

**WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
ORGANIZATION MEETING
THURSDAY, JANUARY 5, 2012**

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 Thomas.

Roll called, the following members 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	-William Loeb
Ward 5	-William H. Kenny
Hague	-Edna Frasier
Horicon	-Ralph W. Bentley
Johnsburg	-Ronald Vanselow
Lake George	-Dennis Dickinson
Queensbury	-Daniel G. Stec
	-David J. Strainer
	-William Mason
	-Mark Westcott
	-Matthew D. Sokol
Stony Creek	-Frank E. Thomas
Thurman	-Evelyn Wood
Warrensburg	-Kevin B. Geraghty
Absent:	Lake Luzerne -Eugene J. Merlino

Members of the Board of Supervisors subscribed to the Constitutional Oath, as administered by Pam Vogel, Warren County Clerk. Those in attendance responded with a round of applause.

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

Mrs. Wood nominated Kevin Geraghty as Temporary Chairman, seconded by Mr. Sokol.

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

Clerk requested Mr. Thomas and Mrs. Wood to escort Mr. Geraghty to the Chair.

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

Mr. Geraghty apprised that he had been a member of the Board of Supervisors for six years, and he had been fortunate to serve as Budget Officer during Mr. Monroe's Chairmanship, as well as Mr. Stec's, both of whom had been a pleasure to work with. He requested a nomination for Permanent Chairman.

Mr. Taylor stated it was an honor to nominate Mr. Daniel G. Stec as Permanent Chairman, and Mr. Mason stated he would second the motion.

There being no further nominations, Mr. Kenny moved the nominations be closed, and the Clerk cast one ballot for Daniel G. Stec as Permanent Chairman. Mr. Dickinson seconded the motion, and it was carried by unanimous vote.

Mr. Geraghty, Temporary Chairman, requested Mr. Bentley and Mr. Loeb to escort Mr. Stec to the Chair.

Chairman Stec requested his wife, Hilary, to stand beside him and hold the family Bible while he was sworn into office.

Chairman Stec subscribed to the Constitutional Oath as administered by Pam Vogel, County Clerk of Warren County. The board members acknowledged Mr. Stec with a round of applause.

Chairman Stec wished everyone a Happy New Year and welcomed all in attendance to the first meeting of the year. He noted that twenty-one years ago today, he had taken another solemn oath when he married his wife. He added that she had been by his side throughout the years and the things that he had been privileged to accomplish in both his personal and professional career would not have been possible without her support. He introduced his wife Hilary, as well as his mother and father, Elsie and George Stec, and he expressed his appreciation for his family's support.

Chairman Stec advised he had attended the State of the State Address yesterday in Albany and acknowledged that Governor Cuomo had outlined an aggressive agenda, while rightfully reflecting on the success of his first year as Governor. He asserted that the State of New York, as well as Warren County, were on an upward and improving trend, to which he credited and thanked Governor Cuomo and the State Legislature for the work they had done.

Chairman Stec presented the following remarks:

STATE OF THE COUNTY
JANUARY 5, 2012

"Thank you to my fellow Supervisors for the continued support and confidence that you have placed in me in electing me to again serve as your Chairman. It is truly a privilege to serve in this capacity and I pledge to continue to maintain a high level of communication to assist us in our work on behalf of the residents of Warren County.

"In preparing this year's State of the County Address, I reviewed last year's address for use as a benchmark against which to measure our performance in 2011. I am pleased to report that as 2010 saw improvements over 2009 in the County's overall financial health and approach to governance, 2011 saw this improving trend continue substantially.

"In 2010, before this year's enactment of the Tax Cap Law, Warren County, facing shrinking revenues, reduced 2011 budget appropriations by \$518,000 and held the tax levy increase to 1.1%, the lowest increase in 15 years, without appropriating any fund balance to achieve this. However, the County's available fund balance stood at little more than \$3 million and cash flow was so anemic that the County needed to secure short term borrowing at the start of both 2009 and 2010 to meet its obligations.

"In 2011, working on the 2012 County Budget, despite reducing budgeted revenues by nearly \$2 million, the County was able to further reduce budgeted appropriations by just over \$3,000 and limiting the tax levy increase to just 1.7%, again without appropriating any fund balance to keep the levied amount down. In fact, the projection for the end of year 2011 undesignated fund balance is \$7.1 million, double what it was a year before, and short term borrowing will not be necessary in 2012 as it had been in 2010 and 2011.

