Present: Legislators Bryan Moser, Ron Burns, John Lehman, Tom Osborne, Richard Chartrand and Chairman Larry Dolhof.

Others Present: Legislators Greg Kulzer, Randy LaChausse, Jerry King and Andrea Moroughan, County Manager Ryan Piche, County Attorney Joan McNichol, Human Resources Director Chris Boulio and New Human Resources Director Caitlyn Smith, IT Director Adam Zehr, Treasurer Patty O’Brien, Real Property Director Candy Akin, and reporters Nick Altmire & Julie Abbass.

Committee Chairman Bryan Moser called the meeting to order at 4:17 p.m.

Legislator Chartrand made a motion to accept the minutes of the June 18, 2019 meeting as recorded, seconded by Legislator Osborne. Motion carried.

Human Resources Director Chris Boulio briefly introduced the Committee to the New Human Resources Director Caitlyn Smith.

The following dockets were read:

1. Local Law to impose and continue a tax of twenty-five cents for each one hundred dollars of principal debt or obligation which is secured by a mortgage on real property situated in Lewis County and to provide for the administration of the same for the 3-year term from November 1, 2019 to October 31, 2022 and to set the public hearing for same on September 3, 2019 at 5 p.m.

2. Resolution to adopt Procurement Policy and designate Ryan Piche, Lewis County Manager, as the sole responsible procurement purchaser for Lewis County in accordance with General Municipal Law § 104-b (2) (f).

3. Resolution authorizing an agreement with Systems East, Inc. to provide software licensing, annual support and maintenance services and development of a custom tax bill for the Office of Real Property Tax Services tax collection system for the period of September 1, 2019 through December 31, 2021, at a cost of $24,748 for the software licensing, and a one-time fee of $3,500 for the creation of a custom tax bill for a total of $28,248. In addition, there will be an annual support services and maintenance charge of $3,712 commencing January 1, 2021, with no more than 3% annual increases, if any, depending upon major revisions in the product or applicable law. County Attorney advised the committee that this is the software program previously discussed to go with the new Local law providing for installment payments of town and county taxes. There is a demonstration of the program scheduled for Thursday at the courthouse at 5:30 for all town, village and school district personnel interested in the program. Candy Akin and Joan McNichol will be at the meeting.

4. Resolution authorizing a Lease Agreement by and between the County of Lewis and Transitional Living Services of Northern New York (TLS), for the rental of approximately 3,831 square feet of office/commercial space on the first floor of the building known as The Lowville Commons, 7550 South State Street, Lowville, New York 13367, for the
benefit of the Lewis County Board of Elections. Term of May 1, 2019 through April 30, 2022 at a rate of $4,836.64/month.

5. Resolution to appoint Andrew Krokowski to fulfill the unexpired term of Mike Hanno as the representative for South Lewis Central School District on the Lewis County Traffic Safety Board from August 7, 2019 to December 31, 2021.

6. Resolution in recognition of the RPEA’s 50 years of service in support of retired public employees, to commemorate and congratulate the Retired Public Employees’ Association for its successful endeavors on behalf of its members. There are 470,000 state and local retirees and beneficiaries in the New York State Retirement System; nearly 80 percent still reside in New York State, including 1,245 in Lewis County; are responsible for $12 billion in economic activity statewide, thereby creating 73,000 jobs; and also pay $2 billion in real property taxes.

7. Resolution to approve an Agreement with the Harrisville Volunteer Fire Department and appropriate Special Legislative Contingency to assist with payment of a new pumper in the amount of $2,000.

Motions

1. Motion to recommend obtaining Workers’ Compensation Excess policy for the Lewis County Self-Insurance Plan from Safety National Casualty Corp. with a $2 million self-insured retention with no statutory limit for a premium rate of $0.1528 per $100 of payroll or approximately $77,955 for 2020.

Broadband Update - Information Technology Director Adam Zehr

The State has decided to redistribute funds for the Broadband project due to Mohawk Networks inability to complete the project. Mohawk will continue to support the 400 customers they currently have set up. Frontier plans to provide 2,000 units to reach out to customers beyond their current areas and put in new fiber network. Hughes Communications and Spectrum are planning on providing service to some remote areas as well. The State is putting more pressure on the project to make sure it is completed. Ryan will share the updated service area maps with Legislators as soon as they are available.

Management Salary Policy – Human Resources Director Chris Boulio

Chris began by updating the Committee about a few dockets that went forward at the General Services Committee; Increasing the Assistant District Attorney hours, Creating a Temporary Intern position in the District Attorney’s office, and filling a Full-time MEO Grade 18 position in Solid Waste.

Chris then explained a few recommendations and dockets were presented for the following:

1. Resolution authorizing the following reclassification, effective August 19, 2019: Abolish Keyboard Specialist (Community Services and Human Resources) CSEA Grade 9 at $26,364 and Create Senior Keyboard Specialist (Community Services and Human Resources) M/C at $30,091 ($16.47/hour). This was recommended because the employee had worked with the county 8 months prior as a Senior Keyboard Specialist and is doing a phenomenal job, especially with the new HR program eGov. This employee will also be dealing with sensitive information regarding the Union which is why the position should be taken out of the Union and put in Management Confidential (M/C). This would be
covered under the current budget, so a budget neutral change. Legislator Lehman voiced his opposition to pulling her out of the Union.

