

Law and Finance Committee Minutes
September 14, 2011 – 4:00 p.m.

Present: Chairman Thompson; Supervisors, Grattidge, Peck, Sausville, Veitch, Wormuth, Kinowski, Rowland, Collyer, Southworth, Lucia, Richardson, Jenkins, Wright, Hargrave; Spencer Hellwig, Administrator; Ryan Moore, Mgmt. Analyst; George Martin, D'Arcy Plummer, Treasurer; Joanne Bosley, Chris Aldrich, Real Property; Jason Kemper, Planning; Diane Brown, Sandi Fischer, Maplewood Manor; Brian O'Connor, Auditor; LoAnn Sanders, Deputy County Clerk; Karin Levison, Public Health; Steven Dorsey, County Attorney; Joseph Ritchey, Public Works; David, Spana, Joe Klimek, Toski & Schaefer; Sam Pitcherelle, Treasurer; James Murphy, DA; Denny Finnernan, League of Women Voters; Press.

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

On a motion made by Mrs. Wormuth, seconded by Mr. Veitch the minutes of the August 10, 2011 meeting were approved unanimously.

Mr. Pitcherelle introduced Mr. Klimek from Toski-Schafer & Co., who gave a brief overview of the county audit. Mr. Klimek said the audit has been completed for the 2010 financial statements of the county. A review of the Sheriff's Inmate account has been completed as well as the Federal programs of the county with no findings or questioned costs. An audit was done with the New York State Department of Transportation state funds with no findings regarding those programs.

In terms of the fiscal health of the county, in the summer of 2010 the general fund had a balance of \$17,395,000. In the third year the county experienced a decrease in the general fund balance of \$7,338,000. The unappropriated fund balance going into 2012 is anticipated to be \$13,622,000.

Mr. Hellwig said the \$13,622,000 assumes that we are going to finish this year using what we budgeted.

Mr. Thompson asked what the projected shortfall was going to be for Maplewood Manor? Mr. Hellwig said at the August meeting the projected shortfall was \$8.5 million.

Mr. Peck asked Mr. Klimek what Federal Programs were audited? Mr. Klimek said they audited a \$6.6 million grant that the county received to help offset the costs of the sewer project; the Fiscal Stabilization Fund, Governmental Services and Recovery Act, which were funds that were received in lieu of State aid for the Youth Program in the amount of \$3,115,000; TANIF \$5,985,658; Foster Care \$1,103,000; Medicaid \$103,058,000.

EQUALIZATION AND ASSESSMENT

- **Accepting tender offers in the Towns of Ballston (23,887.27) and Northumberland (4,165.15).**

- **Authorizing a credit to the 2011 tax bill in the Town of Northumberland (\$1,023) on parcel # 144.3-1-10.**

Mr. Hellwig said the first item is two tender offers totaling \$28,052.78 for parcels in the town of Ballston and Northumberland. The payments are for taxes due in the years 2008, 2009 and 2010.

The second item is for a tax bill credit on a property located in the Town of Northumberland. This parcel was incorrectly valued as having sewer and water and being a buildable lot, which was not correct. The assessed value was, therefore, reduced from \$41,400 to \$6,500 which resulted in a tax credit of \$1,023 to the Town of Northumberland or the current property owners.

On a motion made by Mr. Veitch, seconded by Mrs. Wormuth the above resolutions were approved. Mr. Peck abstained from the vote, as Northumberland is his town.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

- **Authorizing the Chairman to enter into an agreement with Marshall & Sterling Insurance as the insurance consultant to prepare bid specifications for the County's insurance coverage at a cost not to exceed \$22,500.**

Mr. Hellwig said every three years the county hires an insurance consultant to review property and liability insurance coverage and help in preparing for the upcoming renewal. This is the third and final year of this cycle, with Cool Insuring being the current broker. The new consultant responsibilities will include an evaluation of agents and brokers, preparation of bid specifications and evaluations of the bids received and issuance of a bid report to the Board. This year four qualified proposals were received, with the two lowest bidders being interviewed by a subcommittee of personnel which included the Chairman of the Committee, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Richardson, Mr. Moore and Mr. Hellwig. It was recommended to the Personnel Committee that Marshall & Sterling be hired at a cost of \$22,500. Mr. Hellwig said the bids ranged from \$13,900 up to \$28,000. The two lowest bidders were Marshall & Sterling and Patrick DiCesare whose bid was \$13,900. Based on conversations with Mr. DiCesare and a review of his proposal he did not have any experience dealing with municipalities the size of the county and, in fact, did not have any experience working with any counties. Marshall & Sterling did have a lengthy list of clients dealing with municipalities the size of the county. In addition to that, some of the issues and questions that were covered during the course of the interview revealed that Marshall & Sterling was much more prepared to handle the business. As a result of that process a decision was made to recommend that Marshall and Sterling be given the contract.

On a motion made by Ms. Daly, seconded by Mr. Grattidge the above resolution was approved unanimously.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- **Authorizing the Chairman to enter into an agreement with the Saratoga Hilton for the annual Planning Conference at a cost not to exceed \$35,000.**
- **Authorizing the Chairman to enter into agreements to accept \$89,000 in snowmobile funding and determining no environmental impact relative to the construction or modification of snowmobile trail routes.**

Mr. Hellwig said the contract with Saratoga Hilton is to cover the cost of the rooms and lunches given to the individuals that are going to attend the planning conference. This years contract total is \$35,000. That cost is going to be covered through a combination of registration fees and sponsorships so there is no cost to the county.

