

Human Resources & Insurance Committee Minutes
August 31, 2021 – 4:00 p.m.

Present: Chairman Kevin Tollisen; Committee Members Joe Grasso, John Lant, Jon Schopf, Tom Richardson, Matt Veitch, Tom Wood; Supervisors Phil Barrett, Tara Gaston, Mike Smith; Steve Bulger, Ridge Harris, Matt Rose, Audra Hedden, County Administrator; Michael Hartnett, Michael Naughton, County Attorney; Scot Chamberlain, Adam Kinowski, Wendy Tennant, Human Resources; Sandi Cross, Office for the Aging; Charles Foehser, County Clerk; Carl Zeilman, Emergency Services; Michael Zurlo, Rick Castle, Sheriff; Lauren Roberts, Historian; Erin Murray, Rachel Maxwell, Public Health; John Warnt, Purchasing; Rebecca Robarge, Youth Bureau; Donna Miter, CSEA.

Chairman Tollisen called the meeting to order and welcomed all in attendance.

On a motion made by Mr. Wood, seconded by Mr. Veitch, the minutes of the July 27, 2021 meeting were approved unanimously.

Employee Appreciation

Mr. Tollisen said that this summer the County had 11 college students from 10 different colleges that served as interns. A certificate of appreciation will be sent to each of the students.

Mr. Tollisen said that County Administrator Steve Bulger would like to recognize the efforts of Assistant County Attorney Mike Naughton. Mr. Naughton took a County van and conducted an off site tour of various County projects for the interns. Project sites included the Airport, Sewer District pump station, habitat mitigation sites in Wilton and Northumberland, and the Hadley Bridge. Mr. Tollisen thanked Mr. Naughton for devoting the time and effort.

Mr. Tollisen said that going forward, employee recognition will also be done at the Board Meetings and certificates of appreciation presented.

Workers Compensation Report

Mr. Chamberlain said that for the month of July there was a total of 32 claims, of which only 3 did not report through the 24/7 hotline. Total claims paid out in the month of July was \$224,442 which equates to 55% of the budget.

A motion was made by Mr. Richardson, seconded by Mr. Lant, to authorize the restructuring of certain Departments. Unanimous.

Mr. Chamberlain said that changes include:

- a. Youth Bureau being absorbed into Public Health and the Office for the Aging. Specifically in Public Health: preschool, special ed., and early intervention; and within the Office for the Aging: youth development training, homeless youth and youth community outreach.
- b. Consolidating the Office of Emergency Services within the Sheriff's Department
- c. Consolidating the County Historian into the County Clerk's Office

Mr. Chamberlain said that no actual changes in classification of any of these positions will occur until calendar year 2022.

- d. Public Health Temporary Positions that will allow for the hiring of COVID-19 school epidemiology officers, testing site supervisors and testing site coordinators.

Mr. Veitch questioned the functionality of moving Emergency Services under the Sheriff's Department, if any there is any legal authority that states they need to be separate, and what the move would accomplish. Mr. Zeilman said that currently Albany and Columbia Counties have emergency management under the Sheriff's Department. Westchester currently has a proposal they are looking at to pursue the same measure. Mr. Zeilman said that consolidating the offices has been the movement across the State. This was discussed a few years ago, and now that OES has moved to the new Public Safety Facility, experiencing how close they worked together during COVID, gave them the resources to be able to work together efficiently under one roof. Mr. Zeilman said that they are also responsible for CAD and GIS, which is plotting all 911 addressing, which is what the Sheriff's office uses in the PSAP. Working together will enable them to be able to streamline communications and maximize the applications. Additionally, both offices are constantly managing grants that come from the same sources, and consolidation will streamline the process.

Mr. Veitch said that the Commissioner of Emergency Services is appointed by the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors and asked how the Commissioner would report to the Sheriff. Mr. Zeilman said that structurally, in the organizational chart it would be the Sheriff, Under Sheriff and then Office of Emergency Services.

A motion was made by Mr. Wood, seconded by Mr. Grasso, to authorize a transfer of funds to cover 18-B Attorney's fees. Unanimous.

Mr. Chamberlain said that this related to County Law Article 18-B, which allows for funds for assigned Counsel. During COVID a backlog of cases was experienced due to courts not meeting in person. Mr. Rose said that 18-B officially started last year, and therefore no history on which to base the budget.

On a motion made by Mr. Richardson, seconded by Mr. Veitch, the meeting was adjourned unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Therese Connolly
Clerk of the Board