

**ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING**

**DELAWARE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

**JANUARY 3, 2024**

The Organizational Meeting of the Delaware County Board of Supervisors was held Wednesday, January 3, 2024 at 1:00 p.m. in the Supervisors’ Room of the Senator Charles D. Cook County Office Building, 111 Main Street, Delhi, New York.

Clerk of the Board, Penny A. Bishop, called the meeting to order and read the Notice of Meeting:

**TO ALL SUPERVISORS:**

Pursuant to County Law §151 and Board Rule 1, the Organizational Meeting of the Delaware County Board of Supervisors will be held in the Supervisors’ Room of the Senator Charles D. Cook County Office Building, 111 Main Street, Delhi, New York, on Wednesday, January 3, 2024 at 1:00 p.m.

The meeting is called for the purpose of organizing for the year 2024, including election of a Chairman, Vice Chairman, Clerk of the Board, County Attorney, and Budget Officer.

Any other business that may properly be brought before the Board will be conducted.

Penny A. Bishop, Clerk  
Delaware County Board of Supervisors

The Clerk called the roll by towns and the following Supervisors were present:

Wayland Gladstone	PO Box 125	Andes
Tina B. Molé	PO Box 63, Bovina Center	Bovina
Arthur Merrill	PO Box 321, Downsville	Colchester
Timothy S. Kelso	2686 Charlotte Creek Road	Davenport
Maya Boukai	5 Elm Street	Delhi
Rebecca Walley	3 Elm Street	Deposit
Donald T. Smith	450 Hodge Road	Franklin
Wayne E. Marshfield	6754 Basin Clove Road	Hamden
Jerry Vernold	661 West Main Street	Hancock
Lisa M. Driscoll	25399 State Hwy 23	Harpersfield
George E. Haynes, Jr.	51971 State Hwy 10, Bloomville	Kortright
Betty L. Scott	PO Box 313	Masonville
James G. Ellis	4187 Turnpike Road, Delhi	Meredith
Glen Faulkner	PO Box 577, Margaretville	Middletown
Allen R. Hinkley	56 Hillcrest Drive	Roxbury

Eric T. Wilson	44 Grand Street	Sidney
John S. Kosier	PO Box M, Hobart	Stamford
William Layton	PO Box 139, Trout Creek	Tompkins
Joseph M. Cetta	129 North Street	Walton

Mr. Marshfield offered the invocation.

Mr. Haynes led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Mrs. Bishop requested nominations for Chairman. Mr. Haynes nominated Tina Molé. The nomination was seconded by Mr. Merrill and Tina Molé was unanimously re-elected as Chairman.

Deputy County Clerk Haley Gransbury administered the Oath of Office to Ms. Molé.

Mr. Merrill nominated James Ellis for Vice Chairman, which was seconded by Mr. Vernold.

Mr. Marshfield nominated Wayland Gladstone for Vice Chairman, which was seconded by Ms. Boukai.

James Ellis was elected as Vice Chairman by voice vote with five opposed (Gladstone, Boukai, Marshfield, Faulkner, Kosier).

Upon a nomination by Mr. Vernold, seconded by Mr. Cetta, Penny A. Bishop was unanimously re-elected as Clerk of the Board.

Upon a nomination by Mr. Vernold, seconded by Mr. Ellis, Amy Merklen was re-elected as County Attorney with one opposed (Boukai).

Upon a nomination by Mr. Kosier, seconded by Mr. Marshfield, Arthur Merrill was unanimously re-elected as Budget Officer.