The second item is accepting an annual snowmobile grant, which is \$89,000 this year. This is pass through money from the State Department of Parks and Recreation and Historic Preservation. The money is used by local snowmobile clubs to maintain the trail systems within the county borders.

On a motion made by Ms. Daly, seconded by Mr. Sausville the above resolutions were approved unanimously.

Ms. Daly said Chairman Wood and she would be speaking to the Supervisors at the Agenda meeting with a report regarding the Capital Region Economic Development Council and, in particular, the county's participation.

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

- **Accepting a \$199,493 FAA Grant for the design of airport taxiway lighting, precision approach path indicator lights and reconstructing the aircraft apron.**

Mr. Hellwig said this FAA grant will cover 95% of the costs to complete the design and installation of runway approach lights at the county airport, and also reconstruction of the aircraft apron. The total project cost is \$209,993, and the remaining 5% will be covered between the State and the County. The County's match will be \$5,250.

On a motion made by Mr. Peck, seconded by Mrs. Wormuth the above resolution was approved unanimously.

PUBLIC HEALTH

- **Amending the "Saratoga County Maplewood Manor Collection of Late Payments Policy and Procedure".**

Mr. Hellwig said this was approved by the Public Health Committee to address a problem of lost or reduced revenues, which have affected the cash flows of Maplewood Manor. Up until now, the procedure for assessing and approving prospective residents allowed for a certain amount of latitude that in some cases resulted in people being granted residency in the facility without a guarantee of payment. The changes in the proposed policy are designed to encourage individuals and their families to help Maplewood

Manor improve the requests for admission by providing evidence that they have initiated the basic steps to provide Maplewood Manor with the revenue source to pay for their care. This initially began based on the recognition that on an annual basis we are facing in the neighborhood of several hundred thousand dollars in delinquencies every year.

On a motion made by Mr. Veitch, seconded by Mr. Sausville the above resolution was approved unanimously.

PUBLIC SAFETY

- **Authorizing the Chairman to accept an Aid to Prosecution Grant in the District Attorney's office in the amount of \$41,300.**
- **Authorizing the Chairman to accept a \$40,780 Violence Against Women Grant in the District Attorney's office.**
- **Authorizing the Chairman to enter into a contract with Dr. Jeffrey Hubbard to perform autopsies and related services in an amount not to exceed \$15,000.**
- **Authorizing a contract amendment to the agreement with Forensic Medical Services to add additional services to include an external examination at \$250 and a neuropathy examination at \$500.**

Mr. Hellwig said the District Attorney receives, on an annual basis, an Aid to Prosecution Grant that helps to offset the costs that are incurred in the prosecution of violent felony cases such as burglaries and robberies. This years funding of \$41,300 represents a decline of approximately 7.6% over last years amount.

The second item is a Domestic Violence grant that is also State funding to offset some of the District Attorney's expenses for prosecuting Domestic Violence cases. This grant dates back to 1998, and at that time it was expected that the grant would be received for approximately three years; however, the District Attorney has continued to receive it. This years funding of \$40,780 is a slight increase of approximately 5% more than what was received last year, which was just over \$38,000.

The third item is a contract with Dr. Jeffrey Hubbard who is a backup to Dr. Paston who is no longer performing autopsies due to some medical issues. In his minor contract, based on the additional work load that he has incurred as a result of Dr. Paston's absence, the Public Safety Committee approved an extension of his contract for up to \$15,000 to cover additional work that he is anticipated to have to perform this year.

The fourth item is a contract with Forensic Medical Services for some additional services that are being performed by Dr. Sikirica that were not included in the current agreement with the county. This amendment will allow these services to be added to the existing contract.

On a motion made by Mr. Peck, seconded by Mr. Sausville the above resolutions were approved. Mr. Thompson abstained from the vote of items three and four.

PUBLIC WORKS

- **Authorizing an inter-municipal agreement with Warren County for repairs to the Hadley-Luzerne Bridge in an amount not to exceed \$90,000.**

Mr. Hellwig said the \$90,000 covers Saratoga County's portion of the repairs, which is approximately 50% of the total bridge repairs, which is co-owned by Warren County. The project was included in the Capital Plan two or three years ago and the money has been re-appropriated for the past several years. The reason for the delay is that we have been waiting for Warren County to come up with their half of the money so we can move forward with the repairs. We have now reached a point where they are ready to provide that funding. The money is going to be used to replace the deck of the bridge and some repairs caused by corrosion of the sub structure and also the installation of a drainage system as well.

On a motion made by Mr. Grattidge, seconded by Mrs. Wormuth the above resolution was approved unanimously.

LAW AND FINANCE

- **Amending the budget under Social services Intergovernmental Transfer to appropriate \$4,797,789 in expenses and revenues to access additional funding under the Federal Medicaid Assistance Program.**

Mr. Hellwig said the Federal Medicaid Assistance Program is providing additional Federal revenue to cover some of the county's long term operating costs. In order for the county to access this funding we must put up a local share of a 50% match, which amounts to \$4,797,789. In return for that match, the county will receive payment from the Federal Government of \$9,595,578. There will be a net gain as a result of that of over \$4.7 million. The additional funding will be applied toward the current operating deficit of Maplewood Manor.

On a motion made by Mr. Sausville, seconded by Mr. Peck the above resolution was approved unanimously.

On a motion made by Mrs. Wormuth, seconded by Mr. Sausville the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Chris Sansom