

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: **FINANCE**

DATE: **MARCH 9, 2011**

Committee Members Present:

Supervisors Thomas
Taylor
Goodspeed
Belden
Monroe
VanNess
Kenny
Merlino
Conover

Others Present:

Daniel G. Stec, Chairman of the Board
Paul Dusek, County Attorney/Administrator
Joan Sady, Clerk of the Board
Kevin Geraghty, Budget Officer
Supervisor Bentley
Supervisor Champagne
Supervisor McCoy
Supervisor Strainer
Supervisor Wood
Frank O'Keefe, Treasurer
Rob Lynch, Deputy Treasurer
Jeff Tennyson, DPW Superintendent
Bud York, Sheriff
Don Lehman, *The Post Star*
Thom Randall, *Adirondack Journal*
Nicole Livingston, Deputy Clerk

Mr. Thomas called the meeting of the Finance Committee to order at 10:23 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Kenny, seconded by Mr. Belden and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the February 10, 2010 Committee meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk of the Board.

Copies of the Finance Agenda were provided to the Committee members, and a copy of same is on file with the minutes.

Commencing the Action Agenda review, Mr. Thomas stated Item 1 were the requests for Transfer of Funds which were attached for Committee approval. He noted that Supervisory Committee approval had been obtained as necessary.

Motion was made by Mr. Kenny, seconded by Mr. Belden and carried unanimously to approve Item 1 as outlined above. The necessary resolution was authorized for the next board meeting.

Mr. Thomas advised Item 2 was a referral from the County Treasurer, requesting to amend Resolution No. 850 of 2010 which amended the Table of Organization and the Salary and Compensation Plan for 2011, to set the base salary of the Accounting Technician position at \$41,060, Grade 19.

Motion was made by Mr. Goodspeed, seconded by Mr. Conover and carried unanimously to approve Item 2 as outlined above. The necessary resolution was authorized for the next board meeting.

Mr. Thomas asserted Item 3 was a Referral from the Human Services Committee, Employment & Training Administration, requesting to amend the 2011 County budget to increase estimated revenues and appropriations in the amount of \$12,000 to reflect receipt of Federal funds.

Motion was made by Mr. Conover, seconded by Mr. Merlino and carried unanimously to approve Item 3 as outlined above, and the necessary resolution was authorized for the next board meeting.

Mr. Thomas apprised Items 4A and B were referrals from the Public Safety Committee, Sheriff & Communications. Item 4A, he said, was a request to amend the 2011 County budget to increase estimated revenues and appropriations in the amount of \$36,500 to reflect monies for the Statewide Law Enforcement Terrorism Preventive Program (SLETPP) grant.

Motion was made by Mr. VanNess and seconded by Mr. Monroe to approve the request as presented.

In response to an inquiry, Sheriff York explained \$27,000 would be allocated for technical equipment; \$8,000 would cover the overtime associated with the Buckle Up New York Program; \$1,500 would be allocated to the 911 Communications Center. He clarified that these were funds from a grant beginning in 2008, which needed to be appropriated.

Mr. Thomas called the question and the motion was carried unanimously to approve Item 4A as outlined above, and the necessary resolution was authorized for the next board meeting.

Mr. Thomas added Item 4B was a request to amend the 2011 County budget to increase estimated revenues and appropriations in the amount of \$659 to reflect receipt of payment for damages to a Sheriff's vehicle.

Motion was made by Mr. Taylor, seconded by Mr. VanNess and carried unanimously to approve Item 4B as outlined above, and the necessary resolution was authorized for the next board meeting.

Mr. Thomas apprised Items 5A through E were referrals from the Public Works Committee. Items 5A through C, he said, were referred from the DPW. He stated Item

5A was a request to authorize a \$5.5 million Bond Anticipation Note (BAN) for 2011 Federal and State Aid Transportation Projects.

Motion was made by Mr. Belden and seconded by Mr. Conover to approve the request as presented.

Mr. Belden questioned if this money was needed to begin projects until reimbursements were received, and Jeff Tennyson, DPW Superintendent affirmed. Mr. Tennyson further explained this would cover the cash flow needed to keep projects progressing through this year and 80% would be Federally reimbursed and 15% would be State reimbursed.

