Committee Chairman Bryan Moser called the meeting at 5:30 p.m.

Legislator Lehman made a motion to approve the 4/16/19 committee meeting minutes, seconded by Legislator Chartrand and carried.

Planning Director Frank Pace reported paving and landscaping are scheduled at the JCC Lewis County Education Center next week.

There are three distinct English courses scheduled this summer. The construction/carpentry trades program graduated 21 students earlier this month, of which 13 have attained employment and 8 others have or will be interviewed. Half of those students were Lewis County residents for the 400 hour course that started 3/11/19. The trades class will be offered again next February. Also, certificate programs for Quickbooks, Excel and medical coding and phlebotomy courses are offered.

A Fort Drum Mechatronics Program is offered through SUNY Polytechnic Institute; and JCC is offering kids college learning opportunities for students aged 10 to adult.

In response to Legislator Moser, Frank stated area school districts do not provide bus transportation for summer classes, but Harrisville and Lyons Falls persons may avail the public bus transportation. However, the school districts have each agreed to bus their respective students to the Manufacturing Academy of Science and Technology (MAST) summer camp program to be held at the JCC Lewis County Education Center. The 30-32 students are from all local school districts with a focus project to recapture and repurpose steam from maple producing. BOCES will transport their students to the JCC Center for these all-day classes, but not for partial day classes.

The fall semester will include Engineering and Design, a college credit course with robotics and programming; as well as a New Vision Health Program as continuing education from the BOCES program as a pathway to articulate into JCC College. They are also contemplating other certificate programs ie. mechatronics and hydroponics.

Ryan Piche wants to assure there is appropriate advertising to alert the public that the public bus transportation is available to students for drop off at the JCC Lewis County Education Center.
Real Property Tax Director Candy Akin presented three proposals for implementing property tax installment payments, which the Legislature may establish by adopting a Local Law.

Two installment payments are recommended with 50% payments each. Each interested Town must also adopt a Resolution to set the number and amount of installment payments. Installment payments are not available for property owners with escrow account payments. Property owners retain the option to pay the full amount by January 31st to avoid interest charges. However, an owner may not opt to revert to installments after paying the full tax amount. At the Board’s discretion, a 2% interest charge for the balance due after January 31st may be imposed, or the current Federal short term rate plus 2% monthly.

Systems East has proposed website cloud-based software, which Candy submits is the most feasible for Lewis County and allows for on-line tax payments. Credit card charges would be the payer’s full responsibility. The company would create the tax bill with installment stubs for $3,500. The initial start-up cost would be $24,748 which equates $1/parcel county-wide, plus an annual maintenance fee of $3,712. That amount could be split between all users and may include all or a portion of the 17 Towns and the County.

Systems East extends these price quotes to all Villages and School Districts within the County. However, they would pay higher costs if they choose to purchase the software at a later date. For instance, the annual maintenance fee is currently $3,995.

Candy has alerted Town Assessors that the County is researching a tax installment program. Any paid interest fees would be collected and paid to the Towns. The recommendation is for the first installment payment due by January 31st and the second installment due by March 31st. Tax collectors must send out the second notices. Legislator Dolhof suggested extending the second installment until May 31st. The tax rolls are turned over to the County on June 1st each year, and, thereafter, the County must collect remaining taxes.

Legislator Chartrand inquired the feasibility of implementing 3 installments due January 31, March 31st and May 31st. The full tax amount would still be payable by May 31st and collected by the Towns. Legislator Kulzer favored 3 installments, but possibly extending the due dates.

Legislator King inquired the amount of interest the County may lose by implementing installments, considering that larger amounts would be paid after January 31st. Patty O’Brien said that if the full tax amounts are not paid by the final installment due date, the property would be subject to the delinquent status and foreclosure proceedings. If a property owner does not pay the first installment by 1/31, they are not eligible to pay by installments.

Candy posed the price quotes of the two other companies: BAS and ATC, both proposing substantially higher initial and maintenance pricing. Thirteen of the 17 Towns currently utilize BAS software, and the Harrisville School District uses ATC software. The software systems of all three companies are State verified and authorized as compatible.
Legislator King voiced favor for the System East cloud-based software, which negates expense for computer purchases, requiring only an Internet connection and facilitates on-line tax payments. Candy reported that Systems East offers 4 days of on-site training for all users.

If any Town chooses not to participate with installment payments, Candy reports there would be no change from the Tax Department perspective. Patty O’Brien cited the learning curve for new software use, but supports the initiative.

Legislator Osborne expressed preliminary support for Systems East software proposal, but would like more time. He relayed confusion, particularly from the ag community perspective, citing compounding interest charges and not understanding the additional County implementation cost.

Legislator Moser cited the need to inform and obtain feedback from the Towns.

