

223rd ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING
Monday, January 3, 2022

J. GARRISON, CLERK OF THE BOARD: Good morning and welcome. I would like to call this 223rd organizational session to order. Please stand for the salute to the flag. Thank you.

We will now swear in the newly elected Supervisors. Would Mr. Merrihew and Mr. Barber please escort Mr. Stanley to the County Clerk to be sworn in and escort him back to his new seat.

PROVONCHA: Madam Chairman, Mr. Stanley will have his wife, Shannon hold the bible. Please raise your right hand and repeat after me –

STANLEY: I, Matthew Stanley, do solemnly swear, that I will support the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of New York and I will faithfully discharge the duties of Supervisor, of the Town of Jay according to the best of my ability.

PROVONCHA: Congratulations.

GARRISON: Would Mr. McNally and Mr. Holzer please escort Mr. Doty to the County Clerk to be sworn in and escort him back to his new seat.

PROVONCHA: Mr. Doty will have his wife; Polly hold the bible. Please raise your right hand and repeat after me –

DOTY: I, Derek Doty, do solemnly swear, that I will support the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of New York and I will faithfully discharge the duties of Supervisor, of the Town of North Elba according to the best of my ability.

PROVONCHA: Congratulations.

GARRISON: Would Mr. Monty and Mr. Hughes please escort Mr. Wright to the County Clerk to be sworn in and escort him back to his new seat.

PROVONCHA: Mr. Wright's wife, Laura will be holding the bible. Please raise your right hand and repeat after me –

WRIGHT: I, Mark Wright, do solemnly swear, that I will support the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of New York and I will faithfully discharge the duties of Supervisor, of the Town of Ticonderoga according to the best of my ability.

PROVONCHA: Congratulations.

GARRISON: Would Mrs. DeZalia and Mr. DeLoria please escort Mrs. Wood to the County Clerk to be sworn in and escort her back to her new seat.

PROVONCHA: Please raise your right hand and repeat after me –

WOOD: I, Margaret Wood, do solemnly swear, that I will support the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of New York and I will faithfully discharge the duties of Supervisor, of the Town of Schroon according to the best of my ability.

PROVONCHA: Congratulations.

GARRISON: Thank you Joe. I will now call the roll for the 2022 Board of Supervisors.

PRESENT: Clayton Barber - Town of Chesterfield
Charles Harrington - Town of Crown Point
Noel Merrihew - Town of Elizabethtown
Kenneth Hughes - Town of Essex
Matthew Stanley - Town of Jay
Joe Pete Wilson - Town of Keene - excused
James Monty - Town of Lewis
Stephen McNally - Town of Minerva
Thomas Scozzafava - Town of Moriah
Robin DeLoria - Town of Newcomb
Derek Doty - Town of North Elba
Stephanie DeZalia - Town of North Hudson
Margaret Wood - Town of Schroon
Davina Winemiller - Town of St. Armand - excused
Mark Wright - Town of Ticonderoga
Michael Tyler - Town of Westport
Shaun Gilliland - Town of Willsboro
Roy Holzer - Town of Wilmington

Department Heads in attendance: Brandon Boutelle, Laura Carson, James Dougan, Judith Garrison, Krissy Leerkes, Michael Mascarenas, Daniel Palmer, Joseph Provoncha, David Reynolds, Heather Sheehan, Kristy Sprague and Max Thwaites. Dan Manning was previously excused.

Also in attendance: Laurie DeZalia, Chelsea Merrihew, Dina Garvey, Daniel Tedford, Shannon Stanley, Polly Doty, Laura Wright, Linda Gilliland, Ana Alvarez and Cedric Weiss.

News Media: Tim Rowland - Sun Community News.

GARRISON: Thank you. I will now call the nominations for the 2022 temporary Chairman of the Board.

HARRINGTON: Madam Clerk, I would like to move the name of Thomas Scozzafava, from the Town of Moriah as temporary Chairman for 2022.

McNALLY: I will second that.

GARRISON: Thank you. Mr. Harrington moves the name of Mr. Scozzafava, seconded by Mr. McNally. Are there other nominations?

HUGHES: I move that the nominations be closed and the Clerk cast one ballot for Mr. Scozzafava as Temporary Chairman.

DELORIA: I will second that.

GARRISON: Thank you. All those in favor, opposed – carried. Would Mr. Harrington and Mr. McNally please escort Mr. Scozzafava to the County Clerk to be sworn in and then to the dais.

