

**WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
BOARD MEETING
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2011**

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 10:05 a.m.

Mr. Daniel G. Stec presiding.

Salute to the flag was led by Supervisor Goodspeed.

Chairman Stec requested a moment of silence to honor Jack Lattimore, an employee of the New York State Department of Transportation (NYS DOT) Bridge Crew, who lost his life yesterday while working in Warrensburg on the Glen Bridge.

Roll called, the following members present:

Supervisors Conover, Monroe, Girard, McDevitt, Taylor, Loeb, Kenny, Belden, Bentley, Goodspeed, McCoy, Merlino, Stec, Strainer, Champagne, VanNess, Sokol, Thomas, Wood and Geraghty - 20.

Motion was made by Mr. VanNess, seconded by Mr. Belden and carried unanimously, to approve the minutes of the September 16, 2011 Board Meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk of the Board.

Chairman Stec declared the Public Hearing on proposed Local Law No. 10 of 2011, entitled "A Local Law Amending Section 3 of Local Law No. 10 of 2008 and Imposing an Additional Mortgage Recording Tax in Warren County" open at 10:08 a.m. and requested the Clerk read the Notice of Public Hearing for the record.

Clerk read the Notice of Public Hearing on proposed Local Law No. 10 of 2011.

Chairman Stec advised that the public hearing would remain open while he continued the Agenda review. Next, he said, he would like to present a Proclamation recognizing Domestic Violence Awareness Month in Warren County to Rachel Gardner, Program Director of the Domestic Violence Project Warren-Washington Counties. The board members responded with applause.

Chairman Stec requested Supervisor Belden and Jeff Tennyson, Superintendent of Public Works, to come forward for a presentation. Mr. Belden presented a Certificate of Appreciation to Larry Cook, for six years of dedicated service to the Department of Public Works. He wished him well in his retirement and thanked him again for his service. Mr. Tennyson added that Mr. Cook was a hard worker and he appreciated all he had done at the Municipal Center Campus. Frank Morehouse, Superintendent of Buildings, noted that when Mr. Cook came to the County, he was well experienced and his work ethic was unmatched. He stated that Mr. Cook would be greatly missed and he wished him well. The board members responded with applause.

Next, Mr. Belden presented a Certificate of Appreciation to Kevin Berkowitz, for thirty-one years of dedicated service to the Department of Public Works. Mr. Belden thanked Mr. Berkowitz for all he had done for the Department, as well as the County and he wished him well in his retirement. Mr. Tennyson noted that Mr. Berkowitz had been a Heavy Equipment Operator on the south end and had been the right hand man to the foreman. Mr. Tennyson wished Mr. Berkowitz the best of luck in the future. Mr. Berkowitz added that after thirty-one years, his co-workers became his family and stated he would miss everyone very much. Mr. Girard said Mr. Berkowitz was a resident of Ward 1 in the City of Glens Falls and he thanked him for his years of service, as well.

Chairman Stec announced the next item on the Agenda was the presentation of Certificates of Recognition to individuals and agencies who assisted during Tropical Storm Irene. He requested Supervisor VanNess to come forward to assist in the distribution of Certificates. He noted a slide show was put together depicting the devastation suffered throughout the County and the efforts being made to repair the damage, which would continue to run during the presentation. Chairman Stec and Mr. VanNess proceeded to present certificates to employees of the Buildings & Grounds Department; the staff of the Office of Emergency Services; employees in the Information Technology Department; the Department of Public Health; the Department of Public Works; Planning & Community Development Department staff; representatives of the American Red Cross; staff in the Tourism Department; members of the Sheriff's Communication Center; employees in the Sheriff's Office; various construction companies; the Towns and City Fire Departments; and the Towns, City and Village Highway Departments. The board members responded with applause.

Mr. VanNess requested Amy Drexel, Deputy Director of the Office of Emergency Services, to come forward. He informed that during Tropical Storm Irene, Ms. Drexel stayed at the Municipal Center in her Office for three days to oversee operations. Because of Ms. Drexel, he continued, Warren County was one of the first counties to be put on the FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) list for funding assistance. Mr. VanNess presented Ms. Drexel with an emergency supply bag, which included items that would be needed during another similar incident, such as a flashlight, blanket, snacks and powdered milk. He also presented her with a gift certificate on behalf of the Board of Supervisors for all the work and effort she put forth during the storm. The board members responded with applause.

