

**Personnel Committee Meeting
Chenango County Office Building – Committee Room
Wednesday, January 27, 2021 – 10:00 am**

Present were: Chairperson Robert E. Wansor, Supervisor Robert Starr, Supervisor Robert M. Jeffrey, Supervisor Marjorie L. Davis, Supervisor Joseph Henninge, Personnel Officer Lisa Kerr, Personnel Technician Matthew Caldwell, Board Chairman George Seneck, Planning & Economic Development Chairperson Michael Khoury, Director of Public Facilities Julie Gates, Director of Public Works Shawn Fry, County Clerk Mary Weidman, DSS Commissioner Dan Auwarter, Public Health Director Marc Flindt

Absent: Supervisor Jennifer B. Boudreau.

Chairman Robert E. Wansor called the meeting to order at 10:00 am.

Michael Khoury, Chairperson, Planning & Economic Development Committee

Staffing Recommendation for County Historian's Office:

Mr. Khoury stated the former County Historian retired and there were several letters recommending candidates to refill this position. Mr. Khoury stated the committee narrowed it down to 4 candidates who they felt were qualified for the position. The committee conducted interviews and selected two candidates that came highly recommended. Mr. Khoury stated the first candidate is Henry Drexler, a Chenango County resident, who is a well renowned historian and artist. Mr. Khoury stated the committee agreed he was the best person for this position. Mr. Khoury stated they also would like to request that the Personnel Committee creates a Deputy County Historian position with the intent to fill this position with their second choice. This would establish a succession plan. Mr. Khoury stated the County Historian position has already been offered to Henry Drexler and that he has accepted the position at an annual salary of \$9,600 at 12 hours per week. Mr. Khoury stated he would like to request that a Deputy County Historian position be created with an annual salary of \$6,400 at 8 hours per week. Mr. Khoury stated he feels this will help revitalize the county museum, create a greater interest in local history, and potentially increase tourism.

Mr. Jeffrey commended the Planning & Economic Development Committee for selecting two outstanding candidates.

Mr. Jeffrey made a motion, seconded by Mr. Henninge, to refer to the next BOS meeting for a Resolution to appoint Mr. Henry Drexler as the County Historian with an annual salary of \$9,000 at 12 hours per week. Carried.

Resolution to Follow

Mr. Jeffrey made a motion, seconded by Mr. Starr, to refer to the Finance Committee to create the position of Deputy County Historian with an annual salary of \$6,400 at 8 hours per work week. Carried.

Refer to Finance

Julie Gates, Director of Public Facilities

Refill part-time, 19 hr/wk, Account Clerk/Typist Position A1620.19:

Ms. Gates stated she is requesting to refill part-time Account Clerk/Typist Position A1620.19. This person left on December 3, 2020 for insurance reasons. Ms. Gates stated she has an extra hire that she would like to move into this position.

Dr. Wansor asked if this was an essential position. Ms. Gates stated that yes, it is an essential position.

Mr. Starr made a motion, seconded by Mr. Henninge, to refill part-time Account Clerk/Typist Position A1620.19. Carried.

Shawn Fry, Director of Public Works

Refill MEO Position:

Mr. Fry stated that he is requesting to refill an MEO position. This person moved to an HMEO position in November. Mr. Fry stated at this time he did not have an LMEO who was interested in moving into the vacant MEO position. Mr. Fry stated there are actually two vacant HMEO positions open but so far has only been approved by the Public Works Committee to refill one position.

Dr. Wansor asked if they could fill this position from within. Mr. Fry stated that no he cannot as there are no LMEOs who have a CDL license, so he is requesting an outside hire.

Mr. Jeffrey made a motion, seconded by Mr. Henninge to refill the MEO position at \$16.64 per hour. Carried.

Discussion:

Supervisor Jeffrey asked if it is getting more difficult to fill positions with a CDL requirement. Mr. Fry stated that yes, it is getting more difficult to fill positions with a CDL requirement at the current pay rate. Mr. Fry stated many townships are paying between \$4.00-\$5.00 an hour more than the county is currently. Mr. Fry stated the private sector usually has a higher pay rate as well. Mr. Fry stated he does have a training program in place for employees to acquire their CDL, but he does not have an LMEO who is interested in doing this at this time.

