

FINANCE AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 8, 2009

FINANCE & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: G. Hall, Brown, LaPointe, Trinkle, Scribner, Rymph, Shay, Lindsay, Henke, Hurley, Campbell

FINANCE & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: None

SUPERVISORS: Wilbur, Alexander

Debra Prehoda, Clerk

Kevin Hayes, County Administrator

Roger Wickes, County Attorney

Phyllis Cooper, Treasurer

Bill McCarty, Director RPTS

Nick Riesman, Post Star

AGENDA AS PRESENTED IN COMMITTEE NOTICE:

- 1) Call to Order
- 2) Approval of Minutes – December 11, 2008
- 3) Department Reports/Requests:
 - a) Real Property
 - (1) Discuss Status of Food & Gas Property in Whitehall
 - (2) 2009 Auctioneer Contract
 - b) Treasurer
 - (1) Monthly Reports – HF Resource Recovery Plant Shortfall, Sales Tax
 - (2) Discuss Contract for Abstracting Services
 - c) County Administrator
 - d) Budget Workshop
- 4) Other Business
- 5) Adjournment

Chairman G. Hall opened the meeting at 9:30 A.M.

A motion to approve the minutes of the December 11th meeting was moved by Mr. Lindsay, seconded by Messrs. Henke and Scribner and adopted.

REAL PROPERTY – Bill McCarty, Director of Real Property, addressed the following items with the committee:

- Discuss Status of Food & Gas Property in Whitehall – Bill stated that this parcel has been on the exempt section of the tax roll. This property has been cleaned up and the State has released the County from any liability. A motion to place this parcel back on the taxable section of the tax roll, Treasurer will issue a certificate of reinstatement, for the March 1, 2009 taxable status deadline, was moved by Mr. Lindsay, seconded by Mrs. Trinkle and Mr. Scribner and adopted.
- 2009 Auctioneer Contract – The County contracts with Auctions Internationals, Russ Scherrer, to auction tax sale parcels. A motion to contract for one year at the current terms was moved by Mrs. Trinkle and seconded by Messrs. Hurley and Scribner. Discussion. Bill explained what the auctioneer does for the County. The auctioneer receives a 5% buyer's premium and \$150.00 per parcel repurchase charge to be paid at the time of repurchase. The Treasurer has previously reported on the amount the auctioneer was paid and will make that information available. He also markets the county's on line web sale of items. The motion to contract for one-year at the current terms was moved by Mrs. Trinkle, seconded by Messrs. Hurley and Scribner and adopted. (January 16th resolution) Mr. Brown commented that the 09 budget includes anticipated revenue of \$100,000 for the sale of excess county owned property and suggested possibly the sale of this property could be added to the auctioneer's contract, sell any county owned property for a discounted commission. Kevin mentioned the County's three parcels: land at Pleasant Valley, 20+ acres on Rt. 149 in Fort Ann and the Hartford landfill property. Kevin suggested that the Fort Ann parcel is commercial and maybe have the Town

of Fort Ann as the lead agency, having the towns be the lead agency for parcels in their towns. The Fort Ann parcel was taken for delinquent taxes and it adjoins the County's Tripoli gravel pit. Mr. Brown stated it might be better to wait on the economy prior to trying to selling the Fort Ann parcel and move forward with the Argyle property as the value will probably remain the same. Chairman Hall recommends bringing the maps and all information back to the committee next month for discussion. Mr. Brown is worried about getting the \$100,000 for the budget. Kevin will distribute information on the three parcels prior to the February Finance meeting.

- Governor's Proposal to Cap Payments on State Land – Bill mentioned a proposal in the Governor's proposed budget to cap payments on state owned lands for no more than the 2008 -2009 level. A motion to present a resolution in opposition to NYS proposal to cap the amount of real property taxes paid by the State for State owned real property was moved by Mr. LaPointe, seconded unanimously and adopted. The Treasurer reported that her office just billed the State for their 2009 taxes in the amount of \$884,000.
- Consolidated Assessment Study Grant – Bill reported that the County received the second \$25,000 payment regarding the consolidated assessment study at the end of 2008.

Treasurer – Phyllis Cooper, Treasurer, addressed the following items with the committee:

- Article 11 – Tax Enforcement – Under Article 11 regarding the Tax Enforcement procedure, the Treasurer's office has to have the records search for any one that has an interest in parcels they are going to foreclose on. The County has contracted with Dean White for abstracting services and his contract has expired. He submitted a new three-year proposal for \$45,000.00 per year, an increase from his previous contract amount of \$40,000.00, handout on file. The Treasurer is allowed to charge back on these delinquent parcels for the abstracting. She budgeted \$45,000 in 2009 budget for abstracting services. From the fee she is allowed to charge for the abstracting done on these tax sale parcels, revenue is generated ranging from \$53,000 to \$74,000 per year depending on the number of parcels. The monies for abstracting collected off the parcels offsets the expense. A motion to approve abstracting contract with Dean White for a three-year contract at \$45,000 per year was moved by Mr. LaPointe and seconded by Mr. Rymph. Discussion. Messrs. Campbell and Rymph felt it was a substantial increase. Discussion. A motion to amend to \$39,500 per year was moved by Mr. Brown but did not receive a second. Discussion. A motion to amend to \$39,000 was moved by Mr. Brown but did not receive a second. Discussion. A motion to maintain the contract at the same rate \$40,000 for three-years was moved by Mrs. Trinkle and seconded by Mr. Shay. Discussion. A motion to amend amendment to \$39,500 was moved by Mr. Brown, no second. Mr. Brown would like more information on just what is in the contract, i.e. termination clause. The Treasurer, as tax enforcement officer, stated she will check to see if this contract has to come before the Board. A motion to amend the amendment to one year at \$40,000 was moved by Mr. Rymph, seconded by Mr. Scribner and adopted. Noes Mrs. G. Hall and Mr. Brown. The motion as amended to contract with Dean White for abstracting services for one year at \$40,000 was moved by Mr. LaPointe, seconded by Mr. Rymph and adopted as amended. Roger Wickes, County Attorney, stated he could add a cancellation policy. Kevin will ask Dean to come up with a three-year proposal.
- Budget Variance Report as of Dec. 31, 2008 – distributed to all Supervisors. The Treasurer stated that this report is not complete due to revenues still coming in, expenses still being paid and final 08 year-end payroll figures. She also mentioned her concern with the fund balance as

