

GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
MARCH 20, 2017

GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: O'Brien, Armstrong, Campbell, Gang, Shaw, Skellie, Hogan

GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

SUPERVISORS: Henke, Hicks, Fedler, Moore, Idleman, LaPointe

Debra Prehoda, Clerk of the Board

Chris DeBolt, County Administrator

Al Nolette, County Treasurer

Roger Wickes, County Attorney

Melissa Fitch, Personnel Director

Harrison Steves, Supt. Bldgs. & Grnds

AGENDA AS PRESENTED IN COMMITTEE NOTICE:

- 1) Call to Order
- 2) Accept Minutes – February 21, 2017
- 3) Conduct Interviews for Buildings & Grounds Supt. Trainee (2)
- 4) Department Requests/Reports:
  - A. Buildings & Grounds
    1. Eastern Heating & Cooling Maint. Agreement
    2. Monthly Updates
  - B. Information Technology
    1. Department Update
    2. Training Budget
    3. Capital Project Budget
  - C. County Administrator
    1. IT Needs Analysis RFP Update
    2. Hudson River Dredging CAG Membership
    3. ID Policy
    4. Title VI Review
    5. Occupancy Tax
    6. Administration/Purchasing Dept. Reconfiguration
    7. Fixed Asset & Procurement Policy Review
- 5) Other Business
- 6) Adjournment

Chairman O'Brien called the meeting to order at 9:30 A.M.

A motion to accept the minutes of the February 21, 2017 meeting was moved by Mr. Armstrong, seconded by Mr. Skellie and adopted.

CONDUCT INTERVIEWS FOR BUILDINGS & GROUNDS SUPERINTENDENT TRAINEE – A motion to enter an executive session to discuss matters leading to the appointment of a particular person, Buildings and Grounds Superintendent Trainee, was moved by Mr. Hogan, seconded by Mr. Armstrong and adopted. A motion to return to regular session was moved by Mr. Campbell, seconded by Mr. Armstrong and adopted. No action was taken in executive session.

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS – Harrison Steves, Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds, addressed the following items with the committee:

- Monthly Updates:
  - County Clerk's wall is complete.
  - Entrance to Annex I has been repaired.
  - Public Safety conference room is complete, carpet was install on Friday.
  - Drill for Public Safety (setting up emergency operations center) went well; less than 2 hours.
  - Reverse caller ID is done.
  - Lead testing at the Head Start buildings is complete. (5 faucets failed and have been replaced.)
  - Headed to Salem Substation to rearrange workstations and replace carpet.

- May have a leak in water line at PV but have been unable to check due to snow storm.
- Annex I Garage is now on generator (Air Station).
- Eastern Heating & Cooling Maintenance Agreement – Received three different plans and all three put you on the preferred customer service rate for call ins ranging in price from \$26,000 Plan A – minimum of four (4) scheduled inspections, perform maintenance on the system and seasonal adjustments, purge unwanted data, priority emergency service taking preference over those without a maintenance contract, install updates to the system, \$45,000 Plan B – repair labor no charge, and \$62,000 Plan C – you do not pay for labor or parts. He does not recommend paying \$62,000 on a yearly maintenance plan. He has asked for a three to five year contract. A motion to go with recommendation of Plan A for \$26,000 per year was moved by Mr. Shaw and seconded by Mr. Skellie. Discussion. Mr. Shaw asked how much of a gamble is this? Harrison stated minimal. He is looking for them to head off the big expenses which can be budgeted. The motion to go with recommendation of Plan A for \$26,000 per year was moved by Mr. Shaw, seconded by Mr. Skellie and adopted.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY – In the absence of Karen Pratt, agenda items will be addressed next month. Mr. Shaw asked about the status of the Data Protection Software Package that the IT Department wanted to move forward with and the committee last month was going to look into extending the contract or ask the vendor if they could guarantee the data could be saved. The County Administrator stated they did get an extension from the vendor but that may have lapsed. Chairman O'Brien stated he does not see a need and would like to go through the IT RFP process to get a better handle on things and a recommendation from the consultant prior to spending any funds for the software.

