



Tioga County Work Session Minutes

June 4, 2020 – 1:00 p.m.

Legislators present:

Legislator Balliet
Legislator Hollenbeck
Legislator Monell via Zoom (*approx. 1:12 p.m.*)
Legislator Mullen
Legislator Roberts
Chair/Legislator Sauerbrey
Legislator Standingger
Legislator Sullivan via Zoom
Legislator Weston

Guests:

Matt Freeze, Morning Times via Zoom

Staff present:

Legislative Clerk Cathy Haskell
County Attorney Peter DeWind
Personnel Officer Bethany O'Rourke
Budget Officer Jackson Bailey via Zoom
Secretary to County Attorney Diane Stephens
ITCS Deputy Director Drew Griffin
Sheriff Gary Howard
Public Health Director Lisa McCafferty via Zoom

Call Meeting to Order: Chair Sauerbrey opened the meeting at 1:02 p.m.

Roll call was taken.

Financial Discussion: Jackson Bailey, Budget Officer

Budget Officer Bailey reported he is still receiving feedback from the departments regarding budget cuts. Mr. Bailey is analyzing available numbers and determining what areas can be cut back, while at the same time figuring out how to present the 2021 budget. Mr. Bailey will be sending out an email to those departments who have not responded yet to see where they are and if they need guidance. Once he has solid numbers, he will present it to the Legislature for review and analysis.

Mr. Bailey also reported he would begin working on implementing the salary data in Munis for the 2021 budget. Hopefully, this will go out to departments in early July so they can start working on it.

Chair Sauerbrey stated the Finance Committee meeting is June 9, 2020 at 4:30 p.m. and requested Mr. Bailey attend. In addition, Chair Sauerbrey asked County Treasurer McFadden to report on the decrease in sales tax revenue.

Mr. Bailey also reported he has been monitoring New York State Association of Counties (NYSAC) and other resources regarding any State budget updates, but to date nothing has been forthcoming from the State as to what they will be requesting from the local governments.

Chair Sauerbrey stated she will be taking part in an upcoming conference call and is hoping the State budget and tax cap will be addressed.

Chair Sauerbrey stated she is going to need help from all Legislators if it turns out that a 20% budget cut is needed. She expressed Legislators have their favorite departments and that we do not want to lose people or cut programs, but everyone will have to work together. Chair Sauerbrey reported the skills of those who are good with details and finances will be needed.

Legislator Hollenbeck reported the Legislature will need to look at everything while trying to protect personnel.

Legislator Mullen reported the value of the County government is the people who work for the County and that should be the number one priority. Everyone that is working in a necessary position should be kept working. In Emergency Management, the EMS Coordinator position is going to be eliminated along with EMS training because it costs the County money and the program has been floundering. He feels that 10% is the just tip of the iceberg and that two or three tough years are probable.

Chair Sauerbrey stated she had a conversation with Legislator Balliet about prioritizing the programs in each department. Chair Sauerbrey reported a hard look needs to be taken at what programs are absolutely necessary.

Legislator Roberts stated he feels everything should be on the table. He does not think a statement should be made that personnel is not going to be touched. Legislator Roberts reported he is not necessarily looking at layoffs, but alternatives should be explored. Legislator Hollenbeck reported he did not mean to infer that, but that personnel cuts should be the last alternative.

Chair Sauerbrey stated some positions would be eliminated through attrition.

Legislator Weston stated an alternative option could be reducing staff to working half time. He believes all options should be explored in its entirety and determine the effects of such options.

Legislator Mullen reported what has taken place in Board of Elections where they reached out for help from other departments is an example of job sharing that can be done. He also stated he feels that it should be explained to employees that they are going to do everything they can to keep them employed, but the employees might be required to do additional work to keep going forward. He stated it is a two way street and hopes the employees in the County understand that. He also agreed with Legislator Roberts that everything has to be on the table.

Approval of May 21, 2020 Worksession Minutes:

On motion of Legislator Hollenbeck, seconded by Legislator Roberts, the May 21, 2020 Legislative Worksession minutes were unanimously approved.

