

MINUTES OF MEETING

Committee on Administration and Legislature

December 16, 2005

The Charter Revision Commission's Committee on Administration and the Legislature met at 8:00 a.m. on December 16, 2005 in a meeting room of the County Legislature. Present were Committee members John Maggiore, Vice-Chair, David Comerford, Chris Duquin, and James L. Magavern, Chair. Also present by invitation were Brian White, Assistant County Attorney, Jon Lyons, political science instructor, Buffalo State College, and Leonard Matarese, Commissioner of Human Resources, City of Buffalo.

Mr. Magavern introduced Commissioner Matarese, a member and Certified Manager of the International City/County Management Association ("ICMA"), who assisted in the formulation of the County Executive's proposal for a County Manager. Commissioner Matarese distributed a set of papers prepared by the ICMA in support of the creation of a position of County Manager in Erie County. Copies are annexed to these minutes. Commissioner Matarese advocated a hybrid model, with an elected County Executive to provide strong policy leadership and representation of the County, and an appointed County Manager to provide non-partisan professional management of county services. He emphasized the need to free county government from the debilitating effects of patronage politics. The ensuing discussion addressed a number of details and demonstrated strong agreement on the need to reduce the role of patronage in county government. Commissioner Matarese agreed to provide copies of the ICMA's Code of Ethics and model employment agreement, copies of which are annexed hereto.

Mr. Comerford agreed to contact Sam Iraci, former Deputy Mayor of the City of Buffalo and former City Manager of the City of Elmira, and request him to meet with the Committee to discuss prospects for a County Manager in light of his experience.

Mr. Duquin distributed an organization chart, memorandum and draft Charter amendments for a County Manager appointed by the County Executive and a Director of Finance appointed by the Comptroller. Copies are annexed to these minutes. The Committee will discuss them at its next meeting on December 23.

Mr. White distributed an outline of the contractor payment process. He noted that, since it embodies a set of necessary checks and balances, it will be difficult to streamline. Mr. Comerford will meet with Messrs. White and Lofredo to explore ways in which the process might be improved.

Mr. Maggiore distributed a memorandum identifying potential subjects of charter revision for preliminary consideration and decision by the Committee whether to pursue them. These will be considered at our meeting on December 23.