

**ULSTER COUNTY LEGISLATURE
COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

NAME OF COMMITTEE: Administrative Services Committee

DATE: January 15, 2008

TIME: 4:46 P.M.

PLACE: Library Conference Room, 6th Floor

LEGISLATORS PRESENT: Chairman Jeanette Provenzano, Legislators Alan Lomita, Ken Ronk, Peter Kraft, Brian Cahill, Jim Maloney, Frank Felicello

LEGISLATORS ABSENT: None

OTHERS ATTENDING: Sylvia Wohlfahrt, Director Information Services, Dorothy Martin, Director Real Property, Diane Beitzl, Safety Officer, Robin Peruso, Purchasing Officer, Bonnie Szpulecki, Insurance Officer, Dorraine Whitney, Deputy Insurance Officer and Soni O'Bryan, Deputy Insurance Officer (taking minutes of meeting).

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Provenzano. Since this was the Chairman's first meeting she asked that all in attendance introduce themselves. The Chairman then asked each department to tell the Legislators a little about their department.

Purchasing Officer, Robin Persuo, was first to speak. Robin advised that her department has the responsibility or management of procurement activities of the County of Ulster. That includes handling all bids, quotes and proposals for Legislative Compilation. All vendors now register on-line and this way when opportunities arise they can go to one spot to get bid applications. Robin indicated that they are currently working on their Purchasing Manual. It is being worked on to fully explain services, especially as a result of the Law Enforcement Committee Meeting findings. They also currently are working on a Buyers Assignment by quarter for buyers. Every quarter they assign their scheduled bids and quotes to buyers. This way they have their "known" assignments three months at a time. Robin added that all bid openings are open to the Public and are updated weekly and also on line. Specific bid Projects that they are currently working on include a bid for Prison Health Services, Halfway Houses for Mental Health to hopefully see savings, and Security and Gate Fencing at DPW Quarry since we no longer have security there. Robin encouraged any of the Legislators' to come to her office and observe what they do. Legislator Felicello brought up the subject on vehicle justification to Robin, partly with respects to the duties of the Fleet Manager. His concerns were who now controls how the vehicles are being purchased and who controls how many are purchased since the reason this process started to begin with was to justify the need for vehicles (and purchase of). Robin indicated that the Fleet Manager is really doing the maintenances on the vehicles, making sure they are maintained on a more regular basis and doing it in-house,

rather than out-sourcing, to cut down on costs. He is keeping track of who has what vehicle and what vehicles are really needed by departments, based on usage and also has been able to create a large supply of parts by utilizing parts off of vehicles we own and are no longer road worthy, or have been taken off the road and are no longer in use. She did, however, indicate that he is not controlling the purchases of vehicles. Legislator Cahill mentioned that Fleet Manager Tony Gallo and Deputy Purchasing Agent Bob DiBella came to an Administrative Committee meeting a few months ago and gave a report on vehicle utilization. The real goal was to be able to take input data based on utilized versus underutilized, for the justification and this would be most useful to the Legislators. The main goal of Fleet was to decrease the maintenance expenses, utilize parts off of unused and "dead" cars and save money, which they have done. Chairman Provenzano still questioned whether the Fleet Manager was controlling vehicle purchases. Robin advised that the Fleet Manager is not controlling the vehicle purchases, even though they still go through Purchasing. It was suggested that possibly Deputy DiBella could report to the Legislators on who needs vehicles, who has what vehicle and more. Legislator Felicello also felt that the purpose of the Fleet "Facilitator" was to place more control over vehicle purchases. Robin explained that the vehicles are now put in Purchasing to buy, and not within each department, and they must request any purchase from their committee. She also explained that authoritative control is not part of the CSEA civil position which is what the Fleet Manager position would fall under. Robin will work on coming up with something to accomplish this.

