

**WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
ORGANIZATION MEETING  
THURSDAY, JANUARY 5, 2006**

The Board of Supervisors of the County of Warren convened at the Supervisors' Room in the Warren County Municipal Center, Lake George, New York, at 11:00 a.m.

Board called to order by Joan Parsons, Administrator/Clerk of the Board of Supervisors.

Invocation was given by Supervisor Michael O'Connor, Chaplain.

Salute to the flag was led by Supervisor Girard.

Roll called, the following members present:

Bolton	-	Alexander G. Gabriels III
Chester	-	Frederick H. Monroe
City of Glens Falls		
Ward 1	-	Daniel L. Girard
Ward 2	-	Joseph M. Sheehan
Ward 3	-	Richard A. Mason
Ward 4	-	Michael J. O'Connor
Ward 5	-	William H. Kenny
Hague	-	Daniel D. Belden
Horicon	-	Ralph W. Bentley
Johnsburg	-	William H. Thomas
Lake George	-	Louis E. Tessier
Lake Luzerne	-	Eugene J. Merlino
Queensbury	-	Daniel G. Stec
	-	Nicholas A. Caimano
	-	Fred Champagne
	-	William T. VanNess
	-	Michael Barody
Stony Creek	-	Frank E. Thomas
Thurman	-	John M. Haskell
Warrensburg	-	Kevin Geraghty

Members of the Board of Supervisors, subscribed to the Constitutional Oath as administered by David B. Krogmann, Supreme Court Justice.

Clerk announced the first order of business would be the selection of a Temporary Chairman.

Mr. Bentley nominated Mr. Sheehan as Temporary Chairman, seconded by Mr. Champagne.

There being no further nominations, Mr. Haskell moved that the nominations be closed, and the Clerk cast one ballot for Joseph Sheehan as Temporary Chairman, seconded by Mr. Geraghty, and carried unanimously.

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Clerk requested Mr. Kenny and Mr. Mason to escort Mr. Sheehan to the Chair. The board members acknowledged Mr. Sheehan with a round of applause.

Mr. Sheehan thanked the members of the board for the honor of being selected Temporary Chairman.

Mr. Sheehan extended a welcome to those families, friends and department heads in attendance at the meeting. He noted that when he was first elected to the Board of Supervisors, Mr. Tessier was serving as Chairman of the Board, followed by Mr. W. Thomas. Mr. Sheehan said, in his opinion, both of these gentlemen had God-given gifts which they use to make Warren County a better place to live for everyone.

Mr. Sheehan stated that the next order of business would be the selection of a Permanent Chairman.

Mr. F. Thomas stated it was an honor to nominate William Thomas as Permanent Chairman, and Mr. VanNess stated he would second the motion.

There being no further nominations, Mr. Sheehan moved the nominations be closed, and the Clerk cast one ballot for William Thomas as Permanent Chairman, seconded by Mr. Monroe, and carried unanimously.

Mr. Haskell , Temporary Chairman, requested Mr. Gabriels and Mr. Tessier to escort Mr. W. Thomas to the Chair. The board members acknowledged Mr. Thomas with a round of applause.

Chairman Thomas subscribed to the Constitutional Oath as administered by David Krogmann, Supreme Court Justice.

Chairman Thomas thanked Judge Krogmann for swearing in the supervisors and Mr. O'Connor for providing a very moving invocation. He noted Mr. O'Connor was a long-time member of the Board of Supervisors, following Mr. Tessier, who is the longest tenured member of the Board.

Chairman Thomas presented the following remarks:

"STATE OF THE COUNTY  
JANUARY 5, 2006

"Thank you once again for the confidence you have placed in me by re-electing me as Chairman of the Warren County Board of Supervisors for my sixth term. As I have pledged in the past, I will do everything within my power to carry out the responsibilities of the Office of Chairman and to keep each and every one of you fully informed on all key issues.

“Each year that State of the County is given, I, as chairman, and those that served before me have emphasized the fact that Tourism is our Number One Industry. We also encouraged the need for continued support and promotion of the county and its attractions as a first rate destination. This did not change in 2005, but the normally silent partners who support the safety aspect of our endeavors for tourism moved to the forefront.

