

**224<sup>th</sup> ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING**  
**Wednesday, January 4, 2023**

J. GARRISON, CLERK OF THE BOARD: Good morning and welcome. I would like to call this 224<sup>th</sup> organizational session to order. Please stand for the salute to the flag. Thank you. I will now call the roll for the 2023 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 - Absent  
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: Angie Allen, Linda Beers, Michael Diskin, James Dougan, Judith Garrison, Krissy Leerkes, Dan Manning, Jennifer Mascarenas, Michael Mascarenas, Jack Mouton, David Reynolds, Heather Sheehan, Kristy Sprague and Matt Watts.

Also in attendance: Chelsea Merrihew, Dina Garvey, Tom Murphy, William Tansey, Mary McGowan, Jennifer Fifield, Kellie King, Patti Doyle, Mary Stanley, Allison McGahay, Stacey Hayes, Linda Gilliland, Heather Reynolds, Evelyn Hatch, Devann Murphy and Bill McGahay.

News Media: Alana Penny - Sun Community News.

GARRISON: I will now call for nominations for the 2023 temporary Chairman of the Board.

HARRINGTON: Madam Clerk, I would to move the name of Thomas Scozzafava from the Town of Moriah, as temporary Chairman for 2023.

GARRISON: Thank you. Do we have a second?

DOTY: I will second that.

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

STANLEY: I move the nominations be closed and the Clerk cast one ballot for Mr. Scozzafava as temporary Chairman.

DELORIA: I'll second that.

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

SCOZZAFAVA: Good morning. So, I would guess that I probably have been Chair of this body more times than anyone in the history but I always get temporary Chair, they never give me permanent chair. Okay, the first order of business is to adopt the rules and regulations that will govern this board for 2023.

**RESOLUTION #1 – ADOPTING RULES AND REGULATIONS OF 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: 2576 votes**

**NOES: 0 votes**

**ABSENT: 277 votes (Wilson, McNally, Winemiller)**

SCOZZAFAVA: Okay, we will now call for nominations of the 2023 Chair and I would like to nominate and move the name of Supervisor Shaun Gilliland for the 2023 Chair of the Essex County Board of Supervisors. Shaun has proven his leadership qualities through some very trying times for this county and has always used a bipartisan approach to all the difficulties that we have faced these past few years. He's worked for the betterment of our county, has excelled in the art of compromise during his tenure as our Chairman. He has represented our county proudly and with dignity and articulated our mission very well to both the Federal Government and to Albany. He always works for the betterment of all of our constituents and the Town of Willsboro is very fortunate to have Shaun Gilliland as their leader. He has also earned the respect from our employees, department heads, my colleagues on the Board of Supervisors as being someone who listens without prejudice and always strives for fairness and shows compassion and that is why I submit the name of Supervisor Shaun Gilliland, Supervisor from the Town of Willsboro as our Chair for 2023.

HUGHES: I'll second that, temporary Chairman.

SCOZZAFAVA: All in favor, opposed – carried. Mr. Hughes we will bring Mr. Gilliland to the front to be sworn in.

GILLILLAND: And swearing me in will be our new Supreme Court Judge, Judge McGahay.

JUDGE McGAHAY: Congratulations.

GILLILLAND: Thank you. We will now call for the nominations for the 2023 Vice-Chairman of the Essex County Board of Supervisors.

HOLZER: Mr. Chairman, it is an honor to nominate Mr. Jim Monty of Lewis, New York as the 2023 Vice-Chairman of the Board for this body. Jim has served as Vice-Chairman with distinction and I'm very extremely happy that he has agreed to serve in this capacity once more. The citizens of his community and our county are fortunate to have his leadership. Over the last few years I have served on this board and I have always found Jim to be a man of his word. He is an individual who does his homework, one can tell he has a passion for his job and researches the issues. He will make no qualms in expressing his views. Jim is a no nonsense leader who commands respect by his very nature through all that he is also a person that listens to other opinions and is always willing to meet in the middle if it serves the better public good. Jim is a true public servant in every sense of the word, prior to him serving as the town supervisor he was on the Lewis town board for eighteen years. He understands the issues affecting our communities and county. His work on the county housing task force and being a staunch advocate for better broadband in our area is incredible. Outside his county responsibilities Jim also serves on the ACAP and Essex County IDA boards along with countless other boards in civic responsibilities. I cannot think of a better individual with the caliber of Jim Monty to assist in leading our county into 2023. I am proud to call Jim Monty my friend and colleague and I cannot think of a better individual for this position.

