

STEUBEN COUNTY FINANCE COMMITTEE

Tuesday, February 14, 2017

10:10 a.m.

*Legislative Committee Room
Steuben County Office Building
Bath, New York*

****MINUTES****

COMMITTEE:	Scott J. Van Etten, Chair Brian C. Schu	Gary D. Swackhamer, Vice Chair	Gary B. Roush
STAFF:	Jack K. Wheeler Pat Donnelly Jim Allard	Mitchell Alger Alan Reed Andy Morse	Tim Marshall Jennifer Prossick Tammy Hurd-Harvey
LEGISLATORS:	Joseph J. Hauryski Hilda T. Lando	Carol A. Ferratella John V. Malter	K. Michael Hanna
ABSENT:	Kelly H. Fitzpatrick		
OTHERS:	Jeff Smith, <i>The Leader</i>		

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Van Etten called the meeting to order at 10:10 a.m.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: APPROVING THE MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 10, 2017, MEETING MADE BY MR. SCHU. SECONDED BY MR. ROUSH. ALL BEING IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIES 4-0.

III. DEPARTMENT REQUESTS

A. Emergency Management Office

1. **Major Equipment Adjustment** – Mr. Marshall informed the committee that through the State Interoperability Grant, they are looking to upgrade their net monitor. This monitors the network for the radio system. We need to upgrade the monitor to enhance the monitoring of the fiber network. He requested amending the major equipment list to reflect \$16,593.50 for this purpose.

MOTION: AUTHORIZING AN AMENDMENT TO THE MAJOR EQUIPMENT LINE FOR THE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE, REFLECTING \$16,593.50 FOR THE UPGRADE OF THE NET MONITOR MADE BY MR. ROUSH. SECONDED BY MR. SCHU. ALL BEING IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIES 4-0.

B. Public Works

1. **Add Security Cameras to 2017 Major Equipment List** – Mr. Orcutt informed the committee that they would like to purchase security cameras for the pits at the Landfill and the three transfer stations. The total cost is \$20,000. Each camera will have the ability to record activity at each pit. We have money in our account and he requested authorization to amend the major equipment list to reflect this purchase. Mr. Van Etten asked if the cameras will be at the pits and the monitors will be in the scale houses, how will they be connected? Mr. Orcutt replied they will be wireless.

MOTION: AMENDING THE LANDFILL MAJOR EQUIPMENT LIST TO INCLUDE FOUR SECURITY CAMERAS FOR THE BATH LANDFILL, HORNELL TRANSFER STATION, ERWIN TRANSFER STATION AND WAYLAND TRANSFER STATION, TOTTALLING \$20,000 MADE BY MR. ROUSH. SECONDED BY MR. SCHU. ALL BEING IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIES 4-0.

C. Commissioner of Finance

1. **Monthly Financial Reports** – Mr. Malter commented that he noticed several overages in the Sheriff's Office and Jail with regard to overtime and temporary hires. Was the 2017 budget adjusted to deal with those? Mr. Wheeler replied we have tried. The Jail has a lot of turnover in staff and we have allowed flex within their salaries and wages line item to fund temporary hire and overtime. We did decrease the salaries and wages line item and increase the temporary hire and overtime line items, but he anticipates that will not be enough.

Sheriff Allard commented there are several fluctuating factors, one of which is hospital transports. When an inmate needs to be hospitalized, we need to provide 24-hour staffing. Another factor is the constant watches. The more inmates we have with mental health issues, the more constant watches we have.

Mr. Van Etten commented on the Jail report you average 210 inmates. In the course of one month, you took in 120 inmates and released 120 inmates. He did not realize that there was that much roll over. Mr. Swackhamer asked when you have to provide staffing for a hospital stay, how is that worked out? Sheriff Allard replied we do 12-hour shifts. One officer stays in the room at all times with the inmate. The type of security risk on an inmate determines the number of staff.