“On October 2nd, our tourism community was faced with its biggest tragedy. Twenty senior citizens drowned when the Ethan Allen Tour Boat capsized on Lake George. It was the worst marine accident in Lake George history, and all of the individuals whom we seem to only think about in time of emergency - the Fire Departments, Emergency Medical Services, Sheriff's Law Enforcement, State Police and Lake George Park Commission, appeared in minutes and worked alongside many private citizens and local officials giving all they had to mitigate the disaster.

“Many times as we review our tourism promotions, we talk about the press coverage we receive “free of charge” from the media, and inevitably someone says, “We couldn't estimate the value of that free press coverage.” This time, the free press coverage came from state and national outlets, and no one was really interested. We mourned the losses to the communities in Michigan affected by this tragedy and we rallied to provide assistance to those who survived and needed a shoulder to lean on. We helped replace lost articles, made sure accommodation needs were met for families arriving to bring their family members home - or we just sat and listened to the survivors' stories and offered our condolences in whatever way we could.

“I am very proud to say I belong to such a caring community. The courage and compassion of the people of Warren County shone through, and we will always be indebted to the people who served during this crisis. It says volumes about whom we are in Warren County.

“Earlier this year, on June 13<sup>th</sup>, a disaster of another magnitude hit our communities. Our resources were tested by a torrential rain storm which washed out a section of the Northway between Exits 23 and 25, and washed out town and county roads in Bolton and Warrensburg. Within minutes of the storm, county and state officials and emergency services personnel had communicated and reacted to avert any further damages, and to assure that no injuries occurred. Roads were closed, water lines were damaged, emergency operating centers were set up, and recognition that a major thoroughfare for the tourism industry was affected. I can only reiterate my earlier comments concerning the unselfish dedication of our county workers and emergency service providers, and the support provided by so many in the community.

“When it came time to assess the damage and make repairs, Warren County's cost was about \$3 million. Every emergency agency and county forces affected by this disaster mobilized, and with the assistance of several local private contractors, along with the State Department of Transportation, the Northway and local roads reopened before the 4<sup>th</sup> of July weekend.

“We immediately made application to the Federal Emergency Management Agency to ask for financial assistance to assist with these unexpected costs. Our application was denied. We appealed

the decision, and on December 9th, our appeal was denied as well. It is noteworthy to say that shortly after our application was sent in, Hurricane Katrina devastated New Orleans, and the requested resources needed to help Warren County seemed small given the needs of the hurricane survivors. Due to the drastic effect these costs will have on our budgeting in 2006, we are now asking the State for financial assistance, and we hope they will respond favorably.

“Each year I have talked about the Resource Recovery Plant. As a result of our refinancing and the changing of operators to Wheelabrator Technologies, I am happy to report that Warren County is seeing the savings estimated. In June 2005, the plant saw a profit - the first one since 1994. The good business practices and changes in operation that took so very long to put into place are starting to pay off. Many thanks go to Supervisor Fred Monroe for his diligence and resolve in this endeavor.

“The second year of collecting Occupancy Tax in Warren County has concluded. Our collections have passed \$2.5 million, and all but \$350,000 of our Tourism Budget spending is now being covered by Occupancy Tax collections. In next year’s budget, we plan to transfer the final costs associated with the operation of the Tourism Department to the Occupancy Tax budget. This was a promise made to the taxpayers and I am proud to say we have kept it.

“I would like to thank Kate Johnson, Tourism Coordinator, and Paul Kaza of Paul Kaza Associates for the successful planning and strategies they have put into place to provide for both current and future tourism promotions and activities for Warren County. I would also like to thank Nick Caimano, Budget Officer, and Chairman of the Occupancy Tax Committee for his role in maintaining a control and oversight of expenses in these areas, and for the expertise he has brought to the endeavor.

