



Inclusion Through Diversity

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THREE PAGES

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Highlights of the **July 17, 2018** meeting of the Tompkins County Legislature

#### **Lisa Holmes and Amie Hendrix Appointed Deputy County Administrators**

Tompkins County Administrator Jason Molino has tapped two experienced department administrators to serve in the position of Deputy County Administrator, announcing his appointment of Office for the Aging Director Lisa Holmes and Youth Services Director Amie Hendrix to fill critical leadership roles in the Department of County Administration and County government. Both positions provide executive level assistance for County Administration's many budget, administrative, planning, and coordination functions—involving Administration staff, and administrative and fiscal management of departments, programs, and agencies.

Hendrix and Holmes were selected as the result of an extensive national search. "This was a thorough process that involved the input from many within the organization," Administrator Molino noted. "The talent pool that applied for the deputy position has brought forward two excellent internal candidates who will greatly contribute to County Administration and to the County organization. After much thought and review, I decided to request from the Legislature to fill not only the existing deputy position but also the second deputy position authorized as part of the 2018 budget."

Lisa Holmes, appointed as Deputy County Administrator (Operations and Administration), brings to the position 20 years of progressive responsibility in Tompkins County government through the Office for the Aging, serving since 2006 as its Director. Holmes' position will coordinate and oversee the administrative and fiscal management activities to support County departments and agencies—in part, assisting the Administrator in providing strategic and operational leadership and oversight to departments, services and major projects. Ms. Holmes holds a Master of Public Administration degree from Northeastern University, Boston, MA, and a Bachelor of Science degree in Human Development and Family Studies from Cornell University.

"I am honored to continue to serve Tompkins County in this new capacity, and look forward to bringing my skills and experience to County Administration," Ms. Holmes said.

Amie Hendrix, appointed as Deputy County Administrator (Performance and Innovation), enters the position with more than ten years of experience in government and non-profit administration, serving since 2010 as Tompkins County's Director of Youth Services. Ms. Hendrix' position will include specific focus areas on performance of the County organization, including helping to lead the countywide performance measurement initiative, and working on leadership development and operational efficiencies within county government. Ms. Hendrix holds a Master of Science degree in Strategic Leadership from Roberts Wesleyan College and a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from Niagara University.

"This transition is bittersweet for me as I will greatly miss my team at Youth Services while being excited to begin a new role within the same organization," Ms. Hendrix said. "In my current role, I have seen many of the things that Tompkins County has to offer both our internal and external partners, and I look forward to finding ways to enhance our operations through building on current successes and tackling our challenges. It is truly energizing to support an organization you believe in."

Mr. Molino's announcement of the appointments followed the Legislature's authorization to create the second Deputy County Administrator position and to transfer from the County's Contingent Fund money that had been set aside as part of the 2018 budget to support the second Deputy's position, as determined appropriate by the next County Administrator. More than \$150,000 in Contingent funding was appropriated to support cost of the second Deputy (salary and fringe), as well as related expenses such as office and computer expense.

Administrator Molino is working with Hendrix and Holmes on transition plans for their respective departments as they move out of their current positions. "This is an exciting time for the Department of County Administration and county government," Mr. Molino said. "Lisa and Amie are excellent leaders in the community, and I am looking forward to their joining the County Administration team."

*Contact: County Administrator Jason Molino, 274-5551; Deputy County Administrator Lisa Holmes, 274-5485; Deputy County Administrator Amie Hendrix, 274-5312.*

### **Legislature Updates Sustainable Energy Program Law**

Following a public hearing, the Legislature, without dissent, adopted a new Local Law modifying the County's 2015 Local Law that established the County's Sustainable Energy Loan Program and authorized the County Administrator to execute an amended municipal agreement with the Energy Improvement Corporation to implement and administer the program. The program provides Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) financing for local energy-related improvement projects by implementing the *Energize NY* Benefit Financing Program authorized by New York State. The financing program helps commercial and non-profit building owners reduce operating costs and increase the value of their properties through clean energy improvements. The recommended modifications would incorporate updated provisions of the New York State PACE law, and would keep the County's PACE provisions in line with the City of Ithaca's already adopted revised PACE law.

*Contact: Anna Kelles, Chair, Planning, Development, and Environmental Quality Committee, 342-2036; Andrea Aguirre, Senior Planner/ Energy Specialist, Tompkins County Department of Planning and Sustainability, 274-5560.*

### **State Urged to Strengthen Proposed New Guidelines for Major Power Generators**

The Legislature passed a resolution, advanced by Legislator Anna Kelles, that strongly urges the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation to adopt more stringent guidelines when revising Greenhouse Gas Emissions standards for major power generators, ones that account for lifecycle emissions and global warming impact of methane, as established by current scientific research. The vote was 13-1, with Legislator Mike Sigler voting no. The resolution will be submitted as the DEC proposes revisions to the air quality section of the NYS Conservation Code, setting performance standards for major electric generating facilities, which will require all power plants in New York to meet new emissions limits for carbon dioxide, with comments on the revisions due by July 28<sup>th</sup>.