PROVONCHA: Please raise your right hand and repeat after me –

SCOZZAFAVA: I, Thomas Scozzafava, do solemnly swear, that I will support the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of New York and I will faithfully discharge the duties of Temporary Chairman for the Essex County Board Supervisors according to the best of my ability.

Good morning. This is my 32nd or 33rd year on the Board of Supervisors and the same time frame I have been temporary Chair for whatever reason, I never became permanent Chair but anyway. I do want to say, the past couple of years and I'm sure the next two years at the Board of Supervisors, it's too bad that the State of New York and the Federal Government couldn't take a lesson from this Board of Supervisors because we are nonpartisan and we do what we feel is in the best interest of our constituents not based on their party. The first order of business is to adopt the rules and regulations that will govern this board for 2022.

RESOLUTION # 1 - ADOPTING THE RULES AND REGULATIONS OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE ESSEX COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS.

This resolution was moved by Mr. Monty, seconded by Mr. Holzer and adopted upon a roll-call vote as follows:

AYES: 2705 votes

NOES: 0 votes

ABSENT: 216 votes (Wilson, Winemiller)

SCOZZAFAVA: We will now call for the nominations for the 2022 Chair.

MERRIHEW: Thank you Mr. Chairman. It is my privilege today to move the familiar name of Shaun Gilliland as our Chairman for 2022. Over the last two years we have experienced an unprecedented development of the changing health, economic and social issues all requiring direct evaluation formulating specific strategies and ambition inseminating information that has not stopped and through it all Shaun has weathered the storm and set steady sail in the best possible direction in turn, by his coordinating efforts

with all effective parties. God Bless his resiliency and commitment. I have served in these chambers for 20 years and under many different Chairmen and many different emergencies and situations and I can assure you that we have never experienced such a non-stop every changing saga that demands daily address on daily issues. Through it all Shaun remains professional, informed, accessible and respectful; great leadership qualities. His relationship with our county administration provides a timely efficient interest to our changing issues. Shaun established relationships with our State and Federal representatives assures us direct communication on these important matters and issues. At this time, I would like to personally thank Shaun's wife, Linda and his family for allowing such a continued commitment to the people of Essex County and last but not least, thank you Shaun for offering your continued leadership through these trying times, your commitment to duty is admirable and I am proud to read your name as a consideration for Chairman. Thank you.

HUGHES: I will second that.

SCOZZAFAVA: Mr. Hughes seconds.

MERRIHEW: I will move proudly, Mr. Gilliland's names in nomination.

SCOZZAFAVA: Are there other nominations?

DEZALIA: I move that the nominations be closed and the Clerk cast one ballot for Mr. Gilliland as the 2022 Chair of the Board.

McNALLY: I will second that.

SCOZZAFAVA: Second by Mr. McNally. Discussion? All in favor, opposed – carried. Would Mr. Merrihew and Mr. Hughes escort Mr. Gilliland to the front of the room where he can take his oath of office and then escort him to the dais.

PROVONCHA: Mr. Chairman holding the bible for Mr. Gilliland are two exchange students.

GILLILLAND: Ana Alvarez Galindo from Spain. Cedric Weiss from Germany.

PROVONCHA: Please raise your right hand and repeat after me –

GILLILLAND: I, Shaun Gilliland, do solemnly swear, that I will support the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of New York and I will faithfully discharge the duties of Chairman of the Essex County Board Supervisors according to the best of my ability.

Thank you. Thank you for the kind words Mr. Merrihew. We will now call nominations for the 2022 Vice-Chairman of the Essex County Board of Supervisors.

HOLZER: Mr. Chairman, I am honored to move the name of Mr. Monty in the nomination for the 2022 Vice-Chairmanship.

TYLER: I will second that.

GILLILLAND: Are there any other nominations?

BARBER: Mr. Chairman, I move that the nominations be closed for the 2022 Vice-Chairman of the Board.

DELORIA: I will second that motion Mr. Chair.

GILLILLAND: All in favor, opposed – carried. Would Mr. Tyler and Mr. Holzer please escort Mr. Monty to the County Clerk to be sworn in.

PROVONCHA: Please raise your right hand and repeat after me –

MONTY: I, James Monty, do solemnly swear, that I will support the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of New York and I will faithfully discharge the duties of Vice-Chairman for the Essex County Board Supervisors according to the best of my ability.

