in using graphs, spreadsheets, bar charts, and having key indicators and color bands in place. This is just a preview and Chairman Cahill would like them to also show goals and targets. Departments could use a spreadsheet and send it to Sylvia each month.

Diane Beitel, Safety Officer, brought up that there are new building codes effective 1/1/07 that will affect local law the County operates under. It needs to be reviewed. This has already been sent to Assistant County Attorney Bea Havranik. Diane will send this committee copies when Bea is done.

A motion to adjourn at 8:34 p.m. was made by Legislator Kraft, seconded by Legislator Bischoff and approved by all.

Respectfully submitted,

**Brian Cahill, Chairman
Administrative Services Committee**