Chairman Stec expounded that the taxpayers of Warren County were getting quite a deal with an employee such as Ms. Drexel and he thanked her for everything that she did. The board members responded with applause.

Ms. Drexel stated that she had been working for the County for fifteen years and she was truly moved to be acknowledged in such a way. She further noted that she did not act alone during the storm, it was the teamwork achieved by all those recognized earlier in the

meeting, that made the entire process more controllable. She thanked the Board of Supervisors for the recognition. The board members again responded with applause.

Chairman Stec reported that the Public Hearing on proposed Local Law No. 10 of 2011 was still open and he asked if there was anyone wishing to comment.

Mr. Monroe pointed out that the proposed Local Law was merely a continuation of the original Local Law adopted in 2008; and therefore was not a new tax.

There being no one further wishing to speak on proposed Local Law No. 10 of 2011, Chairman Stec declared the Public Hearing closed at 10:36 a.m.

Chairman Stec introduced Peter Kehoe, Executive Director for the New York State Sheriff's Association, who was at the meeting today to provide information on the accreditation program and to recognize the Sheriff's Office for another outstanding achievement, the re-accreditation of the Sheriff's Civil Division. He explained that only twenty of the States sixty-two counties had qualified for Civil Division accreditation, and this was in addition to Warren County achieving the Correction Division accreditation and the accreditation of the Law Enforcement Division. He noted that all of these accomplishments were great testaments to Sheriff York and the entire staff in the Sheriff's Office, showing their dedication to the pursuit of excellence in their profession. The citizens of Warren County and the Board of Supervisors responsible for the financial support of the Office, he continued, should be very proud of the Sheriff's Office. Mr. Kehoe provided detailed information on the accreditation programs. He congratulated Sheriff York and the men and women of the Civil Division and all the staff of the Warren County Sheriff's Office for this accomplishment. He particularly recognized one individual that had devoted a great deal of time and effort in managing the administrative and operational details in order to successfully document and demonstrate that the Warren County Sheriff's Office was most deserving of this recognition, and that individual was Sergeant Kevin Scellen. Mr. Kehoe presented Sergeant Scellen with a Certificate and thanked him for all of his hard work. The board members responded with applause.

Mr. Kehoe also presented a plaque to Undersheriff Swan commemorating the accreditation achievement. The board members again responded with applause.

Chairman Stec advised the next item was a presentation by Lisa Nagel and Jerr Tatich of Elan Planning, Design & Architecture, PLLC, of the conceptual design of the former Gaslight Village property. Copies of the conceptual design plans for the Westbrook Conservation Initiative and the Festival Space were distributed to the board members, copies of which are on file with the minutes. Mr. Tatich proceeded to review the design plans in detail. He highlighted the following components of the Master Plan: the wetland recreation area was in the completion phase and the remaining planting and landscaping associated with it would be completed; the new work included a series of walkways, a small section of

boardwalk, an outdoor learning classroom with a council ring; an area for donors; and an observation point at the far south end of the wetland area overlooking the two completion ponds of the wetland project. He also discussed the surrounding elements of the Festival Space included in the Master Plan as follows: the entry points; a water feature; a children's adventure area; a large activity area that contained the park building which would house the restrooms, storage area and a large, extensive interpretive program for the park that would tell the story of the importance of water within the Lake George Basin and the importance of Westbrook. Mr. Tatich continued and reviewed specific details of the Festival Space. In terms of project costs, he informed there was TEP (Transportation Enhancement Program) funding in the amount of \$1.7 million; however, he said, the Festival Space would not be funded by the TEP money. He apprised that it was the desire of the Gaslight Village Ad Hoc Committee for the Festival Space to be functional as quickly as possible, due to a large interest in potential renters; and therefore, they had determined a phased approach would be the best option for completing the Festival Space. He reported that the first phase would include the establishment of turf grass, a temporary boundary and some of the utilities. He added a small paved area for the performance stage would be needed, as well as a gravel loop drive, both of which would be included in the first phase. As more funding became available, Mr. Tatich stated, the utilities would be enhanced, the irrigation would be put in place, and the landscaping and decorative boundaries would be established. He concluded that the total cost for the build-out of the Festival Space would be approximately \$1.2 million.

