

## MINUTES

### GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

Thursday, June 9, 2022 9:00 a.m.

Present: Supervisors Lasher, Donalty, Chatfield, Miller and Eygnor, County Administrator Rick House, Fiscal Assistant Brian Sams, Human Resource Director Chris Kalinski, Election Commissioners John Zornow and Mark Alquist, Grant Specialist Jay Roscup and County Attorney Dan Connors. Supervisor Kolczynski was not present for the meeting.

Minutes from the May 5<sup>th</sup> Committee meeting were approved as written.

The following transmittals were referred to the Government Operations Committee:

--Authorization to abolish the full-time position of Finance Clerk in the Nursing Home and create and fill the position of full-time Deputy Health Services Comptroller. The new position is a Grade 6. Approved 4-0.

--Authorization to abolish the positions of one part-time Nurse Practitioner and one part-time Psychiatrist and create and fill the position of one Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner at the Mental Health Department. The new position has an annual salary of \$104,500. Approved 4-0.

--Authorization to abolish the positions of one full-time Staff Social Worker and one part-time Staff Social Worker and create and fill the position of one full-time Program Supervisor at the Mental Health Department. Approved 4-0.

--Authorization to abolish the positions of one Project Coordinator and one EM Training Coordinator and create and fill the position of Deputy Director of Disaster Preparedness. Approved 4-0.

--Authorization to abolish the position of Automotive Mechanic Helper and create and fill the position of Automotive Mechanic at the Highway Department. Approved 4-0.

Mr. House presented a transmittal requesting authorization to set a date for a public hearing that would allow for the expansion of video conferencing for public County meetings for the purpose of conducting government business. The Governor is allowing video conferencing in the State through July 1<sup>st</sup>; local governments have to establish a local law allowing this action. Approved 4-0.

The following transmittals were presented by the Board of Elections:

--Authorization for the Chairman of the Board to sign an Early Voting Expansion Grant contract extension that would allow for expenditure of the remaining \$19,770 of this grant through January 2023. Approved 4-0.

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--Authorization for the Chairman of the Board to sign an Electronic Poll Book Capital Grant Project extension contract for the Board of Elections. This would allow for the remaining \$47,934 in this grant to be expended through January 2023. Approved 4-0.

--Authorization for the Chairman of the Board to sign a contract extension for the Early Voting Aide to Localities Grant to allow for expenditure of remaining funds through January 2023. Approved 4-0.

The monthly report for the County Attorney's Office was included with the agenda. During May the Office drafted and/or reviewed 32 contract, 25 insurance certificates, three poor person applications, one accident claim and responded to 41 Freedom of Information requests. Mr. Connors said he would review a litigation settlement issue with the Finance Committee next week.

Mr. Roscup update the Committee on his activities. He has been assisting County agencies, schools, and municipalities with grant applications. The County is developing a smoother process for their grant decision, application and follow through efforts. Mr. Roscup will be scheduling quarterly meetings with County Department Heads to make sure they continue to follow the correct process for grant submission. Mr. House stated the need not to obtain grants with future County costs.

Mr. Roscup updated the Committee on the Community School Leaders Conference that was held yesterday in Newark. The event was well attended and provided an opportunity for school representatives, municipal leaders, and agencies that serve the public to communicate to the private sector why they should invest in Wayne County. Chairman Eygnor said he attended the event and was pleased with how it was carried out.

Mr. House reviewed a proposal to change work week hours of County employees that currently work 35 hours a week to 37.5 hours a week. At this time there are three work schedules in the County: 35 hours, 37.5 hours, and 40 hours. The proposed change would affect all County employees on a 35-hour work week and replace the one-hour non-paid lunch break with a 30-minute non-paid lunch. Mr. House believes this will help increase efficiencies in departments with five additional work hours every pay period. The Federal Fair Labor Standards Act and New York State Labor Law require any employee working over six consecutive hours be provided at least a 30-minute lunch break. Mr. House said this would allow for County Departments to be open during the lunch hour, as lunch times could be rotated. The change is proposed for the 2023 County budget; however, Mr. House said he needs to know soon so he can have the request formally presented and approved by employee Unions. During an unofficial canvas, both Unions and employees favored the increase in hours. Mr. House believes the additional work/pay hours may help the County with recruitment and retention. The change in hours would affect approximately 500 staff members and would add approximately \$2.6 million to the 2023 budget for both Union and confidential and management staff. Department Heads were told of the possibility of this action occurring; however, at this time have been instructed to include only the 2.5% Cost of Living increase in their budget proposals for personnel. Mr. Sams stated State