Legislator Chartrand asked Candy to provide a side-by-side vendor proposal outline and total costs.

Patty O’Brien inquired Legislator’s opinions for the County to pay the initial $24,748 to entice the Towns to implement the System East software program.

Chairman Larry Dolhof suggests the County pay the annual $3,712 maintenance fee as a shared service for the Towns.

Candy reported 367 dairy farms, 1,400 ag parcels and median household income of $51,475. Property taxes average $3,000 for a large portion of Lewis County households.

Candy stated the process should be implemented, including adoption by Town Boards by October 1st to allow appropriate time for tax bill design, testing and approval. Although it is favorable for all Towns to have the same software, it is not mandatory.

Legislators expressed support for an Introductory Local Law to implement installment property tax payments. Legislator Chartrand made a motion to propose two installment payments with 50% due by January 31st, a 2% interest charge for the remaining balance, the 2nd installment due by May 31st, with the County to pay the initial start-up costs for the Systems East software. Legislator Osborne seconded the motion and unanimously carried.

Clerk of the Board Terry Clark distributed copies and reviewed page-by-page proposed amendments to the Standing Rules as specifically outlined in the proposed Resolution. Pursuant to the Standing Rules, the Committee recommends presenting the amendments on 6/4/19, and then propose for adoption at the July 2, 2019 Board meeting.

Ryan Piche invoked discussion for the set times of committee meetings. Legislator Osborne relayed that he and Legislator Moroughan start the day with the 10 a.m. Soil & Water board
meeting, then break until 2 p.m., and then another break until 5:30 p.m. After discussion, Legislator Lehman made a motion to amend the Sub-section entitled “Committee Rules for Legislators” to start the General Services Committee at 1 p.m.; the Health and Human Services Committee at 3 p.m.; and the Finance and Rules Committee to start at 4 p.m. The motion was seconded by Legislator Osborne and unanimously carried.

Legislator LaChausse stated his preference for night meetings to accommodate others who may want to attend, however, while open to any meeting time deeming it a responsibility as an elected Legislator.

Ryan inquired the Board’s pleasure in consideration of his request for Department Heads to be present at their jurisdictional committee meeting. Legislator Moser feels that Dept. Heads should be able to leave unless they have a presentation and/or agenda items. In response to Legislator King, Ryan encouraged Legislators to call him with any questions about proposed docket items or desired information/presentation at committee meetings.

Ryan reported efforts to minimize the number of resolutions, inquiring the Board’s discretion to allow him to approve transfers up to $5,000. Legislator Chartrand stated his support as long as there was no budget impact. There was no action put forth.

Patty O’Brien distributed the list of account balances, reporting a loss in the health insurance account due to high claims, which would be partially offset by anticipated loss insurance recovery.

Chris Boulio announced that the annual health insurance review is scheduled for 7/23/19 and invited all Legislators to attend.

Legislator Lehman made a motion to recommend the Board authorize refilling the Director of Human Resources/Personnel Director position due to the impending retirement of Chris Boulio effective July 31, 2019, seconded by Legislator Osborne and carried.

The following dockets were then reviewed and approved:

1. Appropriate Special Legislative Contingency and authorize Agreement with Project Safe Community in Harrisville to purchase two (2) laptops - $1,000.00

2. Authorizing 5 yr. renewal Agreement between Mailfinance/Neopost and Lewis County Clerk for postage meter in the Clerk’s office utilized by several county offices- $145.63/mo.

Atty. Joan McNichol relayed initiative by some counties to pursue recovery of E-911 land line surcharges that have purportedly not been reported and paid by some telecommunication companies ie. Verizon. She will research for detailed information with records on file with Treasurer Patty O’Brien to determine Lewis County’s lost revenue amount.
Atty. McNichol also posed a potential anti-trust lawsuit related to generic pharmaceuticals that has been circulating among counties. She will research and make a recommendation to the Board whether to join a class action suit.

Ryan reported that Empire State Development may re-allocate the grant funds previously earmarked and surrendered by Mohawk Networks because they had substantially underestimated expense to expand broadband into outlying areas. Assemblyman Blankenbush is closely following this issue to assure that the chosen vendor is willing to install a hardwire system, as opposed to a satellite/wireless system. Frontier has indicated willingness to meet this demand. Rather than bashing Mohawk Networks, Legislator Moser suggests investigating why other broadband providers are not expanding their services, surmising there are too few potential customers in the underserved areas to make it cost effective.

Ryan relayed receipt of the Bernier, Carr & Associates $5,000 new building survey of the various prospective locations. Terry will generate an email to Legislators to choose a date and time for Rick Tague to present the survey results.

At 7:55 p.m. Legislator Lehman made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Legislator Osborne and carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Terry Clark, Clerk of the Board