

Warren County Board of Supervisors

**BOARD MEETING
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2018**



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 10:00 a.m.

Mr. Ronald F. Conover presiding.

Salute to the flag was led by Supervisor Driscoll.

Roll called, the following members present:

Supervisors Leggett, Diamond, McDevitt, Braymer, Loeb, Driscoll, Frasier, Simpson, Hogan, Merlino, Strough, Wild, Beaty, Magowan, Sokol, Thomas, Hyde, Geraghty and Conover - 19; Supervisor Dickinson absent - 1.

Commencing the Agenda review, Chairman Conover noted a motion was necessary to approve the minutes of the January 19th Board Meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk of the Board. The motion was made by Supervisor Simpson, seconded by Supervisor Merlino and carried unanimously.

Chairman Conover remarked he was pleased that Supervisor Merlino was present at the meeting today, as he had given everyone quite a scare during the February 7th meeting of the Personnel & Higher Education Committee meeting when he had a medical emergency. Supervisor Merlino apprised he was feeling much better, noting a medical incident such as that allowed him to experience first hand the stellar service provided by those who responded to the call. He thanked Supervisor Sokol for going with him to the hospital and staying until he knew he was secure; the Bay Ridge EMS Squad for the phenomenal care they provided him while he was en route to the hospital; and the Health Services Department for taking over his care from the Supervisors in the room before the EMS Squad arrived. He mentioned he was doing well now and he thanked all those who reached out to him inquiring about his health, as he was truly appreciative of this. A round of applause followed.

Continuing with the Agenda review, Chairman Conover offered privilege of the floor to Laura Kohls and fellow business owners who were present to address the Board with regard to items related to tourism in Warren County. Ms. Kohls apprised she had been involved in the local tourism industry since 1978 when she rented her first motel room in Lake George. She thanked the business people in Warren County who were comprised of sports venue owners, retail stores and entertainment venues all of whom were focused on tourism and were committed to expanding the tourism economy by providing input to this presentation today. She continued with a special thank you Deb Eeves from the North Creek Chamber of Commerce, John Carr of the Adirondack Brewery and Retail Ventures in the Town of Queensbury, Eric Unkoff from the Shirt Factory in the City of Glens Falls, Tyler Herrick from the Queensbury Hotel in the City of Glens Falls and Jim Ferriss from the Town of Queensbury. She informed families, businesses and Supervisors were all challenged with determining how to balance their budgets i.e. determine where the funds would originate from to pay for everything they wanted to do. She reviewed in detail a packet that was distributed to the Supervisors regarding tourism statistics over the last three years and how they could work together to increase tourism in Warren County; a copy of same is on file with the items distributed at the Board Meeting.

Following Ms. Kohl's presentation, privilege of the floor was extended to Frank Dittrich, *Warren County*

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Lodging Association, who advised the takeaway from the presentation which he hoped everyone concurred with was that tourism was a wonderful thing in the community. He apprised those from the business community believed they had made significant progress growing tourism since 2014. He mentioned Chairman Conover and Supervisors Geraghty, Merlino and Dickinson had all been meeting with them frequently and were working on gaining a common understanding of what they should be doing and where they should be headed in terms of attracting more tourists to the region. He stated although they had a great opportunity to grow tourism they were within a competitive marketplace. He remarked what he found to be most disturbing about the statistics Ms. Kohl reviewed with the Board was that Central New York's growth in tourism based spending had increased by \$165 million whereas it was only increased by \$45 million in this region, \$30 million of which was in Essex County. He clarified it was not their intent to state that the County and the business people were doing a bad job marketing the region, but rather to use education and data to determine where Warren County fell within the landscape. He said their concerns revolved around the larger hotels and chains, as there were some warning signals present there. He commented since they believed the County "lived on top of a gold mine" they were requesting that the County work with them in an attempt to determine the proper use of the \$4 million in occupancy tax collected each year, which, he noted, was not only the largest amount collected by any municipality in the State, but also more than some States collected in this Country. He explained their concern involved those who visited the County every year finding other places to visit rather than coming here such as Central New York, Niagra Falls, the Finger Lakes Region, etc. He said they were simply requesting to continue to work together to determine whether the data they gathered was factual and whether warning signs or positive notes were being transmitted that should be reenforced by doing more of them. He advised the business people felt there were warning signs present, but they were unsure. He informed this was why they required assistance from the County Treasurer and the Board to make a determination regarding the state of tourism in the County. With regards to the Lake George Chamber of Commerce & CVB, Mr. Dittrich remarked their concern was that the County viewed this entity as a threat that was centered around attracting tourists only to the Lake George region; however, he noted, this was not the case because if it was it would fail. He reminded them the BB&G study pointed out the strength of the region was the entire County and not just Lake George which was why the Business Association had been reaching out to entrepreneurs from both the northern and southern sections of the County with the goal of seeking as much assistance as possible to produce a fully functioning CVB that was provided with adequate funding to lead the County to a series of strategic steps and actions that resulted in the tourism industry moving forward as a community and not just the Lake George region versus other areas located in the County. He pointed out if they were able to "ride the entire tide all ships would float". He thanked the Supervisors for their time, adding he looked forward to spending as much time as the Supervisors were interested in with the Business Association.

Proceeding with the Agenda review, Chairman Conover offered privilege of the floor to representatives of ANCA (*Adirondack North Country Association*) who were present to provide an overview of their Organization and their ongoing projects. Caitlin Wargo, *Communications and Development Director*, apprised she and her colleague Jacob Vennie-Vollrath, *Regional Advocacy Director*, first and foremost wanted to thank the Board for their longstanding support of their Organization, as they relied on these funds to develop programs that impacted Warren County, as well as the other Counties they served in the region. She explained they were a not-for-profit whose office was located in Saranac Lake; however, she noted, they served the fourteen Counties who provided them with financial support. She said the funds from the Counties they served along with other philanthropic funding and grant funds were used as their operating budget which equated to around \$1.2 million. She continued, they were an economic development organization that worked to grow a new economy which provided sustainable economic development with an emphasis local food, business and energy. She stated although they did not work specifically in Warren County, what they did complimented the work that was going on here. She said

