

**ANNUAL ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING
THURSDAY, JANUARY 4, 2021
2:00 PM**

The annual organizational meeting of the Wyoming County Board of Supervisors was held in the Supervisor's Chamber, Government Center, 143 North Main Street, Warsaw, NY with all members present, The following Supervisors participated via Zoom – A. Brunner, T/Java; D. Leuer, T/Middlebury and S. May, T/Orangeville. Clerk to the Board, Cheryl Ketchum, called the 180th organizational meeting session of the Wyoming County Board of Supervisors to order at 2:00 pm with the following remarks:

“Good Afternoon everyone and welcome to the one hundred eightieth (180th) session of the Wyoming County Board of Supervisors’ Annual Organizational Meeting. 2020 was certainly a year to remember. Beginning in March of 2020, Governor Cuomo passed a series of Executive Orders as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic that began sweeping the nation. So, for the first time ever, Executive Order 202.1 permits any public body to meet and take such actions authorized by law without permitting in public, in-person access to meetings and authorizing such meetings to be held remotely by conference call or similar service, provided that the public has the ability to view or listen to such proceeding... With the assistance of the county’s Information Technology Department, the Wyoming County Board of Supervisors have been holding regular monthly meetings, as scheduled, with the added benefit to Supervisors and Department Heads to participate via Zoom. Members of the public have been invited and encouraged to observe these proceedings by tuning into the Board of Supervisors’ YouTube channel, which can be easily accessed through the county’s web site. In years past, these chambers would be filled to capacity with Department Heads, family members and distinguished guests supporting their Town Supervisor during these historic proceedings. As you can clearly see, today’s in-person attendance has been greatly diminished due to requirements for social distancing. It is my greatest hope that those of you watching these proceedings via YouTube are with each and every one of us in spirit and that 2021 will be a year of good health, hope and healing...”

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Wyoming County Sheriff, G. Rudolph.

The Reverend Frank Frazier offered an opening prayer.

Wyoming County Court Judge, M. Mohun was welcomed to the proceedings and invited to administer the oath of office to the entire 2021 Board of Supervisors.

Clerk Ketchum then called for nominations for ***Temporary Chairman***. Supervisor Becker, T/Sheldon nominated Supervisor Brick, T/Perry, seconded by Supervisor Roberts, T/Genesee Falls.

Hearing no further nominations, Supervisor Klein, T/Castile moved that the nominations be closed, and was seconded by Supervisor Jacoby, T/Wethersfield. Nominations were declared closed and a roll call vote was taken with the following results:

Ayes: (1541); **Noes:** (0); **Absent:** (58) Orangeville **Abstain:** (0)

Due to technical difficulties, Supervisor May, T/Orangeville was unable to have her vote heard.

Supervisor Brick was declared Temporary Chairman.

Judge Mohun administered the Oath of Office to Temporary Chairman Brick.

Temporary Chairman Brick thanked his fellow Supervisors for the honor of presiding over today's proceedings as Temporary Chair then called for nominations for Chairman of the Board for the year 2021.

Supervisor King, T/Pike nominated Supervisor Ryan, T/Warsaw; seconded by Supervisor Leuer, T/Middlebury.

Temporary Chairman Brick called for further nominations three (3) times.

Hearing no further nominations, Supervisor Becker, T/Sheldon moved that the nominations be closed, and was seconded by Supervisor Jacoby, T/Wethersfield. Nominations were declared closed and a roll call vote was taken with the following results:

Ayes: (1541); **Noes:** (0); **Absent:** (58) Orangeville **Abstain:** (0)

Due to technical difficulties, Supervisor May, T/Orangeville was unable to have her vote heard.

Temporary Chairman Brick declared Supervisor Ryan, T/Warsaw as Chairwoman of the Wyoming County Board of Supervisors for the year 2021.

Judge Mohun administered the Oath of Office to Chairwoman Ryan.

Chairwoman Ryan called for nominations for Vice-Chair of the Board for 2021 and nominated Jerry Davis, T/Covington. The nomination was seconded by Supervisor Becker, T/Sheldon.

Chairwoman Ryan called for further nominations three (3) times.

Hearing no further nominations, Supervisor Roberts, T/Genesee Falls moved that the nominations be closed and the motion was seconded by Supervisor Brick, T/Perry. Nominations were declared closed and a roll call vote was taken with the following results:

Ayes: (1541); **Noes:** (0); **Absent:** (58) Orangeville **Abstain:** (0)

Due to technical difficulties, Supervisor May, T/Orangeville was unable to have her vote heard.

Supervisor Davis, T/Covington was declared Vice-Chairman of the Wyoming County Board of Supervisors for the year 2021.

Judge Mohun administered the Oath of Office to Vice Chairman Davis.

Chairwoman Ryan called for nominations for Clerk to the Board for 2021. Supervisor Becker, T/Sheldon nominated Cheryl J. Ketchum. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Grant, T/Bennington.

Chairwoman Ryan called for further nominations three (3) times.

