

Law and Finance Committee Minutes
November 14, 2012 – 4:00 p.m.

Present: Chairman Grattidge; Supervisors Daly, Rowland, Sausville, Veitch, Wormuth, Wright, Kinowski, Peck, Raymond, A. Johnson, Collyer, Hargrave, Yepsen, Lucia, Wood, and Richardson; Spencer Hellwig, Administrator; Steve Dorsey, Hugh Burke, County Attorney; Ryan Moore, Mgmt. Analyst; Jack Kalinkewicz, Personnel; Jason Kemper, Planning; Dennis Brobston, SEDC; Ed Tremblay, Paul Lent, Emergency Services; George Martin, Sam Pitcherelle, Treasurer; Brian O’Conor, Auditor; Hans Lehr, Mental Health; Andrew Davis, Veterans; Chad Cooke, Bill Davis, Sewer District; Karen Levison, Public Health; Keith Manz, Public Works; Sandi Cross, Aging; Chris Aldrich, Real Property; Press.

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

On a motion made by Mrs. Wormuth, seconded by Mr. Wright the minutes of the October 10, 2012 meeting were approved unanimously.

EQUALIZATION AND ASSESSMENT

- **Declaring parcels in the Towns of Charlton, Halfmoon and Malta and a parcel in the Village of Stillwater worthless in accordance with the Equalization and Assessment Committee Policy and canceling past, present and prospective taxes in the respective amounts of \$5,141.51, \$801.72, \$5,896.35 and \$2,237.53.**
- **Authorizing a credit to a tax bill in the Town of Saratoga (\$4,294.68).**

Mr. Hellwig said pursuant to the E&A committee policy, properties that can be considered worthless are ones that attract no bids in two consecutive auctions and remain unsold after four consecutive auctions or the nature of the property makes it incontrovertibly useless or worthless, such as a landlocked parcel. The four parcels seen on this resolution have been examined and fit one of these descriptions, and the recommendation of the committee is that they be declared worthless.

The second item is in the town of Saratoga where the assessor incorrectly assessed the parcel with improvements that were not in existence. A cottage that was previously located on this parcel was destroyed by fire in 2010 and the parcel no longer has sewer service. The recommendation is to reduce the tax bill as a result of the lack of those improvements.

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

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

- **Authorizing acceptance of a State Airport Grant in the amount of \$18,069 from the New York State Department of Transportation for the Saratoga County Airport Master Plan update.**
- **Introducing a Local Law stating lease terms for the Saratoga County Mental Health Center and setting December 12, 2012 at 4:40 p.m. in the County Board Room as the date, time and place for a public hearing in relation thereto.**

Mr. Hellwig said the first item is to accept the State portion of funding for the \$361,375 contract that the county has with McFarland Johnson to update the Saratoga County Airport Master Plan. This contract was approved last month and this resolution will authorize the acceptance of the 5% share which is \$18,069.

The second item is the introduction of a Local Law that will authorize a ten year lease term for the Mental Health Clinic. Initially, the resolution authorizing the lease agreement with Saratoga Prime Properties was limited to five years with options to renew for two additional terms. This limitation in the length of the lease has resulted in some financial stipulations by the property owner that are problematic for the county and as a result the County Attorney has investigated further and has discovered that the county can exceed the five year limit through the adoption of a Local Law. This resolution would be to adopt the Local Law so that the lease can be extended to a ten year term. There are significant capital improvements that are going to be made to the building to make it serve the needs of the Mental Health Clinic, and the property owner wants to make sure that the investment is protected.

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

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- **Authorizing the Chairman to enter into an agreement with Panza's Restaurant to provide food and beverage services for the 2013 Planning Conference in an amount not to exceed \$20,000.**

Mr. Hellwig said the above resolution is for authorization for a catering contract for the Planning Conference. The Planning Department sent out a Request for Proposal for catering services which would include the meals and snacks for the 2013 conference. There were four proposals submitted and this proposal from Panza's was the low bid.

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

PUBLIC HEALTH

- **Authorizing the establishment of a Local Development Corporation and the scheduling of a public hearing to consider the disposition of certain real estate and related improvements and equipment known as Maplewood Manor Nursing Home.**
- **Authorizing the Chairman to enter into agreements with the Saratoga County Veterans Service Agency to accept \$180,000 in New York State Office of Mental Health (OMH) funding to implement a peer-to-peer support program for Saratoga County veterans who experience post-traumatic stress symptoms.**
- **Amending the Policies and Procedures Manual of the Public Health Nursing Service to include a Home Care Registry and a Palliative Care Policy.**
- **Authorizing Public Health Nursing to write off uncollectibles in the amount of \$170.00.**

Mr. Hellwig said the first item is for authorization to establish a Local Development Corporation to facilitate the eventual sale of the facility to a private operator. In addition, this resolution will also set the date and time of the Public Hearing that must be held before the transfer of real property to the LDC.

