

FINANCE COMMITTEE
March 2, 2015

Present: Doug Paddock, Sarah Purdy, Gary Montgomery, Margaret Dunn, Elden Morrison, Bonnie Percy, Dan Banach, Mark Morris, Bob Clark, Jim Smith, Connie Hayes, Pat Brede, Shawna Bonshak, Nonie Flynn, Fran Dumas, Tim Groth, Ron Spike, Joe Reed, Leslie Church, Tim Dennis, Gwen Chamberlain,

Doug and Bill will do the audit this month

Minutes of the January 30th meeting were approved as presented.

Planning – Shawna Bonshak

Shawna reported the Planning Board had four referrals at their February 26th meeting.

Shawna updated the Committee on various issues pertaining to the Fiber Project.

- A Fiber Cost Benefit analysis will be discussed in executive session.
- The County Attorney sent edits and comments on the Indefeasible right of use (IRU) to STN last week. Once negotiations are finished the IRU will be distributed.
- The Grant Disbursement Agreement the team has been working on finalizing dates and the new completion date is September 2016. This is being sent to the state today for their opinion.

Shawna reported with regard to Penn Yan Marine, the borings for all the sediment testing were due back Friday. They are running a little bit behind and Shawna doesn't have the information as yet. The bridge work is done and the boathouse is down.

Shawna reported Iverson did email her today and his goal is to close next Friday, March 13, 2015. The only thing that is currently outstanding is the Village agreement with regards to keeping some open access for the marina and walking path. If closing happens on the 13th, demolition and abatement could start in April.

Shawna reviewed her 2015 goals

Fran's reviewed her Historian's report.

Fran reviewed the following resolution that would be needed. The Committee approved.

- Resolution to sign a contract with General Code Publishing

Real Property – Patricia Brede

Pat gave the following update on the electronic RP5217 program.

We have one year under our belt. Background: The scanning of the Real Property transfer reports and the electronic transmission of these documents was prompted because the state had decided to eliminate this 4-part paper form. They can be filled in electronically and this automatically creates a bar code on the form. The forms are then filed at the County Clerk's office where they scan the originals into their ACS program. We share access to this program and we can retrieve the deeds as well, in PDF format. We retain the one page original in Real Property. We are able to utilize a bar code reader and a program that will convert these to text files that can be sent electronically to the assessors, along with the PDF of the deeds. We do not see a time savings in processing in this format, our only savings

may be in the paper and toner used to print the deeds and the RP5217. At our Yates County Assessors meeting on the 19th, we discussed the progress with this program and what we might want to do differently going forward.

Pat has spoken with Tim Groth about finding a more efficient way to share the files, and the possibility of utilizing a new program to solve some of the existing problems with large electronic files and databases

Pat submitted the overall full value tax rates by County for the years 2004-2013. The 2014 information is not available yet as soon as it is she will share it with the Committee.

Pat reported our customer relations manager from ORPTS has changed again. The office has been losing personnel to retirement and they are not refilling the positions. Yates is now on a team that also supports Steuben, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua and Allegheny counties.

Pats 2015 goals were reviewed.

Treasurer – Nonie Flynn

Nonie reviewed the 2015 Appropriations

Nonie reviewed the Property Taxes Collected which shows collection is up 5.82% over this time last year.

Nonie reviewed the Sales Tax Report which shows \$645,917.03 collected so far this year.

Nonie reviewed the funding due from Federal & NYS which shows \$2,723,720.24 outstanding.

Nonie reported there were 41 parcels that have 2013 property taxes unpaid. The foreclosure process has begun on these parcels.

Nonie reported the auditors were here for two weeks in February and will return for a day at the beginning of March to complete their audit.

Nonie reported she is in the process of updating account numbers for the transition of the budget into MUNIS. Nonie will review this process and train department heads on budget input. Nonie will attached samples of what the budget will look like in MUNIS to next month's agenda.

Nonie reviewed the following resolutions that would be needed. The Committee approved.

- 2015 Budget Transfers
- Appropriate Additional Federal Aid (Public Health)
- Appropriate Donations (Public Health)
- Appropriate Carryover of Mental Health Grant (Community Services)
- Authorize Chairman to Sign OSDBA Support Contract for Treasurer's Office
- Cancellation of 2013 Taxes (Potter 3.36-1-36.1)
- Establish Airport Infrastructure Reserve Fund
- Adopt Electronic Banking Policy

County Administrator/Budget Officer – Sarah Purdy

Sarah reviewed the following memo regarding the Property Tax Freeze Credit.

The purpose of this memo is to provide information and suggestions on how Yates County can meet the eligibility requirements for the State's Property Tax Freeze credit.

As you know, fiscal year 2015 is the first year in which property taxpayers have been eligible for a property tax credit, and Yates County achieved the eligibility for this credit by staying within the tax cap in the 2015 County budget. For the County's 2016 fiscal year, in order for property taxpayers to be eligible for a property tax credit, the County is required to stay within the cap in the 2016 County budget and also submit by June 1, 2015 a Government Efficiency Plan that meets distinct criteria.

