

FINANCE AND RULES COMMITTEE
October 19, 2021

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

Others present: Legislators Larry Dolhof, Jerry King, Lisa Virkler, Richard Chartrand and Andrea Moroughan; County Manager Ryan Piche; County Attorney Joan McNichol; Treasurer Eric Virkler; Human Resource Director Caitlyn Smith; and Information Technology Director Conner Biolsi.

Committee Chair Tom Osborne called the meeting at 2:43 p.m.

Legislator Burns made a motion to approve the September 21, 2021 committee meeting minutes as recorded, seconded by Legislator Gilbert and carried.

2022 Budget Workshop – Ryan Piche, County Manager

Ryan began his presentation by explaining the timeline on the 2022 budget process. In August departments began inputting their budget requests, in August and September the County Manager and Treasurer met with Department Heads, September 21st the Finance & Rules Committee discussed preliminary budget issues such as personnel, sales tax, and health insurance, October 19th is the 2022 Budget Workshop, November 2nd the 2022 Tentative Budget is presented to the Board, November 18th will be the Public Hearing on the 2022 Tentative Budget and it can be adopted any time after the hearing.

The goals of today's presentation are to preview the 2022 Tentative Budget; have some consensus-building before the official Tentative Budget is distributed; opportunity for questions and input; and additional workshops can be scheduled if necessary. The Fiscal Targets that were established in 2015 but still used today are to maintain \$13 million in fund balance or 10% of County and Hospital operations; maintain County's A+ credit rating; and maintain current County service levels.

The fund balance summary as of 9/30/2021 is: General Fund is \$24,096,596 but will drop before the end of the year; County Road is -\$43,346 but CHIPS funds are due to the county; Highway Machinery is \$822,790; Solid Waste is \$706,738; Lewis County General Hospital is \$29,339,000; Workers Compensation is \$1,428,778; Health Insurance is \$6,147,868; and Capital is \$6,808,711. There is no tax increase for the 2022 budget, it will remain at last years rate of 7.595. The Full Taxable Value of all property only went up .64%, but with increasing sales tax revenue up to \$12,850,000 there was a zero-tax increase.

The 2021 Budget did not reflect any increase in compensation at a department level as CSEA negotiations were undetermined. For 2022, we have estimated a potential retroactive settlement for hourly employees for the 2021 calendar year. We have also estimated a potential increase for the 2022 contract year. As a result, each department's compensation will increase by approximately 5%. The expected increase in retirement system changes for NYS in 2022 is approximately 18% across all retirement system tiers. For 2022, vehicle lease costs are included

directly in each department's budget. In previous years, the cost was a lump sum in Capital and was transferred to departments at the beginning of the year by resolution.

The approach to Shared Services costs has been modified. In the past general costs such as copiers, telephones, cell phones were captured in a Shared Services department. The IT department is interested in more responsibility and also ensuring user departments take responsibility for their IT related costs. The 2022 budget has all these costs under the IT department, with each department having an expense line to reflect the actual costs for these services. An offsetting interdepartmental revenue has been created in the IT department.

Ryan then went through each department to give highlights and the total net cost of each, which is the taxpayers responsibility for the department.

Public Safety: District Attorney - \$608,555, a 7.4% increase over 2021; Coroner - \$101,596, a 0.4% increase; Public Defender - \$402,200; Sheriff's Office (Non-Jail) - \$3,824,173, a 13.8% increase; Sheriff's Office (Jail) - \$2,582,749, a 4.2% increase; Probation - \$458,501, a 7% increase; Emergency Management - \$174,407, a 5.5% increase; and Codes - \$341,248, a 15.9% increase.

Health & Human Services: Community Services - \$83,006, a 54% increase over 2021; Public Health - \$1,495,073, a 9% increase; Social Services - \$10,218,457, a 1.4% increase; and Office For the Aging - \$409,521, a 2.8% increase.

Public Services: County Clerk (revenue) - \$81,255, a 51% decrease over 2021; Highway - \$4,237,513, a 3.8% increase; Solid Waste (Enterprise Fund) - \$2,335,607 revenue & \$2,335,607 expenditures, a \$0 net cost; Recreation - \$166,169, a 2% decrease; Real Property - \$405,174, a 6.1% increase; Board of Elections - \$558,947, a 4.6% increase; Veterans - \$462,742, a 8.1% increase; Weights & Measures - \$69,000, a 3.6% increase; and Planning - \$364,680, a 39% increase.

Administrative: Information Technology - \$545,599, a 56% increase; Buildings & Grounds - \$876,026, a 12.8% increase; Human Resources - \$259,045, a 4.1% increase; County Attorney - \$180,856, a 11.9% increase; Treasurer (revenue) - \$254,618, a 20.8% decrease; County Manager - \$161,122, a 14.7% increase; Clerk of the Board - \$207,775, a 68% increase; Legislative - \$312,111, a 24.3% increase.

Outside Agencies were reviewed, with each of the Museums getting a \$1,000 increase over last year. There was discussion on the Historical Society as their increase was around \$8,000. Legislator Kulzer proposed increasing the amount, Legislator Chartrand thought it should be raised to \$50,000. After further discussion it was decided that it could be raised to \$35,000. The North Country Library System increased \$10,000 over last year. Ryan concluded by reviewing the Capital Transfer that are recommended for 2022, with an additional \$1,110,000 being put into the capital Building line for now from Windmill and Solar revenue.

The following dockets were reviewed:

1. Authorizing Exemption from Taxation for Certain Real Property Owned by the Towns and Villages in Lewis County and Used for Production and Transmission of Public Water and Sewer Systems Benefiting Lewis County Residents and Businesses.

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2. Authorizing GIS Web-Based Hosting renewal agreement with the Development Authority of the North Country for a term commencing on January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2016 at an annual fee of \$1,600 for years one through three respectively, then \$1,700 for years four and five.

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The following motion was made:

1. Legislator Hathway made a motion to authorize Social Services Commissioner, Jennifer Jones to refill one (1) full-time Senior Account Clerk position effective immediately due to resignation, seconded by Legislator Gilbert and carried.
2. Legislator Gilbert made a motion to authorize Social Services Commissioner, Jennifer Jones to refill one (1) full-time Employment & Training Specialist position effective immediately due to resignation, seconded by Legislator Hathway and carried.

At 4:17 p.m., Legislator Burns made a motion to enter executive session for labor negotiation update, seconded by Legislator Osborne and carried.

At 4:52 p.m., Legislator Hathway made a motion to enter regular session, seconded by Legislator Burns and carried.

There being no other business to come before the committee, Legislator Burns made a motion to adjourn at 4:53 p.m., seconded by Legislator Osborne and carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Cassandra Moser, Clerk of the Board