Ms. Nagel asserted that the Governor had recently announced a new Consolidated Funding application round, said applications were due on October 31, 2011. She advised they were considering applying to three State agencies, the New York State Department of State Environmental Protection Fund; the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation Park Development Program; and the New York State Environmental Facilities Corporation Green Innovation Grant Program. She informed that they would apply as outlined: to the New York State Department of State Environmental Protection Fund for the Phase I Festival Space build-out and the at grade crossings over Westbrook for an amount of \$325,000; to the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation Park Development Program for the build-out of the park building and additional landscaping for an amount of \$285,000; and to the New York State Environmental Facilities Corporation Green Innovation Grant Program for the stabilized turf grass pavers for an amount of \$450,000 and the permeable asphalt on the north side of Westbrook Road for an amount to be determined. Ms. Nagel remarked that Warren County was the applicant for the grants, supported by the three Environmental Groups (3 E's) and the Village of Lake George. She noted that they hoped to have a clear picture of the anticipated funding round in January 2012.

In response to an inquiry, Ms. Nagel stated that the total cost for the complete build-out as outlined in the Master Plan was \$5.8 million. Mr. Monroe further explained that the theory was to make the property ready as quickly as possible, as far as the aspects that would be revenue generating, such as the parking. He noted that there were also donors that were interested in providing funds for the project. Ms. Nagel announced that a public

informational meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, October 26, 2011 at the Lake George Fire House to present the conceptual design plan to the public. Mr. Monroe commented that there was a tremendous amount of support for this project and he opined it was a well designed concept and plan. Mr. Girard reminded the board members that the preservation of Lake George was what propagated this project and he agreed that the plan was well designed.

Chairman Stec advised the next item on the Agenda pertained to his reports. He requested that the board members consider waiving the rules to entertain a resolution to support a grant application by the City of Albany for NYSERDA (New York State Energy Research Development Authority) for the Regional Sustainability Planning stage of the Cleaner, Greener Community Program. He added that if the grant were to be awarded, Warren County would be offering to provide forty to fifty hours of in-kind services performed by staff, which he felt was a modest commitment on the County's behalf.

Motion was made by Mr. Conover, seconded by Mr. Monroe and carried unanimously to waive the rules of the board requiring a resolution be in writing. Clerk noted it would be Resolution No. 599 of 2011 for the record.

Motion was made by Mr. Girard, seconded by Mr. Monroe and carried unanimously to support the grant application by the City of Albany for NYSERDA for the Regional Sustainability Planning stage of the Cleaner, Greener Community Program. Clerk added it would be Resolution No. 600 of 2011 for the record.

Chairman Stec called for reports by Committee Chairmen on past month's activities or meetings and the following gave verbal reports:

Supervisor Merlino, Tourism; Supervisor Champagne, Community College and Intercounty Solid Waste Coordinating; Supervisor VanNess, Public Safety; Supervisor Sokol, Health Services; Supervisor Thomas, Finance; Supervisor Wood, Planning & Community Development; Supervisor Geraghty, Budget; Supervisor Conover, Personnel; Supervisor Monroe, Gaslight Village Ad Hoc; Supervisor Girard, Extension Service; Supervisor Taylor, Support Services; Supervisor Loeb, Social Services; and Supervisor Belden, Public Works.

Mr. Goodspeed provided rider-ship numbers for the train from Saratoga to North Creek for mid-October as follows: October 7th, 289; October 8th, 500; October 9th, 731; October 10th, 455; October 13th, 288; October 14th, 207; October 15th, 317; and October 16th, 288. He noted that the success story of train continued to build, as evidenced in the numbers he presented.

With regard to the Tourism Committee, Mr. Merlino informed Resolution No. 562 included in the Supervisors' packets amended previous resolutions to correct the number of years for contract renewals from three years to two years. He expressed his support of

Resolution No. 593, which introduced proposed Local Law No. 11 of 2011 and would allow snowmobiles on a portion of the Bikeway.

In connection with the Community College Committee, Mr. Champagne informed Resolution No. 553 in the packets would support the SUNY Adirondack Capital Investment Improvement Projects for 2012-2013. He referenced Resolution No. 598 which was generated from the Intercounty Solid Waste Committee and would award bids and authorize agreements for solid waste and recycling transportation services with Waste Management of New York and for solid waste and recyclable disposal services with Wheelabrator Hudson Falls, LLC.

Regarding the Public Safety Committee, Mr. VanNess stated that under the Sheriff & Communications portion of the meeting, Resolution Nos. 557 through 560 were resultant of the meeting and authorized various agreements. He asserted Resolution No. 569 called for the allocation of revenues from the New York State Public Safety Surcharge to counties to support 911 and Public Safety Communications.