TYLER: I will second that.

GILLILLAND: Thank you Mr. Tyler. Are there any other nominations?

BARBER: Mr. Chairman, I move that the nominations be closed for the 2023 Vice-Chairman of the Board.

DOTY: Second.

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

At this time, we have the honor of swearing in our newest Supreme Court Judge for the 4<sup>th</sup> Judicial District who is our resident, Essex County Judge an honor that we haven't had in many, many years so if I could ask Judge McGahay to join us at the table. Congratulations Judge.

JUDGE McGAHAY: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Thank you everyone. It's an honor and a privilege to serve in Essex County in this capacity. I enjoy working with this county in every different position that I've held from Assistant DA to Commissioner of the Board of Elections but this position I recognize the importance of and I am so grateful for the support of all of you. I'm excited to get started in this role for Essex County, thank you.

GILLILLAND: I am very humbled to the board for your continued confidence in me to continue to perform my duties as Chairman. It's a job that I truly enjoy doing and it's a job I strive to do the best I possibly can but being Chairman or being the Vice-Chairman cannot be done unless you have a the tremendous team of giants that sit here and you all are giants there's not one supervisor that is sitting here that has not in time, whether this is your first term or fifty-seventh term, I'm not sure where Tom is but – taking your communities through crisis's be them manmade or God made crises and you always perform either individually on the scene or as a team here at the county and you take great pride and I take great pride in the fact that we are recognized as a board that is not dysfunctional and most of our neighbors around the State have severe problems. I can say that in the entire time that I've been on this board I think we've only had one slightly partisan issue we've ever had to deal with and that was with that picture up there and we came to a compromise and an agreement on it. Every member does what is best for the county and the citizens of the county here with in mind that you are also a town, you bring the town's flavor to this board, to help the county. I kind of speak of giants and many of us, we serve with giants here that did tremendous work and brought this county forward in great ways George Canon, Roby Politi even Tommy Scozzafava. I know we laugh about that because he's got a great sense of humor but Tom has taken his town, I mean you think of all the crisis's, the dropping of the bridge, the first attempted closing of Moriah Shock and now we're working on the second one you all sit among great people and I take great pride and always be honor and take it to my grave the honor of serving with you.

We've done great things and will continue to do great things. I will tell you that yesterday, one of them is the EMS program that we banner about and we argue about and we debate; I got a call yesterday from a supervisor from Onondaga county who wanted, as I'm trying to rush out the door, and said do you have a couple of minutes to talk about your EMS program? I said sure, what's up? Well, ours is a mess. It's a complete mess and word around the state is you guys have got the golden ring and you've solved the problem. I said, well, I don't know if we've solved the problem but, Essex County evidently has a reputation in the EMS world, EMS programs as being closest to managing the crisis that EMS is having throughout the state. So I described to her the whole program and everything and then she came back to me, I told her we are much different though than Onondaga County, Onondaga County has a massive population, urban centers, we have a small population, really don't have any real urban centers and we're very large geographically and very rural. So I explained the whole system to her and she said, well, it definitely sounds like you guys are on the cutting edge of working through the crisis. I said, I think we kind are because we have a great board. That's just one example. Essex County and this board and particularly these department heads and employees in this county who are willing to go try something new, not afraid to lead. We're a small county, some of the lowest population, we have a rural poverty problem, we have a distance

problem here all the things Essex County leads the State in we shouldn't be because of the disadvantages we have but we do and just as a preamble because I think we're in for some rough seas ahead.

I was honored to go down to the inauguration of the Governor on Sunday with Tom and Steve McNally and others and it kind of seemed hearing that, it seemed to me that the old days of the Adirondacks and stuff being a preeminent issue with Albany are kind of gone. The concerns of the state are shifting other places so I think we're back if some of us remember to we're going to have to do it ourselves and figure out systems and figure out programs and mostly figure out funding to do the things that we want to do to improve the lives of our citizens.

