



**SPECIAL LEGISLATURE MEETING MINUTES
CAYUGA COUNTY LEGISLATURE
Monday, September 9, 2019 at 6:00PM in Chambers**

CALL TO ORDER: Hon. Tucker Whitman, Chair called the meeting to order at 6:00PM

ROLL CALL: Sheila Smith, Clerk of the Legislature all Legislators present

EXCUSED: Andy Dennison, Ben Vitale, Chris Petrus and Timothy Lattimore

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

MOMENT OF PRAYER:

PUBLIC HEARING: Opened at 6:01 PM by Whitman.

- Make appropriations from the Buildings Repair Reserve

TOPIC OF DISCUSSION: County Administrator position

Discussion:

Whitman says the topic of tonight's meeting is the position of County Administrator and what the future might bring for it. He says this essentially will be a brain storming session, I guess we have a few options. He says I know in the past there has been a full-time chair person, Administrators and a few other things as well. He says as far as how we want to proceed in the future as of first of the year I think that is what we will be mostly focused on. Whitman says I believe we have the rest of the year covered, we have somebody filling in on the day to day operations that will be working with Lynn on the budget.

Bennett say I think it is time we appoint an interim so they can start making some decisions. He says we need somebody that department heads can go to get definitive answers from without having to go thru three to four people.

Whitman asks would this individual fill the shoes of our past County Administrator. Bennett says I would hope they have some input on the budget and work on operations on a day to day basis. He says out department heads need someone to go to on a full-time basis.

Didio says I support what Bennett just said. He says we need someone now we cannot wait.

Foley says we have wrestled with the idea of going with an administrator at least interim in part because we have our department heads that ideally would step up into the position but they have their own full-time positions. He says if we move one over we need to give them our full support.

Motion by Bennett to go into executive session at 6:11 PM, 2nd by Foley, all in favor.

Motion by Bennett to come out of executive session at 6:27 PM, 2nd by Daly, all in favor.

Discussion:

Whitman says lets pick back up the discussion on what we would like to do about the administrator position.

McNabb-Coleman says I am against having a full-time chair, I don't think that any of us are a CEO or pretend to be either. She says I think the Administrator's office, we did a lot to set it up for success with the last Administrator and it is unfortunate that it didn't work out. She says but I am not willing to give up on the idea.

Whitman says I have struggle with concept of a full-time chair person, in the past I have seen different chair's even when we had administrators. He says it is hard for the elected to give up that much time as well.

Ripley says the administrator position has not worked for many years, how many times have we went thru administrators already. He says this County does not work with Administrators, the Legislative body runs the county. He says for us to move forward I think we would be better off going with a County Executive that is elected by the people.

Whitman says we have had three administrators since I have been here and at no fault of them individually, some have been a great fit personality with everybody but not so great at their jobs. He says with our structure I do not see how it would ever work, it turns into a power struggle in the end. He says this body has the power and the administrator has enough power to get the job done but we want them to do all the work for us but we do not give them enough power to get it done. Whitman says my concern with having a County Executive, if we do not give an administrator enough power to get their job done I cannot believe we would give an executive enough power to do the job. He says I am intrigued by Daly's term Professional Management and whether or not there is a third option, we could find something in the middle that keeps the Legislature in control but yet we have somebody professionally managing the day to day operations.

Didio say do we have the name of a firm. He says I know there will be a price on it but we need to begin somewhere.

DeForest says the other thing is we need to look at redistricting. He says we may be looking at a situation where the size of the body decreases so in theory it would make things easier to manage so we shouldn't lose sight of that scenario.

Batman says in recent years we have had challenges in the administrative office. He says when we had a fulltime chair one of the things that happened is that we blew away 22 million dollars and taxes had to increase so our experience is that it does not giving up authority and we acknowledge that and so we need to be looking at something new.

Whitman says I am open to all of this and I think this needs to go to committee of I will need to put another group together.

Bennett says I hope this body doesn't spend more money foolishly on another study, I was totally against that from the beginning. He says not that we have it we should use it and modify it. He says we gave too much power to the county administrator at the time so now we need to clean up Local Law 7.

Batman says I would suggest ideas and I suspect we are as far as long as we are going to get this evening. He says what I would suggest is Whitman meet with the chair of Government Opts to determine if that is the group that should be looking at this and if not put together another group to look at it.

Whitman closes the public hearing at 6:55 PM.

9-9-LEG-1 Authorization pursuant to NY Gen. Mun. Law § 6-D to appropriate from the Buildings Repair Reserve.
Motion by Batman, 2nd by Ripley, all in favor.

Motion by Bennett to adjourn at 6:56 PM, 2nd by Foley, all in favor. 5