"It is important to emphasize, the levy increases for the 2011 and 2012 budgets, two of the smallest percentage increases in the past two decades, done in two consecutive years, done in certainly the two worst years for non-property tax revenue collections, done during our County's worst economy since the Great Depression, was done without the appropriation of any fund balance. Many other counties and local municipalities in New York State are relying on fund balances (prior year over-taxation) to mask spending, control tax rates and comply with the State's Tax Cap Law. This was also achieved while resisting the temptation to increase the County's tax rate from 7%. Warren County remains one of five counties in New York State that has not increased sales tax above 7%.

"The long term issue now with any county budget in New York State will be that two New York State imposed forces are acting in opposition to one another: the issue of unfunded mandates and the imposition of a tax cap. The irony of New York State government (of all state governments in this country) promulgating any financial and budgeting guidance is certainly not lost. Whatever the motivation was by the State

Legislature and Governor in imposing the Tax Cap without any meaningful mandate relief, political or fiscal, it is an unsustainable model in the long run for county government. In mandating increases in scope, coverage and costs of various social programs, with double digit increases in significant budget items such as employee health insurance and mandatory local state retirement contributions common place it is simply mathematically impossible for county governments to maintain levy increases below 2% indefinitely. Sustainability will vary from county to county, with counties that have carried inflated appropriations and/or excessively high fund balances (prior year over-taxation) being able to consume their cushions for a longer period of time than those counties that do not have inflated budgets and fund balances. In the end, however, when the fund balances are gone and all inefficiencies are found and eliminated, without mandate relief the end result will be the elimination of non-mandated services and significant infrastructure decay. All that will remain will be the state mandated programs whose expense will outpace the state imposed limit for counties to raise taxes to pay for these state programs.

"If the state's mindset is that this is all temporary, so as to force local government to improve efficiencies and reduce excessive fund balances during a time of economic difficulty, fine. However, if this is not the case, then mandate relief, meaningful mandate relief, is a must. Frankly, the responsible thing to have done would have been for the tax cap to have been implemented in conjunction with mandate relief. Despite the loud cries from local government officials throughout the state last year, this did not happen. It must be our continued resolve to work with New York State Association of Counties and other counties to bring pressure to our Governor and State Legislators to make meaningful mandate relief a reality. One step Warren County undertook in 2011, in following Fulton County's lead, was the adoption of our Truth-in-Taxation local law which provided for us to compile and include a disclosure of the effect these unfunded state mandates have on the County property tax bill. This document was sent out last week with the property tax bills in an effort to educate our public on this fiscally critical issue. We will continue to look for any means available to shed a light on this unaddressed issue of unfunded mandates until the State Legislature and Governor take the required action.

"I personally reject the argument that mandate relief must somehow automatically translate to a simple one-for-one shift of expenses from local government back to state government, resulting in the same total taxpayer dollars being spent, just out of a different pocket. If this were what we were seeking that would just be silly. True mandate relief is the reduction of expenses, regardless of whether local property tax or state income tax pays for it. Of course, if these expenses can't be reduced, then the act of shifting them back to those making the mandates (the State) will at the very least give them pause to reconsider these mandates or avoid creating new ones if they would be held accountable by the public for them, not a horrible result. However, what we're seeking is actual relief, relief that can only be brought about by reducing what is spent, not who spends it. Specific, significant items the state should review and revise that would accomplish this include Medicaid eligibility standards, the prevailing wage law, the Wicks law and state procurement laws.

"2011 held several other milestones for Warren County, achieved working in concert with other municipal partners Warren County:

In 2011, Warren and Washington County made their final payments toward the Hudson Falls Burn Plant, as an aside, this happens to be a fine example of a very local and painfully expensive unfunded state mandate that local taxpayers paid for over two decades. Additionally, thanks in large part to the work of Supervisor Fred Monroe several years ago, the counties were able to renegotiate the burn plant deal, reducing the negative financial impact and resulting in the ability to sell the plant earlier this year, the proceeds of this sale benefiting both counties.

"Earlier this year we were able to participate in discussions with the Town of Lake George and our State Legislators that ultimately led to a reversal of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation's (NYS DEC) position on its lease terms for Americade's use of the Million Dollar Beach parking lot, ending a multiyear debate over this proposed lease rate whose escalation threatened the very continuation of this more than \$40 million economic impact event in the County. As a result of this effort it appears that Americade's future here in Warren County has been assured for many years to come.