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR – Chris DeBolt, County Administrator, addressed the following items with the committee:

- IT Needs Analysis RFP Update – Received 15 responses ranging in price from \$24,000 to \$249,000. Chairman O'Brien, Supervisor Hogan and the County Administrator met and selected four proposals ranging in price from \$24,000 to \$115,000 and recommend bringing those four vendors in Wednesday, April 5<sup>th</sup> for interviews. In evaluating the consultant, Chairman O'Brien stated he would like to know their process, approach and deliverables and that is what to look for in the interview process. Mr. Campbell suggested possibly bringing in an IT consultant to help with the interview process and Chairman O'Brien concurred. Mr. Hicks would like some time prior to interviews for an overview of the IT RFP and questions. Mr. Shaw stated with this study and the tourism study money is being spent and if the recommendations are not accept then what has been accomplished by spending this money. Regarding the IT study, the County Administrator has an increasing sense with the kind of organic way our IT structure has grown to just meet the demands of the departments, it's probably not the more efficient way we could have done it because we never had a holistic, 30,000 foot, view of the what the architecture of our system should be to most efficiently meet the needs of our departments. He hopes this study takes that look and can function with the same funding or possibly saving money; do we need to buy all these maintenance plans, and are there things we could do more efficiently by going to the same vendor. The IT RFP is to take a 30,000 view of the IT system to see if that is the most efficient department and how the various other county departments are served. He would like to bring in an expert because this is a huge cost center and there has to be a way to do it more efficiently. Chairman O'Brien stated we need to understand what the best structure is and what is the best process and procedure for IT. He stated IT is going to be an increasingly large cost center.
- Hudson River Dredging CAG Membership – Citizens Advisory Group for the superfund

cleanup of the upper Hudson River. He has been a member of the CAG since 2007/2008 and since he has become Administrator, he has not been able to regularly attend the meetings. The EPA hired the Consensus Building Institute out of Connecticut who actually administers the CAG process and they are updating the membership. Washington County has three seats on the CAB and for each of those three seats; the County can designate an alternate. Lois Squires and her son Andrew from the Town of Easton was the representative and alternate for one seat for many years and Merrilyn Pulver-Moulthrop, Town of Fort Edward and Roland Mann, Town of Greenwich are the other County representatives. There are no alternates for Merrilyn Pulver-Moulthrop or Roland Mann seats. The CAG asked the County Administrator that if the County appoints representatives, they should regularly attend the meetings and report back to the Board of Supervisors. Reporting back to the Board has been lacking. He recommends appointing Layne Darfer, Washington County Junior Planner, to the CAB Board. Now that the dredging has ended, this group is starting the flood plain cleanup. He stated the County has two alternate slots to fill and one open slot because Lois Squires and her son have moved to an at-large Ag slot not dictated by a County appointment. He urged Supervisors to suggest some possible candidates for alternate appointment especially from communities on the river. Mr. Mann is interested in retaining his seat and the County Administrator will follow up with Merrilyn Pulver-Moulthrop to see if she wants to continue to serve. The CAG meets four times a year. A motion to appoint Layne Darfer, Washington County Junior Planner, to the Citizens Advisory Group (CAG) was moved by Mr. Hogan, seconded by Mr. Campbell and adopted.

