MEMORANDUM

November 4, 2020

TO: Members of the Board of Trustees

FROM: Dr. Jim Malatras, Chancellor

SUBJECT: Appointment of Joanie Mahoney as President of the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry

Action Requested

The proposed resolution approves the appointment of Joanie Mahoney as President of the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry.

Resolution

I recommend that the Board of Trustees adopt the following resolution:

Resolved that the appointment of Joanie Mahoney as President of the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry, effective on or about November 4, 2020, be and hereby is, approved. Ms. Mahoney will receive a salary of $275,000 per year and will also be provided with use of a campus owned residence and have use of a campus automobile.

Background

Joanie Mahoney joined ESF in November 2018 as Chief Operating Officer. In her role at ESF, Joanie serves on the Senior Leadership Team where she has been instrumental in the Discovery Challenge process, expansion of ESF as an instrumental partner with government to address pressing issues like climate change and intrusion of invasive species in our waterways, and functions as point person on COVID matters and preparedness.
Prior to ESF, Ms. Mahoney served as Onondaga County Executive for 11 years and oversaw all aspects of a county government, which served 460,000 residents. During her tenure as county executive, Joanie earned national recognition for her environmentally friendly stewardship.

Prior to elective office, Ms. Mahoney worked as an attorney both in private practice with the Harris Beach law firm and for 5 years as a criminal prosecutor in the Onondaga County District Attorney’s Office.

Ms. Mahoney received her B.S. from Syracuse University’s School of Management in 1987 and then her Juris Doctor from S.U.’s College of Law in 1990. Joanie and her husband, Marc Overdyk, have four sons and reside in the Town of Dewitt.

Ms. Mahoney was the overwhelming choice by various campus and community constituencies.

A copy of Ms. Mahoney’s curriculum vitae is attached.
Executive Profile


Professional Experience

Chief Operating Officer, SUNY ESF November 2018-Present

- Part of leadership team responsible for all aspects of College administration. Assisted with setting and executing priorities, planning, collaborating with strategic partners and budget issues.
- Identified and recruited Board of Trustee candidates and successfully saw through the confirmation process to completion.
- Drafted and Presented the Discovery Challenge Report to the College community and SUNY Administration
- Assisted faculty coordination with state agencies to further academic research.
- Successfully assisted College Foundation in raising money to help offset budget deficit

County Executive, Onondaga County, Syracuse NY 2008 to 2018

- Responsible for County Government operation, which serves 460,000 residents of Central New York. Created and managed a billion dollar budget with 3,500 employees in dozens of departments including Health, Procurement, Community Development, Finance, Law and Facilities Management.
- Created an innovative development corporation to facilitate public/private partnerships, which was used to successfully finance construction projects for most of the colleges and hospitals in Syracuse including Saint Joseph’s Hospital Health Center, Upstate Medical Center, Crouse Hospital and SUNY ESF.
- Managed to lower property taxes, reduce the size of government and keep county budget finances strong during a difficult national recession, earning the highest bond ratings among counties in New York State
- Successfully renegotiated a Federal Consent Order to allow for a more environmentally friendly strategy to manage storm water, resulting in awards and recognition from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.
- Led successful consolidation of services among multiple government partners.
- Built State of the Art Amphitheater on Onondaga Lake and project was completed within budget in record time and won multiple architecture, design and construction awards.

Common Councilor, Syracuse NY 1999 to 2003

- Elected representative responsible for Syracuse City Budget, constituent service and policy making for 150,000 city residents.

Assistant District Attorney, Syracuse, NY 1992 to 1997

- Responsible for all aspects of criminal prosecutions in Onondaga County from Grand Jury presentation through trial verdict.

Attorney, Harris, Beach and Wilcox, Ithaca, NY 1990-1991

- Staff attorney representing clients in Real Estate, Banking and Civil Litigation Matters.

Board Appointments

New York State Thruway Authority 2015-Present

Board Chair: Appointed by Governor Andrew Cuomo and confirmed by the New York State Senate to oversee a user-fee supported 570 mile highway system known for dependability and safety. Oversaw one of the largest infrastructure projects in the United States, the new Mario M. Cuomo Bridge, which replaced the Tappanze Bridge over the Hudson River.
New York Power Authority 2012-2015

Board Member: Appointed by Governor Andrew Cuomo and confirmed by the New York State Senate as a board member overseeing America's largest state power organization, with 16 generating facilities and more than 1,400 circuit miles of transmission lines. The New York Power Authority (NYPA) is a national leader in promoting energy efficiency, the development of clean energy technologies and electric vehicles. 70 percent of power generated by NYPA is hydroelectric and generated without fossil fuels and their related emissions.

Moreland Commission on Utility Storm Preparation and Response 2013

Commissioner: Role included research, taking testimony and writing a report regarding ConEdison, Long Island Power Authority, NYSEG and National Grid response to Hurricane Sandy. Outlined necessary steps to better prepare for similar storms in the future. Report resulted in Regulatory Changes and new contracts to provide power in areas most likely to be affected by climate change.

Moreland Commission on Ethics Reform 2014

Commissioner: Role included research, taking testimony and writing a report regarding State Election Law and Campaign Finance Rules. Report resulted in the creation of a new position at the NYS Board of Elections to enforce campaign finance and election laws.

NAACP/Syracuse and Onondaga County 2015-present

Board Member/Committee Chair: Role includes policy recommendations, public engagement and advocacy on behalf of the NAACP.

Avangrid 2019-present

Board Member: Responsibilities include board level oversight for utility based in Spain with operations in NYS and New England.

Skills

Strong Communication and Leadership skills, Ability to Innovate, Self-Motivated, Financial Expertise, Consensus Builder, Community Outreach, Experience in highly regulated disciplines, Oversees union and non-union workforce, Executed multi-million dollar bond offerings and excels at maintaining focus under difficult circumstances.

Education

1990 Juris Doctor: Syracuse University College of Law
1987 Bachelor of Science, Management: Syracuse University

Selected Awards

Governing Magazine Public Official of the Year
New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Environmental Excellence Award
U.S. Green Building Council Global Community Leadership Award
United States Water Prize
NAACP Outstanding Public Servant Award

Personal Information

References available upon request.