

**ULSTER COUNTY LEGISLATURE
COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

NAME OF COMMITTEE: Administrative Services Committee

DATE: November 18, 2008

TIME: 4:51 P.M.

PLACE: UCOB, 6th Floor Library

LEGISLATORS PRESENT: Chairman Jeanette Provenzano, Legislators Alan Lomita, Ken Ronk, Brian Cahill and Deputy Chairman Frank Felicello

LEGISLATORS ABSENT: Legislators Peter Kraft; Legislator Paul Hansut, excused

OTHERS ATTENDING: Deputy County Auditor, Andrew Slater, Purchasing Officer, Robin Peruso, Information Services Director, Sylvia Wohlfahrt, Real Property Director, Dorothy Martin, Insurance Officer, Bonnie Szpulecki and Soni O'Bryan, Deputy Insurance Officer (attending to take minutes of meeting)

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Provenzano; a motion by Legislator Cahill was made to accept the October Committee meeting minutes, seconded by Legislator Ronk, all were in favor.

Deputy County Auditor, Andrew Slater gave a department report on the vendor efficiency payments; he indicated that the departments are making good progress and you can especially see this in the annual vendor efficiency report. The figures are looking good and show definite improvement. Legislator Ronk questioned why the Board of Elections always seems to show up in the red and Andrew explained that due to the size of their department and the small amount of transactions involved their figures don't look good, but it is not reflective of them not making their vendor payments on time. Chairman Provenzano stated that a lot of credit for the vendor efficiency payments really goes to past County Auditor, Lisa Cutten, as she is the one who really put things in motion by establishing better payment procedures and making it a goal to pay vendors more efficiently. Andrew provided the committee with a summary of what the auditing department has been trying to accomplish with better working relationships with departments. He indicated that the UCAT audit of cash receipts and deposits is being worked on by County Auditor Bob Wenzel and was not certain how much longer that would continue. He also advised that they are still eagerly awaiting the results of the Comptroller Election.

Insurance Officer, Bonnie Szpulecki, advised the committee that her department is currently looking into a new software program designed specifically for Workers Compensation and Property/Casualty and focuses on municipalities and self-insured entities'. She found the software system, Eric Systems, on line and is currently in the process of setting up an interview with a local business that uses this software. Dave Johnson, Programmer/Analyst from Information Services has been meeting with Insurance Department personnel going over the specs and making contact with the vendor. He agrees that the software appears to be reasonable and promising and after speaking with the local company who is using it, he will contact the software company and see about setting up a demonstration with the vendor. Bonnie advised that the software is windows based and provides user friendly reports at our fingertips' and should easily integrate with the County's programs. Bonnie also advised that the HTE system is really a financial system and does not fulfill her department's needs. It was originally intended to be short term use and the Workers

Compensation program has long out grown HTE. IS Director Sylvia Wohlfahrt advised that Dave Johnson has spoken to her on the software and after reviewing the components of the software and department needs, has budgeted \$60,000.00 for the software system. The committee gave its full support to Bonnie for this project. On another note, Legislator Felicello brought up a topic regarding internships for those attending the police academy. He indicated that Phase I of the course, anyone can take the course, but on Phase II the person must have a sponsorship in order to do an internship and complete the course. He has discussed this problem with UC Sheriff Paul Van Blarcum and Insurance Officer Bonnie Szpulecki, and they both agree that in order to have them do an internship and police duties related to that, they must be sworn in first because they would be given the responsibility of carrying a weapon, driving a police vehicle, and making arrests. Once they are sworn in, however, they become an employee of that municipal police department, and no employer wants to create additional exposures' by making them their employee. Frank cited the internships that teachers do and Bonnie advised that because they are working toward a degree they do not have to become an employee of the school district. The people attending the Police Academy are not working toward a degree as the teachers are so they would need to be covered by insurance. After a lengthy discussion it was suggested by several committee members that they might need to re-structure the Police Academy program itself. Frank still strongly believes that we, the County, should be able to offer an internship somehow without paying - at least they police departments would be getting persons with credential and experience in place. Chairman Provenzano will discuss with County Attorney Bea Havranek and the Sheriff to see what their thoughts are rather than continue this discussion in committee.

