

**LEGISLATIVE & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE
of the
Suffolk County Legislature
Minutes**

A regular meeting of the Legislative & Personnel Committee of the Suffolk County Legislature was held in the Rose Y. Caracappa Auditorium of the William H. Rogers Building, Veterans Memorial Highway, Smithtown, New York, on February 16, 2001.

Members Present:

Legislator Martin Haley - Chairman
Legislator Ginny Fields - Vice-Chairperson
Legislator Jon Cooper - Member
Legislator Joseph Caracappa - Member
Legislator Allan Binder - Member

Also In Attendance:

Paul Sabatino - Counsel to the Legislature
Loretta Filosa - Aide to Legislator Haley
Nicole DeAngelo - County Executive's Office
Lance Reinheimer - Budget Review Office
Christine Chayes - Civil Service and Human Resources
Tom LaGuardia - Department of Public Works
Gerard McCreight - Aide to Legislator Cooper
Charlie Gardner - Consumer Affairs
Abram Benko - Intern to Legislator Haley
All Other Interested Parties

Minutes Taken By:

Patricia Patriss - Court Stenographer
(*The meeting was called to order at 1:41 P.M.*)

CHAIRMAN HALEY:

Would everyone please stand for the Pledge of Allegiance?

Salutation

Okay. In the interest of moving things along we'll bring up some people to discuss Resolutions 1084, new position title in Division of Consumer Affairs, and a new position title in the Department of Public Works. So all those interested individuals come on up and then we'll have that discussion while we're waiting for Legislators to come by.

Okay, discussion on 1084, that's amending a new position title in Consumer Affairs. Charlie.

MR. GARDNER:

Yes, Mr. Chairman. I want to make the point for the record that this is a change in title, an upgrade. It is not an addition to the staff, an additional person or an additional employee. It's a change of title.

There was a review by Civil Service and it --

MS. CHAYES:

Yeah, we have no problems with that at all. It was a desk audit. So it's the same position.

MR. GARDNER:

I would also like to make the point -- there was a question at

Consumer Affairs Committee the other day. Apparently the financial impact statements said basically none. I would like to make the point that there is actually a positive financial impact, in that the position that the person left has been downgraded. I requested a downgrade and it was accepted. That position was changed from a Grade 23 down to a Grade 18.

So if you look at all of the pieces of the puzzle, we're going up a couple of grades for the one title, but the position that was vacated has been changed from a 23 down to an 18, which is a substantial savings.

The annualized savings with these two moves is approximately twenty-five thousand dollars for our budget when you take them both.

CHAIRMAN HALEY:

That much of a difference between those two?

MR. GARDNER:

Yes, because he left -- by the way, the person that we're talking about is Bruce Dragonette. He's the person that's in that position now.

CHAIRMAN HALEY:

He's going into that 29?

MR. GARDNER:

He will go to the 29.

CHAIRMAN HALEY:

Right.

MR. GARDNER:

Okay. The position that he was originally -- when Regina Hilbert left, this is what started it all. Regina went to Civil Service. When Regina left, Bruce was a 23. That grade 23 is now a grade 18. And the difference in that salary there is very substantial, Mr. Chairman. That's the reason for the -- and why I say it is actually a positive financial impact.

CHAIRMAN HALEY:

All right. Good. Any questions?

LEG. FIELDS:

No.

LEG. CARACAPPA:

No.

CHAIRMAN HALEY:

Okay. Tom, do you want to talk about the new position title in the Department of Public Works? That will be on 1094, Resolution 1094.

MR. LA GUARDIA:

Sure. Good afternoon, Legislator Haley. This has basically been asked for to create a career ladder for the electrical side. Right now the mechanical side has a complete career ladder for all of our

staff. So as our people come in and they become further educated, get additional experience, we have a place for them to go, and that was never true in the electrical end. So we've asked for this position to be created to expand the career ladder.

CHAIRMAN HALEY:

Well, I thought the purpose of this was because of the desk audit.

MS. CHAYES:

It is the result of a desk audit. The individual working that we audited had nowhere to go. He had assumed additional responsibilities over his tenure of employment and when we went in and did the desk audit he was working above the job specification or description for electrical engineer, and there was nowhere for him to move to being in the electrical field, and that is why after the audit we found that he was working above electrical engineer and created the --

CHAIRMAN HALEY:

So it was twofold. It was created by an audit.

MS. CHAYES:

A desk audit.

CHAIRMAN HALEY:

But it also fulfills the career ladder --

MS. CHAYES:

Concept in Civil Service.

CHAIRMAN HALEY:

-- concept that you need in the electrical --

MS. CHAYES:

Um-hmm.

CHAIRMAN HALEY:

-- engineering portion of Department of the Public Works.

MS. CHAYES:

Yes, definitely.

CHAIRMAN HALEY:

Right, Tom?

MR. LA GUARDIA:

Correct.