Concerning the Health Services Committee, Mr. Sokol advised the six month Dietary Report for Westmount Health Facility had been submitted. He added the staffing report for the Facility reflected poor levels with one vacant LPN and seven vacant CNA's, as well as four out on Medical Leave. He noted that recruitment efforts were under way through the BOCES program. Under the Public Health portion of the meeting, Mr. Sokol continued, the items presented consisted mainly of contract renewals.

Relative to the Finance Committee, Mr. Thomas apprised Resolution Nos. 564 through 569 were generated and he listed them as follows: Resolution No. 564, Authorizing Fees for Surveying Services at the Gaslight Village Property and Fees for Submission of Grant Applications; Resolution No. 565, Establishing Capital Project No. H328.9550 280 West Mountain Road (CR 58) Bicycling Improvements; Authorizing Transfer of Funds and Amending Warren County Budget for 2011; Resolution No. 566, Establishing Capital Project No. H329.9550 280 Warren County Bikeway Improvements; Authorizing Transfer of Funds and Amending Warren County Budget for 2011; Resolution No. 567, Amending Resolution No. 522 of 2011; Changing the Source of Temporary Funding for Capital Project No. H327.9550 280 Tropical Storm Irene; Resolution No. 568, Urging Multi-Year Takeover of Local Share of Medicaid; and Resolution No. 569, Calling for the Allocation of Revenues from the New York State Public Safety Surcharge to Counties to Support 911 and Public Safety Communications. He added that the Committee held considerable discussions pertaining to the future of Countryside Adult Home.

With regard to the Planning & Community Development Committee, Mrs. Wood reported two resolutions were resultant of the meeting, Resolution No. 584, Authorizing Submission of Grant Application to New York State Consolidated Funding Application for

Local Waterfront Programs, Public Facilities, Parks, Transportation or Economic Development; and Resolution No. 592, Authorizing Public Hearing and Submission of Applications to New York State Consolidated Funding Application. She announced that she had attended the 50th Anniversary Gala for SUNY Adirondack and she stated it was a wonderful night and she commended the faculty that coordinated the event.

In connection with the Budget Committee, Mr. Geraghty said they had continued to receive excellent support from the Department Heads during the budget process.

Regarding the Personnel Committee, Mr. Conover informed Resolution Nos. 579 through 583 were resultant of the meeting, and mainly consisted of authorization to fill vacant positions within various departments.

Mr. Monroe pointed out that following the presentation by Elan Planning earlier in the meeting, he suggested that Resolution No. 585, which amended Resolution No. 514 of 2011 to authorize the Chairman of the Board to execute the grant applications and clarified the use of grant funding for the former Gaslight Village property, be amended further. He recommended that the three specific grants and the amounts for each be listed in the resolution as follows: one to the New York State Department of State Environmental Protection Fund for the Phase I Festival Space build-out and at grade crossings over Westbrook for an amount of \$325,000; one to the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation Park Development Program for the build-out of the park building and landscaping for an amount of \$285,000; and to the New York State Environmental Facilities Corporation Green Innovation Grant Program for stabilized turf grass pavers for an amount of \$450,000 and for the permeable asphalt on the north side of Westbrook Road for an amount to be determined.

Motion was made by Mr. Monroe, seconded by Mr. Girard and carried unanimously to amend Resolution No. 585 as outlined above.

Relative to the Extension Service Committee, Mr. Girard informed that two new members had joined the Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) Board of Directors recently, Nicole Livingston and Elwood Green, and a few openings remained on the Board. He requested any Supervisor that could recommend a potential candidate to join the Board, please contact him or Dr. Jim Seeley, Executive Director of CCE. He mentioned the upcoming Special Olympics that would be held in the City of Glens Falls and noted nearly nine hundred volunteers had signed up to assist during the event. Mr. Girard questioned the status of the collaboration of the dispatching services between the County and the City of Glens Falls. Paul Dusek, County Administrator, responded that considerable progress had been made last week as far as outlining the terms of the contract and there were a few more loose ends to tie up. He further stated that he hoped to have a more detailed report by the next Public Safety Committee meeting.

Mr. McDevitt expressed his opposition to Resolution No. 593, regarding the proposed Local Law No. 11 of 2011 which would allow snowmobiles on a portion of the Bikeway. He opined that the additional utilization of the Bikeway for snowmobiles was bad public policy. He requested a roll call vote on Resolution No. 593. Clerk acknowledged the request.