Hearing no further nominations, Supervisor Brick, T/Perry moved that the nominations be closed, the motion was seconded by Chairwoman Ryan, T/Warsaw. Nominations were declared closed and a roll call vote was taken with the following results:

Ayes: (1541); **Noes:** (0); **Absent:** (58) Orangeville **Abstain:** (0)

Due to technical difficulties, Supervisor May, T/Orangeville was unable to have her vote heard.

Cheryl J. Ketchum was declared Clerk to the Wyoming County Board of Supervisors for the year 2021.

Judge Mohun administered the Oath of Office to Board Clerk, Cheryl Ketchum.

2021 Committees assignments for the Supervisors were announced ~

2021 Chairwoman's State of the County Address

January 04, 2021

Thank you Supervisor King for your nomination and Supervisor Leuer for seconding that nomination. Fellow supervisors, thank you for your support today, in the past and I look forward to it in the future months.

To my husband, Pat, thank you for your endless patience and constant encouragement. To my family, daughter, Kelsey, son-in-law, Pete, my son, Keith, daughter-in-law, Ciara and grandchildren, Mitchell, Miranda, Ruthie, Molly, and Ryan you are truly the joy and inspiration in my life.

Supervisor Davis, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you once again for leading us through the first 8 months of 2020. You were the right person, in the right place, at the right time. Thank you.

I believe 2020 was one of the most historic years Wyoming County has ever encountered. It began with the tragic loss of two of our sitting supervisors, Supervisor John Copeland of Wethersfield and Supervisor Keith Granger of Castile. They both served Wyoming County well and are greatly missed.

Toward the end of January, into February we began to hear of a new corona-virus that was very contagious and that would soon come to our shores. A conference call on March 14th with Public Health began the longest state of emergency ever known in our county, state and our country.

On March 20 Chairman Davis signed the delegation of authority and the Wyoming County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) sprang into action. The center was quickly and seamlessly developed, due to pre-emergency planning. In preparation of a pandemic or other emergency, the chambers we are not sitting in had been “wired” to be able to serve as an EOC.

This room and the adjoining offices and conference rooms became home for many county employees who took on new roles and added responsibilities while still making sure the county still ran smoothly, IT Director, Todd MacConnell was instrumental in setting up the communications, the computers, and the T.V. screens to monitor the Governor’s daily executive orders. His dual role included IT for the hospital, the county and Co-Logistics with Tony Santoro. There were meetings twice a day to secure the equipment needed to protect our hospital and our county employees from the virus. This was no easy feat since the whole world was seeking equipment from the same sources.

Todd MacConnell, Todd Gadd, Tony Santoro, Brian Meyers, Bill Streicher, Andy Meyer, Steve Perkins (liaison to the hospital), Laura Paolucci, Dr. Collins, Angela Milillo, Sheriff Rudolph, Deputy Sam West, Jami Hudson, Leah Cappadonia, Danni Hutson, Deputy Chris Bryant, Jillian Calmes, Budget Director Janis Cook, Deana Nikiel, Treasurer Cheryl Mayer, Chairman Davis, Mike Adamczak, Kristin Wiedemann, Jeff Ferris and the Building & Grounds staff worked tirelessly keeping all of us in the EOC and the county safe.

Meanwhile, our Department Heads and our Clerk to the Board and Deputy Clerk kept our routine operations as normal as possible. Sometimes working from home they set up Zoom committee meetings, made sure communications, and all our day to day business continued to flow smoothly. Thank you to all our department leaders and to Cheryl Ketchum and Lisa Perez.

On January 1, 2020, Joe McTernan officially became the new CEO of our hospital only to plunge into the COVID-19 pandemic. Once again, we had the right person in the right place at the right time. Joe’s vast experience and background in the healthcare field proved invaluable to Wyoming County. He continues to successfully steer our hospital team through the corona-virus crisis as well as day to day operations.

WCCHS CEO, Joe McTernan, Amy Chase (CFO) and Mike Corcimiglia (COO) were pare of the daily EOC meetings here as well as the hospital’s own command center

operations. They let the hospital senior management team as they fought this invisible enemy. Through their and Chairman Davis' efforts we were able to obtain a vital new piece of equipment... Trudy, the virus killing, sanitizing robot. Joe's medical knowledge also led to the forethought to obtain the Vortran ventilator system when there was a concern for lack of ventilators.

There were new restrictions and guidance coming down from the Governor's office, sometimes 2-3 times a day. Through it all our HR Department kept the county departments informed, developing new policies and procedures to coincide. Thank you to HR Director Dan Farberman and his staff.

Wyoming County department heads, employees, healthcare frontline workers, hospital staff including our doctors, nurses, CNA's housekeeping, environmental, dietary, and lab techs all stepped up... Wyoming County ran like a well-oiled machine. It seemed as though the worst was over when summer arrived even though the warning signals were sounded.