2. Resolution authorizing reallocation of HEO to Working Supervisor in Solid Waste Department, effective August 19, 2019: Abolish Solid Waste Working Supervisor (Grade 19) and Create Solid Waste Working Supervisor (Grade 21). This was recommended because the employee who held that position was at a grade 2 levels down from the truck drivers. The employee who would be interested in filling that position is a current truck driver and would be taking a cut in pay for the promotion.

3. Resolution authorizing the following reclassification of a position in the Department of Social Services, effective August 19, 2019: Human Resources Director has conducted a classification review and point factor analysis in consideration of the union’s request; and has identified duties and responsibilities and other factors which support the reallocation to Abolish Office Manager (Grade 21) $22.39/hr ($40,750) and Create Office Manager II (Grade 24) $22.47/hr. ($40,895). This was recommended because the employee who currently holds this position has come forward through the Union three times over the last several years asking for this grade increase and after reassessing the job duties and responsibilities there is support for this reallocation. This would allow the employee to have additional step increases over the next several years. Legislator Moser voiced his opposition that this position does not warrant the change. Docket was opposed 3 to 2.

Chris then discussed amending the Management Compensation Plan by adding in step movement, required annual reviews, and longevity for those Management employees who are currently omitted. The current plan does not allow for movement within the salary ranges so by adding the steps this would allow, based on performance reviews, for employees to be able to receive an additional increase over the COLA increase every year. The current plan allows for the possibility of a supervisor to make less than a subordinate due to the step increases employees have in the Union. The recommendation was for a 10 step movement plan (Chris referred to this as Plan B), meaning that once the employee reaches the 10th step they would be at a maximum in the grade range.

Annual employee evaluations will be done by the County Manager for Department Heads and Department Heads will handle their management employees. Evaluations that are rated satisfactory or above will be eligible to receive a step increase effective January 1st. The Board of Legislators would be required to approve the increase each year. An employee would only be eligible for an increase after working 6 months for the County. The steps are intended to be not only a recognition for continued service but also reward for merit.

All full-time employees, in addition to the regular compensation schedule, be entitled to an additional increment or increments of $500 annually effective on the first day of the fiscal year following the completion of 10, 15, 20, 25, 35 and 35th years of service for longevity. Discussion followed as to the recommendation from HR that this apply to Management level employees once they reach those milestones.

Chris replied to Legislator Moser that a good employee will eventually meet the maximum salary over their career, in the Union the maximum is reached within 7 years. Legislator Moser then asked Caitlyn how this idea was handled at Kraft to which Caitlyn responded that it is a Merit
Raise which is based on performance evaluations that are done by direct supervisors or for higher up employee’s two levels of supervisors. The raise is anywhere from 2 to 5% annually.

Chris restated that once an employee reaches the 10th step they would be at the maximum salary range, with longevity being the only additional increase they can receive. Legislator King questioned the effects of this plan on “fringe benefits” in which Ryan suggested that Patty can provide some numbers for a ten year period. Chris is confident that attrition will continue to create a savings that should fund a good portion of this system. Legislator Burns voiced his support for the 10 step plan – Plan B.

Legislator Moser as well as others would like to see a better evaluation process, possibly making it a standard policy. Some felt it would be good to be included on Department Head evaluations. Legislator Kulzer voiced his opinion that the Human Resources Director should fall under the category of employees that the Legislators would be responsible for evaluating. Ryan disagreed stating that other than County Manager, County Attorney, and Clerk of the Board there shouldn’t be any other positions being evaluated by Legislators to avoid politics from being brought in and losing the function of the County Manager.

The following docket was then presented:

1. Resolution to accept and adopt the recommendations submitted by the HR Director as the “Management Salary Plan”. That County Manager, Human Resources Director, and Treasurer are directed to make adjustments to the non-union management employees as outlined in the proposed plan in the preparation of the 2020 County Budget. To address the issue of movement within the band and supervisors making less than subordinates, the Human Resources Director has made a recommendation for incremental step increases for management employees, in addition to any annual cost of living increase which may be followed/offered, so that supervisors will always be compensated more than their subordinated who may be at the top step of their band.

Legislator Moser stated his frustration with how personnel dockets are handled. He feels there is no consistency as to whether the docket goes to the jurisdictional committee or Finance and Rules. He understands that some items are more routine and others are suggestions/recommendations as well as some are already budgeted versus having an impact on the budget. Ryan decided, with approval from the committee, that all personnel matters will have a docket that goes to the jurisdictional committee first then that same docket will go to Finance and Rules.

Joan discussed the letter from the attorney for Water District of Carthage & West Carthage asking for a tax exemption for their property in the county serving their water district. According to the Board’s policy they don’t meet some of the basic requirements set forth in the policy. There are a few Denmark residents who receive water from this District. Legislator Chartrand made a motion to send a negative response back in regards to the request made, seconded by Legislator Lehman. Motion carried.

Chairman Dolhof addressed the Committee for their support of Jerry Cayer doing a presentation at the next Board meeting on the status of the Copenhagen health clinic, and also announced that the Inter-County meeting is being held this Thursday at the JCC building. Ryan responded to
Legislator Moser’s concerns over the trees at the end of the Snell road by offering to talk directly to Warren Shaw to have them taken care of.

Legislator Burns made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:35 p.m., seconded by Legislator Chartrand. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Cassandra Moser, Deputy Clerk to the Board of Legislators
Encl.