"Warren County, in working with the Town of Corinth and Saratoga County, was able to change its stars regarding the Railroad line. After a thorough vetting, the County entered into a contract with Iowa Pacific and the Town of Corinth to upgrade our rail service prospects and connect our track to the rest of the country's rail infrastructure. This relationship is greatly exceeding Iowa Pacific's initial expectations and is proving to be transformative in North Creek. The prospect for freight service and economic development opportunity both south and north of our line holds great potential for not only Warren County but also northern Saratoga County and into Essex County.

"After nearly a decade of public discussion, our partner, the City of Glens Falls, was ready this year to make the move to consolidate police dispatch services. As the Towns of Queensbury and Lake George had experienced the anxiety years ago of consolidating police departments with Warren County, I can tell you that in my estimation from the Town's perspective, this was one of the boldest and wisest moves Queensbury made in the 1980's. I am confident that this dispatch consolidation will be as successful as those two were and that years from now it will be viewed very positively.

"Continuing the list of intermunicipal accomplishments, Warren County achieved this year, we completed the Exit 18/Main Street Project, a project ten years in the planning stages involving State, County, Town and City governments, as well as Water, Sewer, Electric, Gas, Cable and Phone utilities. It took 18 months to construct and was described by many involved as one of the most complex construction projects the New York State Department of Transportation (NYS DOT) had been involved in. It was completed on time and within budget and has been widely praised after completion for both its functionality and its attractiveness. It will help to transform both Queensbury and Glens Falls.

"We also continued to work with environmental groups on the important Gaslight Village Project. Demolition of the buildings on the site has been completed and plans have been developed and funding partially secured to transform this site into an environmentally functional and visually attractive recreation and tourist attraction that will enhance Lake George's ability to accommodate larger events important to our regional economy.

"Working again with these environmental groups, Warren County was a leader in the state invasive species fight. Warren County pledged municipal financial support in combating Asian Clams. The county then took the bold step to leverage its financial commitment to obtain funding support from neighboring municipalities with a stake in the health of Lake George. This was a good first step but much more needs to be done. Realizing this, Warren County also enacted the State's first invasive species law this year. This law was based on a draft of a law proposed but unacted on by our State Legislature. It has been further suggested that perhaps rather than New York State using Environmental Protection Funds to continue to purchase additional lands, while struggling to maintain the lands it already owns, that it would be much wiser to use these funds to combat invasive species, including Asian Clams in Lake George.

"Warren County also took action to reorganize our approach to Economic Development. Working with the Warren County Economic Development Corporation (EDC) we have reorganized the Warren County Local Development Corporation (LDC). This was an important step towards strengthening the tools that EDC has to work with. It also allowed us to reduce the County's planning staff and thus the county budget. More importantly, it contributes to the co-location of several Warren and Washington County economic development agencies under a single roof. This initiative is slated to take place early this year. In light of this, I've decided it makes most sense to recombine the Economic Growth and Planning Committees, to be chaired by Supervisor Taylor.

"2011 also saw unusual storm activity. The storms around Memorial Day and Tropical Storm Irene in late August devastated road infrastructure in the county, particularly in the Town of Thurman. To date application for federal assistance has been denied. This is unacceptable and Warren County will continue to do all it can to support Thurman in its dealings with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the New York State Office of Emergency Management (NYS OEM).

"Looking ahead the Beach Road and Gaslight Village Projects in Lake George will be a major focus. However, as I stated in last year's State of the County Address, the financial challenges we face must remain our main focus for 2012. We must continue the solid work we've done in the past two years in this regard. Working with the department heads and our County Administrator and his staff, I have no doubt that we will continue to find ways to improve our efficiencies, maintain a high level of service to our public, cut costs and protect the wallets of our taxpayers.

"We have several new Supervisors joining us this year. I congratulate and welcome them all to our team. I believe each of you will find your service here to be both challenging and rewarding. We have a great team here and we look forward to your contributions to it.

"I'm reappointing Stony Creek Supervisor Frank Thomas Finance Committee Chairman. I'll ask him and his Committee to continue to closely monitor county spending to ensure that the fund balance continues to recover. Likewise, I'll ask Budget Officer Geraghty and his committee to again start the budget process early in the year. Supervisor Conover will continue to chair the Personnel Committee. Filling vacant chairs on some of our larger committees, Supervisor Bentley will chair Public Works and Supervisor Wood will chair Public Safety.

"We've done much solid work in 2011. These are difficult times. We've made some difficult decisions in the past year and we will certainly be faced with more difficult decisions in 2012. With the help of the tremendous county workforce I'm confident that we will continue to improve Warren County government."

