

## MINUTES

March 17, 1999

The Board of Chosen Freeholders of the County of Warren met in regular session in its offices in the Administration Building, Belvidere, New Jersey on Wednesday, March 17, 1999 at 7:10 p.m.

The meeting was called to order by Director Dickey and upon roll call the following members were present: Freeholder Susan Dickey, Freeholder Stephen Lance and Freeholder Ann Stone.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was led by Director Dickey.

Director Dickey read the following statement: "ADEQUATE NOTICE OF THIS MEETING WAS GIVEN IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT BY FORWARDING A SCHEDULE OF REGULAR MEETINGS OF THE BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS TO THE WARREN COUNTY CLERK, THE STAR/GAZETTE, BLAIRSTOWN PRESS, THE NEWS, STAR-LEDGER AND THE EXPRESS-TIMES AND BY POSTING A COPY THEREOF ON THE BULLETIN BOARD IN THE OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS. FORMAL ACTION MAY BE TAKEN BY THE BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS AT THIS MEETING. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IS ENCOURAGED. IN ORDER TO ASSURE FULL PUBLIC PARTICIPATION, THOSE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES WHO WISH TO ATTEND THE MEETING SHOULD SUBMIT ANY REQUESTS FOR SPECIAL ACCOMMODATION ONE WEEK IN ADVANCE".

Dave Detrick and Peter Lynah spoke to the board about the Highland Project, which is a non-profit group and originally started out in Warren Hills and with the Prosecutor's Office. It began with a need for programs for the young people in Warren County. They are prepared to start their project with youths from the Community Service program. Their mission is to give the youth an opportunity to participate in different projects and to benefit themselves and the community. These participants are young people at risk and the program's goals are to have them work with adults and try to make a contribution to society.

Vocational skills will be made available. The youth need to interact with older people. There are two primary endeavors; one is to have young people assist in the parklands and the other is to create a Warren County Historical Learning Center. Their intent is to assist the county in parkland projects; clearing brush, building picnic tables, possible building a pavilion, clearing trails, etc.

The Historical Learning Center will be for young people to develop a historical study which could be viewed by those interested. Mr. Lynah said that they have an extensive collection of historical objects which could be displayed in the learning center. The youth could renovate a barn and with five directors on the board, there is over 150 years of experience in juvenile work to draw from.

Mr. Detrick said there are many volunteers available and they will take care of running security checks on the volunteers. He asked how Warren County can help this program. When

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the county buys property, there are often buildings on the land. The program needs a facility to house the learning center, shops, etc. They need to have a place to work on their projects; a meeting place and they need projects to work on. The Hamlen property might be good for them. This would also be a good place for tours, trails, a picnic grove, and the house could serve as a temporary learning center.

The barn would be a good component for them for storage, etc. Mr. Lynah said that the barn restoration is a pet project of his. He wants to train the youth in vocational skills. One of the questions posed to them was the cost but they said the only costs would be for materials.

Mrs. Dickey asked about start up time and Mr. Dietrick said probably the last week of June or early July; they will probably be working with the Probation Department. Fish and game are ready to work with them.

Mrs. Stone said the picnic area and the trail are good ideas and will also help to educate people to the Jim Lee property.

Mr. Lance said he is very impressed with this project. It will help the kids and help the county. Greg Sipple has also been involved in this.

Mr. Detrick said that one criteria that is important is that the Hamlen property is centrally located. That is important as the kids need to get to the project on their own. Mr. Marvin asked about the long term operating costs and Mr. Detrick said they will be doing some grant writing to get funds.

Mrs. Dickey said that they all agree that it is a very good project. Mr. Detrick said he will look forward to hearing from the board on working together on this. The presentation ended at 7:35 p.m.

A gentleman from Alpha spoke to the board about the residency requirement/hiring preference for the county. This issue affects huge numbers of people in the county. The idea of a preference list would allow county department heads to hire county residents first.

Mr. Wallace said that all the board members have received copies of the statutes and the correspondence from the Department of Personnel. Section 1.3 of the statute allows us to adopt a resolution that establishes a residency requirement to hire residents of the county first. Section 1.4, if you do the residency resolution, you can then also adopt a hiring preference. Additionally, Section 1.6 said that you must hire county residents first, contiguous counties next, New Jersey residents next, than out of the state. You have to hire in that order.

