

# Attendance Sheets

District	Last Name	Present	Absent	Present/Late
District 14 - Town of Wappinger	Amparo	✓		
District 19 - Towns of North East, Stanford, Pine Plains, Milan	Blalock	✓		
District 13 - Towns of LaGrange, Union Vale, and Wappinger	Bolner	✓		
District 3 - Town of LaGrange	Borchert	✓		
District 1 - Town of Poughkeepsie	Doxsey	✓		
District 6 - Town of Poughkeepsie	Flesland	✓		
District 18 - City of Beacon	Forman	✓		
District 21 - Town of East Fishkill	Horton	✓		
District 22 - Town of Beekman	Hutchings	✓		
District 15 - Towns of Poughkeepsie and Wappinger	Incoronato	✓		
District 10 - City of Poughkeepsie	Jeter-Jackson	✓		
District 25 - Amenia, Stanford, Washington, Pleasant Valley	Kelsey	✓		
District 16 - Towns of Fishkill, East Fishkill and City of Beacon	MacAvery	✓		
District 17 - Town and Village of Fishkill	Miccio	✓		
District 7 - Town of Hyde Park	Perkins	✓		
District 8 - City and Town of Poughkeepsie	Rolison	✓		
District 5 - Town of Poughkeepsie	Roman	✓		
District 4 - Town of Hyde Park	Serino	✓		
District 24 - Towns of Dover and Union Vale	Surman	✓		
District 23 - Town/Village of Pawling, Beekman and East Fishkill	Thomes	✓		
District 20 - Town of Red Hook	Traudt	✓		
District 11 - Towns of Rhinebeck and Clinton	Tyner	✓		
District 12 - Town of East Fishkill	Weiss	✓		
District 9 - City of Poughkeepsie	White	✓		
District 2 - Towns of Pleasant Valley and Poughkeepsie	Wilkinson	✓		
<b>Present:</b>	<u>25</u>	<b>Total:</b>	<u>25</u>	<u>0</u>
<b>Absent:</b>	<u>0</u>			
<b>Vacant:</b>	<u>0</u>			

Public Hearing on County Executive Budget

Date: 11/7/13

Special Board Meeting  
Public Hearing  
on the  
County Executive's Budget  
Legislative Chambers

Thursday, November 7, 2013

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Roll Call by the Clerk of the Legislature

PRESENT: 25 Amparo, Blalock, Bolner, Borchert, Doxsey, Flesland, Forman,  
Incoronato, Horton, Hutchings, Jeter-Jackson, Kelsey, MacAvery,  
Miccio, Perkins, Roman, Rolison, Serino, Surman, Thomes, Traudt,  
Tyner, Weiss, Wilkinson, White.

ABSENT: 0

Quorum Present.

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Clerk read notice of public hearing.

The Chairman declared the public hearing open.

Joan McDermott, Health Department employee, spoke in opposition to the proposed elimination of Senior Accountant position from the 2014 budget. Comments attached.

Dick Sewell, former Assistant Commissioner of Administration of the Health Department, spoke in support of restoring the position of Senior Accountant.

Carol Campbell, Pleasant Valley Supervisor Elect, spoke in support of restoring the position of Senior Accountant. Comments attached.

Gregory Bentley, Department of Public Works employee, spoke in opposition to the proposed elimination of Director of Engineering position from the 2014 budget. Comments attached

Wanda Livigni, town of Beekman, spoke in support of restoring the position of Director of Engineering.

Constantine Kazolias, 47 Noxon Street, Poughkeepsie, spoke in support of restoring the

position of Director of Engineering. He stated that the jail should remain in the City of Poughkeepsie because it was the county seat. He also voiced concerns regarding the county taking over the city bus system.

Joann Miserack, 13 Peckham Road, Poughkeepsie, spoke in support of restoring the position of Senior Accountant.

There being no one else wishing to speak, the Chairman declared the public hearing closed.

The public hearing was adjourned at 7:36 pm

My position is slated to be eliminated in the 2014 budget and I have no "bouncing" rights to another position within the county. This means that I will be laid off as December 31, 2013. I am here this evening to give you my background and an explanation on why I feel elimination of my position by the county is not a wise decision, nor a fiscally responsible one.

I have been an accountant for the past 38 years. I have worked for Goldman-Sachs, the federal government as an auditor, first female Vice President in the M&T bank, Controller for the Tallix foundry and as the Fiscal Officer for Dutchess County Community Action Agency. I have worked in the Dutchess County Health Department (DCDOH) for the past 17 years.

During my tenure in the DCDOH, I have been instrumental in standardizing the accounting procedures within the department (including written policies and procedures for the fiscal division). I have formalized the grant reporting by both agencies reporting to the DCDOH, as well as the claims that are submitted to the state/federal funding sources. I have overseen billing for the Nursing Division, purchasing for DCDOH and all payables. I prepare the Medicaid Cost reports for both Home Care and Article 28 (Clinics). I also submit all state aid claims to the state (\$2,500,000). I prepare the county budget (for 2014 it is over 34,000,000). I am the only professional accountant in the health department.

