



Tioga County Legislative Worksession Minutes

October 10, 2019 – 1:00 p.m.

Legislators Present:

Legislator Balliet
Legislator Hollenbeck
Legislator Mullen
Legislator Roberts
Chair/Legislator Sauerbrey
Legislator Standing
Legislator Sullivan
Legislator Weston

Legislators Absent:

Legislator Monell

Guests:

Matt Freeze, Reporter, Morning Times

Staff Present:

County Attorney Peter DeWind
Legislative Clerk Cathy Haskell
County Clerk Andrea Klett (*departed @ 1:49 p.m.*)
Motor Vehicle Supervisor Joyce Costantini (*departed @ 1:49 p.m.*)
Chief Accountant/Budget Officer Rita Hollenbeck
Public Health Director Lisa McCafferty
Personnel Officer Bethany O'Rourke

Call Meeting to Order –

Chair Sauerbrey called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m.

Budget Update –

Budget Officer Hollenbeck reviewed the following budget documents:

- **Capital Budget Summary** – Document identifies building construction, heavy equipment, vehicles, hardware, and software, as well as State aid. Ms. Hollenbeck reported the Public Works Committee reviewed this summary and noted the communications project is not included in this summary document.



In regards to the Communications Project, Chair Sauerbrey reported the Legislature is aware of the original estimated cost of \$12 million dollars. Chair Sauerbrey concurred this project is not identified in the capital plan at this time. Chair Sauerbrey reported following the initial discussion, it has come to the County's attention that there are NYS targeted grants the County is eligible to apply for this year for \$6 million dollars with awarding of funds to occur in 2020. In 2020, Chair Sauerbrey reported there would be another similar NYS targeted grant opportunity for an additional \$6 million dollars. Therefore, it is possible the County could get a significant portion of this project paid for through these grants.

Ms. Hollenbeck reported this project would need to be included in the 5-Year Capital Plan and offer the following options for inclusion in the 2020 budget:

1. Prior to receiving the grant, the County could appropriate \$6 million dollars out of the capital fund with offsetting State Aid anticipated grants for inclusion in the 2020 budget; or
2. Wait to receive the award grant letter and then appropriate the \$6 million dollars to an expense line. Ms. Hollenbeck recommended this option and then follow through with a resolution to accept the grant upon notification.

Legislator Sullivan inquired about the overall totals. Ms. Hollenbeck reported \$1.4 million is the net result local share that is coming out of the capital fund. Ms. Hollenbeck reported \$4 million is the total of all gross expenses and the \$2.7 million is the total revenue that offsets the expenses.

Ms. Hollenbeck reported some items would not be expensed in 2020, as funds are being set aside in the reserve accounts noting the voting machines as an example.

Legislator Standinger inquired about the \$75,000 DSS vehicle line and the State reimbursement of 75%. Ms. Hollenbeck reported the State's reimbursement is 75% noting there are four vehicles for DSS and one vehicle for Public Health.

On a straw poll vote, Legislators Balliet, Roberts, Standinger, Weston, Mullen, Hollenbeck, Sullivan, and Sauerbrey were in favor of moving forward with the capital budget as presented with Legislator Monell being absent.

- **Fringe Benefit Estimates** – Document is a point of information, as the County does not really have any control over these numbers. Ms. Hollenbeck reported this document includes a summary page, as well as individual



pages representing each of the fringe benefit categories, with the exception of Social Security, Life Insurance, and Unemployment. Ms. Hollenbeck reported Social Security fringe is 7.65% of the total salary and the life insurance and unemployment are not subject to big rate fluctuations resulting in overall significant costs.

- **NYS Retirement** – Ms. Hollenbeck previously distributed the retirement bill, rate changes for 2017-2020, and annual cost per employee depending on their Tier.
- **Workman’s Comp** – Ms. Hollenbeck reported this benefit decreased to \$1,411 per employee.
- **Disability** – Ms. Hollenbeck reported this benefit is approximately \$113.00 per employee/per payroll.
- **Health Insurance** – Ms. Hollenbeck reported the annual cost ranges from \$7,700 to \$24,000 depending on the Group. For example, the Corrections and Deputies family coverage is an approximate \$24,600 cost to the County. The Non-Union and CSEA family coverage is an approximate \$18,800 cost to the County and the individual coverage is an approximate cost of \$7,000. Ms. Hollenbeck reported these costs are just for the premiums. The total net cost for the health insurance, including retirees, is approximately \$7.9 million dollars after the employee and retiree contributions. In regards to HRA, the utilization rate is running lower than in the past, therefore the total HRA rate per payroll dropped from \$80/\$160 depending on individual or family coverage to \$76/\$152. Ms. Hollenbeck reported this document also represents the history of the HRA deductible (\$2600/\$5200) that the County is still sponsoring 100%. Ms. Hollenbeck reported the maximum amount the County could be liable for is \$1.1 million if all employees were to meet their HRA deductible.
- **Medicare** – Ms. Hollenbeck reported the County previously capped this benefit at \$115 and, currently, paid for approximately 188 retirees or active employees who are 65 or older.

