



City of Saratoga Springs  
Office of the Mayor  
**CITY HALL**  
474 Broadway  
Saratoga Springs, New York 12866

---

Telephone 518-587-3550, ext. 2514

JOANNE D. YEPSEN  
Mayor

JOSEPH J. OGDEN  
DEPUTY MAYOR

GAYLE LASALLE  
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT TO  
THE MAYOR

## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Michele Madigan, Commissioner of Finance  
Lynn Bachner, Deputy Commissioner of Finance  
John Franck, Commissioner of Accounts  
Maire Masterson, Deputy Commissioner of Accounts  
Skip Scirocco, Commissioner of Public Works  
Tim Cogan, Deputy Commissioner of Public Works  
Chris Mathiesen, Commissioner of Public Safety  
Eileen Finneran, Deputy Commissioner of Public Safety

**From:** Joseph Ogden, Deputy Mayor

**Date:** August 14, 2015

**Re:** Proposed Transition of Civil Service Functions to Saratoga County

---

For several years and throughout several administrations, our Civil Service Commission and the Secretary to the Civil Service Commission have faced a growing workload vis-à-vis a stagnant level of resources amidst the many competing priorities facing our city. This reality has made it difficult, if not impossible, for the commission and the secretary to keep up with the demands of not just city government, but the growing needs of the school district, the library, and two public authorities as well.

For this reason, Mayor Yepsen would like to propose that we gradually transition all of our civil service functions from the city to Saratoga County throughout 2016.

In the event that a city, town, or village is unable or unwilling to operate a civil service office, the county of that municipality is required to assume that responsibility per NYS Civil Service Law. In fact, the City of Saratoga Springs and the City of Mechanicville are the only municipalities in our county which have their own civil service offices; every other town utilizes the county office.

Given that the county does not charge for providing civil service functions, this transition could save the city a significant amount of money at time when property taxes are subject to a maximum 2% year-over-year increase, and the State is offering incentive programs for municipalities that are able to achieve savings via shared services and consolidations. In addition, the county has greater resources to devote to this area, including: a staff of over ten employees; computerized files, computerized payroll certification and roster systems; and an ability to continue services in the event a staff member is out sick or on vacation. While there are indeed downsides to not having a city civil service office, this is a unique opportunity to provide our citizens and employees with high quality services, while saving taxpayer dollars.

As you can see on the preliminary agenda, there is an item relating to this proposal on the Mayor's Department. This is simply to set a public hearing on local law that would effectively eliminate the Civil Service Commission from city government pending the public approval of a referendum in November. This law is being drafted by the City Attorney's Office and will be distributed shortly. We are not asking anyone to vote on anything Tuesday evening, nor do we expect each department to be able to weigh the pros and cons of such a significant policy issue in such a short amount of time. To that end, myself and Patsy Berrigan will be making appointments with each department to discuss the reason we believe this is an attractive policy solution, and to explain the very tight timeframe we are up against should the Council wish to move forward with this option.

We look forward to discussing this with you in more detail in the very near future, and I thank you for your time and your consideration of our proposal.

Cc: Joanne Yepsen, Mayor  
Patsy Berrigan, Secretary to the Civil Service Commission  
Kate Amello, Human Resources Administrator  
Gayle LaSalle, Executive Assistant to the Mayor  
Trish Bush, Executive Assistant to the City Attorney  
Anthony Izzo, Assistant City Attorney  
Vincent DeLeonardis, City Attorney