"Respectfully submitted,

Daniel G. Stec, Chairman
Warren County Board of Supervisors"

Board members and those in attendance responded with a round of applause.

Chairman Stec stated that the next order of business would be the selection of a Clerk, and he noted that nominations were in order.

Mr. Conover said it was a high honor and privilege to nominate Joan Sady as Clerk of the Board. He remarked that Mrs. Sady was always helpful, correctly informed, hard working and was an individual that was truly committed to excellence. Considering the business of this board and County government in general, he continued, it was a huge volume of information that had to be organized and correctly disseminated and that all took place without a glitch, which was a tribute to Mrs. Sady.

Mr. Conover nominated Joan Sady as Clerk of the Board of Supervisors for a term of two years, seconded by Mrs. Frasier.

There being no further nominations, Mr. McDevitt moved that nominations be closed, and one ballot be cast for Joan Sady as Clerk of the Board of Supervisors for a term of two years. Mr. Vanselow seconded the motion, and it was carried unanimously.

Chairman Stec announced the next order of business would be the selection of a County Attorney, and he added that nominations were in order.

Mr. Monroe nominated Martin Auffredou as County Attorney for a term of two years, seconded by Mr. Geraghty.

There being no further nominations, Mr. Taylor moved that the nominations be closed and the Clerk cast one ballot for Martin Auffredou as County Attorney for a term of two years. Mr. Westcott seconded the motion, and it was carried unanimously.

Clerk and County Attorney subscribed to the Constitutional Oath as administered by Pam Vogel, Warren County Clerk.

The board members and those in attendance responded with a round of applause.

Privilege of the floor was offered to Mrs. Sady, who thanked the board members for the privilege of continuing to serve as Clerk of the Board. She commented that she was first appointed to this position in 2006, and noted that she was as honored and humbled today as she had been six years ago. She acknowledged those that she had the pleasure of working with on a daily basis as follows: the County Attorney, Martin Auffredou, and his staff; the County Administrator, Paul Dusek, and his staff; the County Department Heads, which she opined were second to none; and the staff in her Office, Nicole Livingston, her Deputy Clerk, Marie Edmonds, Charlene DiResta, Amanda Allen and Joanne Collins, all of whom provided great assistance each day. Mrs. Sady recognized her family that was in attendance, her oldest son, Chris Kilmartin and her father, Bob McKinney, and she thanked them for coming.

The board members and those in attendance responded with a round of applause.

Privilege of the floor was offered to Mr. Auffredou, thanked everyone for the opportunity and the privilege to serve as the chief legal advisor to the Board of Supervisors and to Warren County. Holding this title was a great honor, he said, and he recognized its significance every day. He introduced his wife of twenty-seven years, Linda, who was at the meeting, as well as two of his four children, Rebecca and Gregory and noted he was very proud to have them here today. He also recognized and thanked Amy Bartlett and Patricia Nenner, his Assistant County Attorneys, and added that it was a great honor to work with them, noting that they had made the transition for him into this position seamless and he treasured their wisdom and experience. Mr. Auffredou introduced two extremely important people in his life, Shelly VanNostrand and Terry McGarr, both Legal Assistants in his Office. He asserted that they ran the Office and worked hard each and every day to get the work done.

The board members and those in attendance responded with a round of applause.

At this time, Chairman Stec extended privilege of the floor to any Supervisors that wished to introduce family members in attendance.

Mr. McDevitt introduced his brother Rich, his nephew Richard, his niece Evia, and his brother John and thanked them all for attending today.

Mrs. Frasier introduced her husband, Dick, her grandchildren Alissa and Brady, her daughter Lindsey and her sister Bertha.

Mr. Loeb introduced his wife, Pam, who provided him with unwavering support. He took a moment to welcome the new Supervisors. He reinforced the importance of being involved with their respective Committees and the departments associated with the Committees, as well as understanding the operations of the services provided to the citizens of the County.

Mr. Mason introduced his wife, Lynne, and he thanked her for her support over the years.

Mr. Westcott introduced his wife, Roxanne, his mother Sisty, representatives from Congressman Gibson's Office, including Mary Jo Gibson, and he thanked them all for being here today.

Board members and those in attendance responded with a round of applause.