The basics of the Plan are:

1. The property tax freeze credit is available only to homeowners who meet the requirement for the STAR property tax exemption. The credit applies only to the primary residence.
2. Yates County complied for Year One by staying within the property tax cap for the 2015 County budget. Yates County is now examining the compliance requirements for Year Two.
3. There are two components to the compliance requirements for Year Two. One of the components is staying within the tax cap for the 2016 County budget. The other component is submitting by June 1, 2015 a Government Efficiency Plan to the NYS Division of Budget. NYSDOB is supposed to determine whether the plan meets the eligibility criteria within 60 days after June 1.
4. The Government Efficiency Plan is based on saving an amount equivalent to 1% of the County's 2014 property tax levy. The 2014 levy was \$15,453,192. 1% is \$154,531.92
5. The Government Efficiency Plan is based on identifying savings of at least this amount in each of the County 2017, 2018 and 2019 fiscal years.
6. The savings can be recurring from the same individual measure taken to reduce costs, from separate measures, or from a combination.
7. The look-back period for identification of savings goes back to January 1, 2012. Yates County sold its Certified Home Health Agency on December 31, 2012.
8. If Yates County chooses to submit a plan with other municipal jurisdictions, the 1% savings that needs to be made for each of the three fiscal years is calculated on the total of the combined fiscal year 2014 property tax levies of all participating municipalities.
9. If Yates County does not participate with another jurisdiction, Yates County nevertheless can identify savings it achieved through an efficiency with another jurisdiction. For example, Yates County can include the savings to Yates County by teaming up with Schuyler County for the delivery of Weights & Measures services in Yates County. However, Yates County would not be able to include the savings to the Village of Penn Yan by the Village's reliance on County Dispatch and by receiving a patrol vehicle from Yates County unless Yates County and the Village of Penn Yan submitted a joint Government Efficiency Plan. In that case, the 1% savings would be based on the combined total of both jurisdictions' 2014 tax levy.
10. Only one plan can be submitted.
11. There is no repercussion to any municipal jurisdiction if the savings identified in the Government Efficiency Plan for the fiscal years 2017, 2018 and 2019 do not actually materialize.

Given the short timeframe for developing a Government Efficiency Plan, and given that combining with another municipal jurisdiction to create the plan adds to the total amount of savings that need to be identified, I recommend that Yates County submit its own separate plan. Suggested actions to be taken in order to develop the plan are:

- Including everything at all relevant, so that in case some savings are deemed to be ineligible, the County will still meet the criteria of \$154,532 in savings for each of the three fiscal years.
- I will work with Public Health Director Deb Minor to provide the necessary documentation to support that the identification of the continued cost avoidance achieved by selling the CHHA totals more than \$154,532 per year.

- I will work with County Planner Shawna Bonshak to identify the cost-avoidance in 2017 due to the County's participation in the development agreement with the Village of Penn Yan regarding the Penn Yan Marine property, as 2017 as is approximately the year in which the County would be undertaking the Brownfield remediation if the County still owned the property. This cost avoidance should be about \$500,000.
- I will work with Building Maintenance Supervisor Joe Reed to identify the ongoing savings in the County's Weights and Measures budget by contracting with Schuyler County; this savings will include avoiding the cost of purchasing a new vehicle in 2017 or 2018.
- I will work with Sheriff Ron Spike to see what efficiencies we can identify, particularly in regard to communications and towers.
- I will work with Highway Superintendent Dave Hartman to see what efficiencies we can identify, particularly in regard to the cost-avoidance of sharing a striping truck rather than owning one ourselves.
- I will work with anyone else on any other suggested items.

It would be my intent to submit a draft of the plan to the Finance Committee for review at its May meeting, so that the plan can be finalized in time for the Chairman of the Legislature and the Treasurer to submit it to the NYS Division of Budget by June 1. Counties do not yet know the format for the submittal, but hopefully will know by May.

Sarah reviewed the analysis of a Five –Year Comparison of 2010 thru 2014. The report showed that gross expenses have risen \$2,262,005 or 5.7% while revenue has decreased \$425,270 or 1.6%.

Doug asked what comments or questions would the Finance Committee like to address with the state representatives on Friday.

- Where do the representatives stand on the Governor's ethics reform
- What are their views on how they can help us obtain our share of \$1.5 billion economic development funding that's available
- What is the feeling if the Governor's tax cap legislation is made permanent and do they feel it is appropriate to make it permanent without adjusting the mandates that continue to drive counties
- What will the minimum standards be for the teacher candidates that NYS proposes in financing 100% of their college education if will agree to teach in NYS for 5 years after they graduate
- Repeal or unfund the SAFE ACT

Sarah stated CGR is suggesting 3/24 or 3/25 as dates for the public meetings. The consensus of the Committee was to hold Yates County's public meeting on March 25, 2015 at 7:00p.m. in the Legislative Chambers.

Jim Smith moved to enter executive session to discuss employee compensation, seconded by Margaret.

Meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m.