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retirement rates have been provided for 2023 and are down over 25% from this year; due to the reduction in retirement costs, the plan to increase work hours should be cost neutral to the County.

Mr. Sams reported he sent 2023 County budget instructions to Department Heads and had the MUNIS financial system opened for their input. All Departments were instructed to submit their budgets by July 8<sup>th</sup>. The July Finance Committee will be given an update on the proposed budget at their July 12<sup>th</sup> meeting. At this time Department Heads will only be included the 2.5% Cost Of Living Increase in salary lines, if additional hours are approved, budgets will need to be recalculated. All Departments were asked to be mindful of their proposed equipment and vehicle purchases, as many items are very expensive at this time. Instructions request any new position be requests only when a position of similar cost is eliminated.

Mr. Chatfield voiced concern with County appropriations made to outside agencies when those agencies have yet to return to full-time in-person work status. He questioned if this would be a requirement of 2023 County appropriations. Mr. Chatfield said their needs to be more accountability from these agencies. Mr. House said each outside agency will need to present their budget to their standing committee, at that time they can be questioned about their employee work status. He noted all outside agencies were reduced by 10% in the 2022 County budget.

A transmittal was presented requesting the Board of Supervisors support inclusion of Upstate Nuclear Power Plants in New York State's Climate Action Council Scoping Plan and extend their Emissions Credit Program. Mr. Eynor noted discussion he had with representative of Exelon regarding the nuclear power plant in Wayne County. Nuclear power plants in the State are instrumental to achieving decarbonization goals and are among the State's largest employers. The power plants also contribute a great deal of property taxes to the communities they are in. Approved 4-0.

An out of state travel request was presented for Mr. House to attend the NYSAC Board of Director's Conference in Port Jefferson, New York, from June 15<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> for a cost of \$60. Mr. House noted he will need to drive through another State in order to get to this location. Approved.

The following transmittals were presented for the Human Resource Department:

--Authorization to establish the standard work day and reporting resolution for elected and appointed officials to comply with New York State Retirement Law. Approved 4-0.

--Authorization to adopt the managerial/confidential position pay grade for the new Deputy Director of Emergency Preparedness position at Grade 9. Mrs. Kalinski said she reviews each new pay grade with the County's employment consultants to make certain it falls in line with other positions of equal responsibility in the County. Approved 4-0.

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--Authorization to appoint Lisa Graf as Interim Commissioner of Social Services and set the salary at \$91,181. Approved 4-0.

Mrs. Kalinski updated the Committee on personnel activities in May. There were 14 new hires and 20 seasonal hires, five employees retired and 14 resigned from their positions—the majority from the Nursing Home.

Mrs. Kalinski said many healthcare workers in the County have questioned when they will receive the State's Health Care Bonus. She noted this bonus is for both healthcare and social workers, who worked throughout the pandemic, and depending on their work status, could receive a bonus between \$1,500 and \$3,000. Mrs. Kalinski said she has been in conversations with other counties and they also do not know how to apply for these funds. The State said these bonuses would be given to these specified workers through 2024. Secretary to the meeting, Debbie Liseno, said she would pass on this inquiring to next Friday's intercountry meeting where a State Representative will be present.

Mr. House informed the group the State Assembly passed the County's request for an occupancy tax; however, the Senate companion bill never made it out of committee. He is hopeful the request will be address this fall when the Legislature meets again in Albany. All revenue earned from this tax will be reinvested into the Wayne County Tourism Department.

The meeting adjourned at 10:00 a.m. The next meeting of the Government Operations Committee is scheduled for Thursday, July 7<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m.