Refill Senior Account Clerk/Typist Position (A8090.13):

Mr. Fry stated he is requesting to refill Senior Account Clerk/Typist Position A8090.13 at \$16.55 per hour. Mr. Fry stated he had a laborer position that was open in November and the former Senior Account Clerk/Typist at the Solid Waste Facility was the only one who applied for this position. Mr. Fry stated that per the CSEA contract he was required to offer the position to them. Mr. Fry stated that this person was kind enough to stay in this position until February 5, 2021.

Mr. Henninge asked why the person in this position chose to move into the Laborer position. Mr. Fry stated that it is a demotion, and the hourly rate is less, however the laborer position is 40 hours per week with a chance for overtime while the Account Clerk/Typist position is 37.5 hours per week. Mr. Fry stated this person is interested in taking advantage of their training program and hopes to eventually acquire their CDL license.

Mr. Henninge asked if training would be required to fill this position. Mr. Fry stated that yes it will require training, but Mr. Hendricks and Ms. Alger would be able to assist in training the new hire.

Mr. Starr made a motion, seconded by Mr. Henninge to refill Senior Account Clerk/Typist position A8090.13 at \$16.22 per hour. Carried.

Mary Weidman, County Clerk

Refill Recording Clerk Position (A1410.12):

Ms. Weidman stated she is requesting to refill Recording Clerk position A1410.12 at \$15.16 per hour effective January 29, 2021. The last day worked was January 15, 2021. This person moved to Philadelphia. Ms. Weidman stated that unfortunately she does not believe there is a current civil service list for this position.

Dr. Wansor asked how long this person was in this position. Ms. Weidman stated two years.

Mr. Jeffrey made a motion, seconded by Mr. Henninge to refill Recording Clerk position A1410.12 at \$15.16 per hour. Carried.

Discussion: Dr. Wansor asked if this was an essential position. Ms. Weidman stated yes, it is an essential position. Ms. Weidman stated that she has one Senior Recording Clerk and three Recording Clerks all of whom are busy.

Dan Auwarter, Commissioner of Social Services

Refill Caseworker Position (A6010.123):

Mr. Auwarter stated a Caseworker in the Child Protective Services unit left on January 13, 2021. Mr. Auwarter stated he is requesting to refill Caseworker Position A6010.123 on February 2, 2021.

Dr. Wansor asked if this is an essential position. Mr. Auwarter stated that it is essential and that he has significantly less staff.

Dr. Wansor asked if Mr. Auwarter had any candidates in mind. Mr. Auwarter stated he does have a list that he is working off from.

Mr. Starr made a motion, seconded by Mr. Henninge to refill Caseworker position A6010.123. Carried.

Refill Social Welfare Examiner Position (A6010.128):

Mr. Auwarter stated the Social Welfare Examiner accepted a position in another county. The last day worked was January 8, 2021. Mr. Auwarter stated he is requesting to refill the position on February 18th as it is essential.

Mr. Starr made a motion, seconded by Mr. Jeffrey, to refill Social Welfare Examiner, position A6010.128. Carried.

Discussion: Dr. Wansor asked if this is an essential position as they are understaffed. Mr. Auwarter stated that he is being judicious about his requests to refill positions based on the workload required.

Mr. Jeffrey asked how many positions the Social Services Department was down last year and currently this year. Mr. Auwarter stated last year his department was down 16 positions and this year they are currently down 12 positions.

Refill Caseworker Position (A6010.107)

Mr. Auwarter stated that he is requesting to refill Caseworker position A6010.107. This position is open due to a promotion to Senior Caseworker.

Mr. Henninge made a motion, seconded by Mr. Starr, to refill Caseworker position A6010.107. Carried.

Marc Flindt, Public Health Director

Bonuses for certain comp schedule employees for COVID-19 work:

Mr. Flindt stated he is requesting approval to provide a bonus for the managers in the health department due to the unprecedented emergency the last 10 months. Mr. Flindt stated that staff members have been working 8-14 hours per day, 7 days per week, for the last 10 months to try to protect the population of Chenango County. Mr. Flindt stated the line staff thus far have received about \$70,000 in overtime due to contact tracing and quarantine efforts. Mr. Flindt stated the county has currently reached a high of 647 people under quarantine. Mr. Flindt stated because of the necessary overtime, line staff members are often making more than their

supervisors. These managers are responsible for the programs and are making important decisions, therefore he is requesting approval for a bonus for the 6 managers in the Department of Health.