Paul Dusek, County Attorney/Administrator, asserted that the funding for this was complicated in that one bond resolution would not suffice for all of these projects due to SEQRA (State Environmental Quality Review Act) requirements. He further stated that financing could not be authorized unless a SEQRA review was completed on a particular project or it was determined to be a Type 2 project, which meant there was no SEQRA required. He apprised three of the listed projects did not have SEQRA reviews and three projects had been determined to be Type 2 projects; therefore, he continued, one bond resolution would be needed for the three Type 2 projects and a separate bond for the projects that required a SEQRA review, followed by a second bond in the future once the SEQRA was completed. Mr. Dusek opined that a few of the projects listed, such as the Middleton Bridge over Schroon River, Hicks Road Reconstruction and Crane Mountain Road over Mill Creek, should be covered by County funds until reimbursement was received and he asked Frank O'Keefe, County Treasurer, if the County was in a position to cover those projects. Mr. O'Keefe replied that at this time, the County could cover the costs of the aforementioned projects.

Mr. Dusek clarified that he was recommending that the three larger projects be bonded, the smaller projects as previously outlined should be paid for by the County and the Beach Road Reconstruction project could be bonded after the SEQRA was completed. Mr. Dusek added that if engineering work was bonded, the project could not commence until one year from the bonding date, and he was trying to avoid that type of situation. Rob Lynch, Deputy Treasurer, mentioned that a Revenue Anticipation Note (RAN) may provide additional flexibility and Mr. Dusek agreed that a RAN was another possibility that he would look into further.

Mr. Belden amended his motion to authorize Mr. Dusek and Mr. Tennyson to determine what amount of funding should be bonded to accomplish the aforementioned 2011 Federal and State Aid Transportation Projects and to proceed with the necessary action and Mr. Conover amended his second to the motion. Mr. Dusek confirmed that two resolutions would be necessary.

Mr. Thomas called the question and the motion as outlined above was carried unanimously and the necessary resolution was authorized for the next board meeting.

Mr. Thomas added Item 5B was a request for authorization of a bond in the amount of \$207,000 for bridge rehabilitation projects.

Motion was made by Mr. Merlino and seconded by Mr. Taylor to approve the request as presented.

Mr. Belden questioned if the \$207,000 was the required local share, and Mr. Tennyson advised that this was all County money and was the local bridge work performed by the DPW on an annual basis.

Mr. Thoms called the question and the motion was carried unanimously to approve Item 5B as outlined above, and the necessary resolution was authorized for the next board meeting.

Mr. Thomas noted Item 5C was a request to establish Capital Project No. H318.9550 280-Bridge Rehabilitation Projects, in the amount of \$207,000, with the source of funding to be the aforementioned bond.

Motion was made by Mr. Conover, seconded by Mr. Belden and carried unanimously to approve Item 5C as outlined above, and the necessary resolution was authorized for the next board meeting.

Mr. Thomas informed Items 5D and E were referred from Parks, Recreation & Railroad. Item 5D, he said, was a request to amend the 2011 County budget to increase estimated revenues and appropriations in the amount of \$10,620 to reflect the amount to be carried over from Up Yonda Farm's 2010 budget.

Motion was made by Mr. Merlino, seconded by Mr. Belden and carried unanimously to approve Item 5D as outlined above, and the necessary resolution was authorized for the next board meeting.

Mr. Conover commended the operations at the Up Yonda Farm and their efforts to generate additional revenue.

Mr. Thomas remarked Item 5E was a request to amend the 2011 County budget to decrease estimated revenues and appropriations in the amount of \$7,142 to accurately reflect projected revenues and expenses in the Up Yonda Farm budget.

Motion was made by Mr. Conover, seconded by Mr. Belden and carried unanimously to approve Item 5E as outlined above, and the necessary resolution was authorized for the next board meeting.

