

Warren County Board of Supervisors



**ORGANIZATION MEETING
FRIDAY, JANUARY 3, 2014**



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 Sady, Clerk of the Board of Supervisors.

Salute to the flag was led by Supervisor Taylor.

Roll was called and the following members were present:

Bolton	-Ronald F. Conover
Chester	-Frederick H. Monroe
City of Glens Falls	
Ward 1	-Daniel J. Girard
Ward 2	-Peter V. McDevitt
Ward 3	-Harold G. Taylor
Ward 4	-James Brock
Ward 5	-William H. Kenny
Hague	-Edna A. Frasier
Horicon	-Matthew J. Simpson
Johnsburg	-Ron Vanselow
Lake Luzerne	-Eugene J. Merlino
Queensbury	-John F. Strough
	-Rachel E. Seeber
	-Matthew D. Sokol
	-Douglas N. Beaty
	-Mark Westcott
Stony Creek	-Frank E. Thomas
Thurman	-Evelyn Wood
Warrensburg	-Kevin B. Geraghty
(Lake George)	-Dennis Dickinson - Absent)

Mrs. Sady advised the first order of business would be to administer the Oath of Office for the members of the Board of Supervisors.

Pam Vogel, County Clerk, administered the Oath of Office for the members of the Board of Supervisors, following which a round of applause was given.

Mrs. Sady announced the next order of business would be the selection of a temporary Chairman.

Mr. Thomas nominated Mr. Merlino as Temporary Chairman, and Mrs. Wood seconded the nomination.

There being no further nominations, Mr. Conover moved that the nominations be closed and the Clerk cast one ballot for Mr. Merlino as Temporary Chairman; the motion was seconded by Mr. Monroe and carried unanimously.

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Mrs. Sady requested that Messrs. Strough and Sokol escort Mr. Merlino to the Chair.

Mr. Merlino welcomed everyone to the meeting and wished the newly elected members of the Board of Supervisors well in their new positions; he noted that the members of the Board of Supervisors worked together like a family and he said he hoped these relationships would continue with the new Board members. Mr. Merlino stated that he had known Mr. Geraghty for nine years and attested that he was a very fair gentleman whom he was proud to call a friend. Mr. Merlino called for nominations for the selection of a permanent Chairman.

Mr. Thomas announced it was his pleasure to nominate Mr. Geraghty as Chairman of the Board of Supervisors and Mr. Conover seconded the nomination.

There being no further nominations, Mr. Monroe moved the nominations be closed, and the Clerk cast one ballot for Kevin B. Geraghty as Permanent Chairman. Mr. Kenny seconded the motion and it was carried by unanimous vote.

Mr. Merlino, Temporary Chairman, requested that Mr. Vanselow and Mrs. Frasier escort Mr. Geraghty to the Chair. The Board members responded with a round of applause.

With his wife, Kathy, by his side, Chairman Geraghty subscribed to the Constitutional Oath, as administered by Mrs. Vogel, following which another round of applause was given.

Chairman Geraghty thanked the members of the Board of Supervisors for selecting him as Chairman and he welcomed everyone in attendance, acknowledging the presence of Assemblyman Dan Stec. He said he appreciated all those that had taken the time to partake in the Organization Meeting and he echoed Mr. Merlino's comment that the Board acted as one large family. Chairman Geraghty then presented the following remarks:

"STATE OF THE COUNTY
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"Thank you to my wife for her continued support while I serve as a Town Supervisor for another term and my second year as Chairman of the Board of Supervisors. Again, thank you to my fellow Supervisors for the confidence that you have placed in me by electing me to serve as your Chairman. It is truly my privilege to serve in this capacity.

"Switching from the position as Budget Officer to Chairman of the Board has been a good experience for me. I think as I reach the end of my first term as Chairman, I am finally getting used to the position. Everyone at the County has made my transition a smooth one, the staff in the Clerks Office lead by Joan Sady, the County Attorney's office under Martin Auffredou, Administrator's Office lead by Paul Dusek, my fellow Supervisors, Department Heads and County Employees.

"It was hard to relinquish the job as Budget Officer but I feel I made the right choice in appointing Frank Thomas to succeed me. Not only has he done a great job, we are heading down a path that could lead us to 'no tax increase in the future'.