Mr. Van Etten stated on the wage analysis report it shows the temporary hire for the County Clerk at \$20,000 with no budget and \$40,000 for overtime with a budget of \$10,000. What was that \$60,000 used for? Mr. Wheeler replied there was turnover in the department. We did hire college students on their break to come in and do scanning. Mr. Reed commented most of the County Clerk's work is administrative. If documents are not recorded in a timely fashion, the County could have exposure. The filing process needs to be timely and done so there is no exposure to Mrs. Hunter as County Clerk, or to the County.

2. **End of Year Budget Transfers** – Mrs. Hurd-Harvey reviewed the various end of year budget transfers with the committee. Included in those was rolling over grant funds into 2017, rolling over grant funds for Mental Health with regard to Suicide Prevention Grant, fringe adjustments, rolling over funds for WC grant and Maintenance in Lieu of Rent adjustments. Of particular note are two transfers relative to the Seneca Street Bridge project in Hornell. The first is appropriating the revenue cost share from the City of Hornell and the second is closing out the capital project line and moving the remaining balance into the unassigned bridge projects capital project. Both of those transfers will require resolutions.

MOTION: APPROVING NUMEROUS END-OF-YEAR BUDGET TRANSFERS AS PRESENTED BY THE COMMISSIONER OF FINANCE MADE BY MR. SWACKHAMER. SECONDED BY MR. SCHU. ALL BEING IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIES 4-0.

MOTION: APPROVING AN END-OF-YEAR BUDGET TRANSFER APPROPRIATING THE REVENUE COST SHARE FROM THE CITY OF HORNELL RELATIVE TO THE REPLACEMENT OF THE SENECA STREET BRIDGE AND CLOSING OUT THE CAPITAL PROJECT LINE ITEM AND MOVING THE REMAINING BALANCE INTO THE UNASSIGNED BRIDGE PROJECTS CAPITAL PROJECT ACCOUNT MADE BY MR. SWACKHAMER. SECONDED BY MR. SCHU. ALL BEING IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIES 4-0. Resolution required.

3. **Motor Pool Petty Cash** – Mrs. Hurd-Harvey requested authorization to reduce the petty cash fund for the Motor Pool from \$100 to \$25. These funds are used to purchase windshield wiper fluid and car washes.

MOTION: AUTHORIZING THE COMMISSIONER OF FINANCE TO REDUCE THE PETTY CASH FUND FOR THE MOTOR POOL FROM \$100.00 TO \$25.00 MADE BY MR. SCHU. SECONDED BY MR. ROUSH. ALL BEING IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIES 4-0.

4. **Delinquent Real Property Tax Auction** – Mr. Donnelly informed the committee that the final redemption date is Friday, March 3, 2017. He commented that usually we hold the tax auction in the auditorium at Bath Haverling, however, the school will be in the midst of construction. The tax auction this year will be held at Campbell-Savona.

5. **Mission Statement** – Mr. Donnelly informed the committee that they have revised the department Mission Statement.

6. **Prepaid Debit Card Program** – Mr. Donnelly informed the committee that in 2016 they began a program with M & T Bank to provide vendors with the option to receive payment from us in the form of a prepaid debit card as an alternative to checks or EFT (Electronic Funds Transfer). This helps make the process more efficient and we are also entitled to a rebate. During 2016 we earned \$38,000. Mr. Van Etten asked what is the benefit to the vendor? Mr. Donnelly replied they have immediate access to cash and those are processed every week.

7. **Room Tax Audit** – Mr. Donnelly stated we currently use Bonadio & Company to perform our annual audit. He requested authorization to engage them to perform reviews/audits of certain hotels, inns, lodging providers, etc., who are or may be subject to the Room Tax Law. The estimated cost is not to exceed \$10,000 annually to perform reviews/audits on three or four vendors per year. The cost for the contract would be paid for using room tax funds.

