STEUBEN COUNTY FINANCE COMMITTEE
Budget Workshop
Wednesday, November 9, 2016
10:30 a.m.
Legislative Committee Room
Steuben County Office Building
Bath, New York

****MINUTES****

COMMITTEE:	Scott J. Van Etten, Chair Gary B. Roush	Gary D. Swackhamer, Vice Chair Brian C. Schu	Kelly H. Fitzpatrick
STAFF:	Jack Wheeler Tammy Hurd-Harvey	Mitchell Alger	Pat Donnelly
LEGISLATORS:	Carol A. Ferratella	K. Michael Hanna	John V. Malter

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Van Etten called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m.

II. 2017 BUDGET REVIEW

Mr. Wheeler stated the budget is actually in good shape. Overall, both the tax rate and the levy are dropping. The levy is dropping $1,800. The tax rate has decreased on average $8.46, or $.13. Since our last meeting, we have made some adjustments based on the questions the committee had. There were no significant changes. After working with the Public Defender, we did look at the cost centers and appropriated $70,000 in revenue to an account for new State grants coming in. We also anticipated more in the capital projects, with $50,000 allocated for the records digitization project. Additionally, the Ergonomics Capital Project was out of money. Traditionally, they have had $7,500, and we kept that in for future years.

Mr. Wheeler stated in his departmental budget, we are proposing adding $40,000 under the contract line item for a data analysis system. We will need to issue an RFP, but this would get us more toward performance management. The system will take aggregate data and put it into a much more usable fashion. We currently have our office and the Finance Department spending a lot of time in the system pulling out information. This will help the Legislators and the public as we will be able to share information.

Mr. Wheeler informed the committee they received a request from the Hornell Area Humane Society for $7,500 in funding. They are seeing a significant push in the services they provide to their area. This is a no-kill shelter, and they do not provide services to us. He stated that he did not include their request in this budget. Our relationship with the Finger Lakes SPCA is we give them an annual allocation for cruelty and enforcement. We have not given them sustaining funds. He cautioned, if you do this, you will most likely get calls from other agencies for similar requests.

Secretary's Note: *The Committee was in agreement with not including the Hornell Area Human Society's request for $7,500 in the 2017 Budget.*

Mr. Wheeler stated with regard to the sales tax allocation, the municipalities can either opt for cash or a credit against the county tax in their town. This is the first year that really impacted our cap significantly. Any other budget year, I would have come to you requesting that you override the tax cap. We share sales tax with the municipalities. After payment to the cities, we share approximately half with the municipalities. Some take it as cash and others take it as a credit. Anytime there is a change, that directly impacts us. The Towns of Corning and Wayland each took additional cash, totaling $200,000, which reduced our tax cap levy limit by the same amount. The tax levy limit is now $50,000 out of $50 million. We have no control over that as it is an accounting function. Mr. Wheeler explained when we originally did the

sales tax sharing agreements, we had mentioned that we would want to take a look at this. You have the ability to dictate the terms to the municipalities. He stated he is working with Mr. Reed on that the options that we have. As more towns take cash, the County will suffer. As a reminder, an override of the tax limit requires a super majority vote.

Mr. Donnelly stated a total of $7.2 million in credit from sales tax sharing is what goes to the town tax bills. Mr. Wheeler stated this is a potentially uncomfortable discussion to have, but we need to because will be will on the short end of the stick. If we can lock the municipalities in to choosing an allocation method, that would be ideal. He is not sure if this is something we can do, but we need to have that conversation.

Mr. Van Etten stated looking at the Capital Equipment, he still questions why Public Works needs to spend $10,000 on a 10' trailer. It does not make any sense. Mr. Wheeler suggested dropping that to $7,000 or $8,000, and that would not change the budget. Mr. Swackhamer asked that this item be added to the December Public Works Agenda for discussion.

Mr. Van Etten stated that he also questions the portable generator for the landfill scale house. They have it listed for $3,000 but he knows that you can buy a 65w Honda for $2,000. What would they need for the scale house?

Mr. Van Etten stated Mr. Mullen had emailed the following questions:

- Sheriff's Office – Operation of Boats; spent $2,500 in 2015, $2,000 year-to-date, but have budgeted $7,500. Mr. Wheeler explained this is for boat maintenance and fuel costs.

- Jail – Repairs/Maintenance; 2015 spent $14,223.35, year-to-date is $9,331 and requested is $20,000. Mr. Wheeler explained they have a capital project for some of the water infrastructure, and they have had to do a significant amount of maintenance to both the water and sprinkler systems. Due to that, he does not feel the request is too far off.

- Jail – Bedding/Linens; 2015 spent $2,700, year-to-date spent $398 and requesting $5,000. Mr. Wheeler stated this could be a timing issue.

- Fuel Chargebacks – what cost per gallon do we use to estimate and what happens with that money when there is an overage? Mrs. Hurd-Harvey replied the cost is based on the actual gallons that each department uses out of the County pumps. The chargeback is the cost plus $.10 to maintain the fuel system. Mr. Wheeler stated if there is an overage, that goes back into the General Fund.

- Animal Safety – Mr. Mullen feels this should be reduced to $10,000 and believes the risk would be same as it used to be when we funded them $39,000. Mr. Wheeler stated we have a contract with the Finger Lakes SPCA for $10,000 for animal cruelty. If some significant happens, that contract amount will not cover it. We have kept the $39,000 budgeted and Mr. Mullen disagrees with that. We either have the Contingent Fund or we can keep the $39,000 in the budget. If we don't spend it, then it goes back into the General Fund.

- Department of Social Services – Emergency Aid to Families, Foster Care, Residential Schools seem high. Mr. Wheeler stated the Emergency Aid to Families is caseload driven and we have $300,000 for that cost center and he would not change it. This is 100 percent reimbursed by the State and would result in a net zero as you would be cutting the revenue as well. With the Foster Care line item, when you look at the yearly cost, it is not too bad. Finally, with the Residential Schools, this is caseload drive, but does seem high. He will ask for an explanation.

- Public Works – Snow Removal seems high at $429,049. Mr. Wheeler stated reflect overtime and will depend on the type of winter we have. He does not think that is out of line.

MOTION: FORWARDING THE PROPOSED 2017 BUDGET AS PRESENTED BY THE BUDGET OFFICER TO THE FULL LEGISLATURE FOR REVIEW AND APPROVAL MADE BY MR. SWACKHAMER. SECONDED BY MR. SCHU. ALL BEING IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIES 5-0. ***Resolution Required.***

MOTION: TO ADJOURN MADE BY MS. FITZPATRICK. SECONDED BY MR. SWACKHAMER. ALL BEING IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIES 5-0.

Respectfully Submitted by

Amanda L. Chapman
Deputy Clerk
Steuben County Legislature