Ms. Hollenbeck reported all of these fringe benefits are included under the County’s health insurance umbrella.

Overall, Ms. Hollenbeck reported there is a \$250,000 increase over the prior year, which equates to a 1.19% increase for total fringe benefits.

- **2020 Staff Requests:** Ms. Hollenbeck reported decisions have been made on some requests, however, addressed the following outstanding requests:



- **Board of Elections** – Ms. Hollenbeck reported she does not have the information for the four Board of Elections positions; two Commissioners and two Deputy Commissioners. Currently, these four positions have been added to the 2020 budget with the across the board non-union salary increase of 2.5%.

Legislator Balliet reported discussion occurred at this week's Administrative Services Committee regarding the proposed 6% salary increase for the Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners.

In regards to the Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners, Legislator Sullivan reported the Committee was unable to make a decision based on many unanswered questions.

Legislator Standinger reported the Committee further discussed the proposed hourly increase to \$20.00 for the two voting machine technicians.

Ms. Hollenbeck reported she was aware of the possibility of proposing more than the approved 2.5% non-union salary increase for the Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners, however, was unaware of the voting machine technician proposal.

Legislator Balliet reported the justification for the 6% proposed salary increase for the Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners is the need to develop capabilities above their current technical activities and the need for a higher level of expertise to perform the job, as well as the additional requirements for early voting and implementation of the new poll books.

Legislator Sullivan reported she is of the opinion that technology is ever changing and all employees at some point in their careers will need to adapt to new technology. Legislator Sullivan reported the Board of Elections changed from lever voting machines to the current voting machines, which was a significant change without additional compensation. Legislator Sullivan reported she does not believe the justification provided warrants the increased salary requested. However, Legislator Sullivan inquired as to whether the Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners compensation is commensurate with other surrounding counties. Chair Sauerbrey reported the challenge is every county is different and Legislator Balliet concurred stating that in some counties the Commissioners are not working every day whereas other



counties such as Tioga County they are working five days per week. Legislator Balliet reported in order to gather the data it will require a study of every county to include the numbers of hours worked, etc.

Legislator Mullen reported the County is limited to what we can do with the Board of Elections, with the exception of setting their salaries. Legislator Mullen suggested a desk audit to determine what is required with increased workload, training, poll books, early voting, etc.

Personnel Officer O'Rourke reported she does not believe a desk audit would be the appropriate avenue, as they are not currently working out of title, there is no job description, and these are political appointments. Ms. O'Rourke reported it would be difficult to compare these positions to other positions in the County.

Legislator Balliet reported these non-union positions are not eligible for comp time for working over the County's 35-hour workweek.

Legislators expressed concern with the proposed 6% salary increase.

Ms. Hollenbeck recommended pursuing the proposed non-union 2.5% salary increase until additional information is obtained and a definite Legislative decision is made.

Legislators Mullen and Sullivan reported they are in favor of the proposed hourly salary increase to \$20.00 for the voting machine technicians.

Legislator Roberts reported this discussion should revert to the Administrative Services Committee for additional discussion and then proceed with a recommendation to the Legislature.

On a straw poll vote, Legislators Balliet, Standinger, Weston, Mullen, Hollenbeck, Sullivan, and Sauerbrey, were in favor of approving the proposed salary increase of \$20.00 per hour for the two voting machine technicians with Legislator Roberts not in favor and Legislator Monell being absent.

ACTION: Personnel will draft a resolution as part of the year-end staff changes to present to the Legislature at the December Legislature meeting.



On a straw poll vote, Legislators Balliet, Roberts, Standinger, Weston, Mullen, Hollenbeck, Sullivan, and Sauerbrey were not in favor of approving the proposed 6% salary increase for the Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners at this time to allow for additional discussion and information gathering in the Administrative Services Committee and recommendation to the Legislature with Legislator Monell being absent.

