



**MINUTES**  
**GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE**  
**Thursday, April 8, 2021 – 6:00PM**  
**Live Stream Link - <https://youtu.be/WvFu7CglCrY>**

**CALL TO ORDER:** By Hon. Ryan Foley, Chair called the meeting to order at 6:11PM

**MEMBERS:** Legislators, Tricia Kerr, Heidi Nightengale, Hans Pecher, Chris Petrus (Vice Chair) Mark Strong and Tucker Whitman

**OTHERS:** Chair McNabb-Coleman, Legislator Elane Daly, Keith Batman, Paul Pinckney, County Attorney Chris Palermo, County Clerk Sue Dwyer, IT Interim Director Paul Bornemann, Budget Director Lynn Marinelli, Staff Development Supervisor Jennifer Marshall, Commissioner Board of Election Katie Lacey, HR Administrator Lippoldt, Deputy Veterans Director Lindsey Wilkinson, Assistant County Attorney Brittany Massi, and Deputy Clerk of Legislature Amanda Morgan

**MINUTES TO APPROVE:** March 11, 2021, **Motion by Strong, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Kerr, all in favor.**

**APPOINTMENTS:** None

**Foley discusses the IT Hiring Committee meeting today and says that it went well. They are reviewing all of the applicants and their resumes for the position of IT Director. They are working on whittling down the list and established a tool to rank and rate the applicants that they have. They will collate the information they have and try to get down to a couple of candidates and present them to the legislature. He says Batman has some discussions surrounding the ethics policy. Batman says there is a group that has been working on the ethics policy since about October. He has what they hope is the final meeting next week. They will be sending it out to the committee prior to next month's meeting and if anyone has questions or comments to let himself, Massi, or Foley know.**

**DEPARTMENT UPDATES FOR COMMITTEE:**

**Cherl Heary and Katie Lacey (Board of Elections) –**  
Winter Report

This report is actually a summary of office activities for January through March. We have processed 598 new registrants. There have been 1,082 transfers from other counties and 127 name changes. Much of the office work during first three months of 2021 has been post-election “clean up”. Ballots have been stored, voter records have been updated, all of our canvass reports have been filed with State...and now we are readying for the 2021 local elections.

We have approved the mail check cards which every voter will receive in April. As people/post office return cards of those who have moved we expect to update several thousand records.

The Directory of County and Local Officials will be delivered in early April. We are also busy with the petition filings for all of the local elections to be held this year.

The primary date this year is June 22<sup>nd</sup>. We will determine the location of early voting when we know which Towns/City have primaries. We are required to have at least one location in the County and it may well be that our office will serve the purpose.

Our poll sites remain as they were last year except in the Town of Sterling where we have decided to utilize the much larger facility at the Fair Haven Fire Department instead of the Town Hall.

**Sheila Smith (Clerk of the Legislature) –**

- Updating Boards and Agencies members, terms, and By-Laws
- Updating contract log
- Processed several vehicle registration renewals, one Sheriff vehicle will be transferred to Probation Department
- Auctions International has sold 3 vehicles so far this year for a revenue of \$10,925.00 to the county.

**Christopher Palermo (County Attorney) – no updates**

**Susan Dwyer (County Clerk) –**

Beginning April 5, my 4 departments will have their full staff in the office. We will continue with appointments.

DMV got the go-ahead to hire a full time staff person and she is hired and in training. We are in the process of canvassing for the part time position and we have one part time vacancy in that office.

The Recording Office has a new Index & Recording Clerk and she is in training.

The majority of the staff is going through re-certification for the U S Dept of State so we can begin to process passport applications probably by May.

I am anxious to have a discussion of getting the Historian's staff back into their front office. I have attempted to set up a meeting to discuss this and I am requesting that happen very soon.

We continue to move forward with work on the DREAMS Project; we have weekly meetings, and this month met with Purchasing Director Don Carr and our Acting IT Director Paul Bornemann to discuss procurement and other issues.

The Records Advisory Committee is reviewing suggested updates to the County Records Manual and will be bringing those changes to this committee for approval to move on to the whole legislature.