Mr. Thomas said Item 6 was a referral from the Support Services Committee, Self-Insurance, requesting to amend the 2011 County budget to increase estimated revenues and appropriations in the amount of \$18,250 to reflect receipt of the check from NYMIR. Mr. Thomas informed that the amount of the check was \$31,335 instead of \$18,250.

Motion was made by Mr. Taylor, seconded by Mr. VanNess and carried unanimously to approve Item 6 as outlined above with the corrected amount of \$31,335, and the necessary resolution was authorized for the next board meeting.

Mr. Thomas apprised Item 7 was a request for a resolution and letter of support for the Smart Growth Application submitted by the Adirondack Partnership and he noted a sample resolution was attached.

Motion was made by Mr. Belden, seconded by Mr. VanNess and carried unanimously to approve Item 7 as outlined above, and the necessary resolution was authorized for the next board meeting.

Concluding the Action Agenda review, Mr. Thomas informed Item 8 was a request for Finance Committee action which was required on the following item that was approved by the Personnel Committee: Item No. 1A.

Motion was made by Mr. VanNess, seconded by Mr. Kenny and carried unanimously to approve Item 8 as outlined above, and the necessary resolution was authorized for the next board meeting.

Mr. Thomas referred to Item IV. Topics to be reported on/discussions/updates and noted Item 1, was discussion regarding the bonding for the Sheriff's vehicles. Mr. Thomas reminded the Committee that the request to bond \$190,000 for Sheriff's vehicles and equipment was approved; however, he said, the County Treasurer has since recommended that the purchase not be bonded and that the County utilize the General Fund to cover the costs.

Mr. Dusek apprised that during the budget process, these purchases were intended to be bonded and he suggested that the course of action be maintained. Mr. Geraghty added that he appreciated the diligence of the County Treasurer in closely reviewing and monitoring the status of financial actions for the County.

The consensus of the Committee was to continue in the procurement of a bond in the amount of \$190,000 for the Sheriff's vehicles and equipment as previously approved.

Mr. Thomas stated Item IV. 2 was discussion concerning a request for the Commissioners of the Board of Elections to attend the Annual New York State Board of Elections Conference in Albany, NY from April 25 to April 27, 2011. He added that

the discussion from the January 27, 2011 Support Services Committee meeting was attached.

Mr. Kenny said he had requested that this item be added for further discussion as although he had no objection to conference attendance for Board of Elections staff, he disagreed with the prior permissions given authorizing overnight accommodations due to the fact that the Conference was being held within a reasonable driving distance. Mr. Kenny noted that several Departments, such as the Department of Social Services, frequently sent staff for training in Albany to which they commuted daily. He further noted that members of the Board of Supervisors had recently attended various sessions of the NYSAC (New York State Association of Counties) Conference which was held over several days in Albany, to which they had commuted via car pool, requiring no overnight accommodations. He said he felt approval of the request would set an unfavorable precedent, leading many Departments to seek similar allowances for their staff.

Mr. Taylor advised that as Chairman of the Support Services Committee, he had not been in favor of the request and felt a policy should be established to clearly identify when overnight accommodations were appropriate, based on meeting times and distance. Chairman Stec requested further information in relation to the matter, specifically the length of the stay, the per night hotel rate and the number of people seeking accommodations, to which Joan Sady, Clerk of the Board, replied that the associated cost information was not available at the time the request was made. She continued that accommodations had been requested for four people, including both Board of Elections Commissioners and their respective Deputies, for two nights at the Desmond Hotel in Albany, NY. Mr. Kenny said he recalled the rate charged by the Desmond Hotel during the NYSAC Conference had been in the range of \$270 per night. Mr. Belden noted that the rate identified by Mr. Kenny was likely higher than the GSA (Governmental Standards Act) rate. He apprised that during the NYSAC Conference he had chosen to spend one night at the Holiday Inn, located in the area of the Desmond Hotel, at a cost of \$101 per night; therefore, he stated, there were certainly lower priced accommodations available in the immediate area of the Conference site. Chairman Stec interjected his opinion that overnight accommodations were unnecessary and agreed with Mr. Kenny's prior statement that approval of this request would set an unfavorable precedent for future travel requests.