the first example of one of the projects they had been working on that impacted Warren County was their Energy Conference which tied into the tourism aspect. She apprised that clean energy was the fastest growing economy in New York State, as well as the Nation. She mentioned this past years conference was held in the City of Glens Falls and had around 200 attendees resulting in estimated revenue for the County of \$50,000. She said when they built strong local economies including a local energy economy they viewed this as circulating more of those dollars to stabilize the region so when a large employer moved in or out there would still be quality family sustaining jobs, as well as the creation of vibrant Main Streets. She explained they worked with a significant number of artisans, arts organizations, coffee shops, etc. who wanted to create inviting main streets so when visitors traveled to the region they liked it and wanted to stay here and make return visits. She added they also developed and implemented projects around areas such as their Work with Food Hubs and Farm to School Program which was occurring predominantly in Essex, St. Lawrence and Jefferson Counties. She said the Food Hub they worked with was now serving forty farmers and food producers which equated to the processing of 300,000 pounds off produce and value added products to sell through other markets to bring benefit to those producers. She mentioned they had been in discussions with the Adirondack Health Institute to determine how the projects started by their organization benefitted Warren County, as well as the other Counties served by the Adirondack Health Institute.

Ms. Wargo advised another thing they did was work collaboratively with a large number of partners in the region such as other not-for-profits, Workforce Development Institute, Industrial Development Agencies, etc. on a number of different matters. She noted an example of how this had impacted Warren County involved the Forest Product Study that was released about a year ago in collaboration with Finch Paper, International Paper, Empire State Forest Parks Association and the Workforce Development Institute whose findings determined there was a sufficient supply to serve the growing biomass and the paper which employed over 9,000 people, but a labor issue was prevalent so they were working on workforce training with Paul Smith's College to develop a blue print of how to develop this training program to ensure these jobs remain in the region and this sector remained viable.

Mr. Vennie-Vollrath stated he would like to provide an overview of four of the main projects ANCA was currently involved in that had an impact on Warren County, the first of which was the Common Ground Alliance. He explained ANCA valued bringing organizations together to discuss issues and find common ground on them. He said he was pleased to be a member of the Board of the Common Ground Alliance with Supervisors Simpson and Leggett. He informed this particular event brought together 200 leaders, citizens and business owners throughout the Adirondack Park to discuss challenging which resulted in several positive outcomes. Mr. Vennie-Vollrath apprised they had recently produced a video on the Shirt Factory Building in the City of Glens Falls which had attracted a significant amount followers on social media. He mentioned small projects such as this provided details regarding the history of the building and promoted the businesses located there. He added they had recently launched website called "Ignite" whose focus was on expanding small businesses in the region by providing them with small amounts of capital contributed by people from within the region. He mentioned they were working on starting up a Business Transition Services whose focus was on working with small businesses before they got to the point where they needed to close to find new buyers or discover different models that could work in an attempt to keep those businesses here and the downtowns vibrant. In conclusion, Mr. Vennie-Vollrath advised ANCA was working on a regional economic analysis with a representative of the Center for Rural Entrepreneurship. He explained this was a \$200,000 project that was funded by individuals, foundations and businesses throughout the region whose focus was identifying key sectors of the economy to concentrate on expanding in the next fifteen years. He informed the report should be ready to review later this year.

Chairman Conover thanked the ANCA representatives for their presentation. He noted the number of

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guests present to speak about the Cedars Meal Site and offered privilege of the floor to anyone who wished to address the Board regarding this matter.

Virginia Winters, *Cedars Senior Living Community Resident*, advised those present today were fighting to save the Cedars Meal Site from closing. She thanked the Supervisors who visited the Meal Site on February 13th and took the time to listen to the residents comments. She mentioned there were residents, employees and volunteers from the site who were present today to voice their opinions on continuing managing the Meal Site as it currently was.

Janet La Deau, *Cedars Senior Living Community Resident*, read aloud a prepared statement which outlined her objection to the proposed closing of the Cedars Meal Site Kitchen as follows: The kitchen staff boosted her spirits by singing and laughing while they worked; the residents of the Cedars have offered to pay slightly more for their meals even though this placed a hardship on them since they lived on fixed incomes to increase the revenue; some of the delivery drivers offered to forgo their gas mileage reimbursement to reduce costs; she questioned what more they could they do to keep the Cedars meal Site Kitchen open; and she emphasized the importance of socialization to seniors, as well as how she believed Warren County taxpayer money should remain within the County.

Carl Ross, *Cedars Senior Living Community Resident*, read aloud a prepared statement outlining his objections to the proposed closing of the Cedars Meal Site Kitchen which included the following: Warren County taxpayers money being allocated to pay for a contract with Washington County Office for the Aging; the savings realized from closing the kitchen at the site possibly being negated by the cost of unemployment and public assistance benefits if the employees who were laid off were unable to find positions elsewhere; the Kitchen Managers request for a budget was gone unanswered; and the fact that the County signed a new contract with Cedars in December of 2017; a copy of the written statement is on file with the items distributed at the February 16, 2018 Board Meeting.

Lillian Phinney, *Cedars Senior Living Community Resident*, informed she had lived at the Cedars for fifteen years during which time she had eaten a number of her meals in the dining room. She remarked the kitchen staff at the Cedars Meal Site were the most caring people that she knew; she noted on two occasions a staff member went to the rooms of individuals who had not come to the dining room for their meals to deliver them and found them to be in medical distress and called for help. She said this was a good example of how passionate the employees at the site were. She pointed out if the kitchen was closed they would lose the caring and compassion provided to the residents by the staff. In closing, she implored for the kitchen to remain open at the site.

William Haedrich, *Cedars Senior Living Community Resident*, stated that he had lived at the Cedars for twelve years now, during which time he was appointed the Activities Director for Cedars for the last six years. He stated he was present today to ensure the Supervisors were aware of how well the Meal Site Program at Cedars worked including food preparation, delivery and serving, noting it should be a model for other sites to demonstrate how something that was so efficient worked so well. He suggested the Board members look beyond the expense of the site and view the heart and soul of those at the Cedars Meal Site.