We're lucky right now to have several million dollars in ARPA funding and we have a number of issues that we need to get done that have been just sores, saddle sores on the horse of this county for a long time and we've got to fix them and we've got to do it quick before essentially, something else comes along. You know for this year one of the biggest things is we have to get that old jail down. We need to solve the issue with the buildings at the fairgrounds. We need to move forward with the fish hatchery and a number of other issues.

I would like to say my priorities are, for this year are to let's get these things that have been bothering us for years and years and years and get them fixed because basically that's the way we need to gird and reinforce Essex County before the next set of crisis needs comes at us. The days I think of a State grant solving our problems are kind of over.

So, just remember we serve with giants and you are all giants and we'll get through whatever comes at us as we have in the past and I again, say thank you so much and I'm humbled in your confidence. Thank you.

We'll now move into resolutions and then we will swear in our county officials.

**RESOLUTION #2 – AUTHORIZING COMPENSATION FOR THE SUPERVISORS OF ESSEX COUNTY.**

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

**AYES: 2576 votes**

**NOES: 0 votes**

**ABSENT: 277 votes (Wilson, McNally, Winemiller)**

**RESOLUTION #3 – DESIGNATING OFFICIAL NEWSPAPERS FOR 2023.**

**This resolution was moved by Mr. DeLoria, seconded by Mr. Wright and duly adopted.**

**RESOLUTION #4 – ORDERING THE CONFINEMENT OF DOGS TO PROTECT THE DEER HERD.**

**This resolution was moved by Mr. Monty, seconded by Mr. Doty and duly adopted.**

**RESOLUTION #5 – ADOPTING AN INVESTMENT POLICY AND DESIGNATING DEPOSITORIES FOR COUNTY FUNDS.**

**This resolution was moved by Mr. Scozzafava, seconded by Mr. Doty and adopted upon a roll-call vote, with Mr. Monty *abstaining*, as follows:**

**AYES: 2472 votes**  
**NOES: 0 votes**  
**ABSENT: 277 votes (Wilson, McNally, Winemiller)**  
**ABSTAIN: 104 votes (Monty)**

**RESOLUTION # 6 – PURSUANT TO REAL PROPERTY TAX LAW §554 AND §556 DELEGATING TO THE ESSEX COUNTY AUDITOR THE AUTHORITY TO APPORVE 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. Wright, seconded by Mr. Barber and adopted upon a roll-call vote as follows:**

**AYES: 2576 votes**  
**NOES: 0 votes**  
**ABSENT: 277 votes (Wilson, McNally, Winemiller)**

**RESOLUTION #7 – OF 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 Mr. Scozzafava, seconded by Mr. Doty and duly adopted.**

**RESOLUTION #8 – OF 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 Mr. Stanley, seconded by Mr. Holzer and duly adopted.**

GILLILLAND: Discussion?

MONTY: Yes, Mr. Chairman I would like to encourage us as this will be the eighth, second time that I've encouraged us on this date that since our personnel policy is dated 2005, if my math is correct, that is eighteen years old and I would definitely like to see that done this year. Thank you.

GILLILLAND: Mr. Vice-chairman, we will make that a primary administrative goal for this year.

MONTY: Thank you.

GILLILLAND: Further discussion? Being none, all in favor, opposed – carried.

**RESOLUTION #9 – AUTHORIZING THE APPOINTMENT OF J. MICHAEL MASCARENAS TO THE OFFICE OF ESSEX COUNTY MANAGER FOR A TERM OF TWO (2) YEARS.**

**This resolution was moved by Mr. Scozzafava, seconded by Mr. Hughes and duly adopted.**

GILLILLAND: We will now swear in the County Manager.

MASCARENAS: I would like to call up James Dougan as my Deputy County Manager.

