

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: FINANCE

DATE: OCTOBER 9, 2013

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS CONOVER
TAYLOR
SOKOL
MONROE
BENTLEY
WOOD
KENNY
MERLINO

OTHERS PRESENT:

KEVIN GERAGHTY, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD
PAUL DUSEK, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
JOAN SADY, CLERK OF THE BOARD
FRANK THOMAS, BUDGET OFFICER
SUPERVISORS MASON
MONTESI
STRAINER
WESTCOTT
MIKE SWAN, COUNTY TREASURER
JEFFERY TENNYSON, SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
JOHN WAPPETT, PUBLIC DEFENDER
BUD YORK, SHERIFF
DEAN BOECHER, TOWN OF QUEENSBURY RESIDENT
MATT SIMPSON, TOWN OF HORICON RESIDENT
SAMANTHA HOGAN, LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST
DON LEHMAN, *THE POST STAR*
THOM RANDALL, *ADIRONDACK JOURNAL*
AMANDA ALLEN, DEPUTY CLERK OF THE BOARD

COMMITTEE MEMBER ABSENT:

SUPERVISOR FRASIER

Mr. Conover called the meeting of the Finance Committee to order at 9:39 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Sokol, seconded by Mr. Monroe and carried unanimously to approve the minutes from the prior Committee meeting, subject to approval by the Clerk of the Board.

Copies of the meeting agenda were distributed, a copy of which is on file with the meeting minutes.

Commencing the agenda review with the Action Agenda section, Mr. Conover announced Item 1 consisted of a request for transfer of funds as included in the agenda packet for Committee approval.

Motion was made by Mr. Kenny, seconded by Mrs. Wood and carried unanimously to approve the requests for transfers of funds and the necessary resolution was authorized for the October 18th Board meeting.

There being no requests from the County Treasurer to consider, Mr. Conover moved on to Item 3, which was a referral from the Economic Growth & Development Committee, *Planning & Community Development*, to amend the 2013 County Budget to increase estimated revenues and appropriations in the amount of \$33,374 to reflect the costs associated with reclassifying the Housing Cost Coordinator position from part-time to full-time, as per Resolution No. 22 of 2013.

Motion was made by Mr. Taylor, seconded by Mrs. Wood and carried unanimously to approve the request and the necessary resolution was authorized for the October 18th Board meeting.

Mr. Conover advised Item 4 consisted of a referral from the Gaslight Village Ad Hoc Committee noting that Jeffery Tennyson, Superintendent of Public Works, would provide an update on the construction bids for the Charles R. Wood Park. He noted that since Mr. Tennyson had not yet joined the meeting, they would move on with the agenda review and return to this item when he arrived.

Continuing to Item 5, Mr. Conover outlined a referral from the Human Services Committee, *Employment & Training Administration*, to amend the 2013 County Budget to increase estimated revenues and

appropriations in the amount of \$4,420 to reflect the receipt of reimbursements received through the Federal Trade Adjustment Act for the training of 12 dislocated workers.

Motion was made by Mr. Sokol, seconded by Mrs. Wood and carried unanimously to approve the aforementioned request and the necessary resolution was authorized for the October 18th Board Meeting.

Mr. Conover announced Agenda Items 6A and B consisted of referrals from the Public Works Committee and he read them aloud, as follows:

- 6A) Request to increase Capital Project No. H.250 9550 280, *Highway Equipment Storage Building Roof*, in the amount of \$236.41 with the source of funding to be a transfer from Budget Code D.9950 910; and
- 6B) Request to close Capital Project No. H.250 9550 280, *Highway Equipment Storage Building Roof*.

Motion was made by Mr. Kenny, seconded by Mr. Monroe and carried unanimously to approve both items 6A and 6B, as outlined above, and the necessary resolutions were approved for the October 18th Board Meeting.

Mr. Tennyson entered the meeting at 9:45 a.m.

Mr. Conover noted Mr. Tennyson had joined the meeting and he asked him to provide the update on construction bids for the Charles R. Wood Park, as noted in Agenda Item 4. Mr. Tennyson apprised the bid opening had been held on Friday, October 4th and he noted that many of the bids received had been very close in price, most under the specified budget. He said it would probably take a week or two before a recommendation for the bid award was made because there were some technical issues to address concerning New York State Department of State requirements pertaining to minority and women-owned businesses. Mr. Tennyson concluded that he would likely be able to provide a better update at the October Board Meeting. Mr. Conover questioned how much of the grant funding was at stake and Mr. Tennyson responded that if they were unable to meet the State imposed regulations relating to minority and women owned businesses, they could lose 20% of the Department of State grant funding; Mr. Tennyson added it was his understanding that the State was not very flexible in regards to this requirement.

Resuming the agenda review, Mr. Conover noted Items 7A - E consisted of requests from the County Administrator and items to be discussed. He said Item 7A included a request for an appropriation from the General Fund Surplus to the Sheriff's Budget in the amount of \$92,425 for overtime costs commensurate with SEA contract increases.

Motion was made by Mr. Merlino, seconded by Mrs. Wood and carried unanimously to approve the request and the necessary resolution was authorized for the October 18th Board Meeting.

Mr. Conover advised Item 7B included a request for a transfer from the Contingent Fund to the Sheriff's Budget in the amount of \$118,667 for overtime costs commensurate with SEA contract increases. Mr. Monroe asked what the balance of the Contingent Fund was and Paul Dusek, County Administrator, estimated it to be in the range of \$50,000 - \$60,000.

Motion was made by Mr. Monroe, seconded by Mrs. Wood and carried unanimously to approve the request and the necessary resolution was authorized for the October 18th Board Meeting.