Pam Reed, *Cedars Senior Living Community Resident*, read aloud a prepared statement which summarized her concerns pertaining to the proposed closing of the Cedars Meal Site Kitchen as follows: the lack of transparency which lead the Supervisors to vote on January 23rd to close the commercial kitchen which prepared and cooked over 300 meals a day for the Meals on Wheels Program; how the senior residents of the Town of Queensbury and the City of Glens Falls deserved to have quality meals prepared by the dedicated staff at the Cedars Meal Site which was located within the County; how the

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seniors deserved to be consulted about proposed cutbacks that would impact them; how seniors were taxpayers, as well and elected the Board members with the hopes that the senior population would be represented fairly by them which was why she was requesting that they explore other solutions for the necessary cutbacks; and she thanked the Supervisors who took time out of their own day to meet with them while being able to experience for themselves the delicious meals served to 300+ seniors every day in the region; a copy of the written statement is on file with the items distributed at the February 16, 2018 Board Meeting.

Diane Collins, *Warren County Resident and Volunteer Meals on Wheels Driver*, recited aloud a written statement which outlined the following reasons not to close the kitchen at the Cedars Meal Site: The loss of a remarkably efficient system which promptly delivered meals within thirty minutes to the volunteers respective locations whereas transporting them from the Washington County Jail to Cedars and then to the residents home would take much longer causing seniors to have to wait longer for their meals; there would be a loss of confidence in the quality of the food, as the kitchen staff worked together for several years preparing hot meals at the site which the seniors were thoroughly appreciative; and the possible loss of volunteers due to the proposed changeover and the comradery between those at the site to ensure it was managed in an efficient way; a copy of the written statement is on file with the items distributed at the February 16, 2018 Board Meeting.

Seth Griffen, *Cedars Senior Living Community Resident*, read aloud a prepared at testimonial in support of keeping the Cedars Meal Site Kitchen open which included a quote from the Post Star that questioned how it would be possible for Washington County to take over the meal preparation without incurring the cost of hiring additional staff or overtime for the current staff; a copy of the written statement is on file with the items distributed at the February 16, 2018 Board Meeting.

Holly Hahne, *Cedars Senior Living Community Resident and volunteer for Meals on Wheels and Hospice*, stated that she had been involved in the restaurant business her entire life. She said due to this experience she could convey with confidence the quality of the food would not be the same if it was transported from Washington County. She added the comradery between the kitchen staff and the dining room was significant because it allowed those who were unable to get out of their apartments the chance to socialize. She added as a volunteer she could attest to the fact that the seniors loved the meals.

Maryjane Melton, *Cedars Senior Living Community Resident*, advised she would like to address some of the important aspects of the Meals on Wheels Program, the first of which pertained to the fact that well balanced and flavorful meals were provided Monday through Friday; this was the main meal of the day for many of the recipients while others may not have a meal as tasty as the one delivered. She informed the kitchen staff also prepared special meals on holidays such as Easter, St. Patrick's Day, Thanksgiving and Christmas. She pointed out the staff put forth extra effort to prepare the meals on these holidays which brightened the day for the recipients. She mentioned preparing the meals elsewhere would not be as pleasing as the current staff made it for the recipients. She questioned whether the Boards intention was to take these delicious meals away from the seniors. She stated socialization played a significant part in this program; she noted without the comradery the seniors could become lonely and depressed possibly leading to bad situations. She questioned whether this was what the Board members wanted for the seniors who lived there. She stated safety played an important role in this whole program, as the volunteers who delivered the meals completed spot checks of the residents dwellings and report anything they felt would put the residents in an at risk situation to the appropriate parties. She remarked the kitchen staff at the Cedars site did a wonderful job ensuring the program was a success by providing great meals, socialization opportunities and safety. She inquired whether the Supervisors really felt this should be taken away, as the seniors did not. She implored with

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the Board to reconsider the proposed action and she quoted the following: "If it is not broken do not fix it".

Trudy Lapasinskas, *Cedars Meal Site Manager*, apprised she had been in the food service industry since 1975 when she joined the United States Army to serve as a Hospital Food Service Specialist. She informed she knew her job well which was why she wished she had been afforded the opportunity to try and save money for the County, but she was never asked to do so. She said when she was notified the kitchen staff would all be laid off due to budget cuts she eliminated the knife sharpening service which came once a month to sharpen the sites slicer. She pointed out the sites employees were ecstatic when they were provided with sharp knives to work with since this was something they had never had before and the slicer had a chip in it for years. She informed she paid \$30 a month for this sharpening service which although not significant would result in saving over \$300 a year. She mentioned another cost saving idea she had was to inquire about the cost of having Warrensburg Laundry Service wash the towels instead of using disposable ones to determine if this would result in additional savings. She continued, another suggestion she had was to make their own gravy and not add salt rather than purchasing sodium free gravy which was rather costly and came in small quantities. She said another idea would be for her to work with a dietician to develop a menu that did not include high end items as often which were expensive to make such as beef stew. She implored with the Board to allow her to try and cut back costs elsewhere and save the jobs of the seven employees at the site. She apprised she answered anywhere between 30-50 calls a day from clients requesting to be taken off the list for the day to receive meals because they would not be home and she questioned how this would be managed if she and her staff were laid off. Ms. Lapasinskas informed local celebrity chef Rachel Ray donated dog and cat food to the site and was delivered Meals on Wheels recipients with pets as a result of her efforts and she questioned whether Washington County would be willing to continue contacting Ms. Ray every few months when the supply was low. She remarked she loved the seniors she served, as well as the employees who worked with her at the Meal Site; she noted she did not want any of them to lose their jobs which was why she was requesting she be afforded the opportunity to make cutbacks elsewhere rather than closing the site. A round of applause followed.

Maggie Hoey, *Cedars Meal Site Cook*, apprised she had the chance to meet some of the Supervisors the other day, noting it was an honor to cook for those she normally did not. In regards to some comments made that the seniors ate like kings, she stated she felt compelled to point out she used the same bidding system as the Warren County Jail. She remarked the reason the food was so delicious and the Supervisors had a pleasant experience there related to the years of experience, as well as the dedication that had been put forth. She mentioned although she and the Cedars Meal Site, had been made to look inferior, she was not present today to put anyone down. She continued, she believed situations such as this should not be handled in an "attack and tear down" manner, but rather everyone should work together to save what they had. She informed she knew the name of every single senior who was present because she had shared their joys and been there to comfort them through their losses. She reminded the Board Members all of the employees at the Meal Site were members of the Union which meant the proposed changes would have impacts throughout the Meals on Wheels Program. She explained there was a "bumping system" within the County and although she did not want to work for any other seniors but the ones she took care of now she would not give up on this Program nor would she be that easy to get rid of. She implored with the Board to look for other cut backs that could be made instead of closing the site, as she had worked at the Cedars Site for thirteen years and she had grown up with the seniors served by the site. She pointed out everyone had issues inside their own companies, noting she was positive there were times when the Board members did not all agree on a matter. She informed the beauty of this Country was that everyone did not have to agree on everything, but at the end of the day the staff at the Cedars Site were able to efficiently get their jobs done. She requested that the Board not break apart the family that they had built over the years. A round of

applause was given.

