



Onondaga County Legislature

JAMIE McNAMARA
Clerk

TIMOTHY T. BURTIS
Chairman

TAMMY BARBER
Deputy Clerk

401 Montgomery Street • Court House • Room 407 • Syracuse, New York 13202
Phone: 315.435.2070 • onondagacountylegislature@ongov.net • www.ongov.net/legislature

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION COMMITTEE MINUTES – MARCH 18, 2025 **JULIE ABBOTT, CHAIR**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dr. Kelly, Ms. Cody, Mr. Romeo, Mr. Brown

ALSO ATTENDING: See attached list

Chair Abbott called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m., and the previous meeting's minutes were approved.

1. WATER ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION: Shannon Harty, Commissioner **a. Personnel Resolution**

Purpose: *The Onondaga County Department of Water Environment Protection (WEP) has identified critical management positions that require title modifications to better align with their current roles and responsibilities. WEP is seeking legislative authorization to abolish the following existing titles and replace them with more appropriate designations.*

1. Employee and Labor Relations Division

- *WEP, in coordination with the Department of Personnel, proposes abolishing the Employee Relations Officer (ERO) (L109599) position and replacing it with Administrative Officer (WEP) (both Grade 33).*
- *The ERO title includes union negotiation duties, which must be performed within the Department of Personnel. The Administrative Officer (WEP) title allows WEP to recruit candidates with the appropriate skills and experience for the role without the constraints of union negotiation duties.*

2. Administrative Function – Community Relations and Public Outreach

- *To enhance community engagement and public outreach, WEP proposes replacing Project Coordinator (L109178 – Grade 31) with a Director of Community Relations (Grade 35).*
- *This position will be responsible for developing and implementing strategic communication programs focused on basement backups, community development, recruitment efforts, and construction project updates.*

3. Asset Management Function – Fleet Management

- *WEP's Equipment Maintenance Supervisor (L105510 – Grade 34) has assumed increasing responsibilities for managing fleet operations across multiple departments, including the Sheriff's Department and County Parks.*
- *To support expanded GPS fleet management, cloud-based Fleet Asset Management, and proactive maintenance, WEP proposes abolishing the current position and replacing it with a Fleet Manager (Grade 35).*

Summary: *These adjustments will enable WEP to optimize its workforce, improve efficiency, and ensure that job roles reflect their evolving responsibilities.*

Fiscal Impact: *There is no increase in authorized, funded positions and no fiscal impact to the 2025 Operating Budget.*

- 3 new job titles are more in line with WEP needs and Civil Service duties

Questions/Comments from the Committee:

- Are new positions part of the HELP program?
 - Personnel
 - No, they could be, but will have to see what happens

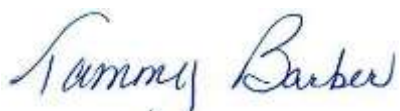
- Are there exams for these titles?
 - Personnel
 - Any new position created is automatically competitive
 - Can submit a resolution to the state to have it moved from competitive to non-competitive or exempt
 - Determination does not need to be made right away, there is plenty of time
- Are there candidates for the new positions?
 - Fleet Manager – currently have someone that can roll into position
 - Administrative Officer – Have candidates lined up to being interviewed
 - Community Relations – have not identified all of the candidates, but have some lined up to look at
- Is WEP trying to proactively create programs with the Community Relations and Public Outreach position?
 - WEP gets asked to speak at different community events on different issues
 - It is important to have someone prepared with a list of talking points and able to answer questions
 - Personnel
 - Project Coordinator is not a professional level public relations position
- Would WEP have a person that goes to meetings or festivals where there are tables set up?
 - Yes, it could be the zoo or a career fair, etc.
 - Need someone running the program that knows who the audience is, what to bring and what staff should be going
- How many public relations people are there now?
 - 2 grade 31 Project Coordinators; 1 will become Director of Community Relations
 - 1 Public Information Specialist (union position)
 - The new Director of Community Relations will need to supply a staffing plan on the needs for public events
- Who oversees the current 3 positions
 - Deputy Commissioner of Administration
- What union does the ERO oversee?
 - CSEA
 - WEP is not requesting to abolish any union positions
- What is the Project Coordinator responsible for now?
 - Project Coordinator is currently vacant
 - Can use this title to facilitate OpenGov, create pamphlets/flyers, organize data sets, write policies
 - Would be part of public outreach, but would need direction on what messaging should be
- Will there be service chargebacks to other departments with the Fleet Manager position?
 - Yes, that is happening now
 - FASTER (asset management system) creates itemized bills on a quarterly basis that get sent to departments
- What will the new responsibilities of the Fleet Manager be?
 - Additional duties will include running GPS programs and cloud-based fleet asset management program
 - Implementing preventive maintenance program
 - Existing employee is currently building the program and taking it on as an extra duty added to their workload
- Are there any interdepartmental funds associated with the Fleet Manager position?
 - Yes, all done through interdepartmental billing on quarterly or annual basis
- With all the changes made with titles and positions, what is the current state of the roster as it relates to funded and filled positions?
 - Do not have that information now, but will provide funded and filled status
 - Deputy Commissioner of Administration is working with Personnel to develop more tools to look at roster
 - Have 115 titles within WEP
 - Will be looking to consolidate titles in order to avoid vacancies amongst divisions

- How is it going with regard to WEP’s approach of offering more training and support to staff?
 - Really well, but there is a learning curve with change
 - Latest group of recruits have willingness to adapt
- It is great to look at positions and change them as you go along
 - Personnel has provided amazing support
 - Many titles have not been looked at in 20-30 years and are antiquated
- With Micron coming in, it will be nice to have a Community Relations person to educate the public on progress

A motion was made by Mr. Romeo, seconded by Ms. Cody, to approve this item. Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



TAMMY BARBER, Deputy Clerk
Onondaga County Legislature

ATTENDANCE

COMMITTEE: ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION COMMITTEE

DATE: MARCH 18, 2025

NAME (Please Print)	DEPARTMENT/AGENCY
Shannon Murray	OCNWBP
Alexis Coia	Syracuse Univ.
Darcie Lesniak	Leg
John Desautis	Leg
Ben Yaus	Law Dept
Ryan Ockenden	Law Dept.
Joe Frateschi	Counsel
Jim Beebe	Leg.
Ethan LaMontagne	Leg.
Cydney Johnson	Co. Exec.