**RESOLUTION #10 – ADOPTING LOCAL LAW NO. 1 OF 2023.**

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

**AYES: 2576 votes**

**NOES: 0 votes**

**ABSENT: 277 votes (Wilson, McNally, Winemiller)**

**RESOLUTION #11 – APPOINTING JACK MOULTON AS ESSEX COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS REPUBLICAN COMMISSIONER.**

**This resolution was moved by Mr. Holzer, seconded by Mr. Barber and duly adopted.**

GILLILLAND: Mr. Moulton come up and get sworn in as the Republican Commissioner.

**RESOLUTION #12 – APPOINTING MARY MCGOWAN AS ESSEX COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS DEMOCRATIC COMMISSIONER.**

**This resolution was moved by Mr. Doty, seconded by Mr. Stanley and duly adopted.**

GILLILLAND: Ms. McGowan, come forward to be sworn in please.

**RESOLUTION #13 – AUTHORIZING THE COUNTY CHAIRMAN OR COUNTY MANAGER TO EXECUTE A CONTRACT WITH DAVID CUNNINGHAM ARCHITECTURE PLANNING, PLLC IN THE PRINCIPAL AMOUNT OF \$159,000.00, FOR ARCHITECTURAL SERVICES FOR FARMWORKER HOUSING PROJECTS.**

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

**AYES: 2576 votes**

**NOES: 0 votes**

**ABSENT: 277 votes (Wilson, McNally, Winemiller)**

HUGHES: What is this?

MASCARENAS: Yeah, I can explain. This the farmworker's grant that we got through the community development block grant that is being managed by community resources group. You had a resolution passed allowing our Purchasing Agent to bid and award, we just wanted to tighten up a previous resolution with the amounts and who it was awarded to so, the board had granted permission for this we just wanted to make sure we had some belt and suspenders in a resolution for our funding agency.

HUGHES: Thank you.

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

**RESOLUTION #14 – AUTHORIZING THE REAPPOINTMENT OF LINDA L. BEERS AS DIRECTOR OF ESSEX COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT.**

**This resolution was moved by Mr. Doty, seconded by Mr. Scozzafava and duly adopted.**

GILLILLAND: Thank you very much. Linda, would you like to come forward to be sworn in.

**RESOLUTION #15 – REQUESTING HOME RULE LEGISLATION TO EXTEND THE AUTHORIZATION GRANTED TO ESSEX COUNTY PURSUANT TO NYS TAX LAW §1210(i)(36) TO IMPOSE AN ADDITIONAL ONE PERCENT (1%) OF SALES AND COMPENSATION USE TAX FOR THE PERIOD BEGINNING DECEMBER 1, 2013 AND ENDING NOVEMBER 30, 2026, OR WHATEVER DATE THE LEGISLATURE DECIDES IS APPROPRIATE.**

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

**AYES: 3532 votes**

**NOES: 0 votes**

**ABSENT: 359 votes (Wilson, McNally, Winemiller)**

GILLILLAND: We will now ask our newly re-elected Sheriff to come forward to be sworn in. Congratulations. Could I have the Under Sheriff come forward and sworn in please. Congratulations. Could I have the newly, re-elected Treasurer, Mike Diskin please come forward to be sworn in, only four more terms after this Mike.

DISKIN: Before I walk away I do want to have my Deputy sworn in but some of you may wonder why I had Mr. Scozzafava come up. It's always been my choice to have a family member or somebody come up, I ran out of children, ran out of grandchildren and my dad always used to be here. He was here up until my fifth time, this is my eighth time but I wanted to let you know Tom served with my dad so, that's why I asked him to come forward to represent my family and I also want to tell you that every time I've been sworn in I've worn something of my fathers, today I wore his sport coat.

GILLILLAND: And can we have our new Commissioner of Social Services, Angie Allen come forward to be sworn in please.

ALLEN: Thank you.

MASCARENAS: You do whatever you want. The floor is yours, you do whatever you want.

ALLEN: Oh, the floor is mine. Well then, I just want to say thank you for the trust of the board, the trust and the guidance of Mr. Mascarenas. This has been something that I



think all women in Essex County should strive for. I am the first woman in Essex County to become Commissioner of Social Services as well as the first one that has been through the ranks so to me, that speaks a lot to the trust and the guidance that I have been given over the years and I will not fail you that's my promise, so thank you.