**Paul Bornemann (Information Technology) –**

○ **Legislative Support**

- Jodie Nickerson continues to be available to work with legislators based on their availability to help with using county technology.
- Jodie and Daniel Lovell have been involved with meetings for Committees and Legislative Meetings and help with meeting related issues/concerns
- Some tips we have found are helpful for a fully functional meeting
  - Ensure you have a good internet connection
  - We have found that issues can be avoided by rebooting the Windows PC's one hour prior to the meeting to help ensure the memory has been cleared, updates are applied, and it's ready to use.
  - Connect in to the meeting 15 minutes early to validate audio/video is working as expected

• **Active projects**

- Mental Health Building network improvements are being planned for April replace aging network hardware with new devices supporting 10x throughput to accommodate increased reliance on Telehealth services.
- BOE cyber security initiative...partial funding by NYS BOE – meeting monthly
- Network Infrastructure upgrades for County office Building, Public Safety Building and Vitale building. Replace site switches and core network switches. Increase connections from 1gb to 10gb where possible. Scheduled security updates to network in April.
- Annual Munis upgrades and move to role based security
- 911 Phone System upgrade (per approved resolution)
- Jail system upgrade (per approved resolution)
- Evaluating alternative systems for Sheriff Vehicle & Cellular Services

**Discussion:**

**Foley says there were some technical difficulties with the last legislature meeting. He says there were some legislators that expressed concern. He says the issues were two fold. The OWL had been dropped and not working properly, equipment inside of chambers upgraded and updated, and 8x8 not performing well. He says it is a work in progress and having IT onsite during the entire meeting has been beneficial. He says one issue they were working on in the steering group was the wiring in the county office building and it being part of the issue. There needs to be an upgrade to the wiring to make it better all around.**

**Bornemann says the places that have the worst wiring are the county office building and the public safety building. He says it is the equivalent of trying to take ten lanes of traffic down a to lane road. They are working with our cabling vendor and buildings to look at the county office building and public safety building to look for cost effect ways to upgrade the infrastructure. The cabling has not been maintained over the years and they are looking at replacing it.**

**Jessica Strassle (Veterans) – Deputy Lindsey Wilkinson:**

- 1 case were rated for a veteran in retro payment
  - 1 WW2 veteran received \$ 4200.00 in retro payment, and a monthly tax-free benefit of \$912.00.
  - 4 veteran family members received over \$2450.00 reimbursements for burial benefits.

- These veterans & or surviving spouses will continue to receive a monthly benefit ranging from \$135.00 - \$3,700.00 for their service connected disabilities from the Veterans Administration.
- Syracuse VA Medical Center are administering COVID Vaccinations in accordance with CDC prioritization guidelines.
- Cayuga County Vet van is transporting patients to Syracuse Tuesday (North) and Wednesday (South).
- NYS Division of Veterans Services hosted virtual training on a variety of topics, and we will continue to participate.
- 1 education (Chapter 35) benefits were processed through the VA allowing a \$1,248.00 monthly tax-free allowance for dependent children obtaining a higher education for veterans who are at a VA disability rating of 100%. This stipend can be spent on students' needs.
- 6 markers, burial benefits and presidential citations were processed through our office for deceased veterans and their families.
- Our office initiated 12 new claims for pensions or compensation. We are still operating by appointment only at this time.
- Average phone calls in a workday is 25-30 to schedule an appointment to make an office visit, as we continue to operate by appointment only.

**Background on resolutions:**

Foley says the Operations Officer was put in the budget to help with the Chairperson managing a \$150 million dollar corporation and not having to do his or herself. The other portion is Secretary to the Chairperson for support as well. He says that Jen Marshall has some information (Attached) to present.