I would just like to take a few minutes of your time to thank first the voters of the Town of Lewis who chose faith in me to re-elect me again this year as well as my colleagues on the Board of Supervisors. It's been an honor and pleasure to work here with you and I echo Tom's statements that this is the most non-partisan Governmental agency I've seen. We all are here for the right reasons, the people of Essex County. I would also like to add that it's been my honor and pleasure to work with Shaun these past three years I believe it is, that given what we've been going through the last couple of years I can see no better man or woman to have led us through this pandemic and everything that goes with it than Shaun. He is informed. He is knowledgeable. I can understand how he commanded a fleet in the Navy and worked in the Pentagon. The man is amazing. I have such respect for him. We don't always necessarily agree on things but I think that's what makes it work so thank you again and I look forward to serving with the Board of Supervisors. Thank you.

GILLILLAND: Thank you Jim. Thank you for those kind words. It's very much a pleasure and an honor for me to serve the people of Essex County and serve with you, my colleagues on the Board of Supervisors. I also want to thank my family for putting up with this thing I do. It takes a lot of time and effort and patience of my family; Sunday calls, 6 o'clock in the morning calls and I am indebted to them and they are the reason I am here. I want to welcome our new colleagues on the board. This will now be a new board than it has been in the past and looking forward to moving forward and looking with new ideas in ways of looking at things and you were elected for a reason, that's to represent your people and represent them in the format of Governing a county.

I have been honored to work with this the workforce and the leadership of the Essex County Government the last few years. I have learned and observed. Our people that work for the County Government are the most valuable precious asset that we have to provide the services that we, as elected officials have been charged to provide. As I said,

in my time in the military and stuff you know, it's mission and people but it's hard to rank them just one and two because you can't do one without the other so they have to be kept in everybody's mind as they are doing the mission and they will do the mission as long as the people are taken care of and I hope we, as a board have been doing that.

We are a very unique county. We're the second largest geographic county in the State. We are the county that has a unique economy in that tourism is our number one unlike any others. We are one of the smallest population counties and we have very unique problems which always requires that we have to find our way. There is no county next door, no county at the other end of the State that is close to what we are. We always look at it we're different and therefore we have to lead and I think Essex County has developed a reputation as leading and I can say many things about the things that have gone on and done in the last few years that show that we lead and people look to us as often pioneers in new situations and new requirements and because we're unique and because that is kind of the mantra of the way we look at things we have essentially not succumbed to the pressure of this pandemic. We have successfully protected our workforce and continue to provide the mission in spite of labor and economic difficulties. I think we've come out at this end or this portion of the pandemic financially stronger than when we went in because of good, fiscal oversight and control and concern by this board and in particularly by our County Manager, Dan Palmer.

There's an old Navy saying, that says you cannot steer by your wake. It means, don't go into uncharted waters ahead based upon how you successfully sailed through them before but you can take lessons from the success of your wake in navigating forward and I just would like to point out a couple of those that I think our valuable lessons that we need to use as philosophies moving forward through this next year and going forward. The first one, Governments – I think we as this was mentioned before, I would almost describe that this board is almost a beacon of our American political experiment. We have respect. We have collegiality. We have dignity toward each other and we get decisions made and move forward all while each of us remains loyal to our core beliefs and core philosophies. Sometimes I wonder how we do it, it takes patience. Sometimes it takes biting of the tongue but compared to other bodies that surround us we are in a much, much better and successful place. I think that's a lesson that we need to take forward and I would also just put that in the thinking caps of our new colleagues. You won't find partisan bickering with this board.

The second thing is a beacon for going forward is we have and I think we should as a philosophy looking forward, we need to determine that we are going to boot strap ourselves. Our colleagues at the State will often just quietly curtail our sources of revenue and often they will just ex-appropriate like hiding them in the night. We cannot become so dependent on the State for our own economic well-being going forward. We have to determine our own course and we have to be willing to do it on our own if necessary. I will give you an example, we have been working for years in North Hudson on developing that area and with nothing going on and nothing going on now we've had change of Government in Albany, we've had pandemics and things but the only way for us to move forward is to move forward and not wait for the State and we are doing that and with support of this board. Sometimes we are going to have to go it alone but this often, because of our unique place and our unique aspects we do know how to go it alone. When we lead, the State will follow.

This pandemic is rough; it is getting rougher. I was just on the ride in this morning talking to a former colleague who talked about four and five hour waits in the parking lot of ECH over here just to see the emergency room. We have lost a former colleague to this disease and it's getting more and more personal. Things are going to be changing I think quickly. The biology of it is maybe it will peter out, maybe it will become endemic, maybe it will become such a light infection that people will survive it and it will become part of our daily living but so far, antidotally I'm not seeing that so we have a lot of work to do moving forward as Government and providing services to the people even with the load of handling this pandemic.

