

**MINUTES
LEGISLATION COMMITTEE
SUB-COMMITTEE ON APPOINTMENTS
THURSDAY, JANUARY 14, 2010
2:30 P.M.**

PRESENT: Chair: Burton. Members: Myers, Nonna, Testa. Staff: Vita.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Ed Brancati; Patsy Yang; Ed Buroughs; John Hsu; Ann Marie Berg; Kevin Plunkett, and Robert Meehan.. Channel 12 News Crew; Legislators: Jenkins, Kaplowitz, Pinto, Alfreda Williams. Staff: Boland; Bass, Delgado (CEO), DeSoye.

APPOINTMENTS:

ACTING COMMISSIONER OF HUMAN RESOURCES:

Edward W. Brancati: Is a resident of Goldens Bridge, New York and has been appointed as the Acting Commissioner of Human Resources to expire upon the appointment of a Commissioner. He began his employment with Westchester County in September 1974 as a Public Administrative Intern and worked himself up to Deputy Commissioner of HR, and has held that position since May 1984. He is responsible for the daily operation of the department, with a unionized staff of 50 to uphold Civil Service Law for local municipalities, the County and its School Districts. He also provides compensation analysis, salary administration, position classification employee records management, employee relations and employee selection & development of the department. He will assist through the transition as the Deputy Commissioner title has been eliminated and he will retire at the end of January 2010.

The members were impressed with his years of service and his knowledge of C.S. Laws and his management of the Department. The Legislators thanked Mr. Brancati for his years of dedicated service and wish him well with future endeavors.

On the motion of Legislator Myers, seconded by Legislator Testa, the appointment is approved by a 4-0 vote. All in favor none opposed.

Submitted by: Emilia Vita
Approved: 4/12/10

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ACTING COMMISSIONER OF HEALTH DEPARTMENT:

Dr. Patsy Yang, Dr. P.H.: Is a resident of New Rochelle, New York and has been appointed as the Acting Commissioner of Human Resources to expire upon the appointment of a Commissioner. She has been employed with the County Health department since 1990 and has held the position of Deputy and Acting Commissioner throughout the years and had had the responsibility as the liaison of public health policy in the County and Department. She has overall responsibility for all environmental, clinical and administrative operations and initiatives, planning & evaluation, services for children with special needs, health care access, emergency preparedness and response, and responsible for a \$176 million budget and 370 employees. Prior to working with the County Dr. Yang, was employed as Assistant and Deputy Commissioner for the NYC Department of Health.

The members were impressed with her experience and knowledge and thanked Dr. Yang for her years of dedicated service and wish her well with future endeavors.

On the motion of Legislator Myers, seconded by Legislator Testa, the appointment is approved by a 4-0 vote. All in favor none opposed.

ACTING COMMISSIONER OF PLANNING:

Edward Burroughs: Is a resident of Lewisboro, and has been appointed as the Acting Commissioner of Planning to expire upon the appointment of a Commissioner. He has been employed by the County's Planning Department since 1994 and has served in several positions such as Chief Planner, Assistant Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner. He provides professional planning advice through reviews and reports, represents Department and County at other agencies and public events regarding municipal process for planning and zoning actions; long-range planning – "*Patterns for Westchester & Westchester 2025*"; transportation sub-regional studies; lead staff to West/Rock Tappan Zee Futures Task Force; lead support to the County Planning Board; and oversees work programs of Environmental section and Land Use and Development section.

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When asked about some of the Departments programs, Mr. Burroughs explained that the Flood Action Task force will continue as a funding source; CDBG grants will continue no change in existing staff and the Implementation Plan is due by the end of January and will forward as

available. Also in question is the status of Section 8 and if it will be transferred to the Department of Social Services, he responded that the two Commissioners are pursuing discussions with the idea being DSS would be able to handle more efficiently.

The members were impressed with his experience and knowledge and thanked Mr. Buroughs for his years of dedicated service and wish him well with future endeavors.

On the motion of Legislator Myers, seconded by Legislator Testa, the appointment is approved by a 4-0 vote. All in favor none opposed.

ACTING COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC WORKS:

John Hsu: Is a resident of Fresh Meadows, formerly of Yonkers, Mr. Hsu is appointed as the Acting Commissioner to expire upon the appointment of a Commissioner of DPW. He began his employment with the County in May, 1992 as the Director of Traffic engineering & Highway Safety; Deputy Commissioner with the Department of Transportation and First Deputy/Deputy Commissioner with DPW since 1997. He is responsible for the administration, planning organization and operational activities of the Public Works Department. He evaluates and recommends policy and procedural changes for the improvement of services provided by the department, and represent the department at meetings with elected officials, government agencies, community leaders and other County departments. The Department has an annual operating budget of \$72 million dollars and a capital improvements budget of \$80 million dollars and employees 300 full time personnel.

The Department is comprised of 5 divisions: Administration, Engineering, Building Operations, Road Maintenance and Fleet/Motor Pool. When asked about county vehicles, Mr. Hsu stated a third of the fleet are Hybrid cars; buses are electric hybrid, as well as the heavy equipment vehicles. The department purchases all county vehicles and is maintained by Public Works, and all have a GIS system, (you can find out if any car is out of the county, state and caught for speeding).

