

7. MANAGING COUNTY GOVERNMENT

PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

Division of Labor Relations. Part of the Office of the County Executive, this Division is responsible for the negotiation of union contracts, seeks to solve workers' grievances, and performs arbitration where needed. Through its Affirmative Action Program, the Division also carries on a continuing study of the employment situation as it affects minorities and women.

Department of Civil Service and Human Resources. This Department, which is headed by the County Personnel Director, operates under Article VI of the Suffolk County Charter. It is responsible to the New York State Civil Service Commission for the local administration of the Civil Service System and for the enforcement of the State's Civil Service Law.

The Department maintains a classification and salary plan for all Civil Service positions under its jurisdiction. It also prepares and conducts examinations, maintains official records for all personnel transactions, and certifies payrolls for all agencies under the jurisdiction of the Department. Other responsibilities include administration of unemployment insurance, maintaining Affirmative Action statistics for Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and training and tuition reimbursement programs. In addition, the Department acts as the civil service department for towns and villages, as well as for school, library, fire, water and other special districts.

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

The Suffolk County Department of Labor was established to prevent and resolve labor disputes and maintain labor harmony in Suffolk County by providing arbitration, mediation and fact-finding services at no cost to employers. The Department also administers various employment and training programs, primarily supported by federal and state funding, providing job training and employment services to business and individuals alike. The Department also compiles, interprets and distributes current labor market statistics for the benefit of the residents and the business community of Suffolk County.

The Department of Labor has several major state and federally funded job training programs. Funds provided by the Job Training Partnership Act, transitioning in 2000 to the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), allow the Labor Department to provide individual retraining, job placement and employment services to the residents of Suffolk County. The state-sponsored Job Opportunities and Basic Skills Program offers a complete array of training and employment services to recipients of public assistance.

The Labor Department also manages the Suffolk Works program that strives to improve the employability of those on public assistance while allowing the participants to work on projects which benefit County residents.

Activities and Accomplishments. The Labor Department has been described as a partnership that works to keep people working. Key partners include: the Private Industry Council, which is made up of business, labor, education, and community leaders and will transition to the Workforce Investment Board, the local and State Departments of Social Services, the State Department of Labor and many other organizations that, together, help keep people employed and business growing.

Some recent partnership accomplishments include:

Providing 1,462 dislocated workers with retraining and basic job related readjustment services. 890 succeeded in securing new jobs.

Providing 458 disadvantaged adults with a variety of activities designed to improve the likelihood of securing employment. 160 succeeded in securing new jobs.

Providing summer employment programs for youth. 1,000 young people were enrolled in the program and provided valuable services to their community while "earning and learning" in the process.

Enrolling 323 youth in work experience, vocational training, school-to-work transition and internships.

Providing a Displaced Homemaker Program which helped 487 individuals who lost their spouses through death or divorce acquire the independent living skills necessary to re-enter the labor market and become self sufficient.

Providing employment and training activities through public assistance work programs. Suffolk Works job counselors conducted 7,544 assessments and completed 5,951 employment plans. Participants were also provided with one or more employment-related support services (e.g., transportation, skill training, or job development counseling). In the course of a program year, 2,896 unemployed participants obtain jobs.

Establishment of the state-of-the-art One-Stop Employment Centers in Hauppauge and Riverhead to better serve Suffolk County residents. These centers are the heart of the One-Stop Workforce Development System, where both job seekers and local businesses find the resources they need. Job seekers can take advantage of resume preparation, telephones, computers and printers, national and local job listings, fax machines, copiers, a library, a variety of workshops, internet access and help from professional job search counselors. Employers can post job openings, scan a computerized Talent Bank for qualified applicants, have training programs designed to fit their specific needs and find information on labor market issues of interest to their business. To date, over 28,000 customers have made use of these facilities.

Suffolk Works. Suffolk Works was a component of the Jobs Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS) Training Program until September 30, 1997 when it was replaced by the Suffolk Works Employment Program (SWEP). SWEP incorporated the following programs: Family Assistance (formerly JOBS/Aid to Dependent Children), Safety Net (formerly JOBS/Home Relief), and Food Stamps (formerly JOBS/Food Stamps Employment and Training).

Suffolk Works developed out of the evolving philosophy and policy direction that emphasizes "workfare" instead of welfare and places emphasis on short-term activities designed to help people obtain immediate employment.

This supportive program helps participants gain confidence and increase their job skills while improving the community through various service projects.

