

# **Cortland County Government: Is it Time to Rehire a County Administrator?**

***Making Democracy Work®*** event sponsored by  
**League of Women Voters of Cortland County**  
July 14, 2016

## **Educational Forum & Community Discussion**

### **Speakers**

Joe Mareane, MPA

County Administrator,  
Tompkins County

Mary McGuire, PhD

Public Administration & Policy,  
SUNY Cortland

*We welcome new members and  
appreciate contributions*

# Cortland League of Women Voters (LWV)

## 2016-2018 Focus: *Making Democracy Work*<sup>®</sup>

- Nonpartisan organization of citizen volunteers
- Registers voters; seeks to increase voter turnout
- Provides nonpartisan information on candidates and ballots
- Engages communities in promoting positive solutions to public policy issues through education and advocacy
  - Identifies, understands and addresses systemic obstacles to the democratic process
  - Studies, takes action, advocates, and testifies on important issues

# LWV Study of Cortland County Administrator

- A year ago, Cortland LWV members ranked County Administrator as priority for 2015-2016 programming
- Study committee of LWV members and interested citizens met for 6 months and planned this forum
  - Mary Alice Bellardini, Suzanne Etherington, Alison King, Susan Morgan, Lenore Schwager, Robert Spitzer
- Purpose of today's forum
  - Initiate public dialogue on improving Cortland County governance
  - Consider the position of County Administrator and whether it is time to hire again
- Format
  - Introduction and History: Alison King, PhD, President, Cortland LWV
  - Speakers: Joe Mareane MPA, Tompkins County Administrator  
Mary McGuire PhD, Associate Professor, Political Science,  
SUNY Cortland
  - Audience Q&A

# Cortland County Administrator: History & Legislative Timeline

- 1980s County Legislature discussed creating a position for professional oversight of operations
- *1990 & 1992 Resolutions to create position did not pass*
- June 1994 Personnel Subcommittee chaired by Sandy Price recommended Administrator over executive, business manager, or fulltime Legislature Chairperson
- *1994 & 1997 Resolutions to create position did not pass*
- **2002 Legislature enacted Local Law 7 creating County Administrator appointed by Legislature**
- *April 2003 Legislature hired Scott Schrader as County Administrator*
- **2003 LL3 designated County Administrator as Budget Officer**
- **2010 LL2 allowed term of office up to 4 years for County Administrator**
- *2010 Schrader left post; Legislature hired Martin Murphy for 4-year term*
- *2014 Murphy left post*
- *2015 Legislature revised job description of County Budget and Finance Director; Hired Peggy Mousaw*
- *2015 Legislature divided administrative duties between Mousaw, County Attorney Karen Howe, and Legislature Chairperson Donnell Boyden*

# 2002 Local Law 7 Establishing County Administrator

Overview	Powers & Duties of County Administrator	Qualifications
<p><b>2002 LL 7</b> Establishes County Administrator to function as chief administrative officer</p>	<p>Overall administration of county government. Coordinate staff services to Legislature, Develop and enforce County policies, Coordinate admin. functions of depts, meet regularly with dept heads, liaise between depts and Legislature, Represent Legislature in contacts w/State &amp; Federal officials and agencies</p>	<p>MS in Public Administration or Business Admin. and 4 yrs FT experience in public or bus admin <i>OR</i></p>
<p>Appointed by Legislature, which retains final administrative authority</p>	<p>PERSONNEL: Supervise dept heads, Conduct performance appraisals, Recommend appointments/dismissals</p>	<p>BA in Public Admin. or Business Admin. and 6 yrs FT experience <i>OR</i></p>
<p>Chairperson of Legislature shall be acting Administrator in event of absence; limited to 60d per calendar year unless authorized by Legislature</p>	<p>FINANCE: Prepare tentative County budget Prescribe form of financial fillings by agencies, Pre-audit claims, Audit County departments, Establish uniform purchasing system, Measure policy impact on tax base and econ development</p>	<p>10 yrs FT experience <i>OR</i>  Equivalent combination of above</p>
	<p>GRANTS: Research and aid application for Federal &amp; State aid and grants</p>	<p><i>AND</i></p>
	<p>LABOR RELATIONS: Participate in all labor relations activities</p>	<p>Must have domicile in Cortland County within 90 days of appt</p>

# Current Job Descriptions

Position	Powers & Duties	Qualifications ( <i>Jurisdictional Class</i> )
<p><b>County Administrator</b></p> <p>Adopted: 10/2/2005</p>	<p>Chief administrative officer and budget officer; management position. All duties conferred by law upon head of administrative branch of County.</p> <p>Budget Officer, Personnel, Labor relations, State/Federal Grants</p>	<p>BA or MS in Public /Business Admin. or Industrial Enterprise &amp; 4-6 yrs experience <i>OR</i> 10 yrs experience -County residency w/in 90 days (<i>Unclassified</i>)</p>
<p><b>Director of Budget and Finance</b></p> <p>Adopted: 12/18/2004 Revised: 4/23/2015</p>	<p>Fiscal and administrative position assisting Legislature in implementing mission of County Government.</p> <p>Prepare, submit, and administer operation and capital budgets.</p> <p>-Under direction of Chairperson of Legislature; Exercise independent judgment within established policies</p>	<p><i>No requirements</i> but recommend: BA or MS in Public or Business Administration, accounting, or related field, <math>\geq 12</math> acctg credits &amp; 4-6 yrs exper. in public or bus admin, finance, accounting, or auditing <i>OR</i> equivalent (<i>Unclassified civil service</i>)</p>
<p><b>County Attorney</b></p> <p>Adopted: 10/20/05 Amended: 12/18/09</p>	<p>Represent County in all legal proceedings; Prepare contracts, local laws, resolutions, legal opinions for Legislature and all departments; Prosecute juvenile delinquency and PINS petitions in Family Court;</p> <p>-Under administrative direction of County Administrator and general direction of Legislature</p>	<p>License to practice law in NYS &amp; 5 yrs experience (<i>Exempt</i>)</p>

# What People are Saying

## COUNTY LEGISLATORS

**Donnell Boyden, Leg. Chairperson:** “We haven’t really sat down to decide whether it should be full-time or part-time or whatever. We’re in limbo now.”

**George Wagner, Chairperson,  
Personnel Committee:** “We have a chairman who’s doing an excellent job. We have a budget director who’s doing an excellent job.”

**Linda Jones, Homer:**  
“Every county needs a county administrator – a professional one.”

## THE PUBLIC

~~3/31/2016~~ **Your Opinion**

And let me add my opinion that the county needs an overall manager. Having a Budget Officer and a County Attorney and a part-time legislative leader run an operation as large and complex as the county just doesn't make sense. And as past history has shown, it will cost us in the long run.

**Michael Stevans  
Cortland**

# Today's Speakers:

## Mary McGuire, PhD

- MPA and PhD  
Maxwell School, Syracuse University
- Associate Professor of Political Science, SUNY Cortland
  - Teaches Public Policy, Public Administration, and American Politics
  - Supervises student internships
- Director, Institute for Civic Engagement, SUNY Cortland



# Today's Speakers:

## Joe Mareane, MPA

- MPA  
Maxwell School, Syracuse University
- 37 years in Central NY
  - 14 yrs with City of Syracuse
    - Commissioner of Assessment
    - Director of Management and Budget
    - 1<sup>st</sup> Director of Development (community, workforce, & economic)
  - 3 yrs Syracuse Chamber of Commerce & Pyramid Companies
  - 12 yrs Chief Fiscal Officer for Onondaga County  
\$1.2 billion budget
  - 8 yrs Tompkins County Administrator