GILLILLAND: We have some other business for the board to attend to –

TYLER: Mr. Chairman can I offer a resolution to recognize long time, resident, Lillian Lobdell who is turning 100 years old from the Town of Westport?

GILLILLAND: Absolutely. I have a resolution on the floor, do we have a second? Thank you very much.

**RESOLUTION #16 – OF CONGRATULATIONS TO LILLIAN LOBDELL UPON CELEBRATING HER 100<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY.**

**This resolution was moved by Mr. Tyler, seconded unanimously and duly adopted.**

GILLILLAND: Anything further from the board? I would like to make one, quick announcement we have some business the board has to attend to quickly; I think there is going to be a reception at the Half Way House in honor of this event and of our Supreme Court Judge so, I believe it is at 11:30, so everybody is invited to join in but at this time, I need a motion to go into executive session in order to discuss a personnel issue and to discuss a contract issue.

MANNING: And for legal advice.

GILLILLAND: Moved by Mr. Monty, second by Ms. Wood. Thank you very much we are in executive session at this time.

THE BOARD MOVED INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 10:45 A.M. TO DISCUSS A PERSONNEL ISSUE, A CONTRACT ISSUE AND TO RECEIVE LEGAL ADVICE.  
THE BOARD MOVED BACK INTO OPEN SESSION AT 11:25 A.M.

GILLILLAND: I note the time is 11:25 a.m. we are out of executive session. No decisions were made in executive session. We are now in regular session.

MASCARENAS: Which resolution would you like to do first?

MANNING: Let's do the HAPEC one.

MASCARENAS: We are asking for a resolution for Essex County to enter into an agreement with PRIDE of Ticonderoga, on their most recent OCR, CDBG award.

**RESOLUTION #17 – AUTHORIZING A CONTRACT/SUBRECIPIENT AGREEMENT WITH THE PRIDE OF TICONDEROGA TO ACT AS SUBRECIPIENT OF ESSEX COUNTY'S COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) UNDER THE**

**HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ACT, (PROJECT #382-HR312-22)  
FOR THE REHABILITATION OF RESIDENTIAL UNITS WITHIN THE COUNTY.**

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

**AYES: 2576 votes**  
**NOES: 0 votes**  
**ABSENT: 277 votes (Wilson, McNally, Winemiller)**

GILLILLAND: Discussion? Being none, roll call please.

MASCARENAS: And I defer to Mr. Manning on the correct language for the County Clerk resolution.

MANNING: So we would like to ask for a resolution amending the salary of the current deputy county clerk, Chelsea Merrihew to the former salary of county clerk as she is doing duties, the published salary for the year, 2023, of \$85,677.64.

**RESOLUTION #18 – AUTHORIZING TO AMEND THE SALARY OF THE DEPUTY COUNTY CLERK, CHELSEA MERRIHEW, TO \$85,677.64 FOR THE CALENDAR YEAR 2023.**

**This resolution was moved by Mr. DeLoria, seconded by Mr. Doty and adopted upon a roll-call vote, with Mr. Merrihew *abstaining*, as follows:**

**AYES: 2477 votes**  
**NOES: 0 votes**  
**ABSENT: 277 votes (Wilson, McNally, Winemiller)**  
**ABSTAIN: 99 votes (Merrihew)**

GILLILLAND: If I could add one thing on there, while she performs the duties of the County Clerk and that no county clerk would have been appointed by the Governor. Moved by Mr. DeLoria, second by Mr. Doty. Discussion?

MASCARENAS: With the understanding folks that after the 2023 election, that that deputy county clerk wage will go back to what it would have been following.

GILLILLAND: Further discussion? Being none, roll call please. Anything else to come before this board? As I said, the reception being held is being paid for by the wallet of Mr. McGahay so I would encourage everybody to go down there and empty that wallet. (*laughter*) Nothing before this board, welcome to 2023, once again, thank you so much in your confidence in me, looking forward to a really good year.

As there was no further discussion to come before this 224<sup>th</sup> organizational meeting it was adjourned at 11:27 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith Garrison, Clerk  
Board of Supervisors