"As we begin a new year, I think it is important to recognize the County's positive financial growth and accomplishments from last year:

- * Another year with no short term borrowing for cash flow purposes in 2013. We had a fund balance that meets our goal at the end of 2012 and again will achieve a positive fund balance at the end of this year. This couldn't be done without everyone being on the "same page" when it comes to finances. The Treasurer's office does a superb job in keeping us informed on county spending lead by Mike Swan and Rob Lynch. Thank you for your diligence and effort.
- * The Administrator's Office along with the Budget Team continues to look at multiyear financial planning. We now have a better picture of the County's future financial position. We continue to stay below the State goal of a 2% Tax Cap without depleting our fund balance.
- * In the past year a Computer Reserve Fund was created to replace the computers in the County that will not be supported with the proper software after April 2014. We have undertaken replacing or making upgrades to 250 County computers and will continue to complete the replacements by April of this year. That was no easy task but it has gone along smoothly thanks to the IT Department and Department Heads. This department continues to work flawlessly after the retirement of Rob Metthe and the search for a new IT director.
- * The vehicle replacement plan adopted by the County has allowed departments to purchase safe and reliable vehicles. Thanks to all involved for making this work.
- * The Westbrook/Gaslight Village Project has taken shape with the Environmental Park on the south side of the parcel. We hope to have the Festival Space on the north side, more viable this summer, and you know what they say "Rome wasn't built in a Day". Rebuilding of the Beach Road is another project that will protect Lake George for future generations and I believe we will deem the porous paving project a success. Thank you to the Department of Public Works.
- * The county continues to work on inefficiencies by using technology and outside resources. The County printing project implemented in August 2012 has allowed us to reduce the copier and printer inventory by over 200 devices.
- * We continue to see growth in sales and mortgage taxes which are signs that the economy is slowly recovering.
- * We successfully reached collective bargaining agreements with our other labor unions: Warren County Sheriffs' Employees' Alliance, Warren County Correctional Supervisors Association - Corrections Lieutenants, and Warren County Police Supervisors Benevolent Association - Sheriff's Lieutenants which help chart the course for the future of the County.
- * We completed the County's Bicentennial celebration in 2013. Thank you to all who helped make this yearlong celebration a success.
- * I am proud to say that Warren County remains one of few counties in New York State that has not increased sales tax above 7%.

"While it is important to recognize and celebrate our success and achievements as a County we must also consider the important work that still lies ahead:

1. Although we have had to delay infrastructure improvements to many of our roads the last few years, the Budget Team has a plan in place to increase the amount of funding available to the Department of Public Works in the future. As long as the economy continues to grow we should be able to start getting the County roads back into shape.
2. Another project that needs to be addressed in 2014 will be the need for more court space. We will be looking at this initiative in January, to solve the overcrowding that we currently have, and make a sensible plan for the future of the Judicial System in the County. Just like the roads it's time to come up with a plan, working with our Judges, to meet the needs now and into the future.

3. We also have been the leader in the County and State in dealing with Invasive Species. Most efforts so far have been successful and we have contributed our fair share to the fight, but invasive species aren't going away. I applaud the efforts of the committee members and its Chairman Dennis Dickinson. They aren't just looking at Lake George but also to the other water bodies in the county that are so important to our economic future and growth. The challenge will continue.
4. Staffing requirements at the Correctional Facility will also have to be addressed this year.

"Other tasks that will require our continued attention and efforts are:

1. We need to continue to work with the Town of Corinth, Saratoga County and Iowa Pacific Holdings to open the rail corridor to carry freight on a regular basis.
2. We need to finish the privatization of the Westmount Skilled Nursing Facility. Once the sale is completed this important initiative will have a significant effect on County finances.
3. We need to continue our effort in Economic Development. Consolidation of the Economic Development Agencies under the leadership of Ed Bartholomew made great strides in getting together the private sector, EDC, County Government and City Government to work together toward one goal, improving the Economic Development of the Region. Along with the Adirondack Gateway Council, the County and region are beginning to see what consolidation of governments can do for the area. The region received over \$6,000,000 in grants at the recent awards of the Consolidated Funding Applications. Warren County's Planning Department was instrumental in helping our communities secure awards.
4. We need to consider and address the real financial issues some of our communities are facing with diminishing tax bases. I would like to see that the County Management Team and the Board of Supervisors work toward finding a solution to this issue in the upcoming year since the financial stability of the municipalities is not only important for themselves but the County as a whole. After all we are all one County, from the City in the South to the most northern, eastern or western towns.
5. We need to continue to make improvements in streamlining and making operations more efficient throughout the County. The Board, Departments and Employees of the County have made remarkable improvements in this area. The operational efficiencies and cost initiatives make the goal of a 0% tax increase possible in the near future. We must do this while continuing to provide the best possible services at the lowest cost to our residents.