- o **County Clerk/DMV** - Ms. Hollenbeck reported County Clerk Klett submitted clarification regarding the position request. Ms. Hollenbeck reported the County Clerk would like to create a Principal Motor Vehicle Examiner position, abolish the part-time position and create a new full-time position, and unfund the current Senior Motor Vehicle Examiner position. Ms. Hollenbeck reported the total cost to the County's local share is \$44,000 gross. In addition, the DMV is a revenue producing Department and anticipates a low-end estimate of \$24,000 for an actual net cost of \$20,000.

County Clerk Klett reaffirmed the \$24,000 revenue was a low-end estimate prior to the recent dealership arrangement for increased transactions. Ms. Klett reported this amount could easily increase to an estimated \$54,860 annually.

Ms. Hollenbeck reported the County Clerk's revenue figures would need to be increased in their 2020 budget, which has not occurred yet.

In light of the new estimated figures presented today, Ms. Hollenbeck reported this position request would be cost neutral with additional Department revenue.

Legislator Roberts inquired as to why the dealerships are coming to Tioga County and what guarantee they will continue to do so.

Ms. Klett reported Tioga County can offer better turnaround time and customer service. They have been happily satisfied with the service, therefore, are including their other two dealerships.

DMV Supervisor Costantini reported she is of the opinion that if the dealerships discontinue services with Tioga County, DMV can still maintain the positions based on the current business. However, she does not foresee this arrangement changing. Ms. Costantini reported



the vehicle sales tax goes to the County the customer resides whereas the 12.7% retention fee goes to the DMV office processing the transaction. Ms. Costantini reported the numbers are based on the 12.7% retention fee and believes DMV can continue to support the positions. Ms. Costantini reported the County does not recoup much of the sales tax paid on a vehicle, as the majority goes to the State.

Legislator Weston suggested opening a window specifically for dealership transactions or individuals who have numerous transactions to expedite processing.

Legislator Mullen reported license renewals require coming to a DMV office to get a new photo. In addition, this is the same requirement for all upgrades to Real ID or Enhanced Licenses, therefore, increased customer traffic anticipated.

Legislator Weston reported he supports the proposed position requests providing DMV is willing to designate a window specifically for the customers with numerous transactions; even if this is limited to just a day or two a week.

On a straw poll vote, Legislators Balliet, Roberts, Standinger, Weston, Mullen, Hollenbeck, Sullivan, and Sauerbrey were in favor of creating a new Principal Motor Vehicle Examiner position, abolishing the part-time position and creating a new full-time position, and unfunding the current Senior Motor Vehicle Examiner position with Legislator Monell being absent.

- **Public Health** – Ms. Hollenbeck reported Public Health submitted clarification on their reclassification of two positions, maintaining one unfunded position, and creating two full-time and one part-time positions in place of contractual employees. Ms. Hollenbeck reported their contracted services line will decrease and employee headcount will increase, however, noting the net result is a gain for the Public Health's budget. Ms. Hollenbeck reported the net local share savings could be higher than noted, as she has not computed the State Aid for these positions. State Aid based on activity and an actual number is unknown at this time.

On a straw poll vote, Legislators Balliet, Roberts, Standinger, Weston, Mullen, Hollenbeck, Sullivan, and Sauerbrey were in favor of the two proposed positions with Legislator Monell being absent.



- **Veterans** – Ms. Hollenbeck reported the proposed request is changing a part-time position to full-time. Ms. Hollenbeck reported she is unaware of any offsetting revenue for this position, therefore, all local share.

At this time, there was no committee support to move this proposal forward, therefore, the Director of Veterans Service will remain a part-time position.

- **Budget Summary** - Ms. Hollenbeck reported this document represents additional information from 2015 – 2020 for expenditures and revenues. Ms. Hollenbeck reported this is a worst-case budget summary scenario.