The second item is authorization for the Chairman to enter into agreements with the Saratoga County Veterans Service Agency to accept \$180,000 in funding for a pilot program that will provide outreach for peer to peer counseling for Veterans residing in Saratoga County who are experiencing Post Traumatic Stress Disorder symptoms. The program will be designed by the Saratoga County Veterans Director, Andrew Davis, and will involve 30 volunteer mentors who will be overseen by a part time county employee with a professional certification in the Mental Health field who will be paid through the grant proceeds.

The third item is an amendment to the Public Health Policy and Procedures Manual. These regular updates to the policy and procedures are required in order to meet regulatory requirements. This year they will be adding two procedures; one, for home health aides to follow and update a home care registry, which is a web based registry of all personal care and home health aides who have successfully completed training programs that have been approved by the State. The second change to the Policy and Procedures Manual will be the addition of a Palliative Care Policy which will provide guidelines for the provision of information for patients who receive care related to life limiting conditions and illness.

The fourth item will allow Public Health to write off bad debts from the previous year that have been vetted by the County Attorney's Office and deemed uncollectible. This years' \$170 covers the expense related to a patient review instrument required for a nursing home application.

Mr. Sausville requested clarification with regard to grant money for the Veterans Services Agency, and an existing person under that grant. Mr. Hellwig said that the Board would have to authorize the creation of a position sometime next year once the plan of the program has been setup. That position will be terminated upon the ending of the funding stream, he said.

Mr. Grattidge said the new position is part time with Veterans staff filling in.

Mr. Davis said this person would be part time with a 10 to 17 ½ hour week with a PHD in Psychology or an MSW in clinical experience that would be program director. The Veterans Office would have oversight working with Mental Health on the overall program.

Mr. Grattidge said this is a pilot program where four counties have been invited to participate. Mr. Davis said, yes, Jefferson County in Fort Drum with their active duty population was the first county selected. Suffolk County on Long Island was second with the most populous Veterans count in the country after Los Angeles County, and then Rensselaer and Saratoga with a more median Veterans population and demographic breakdown.

Mrs. Wormuth said one of the reasons our county was selected is because of the background of the Veterans Director, Mr. Davis and the great work that he does. She said it was an honor to see some of Mr. Davis's work brought out in the paper this weekend and the great work that is done for Veterans.

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

PERSONNEL AND INSURANCE

- **Authorizing and amendment to Resolution 141-12 to increase a renewal contract total by \$18,000 for third party administrative services of the County's Self Insurance program.**
- **Authorizing the Chairman to enter into an agreement with Empire Blue Cross for medical and prescription drug health insurance coverage for county employees and retirees.**
- **Authorizing the Chairman to enter into an agreement with Blue Shield of Northeastern New York, Inc. for dental insurance coverage for county employees.**

Mr. Hellwig said in 2011 the county contracted with Sedgewick to become a third party administrator for the self-insurance workers compensation insurance program, that agreement was approved at a cost of \$23,000/monthly. This past June the Board authorized the renewal of the contract at a cost not to exceed \$21,745/monthly. Personnel has since discovered that \$18,000 of administrative and software costs were not factored into the amount approved at the June contract renewal resolution. Adding those costs into the contract total will result in a monthly cost of \$23,245. This resolution would allow an amendment to the original approval to include these costs.

The second item has to do with the health insurance renewal. Over the past several months the Personnel Department and the Health Insurance Advisory Committee have been working on the health insurance renewal, which included competitive bidding for the county's health insurance policies. The process has involved the services of a consultant, Benetech, Inc. who was hired as the Counties consultant to help prepare the RFP and review the bids in order to make a contract recommendation to the committee. At this point, with the assistance of Benetech, a recommendation to approve a contract with Empire Blue Cross to provide medical and prescription coverage has been selected and this option will provide savings over what was originally placed in the tentative budget for 2013. The terms of the renewal will provide savings in excess of \$421,000.

The final resolution is for the dental policy that will remain with the current provider, Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Northeastern New York. The consultants narrowed their analysis down to two providers, which were Blue Shield and Delta Dental. Their findings were that while Delta did offer a competitive network and generally lower provider reimbursement rates than Blue Shield, there was a disruption in service that was viewed as too much of an inconvenience for employees, and therefore the committee supported the retention of Blue Shield for this particular coverage.

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

PUBLIC SAFETY

- **Authorizing the Chairman to enter into an agreement with New York State Office of Homeland Security to accept \$168,000 in Homeland Security funding.**
- **Authorizing the Chairman to enter into an agreement with BullEx, Inc. to furnish a car fire training prep and a retrofit of the existing pressure vessel tank at a cost of \$89,675.**

Mr. Hellwig said the first item is authorizing the acceptance of \$168,000 from a State Homeland Security Grant. This grant funding will be used for the purchase of new self-contained breathing apparatus, protective clothing, cyano kits and audio visual upgrades to the county's emergency operations center.

The second resolution is for authorization to enter into a contract with BullEx, Inc. to furnish a new propane training simulator and to provide a retrofit to an existing propane fire training prop for the fire training center. Funding for the purpose of the new prop and the repair of the existing training device will be covered out of a surplus in this year's budget. The State has given Emergency Services and the County authority to use this surplus for these expenses.