- ID Policy – There is no adopted ID Policy. Reviewing a policy drafted by County Attorney for presentation at a future meeting.
- Title VI Review – Contacted by NYSDOT who is doing an audit for the federal government and he is in the process of figuring out what policies they need implemented. He is checking to see if all these policies apply to the County and will develop the necessary policies. DOT is requiring quarterly reports so it is important to determine the scope of what is necessary. Anticipating adoption by the end of April.
- Occupancy Tax – Airbnb is entering into voluntary collection agreements with counties and they would collect the occupancy tax and remit to Treasurer. According to our occupancy tax law most of the items listed on Airbnb would not qualify for occupancy tax. The County Administrator asked if there is any interest to try to increase or broaden the scope of the occupancy tax law to include Airbnb rentals. Mr. Campbell stated if the decision is made to not do tourism then why charge an occupancy tax because that is where the money goes. He recommends holding off on pursuing any change to the occupancy tax to incorporate Airbnb rentals until the County determines what direction it is going to take with tourism. The Treasurer stated \$13,735 in occupancy tax collections. Direction from the committee is to start exploring.
- Administration/Purchasing Dept. Reconfiguration – The County Administrator is not quite ready to present information on the department reconfiguration. He stated at the budget process, he was approved for a part time Secretary but the Board requested a comprehensive plan for the future of his office before he moved forward with it. He was going in one direction and then he had a conversation with the Treasurer and changed his thinking. He thinks there is a good opportunity for collaboration between the two offices but needs time to work that out a little more.
- Fixed Asset & Procurement Policy Review – This issue was referred to this committee from the Public Works committee. The small tool line in the DPW budget is in a .4 contractual account. The fixed asset policy states a tracked fixed asset is anything over \$100 in cost that has a two or greater year life expectancy. The next part of that statement is that anything that is a fixed asset must be purchased out of a .2 equipment account so because of those two

things the DPW Superintendent can only buy small tools under \$100 out of that account and most tools cost more than that so he is being handcuffed by those rules. Two potential solutions are as follows: move the .4 small tools to .2 equipment and consider some kind of amendment to the Fixed Asset Policy to either exempt small tool purchased by DPW from that tracking threshold or up the fixed asset tracking amount. He recommends moving the .4 small tool line to .2 equipment. The Treasurer stated there will be a specific line in the .2 equipment for small tools. A motion to amend Public Works budget moving .4 contractual small tools to .2 equipment and forward to the Finance Committee for consideration was moved by Mr. Shaw, seconded by Mr. Gang and adopted.

- Budget Officer Letter – Section 7 of the Purchasing Policy states any individual purchase over \$400 must have prior approval of the Budget Officer; Budget Officer approval letter. This requirement has been in place for a very long time at the \$400 amount and asked if there was any interest in increasing that threshold or to remove it. The Budget Officer stated he signs 10 to 15 requests a week and it is not burdensome. Chairman O'Brien stated the DPW Superintendent might find a bargain on line and this approval process put a burden on him and he recommends changing the amount to \$1,000. A motion to increase the threshold on individual equipment purchases that required approval of the Budget Officer from \$400 to \$800 was moved by Mr. Hogan and seconded by Mr. Skellie. Discussion ensued. Mr. Hogan based the \$800 amount on a 3.5% annual increase from the time the \$400 limit was instituted. The Budget Officer does not have a problem with the process. It was noted the procedure is not that cumbersome. Mr. Hicks asked what is the harm of having the Budget Officer look at these requests prior to approval to purchase. Based on the discussion Mr. Hogan rescinded his motion because he does not see a strong interest to move it higher and the Budget Officer does not find the process cumbersome and Mr. Skellie withdrew his second.

#### OTHER BUSINESS:

Executive Session – A motion to enter an executive session to discuss matters leading to the appointment of a particular person, Buildings and Grounds Superintendent Trainee, was moved by Mr. Hogan, seconded by Mr. Skellie and adopted. A motion to return to regular session was moved by Mr. Campbell, seconded by Mr. Armstrong and adopted. No action was taken in executive session.

Mr. Hicks stated Mr. Underwood, who spoke at the March 17<sup>th</sup> Board meeting during Supervisors Privilege of the Floor regarding the Brand New Beginnings business proposal, pointed him out but Mr. Hicks does not think the County should have anything to do with this issue. Mr. Underwood's letter asked the County Administrator to set a public hearing and he has no plans to do that.

Granville FFA Ag Issues Team - Mr. Hicks reported that they came in second at their competition on Saturday, losing by one point, but noted that they will be going to the State competition because the top two teams go.

A motion to adjourn was moved by Mr. Hogan, seconded by Mr. Gang and adopted. The meeting adjourned at 11:39 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,  
*Debra Prehoda, Clerk*  
*Washington County Board of Supervisors*