Information Services Director, Sylvia Wohlfahrt, next spoke to the committee and advised she did not think it would be necessary to give them a summary of what her department does, as it was pretty self-explanatory. She advised that they have two major projects they are working on Countywide. The **first** is an Electronic Document Management System. They are applying for a State Grant and it should be finalized and submitted February 2, 2008. Two years ago it was submitted for a needs analysis. This is important in order to process and follow the rules for retention. The needs assessment consists of two things: 1. Store and retrieve Countywide and 2. Follow retention schedules set by NYS, which is **Very Important**. The Contract Management System was one of the problems and there needs to be a central depository to store documents so it can be searched for by authorized people in the County. They purchased the Archiving at the end of 2007. The grant application is to purchase the management documentation system which they should have by July or early August. This will enable a search by key words and would include e-mails as well and then they would be put in Central Depository. Sylvia advised that the first grant was applied for by Shingebiss and they were not real happy with them. Laurie Hancock from Records Management applied for the current grant. Legislator Felicello then asked Sylvia what actually happened on Election Day. Sylvia advised that steps have been taken to prevent this happening again, and she has re-negotiated the contract to have a dedicated server so Sylvia herself can control it. The plan we were on was not able to handle the number of hits that occurred and of course there were far more hits than ever before so the plan who provided us with our service thought we were being hacked into and shut it down. There was no way to get a hold of them. Sylvia apologized for the computer crash but is confident that going forward we do not have to worry about this happening. Sylvia returned to the e-mail and archiving storage system and advised that as part of the e-mail and archiving, there is a storage area network which is a series of storage devices that you can add on as needed. They have purchased the infrastructure to do this, but they did not get everything in place until 2008 and will be re-presenting this. The **second** project they are doing is a pilot program for Inter-Municipal Agreements with the Town of Marbletown. Because this town has a small GIS and don't have the expertise to handle, the Supervisor

approached IS for help. The town was able to get a grant for \$12,000 to assist with the implementation. The proposal is to pay the County of Ulster the \$12,000 to upgrade our hardware and software to do their program, which benefits the town. No GIS is needed or licenses and they will have the ability to access our site from any of their offices. They will be able to load their data onto our system so we will have their data as well. This provides for more standardization and shows other towns there is more compatibility. There is no extra expense to the County for the hardware, software, or staffing and we would charge \$120.00 as an administration fee. By doing this as a pilot program we will then be able to offer this to other towns. Sylvia would like to draft a letter to do a Resolution to do this and are looking at February-March dates, probably closer to March. Other projects that IS has are discussions on a request for proposal of a new financial system that they would be looking at for 2009. Sylvia also requested Conference Attendance for five programmers in Albany for five days for training on web based programs. They would travel daily back and forth to the training at a cost of \$1800.00 per person, total of \$9,000.00 which is a Group Discount price. They would be trained in Visual Basic which will help to make web pages far more interactive. . Concerns on the cost per person were expressed and it was asked why we could not send a couple of programmers and have them train the others. Sylvia felt if that is what they wanted she would abide by their decision. She did indicate that it would be hard for the programmers to do the training and then try to train the others at the office since she currently has all five programmers working on a tax project, Contract Management System project and an upgrade to VHB - there are two people for each project with one programmer working on two projects. Legislator Cahill reminded the committee that only the Chairman needs to approve these conferences and not the balance of the committee, however, Chairman Provenzano was not 100% comfortable approving all conferences, and also brought up at this time was equipment purchases under \$3,000.00. Chairman Provenzano agreed she will review the conferences and approve along with the equipment unless she was uncomfortable with something then she would bring it to the committee.

Insurance Officer, Bonnie Szpulecki, was the next department head to speak. Bonnie distributed a two-page memo outlining what her department does, the divisions that are included, what aspects of insurance are handled within each division and a list of personnel in her department. Bonnie advised the status of the fire department lawsuits and was happy to tell them that there is currently only one that has not settled, that being Port Ewen Fire Department. She also expressed that one of her goals is to be able to have a Workers Compensation System designed by IS for her department's use; she indicated that the financial system they have been using just does not work for what the departments needs are.