Dr. Wansor asked if Mr. Flindt had an amount in mind. Mr. Flindt stated he had spoken with the Financial Officer and the Health and Human Services Committee and provided them with a figure of \$17,000 total for all 6 managers. Mr. Flindt stated he had put in a bonus request for \$2,000 for Eric Depperman, one of his managers, but that the stated the would only accept \$1,000. Therefore, the bonus request is now \$16,000 instead of \$17,000.

Dr. Wansor asked if the funds for this are available within the Department of Health budget. Mr. Flindt stated yes that he would like to request to use the funds from A4010.17, which is for a vacant Registered Professional Nurse Lead position that he has been unable to fill.

Dr. Wansor asked if this was an appropriate use of these funds. Mr. Flindt stated a precedent had been set last year where funds from A4010.17 were used for overtime pay.

Ms. Kerr asked if this is a one-time bonus or an increase in salary. Mr. Flindt stated this is a one-time bonus and that this had been done previously in July of last year as well. Mr. Flindt stated there are two managers in the nursing division, the Director of Patient Services and the Supervising Community Health Nurse who are both new and did not receive a bonus. Mr. Flindt stated that one started in July and one started in September. Mr. Flindt stated that the group of managers currently in the Health Department are very committed to protecting the community and he feels very fortunate to work with this team. Mr. Flindt stated other counties have had staff vacate positions due to the unprecedented circumstances.

Mr. Jeffrey made a motion, seconded by Mr. Henninge to refer to the Finance Committee to award a one-time bonus to comp schedule employees as follows from A4010.17 Reg Prof Nurse Lead:

A4010.112 – Dir Patient Srvs \$3,500
A4010.121 – Supervising Comm Health Nurse \$3,500
A4010.142 – Dir Env Health Serv \$3,500
A4050.10 – Disaster Prep Coord \$3,500
A4010.114 – Admin Srvs Officer \$1,000
A4010.130 Administrative Assistant \$1,000
A4010.129 Public Health Director \$3,500. (as amended)

Carried.

Refer to Finance Committee

Discussion: Mr. Jeffrey stated that as someone who has experienced it firsthand that the dedication is unbelievable and reassuring. Mr. Jeffrey stated that he experienced unbelievable professionalism and that it is worth the money.

Ms. Kerr stated she would like to point out that Mr. Flindt himself is not on the list and while he is not asking for a bonus for himself that she knows personally he has put in a lot of hours and has been continuously available to the department. Mr. Jeffrey thanked Ms. Kerr and stated that he would like to amend the motion. Mr. Flindt stated that it is not necessary, and that money is not what motivates him to do his job. Mr. Jeffrey stated that he would like to amend the former motion to include a \$3,500 bonus for Mr. Flindt. Mr. Henninge seconded the motion as amended.

Ms. Davis asked how many received a bonus previously in July. Mr. Flindt stated 4 managers did out of the 6 he is requesting a bonus for. Ms. Davis stated she was concerned that other departments would request a bonus due to unprecedented times as happened in July and posed the idea that maybe they can compensate them in

some other way such as additional vacation time to be used later. Ms. Davis stated the IT department has been working hard from the cyber attack and that the Board of Elections felt that they deserved extra compensation which they received. Ms. Davis stated the Department of Health managers were certainly deserving but that she wants to make it clear that this is not a precedent. Ms. Davis stated they need to be careful because of this.

Mr. Henninge stated he shared Ms. Davis's concern but that he was on the Personnel Committee last year at the time this occurred in July of 2020. Mr. Henninge stated that at that time the IT Department and Board of Elections were certainly deserving of a bonus.

Dr. Wansor thanked Mr. Flindt and the Health Department for all that they are doing to keep everyone safe.

Mr. Jeffrey asked about the allocation of vaccines and when they will know how much to expect next week. Mr. Jeffrey asked for an update. Mr. Flindt stated the first shipment was received on January 11, 2021 and they have administered 620 doses to date. Mr. Flindt stated at the end of every week he can put in a request for more vaccines for the following week. Mr. Flindt stated the requested 200 doses last week and received all 200 doses, 100 of which were for Phase 1B, and the remaining 100 were for those who were 65 and older. Mr. Flindt stated they did their first clinic for those 65 and older at the Broad St United Methodist Church on Monday, January 25, 2021.

