

Law and Finance Committee Minutes

December 14, 2011 – 4:00 p.m.

Present: Chairman Thompson; Supervisors Daly, Grattidge, Sausville, Veitch, Wormuth, Hargrave, Raymond, M. Johnson, Southworth, Barrett, Wood, Yepsen, Collyer, Richardson, Lucia, Wright, Jenkins, Rowland, Lawler and Kinowski; Spencer Hellwig, Administrator; Ryan Moore, Mgmt. Analyst; Dan Butler, Animal Shelter; Jason Kemper, Planning; Andy Davis, Veterans; Sandi Cross, Aging; Ed Tremblay, Emergency Services; Oscar Schreiber, John Ciulla, Public Defender; Karen Levison, Public Health; Joanne Bosley, Real Property; Stephen Dorsey, County Attorney; Joseph Ritchey, Public Works; Brian O’Conor, Auditor; Diane Brown, Maplewood Manor; Jim DiPasquale, Sewer District; George Martin, D’Arcy Plummer, Treasurer; Kyle Wessels, Benetech; Teddi Smith, Town of Charlton; Press.

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

On a motion made by Mr. Grattidge, seconded by Mr. Sausville the minutes of the November 9, 2011 meeting were approved unanimously.

EQUALIZATION AND ASSESSMENT

- **Authorizing a refund of 2011 taxes paid by Upper Hudson Woodlands, ATP 2 parcels in Day (\$453.80), 7 parcels in Edinburg (\$1,831.69) and 6 parcels in Providence (\$1,243.37) due to conservation easements acquired by the State of New York.**
- **Authorizing conveyance of tax acquired parcels in the Towns of Ballston (\$375), Greenfield (\$275), and Malta (\$5,500) sold at the September auction to the second bidder.**

Mr. Hellwig said the first item is a tax refund resolution to reimburse a property owners for a conservation easement on 15 separate parcels acquired by the State of New York. The parcels are located in the towns of Day, Edinburg and Providence. The county has already received the tax payments from the state for these easements and will be using these funds to reimburse the property owners.

The second item is authorization to convey three parcels sold at the September auction to the second bidder. In each of these cases, the successful bidder at the auction has defaulted by not paying the balance of their bid; therefore, these parcels will be offered to the second highest bidder. The properties are located in the towns of Greenfield, Malta and the Village of Round Lake.

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

VETERANS

- **Establishing the Saratoga County Veterans Trust and Agency Fund, adopting rules and procedures relating to the operation thereof, and authorizing the creation of a trust and agency account to deposit and segregate funds donated to the fund.**

Mr. Hellwig said this establishes the Saratoga County Veterans Trust and Agency Fund, which was started several months ago by Supervisor Daly in memory of her father. The fund currently has \$1,001 in it, which is made up entirely of private donations. The County Attorney has worked with the Veterans subcommittee as well as the Veterans Director to establish rules and procedures for the fund. The Veterans Committee will review all applications to the fund and will have authority to make final determinations on who receives the funding. Eligible applicants include Veterans residing in the county or not for profit organizations devoted to assisting Veterans who are county residents. The awards are limited to \$500 per Veteran, per every three-year period, and \$1,000 per organization.

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

PERSONNEL

- **Authorizing the Chairman to enter into a renewal agreement with Blue Shield of Northeastern New York for medical, dental and prescription health care insurance at a cost not to exceed \$24,365,367.**
- **Authorizing the Chairman to enter into an agreement with Benetech, Inc. to provide health insurance consulting and management services at a cost not to exceed \$72,450 annually.**

Mr. Hellwig said over the past several months the Personnel Department and Personnel Committee have been working on the health insurance renewal contract with Blue Shield of Northeastern New York. The process has included the services of Benetech, Inc., who was hired as a consultant to help negotiate the renewal with Blue Shield. Initially, the renewal was being negotiated with the expectation that the contract terms would remain the same with the county being fully insured, which essentially means that all benefit and administrative costs would be included under the agreement for a total premium at the time the contract was started of \$25.7 million for 2012. At this point, with the assistance of Benetech, a new renewal option has been negotiated, and will provide premium savings over what was originally placed in the budget for next year. The terms of this renewal will provide \$1.3 million in savings from the amount originally proposed and placed in the tentative budget for next year. Essentially, the savings are obtained through

an alternative funding arrangement that will allow the county to assume some additional risks in order to capitalize on our favorable claims experience. The Personnel Committee is recommending that this renewal be approved for 2012.