MOTION: WAIVING THE BIDDING REQUIREMENTS AND AUTHORIZING THE COMMISSIONER OF FINANCE TO ENGAGE THE SERVICES OF BONADIO & COMPANY TO PERFORM COMPLIANCE AUDITS OF VENDORS WHO ARE OR MAY BE SUBJECT TO THE ROOM TAX LAW, IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$10,000 ANNUALLY MADE BY MR. ROUSH. SECONDED BY MR. SCHU. ALL BEING IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIES 4-0.

8. **Hardships** – Mr. Donnelly stated moving forward when the committee approves hardship deferrals, we will have the authority to waive the penalty and will recite that in the motions.

9. **Investment Policy** – Mr. Donnelly informed the committee that he is looking into purchasing Treasury Bills rather than Certificates of Deposit. By purchasing the Treasury Bills, we have the potential to step up our earnings point by .5 percent.

10. **Land Bank** – Mr. Swackhamer asked is there any update on the land bank? Mr. Alger replied we are still waiting, but things are looking good.

D. **County Manager**

1. **Home Rule Request for Sales Tax Extension** – Mr. Wheeler informed the committee that we need to renew the 1% additional sales tax. We have talked with the Cities of Corning and Hornell and we have agreed to a \$15,000 increase for the cities. Each city will receive \$780,000 and the towns and villages will continue to receive \$750,000. He requested the Legislature extend the 1% sales tax. He clarified this is separate from the sales tax agreements we have with the cities.

MOTION: REQUESTING LEGISLATION FOR AN EXTENSION AUTHORIZING AN ADDITIONAL ONE PERCENT SALES TAX FOR STEUBEN COUNTY MADE BY MR. SCHU. SECONDED BY MR. ROUSH. ALL BEING IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIES 4-0. Resolution Required.

2. **City of Corning Residential/Commercial Exemptions** – Mr. Wheeler informed the committee that the City of Corning is requesting our participation in two exemption programs. Both proposals have been adopted by the City. The first is relative to Section 485-n of the Real Property Tax Law which allows a municipality to establish commercial mixed-used districts. In the City of Corning’s case, this will involve nine properties. The City, by adopting this, will have the ability to tax the value of improvements over \$10,000. Whatever the value of the tax improvement is, that amount will be tax exempt for eight years, and then the following four years, the assessment would be increased by 20 percent. If you agree, then this will be done on a case by case basis across the County. The municipality will designate the property and the County will have the ability to approve, and if you do, then the County tax portion would also be exempt. All taxing jurisdictions have to separately approve this.

MOTION: AUTHORIZING A REAL PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION PURSUANT TO SECTION 485-n OF THE REAL PROPERTY TAX LAW ALLOWING MUNICIPALITIES TO ESTABLISH COMMERCIAL MIXED-USE DISTRICTS MADE BY MR. SCHU. SECONDED BY MR. SWACKHAMER. ALL BEING IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIES 4-0. Resolution Required.

Mr. Wheeler stated the second exemption is relative to Section 421 of Real Property Tax Law which is for residential improvements. He stated his concern is that if they keep the \$10,000 improvement threshold, or higher, then every kitchen remodel would fall within this and we would have to have an assessor going in and checking all projects. Normally the assessors do not go into structures and they would need to do a pre and post inspection. If you pass this, it would be effective countywide, and would be a huge burden. Mr. Wheeler stated if the committee was in agreement with not doing this, he will send a letter to the City of Corning.

Secretary’s Note: The committee was in agreement to have Mr. Wheeler send a letter to the City of Corning indicating that the County would not be participating in the tax exemption relative to Section 421 of Real Property Tax Law.

MOTION: TO ADJOURN MADE BY MR. ROUSH. SECONDED BY MR. SCHU. ALL BEING IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIES 4-0.

Respectfully Submitted by

Amanda L. Chapman
Deputy Clerk
Steuben County Legislature

****NEXT MEETING SCHEDULED FOR**
Tuesday, March 14, 2017
Legislative Committee Room
10:00 a.m.**

**Please send agenda items to the Clerk of the Legislature’s Office
NO LATER THAN NOON
Wednesday, March 1, 2017.**