Section 1.7 allows you to hire out of order if you have determined that you need special talents or skills and have failed to find those skills in the county. The board needs to agree on the criteria for special skills, talents, etc. before the resolution is passed. Section 1.8 goes to promotion; there is a preference for county residents but you may exempt current employees from this residency requirement.

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Mr. Lance had a question on the promotional issues and how it affects current employees. Mr. Wallace says it applies to all county employees.

Carmine Quick, Administrator of Warren Haven, asked that if we hire outside of the county, do the employees have to move into the county within a year. She said Warren Haven has 243 employees and 56 of them live outside Warren County which works out to 23% of her employees that don't live in Warren County; 23 of her nurse's aides and 12 of her professional nurses. The board needs to realize that it is tough job market out there. Right now, New Jersey has the lowest unemployment rate that it has had in a long time. There are many new mandated laws; federal and state and also, the Department of Personnel. We are located so close to the Pennsylvania border that it makes hiring very difficult. Care at the home will suffer greatly if they do this. She asked if her facility could be exempt from this because it is health care facility. As it is the hiring process takes forever.

Kent Bergmann, a lieutenant in the Prosecutor's Office, said that the Prosecutor is concerned if this will affect law enforcement, does it affect appointed officials. If this has no advantage or is too complicated, they recommend we not do this.

Ann Stone wants memos to go to all department heads for their input. She has heard no positive input so far.

Mr. Lance said we should put together a sample resolution.

**RESOLUTION 201-99**

On motion by Mrs. Stone, seconded by Mr. Lance, the following resolution was unanimously adopted by the Board of Chosen Freeholders of the County of Warren at a meeting held March 17, 1999.

**RESOLUTION TO PAY BILLS.**

**BE AND IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED** that Master Voucher Certificate for Certification/Ratification for Payment no. 98-2.3 dated January 28, 1998 in the amount of \$2,915,833.02 including bills and investments, is approved subject to the review of the vouchers by the Board of Chosen Freeholders of the County of Warren .

98-2	452,069.26
98-3	1,470,233.83
Payroll 1/15	993,529.93
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,915,833.02</b>

I hereby certify the above to be a true copy of a resolution adopted by the Board of Chosen Freeholders of the County of Warren on the date above mentioned.

s/Naomi J. Stout, Deputy Clerk

ROLL CALL: Mrs. Stone: yes Mr. Lance: yes Mrs. Dickey: yes

**RESOLUTION 202-99**

On motion by Mr. Lance, seconded by Mrs. Dickey, the following resolution was adopted by the Board of Chosen Freeholders of the County of Warren at a meeting held March

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**RESOLUTION REQUESTING FINANCIAL SUPPORT FROM THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY TO FUND A STUDY TO RESEARCH THE FEASIBILITY OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A MULTI-COUNTY REGIONAL INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.**

**WHEREAS**, Governor Whitman's budget message supported property tax reduction through municipal, county and school district consolidation and shared services; and

**WHEREAS**, the New Jersey Commission on Higher Education has stated that the northwest regions of New Jersey, specifically Sussex and Warren, have limited access to post-secondary degree programs; and

**WHEREAS**, the New Jersey Commission on Higher Education suggests the establishment of multi-institution centers by two and four year institutions for the northwest region of New Jersey; and

**WHEREAS**, the analysis of the Blue-Ribbon Task Force on the Capacity of New Jersey's Higher Education System indicated that while northwest New Jersey was one of the few regions in the state with a projected growth in college age population it also represents a pocket of low access to degree programs; and

**WHEREAS**, instructional collaboration and cooperation activities between two or more New Jersey institutions of higher education could result in offering more than 70 degrees or certificates through "joint" or "cooperative" efforts; and

**WHEREAS**, two community colleges, Salem and Warren, have enrollment levels that are below the point at which research suggests that "economies of scale" are fully realized for two-year institutions; and

**WHEREAS**, annual costs for Warren County students to attend out-of-county institutions of higher education total approximately \$350,000 which includes the Warren County Community College brokerage academic programs for FY'00 at \$260,000 and the County of Warren FY'98 budget expenditures of \$90,000 for Reimbursement for Residents attending out-of-county two year colleges; and