The second resolution is related to the Blue Shield Contract as a result of the change in how the benefits are going to be managed for the health insurance for next year. This second resolution will authorize a contract with Benetech to become our benefits administrator and will provide a number of services that will include managing medical and prescription drug claim audits, disease management, wellness services, dependent eligibility audits and other ongoing management services.

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

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

- **Authorizing a sewer lateral easement on the Zim Smith Trail for a sewer line to serve the property of Frank Rossi at 1 Constitution Court in the Town of Ballston.**
- **Scheduling a Public Hearing for January 11, 2012 at 4:50 p.m. regarding the proposed lease agreement with the Adirondack Soaring Club in the amount of \$3,017.33 annually for 45,000 square feet of land area from 2/1/12 through 12/31/27.**

Mr. Hellwig said the first resolution grants an easement for the installation of a sewer line linking the Frank Rossi property to the county sewer district interceptor line at the Zim Smith Trail, which is just south of Zepko Lane. This is a temporary easement so they can access the line through the trail.

The second resolution schedules a Public Hearing regarding the proposed lease for the Adirondack Soaring Club at the County Airport. The proposed lease is designed to mirror the lease authorized in 2008 for the Saratoga Soaring Association. The initial dollar figure on the Adirondack lease would be \$3,017.33, which is the same as Saratoga Soarings 2012 amount. Both leases would run out on December 31, 2027 as a way to offer renewals to both groups simultaneously. Both clubs would also have their own hangers, which would have to be removed in the event that a lease renewal is not approved.

On a motion made by Mr. Peck, seconded by Mr. Veitch the above resolutions were approved unanimously.

PUBLIC HEALTH

- **Authorizing the Chairman to enter into a renewal agreement with Thomas Nicolla Consulting Services, PLLC at an hourly rate of \$46.48/hr. for physical therapy services.**
- **Amending Resolution #146 of 2008 to increase Public Health Nursing Services' Agency fees to maximize Federal and Medicaid funding effective January 1, 2012.**

Mr. Hellwig said the first item is for authorization to enter into a renewal agreement next year with Thomas Nicolla Consulting Services to provide physical therapy services at Maplewood Manor for 2012. The renewal is at the same hourly rate as the expiring agreement, which is \$46.48/hr. This part of having a physical therapist in the building allows us to include the physical therapy services for the facility as part of the Medicaid reimbursement rate calculation.

The second item is authorization to increase the certified home health agency rates, which have been in place since August of 2008. In order to maximize the county's Medicaid /Medicare and private insurance revenues for these services we need to increase the rates to an amount at least above the Medicaid ceiling to capture additional revenue.

On a motion made by Mr. Veitch, seconded by Mrs. Wormuth the above resolutions were approved unanimously.

SOCIAL PROGRAMS

- **Authorizing the Chairman to enter into an agreement with A&H Services to provide transportation services for seniors who reside in the towns of Malta, Milton, Ballston, Wilton, Northumberland and Greenfield at a rate of \$190/day.**
- **Authorizing the Chairman to enter into an agreement with A&H Services to provide transportation services for seniors who reside in the City of Saratoga Springs at a rate of \$190/day.**

Mr. Hellwig said the first resolution is for authorization to enter into an agreement with A&H Services to provide transportation for seniors living in the towns of Malta, Milton, Ballston, Wilton, Northumberland and Greenfield. A&H was the lowest of three bids received for the service at \$190/day.

The second resolution is to also authorize a contract with A&H for a similar service for seniors living in the City of Saratoga Springs. A&H was again the lowest of the three bids for this service at \$190/day.

Mr. Hellwig said in both instances there was substantial savings over the expiring contracts. In the six towns contract the savings were 33% below the expiring rate of \$284/day. In the Saratoga Springs contract the savings were 42% below the expiring rate of \$330/day.

Mr. Lawler asked if the contract could be added to with additional communities. Mrs. Cross said contingent upon funding, yes.

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

PUBLIC SAFETY

- **Authorizing the Chairman to enter into an agreement with the State to accept a \$31,007 Indigent Legal Services Grant.**
- **Authorizing the submission of a grant application for a Hazardous Materials Grant in an amount up to \$125,000 in regional funding for planning, training and equipment purchases to benefit Saratoga, Albany, Rensselaer and Schenectady County Hazmat Teams.**

Mr. Hellwig said the first item is an Indigent Legal Services Grant from the State that is available to the Public Defender's office to pay for expenses related to the purchase of equipment, training, computer software and office renovations. A resolution is needed to authorize the Chairman to sign the agreement with the State to accept the grant.