Safety Officer, Diane Beitzl, next described what her office does. She indicated that they are responsible for the Safety, Health and Welfare of County Departments and are subject to Federal, State and County mandates. They provide County driving permits and oversee driving records, do drug and alcohol testing - both random and scheduled, air quality tests, driver training classes. Diane advised that they recently completed lock out tag out training for UCAT and are planning to do training with UC Highway in the Spring for Right to Know and Flagger Training. They also respond to County road accidents, handle all of the State and Federal reports that are required. Legislator Felicello questioned Diane on why they did not do the same testing on any employee in the County who operates a County vehicle. She advised him that drug testing is a CSEA negotiable item and that with this there are also other considerations for drug and alcohol testing. She also mentioned that if the County was to do this there are additional costs to do this on every employee and it would need to be clearly outlined on how it would be administered. They currently

are contracted through Emergency One for drug testing. She advised that any supervisor can request random or mandatory drug test, but it must be clearly documented as to why this test is being requested. An additional comment was brought up about an article that appeared in a local newspaper regarding County vehicle accidents. She was not certain where they got this information from and had not seen the article, but would look into it.

Real Property Director, Dorothy Martin, advised that Real Property was established to put together a means for assessors to locate properties. The County now has a mapping - which is some of the best in the state- and we also assist local government in maintaining by acting as a liaison with the towns. Dorothy indicated that the County is maintaining with respects to the Real Estate sales - she notes that the upper range is not selling, but the mid and low ranges seem to be selling and there still is a large influx of NYC people. The average sale price of a home is \$301,000, a number she got from the Board of Realtors. Legislator Felicello questioned Dorothy on what happens if the values of homes go down - how it affects taxes. The bottom line is it will affect school and town budgets; taxes won't really go down because budgets are going up as they need the revenues'. Dorothy explained that the assessed value versus the sales value is based on equalization rates. Budgets are what really affect equalization and not the assessment. In trying to site an example Dorothy remembered that she had a great write up on this in her office and felt the write up would help them be able to understand equalization better, so she will e-mail this to each member of the committee for their review. She advised that some of the municipalities in the County will go to Real Property for assistance with the assessments and some will farm it to vendors - but she felt that doing assessments in-house was really the more hands on way to do them. Dorothy's last item was a conference request that she will submit to Chairman Provenzano.

Health Services Committee Chairman Rob Parete asked if he could address the committee with regards to a Resolution that was original authorized as follows: 1. Allowed AED for homes, 2. Allowed AED in County Office building, 3. Allowed government and police to purchase AED's through us, utilizing our purchase price and he would like to now include 4. \$35,000 more towards a complete plan of outfitting all County buildings with AED's. Rob strongly feels that all County buildings should have these in them and advised that they have applied for a grant for this; if they get the grant they will re-pay the County for the cost - the financial impact now is \$35,000. A motion to amend the Resolution was made by Legislator Kraft, seconded by Legislator Felicello and all were in favor. One question Legislator Felicello wanted to know about is the training on the AED's - currently only George Hill is doing the training - Rob advised he will look into this but indicated that there were clear and simple instructions on using them.

Chairman Provenzano advised her Committee that she has named Legislator Frank Felicello as Vice-Chairman of the Administrative Services Committee. She also advised that auditor Lisa Cutten was not attending tonight's meeting as she put in her resignation effective January 25, 2008. Chairman Provenzano advised that they will advertise in the paper for the position and interviews will be held by the Standing Committee, consisting of the Majority Leader, Majority Whip, Committee Chairman, Legislative Chairman and a Committee Chairman pick. Insurance Officer, Bonnie Szpulecki expressed her concerns over payments still being processed timely due to the massive amount of bills and payments her department has to process and was assured that there was still a Deputy Auditor there and it will be handled.

A motion was made by Legislator Jim Maloney, seconded by Legislator Lomita, all in favor, meeting adjourned at 6:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

**Jeanette Provenzano, Chairman
Administrative Services Committee**