

Legislative and Research Committee Minutes
May 7, 2014 – 2:00 p.m.

Present: Chairman Johnson; Supervisors Barrett, Lucia, Lunde, and Raymond; Ryan Moore, Mgmt. Analyst; Oscar Schreiber, Public Defender; John Warmt, General Services; Steve Dorsey, County Attorney.

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

On a motion made by Mr. Lucia, seconded by Mr. Lunde the minutes of the February 6, 2014 meeting were approved unanimously.

Mr. Dorsey said he is looking to improve the purchasing policies of the county with the introduction of a proposed Local Law authorizing contract awards based on best value methodology. He said currently under general municipal law, section 103 the county is required to take the lowest responsible bidder when bidding on service contracts and bidder contracts. The General Municipal Law 103 was amended in 2012 to allow for the alternative of using best value methodology when awarding contracts, but you need a county with a population of less than one million to pass a local law authorizing your county to take the best value practices.

Mr. Dorsey distributed a copy of a draft local law that was based on local laws adopted by other counties, taking the best of all of them and including the best points of what other counties have done. This will take away the obligation of the county to take the lowest bid, he said.

A motion was made by Mr. Lunde, seconded by Mr. Lucia to introduce a proposed Local Law identified as Introductory No. 1 Print No. 1 of 2014, authorizing contract awards based on best value methodology, and setting a public hearing for June 11, 2014. Unanimous.

Mr. Schreiber said his office has received a letter from the Office of Indigent Legal Services which governs the County's Public Defender's office and distributes grants. He said they have urged the Public Defender's office to urge their county to pass a resolution urging the Governor to settle the Hurrell-Haring law suit and have the State takeover all the Public Defender offices.

A motion was made by Ms. Raymond, seconded by Mr. Lucia to table action on the request for a resolution urging the State takeover of all Public Defender Offices, in order to obtain more detailed information. Unanimous.

Mr. Moore said the Department of Energy Program, referred to as the National Nuclear Security Administration, was cut \$151 million last year. As a part of the \$151 million cut, the facility in West Milton was affected by a \$24 million cut. The site operates two prototype reactors that are used to train navy personnel on how to operate reactors on aircraft carriers

and submarines. Bechtel, who runs the site on behalf of Knolls Atomic Laboratory and the Department of Energy, has said that if the funding cut continues into another year they will be forced to shut down one of the reactor plants, which would affect 450 naval personnel, and overall approximately 1,600 employees who are associated with the operation of the reactor at the plant. Mr. Moore said the Chamber of Commerce has stated that the Navy in the capital region has a \$500 million annual economic impact, compared to the \$200 million at the racetrack, which is substantial.

Mr. Moore said Congressmen have asked for the President's Proposal for the Department of Energy to go through, which would restore the \$151 million through 2015. In addition, Senator Schumer has requested that the \$24 million cut for 2014 to be replaced, either from the Department of Energy reprogramming funding or by the Department of Defense transferring the money to the Department of Energy.

A motion was made by Ms. Raymond, seconded by Mr. Lunde to approve a resolution supporting the Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program funding. Unanimous.

Mr. Moore gave a brief overview of the State budget and its impacts on the county as follows:

- State takeover of the Medicaid Program – Did not happen; 2015 costs will be the same as 2014.
- Reforms to Early Intervention and Preschool Special Education - No action was taken with regard to Preschool Special Education; however, there was support for Special Education Itinerant Teacher Services. It will now be a fee for service program.
- Constitutional amendment on Unfunded Mandates – No action taken.
- VLT Host Benefits – They had been restored in 2011 and 2012 to 45%; 2013 to 55%; and in 2014 70%.
- Opposing the closure of the Mt. McGregor Correctional Facility – The facility will be closing in July. He said what the State budget did do was to initially put \$24 million in for communities to re-develop these sites; that amount will increase to \$32 million.
- Providing Veteran owned businesses with increased opportunities in State contracting - A 6% carve out for service disabled Veterans was approved.
- Urging the NYS Department of Labor to immediately fill Saratoga County's vacant Disabled Veterans Outreach Program Specialist position – currently Senator Marchione is working on this initiative.
- Requesting reimbursement of the costs associated with holding a third primary in 2012, and calling for the consolidation of State and Federal primaries on the same day – No action was taken.
- Requesting a more equitable share of the NYS Public Safety Surcharge to support Statewide Interoperable Public Safety Communications – The Legislature kept the Governor's \$75 million grant program.

- Supporting the extension of Design-Build Contracting to local governments and urging the repeal of the Wicks Law - The Wicks Law piece was taken out by the Governor in the 30/day amendment; however, Senators will continue to support bills on that.

Mr. Moore said the CHIPS funding was held constant to the increase received last year. The county, according to NYSAC, will receive approximately \$8,000 more than last year.

On a motion made by Mr. Lucia, seconded by Mr. Lunde the meeting was adjourned unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Chris Sansom