The second item is also a State grant. There is a regional grant that is available to communities that team together to purchase hazardous materials equipment and services in a regional platform. The application approval will allow Emergency Services to apply for up to \$125,000 in Homeland Security funding that can be used for planning, training and equipment purchases. It does require the participation of, at least, two HAZMAT teams. In prior years Rensselaer, Schenectady and Albany counties have been the submitting partners for this grant. It is now Saratoga County's turn to submit the application on behalf of the group.

On a motion made by Mrs. Wormuth, seconded by Mr. Veitch the above resolutions were approved unanimously.

PUBLIC WORKS

- **Authorizing the Chairman to enter into a supplemental agreement with NYSDOT to accept \$43,302 in funding for additional engineering and right-of-way expenses necessary for the replacement of Central Avenue (Route 4) over the Anthony Kill Bridge in the City of Mechanicville.**
- **Authorizing the Chairman to enter into an amended agreement with Greenman Pedersen, Inc. in the amount of \$49,302 for additional engineering and right-of-way expenses necessary for the replacement of Central Avenue (Route 4) over the Anthony Kill Bridge in the City of Mechanicville.**

Mr. Hellwig said the first resolution is to authorize the Chairman to execute a supplemental agreement with the NYS Department of Transportation with regard to an HBRR grant for additional engineering and right-of-way expenses for changes required by the State that weren't initially included in plans to replace Central Avenue over the Anthony Kill Bridge in the City of Mechanicville.

The second resolution is to authorize the Chairman to execute an amendment to the engineering contract with Greenman Pedersen in the amount of \$49,302 for the additional engineering work required as a result of the changes requested by the State.

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

LAW AND FINANCE

- **Confirming the 2012 scale of charges for the Saratoga County Sewer District.**

Mr. Hellwig said the 2012 scale of charges was approved unanimously by the Sewer Commission. Those changes were presented at a Public Hearing on November 9, 2011. At this time the Board's approval is required before they can go into effect. There are no changes in the scale of charges for next year over what was in place for 2011.

On a motion made by Ms. Daly, seconded by Mr. Sausville the above resolution was approved. Mr. Thompson was opposed.

- **Authorizing the Saratoga County Sewer District to reimburse Wilton Water and Sewer Authority \$117,810 for upgrades at the SCSD's Route 50 pump station at Exit 15 in the Town of Wilton.**

Mr. Hellwig said the second item is authorization to reimburse Wilton Water and Sewer Authority \$417,810 for a portion of the capital improvements for the Route 50 pump station in the town of Wilton. This payment is being made to cover additional costs of equipment that was specifically requested by the Sewer District as add ons to the original upgrades to the pump station. These up grades are part of the district's long term capital improvement plan, and funding is available in the 2012 budget.

On a motion made by Mr. Peck, seconded by Mr. Veitch the above resolution was approved. Mr. Thompson was opposed.

- **Amending the Saratoga County Computer and Internet Technology Use Policy to include the County Attorney and Public Defender as exceptions to the Acceptable Use and Content policy when prohibited content must be accessed as part of their official duties.**

Mr. Hellwig said the Technology Committee Computer Policy changes were approved by the committee. The changes proposed the addition of the County Attorney and the Public

Defender to the list of departmental exceptions to policy governing access to prohibited content as part of their departmental duties.

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

- **Adopting the 2012 Compensation Schedule.**

Mr. Hellwig said this is necessary to approve the rate changes for the final contract year of the existing agreement with CSEA. This was a three-year agreement and in order for the compensation schedule to be adjusted for the cost of living that was agreed upon the Board has to approve or adopt that schedule for 2012.

Mr. Grattidge said in reflection of the budget, there is a separation now between management and confidential employees with the contractual rates. The proposed budget does not include a raise for the management/confidential employees. He asked if there were now two different rates. Mr. Hellwig said their schedule will remain unchanged, we are just changing the rates for the people who are unionized. The adoption of the compensation plan with the rate changes will only address CSEA.

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

- **Levying amounts payable to the County Treasurer and Town Supervisors.**

Mr. Hellwig said this is authorization that is needed in order to issue tax bills for next year.

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

- **Establishing January 3, 2012 at 3:30 p.m. as the date and time for the organizational meeting of the Board of Supervisors.**

On a motion made by Mr. Grattidge, seconded by Mr. Peck the above resolution was approved. Mr. Thompson was opposed.

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

Respectfully submitted,
Chris Sansom