Action Items:

Legislator Hollenbeck requested adding the Non-Union Salary Study as an action item, as Personnel Officer O'Rourke has agreed to forego this study for 2020 in light of the budget directive, but did not want to lose sight of this for future budget. Legislator Monell stated Ms. O'Rourke sent an email indicating the State was planning to do a survey; therefore, this might not be needed. Legislator Weston stated retirement incentives should be explored, as well as unfunded and funded positions that are vacant and carried from year to year.

ACTION: Non-Union Salary Study will be added to the Action Item List for future consideration in the event the State does not conduct their own study.

Legislative Support: Cathy Haskell, Clerk of the Legislature

Approval of Legislative Support Committee Minutes – March 5, 2020:

On motion of Legislator Hollenbeck, seconded by Legislator Balliet, the Legislative Support minutes of March 5, 2020 were unanimously approved.

Vacant Deputy Legislative Clerk Position: Ms. Haskell reported she would not be filling the vacant position of Deputy Clerk for the remainder of the year due to the 2020 budget directive. Ms. Haskell pointed out that she will be looking to departments, especially at 56 Main, for assistance primarily with office coverage in her absence. Ms. Haskell thanked Ms. Stephens for taking worksession minutes for her. Ms. Haskell will be requesting Munis financial backup assistance from the Treasurer's Office when she is out of the office. Ms. Haskell reported she has not officially contacted County Treasurer McFadden, Personnel Officer O'Rourke, or other Department Heads yet, as she wanted to secure Legislative support to do so. All Legislators were in agreement of job sharing.

Legislator Weston spoke about a stipend for the Legislative Clerk since she is doing the work of both the Legislative Clerk and Deputy Legislative Clerk positions. Legislator Mullen stated extra hours worked because of the Coronavirus pandemic are reimbursable by FEMA. Legislator Roberts stated the argument of working extra hours could be made for employees in just about every department. There are ebbs and tides to their workload and it is to be expected. Chair Sauerbrey stated sacrifices have to be made and this is not a time to give money away, but to keep it. It was the consensus that no stipend should be paid to the Legislative Clerk.

Ms. Haskell stated that when she is on vacation, other than someone from the Treasurer's Office running the check run or doing a purchase card import, she is not expecting anyone else to do the Munis work. Her plan is to take vacation around those times, so she is in the office when Munis work needs to be done. However, she would like to have office coverage with a staff person sitting in the Legislative Office to answer phones, greet public, and assist Chair Sauerbrey, if needed. Ms. Haskell reported she does not expect this person to do her normal workload. Legislator Balliet asked whether the Legislative phone could be forwarded to another employee's extension. Ms. Haskell reported phones could be forwarded, however, she would prefer to have someone physically in the Legislative Office with the understanding they can access their own work from any workstation and can forward their phones to the Legislative Office extension.

Ms. Haskell reported that after the first of the year, depending on what happens with the budget, she'd like to reconsider filling the position, perhaps even as a part-time position.

Three Year Sales Tax Extender Bill: Ms. Haskell reported she contacted the County's assigned NYS Taxation & Finance Attorney to review the draft sales tax extender resolution. Ms. Haskell reported comments were made, which were reviewed by County Attorney DeWind, and the final resolution will be presented for Legislature consideration at the June 9, 2020 Legislature meeting. Upon Legislative adoption, Ms. Haskell will send the certified resolutions to the appropriate parties via certified mail well in advance of the September 2, 2020 deadline.

8-Year Agricultural District Review Public Hearings: Ms. Haskell reported ED&P has two Ag District Review public hearings coming up in the last week of July and the last week of August in the Towns of Candor and Owego. Ms. Haskell reported five Legislators are needed for a quorum at these public hearings. Legislators Balliet, Hollenbeck and Roberts stated they would be available to attend one or both of the public hearings. Once ED&P establishes the public hearing dates, Ms. Haskell will convey to the Legislature.

Board of Ethics Vacancy: Ms. Haskell reminded the Legislature that a vacancy exists on the Ethics Board and the member who recently vacated the position was from the Candor district.