Travis Whitehead, *Town of Queensbury Resident*, remarked he hoped the Board would not take further services away from the seniors, as they did a few years ago when they sold the former Westmount Health Facility. He continued, these were individuals who had paid taxes their entire lives and they were deserving of some respect. He reminded them how the sale of the former Westmount Health Facility was supposed to generate a savings of \$1 million per year, but he had yet to see this occur. He pointed out this year alone the County had lost \$1 million due to billings which were never submitted. He said it may have been a management problem more than anything else. He advised the rating of the former Westmount Health Facility had been reduced from four stars when it was County-owned to a one star facility no one would want to go to. He said during the time of the sale the Board was well aware of what the proposed operators record was, noting this had not improved any over the last few years. He stated he was hoping they made a better decision today than they made two years ago when they sold the former Westmount Health Facility. A round of applause followed.

George Winters, *Town of Queensbury Resident*, stated after looking around the room he could attest to the fact that at least 90% of the Board members were seniors which was why he felt it was necessary for them to consider that they may be in a similar position as the seniors who attended the meeting today to voice their concerns about the possibility of the Kitchen at the Cedars Meal Site being closed. He remarked he felt the seniors were deserving of having their request to keep the kitchen open at the site granted. He questioned how many other County Departments had cut their budgets by \$150,000, as it appeared the seniors were the ones who suffered the most when cutbacks were made as supported by the sale of the former Westmount Health Facility. He suggested they look at themselves to answer whether they could move forward with closing the kitchen at the Cedars site thereby impacting the seniors in the room. A round of applause followed.

Chairman Conover thanked those in attendance for voicing their opinions regarding the proposed changes at the Cedars Meal Site; however, he noted, he would be continuing with the Agenda review and encouraged anyone who needed to leave to do so.

Moving along to the report by the Chairman of the Board, Chairman Conover advised he had attended the Intercounty Legislative Committee of the Adirondacks meeting on January 25th in Clinton County during which they discussed the proposed Legislation introduced by Senator Little concerning the consolidation and funding of EMS Services in rural areas. He apprised he had attended the NYSAC (*New York State Association of Counties*) Legislation Conference on January 29-30, 2018. He said one major topic of discussion there concerned the Governor's proposed State Budget and the movement from a General Assessment Program to a PILOT Program. He mentioned a number of Counties expressed their disdain for this proposed changeover. He thanked Supervisor Simpson and the other members of the NYSAC Public Safety Standing Committee for bringing to the floor Senator Little's proposed legislation which generated a significant amount of discussion. Chairman Conover informed he had visited the Washington County Office for the Aging Meals on Wheels Meal Site in Hudson Falls on February 2nd. He mentioned he had the privilege of attending the Warren County Highway Superintendents Meeting and Luncheon on February 8th during which he discussed the difficult winter season this year, salt reduction and the new equipment that was available for purchase. He recommended anyone interested in attending a future meeting to contact Kevin Hajos, *Deputy Superintendent of Public Works*.

Chairman Conover then called for the reports by Committee Chairmen on the past months meetings or activities.

Supervisor Driscoll advised he had nothing to report on.

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Supervisor Frasier stated prior to delivering her Committee report, she would like to request that proposed Resolution No. 73, *Authorizing an Agreement with Legal Aid Society of Northeastern New York, Inc. to Provide Legal Services to Elderly Residents of Warren and Hamilton Counties for the Office for the Aging*, be withdrawn.

Motion was made by Mrs. Frasier, seconded by Mr. Simpson and carried unanimously to withdraw proposed Resolution No. 73.

Supervisor Frasier reported on the January 23rd meeting of the Health, Human & Social Services Committee wherein proposed Resolution Nos. 63-72 and 74-77 were approved. She apprised she was disappointed that Pat Auer, *Director, Health Services*, announced she would be retiring next month during the meeting; however, she noted Mrs. Auer would be missed, as she had done a wonderful job for the County. She informed she was on the NYSAC Public and Mental Health Standing Committee which forwarded three resolutions on to the State for support.

Supervisor Simpson provided a summary of the January 23rd Public Works Committee meeting. He inquired about the status of the RFP (*Request for Proposal*) for luxury camping on the Warren County Fairgrounds and Mr. Hajos responded that it was released this Monday. He advised proposed Resolution Nos. 79-80 were approved at the meeting and he provided a brief summary of each. Supervisor Simpson reported on the conference call between the County Attorney and the State's Attorney regarding information sharing to connect the County with the State. He advised he brought up Senator Little's proposed legislation concerning EMS at the NYSAC Public Safety Standing Committee meeting during which a significant amount of discussion took place. He pointed out there were a number of counties who were in the same predicament as Warren County regarding EMS coverage in rural areas. He surmised that the proposed legislation would be moving through the process. Supervisor Simpson stated he was a Board member of the Adirondack Park Local Government Review Board, as well as the President of the Adirondack Association of Towns and Villages, both of which would be impacted by the legislation included in the Governors proposed Budget that concerned revisions to 480A Exemption. He said this involved forest land that was placed under the 480A Exemption. He mentioned the proposed legislation entitled 480B would lower the threshold to 25 acres. He continued, the Towns would be responsible for the first 1% of the exemption which would result in the tax burden being shifted on to the Towns, Counties and School Districts. He advised both organizations were opposed to this tax shift, noting they supported the Forestry Initiative, but not the burden of paying for the exemptions such as Working Forest and Plans for Open Space falling on the Towns, Counties and School Districts.

Supervisor Hogan indicated she had nothing to report on.