Proceeding to Item 7C, Mr. Conover apprised of a request to authorize submission of a grant application to the New York State Office of Indigent Legal Services for grant funding in an amount not to exceed \$300,000 to improve the quality of services and reduce caseloads for attorneys.

Motion was made by Mr. Bentley and seconded by Mr. Monroe to approve the request.

John Wappett, Public Defender, noted this grant opportunity came as the latest development in the ongoing saga with New York State Office of Indigent Legal Services. He said it was a separate allocation of grant monies totaling \$12 million to be awarded State-wide to counties located outside of New York City; he added that if approved, the minimum grant award would be \$60,000 and the maximum \$100,000 per year for three years, to be used for the purpose of reducing caseloads for attorneys handling defense work in both the family and criminal court systems. Mr. Wappett continued that if Warren County were to receive grant funds, they would be used to hire a new attorney who would be specifically trained for criminal court work and would be used during early training to cover arraignments in local courts. He reported that as per the recent Court of Appeals Case, it has been determined that the arraignment was a critical stage of criminal proceedings and the County was obliged to have an attorney represent anyone arraigned in a local court where bail was typically set and the possibility of incarceration existed. Mr. Wappett advised that currently, this representation was not being provided in part due to the reluctance of some Courts to contact the Public Defender's Office, but also due to a lack of staffing. He noted that over the past several years they had instituted a procedure where the County Courts automatically contacted the Public Defender's Office to ensure representation at arraignments, and this system was also being used in some of the major local courts, even in cases where a person had legal counsel that could not be present at the time of arraignment. Mr. Wappett stated that the odd hour arraignments and those in distant courts were not being covered as they should be in order to remain in full compliance and this was one area the new position would assist with, as well as to reduce the ratio of cases per attorney, which was currently quite high. Since the grant funding was available, he stated that it was a good opportunity to address caseload needs and he advised Mr. Dusek had arranged a meeting of the members of the indigent defense community to discuss the matter and develop a joint effort for this grant opportunity.

Mr. Dusek apprised that an Assistant Social Services-type employee would also be incorporated if these grant funds were awarded, with the ultimate theory being to reduce caseloads while meeting new State regulations requiring Public Defender, Legal Society and Legal Aid organizations to work together. He noted that they had a better chance of obtaining grant funds by reflecting these collaborative intentions in their application as these were the types of efforts the State was looking for. Mr. Dusek advised these grant funds were intended to create new jobs within the County and enhance Legal Aid services; however, he noted, it would be entirely appropriate for the new positions to be eliminated if the grant funding ceased. He said they would need to watch this situation very closely to ensure that this would not become another unfunded mandate.

There being no further discussion, Mr. Conover called the question and the previously mentioned motion was carried by unanimous vote, thereby authorizing the necessary resolution for the October 18th Board Meeting.

Moving on to Item 7D, Mr. Conover outlined a request for an appropriation from the Computer Reserve to Departmental budgets in the amount of \$1,068 to fund the purchase of a computer and related equipment and software.

Motion was made by Mr. Sokol, seconded by Mr. Taylor and carried unanimously to approve the request and the necessary resolution was authorized for the October 18th Board meeting.

Mr. Conover advised Item 7E pertained to discussion regarding a power easement for the Schermerhorn t-hangars, which he asked Mr. Dusek to address. Mr. Dusek said it had come to his attention yesterday that Schermerhorn Aviation had completed construction of the ten t-hangar units they had agreed to build at the Warren County Airport in their lease agreement with the County, but there had been some difficulty in getting electricity to the buildings. He noted there were people ready to rent and occupy the hangars, but Schermerhorn Aviation was not able to proceed with the rental agreements until they

received their Certificate of Occupancy, which they were unable to obtain without electrical service. Mr. Dusek advised in order to alleviate this situation, the County would need to authorize an easement across County-owned property to bring electrical service to the hangars, as well as to file an application with National Grid for electrical service. He requested that a resolution be approved for the October 18th Board meeting authorizing the easement and he also asked for authorization to proceed in filing an application for electrical service with National Grid as quickly as possible so as not to delay the project or any potential revenues to be received by Schermerhorn Aviation or the County.

Mr. Conover questioned whether the County would determine the location of the easement and Mr. Dusek replied affirmatively. Mr. Mason asked if the electrical utilities would be run under or above ground and Mr. Tennyson advised they would be above ground, with a pole located in the area of another already in existence.

Motion was made by Mrs. Wood, seconded by Mr. Merlino and carried unanimously to authorize a power easement across County-owned property to bring electricity to the Schermerhorn Aviation t-hangars located at the Warren County Airport, as well as to ratify actions taken by the County Administrator in filing an application with National Grid for utility services, and the necessary resolution was authorized for the October 18th Board meeting.

With reference to Item 8, Mr. Conover announced Finance Committee action was required on the following items as approved by the Personnel Committee: Personnel Agenda Item Nos. 2 and 5.

Motion was made by Mr. Kenny, seconded by Mr. Taylor and carried unanimously to approve Item 8, as outlined above.

Chairman Geraghty entered the meeting at 9:55 a.m.

Concluding the agenda review, Mr. Conover acknowledged the one pending item listed, asking if there was any new information to report regarding the acceptance of credit payments County-wide and Michael Swan, County Treasurer, advised there was not.

There being no further business to come before the Finance Committee, on motion made by Mr. Sokol and seconded by Mr. Kenny, Mr. Conover adjourned the meeting at 9:55 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Amanda Allen, Deputy Clerk of the Board