Chairman Molé gave the following statement:

“As we embark on a new year, I am excited to see new faces at the table and welcome new ideas as we continue to evolve to meet the many needs of our residents. 2023 saw a great deal of progress and success as many of the projects we supported with the American Rescue Plan Act funds either came to full fruition or continued to allow us to meet many long-term goals as a county. Just to name a few:

- The investment made to broadband development is allowing us to attract more businesses and supporting our local school systems as they continue to seek new ways of teaching our children;
- The contract with AMR for ambulance service continues to see success in reducing emergency response times in many of our underserved communities;

- The investment in IT upgrades will make it easier to address the ever-changing landscape making our systems more secure all the time;
- The purchase of a second county-owned drone allows us to further advance how drones can support multiple programs and departments in the county;
- The very successful farm grant program through the Cornell Cooperative Extension will serve us for many years to come as those farmers benefiting were able to make enhancements that will keep agriculture viable and successful in our county;
- The Transportation Study completed with the Chamber of Commerce provides new ideas regarding public transportation in the county; and
- The County Planning Board has been able to secure contracts with a consultant to begin the very first County Comprehensive and Strategic Master Plan.

With all of these projects advancing and new programs being imposed by the state we have continued to excel at finding new ways to support our residents every day. For me one of the greatest highlights of 2023 was the Innovative Readiness Training we hosted with the US Army last July. This program provided much needed medical and veterinary care for 1,079 humans and 393 animals. Over the course of 10 days more than 7,000 much needed medical procedures were performed with a monetary value exceeding \$600,000 dollars. Each day I attended the evening debrief with the military and was amazed at the amount of time and care that went into this mission. As I recall some of the patient stories I think about the life-changing opportunity for so many to get the care they needed. This program highlighted the very cohesive and broad-based talents of our staff, as every department assisted in some way and supported this effort as one mission. With this Board's support, I believe this is one of the greatest services we have been able to bring to our community in my time as supervisor.

As we begin 2024 we should be proud of our successes and the fact that we have been able to keep our budgets below the tax cap and, as of the end of 2023, we can say we are debt free. In 2024 we will continue the hard work of being financially responsible to our taxes payers while also making strides to finish our ongoing capital projects including new facilities for DPW, a new homeless shelter, a visitation center and much needed DSS offices in Walton. All of these facilities will make our mission to serve our community easier and more efficiently, while providing appropriate space for our very dedicated staff to work in.

I know we will be faced with many challenges as we continue to find ways to address the mandates of the state, being imposed without funding to support them. We will continue to do our part to meet the goals of the extremely ambitious climate act while protecting our local Home Rule authority and our landowners' property rights. We continue to negotiate with New York City and the other watershed stakeholders to reduce the impacts of land acquisition, seeking new alternatives to meet water quality goals without the loss of developable lands needed for economic sustainability.

Through prioritizing steam buffer alternatives and changing easement language to allow for more creative use of city-owned lands, we are hopeful we can embrace a whole new watershed partnership. Our sister agencies in the county including Catskill Watershed Corporation (CWC), Watershed Agricultural Council (WAC), and the Soil and Water Conservation District are continuing to work with us to meet our common goals embracing our historic rural industries including agriculture and natural resource management. The evolution

of watershed management will bring with it both challenges and opportunities for encouraging growth in areas of agriculture that can meet the needs of the watershed as well as climate change objectives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

At the end of 2023 we learned the Southern Tier region was named as a federal Tech Hub bringing with it opportunities for funding new businesses and job opportunities. As I encourage our economic development staff to look at the best way for us to fit into the overall development plan of the Tech Hub, I am encouraged that we will be part of a new phase of economic growth in the region. This is an important time for transition into a new era of manufacturing, energy development and environmental enhancements. As a rural agrarian county, we will look at the best ways to fit into this new era of development in New York State while preserving our traditional agricultural and natural resource industries. This balance will be a challenge, but throughout history when faced with challenges we have been able to address our needs with science-based solutions. I will challenge our very talented employees to seek the solutions and will work with each of you here on this Board to support what is in the best interest of the County as a whole.