Supervisor Merlino reported on the January 26th meeting of the Tourism Committee wherein proposed Resolution Nos. 85-86 were approved and he provided a brief summary of each.

Supervisors Strough and Wild indicated they had nothing to report on.

Supervisor Beaty advised he would be providing a brief update following which Julie Butler, *Purchasing Agent*, would deliver an update pertaining to the Shared Services Program with the individual municipalities. He stated the Shared Services Committee would be discussing the Raise the Age legislation which Robert Iusi, *Probation Director*, was heavily involved with, as well as the possibility of implementing a County-wide animal services contract. He added upon the request of the City of Glens Falls for assistance with the challenges they were dealing with that involved their computer

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system, he requested that Mike Colvin, *Director, Information Technology*, contact the key individuals at the City to review what they were working with and possibly make suggestions to address the issues going forward. Supervisor Beaty apprised he was looking into having the Fire Districts who could participate on the County's Shared Services Agreement get on board with the program to save some money on the purchases they made. He acknowledged Mrs. Butler as the point person for her efforts to save the program participants money.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Mrs. Butler, who informed they had far exceeded the projected County-wide savings which included all of the municipalities by 450% or slightly less than \$130,000. She said they had been discussing the challenges they faced and what the Purchasing Department could improve on such as a better way to receive timely responses on estimates to prevent them from becoming backed up on their bid process. She added she once again offered to travel to the municipalities to conduct training with new employees or provide a refresher course to existing employees. She advised once her new employee commenced working on February 26th she would have more time to conduct these trainings. She mentioned in response to the general consensus, the Electronics Recycling Bid went back out. She concluded by stating she was in the process of drafting the RFP for County-wide animal control services.

Supervisor Magowan thanked Chairman Conover, Supervisor Geraghty and the veteran Supervisors for assisting him with understanding his responsibilities as a Supervisor. He added he found the first 43 days of him serving to be interesting, noting he was starting to get comfortable with his position.

Supervisor Simpson clarified there were two different proposals occurring which concerned tax structures and shifts, the first of which pertained to Empire Forest for the Future Initiative that would lower the threshold from 100 acres of private forest property to 25 acres. He said in previous years the State had made the towns and counties whole; however, he noted, this new proposal would create a 1% threshold before the State would reimburse the towns and counties for the taxes resulting in the towns being responsible for that 1%. He remarked although they were supportive of the Forest Products Industry, they were opposed to the tax burden shift. Supervisor Simpson informed the other piece of legislation pertained to the PILOT legislation that the Governor had proposed which concerned the State lands in all of the towns and the Adirondack Park. He explained these lands would be put into a PILOT which used a 2% growth factor in their assessed value. He pointed out private property was not capped at 2% which meant they could increase by 6% in value in a year, but the State property would remain level thereby shifting the tax burden on to the property owners and the town for the Forest Preserve. He apprised the 25% of the property located in the Town of Horicon that was considered Forest Preserve would be impacted by this proposed legislation which was why they were opposed to it. He informed both the Adirondack Park Local Government Review Board and Adirondack Association of Towns and Villages approved resolutions in opposition of this proposed legislation which would be forwarded on to the Governors Office.

Supervisor Sokol reported on the February 1st meeting of the Finance Committee wherein proposed Resolution Nos. 46-47 and 91-100 were approved and he provided a brief summary of each. In regards to proposed Resolution No. 93, *Authorizing Payment to Lake Champlain-lake George Regional Planning Board*, he advised that he had contacted their organization requesting additional information regarding their operation following which a rather lengthy email was distributed to the Board which included a CPA (*Certified Public Accountant*) indicating all of their audits were clear. He stated that they would be holding off on the report by the County Treasurer until next month.

Supervisor Thomas stated that he was a member of the NYSAC Economic Development, Environment & Rural Affairs Standing Committee which had five resolutions presented to them and he provided a

brief overview of each. He added a presentation was also given by the Climate Smart Communities regarding electric cars, charging stations and the various grants currently available. He mentioned at the conclusion of the meeting it was recommended the name of the Committee be changed to Economic Development, Environment and Energy.

Supervisor Hyde indicated she had nothing to report on.

Supervisor Leggett stated the Criminal Justice & Public Safety Committee had met on January 26th, approving proposed Resolution Nos. 50-59 and he provided a brief summary of each. He apprised he had completed his New York State Emergency Management Certification at the NYSAC Conference. He said last night he had attended a meeting of the Warren County Fish and Wildlife Management Board as the County's representative. In conclusion he informed he was a member of the Common Ground Alliance Board.

Supervisor Diamond advised the County Facilities Committee had met on January 23rd wherein they approved proposed Resolution Nos. 48-49 and 88 and he provided brief overview of each.

Supervisor McDevitt stated he had attended a graduation ceremony of the Steamfitters Union on Luzerne Road during which he realized the need to ensure a talented skilled workforce in the region. He said in order to ensure individuals remain in this area they needed to have the skills necessary for employers in this area. He stated one of the major filtering industries in Washington County highlighted that message within the last few weeks by indicating that manufacturers in this region that had a definitive need for skilled workers here. He informed most were aware the Steamfitters Union provided a very skilled workforce for Gloabal Foundries in Saratoga County and they would continue to do so. He called attention to proposed Resolution No. 61, *Authorizing Agreement with the Village of Lake George for Administration of the 2012 and 2014 Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan Funding Awards from the New York State Department of State*, which he had contacted the Planning & Community Development Department about and confirmed they were comfortable taking over the administration of this grant. He read aloud the following statement for the public record from Wayne LaMothe, *County Planner*: "The State and the Village asked for our assistance since these contracts for the grants had not been executed by the State pending a satisfactory means to administer the funds. The Village was used as a portal to apply for funds, but as noted at the Committee meeting the Projects are lake-wide and have a direct impact on the water quality of Lake George. I believe its in the best interest of Warren County to ensure these projects are completed in a timely manner". Supervisor McDevitt informed that Mr. LaMothe, who had a significant amount of experience in these types of matters, was supportive of the proposed Resolution. He discussed the unfortunate incident in Florida that recently occurred in a community many residents of Florida considered to be one of the safest communities there. He said Federal politicians had all told the grieving parents and grandparents that they had their thoughts and prayers; however, he noted, today people were seeking action, not thoughts and prayers. He mentioned the god that he talked to felt this was an overworked expression, as they were seeking solutions to background checks, ensure there was adequate funding for mental health and for someone to take control over assault weapons in this Country which, he noted, were banned up until 1994. He remarked courageous politicians were needed to step up and take a stand.

