



COUNTY OF ERIE

MARK C. POLONCARZ
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

December 9, 2013

The Honorable
Erie County Legislature
92 Franklin Street, Fourth Floor
Buffalo, New York 14202

**Re: Department of Public Works, Division of Highways - Personal Services –
Seasonal Motor Equipment Operator Positions for Winter Operations
IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATION REQUESTED**

Dear Honorable Members:

The Erie County Department of Public Works, Division of Highways is requesting authorization to create fifteen (15) seasonal Motor Equipment Operator (MEO) positions for winter operations.

This authorization is necessary to establish sufficient driver staffing levels, in order to plow and maintain County roads in a timely manner during the winter months. Due to the vagaries of winter weather, we are requesting immediate consideration of this request.

If your Honorable Body requires further information or has any questions, please contact Commissioner John Loffredo. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Mark C. Poloncarz, Esq.
Erie County Executive

MCP
Enclosure

MEMORANDUM

To: Honorable Members of the Erie County Legislature
From: Department of Public Works
Re: Department of Public Works, Division of Highways - Personal Services –
Seasonal Motor Equipment Operator Positions for Winter Operations
Date: December 5, 2013

SUMMARY

The Erie County Department of Public Works is requesting authorization to create fifteen (15) seasonal Motor Equipment Operator (MEO) positions for winter operations.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

In order to start these positions as soon as possible, \$20,397 will be utilized to cover the last few weeks of December. Funding is available in 2013 from budgeted but vacant positions in the Department of Public Works full time salary account.

The total estimated cost for the creation of 15 MEO positions for a full nineteen (19) week seasonal period on an annual basis is \$200,520. Authorization is requested to designate funding in 2013 to be reappropriated into 2014 in order to provide funds for the seasonal salary and fringe benefits. 2013 projections have identified available balances for the designation in account 570020, Interfund to Road, in the County-Wide Interfund Accounts, Fund Center 14020.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

With current staffing levels and difficulties in finding qualified staff willing to accept overtime at night or on weekends, there are not enough certified Highways personnel with commercial driver licenses available to staff all plow routes in a timely manner, especially on weekends.

During the week it takes more than one shift to complete one pass on a district's plow routes. However, on weekends it takes up to three shifts to complete one pass of a district's plow routes. A "cost-effective" solution for this plow driver shortage is to create 15 seasonal MEO positions, for 19 weeks, during winter months, with those employees used for coverage and plowing.

The County has consulted with AFSCME concerning this matter and they have recognized the need for additional coverage and are amenable to the County's proposed solution.

CONSEQUENCES OF NEGATIVE ACTION

There may be difficulties in staffing County roads during certain weather events.

STEPS FOLLOWING APPROVAL

The Department of Public Works will work with the Division of Budget and Management and the Department of Personnel to recruit and fill the 15 seasonal MEO positions.

**A RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS**

**RE: Department of Public Works, Division of Highways - Personal Services –
Seasonal Motor Equipment Operator Positions for Winter Operations**

WHEREAS, there is a need for certified and qualified Motor Equipment Operators in the Division of Highways to provide snowplowing functions on County snow routes during the winter months, and

WHEREAS, a cost-effective solution for the plow driver shortage is to create fifteen (15) seasonal MEO positions for nineteen (19) week appointments during the winter months to provide said coverage, and

WHEREAS, the AFSCME collective bargaining unit has been consulted and is amenable with the proposed action.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that the Erie County Legislature hereby authorizes the creation of fifteen (15) seasonal Motor Equipment Operator (JG 5, step 1) positions in the Department of Public Works, Division of Highways, (B100 #7491); and be it further

RESOLVED, that the following budget transactions are hereby authorized in order to establish the seasonal positions for the remainder of 2013:

2013 Highway Division - Fund 210	
Expense	Increase/(Decrease)
500000 Full Time – Salaries	(\$20,397)
500030 Seasonal Employees	18,212
502000 Fringe Benefits	<u>2,185</u>
Total	- 0 -

and be it further

RESOLVED, that the following budget transactions are hereby authorized in order to establish the seasonal positions in 2014:

2014 Highway Division - Fund 210	
Revenue	Increase
486000 Interfund Revenue Subsidy	\$200,520.00
Expense	
500030 Seasonal Employees	\$179,037.00
502000 Fringe Benefits	<u>21,483.00</u>
	\$200,520.00

and be it further

RESOLVED, that authorization is hereby provided to designate \$200,520 of available funds in account 570020, Interfund to Road, Fund Center 14020 County-Wide Interfund Accounts, in the 2013 Fund 110 Budget, and to reappropriate said funds into 2014 to be utilized as funding for the seasonal positions, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Department of Public Works, Division of Budget and Management and the Department of Personnel are hereby authorized to make the necessary budgetary and personnel transactions to effectuate this resolution; and be it further

RESOLVED, that certified copies of this resolution will be forwarded to the County Executive, the Office of the Comptroller, the Department of Personnel, the Division of Budget and Management, and the Department of Public Works.