LEG. FIELDS:

I have a stupid question. I do, I have a --

CHAIRMAN HALEY:

Legislator Fields.

LEG. FIELDS:

It's an inexperienced question. What is a desk audit?

MS. CHAYES:

A desk audit is when our Civil Service reviews a position and the individual working in the position and all the duties and responsibilities attached to that desk to see if, in fact, that individual is still working within the job title that they are designated in. And many times over the years that they work, they assume other responsibilities or other duties, supervisory responsibilities, and the position changes over time at which point a department or an employee has the right under Civil Service Law to request this desk audit where we do a complete review to see whether or not they are working within title, and if a new title might be warranted.

LEG. FIELDS:

And who usually requests it? The employee or --

MS. CHAYES:

The employee has the right to request a desk audit, the department head also.

LEG. FIELDS:

Okay. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HALEY:

While we're on that question how many desk audits a year do you do and

how many result in an upgrade?

MS. CHAYES:

I wouldn't have that information here, but we can get that for you.

CHAIRMAN HALEY:

Well, off the top of your head. I won't hold you to it, I promise.

MS. CHAYES:

I really couldn't even guess.

CHAIRMAN HALEY:

But it's not a hundred percent of the time that they're successful?

MS. CHAYES:

Oh no, no.

CHAIRMAN HALEY:

Charlie.

MS. CHAYES:

Not every desk audit results in an upgrade. Is that what you mean?

CHAIRMAN HALEY:

Right.

MR. GARDNER:

We had two last year, Mr. Chairman.

MS. CHAYES:

Not at all.

MR. GARDNER:

One the job was upgraded and one was not.

CHAIRMAN HALEY:

Right, because it doesn't happen that often because sometimes it's --

MR. GARDNER:

Both were at the request of the employee by the way. Both of ours were at the request of the employee. One employee was upgraded and one was not.

CHAIRMAN HALEY:

Who determines whether or not a desk audit will take place? Is this purely on a request or is there a committee that determines -- in other words, you could ever employee, you know, technically, thousands of employees tell you they want a desk audit, right?

MS. CHAYES:

Well, because no -- under Civil Service Law no one can work out of title. Anyone that feels they're working out of title is entitled to ask for a desk audit, but again, it is not an overwhelming number. I can get you the total number we do per year, and again, not all of them will result in an upgrade. Not at all.

CHAIRMAN HALEY:

Charlie.

MR. GARDNER:

They do, as part of the request, have to describe what they do on a daily basis and a supervisor --

MS. CHAYES:

Signs it.

MR. GARDNER:

-- has the right to either agree with that or not. In other words, the employee might, for instance, to go to one extreme, write something up --

CHAIRMAN HALEY:

No, but --

MR. GARDNER:

-- and the supervisor says you absolutely, there's no way you do that.

CHAIRMAN HALEY:

The supervisor agrees or doesn't agree, it still gets audited, correct?

MS. CHAYES:

We review it --

MR. GARDNER:

That's right.

MS. CHAYES:

-- we speak with the supervisor, we speak with other employees in the title, other employees that work with that person. It is very thoroughly reviewed.

MR. GARDNER:

My experience is that Civil Service will come over and there are times they'll be in the office two or three days on the basis of that one --

CHAIRMAN HALEY:

That's a function of Civil Service Law?

MS. CHAYES:

Yes, it is.

CHAIRMAN HALEY:

Okay, as opposed to an employee contract?

MS. CHAYES:

Yes. It's Civil Service Law.

CHAIRMAN HALEY:

Okay. I went through all of that so you could get a sense of what's

--

LEG. FIELDS:

Just one other question. Do they all come back to the Legislature or someone else can make decision?

MS. CHAYES:

If a new title, as in this case, is recommended as a result of the audit, it goes through the Legislature for approval.

CHAIRMAN HALEY:

It's a budget amendment.

LEG. FIELDS:

Okay. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HALEY:

It actually becomes a budget amendment.

LEG. FIELDS:

Thanks for the education.

CHAIRMAN HALEY:

Allan, we just went over two position titles. Both for desk audit. One in Consumer Affairs and one is DPW. It seems pretty plain vanilla type stuff. If you have any questions on those, other than that, we'll go to the agenda.

Thanks, very much.

MS. CHAYES:

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HALEY:

Appreciate it. That was pretty fast. How come you didn't invite me

for lunch. I haven't sushi in a while. Okay.

Tabled Resolutions

2218-00 - Establish Media room in William H. Rogers Legislative Building. Assigned to Legislative & Personnel (Binder)

LEG. BINDER:

Motion to approve.

CHAIRMAN HALEY:

I'll second that. Discussion?

LEG. FIELDS:

Motion to table. I spoke to the P.O.'s Office and they said they haven't gotten all of the information back that they were trying to get.