Over the last few years, two years we've had to forgo a lot of our traditions and a lot of our ceremonies. We've lost neighbors and friends and everybody's lives have been upended. I do believe that sometime during the end of this year we need to get back to remembering those sacrifices as well as the sacrifices of people who has provided services to the people over the last few years be it Veterans or others, members of law enforcement, public safety. In talking to Mr. Provoncha, we will be looking at a large remembrance ceremony in the fall.

With that, I would say there is no better body prepared to move forward successfully in this State then this body and I thank you from the bottom of my heart for your confidence. Thank you very much.

We will move forward into resolutions.

RESOLUTION # 2 – APPOINTING THE CLERK OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS AND THE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE ESSEX COUNTY SELF-INSURANCE PLAN.

This resolution was moved by Mr. Merrihew, seconded by Mr. Holzer and adopted upon a roll-call vote as follows:

AYES: 2705 votes
NOES: 0 votes
ABSENT: 216 votes (Wilson, Winemiller)

GILLILLAND: We will now swear in the Clerk of the Board.

PROVONCHA: Please raise your right hand and repeat after me –

GARRISON: I, Judith Garrison, do solemnly swear, that I will support the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of New York and I will faithfully discharge the duties of Clerk of the Essex County Board Supervisors according to the best of my ability.

Mr. Chairman I would like announce Dina Garvey as my Deputy Clerk.

PROVONCHA: Please raise your right hand and repeat after me –

GARVEY: I, Dina Garvey, do solemnly swear, that I will support the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of New York and I will faithfully discharge the duties of Deputy Clerk of the Essex County Board Supervisors according to the best of my ability.

RESOLUTION #3 – AUTHORIZING COMPENSATION FOR THE SUPERVISORS OF ESSEX COUNTY.

This resolution was moved by Mr. McNally, seconded by Mr. Barber and adopted upon a roll-call vote as follows:

AYES: 2705 votes
NOES: 0 votes
ABSENT: 216 votes (Wilson, Winemiller)

RESOLUTION #4 – DESIGNATING THE OFFICIAL NEWSPAPERS FOR 2022.

This resolution was moved by Mr. DeLoria, seconded by Mr. Stanley and adopted.

RESOLUTION #5 – ORDERING THE CONFINEMENT OF DOGS TO PROTECT THE DEER HERD.

This resolution was moved by Mr. Merrihew, seconded by Mr. Monty and adopted.

RESOLUTION #6 – ADOPTING AN INVESTMENT POLICY AND DESIGNATING DEPOSITORY FOR COUNTY FUNDS.

This resolution was moved by Mr. Scozzafava, seconded by Mr. Hughes and adopted upon a roll-call vote as follows:

AYES: 2705 votes
NOES: 0 votes
ABSENT: 216 votes (Wilson, Winemiller)

RESOLUTION #7 – PURSUANT TO REAL PROPERTY TAX LAW §554 AND §556 DELEGATING TO THE ESSEX COUNTY AUDITOR THE AUTHORITY TO APPROVE CORRECTIONS TO THE TAX ROLLS OF NOT MORE THAN \$2,500.00, AND THE PAYMENT OF REFUNDS DUE AS A RESULT OF SUCH CORRECTIONS.

This resolution was moved by Mr. Scozzafava, seconded by Mrs. DeZalia and adopted upon a roll-call vote as follows:

AYES: 2705 votes
NOES: 0 votes
ABSENT: 216 votes (Wilson, Winemiller)

GILLILLAND: Discussion?

HUGHES: Is the \$2500.00, the amount that the law states or is that a local decision on our part?

PALMER: That's local, that's a local decision.

HUGHES: Thank you.

GILLILLAND: Further discussion? Being none, roll call please.

RESOLUTION #8 – ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE ESSEX COUNTY PURCHASING POLICY AND ALL PROCEDURES RELATED THERETO AND AUTHORIZATION OF THE CONTINUED USE THEREOF.

This resolution was moved by Mrs. DeZalia, seconded by Mr. Scozzafava and adopted.

RESOLUTION #9 – ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE ESSEX COUNTY PERSONNEL POLICY AND ALL PROCEDURES RELATED THERETO AND AUTHORIZATION OF THE CONTINUED USE THEREOF.

This resolution was moved by Mrs. DeZalia, seconded by Mr. Merrihew, and adopted with Mr. Monty being opposed.

GILLILLAND: Discussion?

MONTY: I just, I have an issue with this because our Personnel Policy is 17 years old now. I think it's time we really review it and make it right.