Mr. Goodspeed exited the meeting at 10:52 a.m.

Mr. Thomas suggested that an acceptable compromise might be to authorize the request, contingent upon the use of a less expensive hotel, to which Mr. Kenny replied that he upheld his opinion that the overnight stay was unnecessary and should not be approved.

Motion was made by Mr. Kenny, seconded by Mr. Belden and carried unanimously to approve Conference attendance for the Board of Elections Commissioners and staff with no overnight accommodations.

Mr. VanNess added that the Board of Elections staff should use a fleet vehicle for their daily commute, rather than driving a personal or rental vehicle which would incur an additional expense to the County for mileage or rental costs.

Mr. Thomas apprised Items 3A through C were items to be addressed by Mr. Dusek. Item 3A, he said, was discussion relative to single spacing the resolutions to save paper and copying costs.

Mr. Dusek remarked that this idea had been suggested and he wanted to bring it before the Committee to get their feedback.

On a similar topic, Mr. Kenny reported that he had attended a workshop at the recent NYSAC (New York State Association of Counties) Conference regarding a proposal between Suffolk and Nassau Counties to purchase large quantities of common goods in order to save money. Mr. Kenny advised they had done a consolidated bid for paper, in which several communities were able to purchase through the County bid, resulting in a savings of \$400,000 for the various communities involved. He suggested that the County consider such action, and possibly include Washington County. Mr. Dusek agreed that the matter should be explored further and referred to the Purchasing Department to determine if it was an appropriate action for Warren County to pursue.

Mr. Monroe mentioned previous proposals to purchase laptop computers or Ipads for the Supervisors to eliminate paper and recommended that the issue be referred to Support Services for further discussions.

Returning to the discussion relative to single spacing the resolutions to save paper and copying costs, Mr. Thomas questioned the desire of the Committee. The consensus of the Committee was to remain with the double spacing for resolutions.

Mr. Thomas remarked Item 3B was a request for \$5,200 for abstracting for the County foreclosure proceedings.

Motion was made by Mr. Belden and seconded by Mr. Monroe to approve the request as presented.

Mr. Dusek explained the County Attorney's Office budgeted each year for abstracts for the foreclosure process and had exceeded the amount planned for said foreclosures this year. He noted that to a large extent, the money was paid back by the delinquent taxpayers when their taxes were paid. He requested a Contingent Fund transfer in the

amount of \$5,200 to be transferred to Code A.1420 437, County Attorney-Consulting Fees to cover the associated costs as outlined above.

Mr. Thomas called the question and the motion was carried unanimously to approve Item 3B as outlined above with the source of funding to be transferred from the Contingent Fund, and the necessary resolution was authorized for the next board meeting.

Mr. Thomas noted Item 3C was a request for authorization of a settlement of an auto claim in the amount of \$11,591 and to authorize the County to retain ownership of the Fleet vehicle.

Mr. Dusek expounded that a County Fleet vehicle driven by a County employee had been involved in an accident and subsequently determined by the insurance company to be totaled. He recommended that the vehicle be retained for possible parts or salvage.

Motion was made by Mr. Belden, seconded by Mr. Monroe and carried unanimously to approve Item3C as outlined above, and the necessary resolution was authorized for the next board meeting.

Mr. Thomas informed Item 4 was the response to the Budget Analysis Report from the County Treasurer as prepared by JoAnn McKinstry, Assistant to the County Administrator, which was attached for review.

Prior to adjourning, Mr. Dusek advised an executive session was needed to discuss the employment history of two particular people, as well as a matter leading to the discipline of one particular person.

Motion was made by Mr. Conover, seconded by Mr. Taylor and carried unanimously that executive session be declared pursuant to Section 105 (f) of the Public Officer Law.

Executive session was declared from 11:07 a.m. to 11:12 a.m.

The Committee reconvened and Mr. Thomas announced no action was necessary pursuant to the executive session.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, on motion made by Mr. VanNess and seconded by Mr. Kenny, Mr. Thomas adjourned the meeting at 11:14 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Nicole Livingston, Deputy Clerk