Marshall says the Secretary to the Chairperson is a position we have had in the past, so it does currently exist and would just be authorization to fill it. The position was funded in the 2021 budget. The salary is currently in the graded system as a grade four, so the minimum salary would be \$45,000 and could go up an additional \$4,000 which would be the 10%. She says anything more than that would have to come back to the legislature for approval. She discusses the current org chart (attached). She says they are currently not looking at filling the County Administrator position, but an Operations Officer position that reports directly to the Chair of the Legislature and subsequently all of the legislators. The Operations Officer would not oversee all of the county departments, but would be in conjunction with the Chair of the Legislature. They would not fill the County Administrator, Executive Assistant, or Administrative Assistant. The current Confidential Secretary currently works more in Accounts Payable/Purchasing, so they would go under the Director of Purchasing and work with the Treasurer's Office and purchasing.

Pinckney asks if the Secretary to the Chairperson based on a full time or part time Chair position. Marshall says that it would be for both an could be either one. The Secretary to the Chairperson would be a full time position whether the Chair is full time or part time salary. She says that the Chair and all legislators are considered full time. Pinckney asks if we ended up at some point with a part time Chairperson that would translate the same amount of responsibilities for that Secretary. Marshall says she imagines that the Secretary would be support for all of the County Administration, so also the Operations Officer, Budget Director, and any of the legislators as well.

Lattimore asks if we know the total cost of the operations and one versus the other. He knows Petrus has been talking about a County Executive and Charter. He also ask which form is more effective and how we want to look into that. Marshall says that the legislative body will have a lot of decisions over the next couple of years, but currently we need structure now. She says those decisions will not be made soon and it will take at least a couple of years to go through that process. She says she has asked Marinelli to total up the cost of County Administration in the past years (attached).

Daly says it was her understanding that even as we go to look at the long term form of government and looking into charter or not. She says that there has to be an appointment of a charter commission and a lot of decisions on how that would look. This is an opportunity to try and get some additional supports in the administration of the county that would be there in the interim of making those final decisions. Marshall agrees and says that the Operations Officer in conjunction with the legislature would be an excellent resource to help the legislature make those decisions.

Strong says he is taking this all in. He says at this point he is not sure what the best avenue to go is and he agrees with what is on the screen at the moment as far as the Operations Officer and Secretary. He is assuming that is the great way to go, but he is still a little green at this and if that is what they want to do he guesses he will support it.

Kerr is supporting these positions and thinks it is remarkable looking at the current structure and number of vacancies at the top of our county government that we have been operating and functioning as well as we have through the pandemic. She thinks there is a need for immediate support on the sixth floor and it has gone a long time without it. Se

thinks it is a testament in large part to our Chair and her commitment and time she has put into it. The current Confidential Secretary position is split between duties and not functioning fully to support that position. She thinks a basic Secretary to the Chairperson is baseline administrative support that we don't have now and should have. The Operations Officer she thinks is a key critical position for any organization that is the size of ours. She looked at the CGR report and one of those included adding a Deputy and this position reminds her of that and is needed. She thinks it is important to look at the cost and cost comparisons, but does not think it is something that we should skimp on.

Pecher says he is not necessarily opposed to this yet, but he thinks it is early to institute these positions.

