

Law and Finance Committee Minutes

July 11, 2007 – 4:00 p.m.

Present: Chairman Hargrave; Supervisors Gutheil, A. Johnson, M. Johnson, Peck, Thompson, Wood, Keyrouze, Barrett, Wormuth, Sausville, Grattidge, Janik, Trottier, Lucia, and Yepsen; David Wickerham, County Administrator; Paul Lent, Emergency Services; Sandi Cross, Office for the Aging; Sam Pitcheralle, Treasurer; Mark Rider, County Attorney; John Murray, County Auditor; Jim DiPasquale, Bill Davis, Sewer District; John F. Nolan, Republican County Chairman; Janet Glenn, Public Health; Press.

Chairman Hargrave called the meeting to order and welcomed all in attendance.

On a motion made by Mrs. Johnson, seconded by Mr. Wood the minutes of the June 13, 2007 meeting were approved unanimously.

On a motion made by Mr. Gutheil, seconded by Mr. Johnson the following were approved unanimously.

PUBLIC HEALTH

- **Amending the Public Health Nursing Policy and Procedures Manual**
- **Authorizing the Chairman to enter into an amended contract with Franklin Community Center to accept an additional \$695 in State COLA aid and amending the budget in relation thereto.**
- **Authorizing the Chairman to enter into an amended contract with 820 River Street, Inc. to accept an additional \$1,277 in State COLA aid and amending the budget in relation thereto.**
- **Authorizing the Chairman to enter into an amended contract with Family and Children's Services to accept an additional \$1,553 in State COLA aid and amending the budget in relation thereto.**
- **Authorizing the Chairman to enter into an amended contract with Transitional Services Association, Inc. to accept an additional \$3,581 in State COLA aid and amending the budget in relation thereto.**
- **Authorizing the Chairman to enter into an amended contract with the Alcohol and Substance Abuse Prevention Council to accept an additional \$11,925 in State COLA aid and amending the budget in relation thereto.**

Mr. Wickerham said the above items are with regard to the cost of living increases that were approved by the State Legislature. As in the past, when the county has received cost of living increases, they are passed on to the various agencies that contract through the Mental Health Office.

On a motion made by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Mr. Peck the following were approved unanimously.

PUBLIC SAFETY

- **Authorizing the Chairman to accept a Legislative grant in the District Attorney's Office in the amount of \$16,400 for telecommunications and conference expenses and amending the budget in relation thereto.**
- **Authorizing the Chairman to enter into agreements with the NYS Department of Criminal Justice, to accept a Safe Child Program grant in the District Attorney's Office in the amount of \$415,000. To be used for gathering and maintaining photographs and DNA data on children residing in Saratoga County and amending the budget in relation thereto.**
- **Authorizing the Chairman to enter into an amended agreement with National Grid relative to the various costs/fees associated with the care and maintenance of the roadway, building, tower and generator on Spruce Mountain.**
- **Authorizing the Chairman to accept \$597,000 from T-Mobile to cover the expense of replacing the County's microwave system, which will be moved from 2GHz frequency to 6GHz frequency bands and amending the budget in relation thereto.**

Mr. Wickerham said the first item is a Legislative grant from Senator Bruno's office. Eleven thousand five hundred dollars goes to pay for cell phones for the District Attorney's Office and the remaining \$4,900 is for conference expenses for the deputies of the Statewide Conference.

The second item is a grant from DCJS that was applied for through the District Attorney's office. Photographs and DNA will be obtained on children throughout the county and put into a database.

The third item is an amendment with National Grid. Up until now National Grid has been paying the county \$2,000 a year to locate some of their equipment within the county blockhouse. The county is going to co-locate equipment on the National Grid tower in exchange for the \$2,000 a year that was being paid by National Grid.. The county will not have to pay for the co-location of the tower, he said. The maintenance and care will be shared by both the County and National Grid.