Information Services Director Sylvia Wohlfahrt next handed out her on-going department projects and equipment request reports to the committee members. Before discussing these reports however, Sylvia wanted to update them on the programmer position that they are in the process of hiring for; since there was no one qualified on the list Personnel had (based on Civil Service Law), Personnel needed to establish a new list. After working off of the new list Sylvia now has the position narrowed down to two people and will be interviewing them next week. Because this is an entry level position there were not able to hire from within the County since most anyone that was qualified has already been promoted. Sylvia also reported that injured IS employee Rick Umble is now working fulltime and doing very well and they have made some changes to accommodate him and at a very minimal cost. Sylvia next went over her equipment list explaining the need for each of the eleven (11) items listed. It was noted that most all of the items requested for purchase are already in her 2008 budget and has not been taken away yet and put back in the General Fund. It was suggested that she take care of utilizing her 2008 budget as soon as possible so that she does not lose it. The final budget meeting is coming up in early December. Sylvia was also questioned on one of the items, which is the possibility of changing from Dell computers to Hewlett-Packard computers throughout the County. Sylvia explained that they will be testing 5 HP PC's to see if they can accommodate what the County needs before purchasing additional PC replacements for County employees. Legislator Cahill was concerned with the amount that is charged for each PC versus going to a retail store such as Best Buy, to purchase them as the cost difference is quite significant. Sylvia advised that by buying directly through the state bid, HP has the consistency to function as needed for business and has a better deployment package which you may not get when buying retail. Purchasing Agent Robin Peruso advised with regards to the bid that there is always value in numbers so that is why they always purchase from the state bid, but added that there is no reason the County can't put this out to bid to other vendors. Legislator Cahill also questioned her with regards to the configurations' and it was decided that he and Sylvia will meet and discuss this further rather than continuing in committee meeting. The purchase of the five computers at this time, however, was approved by all. With regards to Sylvia's project list, Chairman Provenzano requested Sylvia provide this to her done by department project rather than just by the IS Department format provided, which Sylvia will do.

Purchasing Agent Robin Peruso next spoke on the take home vehicle policy that is still being evaluated. Robin advised that they are still continuing to collect mileage reports and it seems to be working good. They still have six more months to evaluate, however, they are still not hitting the targeted numbers for call-outs; only three people have hit the targeted call-outs, but they are not into their winter season yet so

they will continue to evaluate. Robin has requested a written copy from UC Highway on their call-out procedures. Robin indicated she has put in a request for fencing to go around the back perimeter of the Central Auto Garage as they have had some incidents of theft and also people junking personnel belongings there. Robin advised that in order to do this she would probably need to move money around in her budget; she has a quote of \$10,000 for the equipment and \$1,000.00 to install. Legislator Felicello advised that either Highway or Buildings and Grounds would be able to install the fence and save her that money. He also inquired if there was any older fencing lying around somewhere previously used at the old jail or other County buildings. Robin will look around and inquire with Highway or Buildings and Grounds before making any purchase and will send an e-mail to Chairman Provenzano if she needs to buy fencing.

Dorothy Marin, Real Property Director, advised that because of scheduling problems the study for consolidation of assessment services was not presented as it was intended to be. Dorothy advised that it really is just a ten-minute presentation and that the study could be e-mailed or placed in the mailboxes of all legislators to review the study ahead of time so they could see the highlights of it before the presentation; Chairman Provenzano advised that she could have the study presented at Caucus. Dorothy stressed that this is an important issue and does not want to lose the additional \$25,000 grant money as this must be presented and entered into our minutes before the end of December 2008 to be eligible for it. Legislator Felicello also thanked Dorothy for a report she did on the schools in the County for taxes based on a \$250,000 home; he advised that it was very helpful to the people down in the Marlboro area and asked her if she would be able to copy all of the legislators on this, which she will do. Dorothy also asked the committee that because assessments have changed are they waiting for a specific PR from her to appear in the paper. Everyone on the committee agreed that it would be a good Press Release for her to do and Dorothy will take care of it.

The meeting was respectfully adjourned at 5:55 with a motion by Legislator Lomita and seconded by Legislator Ronk, with all in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

**Jeanette Provenzano, Chairman
Administrative Services Committee**