Concerning the Support Services Committee, Mr. Taylor advised Resolution No. 576 included in the packets was generated from the meeting and would change the official Warren County web address from co.warren.ny.us to warrencountyny.gov. He added that Resolution No. 594 was also resultant of the meeting and authorized health insurance plans to be offered to Officers, Warren County employees and eligible retirees for the period of December 1, 2011 to November 30, 2012.

With regard to the Social Services Committee, Mr. Loeb reported that lengthy discussions were held concerning the future of Countryside Adult Home. He expressed his opinion that it was a wonderful facility that met the needs of its residents. He advised that the County would still have a financial responsibility to the current residents if a determination was made to close the facility. He announced his support of keeping the facility open.

In connection with the Public Works Committee, Mr. Belden referenced Resolution No. 593 in the packets which pertained to the use of snowmobiles on the Bikeway, and expounded that today the Supervisors were only voting to set the Public Hearing on the matter. Under the Solid Waste & Recycling portion of the meeting, he continued, Resolution No. 598, as discussed by Mr. Champagne, awarded the bids and authorized the agreements for solid waste and recycling transportation services and disposal services. He added that two resolutions were generated from the DPW portion of the meeting, Resolution Nos. 565 and 566, both of which established Capital Projects for Bikeway improvements and did not require a local match. Mr. Belden remarked that he would like to reintroduce the resolution to fill the vacant position of Airport Manager, and set a salary range of \$60,000 to \$70,000.

Motion was made by Mr. Belden, seconded by Mr. Bentley and carried unanimously to waive the rules of the board requiring a resolution be in writing. Clerk noted that there were three resolutions that were distributed and would be introduced later in the meeting; therefore, this would be Resolution No. 604 of 2011 for the record.

Motion was made by Mr. Belden and seconded by Mr. Bentley to authorize the filling of the vacant position of Airport Manager as outlined above.

Mr. Geraghty questioned if the scope of services for the Airport Manager had been adjusted. Mr. Dusek replied it had been determined that the position of Airport Manager was needed; however, he said, the concern was that the position was not needed full time and Mr. Tennyson had agreed that more productivity could be achieved by assigning additional DPW work that related to the Airport and was traditionally completed by DPW staff. Mr.

Tennyson confirmed that he had verified the existing job description, which did include the areas of engineering that in the past had assisted the Airport Manager. He further stated that some of the applicants did have the construction oversight and management type background that was being sought. Mr. Tennyson informed it was detrimental that he receive the approval to fill the position prior to conducting interviews. He concluded that the advertisement that had been released for the Airport Manager position was valid and the duty description, as well as the Civil Service title, were accurate.

Chairman Stec called the question and the motion was carried unanimously to authorize the filling of the vacant position of Airport Manager, with a salary range of \$60,000 to \$70,000 and to authorize any backfills resulting from same. Clerk remarked it would be Resolution No. 605 of 2011 for the record.

Returning to verbal reports, Mr. Bentley expressed his support of continuing operations of the Countryside Adult Home, as discussed by Mr. Loeb, and added that the facility was an asset to the County.

Chairman Stec announced the next item on the Agenda were Mr. Dusek's items to report on. Mr. Dusek reported that Resolution No. 594 included in the Supervisors' packets authorized the health insurance plans; however, he said, additional approvals to continue with Delta Dental and EBS-RMSCO, Inc. were necessary and the draft resolutions were distributed earlier, as mentioned by the Clerk. He also informed that an agreement had been executed for the Health Services Department to perform certain work for Capital District Physicians' Health Plan (CDPHP) which required a Certificate for Lobbying and Disclosure; therefore, he stated, a draft resolution authorizing the execution of a Certificate for Lobbying and Disclosure with CDPHP was distributed, as well. Mr. Dusek asserted these matters were continuations of past agreements.

Motion was made by Chairman Stec, and seconded by Mr. Belden to authorize the three aforementioned resolutions as follows: Authorizing agreements with EBS-RMSCO, Inc. for Health Reimbursement Plan Account for reimbursement of retirees for health insurance co-pays; Authorizing agreement with Delta Dental of New York, Inc.; and Authorizing execution of a Certificate for Lobbying and Disclosure with Capital District Physicians' Health Plan, Inc., CDPHP Universal Benefits, Inc. and Capital District Physicians' Healthcare Network, Inc. with regard to the Health Services Department. Clerk advised they would be Resolution Nos. 601, 602 and 603, respectively.

Chairman Stec called for reading of communications.

Clerk read communications, including the following:

Minutes from:

Warren/Washington Counties IDA;
Warren County Planning Board.