**WHEREAS**, the Blue-Ribbon Task Force recommends the establishment of "multi-institution centers" in northwest New Jersey, e.g., Sussex and Warren Counties; and

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Chosen Freeholders of Morris County have expressed a desire and willingness to explore and develop multi-county institution and have requested state financial assistance toward that end; and

**WHEREAS**, establishment of a multi-county institution would expand degree programs and opportunities for Warren County students as well as provide exposure to campus activities otherwise unavailable in the foreseeable future;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Warren County Board of Chosen Freeholders joins the Morris County Board of Chosen Freeholders in requesting financial support from the State of New Jersey to fund a feasibility study regarding the establishment of the best educational opportunities for potential students residing in both counties; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Warren County Board of Chosen Freeholders invite the participation of the Sussex County Board of Chosen Freeholders in this joint venture and that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to Governor Christine Todd Whitman, Senate President Donald DiFrancesco, Senator William E. Schluter, Senator Robert J. Martin, Assemblyman Leonard Lance, Assemblywoman Connie Myers, Assemblyman E. Scott Garrett, Assemblyman David W. Wolfe, Assemblyman Gerald J. Luongo, Assemblywoman Carol Murphy, the Sussex County Board of Chosen Freeholders and the Morris County Board of

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Chosen Freeholders.

I hereby certify the above to be a true copy of a resolution adopted by the Board of Chosen Freeholders of the County of Warren on the date above mentioned.

s/Naomi J. Stout, Deputy Clerk

Mrs. Stone asked did anyone read the document that made it clear that this is not the cost effective way to go. Mrs. Dickey said they are looking specifically at three counties pooling their resources to offer the best education for the money. Warren County will benefit from this. She also said that we would be remiss in our obligation not to look into this. Mr. Lance said we can't down-play this. The greater array of courses that we can offer, the better off we will be. We have to talk about this, now is the time.

ROLL CALL: Mrs. Stone: no Mr. Lance: yes Mrs. Dickey: yes

County Counsel David Wallace offered condolences to the family and friends of Judge Diana who passed away recently. It was decided to send flowers from the board and the administrator and Mr. Marvin and possibly Freeholder Stone will attend the viewing.

Under freeholder comments, Mrs. Stone said that regarding the meeting with the two counties at Mattar's, she was told she could not attend because it would violate the Sunshine Law. She would like a report from Dave Wallace saying why she can not attend this meeting. Both she and Susan attended the Ag dinner last night, doesn't that violate the Sunshine Law and Dave said no, it is o.k.

She wants more clarification, she thinks we are walking a fine line.

Mr. Lance said that regarding the communications committee, he has talked to an individual who is interested in serving in the citizen at-large slot. He is a retired colonel from the U.S. Army and has a background in FEMA. Steve would like him considered for appointment at the next meeting.

On motion by Mr. Lance, seconded by Mrs. Stone, a resolution is to be prepared for the next meeting appointing the individual as discussed above in the citizen at-large slot on the communications committee.

ROLL CALL: Mrs. Stone: yes Mr. Lance: yes Mrs. Dickey: yes

Susan submitted a copy of the report from the joint meeting held March 3rd. At today's meeting, the representatives brought their consulting firm to give some information on how to get funding. The trustees will be brought in when needed, if needed.

Under closing comments, an audience member brought up the subject of the hiring of county residents first and said this would impede all the cream coming to the top. You might disengage some very good people.

Regarding the Sunshine Law, nothing impairs your right to speak.

Someone else in the audience asked how many students would go to other colleges. Mrs. Dickey said that is not known yet. Warren County is paying \$190,000 in charge-backs for students taking courses in other colleges. It would be great if students would avail themselves of this opportunity.

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Mr. Marvin said that it was not that many years ago that these same three counties got together to form a regionalized Juvenile Detention Center.

There were no press comments or questions.

No executive session was necessary tonight.

On motion by Mr. Lance, seconded by Mrs. Stone, and there being no further official business to come before the board at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 9:25 p.m.  
ROLL CALL: Mrs. Stone: yes Mr. Lance: yes Mrs. Dickey: yes

**ATTESTED TO:**

**Naomi J. Stout, Deputy Clerk**