“The Warren County Budget for 2006 provides for stable tax rates for our taxpayers, while it addresses the operational needs of county government, including mandated and essential services. 53% of the amount to be raised by tax in Warren County goes toward the cost of Social Services Programs. For the first time, the 2006 budget reflects the entire amount recommended by the Social Services Commissioner needed for Medicaid expenses. Curbing unfunded mandates and Medicaid Reform have been top priorities of local government for many years. In 2006 Medicaid Reform will finally happen across New York State, and the State will be capping our share of Medicaid payments, which will be set at 3.5% more than our actual 2005 expenses. I received from Commissioner Phelps a breakdown of local share expenditures over the past five years, showing a decrease in Medicaid expenditures from 15.4% in 2002 to 3.2% in 2005. The 3.5% reflects a cost containment savings of \$1,268,045, a significant savings to Warren County.

“The Department of Social Services worked very hard to have our 2005 base cost of Medicaid at its most accurate level. In response to Commissioner Phelps’ request, the Board of Supervisors provided extra staff to assure that benefits were being properly distributed and that clients who may have had a change in financial circumstances were not receiving unnecessary services. Our thanks and gratitude go to the employees of Social Services for their dedication to the task of making the Medicaid Program as efficient and accurate as possible. Some 17,000 or approximately 27% of our

Warren County residents receive some form of assistance and while we certainly are dedicated to serving those in need, we expect this reform effort will also provide a savings to the taxpayers.

"I continue to urge the supervisors and department heads to keep a conservative eye on spending. Review of budget expenditures and revenues have been made much easier by the computerized financial system accomplished through the efforts of the County Treasurer's Office and the Information Technology Department. I urge supervisory committees to take advantage of this system and to review finances with department heads on a regular basis. Priorities change throughout the year, and our planning is key to working within our budgets.

"2006 brings with it some ongoing issues, as well as new ones. Space needs within the Municipal Center continue to be an issue, and we will be once again be wrestling with the needs of departments. Movement was begun at the end of last year to start engineering and architecture for a new Health and Human Services Building to replace the old Social Services Building. This building originally housed our Tuberculosis Clinic and opened in 1928. It later became Westmount Infirmary in 1957, and when the new Westmount Health Facility was built in 1981, it was converted to office space for Social Services. I believe we have certainly used this building to its potential.

"It is our hope that a new building will provide some much needed space for Social Services and Health Services functions, and that it will also allow us to bring back onto the county campus the Office for the Aging, which is currently housed in the CNA building in Glens Falls. We will also look at other consolidations of space as the program moves forward, and the location will be able to benefit from the co-generation plant, an energy-savings plant which was built at Westmount Health Facility and allows the County to produce its own heat and electrical energy.

"In closing, I urge the committee members of the Board of Supervisors to become familiar with the facilities and services offered to the county residents through Warren County. Our task is legislative, not administrative, but we have a responsibility to have an understanding of the operations of the various departments. It proves very helpful for the supervisors to be familiar with the county facilities and their departments, and to have a true understanding of what the department head is talking about, as we make recommendations and give direction.

"Each year I have closed my remarks with a special recognition to our department heads and county workforce. It is their loyalty and dedication that get the important things done for the county residents, and every day in some way I am reminded of the tasks they perform for the people of Warren County. I want to publicly thank them for their commitment to public service, and again, thank you for the privilege of serving as Chairman of the Warren County Board of Supervisors.

"William H. Thomas, Chairman  
Warren County Board of Supervisors"

Chairman Thomas introduced two of his five sons, Rob and Ryan, who were in attendance at

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the meeting and he recognized the department heads in attendance. Members of the Board responded with applause. Chairman Thomas asked that supervisors with family members in the audience introduce them.

Chairman Thomas stated the first order of business would be the selection of a Clerk and that nominations are in order.

Mr. Barody welcomed the new supervisors and noted they would quickly learn the Board of Supervisors was a "working team" and the single thread that ran through the entire operation to pull it together was the County's "MVP" (most valuable player) and that person was Joan Parsons. He said it was a great honor for him to make a motion to nominate Joan Parsons as Clerk of the Board of Supervisors for a term of two years. The motion was seconded by Mr. Merlino.

There being no further nominations, a motion was made by Mr. Champagne, seconded by Mr. O'Connor and carried unanimously that the nominations be closed.

Chairman Thomas stated the next order of business would be the selection of a County Attorney and he noted that nominations were in order.