We continue to be faced with a rising cost of living, families in need of assistance, a homeless population, a lack of affordable housing, a need for affordable and accessible health care alternatives, and a dwindling population base. In 2024 our County Planning Board will be working on a Comprehensive and Strategic Master Plan, which will look at these issues along with our local economy, changing needs of our more diverse population, future anticipated needs, and associated costs to support our residents. The plan will ultimately provide alternatives that we can consider for addressing these issues. I would ask that each of my fellow supervisors join me in encouraging your residents to participate in this effort, be open minded about what our future could hold and even attend a county planning board meeting to really understand this process. I am excited about the opportunity to plan for our future and I hope all of you will help with this process.

As I know many of you have heard me say it in the past, but it bears repeating, Delaware County is successful and considered a leader in many things because of the tremendous workforce we employ. As Chairman I attend most committee meetings throughout the year. I am always impressed by the professionalism, honest candor and complete competence of our department heads. We have tried to compensate our staff the best we can, but I know most of our staff could make more money elsewhere in their fields, yet they choose to stay here and dedicate their time and talents to us. I also speak with other county leaders and I believe it is unique to Delaware County to have the comradery and support across departments that we have here. Our employees have fostered a working relationship that includes supporting each other, supporting each other's programs and looking at the most effective and efficient ways to meet the goals and needs of our county. At the last department head meeting I asked the new supervisors to attend to learn what each department does. Although I know from my years on this Board the work that is accomplished, I was still in awe listening as we went around the room and heard the amount of work our staff does each and every day. To make it even more impressive I was, as always, proud to hear about existing programs and projects, but also new ones being envisioned to continue to meet the needs of our communities. The passion and creativity comes through loud and clear. I know our employees work here because they are

dedicated and truly love Delaware County and I would be remiss if I didn't thank them and acknowledge their hard work.

To end, I welcome our new members to this Board. I am looking forward to getting to know you and work with you in 2024 as we continue to evolve and seek ways to enhance the lives of our residents.”

The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as presented.

The Clerk noted that all communications received have been referred to their respective committees for review.

For standing committee reports, Chairman of the Public Safety Committee Wayland Gladstone stated that the County has been in contract with AMR for about a year, and Director of Emergency Services Steve Hood will be producing a report for the January 24 Board meeting. The report will include a summary of activity including revenue and reimbursement.

Mr. Kosier offered the following resolution and moved its adoption:

**RESOLUTION NO. 1**

**TITLE: RE-APPOINTMENT DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**BE IT RESOLVED** that Glenn Nealis is hereby reappointed as Director of Economic Development for a term of two years effective January 1, 2024, and ending December 31, 2025, at the salary contained in the budget.

The resolution was seconded by Mr. Ellis and unanimously adopted.

Mr. Hinkley offered the following resolution and moved its adoption:

**RESOLUTION NO. 2**

**TITLE: RE-APPOINTMENT OF ELECTIONS COMMISSIONER  
REPUBLICAN**

**BE IT RESOLVED** that Maria Kelso is hereby reappointed as Elections Commissioner (Republican) for a term of two years effective January 1, 2024 and ending December 31, 2025 at the salary contained in the budget.

The resolution was seconded by Mr. Vernold and unanimously adopted.

Mr. Ellis offered the following resolution and moved its adoption:

**RESOLUTION NO. 3**

**TITLE: RE-APPOINTMENT OF COUNTY PLANNING DIRECTOR**

**BE IT RESOLVED** that Shelly Johnson-Bennett is hereby reappointed as County Planning Director for a term of three years, effective January 1, 2024, and ending December 31, 2026, at the salary contained in the budget.

The resolution was seconded by Mr. Merrill and Mr. Vernold and unanimously adopted.

Mr. Marshfield offered the following resolution and moved its adoption:

**RESOLUTION NO. 4**

**TITLE: RE-APPOINTMENT OF YOUTH BUREAU DIRECTOR**

**BE IT RESOLVED** that Sylvia Armanno is hereby reappointed as Youth Bureau Director for a term of one year, effective January 1, 2024, and ending December 31, 2024.

The resolution was seconded by Mr. Vernold and unanimously adopted.