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

SOCIAL PROGRAMS

- **Authorizing the Chairman to enter into contracts with all agencies involved in providing services for the 2013 Office for the Aging Implementation Plan.**
- **Authorizing the Chairman to enter into agreements with Prestige Services, Inc. to provide for the Elderly Nutrition Program from January 1, 2013 through December 31, 2016 at a cost of \$6.20 per meal in 2013 with an annual increase to be determined by the August Consumer Price Index.**

Mr. Hellwig said the first resolution is authorizing the Office for the Aging implementation plan which is required by both the Federal and State governments as part of the eligibility to receive funding for these entities. Included in this resolution is the authorization for the subcontracts for the various vendors who will be providing the services that include transportation, legal counseling, dietary, as well as social day care. There is no increase over the rates for these services for the previous year and they are 100% federally funded and administered by the State.

The second resolution is for Prestige Services, Inc. to provide the Meals on Wheels program. The new price will be \$6.20 per meal with annual adjustments based on the August consumer price index. This is a four year contract, which will end on December 31, 2016.

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

LAW AND FINANCE

- **Authorizing the sale of 15.73 acres of real property in the Town of Northumberland to the Saratoga County Sewer District at a price of \$98,580.**

Mr. Hellwig said this resolution is for authorization to purchase 15.73 acres of county landfill property in the Town of Northumberland, which is planned to be the future site of the districts northern treatment plant. The district contracted with Delaware Engineering to conduct a study to determine a location for the future siting of the northern plant, and this is the location that they are recommending. This additional plant will be constructed to capture and treat sewage from Saratoga Springs north, which will free up capacity at the main plant for everything that is generated south of Saratoga Springs.

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

- **Authorizing the Chairman to enter into an agreement for the upgrade of Saratoga Lake sewer lines and construction of a new sewer line in the Town of Halfmoon as follows: HVAC, Crisafulli Brothers, \$170,000.**

Mr. Hellwig said the above resolution is for authorization to contract with Crisafulli Brothers Plumbing and Heating Contractors. They were the low bidders for the heating and ventilation upgrades to the nine pump stations around Saratoga Lake that will be receiving the capital upgrades as part of the project that was approved by the Board in September. At the September approval there was at that time no bid for the HVAC work so it had to be rebid, and Crisafulli Brothers was the low bidder for the work.

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

- **Authorizing the Saratoga County Sewer District to initiate eminent domain proceedings seeking easement interest on 14 parcels of real property in relation to the upgrade of Saratoga Lake sewer lines.**

Mr. Hellwig said the above resolution is for authorization to move forward with eminent domain proceedings with respect to the property associated with the districts upgrade of the sewers around Saratoga Lake, which are located in the City of Saratoga Springs, and the towns of Malta, Stillwater and Saratoga.

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

- **Adopting the 2013 Saratoga County Budget (TO BE TABLED)**
- **Appropriating amounts finally set forth in the 2013 Saratoga County Budget (TO BE TABLED)**
- **Setting December 3, 2012 at 5:30PM in the County Board Room as the date, time and place for the Public Hearing on the revised tentative 2013 Saratoga County Budget.**
- **Approving the 2013 Tax Bill Flyer, pursuant to Local Law Introductory No. 1, Print No. 1 of 2012, establishing Truth in Taxation in Saratoga County.**

Mr. Hellwig said the final four items are the annual budget resolutions that the Board must adopt as part of the annual cycle. One additional resolution has been added, which is for the approval of the Truth in Taxation Flyer, which will be sent out with the 2013 tax bills. The 2013 tentative budget has been filed in the County Clerk's office as required by county law and copies have been placed in all Supervisors' mailboxes, and are also on line.

The first budget resolution is to adopt the 2013 Saratoga County Budget. This resolution will be tabled next week at the Board Meeting and won't be acted upon until after the Law and Finance Budget Hearing and the Public Hearing are completed.

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

Mr. Hellwig said the second budget resolution will be appropriating the 2013 amounts. This is for the Boards authorization to spend the money for the specific purposes listed in the budget. This resolution will also be tabled and brought back for a vote after the Public Hearing.

On a motion made by Mr. Rowland, seconded by Mr. Wright the above resolution was approved unanimously.

Mr. Hellwig said the third item is setting the Public Hearing for the 2013 budget, which will be advertised to take place on December 3, 2012 at 5:30 p.m. in the County Board Room.

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

Mr. Hellwig said the fourth item is for approval of the tax bill flyer which includes the definition of State and Federal mandates, a brief narrative summary of key financial impacts, a table illustrating the next expense to the general fund and contact information for the Governor and all State and Federal Legislators representing Saratoga County.

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

Mr. Grattidge said all Supervisors have received the Monthly Budget Report electronically. He said the numbers are coming in on the favorable side.

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

Respectfully submitted,
Chris Sansom