Scott Gardner took the lead as we formed the Wyoming County Task Force with the mission to re-open businesses in Wyoming County. Again, multiple roles by a few people were needed to accomplish this. Steve Perkins assisted businesses as they strove to safely re-open. Don Roberts, Andy Meyer, Brian Meyer, Joan Petzen (Cornell Cooperative Extension), Supervisor Dan Leuer, Supervisor Mike Roche, Laura Paolucci, Rosemary Shader (Community Action) and Jim Pierce (Business Center) as well as Supervisor Davis and myself still continue to meet weekly to offer assistance and guidance to our local businesses. Thank you Scott and members of the Task Force.

August came and with it the unprecedented cancellation of the County Fair and September's Apple-Umpkin Festival. October brought the most spectacular fall foliage, but also the cancellation of the annual Letchworth Arts & Crafts Show, again for the first time since its inception. The county saw decreases in sales tax; state aid was slashed as the demand for more mandated services increased. And, through all this Janis Cook, our Budget Officer was challenged with developing our 2021 budget. Thank you, Janis, Jean Monteleone and Deanna Nikiel for getting through those stressful times.

As the county continued its normal operation, we needed to say goodbye to some who have decided to retire. One of those Dixie Perkins, who is retiring early this year. We are fortunate to have Tracy Vacinek in place to try to fill her shoes as Workman's Compensation Program Administrator. I say try, because Dixie has been a valuable asset here in this county for many years serving in many roles. Thank you, Dixie and congratulations to both Dixie and Tracy. We also are excited that Sarah Lippincott joined us in October. She is our new Real Property Tax Services Director and she hit the ground running, congratulations, Sarah.

We were able to realize economic growth in some areas; the new hotel in Warsaw was completed and opened, Grand View Terrace Apartments continued to fill its vacancies, Dunkin' Donuts is slated to open this spring.

Our Agriculture Industry saw some growth, even though, as Supervisor Klein says, “uncertainty is the word of the day...” Domestic and export dairy sales are up 1.2% and many dairies are participating in Feed America programs. The isolation of COVID-19 seems to have brought with it a new appreciation of pizza; sales are skyrocketing.

School closings have impacted milk pricing which is currently in the \$18.00/ct. wt. range with predictions of as low as \$14.00/ct. wt. in April, May or June. There is a shortage of dry ice as demands for the vaccine supply increase. The dairy industry typically uses 350,000 lbs. on a weekly basis. Meatpackers continue to be concerned over the second wave of the virus forcing them to shut down creating shortages in the grocery stores.

Unfortunately, as predicted, the cold late November weather brought with it the most cases yet in our community, placing us further into the throes of COVID-19. Facemasks continue to be an integral part of our wardrobes. We have become accustomed to social distancing, zoom meetings, conference calls and when possible working from home. We now understand the importance of washing our hands often and using hand-sanitizer. The good news is that this year our normal flu season is almost non-existent. Our children and grandchildren learn “virtually” and parents and grand-parents have become co-teachers.

Our healthcare providers and workers have proven to be Davids, as in David and Goliath. They have met and overcome the never-ending challenges they face every day as they battle the virus for our nursing home residents and hospital patients. They work double shifts, many times sacrificing “their own dignity sweating beneath gowns, hair bonnets, booties and PPE of all sorts for hours on end trying to be safe.” They have missed birthdays, holidays, and time with their own families to be the “foster” family member for their patients. Patients who cannot see their own family members because of the restrictions needed to keep them safe. They are true heroes in this pandemic.

The final days of 2020 brought vaccines to help battle the virus. We have begun to administer them to our nursing home residents and staff and first responders. Our hospital has the storage capacity for the Pfizer vaccine with the ultra-cold freezer on hand. Once again many of the same county names come into the picture; first helping with community testing clinics then continuing as those clinics merge into administering vaccines.

Because of our heroes and heroines here in Wyoming County, we have faced this challenge head-on. One of those heroes sadly gave it his all, Todd MacConnell. He paved the road for us in the beginning and although Todd cannot be with us physically I’m sure, he will be looking over our shoulders still guiding us. Our team is in place, trained and ready to make Wyoming County better than before.

I, for one, am so proud and appreciative of all those who have played a part this past year. I sincerely thank all our dedicated department leaders, employees, and our healthcare administrative and management team, and staff. I also want to thank the spouses and families of each of our Wyoming County employees for their sacrifices.

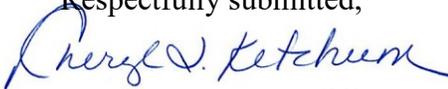
Thank you to our community and business leaders; we must not forget that they too stepped up to the plate; improvising the way they conducted their day-to-day operations. They adjusted in order to provide take-out meals, deliveries, face shields, gowns, masks and other PPE. Many were forced to close due to state restrictions and are still struggling now. Please remember to support our local businesses in 2021 and beyond.

It's time to file 2020 away in the history books and begin work to ensure that 2021 is the best year for Wyoming County.

Thank you and Happy New Year!!

There being no further business to come before this Board, Senior Supervisor Berwanger, T/Arcade, adjourned the meeting at 2:38 PM with a rap on his desk.

Respectfully submitted,



Cheryl J. Ketchum, ^{CMC}
Clerk to the Board

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