Monthly Reports from:

Veterinarian;
Probation;
Weights & Measures.

Annual Reports from:

Warren County Department of Public Works.

New York State Department of Civil Service, Second Quarter 2011 Empire Plan Experience Report.

Capital District Regional Off-Track Betting Corporation, August and September 2011 surcharge in the amounts of \$15,592 and \$7,680, respectively, as well as June 30th and July 31st 2011 Financial Reports.

Letter from Joan Conway-VanWeelden expressing her gratitude to all those that participated in the ceremony honoring her husband, Douglas C. VanWeelden Sr. on October 3, 2011, and a special thanks to the organizer, Denise DiResta, Director of Veterans' Services.

Martin Auffredou, County Attorney, in accordance with the provisions of County Law Section 502 and Social Services Law Section 66, hereby designates the order in which the Assistant County Attorneys shall exercise the powers and duties of this Office in the event of my vacancy, absence or inability: Amy C. Bartlett, First Assistant County Attorney and Patricia C. Nenninger, Second Assistant County Attorney. This designation shall be filed with the County Clerk and the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors as required by County Law Section 502.

Communications, resolutions and reports ordered placed on file.

Chairman Stec called for reading of resolutions and discussion.

Joan Sady, Clerk of the Board, advised that Resolution Nos. 552 through 594 were mailed. She added that the resolutions relating to the filling of vacant positions were Resolution Nos. 579, 580 and 583, and unless a roll call vote was requested, all would be approved in the collective vote.

Mrs. Sady announced a motion was needed to bring Resolution Nos. 551 and 595

through 598 to the floor. Motion was made by Mr. Conover, seconded by Mr. Belden and carried unanimously to bring Resolution Nos. 551 and 595 through 598 to the floor.

Chairman Stec called for a vote on the resolutions.

Mr. Kenny requested a roll call vote on Resolution No. 580, Authorizing the Warren County Sheriff to Fill Vacant Positions.

Mr. Thomas requested an amendment to Resolution No. 568, Urging Multi-Year Takeover of Local Share of Medicaid, to delete the wording "and income taxes". Motion was made by Mr. Thomas, seconded by Mr. Belden and carried unanimously to amend Resolution No. 568 as outlined above.

Resolution Nos. 551 through 605 were approved. Report of Committee on Assessment Rolls; Proclamations-Domestic Violence Awareness Month; and Adoption Awareness Month, were submitted.

Prior to adjourning, Chairman Stec acknowledged Pauline Lucia, who requested permission to address the board, regarding the termination of the contract with Berkshire Farms and returning to the in-house foster care program conducted by the County. Ms. Lucia advised that she had been a foster parent for seven years and one and a half years ago, the County transitioned the foster care program to Berkshire Farms. She asserted that once the transition was complete, the services improved greatly and she provided specific examples, such as how doctors appointments were handled. Ms. Lucia commented that she was recently contacted by the Department of Social Services (DSS) and informed that Warren County would be terminating the contract with Berkshire Farms; however, she said, she was not given any detailed information as to what changes would occur. She expressed her concern for the children in her care, as well as other foster families in the County, and the repercussions such transition would have on them. She further noted that Berkshire Farms was not even aware that the County was terminating the contract.

Mr. Dusek expounded that in speaking with the Deputy Commissioner of DSS, Suzanne Wheeler, and knowing Warren County's policy, children come first. He emphasized the importance of putting the children's needs first, above any kind of change that could be made. Ms. Wheeler apologized for not having the opportunity to speak with Ms. Lucia herself. She added that the number one concern was the children and the process of returning to the previous form of foster care with the County was not supposed to affect the children at all. She confirmed that there was never actually a contract with Berkshire Farms for these services. She noted that in the past eighteen months that the County had been working with Berkshire Farms, they had only provided two more foster homes and DSS had expected much more than that. Ms. Wheeler suggested that she meet with Ms. Lucia and discuss the concerns that were presented today.

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Mr. Loeb encouraged that meeting to take place as soon as possible. Mr. Goodspeed added that Mr. Dusek, Mr. Auffredou and Chairman Stec be involved in these discussions, as well. Mr. Strainer recommended that the matter of the Berkshire Farms contract, or lack thereof, be referred to the Social Services Committee for further discussions.

There being no further business, on motion made by Mr. McCoy and seconded by Mr. Merlino, Chairman Stec adjourned the meeting at 12:30 p.m.