**RESOLUTIONS:**

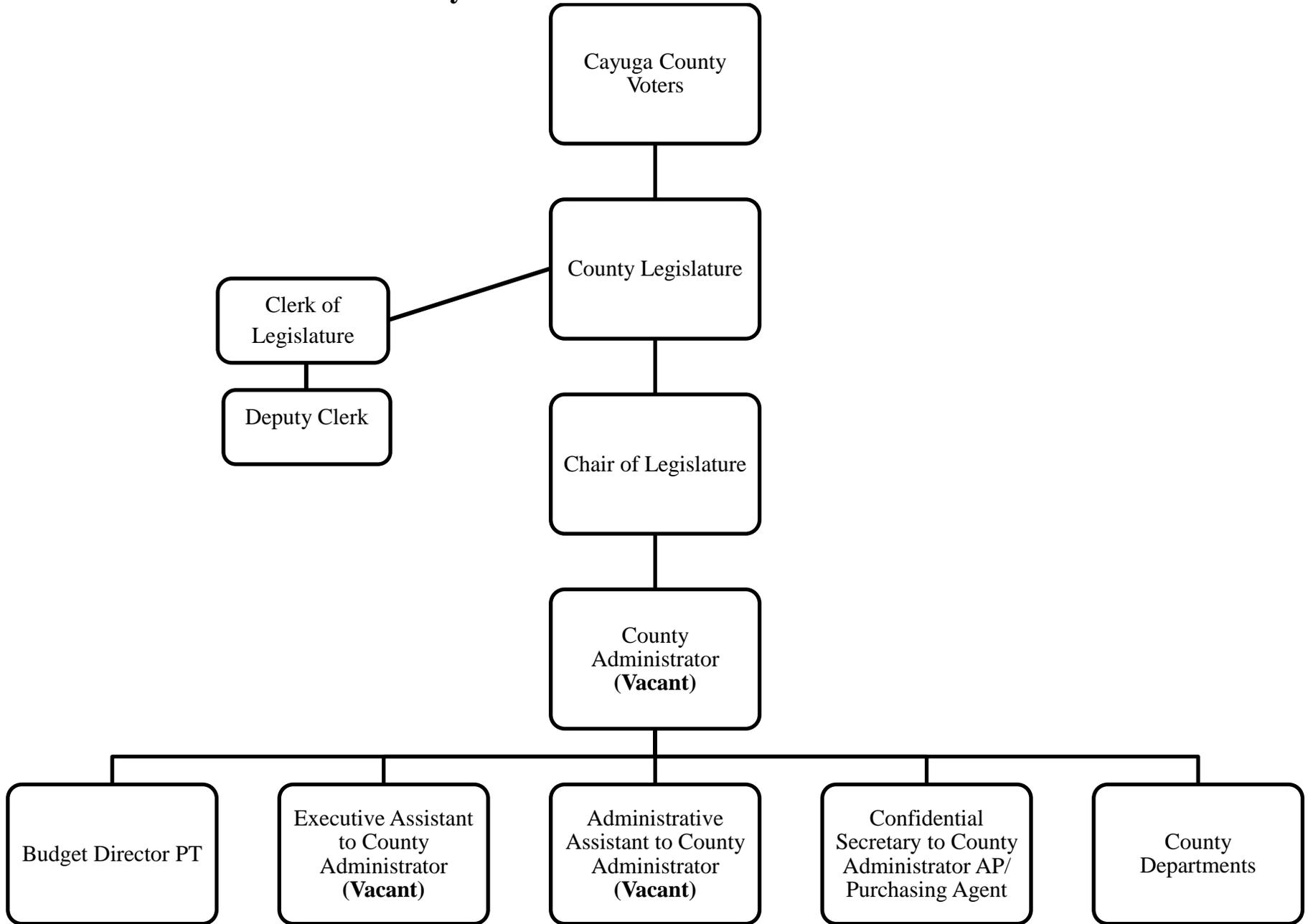
**Motion by Kerr to bundle GO 1 & 2, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Strong, all in favor except Pecher.**

4-21-GO-1 Authorizing the Creation and Filling of the position of Operations Officer.