Chairman Stec announced that he would like to recognize Mr. Champagne, who retired at the end of 2011, for his years of dedicated service to Warren County. He credited Mr. Champagne with his own personal mentor ship as his political process began at the Town of Queensbury. Chairman Stec shared stories of how he became involved in politics, recalling a letter he sent to then Supervisor Champagne, expressing his interest in joining the Town of Queensbury Zoning Board. He added that Mr. and Mrs. Champagne were also good friends of the family. Chairman Stec apprised Mr. Champagne had served on the County Board of Supervisors for eighteen years and his experience and knowledge had been a great resource for all that had worked with him. He requested Mr. Champagne to come forward for the presentation of a Proclamation recognizing his years of service to Warren County, as well as a gift from the Board of Supervisors.

The board members and those in attendance responded with a standing ovation and a round of applause.

Mr. Champagne expounded his years on the board had been great, challenging and exciting, similar to an adventure. He noted he was looking forward to having additional time to spend with his family and grandchildren. He thanked everyone in attendance today for the recognition of his service.

The board members and those in attendance responded with a round of applause.

Chairman Stec called for reading of communications.

Clerk read communications, including the following:

Jeffery Tennyson, Superintendent of the Department of Public Works (DPW), pursuant to Local Law No. 2 of 1971, making the following appointments for the year 2012: Kevin J. Hajos, P.E., Acting Superintendent of Public Works and Deputy Superintendent of DPW; Tod M. Beadnell, P.E., Deputy Superintendent of Public Works/Operations; Joan Wolfe, DPW Records Officer and Deputy Superintendent of DPW for Administration; Ross Dubarry, Airport Manager. Kevin Hajos, Tod Beadnell and Joan Wolfe are hereby given the authority to sign all documents (voucher, purchase orders, contracts, etc.) for the Department of Public Works in the absence of Mr. Tennyson.

Joan Sady, Clerk of the Board, pursuant to Section 401, Paragraph 2 of County Law, providing notice of the appointment of Nicole Livingston as Deputy Clerk and Marie Edmonds, Second Deputy Clerk, effective January 1, 2012.

Communications ordered placed on file.

Chairman Stec called for reading of resolutions.

Clerk noted a motion was necessary to bring Resolution Nos. 1 through 23 to the floor. Motion was made by Mr. Bentley, seconded by Mr. Strainer and carried unanimously, to bring Resolution Nos. 1 through 24 to the floor.

Chairman Thomas called for a vote on the resolutions.

Resolution Nos. 1 through 24 were approved. Certificate of Appointments, naming Director of the Warren County Youth Bureau; naming members to the Warren County Labor/Management Committee; naming member to the Quality Assurance Committee of the Westmount Health Facility; naming members to the Greater Adirondack Resource Conservation and Development Council; naming representative to the Lake George Watershed Conference; naming member to the Board of Trustees of the Supreme Court Library; and naming members to the Warren County Youth Board, were submitted.

Mr. Dusek apprised of an emergency situation that had arisen and required action by the board today. He explained that the New York State Department of Health (NYS DOH) had completed a survey of the Westmount Health Facility, which was essentially an audit type of function, which he reviewed with the Chairman of the Health Services Committee. He asserted that it was necessary to hire a consultant as a requirement of that survey completion in order to correct some deficiencies. Mr. Dusek stated that the cost for such services was not to exceed \$3,500 and the consulting services would be provided through Leading Age New York. He further noted that the NYS DOH had advised that these services needed to

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commence immediately, otherwise there was a risk of losing federal funding for the Facility; thereby necessitating action by the board today.

Motion was made by Mr. Geraghty, seconded by Mrs. Wood and carried unanimously to waive the rules of the board requiring a resolution be in writing. Clerk noted it would be Resolution No. 25 of 2012 for the record.

Motion was made by Mr. Sokol, seconded by Mr. Thomas and carried unanimously to authorize a contract with Leading Age New York for consulting services relating to the Westmount Health Facility 12/20/11 Survey, for an amount not to exceed \$3,500. Clerk added it would be Resolution No. 26 of 2012 for the record.

Chairman Stec announced the 2012 Standing and Special Committees, and a copy of the Committee listings was submitted. A copy was also distributed to each Supervisor.

Chairman Stec took a moment to thank all County staff and Department Heads for their efforts, as well as all the volunteers throughout the County that assisted during the storms in 2011. He also remarked that a luncheon would be held in the new Committee meeting room immediately following the meeting and he invited all to attend. He complimented Frank Morehouse, Superintendent of Buildings & Grounds, and his staff for the recent renovations made in the existing Board Room and also for the work completed for the new Committee meeting room.

There being no further business, on motion by Mr. Strainer and seconded by Mr. Monroe, Chairman Stec adjourned the meeting at 11:52 a.m.