

Government Review & Efficiency Committee Minutes
July 7, 2021 – 4:00 p.m.

Present: Chairman Matt Veitch; Committee Members Tara Gaston, Joe Grasso, Kevin Tollisen; Ridge Harris, Matt Rose, Audra Hedden, County Administrator; Michael Hartnett, County Attorney; Craig Hayner, County Clerk; Andrew Jarosh, County Treasurer; Chris Schall, Auditor, Riley Flint, John Safford.

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

On a motion made by Mr. Tollisen, seconded by Ms. Gaston, the minutes of the June 3, 2021 meeting were approved unanimously.

A motion was made by Ms. Gaston, seconded by Mr. Tollisen, to authorize an amendment to the County's Operating Budget Procedure Policy. Unanimous.

Mr. Veitch said that this is a relatively extensive rewrite of the budget policy. The current budget policy is a few pages long and was originally established in the 1980's. A subcommittee consisting of Supervisors Veitch, Schopf and Tollisen was appointed a few meetings ago, they have met with the County Administrator to discuss the budget process moving forward. The themes that came through was more committee and Supervisor involvement in the budget process, and an improved defined budget process step by step, what information will be presented to Supervisors, and a clear idea of the scheduling and timing of the budget overall. Mr. Veitch said that Attorney Hartnett also worked on this process. Mr. Veitch said that State and County law governs the process however this was not outlined in the previous policy. Mr. Veitch gave an overview of the proposed policy which was distributed as part of the agenda. Mr. Tollisen questioned the process for personnel requests by Department heads, if it would be included in the tentative budget. Mr. Veitch said that under preparation, section three states Department heads will need to be prepared to explain any increases in their budget to Law & Finance and Chair of applicable standing committees. If positions are included, Supervisors will already be involved in this process. Mr. Tollisen said that he believes this is a much better process and Department heads should be notified of the change so that they understand to ask for requests now and not later. Mr. Veitch agreed and said that is one of the reasons they are working on this first portion of the policy now rather than next month. Remaining parts of the budget policy such as addressing the Capital Committee can be done next month. Ms. Gaston said that in general she believes this is a significant improvement, particularly providing additional information to Supervisors and the public. Discussions took place regarding language and minor changes to the proposed policy and timing of the budget. Per State law, the budget must be adopted no later than December 20th. Mr. Veitch said that any amendments to the current proposed policy will be provided to the Law & Finance committee.

A motion was made by Mr. Tollisen, seconded by Ms. Gaston, to authorize an amendment to the County's Voucher Audit Policy. Unanimous.

Mr. Veitch said that Commissioner Cooke reached out to him regarding some issues they have with vouchers for State Permits. Currently they have difficulty getting an authorized signature from the State for \$25 permit expenses so that the voucher can be processed through the Auditors office. This issue was discussed with the County Administrator, Attorney and Auditor. Mr. Schall said that this would streamline these lower risk payments from State and Federal agencies and he has no issues with the proposed adjustment to the policy. Mr. Veitch said that the change will allow payments made to State and Federal agencies in the amount of \$100 or less to not require a counter signature from the State or Federal agency in order for the payment be processed. Mr. Schall clarified that an invoice will still be required.

Records Management Update

Mr. Veitch said that Supervisor Raymond is the Chair of the Records Management sub-committee. Mrs. Raymond submitted a report via email. The committee has toured the County records facility and based on that tour the following has been suggested: better security such as cameras, sign in and sign out, back-up power alarm for the evidence refrigerator and freezer in case of power outage or equipment failure, increased security in areas that contain sensitive materials, and remove tripping hazards in areas where residual cell bars remain. The committee will be touring the Ulster County records facility on July 22. A questionnaire has been prepared by County Historian Lauren Roberts for all County Departments regarding record storage practices and quantities. A questionnaire will be sent to local governments to determine interest in sharing storage space with the County. Lauren is also bringing the Regional Advisory Officer from State Archives to tour the current storage facilities and afterward attending a meeting to discuss the facilities as well as grant funding. It may be necessary to bring in a consultant to determine the quantity of records that exist both in storage and office, and quantify types of records and duration of storage required. Mr. Barrett noted that with the transition to a full health department, the county will also be receiving a voluminous amount of records. Mr. Veitch appointed County Historian Lauren Roberts to this sub-committee at the request of Supervisor Raymond. Mr. Veitch said that he has also had discussions regarding records storage with County Clerk Hayner who has offered the assistance of his office. Mr. Veitch appointed County Clerk Hayner to the sub-committee.

A motion was made by Mr. Grasso, seconded by Ms. Gaston, to authorize a proposed Local Law to Repeal Local Law #3 of 1979 and setting a public hearing. Unanimous.

Mr. Veitch said that one of the projects of this committee is to look through local laws and see where there is redundancy or laws that are no longer applicable. Local Law #3 of 1979 created a committee called the Government Review Committee. The current Government Review and Efficiency Committee was created by Resolution under Board Rules. The local law from 1979 was a single use law. The goal was to provide a report to the County, one of their recommendations was hiring a County Administrator. After this, the Committee disbanded. Mr. Veitch said that at this point, to get it off the books, a public hearing would need to be held to repeal the local law.

Update: Restructuring of Director of Finance and Payroll to Treasurer's Office

Mr. Veitch said that this request has already gone through the Human Resources & Insurance Committee. Mr. Jarosh reported that the Director of Finance position is currently vacant. Several years ago, the Director of Finance and Payroll positions were moved from the County Treasurer's office to the County Administrator and Human Resources departments. The request is for these

positions to revert back to the County Treasurer's office. Mr. Jarosh said that payroll has always been a hybrid function between Treasury and Human Resources, he will be working with the Director of HR on the physical location of the Payroll staff to alleviate any confusions. Mr. Barrett said that he supports the reinstatement of these positions to the Treasurer's office.

On a motion made by Mr. Grasso, seconded by Mr. Tollisen, the meeting was adjourned unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Therese Connolly
Clerk of the Board