



Inclusion Through Diversity

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June 2, 2015
TWO PAGES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Highlights of the **June 2, 2015** meeting of the Tompkins County Legislature

Amy Wilson Guerreri Appointed County Personnel Commissioner

Amy Wilson Guerreri has been appointed Tompkins County Commissioner of Personnel following a national search. The Legislature confirmed County Administrator Joe Mareane's appointment of Ms. Guereri by unanimous vote (Legislators Nate Shinagawa and Peter Stein were excused.) The appointment is for an initial six-year term, as is required under provisions of New York State Civil Service Law. She succeeds Deborah Prato, who accepted a position with the New Jersey Transit Authority.

The new Commissioner has served as Personnel Director for Yates County since 2012, and for eight years before that served as talent acquisition recruiter for the 9,000-person Rochester General Health System, while also fulfilling a number of other human resources management responsibilities. Before that, she was in senior management at the Geneva Housing Authority. Commissioner Guerreri's experience also includes four years in the U.S. Army.

Amy Guerreri holds a MS degree in Management from Keuka College and a Bachelor's degree in Human Resources Management from Empire State College.

In requesting confirmation of the appointment Administrator Mareane stated, "I share the search committee's belief that Amy can continue to move us forward in all areas of HR, including our desire to be known as an employer of choice."

Commissioner Guerreri expressed deep appreciation to the selection committee, and said she is honored to be chosen for the position, eager to start, and promised to serve Tomkins County to the best of her ability.

Tompkins County's Personnel Commissioner leads and manages all aspects of the County's personnel, human resources, civil service, and labor relations programs and activities. The Commissioner serves as the County's chief labor negotiator and is responsible for maintaining positive labor relationships, handling disciplinary actions, and working with management and staff to foster a positive, productive, fulfilling workplace environment.

Ms. Guerreri will begin her service with Tompkins County June 22.
County Administrator Joe Mareane, 274-5551.

Legislature Reconsiders, Reaffirms Support for Single-Payer Health-Care

Reconsidering a resolution that failed to achieve the required eight votes to pass at its last meeting, the Legislature brought the matter up again, and this time reaffirmed its continued support and preference for a single-payer approach to health care coverage in New York State, urging passage by the State Senate of the New York Health Act, proposed legislation that has passed the State Assembly since its last meeting. Legislator Will Burbank, who had been excused from the last meeting, moved for reconsideration, and Legislator Carol Chock, who also had been excused, seconded it. This time, the support resolution, which had first been advanced by Legislator Kathy Luz Herrera, passed by a vote of 9-3, Legislators Mike Sigler, Glenn Morey, and Dave McKenna voting no. (Legislators Nate Shinagawa and Peter Stein were excused.) Legislator Chock called the current system of managing health bills "just insane" and said the current system is driving out many doctors.

Legislator Sigler repeated his skepticism about the proposal, calling its assumptions unrealistic, and characterizing it as a system that would ultimately hurt the middle class. While he voted in favor, Legislator Jim Dennis remarked that he thought it highly doubtful that the State would pick up the cost of this when they will not support other changes, such as assuming the cost of Medicaid, which would have a dramatic impact.

Contact: Legislator Will Burbank, 272-7555; Legislator Mike Sigler, 339-7978.

2016 Budget Guidelines Approved for Departments and Agencies

The Legislature, by a vote of 11-1, approved spending targets for County departments and agencies to use in preparing their proposed budgets, as part of the County's 2016 budget process. (Legislator Carol Chock voted no; Legislators Peter Stein and Nate Shinagawa were excused.) The fiscal targets for County departments will be equal to the amount provided by the 2015 budget for discretionary programs and mandated responsibilities, less any one-time or reallocate costs, and also by changes such as negotiated wage growth and changes in fringe benefit rates. For grants to specific not-for-profit agencies, the fiscal targets will equal the amount approved in the 2015 adopted budget, less any one-time or re-appropriated funding, then increased by 2%.

The Legislature has already adopted a tax levy guideline of 1.3% for the County Administrator's recommended budget, which equals the County's anticipated 2016 tax cap, and is characterized as the basis for a "maintenance of effort" budget for County departments while addressing other critical needs and priorities. Legislator Chock voted no on the spending targets since she said thinks the number should be higher.

In a separate action related to the 2016 budget process, the Legislature, without dissent (Legislators Nate Shinagawa and Peter Stein were excused.) scheduled a public hearing for its next meeting June 16, 5:30 p.m., regarding a proposed Local Law that would authorize the Legislature to override the tax levy limit for 2016. Passage of such a law, which has occurred every year since the New York State Property Tax Cap went into effect, would not mean that the Legislature intends to exceed the cap, but would provide the flexibility to exceed the cap if deemed necessary, and would protect the County if it meets the cap, as calculated, but inadvertently exceeds it due to clerical or technical errors. The June 16 hearing will take place at Legislature Chambers, located at the Governor Daniel D. Tompkins Building (second floor), 121 E. Court Street, Ithaca.

Contact: James Dennis, Chair, Budget, Capital and Personnel Committee, 387-4058

Legislature Accepts New York Prize Community Grid Competition Grant

The Legislature, without dissent (Legislators Peter Stein and Nate Shinagawa were excused), accepted a \$95,314 grant award to Tompkins County under the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority's NY Prize Community Grid Competition, for the purpose of preparing a feasibility study that assesses microgrid options for county facilities and nearby uses in and around Ithaca Tompkins Regional Airport.

A microgrid is a local energy system that can generate electricity independent of the grid and operate independently in times when there is disruption of electrical power from the grid. The NY Prize study will examine whether it is feasible to develop a microgrid in the area around the airport to assure that critical facilities there could continue to operate in an emergency even if there was an interruption of power supplied by the grid. The feasibility assessment will take place over a period of approximately 8 months following a methodology and cost-benefit analysis process required by the NYSERDA grant.

Contact: Ed Marx, Commissioner of Planning, 274-5560; Dooley Kiefer, Chair, Planning, Energy, and Environmental Quality Committee, 257-7453.

Hearing Scheduled on Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan

The Legislature, by unanimous vote, scheduled a public hearing on an updated Tompkins County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan. The hearing will be held July 7, 5:30 p.m., at Legislature Chambers, located in the Governor Daniel D. Tompkins Building (second floor), 121 E. Court Street, Ithaca. Legislators heard an overview of the proposed plan update from Monika Roth of Cooperative Extension. Read more about the draft plan and view the plan itself at <http://www.tompkinscountyny.gov/planning/rural-resources>.

Contact: Dooley Kiefer, Chair, Planning, Energy, and Environmental Quality Committee, 257-7453.