

FINANCE AND RULES COMMITTEE

March 17, 2020

Present: Legislators Tom Osborne, Ron Burns, Greg Kulzer, Ian Gilbert, and Phil Hathway.

Others: Legislators Larry Dolhof, Jerry King, Randy LaChausse, and Andrea Moroughan (she was present via conference call); County Manager Ryan Piche; County Attorney Joan McNichol; Human Resource Director Caitlyn Smith; and reporters Julie Abbass and Nick Altmire.

Committee Chairman Tom Osborne called the meeting at 3:12 p.m.

Legislator Kulzer made a motion to approve the 2/18/2020 committee meeting minutes, seconded by Legislator Burns and carried.

State Budget update – Ryan Piche

There is not much improvement to the State budget, there is a push to get it passed before the weekend. One important item is that the additional 1% sales tax extension for counties is now being put in as part of the budget so as a county we need the budget to pass for that specific reason although the Medicaid portion is still a huge concern. Senator Chuck Schumer pushed for the F.F.C.P. which passed overwhelmingly and it extends Medicare funding to counties directly, not through the State. There is also EFMAP money available now as well as in the 2020 budget. However, there is nothing that addresses the Medicaid issue. The budget as it stands already has a huge deficit and with everything that is going on will likely be close to a \$12 billion shortfall. In the end it likely means that there will be program cuts and reimbursement cuts to counties. NYSAC issued a statement which Ryan quoted "...counties should begin bracing for severe cuts like we have never seen before..." Even though sales tax seems fairly steady now it may fall short in the next few months.

Legislator Hathway stated that he was withdrawing his request to share excess tax revenue with the Towns and Villages at this time due to the current COVID-19 situation and future uncertainty but he would like to revisit it again at a more appropriate time. Ryan reassured the committee that there will be additional funding for expenses from the government due to the COVID-19 situation but Legislator LaChausse cautioned that there is only so much money out there.

The following dockets were reviewed:

1. Resolution to make the Home Rule request to the State Legislature to enact the following: New York State Senate Bill S.____ and the companion bill in the Assembly, Bill A.____: to continue to impose an additional one percent (1%) local sales tax for the period beginning December 1, 2020 and ending November 30, 2023. *There was discussion on clarifying the language a bit more as some people thought this was an additional tax. As Ryan had pointed out earlier this might not be needed due to the additional 1% sales tax extension being part of the budget. Legislator King pointed out that even the 1% still adds up to be quite a bit over the year.*

YEA: 5 NAY: 0

2. Resolution to authorize the County Attorney to take all steps to offer the two County-owned, landlocked parcels Nos. 419.01-01-26.200 and 338.12-01-05.000, (one in the Town of Lewis and one in the Town of Lyonsdale) for private sale in accordance with Local Law No. 6-2004
YEA: 5 NAY: 0

3. Resolution to amend the Compensation Plan of the County of Lewis with reference to the Treasurer's office to create a temporary part-time accounting assistant position at the rate of \$50.00 per hour, not to exceed the amount of \$2,000.00. *There was discussion as to why we would create another position, which Eric Virkler responded that it would be easier than trying to contract with an individual and explained that in the past the former treasurer did come back in to help with year-end and audits. Eric believes that it would be less than 40 hours.*
YEA: 4 NAY: 1 Legislator Kulzer was opposed.

4. Resolution to authorize the Lewis County Commissioner of Social Services to move funds within the WIOA budget lines, provided that said amounts do not exceed the overall annual WIOA budget allocation to Lewis County, and provided that the Commissioner advises the Treasurer of the amounts and the WIOA accounts reallocated.
YEA: 5 NAY: 0

Motions:

1. Legislator Burns made a motion to approve the General Liability Insurance renewal package with Eastern Shore Associates through NYMIR for the period from 4/5/2020 to 4/5/2021 for a total premium of \$212,197.27, seconded by Legislator Hathway and carried.

At 3:27 p.m. Legislator Burns made a motion to enter into executive session to discuss union negotiations, seconded by Legislator Kulzer and carried.

At 3:45 p.m. Legislator Burns made a motion to enter back into regular session, seconded by Legislator Kulzer and carried.

With no other business to come before the committee Legislator Burns made a motion to adjourn at 3:46 p.m., seconded by Legislator Kulzer and carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Cassandra Moser, Clerk of the Board