

Charter Transition Team Meeting
March 25, 2008
4:30 PM
Surrogate's Court, 3rd Floor, COB

Attendance:

Members: Legislator Gary Bischoff, Chairman
 Legislator Jon Decker - *excused*
 Legislator Phil Terpening
 Legislator Wayne Harris
 Dr. Gerald Benjamin, SUNY New Paltz
 Marianne Collins, SUNY Ulster
 Louis Klein, Attorney - *excused*

Staff: Arthur Smith, Deputy County Administrator
 Bea Havranek, First Assistant County Attorney
 Eric Stock – Paralegal, County Attorney's Office
 Meg Dellay – Assistant to Charter Transition Team

Public: Lee Cane, Tom Kadgen, Renee Sachs – LWV
 Emily Johnson – LWV & Youth Bureau
 Allan Wikman

Agenda:

- **Administrative Code**
- **Time Line & Next Informational Meeting**
- **Financial Organization**
- **Salary**
- **Other**

Gary Bischoff opened the meeting at 4:40pm.

1. Administrative Code was set aside as first item, since copies were still being readied for distribution.

2. **Time Line and Next Informational Meeting** – copies of a Proposed Time Line handed out. ****see attachment****

Gary announced there will be a second Informational Meeting on Wednesday, April 2, 2008 during a Special Session. Chairman Dave Donaldson has granted the Charter Transition Team the Privilege of the Floor to review their on-going work of the Administrative Code. Hopefully, this scheduling arrangement will make it possible for more legislators to attend. In addition:

- The public and press are invited.
- A notice will be sent from the Clerk of the Legislature.
- Gary and Bea will present an updated power point presentation.
- Meg will email all legislators Articles 10-14 prior to session.

A third informational meeting is scheduled for June 2008. Bea's deadline is June 1st to complete the code. The proposed timeline sets a legislative vote in August.

Time Line also includes a Tentative Budget Schedule (based on last year). Gary added Civil Service considerations for continuity of positions - per Art Smith's recommendation - during month of December.

Back to Administrative Code – Item #1 on agenda:

Bea responded to POINTS RAISED PREVIOUSLY:

- Vacancy in Elected Office (p.10, C) – Nina Postupack clarified that a vacancy in elected office of County Clerk (or Sheriff or District Attorney) is appointed by the Governor, not by the County Legislature. Bea reported that this follows state law. Gary asked if language can be inserted to over-ride the state law? Bea will research further.
- Medical Examiner (p.38, §A5-3) – Bea explained this position is created by statute as a public officer; therefore, appointment must be a resident of county. Jerry Benjamin added that the Commissioner of Efficiency and Local Government is looking at jurisdiction which may change this requirement.

Bea responded to QUESTIONS FROM LAST MONTH'S MEETING:

- Personnel Director (p.49, §A10-1 (A) – must be a resident per Public Officers Law.
- Social Services (p.50, §A11-1 (B) – Bea will take out the reference to “NYS Code of Rules and Regulations” as suggested by CTT members, to avoid placing future restrictions on department.
- Social Services (p.51, §A11-1 (E) – Bea will eliminate “Rules and Regulations” subsection as suggested by CTT members. Legislature already has capability.
- Voting on the Administrative Code in sections? – Bea said no, Municipal Home Law states the code needs to be adopted as one law.

Bea covered RECENT CHANGES, PLUS NEW ARTICLES:

- Chairman, Vice Chairman of Legislature (p.15, C) – Dave Donaldson recommended the vice chairman be appointed by the chair, rather than by a majority vote of the legislature. Motion by Wayne Harris to change section of Administrative Code §A2-15 (C) to read as follows: “The Chairman within 10 days of having been elected as Chairman of the Legislature shall appoint a Vice Chair.” Seconded by Jerry Benjamin. Passed, with one (1) no - Phil Terpening.
- Social Services/ Accounting for moneys (p.53, D) – research by Adele and Bea indicate the time period of “once weekly” (instead of “no later than the next monthly statement”) to be in compliance with standard accounting practices.
- Social Services/ Deputy Commissioner (p.54, §A11-2 (B) – the deputy language of “not classified as competitive under the County's civil service rules” will be inserted for most departments to cover current deputies who are in competitive/ tested positions.

- Public Works / Article 12 (p. 53-56) – Bea reviewed reports, deputies, acting, and four divisions, LL 5 of 2007, and classification descriptions from Personnel.
- Public Transportation / Article 13 (p. 57-58) – Bea reviewed powers and duties from LL 4 of 2003, reports and deputies.
- County Attorney / Article 14 (p. 59-60) – Bea reviewed reports, Asst. DA’s duties, and Asst DA’s must be licensed/admitted to the bar.

3. Financial Organization – Gary reported that a Financial Organization Meeting with Bob Wenzel (County Auditor), Arthur Smith (Deputy Administrator) and Adele Reiter (Deputy Treasurer) convened to focus on the organization of the county finances. They reviewed the Organizational Chart done last year.

The positions of Executive, Commissioner of Finance, and Comptroller were discussed with the following concerns:

- Suggestion to define this organization as lean. Charter gives Comptroller’s office power to audit everything, but may be overloaded.
- However, don’t want the office ‘starved’ and unable to perform effectively.
- County is now contracting out for auditors, could budget expense in later.
- Hired auditors, as they save money, can then create county position.
- County now only audits about 40% of invoices.
- Elected Comptroller will bring skills to office.

4. Salary of Executive and Comptroller – Arthur Smith distributed an analysis of 2007 County Executive and Comptroller Salaries from data obtained from NYSAC and US Census Bureau. **see Attached**

Gary would like this committee to recommend an Executive salary – suggested the Comptroller salary be 85% of County Executive.

Discussion followed:

- What about any other reference points? What about private sector? Education?
- Comparison useful as a first look, but may not be the complete package (e.g., Broome County salary appears low, but is there a car or other perks included?)
- Suggestion to look at management salaries as well.
- Art agreed to check with NYSAC for subset of County Managers and County Administrators.
- Sheriff, Clerk and Treasurer – currently, same salary of \$95,000.

Jerry suggested a salary be announced within a context:

- What is the present Administrative Office set-up with positions and salaries?
- What is the projected cost of Executive office vs. Administrative costs now?
- What are the net changes?
- Link salaries and responsibilities - current practice vs. projected estimate.

5. Other – Gary handed out a proposal from Legislator Jon Decker who was unable to attend. **see Attached**

Jon's memo to members of the Charter Transition Team suggested forming a Speakers Bureau to travel within the county to create positive awareness and ease facilitation of the transition process. The idea was well received but there was not a quorum to vote; the meeting ran longer than usual and Legislators Harris and Terpening had to leave due to commitments to other committee meetings.

Gary adjourned the meeting at 6:40 PM.

Date of next meeting is Tuesday, April 22, 2008 at 4:30pm.

Respectfully submitted:

Meg E. Dellay

Assistant to Charter Transition Team