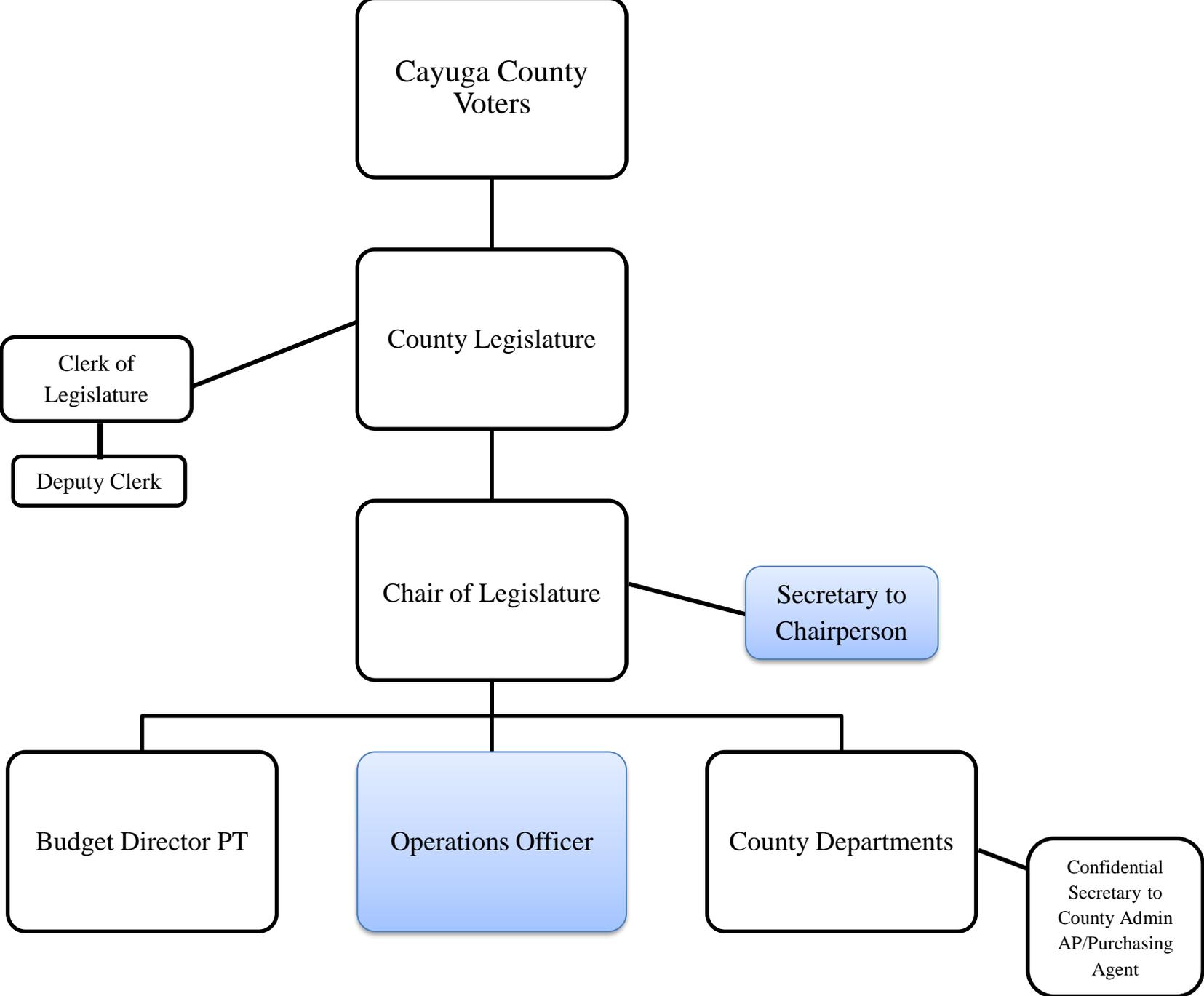
4-21-GO-2 Authorizing the Chair of the Legislature to fill a Secretary to the Chairperson Position.

**Motion by Kerr to adjourn at 7:19PM, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Strong, all in favor.**

# County Administration – Current Structure



**County Administration – Proposed Structure**



## Cost of County Administration

	2016 Budget	2016 Actual	2017 Budget	2017 Actual	2018 Budget	2018 Actual	2019 Budget	2019 Actual	2020 Budget	2020 Actual	2021 Budget
Legislative Department											
A10101 Total Salary and Fringe Benefits	326,022	357,760	361,754	354,700	360,803	357,022	429,309	424,682	445,342	445,286	477,154
County Administrator Department											
A12301 Total Salary and Fringe Benefits	296,343	308,595	305,425	304,798	305,039	355,045	418,477	464,826	303,898	224,213	339,900
Total Cost	622,365	666,355	667,179	659,498	665,842	712,067	847,786	889,508	749,240	669,499	817,054

**2019:** Legislative salary increases. New purchasing director and executive assistant positions added.

**2020:** Administrator not hired but budgeted. Executive assistant not budgeted.

**2021:** Budgeted 3/4 of County Administrator and executive assistant salaries. Budget full time County Chair.