Supervisor Braymer advised she had also attended the NYSAC Conference, noting she was in attendance during the presentation on Clean Energy Communities which she found to be very informative. She said it provided information on how the County could save money, protect the environment and create sustainable local economies similar to what was discussed during the presentation by the ANCA representatives. She reported that she was working with Mrs. Butler and Frank Morehouse on a bid for another hybrid vehicle to add to the County's fleet. She pointed out the first hybrid vehicle they purchased was working well, with many staff members requesting to use it. Supervisor Braymer apprised she was a member of the NYSAC Woman's Leadership Council during which they discussed

the issues woman came across in the workforce. Supervisor Braymer reported on the Environmental Concerns & Real Property Tax Services Committee meeting held on January 26th, wherein they continued the discussion on plastic bag legislation; however, she noted, no action was taken because they wanted to take the time to review the State Task Forces findings which were recently released. She requested support of proposed Resolution No. 62.

Supervisor Loeb reported on the January 26th meeting of the Support Services Committee, wherein they approved proposed Resolution Nos. 81-84 which he request support on. He provided an overview of the presentation given by the Weights and Measures Department. He stated that he was fully supportive of the additional funding being expended to pave County roads. With regard to the discussion earlier in the meeting pertaining to the Cedars Meal Site, he apprised the food served there was delicious as was the meal served to him in Washington County. He mentioned the system developed to transfer the meals from Washington County to the residents of Warren County would probably work well, but it had not been tested out yet. Supervisor Loeb stated all of the seniors he asked at the Cedars Meal site indicated to him they were aware of the meals offered there. He pointed out the Cedars was a private organization whose meal site was funded by the public. He remarked first and foremost the goal was to take care of all the seniors in the County; however, he noted, he was unsettled by the fact that it appeared that unbeknownst to the County, it had been funding the Cedars marketing program. He said the value of the Cedars marketing more than likely far exceeded the \$17,000 allocated to them for use of their facilities to prepare and serve meals to seniors. He mentioned if the meal site was not closed down then it was the County's responsibility to review whether they should be requesting compensation from Cedars for providing them with funds they used to marker their facility.

Continuing to the report by the Acting County Administrator, Supervisor Geraghty advised that proposed Resolutions 87-90 were approved by the Personnel & Higher Education Committee. In regards to Shared Services, Supervisor Geraghty informed as a result of Mrs. Butler's efforts in rebidding some of the chemicals for the municipalities waste water treatment and water facilities it was discovered that one of the suppliers was charging the County a fuel surcharge. He said as a result of adjusting the invoices to remove this charge they were able to save an additional \$640 this week alone. He read aloud a listing of the meetings he attended since the January 19th Board Meeting, a copy of which is on file with the items distributed at the Board Meeting. He advised he had attended the Adirondack Park Local Government Review Board and Adirondack Association of Towns and Villages meetings with Supervisor Simpson yesterday during which a presentation took place regarding how State land was unevenly assessed across the Adirondack Park, as there were some Towns who were on the low end of getting their fair share in terms of assessing State land. He added this not only impacted the localities, but also the School Districts, as well.

Supervisor Geraghty recognized Doug Davis for 30 years of service to the Sheriff's Office.

Supervisor Geraghty reported that the snowmobile races at the Warren County Fairgrounds that took place last weekend had been a success with an excellent turnout for the event. He mentioned this was a good use of County-owned property that would otherwise have sat idle through the winter months. In conclusion he thanked Governor Cuomo on behalf of himself and Supervisor Hyde for being engaged with them on a regular basis regarding the ice jam issues in their municipalities.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Mary Elizabeth Kissane, *County Attorney*, to provide a report from the County Attorney. Ms. Kissane advised that she had nothing to report on.

Resuming the Agenda review, Chairman Conover called for the reading of communications, which Amanda Allen, *Clerk of the Board*, read aloud, as follows:

Reports from:

1. Report of Criminal and Family Workloads for December 2017 from the Warren County Probation Department.
2. Warren County Department of Weights & Measures Monthly Report for January 2018.
3. NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets 2017 Annual Report of Director of Weights & Measures
4. Warren County 2017 Annual Corporate Compliance Report submitted by JoAnn McKinstry, Warren County Corporate Compliance Officer.

Letters/emails from:

1. Copy of petition addressed to Governor Andrew Cuomo signed by many Warren County Seniors asking that the Cedar's Meal Site be allowed to continue as a full working meal producing site.

Other:

1. Capital District Regional Off-Track Betting Corp. December payment in the amount of \$3,130.
2. NYSAC 2018 Legislative Conference Resolution packet. *Bound copy on file in the Clerk of the Board's Office.*
3. Village of South Glens Falls Notice of Public Hearing to review and consider the adoption of proposed Local Law No. 1 of 2018, *A Local Law to Extend the Term and Duration of Local Law No. 2 of 2017 which Established a Temporary Moratorium on Development Approvals in the R-2 and R-2 Overlay Districts of the Village of South Glens Falls.* Public Hearing to be held on March 7, 2018 at 7:00 p.m. at the Village Offices located at 46 Saratoga Avenue, South Glens Falls, NY.
4. Washington County Board of Supervisors Resolution No. 17 of 2018, *Appointing Members to the Counties of Warren and Washington Industrial Development Agency and Civic Development Corporation.*

Continuing to the reading of resolutions, Mrs. Allen announced proposed Resolution Nos. 46-99 were mailed; she informed that proposed Resolution Nos. 58, 87, 91 and 96 were amended after mailing and a motion was needed to approve these revisions. The necessary motion was made by Supervisor Simpson and seconded by Supervisor Leggett to approve the amendments was carried unanimously. Mrs. Allen informed that proposed Resolution No. 100 was approved after the mailing and a motion was necessary to bring the proposed Resolutions to the floor. The necessary motion was made by Supervisor Simpson, seconded by Supervisor Braymer and carried unanimously to bring the resolutions to the floor.