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK

Elected by the voters of Suffolk County, the County Clerk serves a four-year term. The Office of the Suffolk County Clerk, mandated by the New York State Constitution and operating under the Suffolk County Charter, is also the Clerk of the Supreme and County Courts and, in addition, is responsible for record-keeping and archives.

The responsibilities of the Office of the County Clerk are carried out by eight divisions: (1) *Administration*, which carries out all administrative functions, such as personnel, purchasing, policy and procedures; (2) *Financial Services*, which carries out all services related to budget and accounting and mortgage taxation; (3) *Recording Services*, which is responsible for recording and receiving all records related to real property transactions, State requirements and the judgment and commercial bureau operations; (4) *Court Actions*, a division that indexes and maintains a written record or minutes of all Supreme Court or County Court actions, including indictments and convictions on criminal matters, highway easements and maps; (5) *Real Property Service*, which serves the Title Bureau, the Torrens System (which receives and files all instruments affecting land titles authorized by court actions), and the Office of the Registrar and Record Access; (6) *Micrographic Services*, which microfilms all documents pertaining to real property transactions; (7) *Archives*, which maintains all County records according to the current State legal requirements for retention; and (8) *Passport*, which accepts and processes passport applications.

PROCUREMENT AND PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

Division of Real Estate, Department of Law. In 1991, Local Law No. 13-1991, a Charter Law, consolidated all County real estate functions, including those of the Department of Real Estate (created by Local Law 33-1974), into the Division of Real Estate within the Department of Law. The Division's three major responsibilities are to acquire, manage, and sell real property for the County. The Division has four units: (1) *Administration*, which is responsible for the operation of the Division, including the management of the acquisition of development rights to land under the Farmland Program, the Open Space

Preservation Program and the Drinking Water Protection Program; (2) *Appraisal Review*, which evaluates and reviews appraisals as part of the acquisition, sale, or lease of County property; (3) *Acquisition*, which acquires properties for the County by condemnation, eminent domain and negotiation; it also accounts for all capital projects related to the activities of the Division of Real Estate's functions; (4) *Property Management and Disposition*, which conducts all physical on-site inspections, manages property acquired by the County, and prepares title abstracts; the unit handles the proceedings of application for redemption under Local Law No. 16-1976 and New York State Law, Section 215; prepares all properties for sale at public auction; disposes of property by direct sale to adjoining property owners; and prepares sales of real property between municipalities.

Effective January 1, 1995, the Department of General Services was dissolved and its divisions

absorbed by other departments. Under the Department of Civil Service are *Management Information Systems*, which is responsible for planning, developing, and coordinating all County computer information systems and operating the County's mainframe computer, the costs of these services being charged back to the departments at the end of each fiscal year according to use; and the *Telecommunications Division*, which plans, maintains and controls the costs of the County's telephone network, coordinating communication systems cooperatively with Management Information Systems. *Support Services*, which maintains the County's mailing and messenger services, the Print Shop and Typewriter Repairs, are under the Department of Public Works. *Purchasing*, which is responsible for the procurement of equipment, supplies, and services for all County departments (with the exception of those for the Board of Elections, highway construction, and maintenance for the Department of Public Works) is with the



Photo © Adam Gaus

Old First Presbyterian Church of Huntington, NY

The church was founded in 1658 and the first building was built in 1665. The present building was constructed by ships' carpenters in 1784 and is in the National Registry of Historic Places.

Department of Audit and Control. *Fleet Services* purchases or leases, maintains, and repairs all County vehicles. The costs of these services are charged back to each department at the end of the fiscal year according to use.

SUFFOLK COUNTY ETHICS COMMISSION

The Suffolk County "Code of Ethics" is contained in Article XXX of the County Charter. The Suffolk County Ethics Commission was established in January 1989 under Local Law No. 44-1988 and combined with the Board of Public Disclosure as a result of Local Law No. 11-1991. The Commission has three members, one

appointed by the County Executive, one appointed by the County Legislature, and one appointed by the Presiding Officer of the County Legislature. No more than two members can belong to the same political party, no members can hold office in any political party, and none can be employed as a lobbyist. Members serve four-year terms, are not salaried, but are reimbursed for reasonable expenses.

The Commission's purpose is to actively monitor governmental activities and County employees to ensure integrity in government. As part of its responsibilities, the Commission reviews public disclosure statements and potential conflicts of interest, misconduct and improprieties in County Government.



Photo by Henry Mangels

North Shore Shoreline