Mr. Wickerham said the FCC has mandated that all counties and public agencies migrate out of the 2GHz frequency and sell them to the private sector. T-Mobile bought the one that the county had. The county has the right to be paid for all costs that it will take to migrate from the 2GHz to 6GHz band. This was calculated at \$597,000, which was approved by the FCC and T-Mobile.

On a motion made by Mr. Wood, seconded by Peck the following was approved unanimously.

SOCIAL PROGRAMS

- **Authorizing the Chairman to enter into agreement with the NYS Dept of Labor to accept a \$75,000 Disability Program Navigator Grant and amending the budget in relation thereto.**

Mr. Wickerham said an agreement was authorized with the Department of Labor to accept a \$75,000 grant to assist people with special disability needs in finding employment. This will authorize the budget amendment, however, it will still need to go out for an RFP, and the contract will be awarded at a future date.

CHAIRMAN'S ITEM

- **Appointing Michael Mooney of the Town of Wilton to the Saratoga County IDA to serve out the unexpired term of Raymond O'Conor.**

LAW AND FINANCE

On a motion made by Mr. Gutheil, seconded by Mr. Peck the following was approved unanimously.

- **Authorizing the Chairman to enter into agreements with We Care LLC of Jordan, NY to remove ash from the ash lagoons at a cost of \$55.66 per ton.**

Mr. Wickerham said the ash is removed annually from the lagoons in order to provide room for the ash for the next year. A request for proposal was sent out with only two responses. The end result was that the county will be paying \$2 less per ton at a cost of \$55.66 per ton.

On a motion made by Mr. Peck, seconded by Mr. Johnson the following was approved unanimously.

- **Authorizing the Chair to enter into agreements with Insituform Technologies, Inc. to reline the Sewer Interceptor Line at a cost not to exceed \$844,370 and amending the budget thereto.**

Mr. Wickerham said a significant portion of the sewer interceptor line needs to be relined. There were bids taken with the low bid of \$844,370.

On a motion made by Mrs. Johnson, seconded by Mr. Wood the following was approved unanimously.

- **Authorizing the Chair to enter into agreements with DJS Marketing Group/Computer Professionals International (CPI) to design, implement, and troubleshoot county computer networks at a cost not to exceed \$30,000.**

Mr. Wickerham said CPI are the professionals that handles problems with computer dispatching at the County Jail as needed.

On a motion made by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Mrs. Johnson the following was approved unanimously.

- **Introducing a proposed local law to impose a Wireless 911 surcharge and setting August 15, 2007 at 4:45 p.m. as the date for the public hearing.**

Mr. Wickerham gave an update on the County Finances as follows: Some of the projections have not changed. Community College expenses, which are an unfunded county mandate, are trending up \$2 million over budget. This is a problem area that is largely due to big tuition increases in some of the more popular schools. The Treasurer is getting more data on the increases.

Sales tax collections are up significantly, 8% over the past two months. If this trend continues the county will received at least \$50 million for the year, possibly reaching the budget goal of \$51.6 million. Further, looking at the mandated Medicaid costs, they continue to moderate and possibly the county may be able to reduce the adopted budget by \$1.3 million.

Preliminary tax base figures received from Real Property confirm that the county is continuing to grow in double digits. The sales tax now accounts for more than 30% of the total revenue. We are also starting to see the preliminary costs of necessary capital improvements and they will have to be factored into future budgets. The excellent credit rating received from Moody's last month will minimize those costs but they will still be significant.

Mr. Wickerham said he was much more comfortable today than two months ago with the county finances and feels a one time distribution of \$5 million of the county fund balance will not impair the ability to keep the county property tax rates level for 2008. By providing the funding to municipalities as in the past, it is ensured to go directly back to the taxpayers whether in the form of additional services or direct tax relief. The actual distribution, if approved, will occur in September.

Mr. Pitcherelle distributed a distribution list from the Proposed Fund Balance to all committee members for their review.

A motion was made by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Mrs. Johnson to remove from the table and approve the distribution of \$5 million from the County Fund Balance to the Towns and Municipalities. Unanimous.

On a motion made by Mr. Wood, seconded by Mrs. Johnson the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Chris Sansom