In 2008, the former Assistant Commissioner for Administration, Dick Sewell, retired. During 2008 Sabrina Marzouka and I spent a great deal of time and effort in establishing the position of Director of Budget and Finance. (My assumption at the time was that I was to be promoted to the position.) I was not promoted. I continued to run all aspects of the fiscal division for seven months in 2009, until a Director was appointed. The new Director stayed in the position for 2 ½ years and left. Another Director was appointed. He stayed in the Dept. of Health for 1 ½ years. Through these transitions, the department continued to function as the Directors learned exactly what DCDOH does and what the revenue flows are, how expenses were generated and charged to the appropriate divisions, grants or cost centers. I believe that the ease of these transitions was due to my expertise and the staff always having a reliable, knowledgeable individual that could answer their questions.

Last month, I had the opportunity to speak to a representative from CGR, the organization that is studying the possible merger/consolidation of the Health Dept. and Mental Hygiene. He said that the original recommendation that CGR had made was to keep the Director's position vacant in the Health Dept. because if there was a merger, there would not be a need for two directors. Instead the budget office has made their preliminary recommendation to eliminate my position and lay me off. Permission was given to the Health Dept. to fill the Director's position, a day after I was notified of my layoff. Since both positions begin at the similar salary levels, I am having trouble understanding the financial need for elimination of my position and filling of the Director's position.

I strongly believe that I would be invaluable if a merger/consolidation is recommended as I know the federal/state requirements for the fiscal area of the Health Dept. Trying to consolidate may require changing some procedures, but it is imperative to know the difference between "requirements" vs. what is the current practice within the Dept. of Health.

I believe that the elimination of the Sr. Accountant position should be a cause for concern from both a fiscal standpoint and the loss of institutional knowledge that will walk out the door with me on 12/31/2013. Please help me by re-establishing my position within the 2014 budget

Sincerely,  
Joan McDermott  
845-724-3002 Home  
845-486-3428 Cell

Carol Campbell, Salt Point, NY  
Councilwoman, Town of Pleasant Valley  
Supervisor Elect

Formerly employed by the County of Dutchess for 20 years

- County Clerk's Office (4 1/2 years as a Accounting Clerk/Administrative Secretary
- Finance Dept. (1 year) as a Administrative Secretary to the Commissioner of Finance
- Health Dept. (14 years) as the Confidential Administrative Assistant to the Commissioner of Health.

**Senior Accountant/Health Department - Targeted for Deletion**

I outline for you my previous County positions to emphasis my credibility when speaking about the reasons why I feel it is not a good decision to delete the position of **Senior Accountant** from the 2014 Health Department Budget.

As the Conf. Adm. Asst. to the Commissioner of Health, I worked very closely with Joan McDermott, the **Senior Accountant**, who has been in this position for the last 17 years. Not only is this position important to the functioning of the Health Department, it is the "glue" that holds the fiscal unit together. The accounting staff who work in the Administration Division rely on Joan as their "go to" person with any questions they might have. Joan is responsible for budget preparation, the overseer of the grants,

payroll, B-12 transfers, revenue, etc. She developed a procedure policy and is responsible for making sure it is followed.

When Dick Sewell retired management spent months working with Dick and Joan to break out job responsibilities, and create the position of Director of Budget and Finance. Joan was responsible for helping to identify the qualifications of this position, and led to believe that she would be considered for the position. When another candidate was selected, Joan was the one who made the transition seamless for the new Director of Budget and Finance. When that person left (2 years later) Joan was passed over again. She stepped up one more time to make sure that the fiscal unit of the Health Department functioned as usual. When that person left after a year and a half, she stepped up again. Joan has been the one constant in the Health Department's fiscal unit ensuring that it functions seamlessly.

It makes no sense to me to keep open the position of Director of Budget and Finance, and terminate a Senior Accountant position. Joan is on the list for Director of Budget and Finance, but continues to be passed over.

Why keep a position open, hire someone without experience, and terminate an experienced employee who has given 17 years of dedication to her job.

### **Other Occupied Positions Targeted for Deletion**

I have some concerns that the 2014 budget eliminates 18.9 full-time equivalent positions, while adding 9.34 new positions. How can you look at the faces of the people targeted to lose their jobs, and say that "your job is being deleted, but we will be hiring?" And, wasn't the reason to offer a "buy-out" to workers last year, reducing the workforce by close to 100 people, enough that we should not be talking about elimination of positions?

***I would support an appropriation from the General Fund Balance rather than eliminating positions that are occupied.***

### **Repeal Exemptions of Energy Costs**

As I talked with my constituents in Pleasant Valley, they voiced their concerns about higher costs of heating oil and natural gas. They are outraged! This would put a severe hardship on seniors and low income

families that are barely getting by. Please consider another alternative to doing this.

**Printed Material from the County Executive About the 2014 Budget**

Lastly, I want to make a few comments about the printed material that was sent as what looks to be a County-Wide mailing about the proposed highlights of the 2014 budget. I feel that this delivers and bad message to the residents of Dutchess County. How can you continue to talk about a 27 million dollar deficit, raise people's energy costs, and delete positions that are occupied - and justify the expense of a county-wide mailing?