Chairman Conover called for discussion and public comment on the proposed resolutions, as well as requests for roll call votes.

Mr. Whitehead advised he would like to discuss proposed Resolution No. 93, *Authorizing Payment to Lake Champlain-Lake George Regional Planning Board*, and in particular that the matter of \$7,000 should be the very least of the Board's concerns. He apprised the Lake Champlain-Lake George Regional Planning Board did a significant amount of economic development work which included a large loan portfolio. He said from the information he reviewed it appeared that the loan portfolio was not doing very well, as they had lost \$500,000 over the last few years with 1/3rd of their loans not performing. He informed he had not received the material from the Organization that he requested over a month ago; however, he stated, he was aware that the Board members were in receipt of some information from the Organization yesterday because one of them forwarded it on to him, but he had not had the time to review it in depth. He mentioned similar Organizations such as the Warren County Economic Development Corporation, Local Development Corporation, etc. differed significantly from this one because they were all required to submit reports to the Authorities Budget Office. He explained the Authorities Budget Office then reviewed these reports in detail to determine if any issues were present and if there were they would audit them, but this was not the case for the Lake Champlain-Lake George

Regional Planning Board. He stated when he asked the Authorities Budget Office if they provided oversight to that Organization they replied in the negative. He remarked he found it to be troubling that the County was supposed to be providing oversight to this Organization since it appeared that no one had seen the materials he had asked for over a month ago nor could they present them which was why he was questioning how the County could be doing the oversight they were supposed to be doing. He stated this was the issue the Board should be considering and not the allocation to this Organization of \$7,000. He mentioned there was authorizing law that permitted this County in conjunction with Washington and Essex Counties to create this Board, but there were certain requirements which required them to submit an annual report to the collaborating legislative bodies and to the Department of Audit and Control. He said he was unsure of who the Department of Audit and Control was. He advised he had more questions than answers which was why he felt the Supervisors should take their time and consider tabling the proposed Resolution. He apprised that Board members were appointed to the Planning Board, noting it was disconcerting that at least one of these Supervisors indicated he had never attended any of their meetings even though he had been appointed to the Board for the last three years. He informed every motion by the Regional Planning Council required for its adoption the affirmative vote of the majority of all the members of the Regional Planning Council so if members were not present he was unsure of how that would work. He reiterated the Lake Champlain-Lake George Regional Planning Board had millions of dollars of State grants that it administered with \$5.5 million being allocated to the Adirondack Glens Falls Transportation Council, which, he noted, some Supervisors were appointed as members of. He said this meant the Board members were supervising themselves but not supervising themselves. In addition to the State grants, Mr. Whitehead apprised there were also Federal grants such as HUD (*Housing and Urban Development*) involved with Lake Champlain-Lake George Regional Planning Board which were allocated to the revolving loan fund that was losing significant amounts of money. He suggested the Supervisors take a step back and determine what their responsibilities were and then act on them. He reminded them they had pledged to adhere to the State laws, they were responsible for this Organization and they would be held accountable. He cautioned them that this was the same Organization that wrote a check to an individual who was arrested a year ago based upon that check.

Supervisor Driscoll requested roll call votes on proposed Resolution Nos. 63, *Appointing Members of Professional Advisory Committee*, and 69, *Amending Resolution No. 507 of 2017, Which Authorized an Agreement with Northeast Parent & Child Services to Provide Specialized Mental Health Respite Services for the Office of Community Services, to Correct the Amount of the Agreement* .

Supervisor McDevitt requested a roll call vote on proposed Resolution No. 61, *Authorizing Agreement with the Village of Lake George for Administration of the 2012 and 2014 Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan Funding Awards from the New York State Department of State*.

Supervisor Beaty advised he would like to table proposed Resolution No. 93, *Authorizing Payment to Lake Champlain-lake George Regional Planning Board* .

Motion was made by Supervisor Beaty, seconded by Supervisor Braymer and carried by majority vote, with Supervisors Sokol and Thomas voting in opposition, to table proposed Resolution No. 93.

Supervisor Braymer apprised she had a few questions concerning proposed Resolution No. 84, *Amending Resolution No. 496 of 2017, Which Authorized an Extension of the Current Agreement to Retain Bartlett, Pontiff, Stewart & Rhodes, P.C. to Provide Legal Services in Connection with Labor Matters and Other Legal Matters Relating to the Former Westmount Health Facility as Assigned by the Warren County Attorney's Office, to Extend the Contract Termination Date*, that she was unable to ask Ms. Kissane before the meeting. She questioned what was included in the contract because her understanding was it related to labor services and the remaining issues surrounding the former Westmount Health Facility, but the body of the resolution stated that it was also for general operations

and general legal matters. She continued, the other question she had concerned whether Ms. Kissane was able receive confirmation from Bartlett, Pontiff, Stewart & Rhodes, P.C. indicating they would be withdrawing from their representation of Schermerhorn Aviation in the potential lawsuit related to the Airport.

Chairman Conover inquired whether the language in proposed Resolution No. 84 Supervisor Braymer referred to was historic and included in the original resolution and Ms. Kissane responded she was unable to speak to the historical language, but the services provided were specific to labor relations and any outstanding matters relating to the former Westmount Health Facility. Chairman Conover asked Supervisor Braymer whether she would like Resolution No. 84 to be amended to delete the language referring to general operations and general legal matters and she replied in the affirmative.

Motion was made by Supervisor Braymer and seconded by Supervisor Beaty to amend Resolution No. 84 as outlined above.

Supervisor Braymer asked whether amending the proposed Resolution would lower the general fee paid to Bartlett, Pontiff, Stewart & Rhodes, P.C. and questioned whether Ms. Kissane used Bartlett, Pontiff, Stewart & Rhodes, P.C. for any other services and Ms. Kissane replied in the negative.

Chairman Conover called the question and the motion to amend proposed Resolution No. 84 as outlined above was carried unanimously.

Chairman Conover questioned whether this would lower the general fee and Ms. Kissane replied in the negative. She explained she had only used their services for labor matters. She remarked she would not suggest lowering the monthly fee since she had not used them for any additional matters.