Financial Disclosures/Policy Review Attestations: Ms. Haskell reported the financial disclosures and policy review attestations were due June 1, 2020 and noted there are a few outstanding as of this meeting.

Resolutions:

The next Legislative meeting is Tuesday, June 9, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. with Legal/Finance Committee at 4:30 p.m. Legislator Standinger will lead in prayer, pledge and starting the vote. Ms. Haskell reviewed all resolutions with the Legislature for the upcoming June 9, 2020 Legislature Meeting and discussion occurred on the following:

- **Recognition of Linda Myers 30 Years of Dedicated Service – Social Services:** Ms. Haskell reported this resolution will not be presented and just noted in the minutes, as the employee has chosen not to attend a Legislative meeting. The resolution and plaque will be sent to DSS who will present to the employee.
- **Re-Appoint Director to Soil and Water Conservation District:** The person being re-appointed represents the Pomona Grange. Legislator Roberts inquired if anyone had any additional information on the Pomona Grange.
UPDATE: Ms. Haskell contacted Soil & Water Conservation Director Walsh for additional information. Information was obtained and sent via email to all Legislators and County Attorney DeWind on June 7, 2020.
- **Amend Resolution No. 184-17 to Extend Imposition of an Additional One Percent Rate of Sales Tax and Compensating Use Tax for a Period of Three Years Through November 30, 2023:** Legislator Weston inquired as to whether this is an imposition of a new tax or just an extension of the existing 1% tax. Ms. Haskell reported this is an extension of the existing 1% tax.
- **Authorization to Contract with NYSTEC- Radio Consulting State Interoperable 18 Grant:** Legislator Roberts inquired if the cost for this has been budgeted. Legislator Mullen stated the money has already been appropriated. Legislator Standinger stated the money is part of the State Interoperable Grant the County previously received.

- **Extend Duration of Temporary Accounting Associate I Position – Sheriff's Office:** Ms. Haskell reported this resolution was received just prior to this meeting, therefore, did not go through the Public Safety or Personnel Committees. Ms. Haskell reported Sheriff Howard is present to answer any questions.

Sheriff Howard stated he has an employee who was due back to work on July 8, 2020, but is fairly confident she will not be coming back. In the interim, a resolution authorizing a part-time person to fill the position was adopted and said resolution expires on June 30, 2020. Sheriff Howard reported today's resolution is requesting an extension of this part-time position through the end of 2020. Sheriff Howard reported he would hold off hiring a full-time person, therefore, resulting in a budget savings of approximately \$20,000 for the year so far. Sheriff Howard reported the part-time position has no paid benefits. Legislator Roberts inquired if the employee on leave is receiving any benefits. Ms. O'Rourke reported the employee on leave dropped the health insurance and is off the payroll, so no benefits, including FICA, are being paid.

Ms. Haskell asked the Legislature for authorization to include the resolution in the meeting packet for Legislature consideration at the June 9, 2020 Legislature meeting. Since Committee Legislative members were present at the worksession, the Committee was in favor of the resolution, as presented and for inclusion in the meeting packet.

Other:

Phased Re-Opening Update: Chair Sauerbrey reported Phase Two has now started, which means barbers and hairdressers can re-open. Guidance can be found on the NY Forward website for those businesses allowed to open during this phase. Chair Sauerbrey participates on daily calls with NYS elected officials. Chair Sauerbrey reported during yesterday's call she was informed that restaurants can now open for outdoor dining, but with certain requirements.

Chair Sauerbrey reported guidance on high school graduations is supposed to be given later in the week. Legislator Mullen stated he spoke with Waverly Superintendent, Eric Knolles, and every school in Tioga County, with the exception of Spencer-VanEtten, has sent their graduation plan to the regional level and are awaiting approval.

Chair Sauerbrey also added that while we are in a State of Emergency, the Governor is in charge up until April 2021.

Executive Session:

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

Meeting adjourned at 1:55 p.m.

Next Legislative Worksession is scheduled for June 18, 2020 at 10:00 a.m.

Minutes submitted by Diane Stephens