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There are 3 garages: Brockway, Valhalla and White Plains. When asked if there is a possibility of downsizing, Mr. Hsu said the proposal can be reviewed again. When asked about the "Gas Boy", he mentioned that it is very expensive and the BOL approved it in the Capital Projects budget.

The members were satisfied with his responses to their questions as with his experience and knowledge of the Department. Mr. Burton thanked Mr. Hsu for his many years of dedicated service and wish him well with future endeavors.

On the motion of Legislator Myers, seconded by Legislator Testa, the appointment is approved by a 4-0 vote. All in favor none opposed.

COMMISSIONER/DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE:

Ann Marie Berg: Is a resident of Ossining, and has been appointed as the Commissioner of Finance on January 3, 2010, and will serve at the pleasure of the County Executive. Ms. Berg has over 25 years of experience in local government and has served as Deputy town Comptroller in the Town of Mt. Pleasant from 1985 to 1992, where she was responsible for all payroll and personnel functions for the Town employees; assisted Comptroller in budget preparation; instrumental in coordinating recent upgrade of computer system; reports mechanism relating to pension benefits and redesigned work load of support staff.

When asked about her knowledge and experience with the Medical Center, Ms. Berg said she did not know much about its functions but will be reviewing the hospital within the next few weeks, as well as review of the Administrative functions, staffing, bonding, and competitive refunding of rates of the market.

Mr. Boland stated that he has heard nothing but praised from various department s and agencies about Ms. Berg’s knowledge and experience of the financial world, and she will be a positive asset to the County.

The members were satisfied with her responses to their questions as with her background, experience and knowledge of finance. Mr. Burton thanked Ms. Berg and wished her well in her new position, and looks forward to working with her during the next Legislative session.

On the motion of Legislator Myers, seconded by Legislator Testa, the appointment is approved by a 4-0 vote. All in favor none opposed.

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DEPUTY COUNTY EXECUTIVE/MEMBER - INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCT (IDA):

Kevin J. Plunkett: Is a resident of Tarrytown and has been appointed by the County Executive to serve as the Deputy County Executive and as a member of the Industrial Development Agency (IDA) to serve at the pleasure of the County Executive.

Mr. Plunkett stated that he will not comment on the prior Administration, he is familiar with issues facing Westchester County and he is willing to work cooperatively with the Board and address problems of the County and make it better for the residents and children of Westchester. He continued to say that there are tough decisions needed to be made and they may have their differences, but everyone can do this is a civil way and work cooperatively with the Board.

Ms. Myers stated that she has known of Mr. Plunkett from the City of rye and Mamaroneck and she is impressed with his experience and background and know he will be an asset to the County.

Mr. Nonna asked about his outside agency involvement, and Mr. Plunkett plans to resign from the NYS Thruway Authority, Greenway, as well as Taconic State Park; Judicial screening, and all other Boards he served on including Pace Law; and will step down from any involvement that may concern County matters.

As for the IDA Board, Mr. Plunkett will look into matters in both capacities. The IDA is to attract jobs and how you use that business and reach out. They are currently working on keeping a company in Westchester be the business chooses to move (a biomedical field). Some local IDA work solo, but he would like to work together as one Board, and to make the IDA profitable noting that new business can come in and create new jobs, help companies with taxes and other benefits. Together, we can make it an asset to the county, but in the meanwhile; a cost benefit analysis is needed. He looks forward to working with the BOL.

The members were satisfied with his responses to their questions as with his background, experience and knowledge. Mr. Burton thanked Mr. Plunkett and wishes him well in his new position, and looks forward to working with him during the next Legislative session.

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On the motion of Legislator Testa, seconded by Legislator Myers, the appointment is approved by a 4-0 vote. All in favor none opposed.

COUNTY ATTORNEY

Robert F. Meehan: Is a resident of Hawthorne, and has been appointed Westchester County Attorney effective January 1, 2010 by the County Executive to serve at his pleasure. Mr. Meehan is well-known to members of the Board, especially as the Town of Mt. Pleasant Supervisor for the past 20 years. He is a practicing attorney for the past 35 years and has experience in municipal, real estate, zoning, labor, insurance, election, decedent's estate, criminal and construction law and commercial contract litigation in state and federal courts.

As the County Attorney, Mr. Meehan will be the legal advisory to the County Executive and the Board of Legislators, he will be responsible to the Law Department, contracts, litigation and county courts, he will advise various staff and Boards as they ask for opinions. When asked if had any issues working for "two Masters", he replied no, but at times, conflicts will arise, and he will handled them accordingly.

He responded to the members inquiries accordingly and when asked about the Housing settlement, he mentioned that hearings are held in municipalities. Ms. Delgado was requested to invite the BOL to join the administrations in meeting with the locals.

The members were satisfied with his responses to their questions as with his background, experience and knowledge. Mr. Burton thanked Mr. Meehan for his time and wishes him well in his new position, and looks forward to working with him during the next Legislative session.

On the motion of Legislator Nonna, seconded by Legislator Testa, the appointment is approved by a 4-0 vote. All in favor none opposed.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:10 p.m. on the motion of Legislator

Myers, seconded by Legislator Testa, by a 4-0 vote.