Supervisor Braymer asked that Ms. Kissane respond to her other question regarding Bartlett, Pontiff, Stewart & Rhodes, P.C. indicating they would be withdrawing from their representation of Schermerhorn Aviation in the potential lawsuit related to the Airport. Ms. Kissane advised the only confirmation she received was the statement indicating they has written a letter to Schermerhorn Aviation advising that they would not be representing them; however, she noted, they were not permitted to share the letter with her because she was not their client. Supervisor Braymer commented she believed it would be a significant conflict of interest if their firm represented Schermerhorn Aviation in their lawsuit against the County while at the same time representing the County on other legal matters so she was pleased they provided Ms. Kissane with some indication they would not be doing that.

Supervisor Magowan inquired whether it would hurt to ask Bartlett, Pontiff, Stewart & Rhodes, P.C. if they would lower their costs since the workload was reduced and Ms. Kissane replied the workload had not been reduced. She explained their workload would be the same as it had been in previous years. She added the value the County was getting for the amount of work they were doing was significant, noting if they were to bill the County on an hourly rate instead of a flat fee the amount paid to them would increase significantly.

Supervisor Thomas asked whether their firm would still be representing the County on any issues relating to the former Westmount Health Facility or Siemens if any additional issues pertaining to them were to be brought forward since they represented the County in the past on these matters and Ms. Kissane responded that any items relating to the former Westmount Health Facility were included in this contract, but a new contract would be required for Siemens if they were to arise.

Mrs. Allen advised the prior resolution, 496 of 2017, was corrected to remove any reference to other office matters which meant it only applied to any labor or former Westmount Health Facility issues. She

informed the amendment was inadvertently not carried over into proposed Resolution No. 84.

In regards to proposed Resolution No. 91, *Authorizing the County Treasurer to Transfer Funds from the Computer Reserve Fund to Departmental Budgets For the Purchase of Computers, Related Equipment and Software and Amending 2018 Warren County Budget*, Supervisor Magowan inquired whether County employees could use their computers to punch in rather than expending \$7,000 for time clocks and Mike Colvin, *Director, Information Technology*, replied he believed there was an older resolution in place which required use of a biometric time keeping system. He continued, since the clock had a fingerprint scanner on it these types of clocks were required; he also noted these machines were proprietary from this particular vendor so looking for one at a lower price was not an option.

Supervisor Braymer stated she would like to have a quick discussion regarding proposed Resolution No. 86, *Extending Agreement with the Adirondack Regional Tourism Council, Inc. for Regional Marketing Services*, regarding whether appropriating these funds to this organization was economical given the fact that the County increased the amount of money appropriated to the Lake George Regional Chamber of Commerce & CVB this year. Supervisor Merlino apprised that the State provided 50% of the funds for this agreement so the County's portion was \$75,000 and these funds were budgeted. Supervisor Braymer questioned whether the contract was reviewed to ensure the services would not overlap with what the Lake George Regional Chamber of Commerce and CVB would be doing and Supervisor Merlino replied he was working with the Tourism Department to make sure this would not occur.

Mr. Dittrich stated that according to the Director of the Lake George Regional Chamber of Commerce & CVB this was not an issue. He added when he asked if she felt this was a good use of funds she replied in the affirmative.

Supervisor Wild apprised that he would like to make some general comments regarding resolutions, as well as one regarding the seniors who attended the meeting earlier and he questioned whether this was the appropriate time to do so and Chairman Conover replied in the affirmative. Supervisor Wild remarked he took his role pertaining to making good decisions for those who had elected him, as well as those who did not, very seriously. He said he felt there was a pattern which he found to be troubling that involved the Supervisors being provided with little notice in regards to information they had to make a decision on. He advised he would like a concentrated effort to slightly change the culture of how the operation worked to allow them to gather more detailed information quicker. He suggested they implement some form of structuring the information they received to ensure that it covered the basis they all thought they may need when a full-time County Administrator was hired. As an example, he said there had been a few times when they were required to vote on a resolution to extend an expiring contract which was presented at the last minute which had dire consequences associated with it if it was not approved. He explained this put them in a bind. He added he would save his other comment for later in the meeting.

Chairman Conover called for a vote on resolutions, following which Resolution Nos. 46-99, were approved as presented, with the exception of Resolution No. 73 which was withdrawn, Resolution No. 84 which was amended from the floor and Resolution No. 93 which was tabled.

Chairman Conover called for public comments from anyone wishing to address the Board on any matter, but no response was given.

Chairman Conover called for announcements.

Supervisor Loeb stated he noticed one of the resolutions before them today that the Chairman signed declared March Red Cross Month had not been acted on and he questioned if any was required and

Chairman Conover replied in the negative. He explained it was a proclamation which was endorsed by the Board.

Supervisor Simpson announced the Brant Lake Winter Carnival was scheduled for February 24th and he encouraged all to attend. He commented he was looking forward to attending his first Cornell Cooperative Extension Board meeting on February 26th. In regards to the Common Ground Alliance, Supervisor Simpson apprised they had a forum that took place every year that allowed residents of the Adirondack Park to participate. He said this year it was scheduled for Thursday July 19th in Lake Placid at the Lake Placid Clubhouse. He informed email invitations would be distributed to all of the Supervisors and he encouraged all to attend.

Supervisor Sokol thanked Supervisor Leggett for arranging the tour of the District Attorney's Office this morning, as he remembered when he was a new Supervisor on the Board and he took a tour of the Purchasing Department. He said he felt touring the individual departments and meeting with the department heads assisted the Supervisors in becoming more knowledgeable about the responsibilities of each, noting this assisted them in making informative decisions.

Supervisor Leggett apprised he and Supervisor Simpson would be judging the Frying Pan Toss at the Lake George Winter Carnival. He added as a lead up to the event the Crazy Downhill Derby at Dynamite Hill was scheduled for tomorrow at 10:00 a.m.

Supervisor Braymer thanked Chairman Conover and Supervisor Simpson for moving forward with the First Wilderness Corridor Future Planning Stages.

Chairman Conover requested that the Supervisors email any ideas and/or suggestions they had relating to the First Wilderness Corridor to Supervisor Simpson so he could take the necessary steps.

There being no further business to come before the Board of Supervisors, on motion made by Supervisor Frasier and seconded by Supervisor Simpson, Chairman Conover adjourned the Board Meeting 12:06 p.m.