CHAIRMAN HALEY:

I think the thing that I was concerned with is it gives the Presiding Officer basically the authority to do whatever he wants. If he doesn't do it, it doesn't have to happen, is that correct?

LEG. BINDER:

Yes. It actually gives him the authority to get the information that he's looking for. All it says is that we as Legislators want this to happen. We put it on record that we want the people of Suffolk County to have their media in our midst, you know, in or building, if they so choose to be here. It's only a -- more than anything else it's a statement.

I assume the Presiding Officer is working on doing this, but this says that we as a body, all of us, all Legislators want this to happen. I don't think there's anything wrong with making a statement. And that's -- we pass sense resolutions all the time that make statements and there's nothing wrong with making a statement here.

So I would hope we can pass this today.

CHAIRMAN HALEY:

Okay. I have a motion to table. Is there a second? We still have a motion to approve on the table. All those in favor? Opposed?

LEG. FIELDS:

Abstain.

CHAIRMAN HALEY:

All right. 2218 is approved. Note Legislator Fields abstention. Hold on one second. Legislator Cooper, on 2218 we had a motion to approve. How would you like your vote registered?

LEG. COOPER:

A motion to approve? No.

CHAIRMAN HALEY:

You're a no?

LEG. COOPER:
I'm a no.

CHAIRMAN HALEY:
Okay. Please, reflect Legislator Cooper's vote as a no on 2218.
That's still approved. (Vote: 3-1-1-0 - Opposed: Jon Cooper -
Abstained: Ginny Fields).

Introductory Resolutions

1029-01 - Authorizing certain technical correction to Adopted
Resolution Nos. 1001-2000 and 1159-2000. Assigned to Legislative &
Personnel (County Executive).

By the way, I'd like a motion to approve this and to be placed on the
consent calendar.

LEG. CARACAPPA:
Second.

CHAIRMAN HALEY:
Is that a motion, Joey?

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LEG. CARACAPPA:
Second.

CHAIRMAN HALEY:
All right. Motion by myself. Seconded by Legislator Caracappa to
approve and place on the consent calendar 1029. All those in favor?
Opposed? 1029 is approved (Vote: 5-0-0-0).

1060-01 - Approving payment to General Code Publishers for
Administrative Code Pages. Assigned to Legislative & Personnel
(Presiding Officer).

Same motion, same second, some vote.

LEG. FIELDS:
Just an explanation on this.

CHAIRMAN HALEY:
Counsel.

MR. SABATINO:
To those quarterly updates you get for the blue book, which is all of
the County Local Laws --

LEG. FIELDS:
Okay.

CHAIRMAN HALEY:

Okay, we have a motion and a second to approve and place on the consent calendar. All those in favor? Opposed? 1060 is approved. (Vote: 5-0-0-0).

1084-01 - Amending the Suffolk County Classification and Salary Plan and the 2001 Operating Budget in connection with a New Position Title in the County Executive's Office, Division of Consumer Affairs (Assistant Director of Consumer Affairs). Assigned to Legislative & Personnel and Consumer Protection & Government Operations (County Executive). Motion?

LEG. BINDER:

Motion to approve

. LEG. FIELDS: Second. CHAIRMAN HALEY: Motion by Legislator Binder. Seconded by Legislator Fields. All those in favor? Opposed? Approved (Vote: 5-0-0-0). 1093-01 - Authorizing certain Technical Corrections to Adopted Resolution No. 713-2000. Assigned to Legislative & Personnel (County Executive). LEG. BINDER: Motion to approve and put on the consent calendar.

CHAIRMAN HALEY:

Motion to approve and put on the consent calendar by Legislator Binder. Seconded by myself. All those in favor? Opposed? 1093 is approved (Vote: 5-0-0-0).

1094-01 - Amending the Suffolk County Classification and Salary Plan and the 2001 Operating Budget in connection with a New Position Title in the Department of Public Works. Assigned to Legislative & Personnel and Public Works & Transportation (County Executive).

A motion by myself. Seconded by --

LEG. COOPER:

Second.

CHAIRMAN HALEY:

Seconded by Legislator Cooper. All those in favor?

MR. SABATINO:

Just a technical correction on that. The reference to the 2000 Operating Budget should be changed to 2001 in the resolution.

CHAIRMAN HALEY:

I have 2001. I have it right here.

MR. SABATINO:

Okay. It's been corrected. When it was first filed it had 2000 in the first Resolve clause. Okay.

CHAIRMAN HALEY:

Okay. All those in favor? Opposed? 1094 is approved. (Vote: 5-0-0-0).

And before we finish, I'd just like to welcome Abram Benko who is an

intern at my office from the William Floyd High School. All right, and you should have come earlier today, you could have heard some of the real good stuff.

We're adjourned. Thank you.

(*The meeting was adjourned at 1:55 P.M.*)

**Legislator Martin Haley, Chairman
Legislative & Personnel Committee**