The resolution states that "the Tompkins County Legislature recognizes that while conversion from other fossil fuels to natural gas may seem to provide greenhouse gas emission reduction when looking only at combustion emissions, when full life-cycle emissions of shale gas are taken into account, greenhouse gas emissions from shale gas are no better than or possibly even worse than those of other fuels."

More than a half-dozen people addressed the Legislature urging support of the measure, including Cornell professor Tony Ingraffia, who had pioneered research on the impact of methane. Legislator Sigler said he could not support the measure, since he sees that it offers no answer to the energy problem. Legislator Deborah Dawson said she understands the science and the frustrations that such resolutions can create, but that the real problem is being able to shift from fossil fuels without experiencing economic harm. She expressed hope that the Legislature might create a working group to address that issue.

*Contact: Legislator Anna Kelles, 342-2036*

### **Legislature Votes to Recognize Indigenous Peoples' Day as a Holiday in Tompkins County**

Reconsidering a revised version of a resolution first brought up last year, the Legislature unanimously voted to recognize the second Monday in October as *Indigenous Peoples' Day*, "encouraging the celebration of this day in a manner that promotes respect, understanding and friendship; combats prejudice and bias; works to eliminate

discrimination stemming from colonization; and acknowledges our history.” The measure also directs that all Tompkins County documents and references to “Holidays” include Indigenous Peoples’ Day. Legislator Michael Lane noted that the intention is to have two celebrations on the second Monday of each year, Columbus Day and Indigenous Peoples’ Day; indigenous people have been and continue to be important in our community, he said. Several legislators thanked and recognized Legislator Leslyn McBean-Clairborne, chair of the County’s Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Committee, for her initiative and perseverance in moving this important issue forward.

*Contact: Leslyn McBean-Clairborne, Chair, Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Committee, 277-5104*

### **Legislature Passes Resolution of Support for Immigrants and Refugees**

The Legislature approved a resolution to support immigrants and refugees who live within Tompkins County, and maintaining that the separating of children from parents at the United States/Mexico Border is inhumane. The measure states that the Tompkins County Legislature “stand(s) alongside our immigrant neighbors and residents, and oppose(s) the practice of family separation and the detention of children, as well as all inhumane practices established by our federal government to further the duration of family separation.” It calls upon federal leaders “to oppose this practice of family separation and support legislation that honors the dignity of all.” The vote was 11-3, with Republicans Mike Sigler, Glenn Morey, and Dave McKenna dissenting. Legislator Sigler remarked that he was prepared to support the version passed in committee, but objected to wording added to the amended version considered by the Legislature.

*Contact: Shawna Black, Chair, Health and Human Services Committee, 351-7855*

### **Legislature Accepts Audited Financial Report for 2017**

The Legislature, by unanimous vote, accepted the audited Financial Report for Tompkins County for the fiscal year 2017, conducted by the audit firm of Inero& Co. CPAs, LLP. In a comprehensive report to the Legislature, Finance Director Rick Snyder indicated the County received an “unmodified opinion” from the auditors, the highest possible ranking, with no material instances of noncompliance and no material internal control weaknesses found. As part of his report, Director Snyder said the County’s General Fund recorded an increase of \$4.0 million, ending 2017 with fund balance of \$44.9 million, \$38.8 million of that unassigned.

*Contact: Finance Director Rick Snyder, 274-5544*

Among other business,

The Legislature, by resolution, committed the County to adopt the Zero Suicide model, as endorsed by the Tompkins County Suicide Prevention Coalition, to reduce the number of people committing suicides, committing to sharing lessons learned with other counties to support a statewide initiative, and encouraging all health and behavioral healthcare partners to participate in the Zero Suicide Model. The County will be one of the first communities in New York State to implement Zero Suicide.

The Legislature authorized the Mental Health Department to accept a \$156,000 one-time grant from New York State to fund a range of treatment and transition services for jail-based substance abuse disorder services. The Legislature also agreed to sign on to the “Stepping Up” program, an initiative focused on reducing the number of people with mental illnesses in jails.

The Legislature approved a nearly \$725,000 transfer from the Highway Fund Balance to amend the Capital Program for Coddington Road Highway Safety Improvements at the Burns Road/East King Road intersection in the Town of Ithaca, and awarded R. B. Robinson Contracting, Inc., of Candor, NY, the construction contract for the project.

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