"As we consider the tasks ahead, I want to welcome the new County Board members: Jim Brock Ward 4 Supervisor from the City of Glens Falls, Matt Simpson, Supervisor from the Town of Horicon, John Strough, Supervisor from the Town of Queensbury, Doug Beaty County Supervisor from the Town of Queensbury and Rachel Seeber County Supervisor from the Town of Queensbury. You are going to join a great team here and we look forward to your contributions and working with you.

"We are not without challenges for 2014. I know we will continue to work together as a team to find solutions to our problems regardless of party affiliation and make Warren County a better place to live and work. Our employees, as well as the decisions made by this Board of Supervisors will make the difference.

"Respectfully submitted,
Kevin B. Geraghty, Chairman
Warren County Board of Supervisors"

The Board members responded with a round of applause.

Chairman Geraghty announced the next order of business would be the selection of the Clerk of the Board and County Attorney.

Motion was made by Mrs. Wood and seconded by Mr. Girard to nominate Mrs. Sady to continue as Clerk of the Board of Supervisors.

There being no further nominations, Mr. Kenny moved the nominations be closed and one ballot cast for Joan Sady as Clerk of the Board of Supervisors. Mrs. Frasier seconded the motion, and it was carried by unanimous vote.

Motion was made by Mr. Conover and seconded by Mr. McDevitt to nominate Martin Auffredou to continue as Warren County Attorney.

There being no further nominations, Mr. Monroe moved the nominations be closed and the Clerk cast one ballot for Martin Auffredou as County Attorney. Mr. McDevitt seconded the motion, and it was carried by unanimous vote.

Mrs. Vogel administered the Oath of Office for Mrs. Sady and Mr. Auffredou, following which a round of applause was given.

Mrs. Sady thanked the Board of Supervisors for the confidence they had placed in her in offering the privilege of continuing as Clerk of the Board; she said she was as humbled and honored today as she was when she was first appointed in 2006. Mrs. Sady introduced her brother-in-law Brian Engle and niece Bryana, both of whom were in attendance, and noted that her father and sister had intended to attend but had been unable to as her father had taken ill. She continued that she was fortunate to have a very competent and dedicated staff working in her office and she took a moment to recognize them: Amanda Allen, Deputy Clerk of the Board; Charlene DiResta, Sr. Legislative Office Specialist; Sarah McLenithan, Secretary to the Clerk of the Board; and Samantha Hogan, Legislative Office Specialist. Mrs. Sady also thanked Paul Dusek, County Administrator, Mr. Auffredou and the staff of both offices for their assistance, noting that the Clerk of the Board's Office worked very closely and cooperatively with them and she appreciated the support they provided. In closing, Mrs. Sady thanked the Board of Supervisors once again, and stated that she looked forward to working with everyone in the coming year.

Mr. Auffredou also thanked the Board of Supervisors for the opportunity to continue serving as County Attorney, adding that he was very honored to accept the great privilege to serve Warren County. He said that as he looked back over the past two years he had served as County Attorney, he recalled during the interview process for the position Mr. Dusek had asked what he was looking for in the position and why he was interested in working for Warren County, to which he had replied that he was looking for new opportunities and challenges. Mr. Auffredou continued that each day those expectations had been met and exceeded as new challenges were continuously being presented to him and he said he found his work to be truly rewarding. He stated he was very touched by the fact that the Board of Supervisors would place their faith and confidence in him to serve for another two-year term. Mr. Auffredou confessed that the greatest aspect of the job was working with the employees of Warren County who were some of the finest people he had ever met and he said it was truly an honor to do so. He recognized two members of his staff, stating that whatever amount of success he might have achieved as the Warren County Attorney he owed in large part to Terry McGarr, Legal Assistant,

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and Shelly VanNostrand, Legal Assistant, who were his colleagues and friends and kept the Office running; he added that he was constantly amazed by the amount of work they were able to generate each and every day for Warren County. Mr. Auffredou said it was an honor to continue to work with both Mrs. McGarr and Mrs. VanNostrand and he thanked the Board again for the opportunity.

The Board Members responded with a round of applause.

