

RULES, ENACTMENTS AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE
MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 22, 2022
3:30 P.M.

PRESENT: Paul Ruskiewicz, Chairman
Barry J. Cheney, Thomas J. Faggione, Kevin W. Hines, Kathy Stegenga,
Michael D. Paduch

ALSO

PRESENT: Katie Bonelli, Chairwoman
Betsy N. Abraham, Legislative Counsel
Richard B. Golden, County Attorney
Damian Brady, Administrator, Office of Assigned Counsel
Donna McCarey, Deputy Commissioner, Human Resources
Alison Tyack, Director of Personnel Management, Human Resources
Paul Wiley, Acting Director, Real Property Tax Service
Erin Sztendor, Budget Analyst

Mr. Ruskiewicz opened the meeting at 3:30 p.m. and requested everyone stand for the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. All members were present with the exception of Legislator Sierra who was excused and Legislator Amo who was absent.

Due to the late arrival of Mr. Golden, Agenda Items II a. and II b. were moved to the beginning of the agenda.

Ms. Stegenga moved request to create six (6) positions in the Office of Assigned Counsel: one (1) Attorney for Resources, CLE and Training, Grade 25, and five (5) Intern positions (at the 2022 CSEA negotiated hourly rate of \$18.0431/ hour). The positions would be abolished upon the loss of grant funding associated with the positions, seconded by Mr. Faggione.

Mr. Brady explained that the first position is for a Continuing Legal Education (CLE) and Training Attorney, they would be responsible for training the 18b Panel with the goal to increase the quality of legal services for panel attorneys and to ensure they are up to date with their CLE. They would also be responsible for the Summer Intern Program and coordinating, assisting, and providing experts for the panel. They have been negotiating this position with New York State Indigent Legal Services over the last six months and have finally nailed down the description. The position is fully grant funded and would be abolished on the expiration of the grant funding. The summer intern positions are part-time, and they would be doing administrative work with the goal being to connect these individuals with other attorneys to get courtroom exposure. These positions are also grant funded and would be abolished if the grant funding ends.

Mr. Paduch asked for clarification on the training aspect. Mr. Brady replied that the program coordinator already exists and that is part of their job; however, they have eighty-five attorneys on the panel, and in the past they were responsible for their own training. They are required to have twenty-four hours of CLE training every two years and this would help to provide more focused and free training for those on the panel.

Mr. Hines asked for the qualifications of the intern positions. Mr. Brady replied that they are looking for individuals that are interested in practicing criminal law. His primary goal is to get motivated law school students; however, the job market will dictate that. They could be looking at 1L associates (law students who have completed their first year of law school) and/or college students that are looking to go to law school to practice criminal law.

Motion carried. All in favor.

Ms. Stegenga moved request to appropriate \$6,359,553.59 for year 4 of the NYS Office of Indigent Legal Services (NYSILS) grant funds from April 1, 2021 through March 31, 2022. The fourth year grant funds, upon approval by NYSILS, will be distributed for legal representation and defense of indigents as follows: Representation of Indigents by the Legal Aid Society (\$3,054,403.99) and Defense of Indigents under County Law 18-b, including existing and any newly created positions in the Office of Assigned Counsel, rent, fees, services, software, office supplies, attorney programs, investigators, consultants and assigned counsel, seconded by Mr. Cheney.

Mr. Brady explained that the funds are being split with approximately 48% to legal aid and 52% to the Office of Assigned Counsel programs. It also supports all the Hurrell Herring grant programs.

Motion carried. All in favor.

Mr. Faggione moved request to create one (1) Chief Assistant County Attorney (Contracts) position, Management Grade 27, seconded by Ms. Stegenga.

Mr. Golden explained that they would not be adding a new position as they would be eliminating the vacant Senior Assistant County Attorney and creating the Chief Assistant County Attorney (Contracts). He presented a brief overview of the contract process and difficulties and the possibility of a new software system to help the process.

Mr. Ruskiewicz asked if the Senior Assistant County Attorney position would be abolished. Mr. Golden replied that it would; however, he understands that it would be done through the budget process.

Mr. Paduch asked who would be taking over the duties of this attorney. Mr. Golden replied, the other attorneys.

Mr. Paduch asked for the number of county attorneys. Mr. Golden provided a brief synopsis on the number of attorneys in the County Attorney's office, their assigned departments and their responsibilities.

Ms. Stegenga asked about the pending approval of the Civil Service exemption and does Mr. Golden foresee an issue. Mr. Golden replied that he does not foresee an issue as the current position is currently exempt.

Motion carried. All in favor.

Mr. Faggione moved request to amend Schedule A of Local Law 10 of 2018 and Local Law 4 of 2019 to add 156 Greenville Turnpike, Town of Mount Hope, SBL 17-1-23.1, to allow for the sale of the property, seconded by Ms. Stegenga.

Mr. Wiley explained that this two-family house was part of the reservoir properties that were subdivided in the last two years. The property has been broken into on two separate occasions after the previous tenants vacated some time in 2021 and it needs work. This proposal is to allow them to add and sell the property with the other sixteen properties on the Schedule A's from 2018 and 2019 having been sold.

Mr. Ruskiewicz asked if it would be sold through auction. Mr. Wiley replied no, through the Multiple Listing Service (MLS) and broker.

Motion carried. All in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 3:53 p.m.