Mr. Flindt stated that an email account has been created for the health department, COVID19@chenango.ny.us, where residents can send their name, age, occupation, place of employment and their email address to get added to the list. Mr. Flindt stated residents will get an immediate response stating that they will be put on the waiting list. Mr. Flindt stated that when they receive vaccines the Department of Health sends out emails that correspond to the number of vaccines that were received. Mr. Flindt stated these emails contain a link to register for vaccination. Once registered Mr. Flindt stated they receive an email with a date, time, and location. Mr. Flindt stated that he cannot do open clinics as hundreds of people would show up, most of which would be turned away which is not fair to them. Mr. Flindt stated the newspaper does have the email address and that it is on the Health Department's webpage. Mr. Flindt stated that he hopes to see more vaccines allocated in the coming weeks and months but that he expects vaccinations to occur into the summer and fall. Mr. Flindt stated the NYS Department of Health will designate that pharmacies should vaccinate those 65 and older. Mr. Flindt stated he is vaccinating those 65 and older right now because Bartle's Pharmacy, in Oxford, is currently the only pharmacy to have received vaccines. Mr. Flindt stated in the weeks to come he will not be administering vaccines for those 65 and older as the pharmacies receive vaccines and take on this role. Mr. Flindt stated when this occurs, he will be focusing on vaccination schedules.

Dr. Wansor asked if Bartle's Pharmacy receives their own allotment of vaccines. Mr. Flindt stated that yes, Bartle's Pharmacy receives a separate allotment of vaccines. Bartle's Pharmacy has been receiving about 200 (the same as the Health Department). Dr. Wansor asked if Mr. Flindt could request more vaccines. Mr. Flindt stated that he has, he previously asked for 600 but only received 200.

Mr. Seneck stated he went to the clinic to see how things were going on Monday and it was very efficiently done. Mr. Seneck stated there were no lines and people were carefully moved in and out. Mr. Seneck stated he felt the Health Department accommodated everyone and everything was done well. Mr. Seneck stated that the staff was very courteous.

Mr. Henninge asked how many people were on the waiting list. Mr. Flindt stated currently there were about 1,500 people on the list.

Dr. Wansor thanked Mr. Flindt and the Health Department staff.

Standard Work Day and Reporting Resolution:

Ms. Kerr stated that this is something required by the NYS Retirement System. Ms. Kerr stated they had a couple positions leftover to take care of, along with some new employees. Ms. Kerr stated Ms. Mary Lou Monahan submitted a new record of activities to represent the hours that she is working, and she recertified those hours for her new term that started in January of this year, which is why she is listed twice.

Mr. Starr made a motion, seconded by Ms. Davis to refer to the next BOS meeting to authorize the adoption of standard work days for Chenango County elected and appointed officials participating in the NYS and Local Employees Retirement System.

Lisa Kerr, Personnel Officer

Employee Request:

Ms. Kerr stated she received a request from Elaine Testani, the Personnel Assistant, for a reduction in hours from 35 hours per week to 25 hours per week due to some family and personal reasons. Ms. Kerr stated Elaine has expertise in many areas, and she does not want to lose her from her department. Ms. Kerr stated she feels that they can shift things around and make this work. Ms. Kerr stated she is asking for a 6-month trial period is successful she will request to make this permanent when the budget comes around for next year. Ms. Kerr stated she is confident that Elaine will make it work.

Mr. Jeffrey made a motion, seconded by Mr. Henninge, to approve a reduction in hours for Elaine Testani from 35 hours per week to 25 hours per week. Carried.

Mr. Seneck stated there is still an IT Network Technician position that has been open since November of 2020 with no applicants. The position requires a 2-year Associate Degree and some experience. Mr. Seneck stated one of the concerns is the pay rate for this position, which is determined by the CSEA contract. Mr. Seneck stated he thinks that the pay is comparable to similar positions. Mr. Seneck stated it is important to fill this position especially because of the cyber-attack. Mr. Seneck stated that if they need to do something with the salary that it could be more complicated.

Ms. Kerr stated she has created another advertisement for the IT Network Technician that focuses on the benefits of this position which are not typically offered in the private sector. Ms. Kerr stated she left out the job requirements to see what kind of response they receive. Mr. Seneck thanked Lisa and stated that he thought it was an important point as a small percentage of similar positions offer the benefits that the county does.

Mr. Jeffrey welcomed Dr. Wansor back and thanked him for being the chairperson of the Personnel Committee once again.

Adjournment:

Dr. Robert E. Wansor adjourned the meeting at 11:08am.

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