GILLILLAND: We have an action officer on it who is departing so we will, you and I will be taking a close look at that. Further discussion? Being none, all in favor – opposed –

MONTY: I am opposed.

GILLILLAND: Mr. Monty is opposed.

RESOLUTION #10 – APPOINTING A COUNTY ATTORNEY.

This resolution was moved by Mr. Monty, seconded by Mr. Stanley and adopted upon a roll-call vote as follows:

AYES: 2705 votes
NOES: 0 votes
ABSENT: 216 votes (Wilson, Winemiller)

RESOLUTION #11 – APPOINTING A COUNTY AUDITOR.

This resolution was moved by Mr. Monty, seconded by Mr. Hughes and adopted upon a roll-call vote as follows:

AYES: 2705 votes
NOES: 0 votes
ABSENT: 216 votes (Wilson, Winemiller)

GILLILLAND: We will be swearing in the Auditors.

PROVONCHA: Please raise your right hand and repeat after me –

CARSON: I, Laura Carson, do solemnly swear, that I will support the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of New York and I will faithfully discharge the duties of County Auditor according to the best of my ability.
I would like to appoint Laurie DeZalia as my Deputy Auditor.

GILLILLAND: Absolutely.

PROVONCHA: Please raise your right hand and repeat after me –

L. DEZALIA: I, Laurie DeZalia, do solemnly swear, that I will support the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of New York and I will faithfully discharge the duties of Deputy County Auditor according to the best of my ability.

RESOLUTION #12 – APPOINTING A PURCHASING AGENT.

This resolution was moved by Mr. Scozzafava, seconded by Mr. Barber and adopted upon a roll-call vote as follows:

AYES: 2705 votes
NOES: 0 votes
ABSENT: 216 votes (Wilson, Winemiller)

GILLILLAND: We will swear in Linda Wolf.

PROVONCHA: Please raise your right hand and repeat after me –

WOLF: I, Linda Wolf, do solemnly swear, that I will support the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of New York and I will faithfully discharge the duties of County Purchasing Agent according to the best of my ability.

RESOLUTION #13 – APPOINTING AN ESSEX COUNTY PUBLIC DEFENDER.

This resolution was moved by Mr. DeLoria, seconded by Mr. Wright and adopted upon a roll-call vote as follows:

AYES: 2705 votes
NOES: 0 votes
ABSENT: 216 votes (Wilson, Winemiller)

GILLILLAND: Swearing in of the Public Defender.

PROVONCHA: Please raise your right hand and repeat after me –

BOUTELLE: I, Brandon Boutelle, do solemnly swear, that I will support the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of New York and I will faithfully discharge the duties of Essex County Public Defender according to the best of my ability.

RESOLUTION #14 – ADOPTING LOCAL LAW NO. 1 OF 2022.

This resolution was moved by Mr. Barber, seconded by Mrs. DeZalia and adopted upon a roll-call vote as follows:

AYES: 2705 votes
NOES: 0 votes
ABSENT: 216 votes (Wilson, Winemiller)

RESOLUTION #15 – APPOINTING AN ESSEX COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES DIRECTOR.

This resolution was moved by Mr. DeLoria, seconded by Mr. Holzer and adopted upon a roll-call vote as follows:

AYES: 2594 votes (Barber, Harrington, Merrihew, Hughes, Stanley, McNally, Scozzafava, DeLoria, Doty, DeZalia, Wood, Wright, Tyler, Gilliland, Holzer)
NOES: 111 votes (Monty)
ABSENT: 216 votes (Wilson, Winemiller)

GILLILLAND: Mr. Thwait's is here to be sworn in.

PROVONCHA: Please raise your right hand and repeat after me –

THWAITS: I, Max Thwait's, do solemnly swear, that I will support the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of New York and I will faithfully discharge the duties of Essex County Emergency Services Director according to the best of my ability.

GILLILLAND: That's all the regular business for this meeting. Is there anything else to come before this board?

SCOZZAFAVA: The District Attorney, has to take her oath of office.

GILLILLAND: We need a resolution appointing the District Attorney.

PALMER: She just needs to be sworn in, all she needs to be is sworn in.

PROVONCHA: Please raise your right hand and repeat after me –

SPRAGUE: I, Kristy Sprague, do solemnly swear, that I will support the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of New York and I will faithfully discharge the duties of Essex County District Attorney according to the best of my ability.

GILLILLAND: Is there any further business to come before this board? Happy New Year ladies and gentlemen and we've got a big year ahead of us. Thank you.

As there was no further business to come before this Organizational meeting it was adjourned at 10:53 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith Garrison, Clerk
Board of Supervisors