Ms. Hollenbeck addressed the following key points:

1. **2020 Budget** – Additional line item for potential contractual increase on Corrections. Salary increases included for all positions requested is approximately \$160,000. Of this amount, \$77,000 is the approximate range with the other across the board increases of CSEA, non-union, and Sheriff for Corrections. Ms. Hollenbeck noted the 2020 budget does not represent the increased revenue for County Clerk, based on the new figures presented today.
2. **Tax Cap** - The tax cap is based on the formula to stay within the allotted 2%, which did not change. Ms. Hollenbeck reported this only changed the amount of the appropriated fund balance. Ms. Hollenbeck reported the appropriations are \$1.3 million from the General Fund and \$1.4 million from the Capital Fund.
3. **Liability Insurance, County Roads, and Road Machinery** are not self-sustaining, therefore, funded through the General Fund over and above any revenue received.
4. **Significant increase from 2019 to 2020 budget** – Ms. Hollenbeck reported the increases were primarily in the Capital and General Funds. Ms. Hollenbeck reported most of the increase is to support salaries.
5. **Sales Tax** – Ms. Hollenbeck reported she conservatively increased the sales tax based on recent trend. In 2017 and 2018, the County contributed to the General Fund based on increased sales tax.
6. **Fund Balance** – Ms. Hollenbeck reported she is projecting \$18 million in the General Fund Balance for year-end 2019 and \$2.7 million in the Capital Fund. Ms. Hollenbeck reported for the 2020 proposed budget, the Fund Balance for the General Operating Fund would decrease to \$17 million



and \$1.3 million in the Capital Fund, which does not include the reserve accounts.

Approval of Worksession Minutes – September 19, 2019 -

Legislator Sullivan motioned to approve the September 19, 2019 Legislative Worksession minutes as written, seconded by Legislator Hollenbeck with Legislators Balliet, Hollenbeck, Mullen, Roberts, Sauerbrey, Standing, Sullivan, and Weston voting yes with Legislator Monell being absent. Motion carried.

Action Items -

Currently, there are no action items.

Legislative Support – Legislative Clerk Haskell -

Approval of Legislative Support Committee Minutes – September 5, 2019:

Legislator Sullivan motioned to approve the September 5, 2019 Legislative Support Committee minutes as written, seconded by Legislator Hollenbeck with Legislators Balliet, Hollenbeck, Mullen, Roberts, Sauerbrey, Standing, Sullivan, and Weston voting yes with Legislator Monell being absent. Motion carried.

Legislative Clerk Haskell reported the following:

- The October Legislative Meeting is Tuesday, October 15, 2019, at 12:00 p.m. in the Hubbard Auditorium. Finance/Legal Committee will meet at 10:00 a.m. in the Legislative Conference Room.
- Legislator Sullivan will do the prayer, pledge, and start the voting process at the October 15, 2019 Legislature meeting.
- Attended Institute for Advancement training on Ethics for the Public Servant on September 24, 2019.
- Personnel – Deputy Legislative Clerk position remains vacant. Initial job posting was exclusively for internal candidates with an application filing deadline of August 16, 2019. Interviews were conducted, position was offered to two candidates who both later declined. Job search was broadened to the public and vacancy was re-posted on the County website, distribution list consisting of towns, villages, schools, libraries, and County departments, as well as a paid advertisement in the local newspaper. Application filing deadline was October 9, 2019. Interviews are currently underway.

Recognition Resolution (1) –

- ***Recognition Resolution Recognizing William E. Caloroso Posthumously –***
Chair Sauerbrey will read the recognition resolution at the October 15, 2019 Legislature meeting. Legislator Standing expressed willingness to deliver the recognition resolution to Mrs. Caloroso.



Proclamations (2) –

- **Proclamation Recognizing John F. Holton, Sr.** – Legislator Balliet, Chair of the Administrative Services Committee, will read and present to Mr. Holton at the October 15, 2019 Legislature meeting.
- **Breast Cancer Awareness Month in Tioga County** – Resolution will just be noted in the minutes of the October 15, 2019 Legislature meeting minutes, as this resolution has been read and presented in year's past.

Resolutions – All resolutions were reviewed for Legislature consideration at the October 15, 2019 Legislature meeting.

Late-File Resolutions – Ms. Haskell reported she is unaware of any late-file resolutions at this time.

Other –

- **Increase DMV Customer Base** – Legislator Weston requested permission to work with DMV Supervisor, Joyce Costantini, for the purpose of attracting more customers to Tioga County DMV and securing the 12.7% retention fee per transaction. Chair Sauerbrey suggested Legislator Weston seek permission and work with Legislator Balliet, as Chair of the Administrative Services Committee. Legislator Sullivan recommended Legislator Weston inform County Clerk Klett of this arrangement.

Executive Session –

With no confidential topics for discussion, an Executive Session was not necessary.

Meeting adjourned at 2:22 p.m.

Next worksession scheduled for Thursday, October 24, 2019, at 10:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cathy Haskell

Legislative Clerk