Resuming the agenda review, Chairman Geraghty declared the Public Hearing for Local Law No. 2 of 2014 entitled "A Local Law Establishing the Human Resources and Civil Service Administration Department in the County of Warren and Accordingly Amending Local Law No. 3 of 1971, as Previously Amended by Local Law No. 5 of 2012 and Repealing Local Law No. 5 of 2012" open at 11:23 a.m. and he asked that the Notice of Public Hearing be read aloud, which Mrs. Sady proceeded to do.

As there were no immediate comments relative to proposed Local Law No. 2 of 2014, Chairman Geraghty advised the Public Hearing would remain open through the reading of communications.

Chairman Geraghty called for the reading of Communications, which Mrs. Sady read aloud, as follows:

Joan Sady, Clerk of the Board, pursuant to Section 401, Paragraph 2 of County Law, providing notice of appointment of Amanda Allen as Deputy Clerk of the Board, effective January 1, 2014.

There being no public comment respective to proposed Local Law No. 2 of 2014, Chairman Geraghty closed the Public Hearing at 11:25 a.m.

Chairman Geraghty advised the next agenda item pertained to the reading of resolutions. Before proceeding, he said he would like to introduce two additional resolutions for the Board's review: proposed Resolution Nos. 27, *Adopting the Job Description for the Position of County Human Resources Director*, and 28, *Appointing Gretchen Steffan as County Human Resources Director of Human Resources and Civil Service Administration Department*, both of which were sponsored by himself; *copies of proposed Resolution Nos. 27 and 28 were distributed to the Board Members by Mrs. Sady.* Chairman Geraghty explained that many resumes had been reviewed and a number of qualified individuals interviewed before the Personnel Committee had identified Ms. Steffan for the position and he said he felt she would do a great job for the County. There being no questions on proposed Resolution Nos. 27 and 28, Chairman Geraghty advised both would be voted on later in the meeting with the rest of the resolutions already provided.

Mrs. Sady announced a motion was needed to bring proposed Resolution Nos. 1 - 28 to the floor.

Motion was made by Mr. Merlino, seconded by Mr. Thomas and carried unanimously to bring proposed Resolution Nos. 1 - 28 to the floor.

Chairman Geraghty called for discussion on resolutions or requests for roll call votes. There being no discussion or requests for roll call votes, Chairman Geraghty called for a vote on resolutions, following which Resolution Nos. 1 - 28 were approved, as presented. The following Certificates of Appointment were submitted: Appointing Members of the Warren County Labor/Management Committee; Appointing Member of the Quality Assurance Committee of the Westmount Health Facility; Appointing the County's Representative to the Lake George Watershed Conference; Appointing Member of the Board of Trustees of the Supreme Court Library; and Appointing Members of the Warren County Youth Board.

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Chairman Geraghty offered privilege of the floor for announcements and Mr. Kenny stated that because the latest sales tax report indicated estimated sales tax revenues for 2013 had been exceeded by \$2 million, he felt Warren County should aim for a 0% property tax increase in 2014, rather than following the multi-year budgeting plan which projected the same to be implemented in future years.

Chairman Geraghty announced that the listing of Standing Committees for 2014 had been established and copies were distributed to the Board Members by Mrs. Sady. He noted that most of the Chairmanships and memberships of the Standing Committees had remained the same, but advised some changes had been necessary to fill in for prior Supervisors no longer serving the Board. Chairman Geraghty advised that anyone with questions or concerns regarding the Committee assignments should speak with him following the Board Meeting. He stated that each Board Member would have at least one Oath of Office to sign and he asked that everyone stop by the Office of the Clerk of the Board before leaving for the day to do so.

Chairman Geraghty thanked everyone for their support and he also thanked the County employees, Department Heads and the members of the Board of Supervisors for the efforts they had put forth in making 2013 a good financial year for Warren County. He pointed out that the multi-year budgeting process included projections for a 0% property tax increase in future years and they anticipated the availability of funding in 2014 to complete more highway infrastructure improvements. Chairman Geraghty stated that in the near future they intended to undertake a study pertaining to upgrades and space needs for the Court system; he added that they had begun a similar study in 2007 which had been curtailed when the associated costs were revealed. Chairman Geraghty commented that the Court's space needs were very real and required consideration as there was the potential for Warren County to gain additional Judgeships, which would exacerbate the space needs. He continued that in 2014 the County would also face challenges with the invasive species eradication program which were very important.

Concluding the agenda review, Chairman Geraghty invited everyone to enjoy the luncheon provided in the Committee Room.

There being no further business to address, on motion made by Mr. Conover and seconded by Mr. Monroe, Chairman Geraghty adjourned the meeting at 11:31 a.m.