Mr. Hinkley offered the following resolution and moved its adoption:

**RESOLUTION NO. 5**

**TITLE: DESIGNATION OF COUNTY NEWSPAPERS  
PURSUANT COUNTY LAW §214(2)**

**WHEREAS**, the County is required pursuant County Law §214(2) to designate newspapers for printing the County’s local laws and notices and/or other matters required by law to be published in print;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the newspapers designated pursuant County Law §214(2) are the Hancock Herald and the Mountain Eagle.

The resolution was seconded by Mr. Merrill.

In response to Mr. Marshfield, Chairman Molé confirmed that the party designation for the newspapers would occur in today’s meeting at the end of the meeting. She clarified that it is not a Board decision which newspapers are designated by each political party. Each party appoints a newspaper of their choosing which is separate from the designation of the County newspapers pursuant County Law §214(2).

Mr. Marshfield suggested that The Reporter be added to the newspapers designated by the Board for legal notices. He expressed that he felt that it would be a benefit to the residents of Delaware County to include The Reporter, and that he does not subscribe to the Hancock Herald

or the Mountain Eagle. He furthered that The Reporter has the widest coverage of any newspaper in the county, and that it is the only newspaper in the county which has publishing software which enables legal postings to be accessed statewide for free. He furthered that The Reporter belongs to the New York Press Association and adheres to the best practices statewide to maintain that membership. He proposed that with a population of 45,000 residents in Delaware County, even a cost of \$45,000 annually would only equate a dollar per person per year for the service. With a \$120 million dollar budget, he feels that the funding can be found to designate The Reporter as a third paper.

In agreement with Mr. Marshfield, Mr. Gladstone indicated that he will not support the resolution unless it is amended to include The Reporter.

In response to Mr. Marshfield and Mr. Gladstone, County Attorney Amy Merklen stated that legally The Reporter has removed itself from the ability to be designated as a legal paper pursuant to County Law §214(2).

Chairman Molé stated that the resolution would therefore stand.

The resolution was adopted by voice vote with four opposed (Gladstone, Boukai, Marshfield, Faulkner).

Mr. Merrill offered the following resolution and moved its adoption:

## **RESOLUTION NO. 6**

### **TITLE: DESIGNATION OF DEPOSITORY FOR DELAWARE COUNTY FUNDS**

**BE IT RESOLVED**, pursuant to Section 212 of the County Law, as amended and now in force, the bank hereinafter specified is hereby designated as a depository for County Funds, together with the maximum amount that may be kept on deposit therein at any one time, and the County Treasurer is hereby authorized and directed to deposit County monies in the bank herein designated.

**BE IT RESOLVED**, the County Treasurer is authorized to wire funds and use electronic transfer of funds (ACH) from or to each facility.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that one certified copy of the resolution shall be filed in the office of the County Clerk, one in the office of the State Comptroller and two in the office of the County Treasurer by the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors.

Wayne Bank	\$120,000,000.00
The Delaware National Bank of Delhi	\$50,000,000.00

The Delaware National Bank of Delhi (Court and Trust Fund Designated by NYS Comptroller)	\$5,000,000.00
The National Bank and Trust Company	\$80,000,000.00
JP Morgan Chase	\$250,000.00

The resolution was seconded by Mr. Marshfield and Mr. Vernold and unanimously adopted.

Chairman Molé waived Board Rule 10 to permit the introduction without objection of the following not-prefiled resolution.

Mr. Merrill offered the following resolution and moved its adoption:

**RESOLUTION NO. 7**

**TITLE: PAYMENT OF AUDIT**

**WHEREAS**, bills and claims submitted and duly audited by the Clerk of the Board’s office in the amount of \$2,408,862.35 were hereby presented to the Finance Committee for approval for payment on December 29, 2023 prior to presentation to the Board of Supervisors;

**THEREFORE**, the County Treasurer was directed to pay said expenditures as listed below and this Board now approves of said payment as follows:

General Fund	\$1,188,055.23
OET	\$40,512.43
Public Safety Comm System	\$20,123.07
Insurance Risk	\$0.00
CAP 97 Main	\$0.00
CAP MH	\$0.00
CAP DSS	\$941.93
Highway Audits, as Follows:	
Weights & Measures	\$360.98
Solid Waste/Landfill	\$61,039.91
Road	\$35,721.81
Machinery	\$78,390.46
Capital Solid Waste	\$23,940.63
Capital Road & Bridge	\$68,762.72
CAP DPW Complex	\$891,013.18

**WHEREAS**, bills and claims submitted and duly audited by the Clerk of the Board’s office in the amount of \$334,090.70 are hereby presented to the Board of Supervisors for approval of payment;



**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the County Treasurer be directed to pay said expenditures as listed below:

General Fund	\$266,625.67
OET	\$0.00
Public Safety Comm System	\$0.00
Insurance Risk	\$0.00
CAP 97 Main	\$0.00
CAP MH	\$0.00
CAP DSS	\$5,283.78
Highway Audits, as Follows:	
Weights & Measures	\$0.00
Solid Waste/Landfill	\$4,154.33
Road	\$41,175.75
Machinery	\$16,492.33
Capital Solid Waste	\$0.00
Capital Road & Bridge	\$358.84
CAP DPW Complex	\$0.00

The resolution was seconded by Mr. Gladstone and adopted by the following vote:  
Ayes 4799, Noes 0, Absent 0.

Chairman Molé stated that pursuant to County Law §214(1) that the newspapers selected by the two principal political parties into which the people of the state is divided to publish resolutions, election notices, and official canvases are the Hancock Herald chosen by the Republicans and The Reporter chosen by the Democrats.

Mr. Marshfield expressed his confusion over why the newspaper designation was facilitated differently than in previous years. Ms. Molé reiterated that each political party designates their own political newspaper which had been explained at a previous meeting.

Chairman Molé made the following committee appointments:

**AGRICULTURAL AND FARMLAND PROTECTION BOARD**

**4-year term ending December 31, 2027**

Appoint:

Carlos Valery, Jr., East Meredith

Jeff Taggart, Franklin

Supervisor Rebecca Walley

**COMMUNITY SERVICES BOARD**

**4-year term ending December 31, 2027**

Reappoint:

Sarah Nagy-Fleischmann

Joanne Sampson

Gay Merrill

**COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE**

**1-year term ending December 31, 2024**

Reappoint:

Supervisor Wayland Gladstone

**DELAWARE COUNTY INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY**

**1-year term ending December 31, 2024**

Reappoint:

James Thomson

**3-year term ending December 31, 2026**

Appoint:

Wayne Oliver

Reappoint:

Florida Santana

**DELAWARE COUNTY LOCAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

**3-year term ending December 31, 2026**

Appoint:

Noel Goodspeed

**DELAWARE COUNTY PLANNING BOARD**

**3-year term ending December 31, 2026**

Reappoint:

Dale Downin

James Erwin

Mark Lee

Travis O'Dell

Diane Munro

**HEALTH SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD**

**2-year term ending December 31, 2025**

Reappoint:

Supervisor Betty Scott

Amanda Walsh, Director, Public Health

Edward Bartos, NYS DOH District Office

Heather Warner

Kyra Shew

**SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT BOARD**

**1-year term ending December 31, 2024**

Appoint:

Supervisor George Haynes

Reappoint:

Supervisor James Ellis

**3-year term ending December 31, 2026**

Appoint:

Jeffrey Taggart, Franklin

Reappoint:

Andy Kiraly

**TOURISM ADVISORY BOARD**

**3-year term ending December 31, 2026**

Appoint:

Supervisor John Kosier

**YOUTH BUREAU BOARD**

**3-year term ending December 31, 2026**

Reappoint:

Diane Oles

Ms. Molé noted that Standing Oversight Committee appointments will remain the same until the changes are announced at the next Board meeting.

Chairman Molé asked all Supervisors to meet in front of the building for an official photo.

Upon a motion, the meeting was adjourned at 1:30 p.m.