Mr. Caimano said he would echo what Mr. Barody had said about Mrs. Parsons, in that nothing happened in the world of government without a very good attorney and it was his pleasure and a personal honor to nominate Paul Dusek as County Attorney for a term of two years. The motion was seconded by Mr. Belden, who noted that Mr. Dusek had led the Board in the right direction and it had been a pleasure to work with him.

There being no further nominations, a motion was made by Mr. Monroe, seconded by Mr. Girard and carried unanimously that the nominations be closed.

Clerk and County Attorney subscribed to the Constitutional Oath as administered by David Krogmann, Supreme Court Justice.

Chairman Thomas extended privilege of the floor to the Clerk of the Board.

Mrs. Parsons commented that this marked her thirty-second year with Warren County and she remained in awe and was humbled by the choice that the Supervisors had made and thanked them for their support. She noted that Mr. Dusek was her "most valuable player" and she was happy to have him beside her when they presented some of their decisions to the Board of Supervisors.

Privilege of the floor was extended to the County Attorney.

Mr. Dusek thanked the members of the Board of Supervisors for their support and for the honor and privilege they bestowed upon him by allowing him to continue as County Attorney. While

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the work was challenging at times, it is work that he enjoyed and a lot of that had to do with the people he worked with, he stated. Mr. Dusek echoed what had already been said about Mrs. Parsons, noting they worked together constantly and she was a great asset to Warren County.

Chairman called for reading of communications.

Clerk read communications, including the following:

District Attorney Kate Hogan, designating Jason M. Carusone, Warren County First Assistant District Attorney, to exercise the duties of the Warren County District Attorney in the event that she is unable to perform those duties.

William Remington, Superintendent of the Department of Public Works (DPW) , making the following appointments for the year 2006: William E. Lamy, Acting Superintendent of DPW and Deputy Superintendent of DPW; John Farrell, Director of Natural Disaster and Civil Defense; Rose Lamy, DPW Records Officer and Deputy Superintendent of DPW for Administration; Marshall Stevens, Airport Manager and Brian Humphrey, Deputy Superintendent of Public Works for Highways. William E. Lamy, Brian Humphrey and Rose Lamy are hereby given the authority to sign all documents (vouchers, purchase orders, contracts, etc.) for the Department of Public Works in the absence of Mr. Remington.

Joan Parsons, Clerk of the Board of Supervisors and County Administrator, advising that Nancy Hafner, Deputy Clerk of the Board of Supervisors and Deputy County Administrator, is on disability leave. Therefore, the following appointment is being made by me, as Clerk of the Board: Joan Sady, Second Deputy Clerk, who may act in my absence; The following appointment is being made by me as Commissioner of Administrative and Fiscal Services: Richard Murphy, Deputy Commissioner of Fiscal Services.

Communications ordered placed on file.

Chairman called for reading of resolutions.

Clerk noted a motion was necessary to bring Resolution Nos. 1 through 43 to the floor. Motion was made by Mr. Stec, seconded by Mr. Bentley and carried unanimously, to bring Resolution Nos. 1 through 43 to the floor.

Mr. Monroe requested a roll call vote on Resolution Nos. 11 and 29.

Chairman Thomas called for a vote on the resolutions.

Resolution Nos. 1 through 43 were approved. Certificate of Appointments, reappointing Director of the Warren County Youth Bureau; appointing and reappointing members to the Warren County Youth Board; reappointing members to the Warren County Labor/Management Committee; appointing member to the Quality Assurance Committee of the Westmount Health Facility; appointing

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and reappointing members to the Greater Adirondack Resource Conservation and Development Council; naming representative to the Lake George Watershed Conference; reappointing members representing rural areas of Warren County on the Policy Committee of the Adirondack-Glens Falls Transportation Council; reappointing members to the Technical Committee of the Adirondack-Glens Falls Transportation Council; appointing and reappointing representatives on the District Fish and Wildlife Management Board were submitted.

Chairman Thomas announced the 2006 Standing and Special Committees, and a copy of the committee listings was submitted for the record. A copy was also distributed to each supervisor.

There being no further business, on motion by Mr. Sheehan and seconded by Mr. Belden, Chairman Thomas adjourned the meeting at 11:45 a.m.