**I ask this governing body, to take a hard look at the intricacies of this budget before they consider putting employees out on the street in this economy - especially dedicated ones.**



Comments

From GREGORY BENTLEY REGARDING  
PROPOSED ELIMINATION OF DIRECTOR OF ENGINEERING  
POSITION

I am grateful for the opportunity to speak tonight. I present myself only as a 27 year Dutchess County resident, taxpayer and concerned citizen.

I have been Director of Engineering for the Engineering Division of Dutchess County DPW for over 10 years.

The position of Director of Engineering is proposed for elimination in the tentative budget before the Legislature. I am grateful for the opportunity to have served the county for over 10 years, and I'm also thankful for the opportunity before me to continue to be service to the county, albeit in a severely reduced capacity.

I ask that the legislature restore the Director of Engineering position. I present the following facts for your consideration:

Under the tentative budget, there would be six managerial positions in the Department of Public Works. Three of these positions would now be in the Highway Maintenance Division. There would be no managerial positions in the Engineering Division.

This downsizing will not work. There are simply too many administrative tasks and responsibilities to be accomplished without an Engineering Director.

As Director of Engineering, I am directly responsible for the maintenance and safe operation of approximately 398 miles of highway and approximately 336 bridges and large culverts.

The Director provides direct supervision to 15 engineers, technical, and administrative staff.

The Director of Engineering oversees the administration of a large capital program, the approval and maintenance of all traffic control devices on county roads, and environmental compliance for all DPW sponsored and private and local-municipal permitted projects.

The Director of Engineering is directly responsible for approximately \$7 to \$10M per year of contract work using contractors and consultants. Currently, approximately 40 ongoing contracts are under my direct administration. The Director oversees construction contract preparation, bidding, and award. The Director also directs consultant selection activities, makes recommendation for consultant selection, negotiates contracts and provides approval for contract award.

The Director of Engineering reviews and provides final divisional approval of all contractor and consultant invoices and divisional expenditures.

The Engineering Division responds to a large and growing volume of inquiries and requests for assistance from local municipalities and the public. The Director of Engineering typically receives over 200 written and telephone communications per week, many of which require response or divisional action. These communications typically include traffic matters, drainage issues, permitting issues, property concerns and requests for engineering assistance.

The Director of Engineering is responsible for the preparation of annual capital and operational budget requests, and the managing of approved budgets.

I have managed my division below approved budget for 10 consecutive years. Every year, I have returned significant savings of our operational budget at year's end.

When former public works commissioner Michael Murphy and Bill Steinhaus approached me and asked me to come and lead the Engineering Division in 2003, I did so willingly, giving up my tenured career at New York State DOT and surrendering a large cache of accrued benefits.

I assembled what would become a premier engineering staff. Under my guidance, our division became a highly functional and successful engineering and public service unit.

Since 2007 alone, our division has constructed approximately 100 construction projects totaling approximately 52 million dollars of construction projects including many bridges, road improvements and rail trails. This does not include the projects constructed in house by HCM forces.

Reimbursement to the county from state and federal funding sources, for capital improvements performed by the Engineering Division, has steadily increased during my tenure. Since 2007, capital work eligible for State and federal reimbursements on capital projects totaled approximately 29 million dollars.

Reimbursement of engineering division salaries from state and federal funds has steadily increased during my tenure, from zero to \$455,000 in 2012. Since 2007, reimbursements of salary and benefits for my division from state and federal transportation funds have totaled approximately \$1.6M. During the same period my Division's record for "on time and under budget" has been excellent.

Our entire operational and construction programs have a perfect safety record over a ten-year period of which I am particularly proud.

Despite the huge loss of the Assistant Director of Engineering in 2013, all major deadlines were met.

My personal performance reviews during my tenure all resulted in ratings of “fully satisfactory” or “superior”. My last performance review, prepared by former commissioner Traver, included ratings of “superior” for overall program safety and for customer service.

Elimination of the Director of Engineering position will undermine our credibility with New York State DOT and may negatively impact our County’s ability to acquire federal and state funds for critical transportation projects.

During this economic downturn, engineering staff have been reduced from 23 to 16. Engineering management was cut by half last year. Also during that time workloads, productivity, and reimbursable work have steadily increased.

I recognize that even more sacrifice is required of public works staff, but I am being asked to sacrifice far more than most. Efficient operation of our engineering activities requires daily, often hourly, management-level decision making and engineering guidance. Placing all of these responsibilities upon a deputy commissioner who oversees multiple divisions, and provides back up for the remainder of department-wide operations, is not feasible. I believe that additional managerial level staff will be required in the future and that valuable staff experience and system knowledge will be lost in the transition.

I recognize the severe distress of our county’s economic state, and have continued to effectively reduce county expenditures by my division and do more with less. However, the potential savings from the elimination of the Director of Engineering position are minuscule in comparison to, and far outweighed by, the potential for over-expenditure on capital contract work, reduction in divisional productivity, and the legal exposure due to decreases in highway safety which would result from elimination of this position.

I urge the legislature to restore the Director of Engineering position. I ask that it be done by amendment with roll call vote.

Thank you again for your consideration and for the opportunity to be heard.