of December 31st was approximately \$3M. Due to cash flow concerns, she is waiting until the end of January to pay ACC and distribute the sales tax monies due the towns. She will report out on final figures in June. Mr. Hurley would like a report at the end of 2009 on all unanticipated 2008 expenses that are addressed in 2009. The Audit Committee will issue a report at the end of 2009 on stale vouchers.

- Sales Tax Report was distributed, on file. The 2008 sales tax is \$16.3M, just under budget with two more payments expected.
- Shortfall Report was distributed, on file. The net shortfall is \$1,258,662, no true up for November or December. Kevin feels they will meet budget.

County Administrator:

- BUDGET AMENDMENTS: Kevin Hayes, County Administrator, addressed the following budget amendments with the committee:
 - A motion to authorize payment for appropriation to Conservation Education in the amount of \$1,250 was moved by Mr. Lindsay, seconded by Messrs. Henke and Hurley and adopted.
 - A motion to authorize payment to the Adirondack North Country Association in the amount of \$2,000 was moved by Mr. Lindsay, seconded by Mr. Scribner and adopted.
 - A motion to authorize payment to Washington County Historical Association in the amount of \$2,475 was moved by Mr. Lindsay, seconded by Messrs. LaPointe and Scribner and adopted.
 - A motion to authorize payment to the Literacy Program in the amount of \$2,950 was moved by Mr. Lindsay, seconded by Mrs. Trinkle and Mr. Hurley and adopted.
 - A motion to authorize the Chairman to sign agreement Adirondack Park Local Government Review Board in the amount of \$1,750 was moved by Mr. Lindsay, seconded by Messrs. LaPointe and Scribner and adopted.
 - A motion to pay municipal association dues in the amount of \$6,298 was moved by Mrs. Trinkle, seconded by Mr. Scribner and adopted.
 - A motion to amend 2008 budget, County Road fund due to the number of snowstorms late in 2008 and for the purchase of salt was moved by Mr. LaPointe, seconded and adopted.
 - A motion to amend 2009 budget Pleasant Valley in the amount of \$15,952 due to an error in the 2009 Adult Home budget was moved by Mr. Scribner, seconded by Mr. Shay and adopted.
 - A motion to reappoint Superintendent of Public Works was moved by Mr. LaPointe and seconded by Mrs. Trinkle. Discussion. Mr. Brown stated as the new Chairman of the Public Works Committee, he has not had a chance to meet with Willy Grimmke, Superintendent of Public Works, to discuss goals for 2009. He would like the Public Works committee to have the opportunity to meet with Mr. Grimmke prior to consideration of this resolution. Discussion. A motion to table was moved by Mr. Brown, seconded by Mr. Hurley and defeated on the following roll call vote: AYES (3) Brown, Scribner, Hurley, NOES (8) G. Hall, LaPointe, Trinkle, Rymph, Shay, Lindsay, Henke, Campbell. The motion to reappoint Superintendent of Public Works was moved by Mr. LaPointe, seconded by Mrs. Trinkle and adopted. A Public Works Committee meeting was scheduled for Wednesday January 14th at 11:15 A.M.
 - A motion to amend budget Capital Project No. 106 – SD#2 Long Term Control Plan was moved by Mr. LaPointe, seconded Mr. Lindsay and adopted.

Kevin Hayes, County Administrator, distributed a handout , Borrowing for the County in 2009, on file. Kevin stated there will be a resolution for the sewer district bonding, \$950,000.

Mr. Hurley stated a sub committee should be formed to look at mandates and determine what we are not going to follow. A motion to form a subcommittee to identify those mandates the Board considers most onerous and which has the most negative financial impact to the County and recommend to the Finance Committee that we then go ahead and communicate with the State that the County will not accept those mandates and are prepared to accept the consequences was moved by Mr. Hurley, seconded by Mr. Brown and defeated on the following roll call vote: AYES (4) Brown, Hurley, Henke, Campbell NOES (7) G. Hall, LaPointe, Trinkle, Scribner, Rymph, Shay, Lindsay. Kevin will ask departments to come up with a mandate list with the idea of possibly not doing them anymore. Chairman G. Hall is open to the study of the mandates.

Pleasant Valley has submitted rate appeals to the State for adult day care depreciation and equity rate denials. Doug Cosey, PV Administrator, would now like to file an article 78 to pursue the funds from the Department of Health, approximately \$200,000. The cost to file suit is \$5,000 and legal counsel is 65% confident they will be successful. He will transfer funds from personnel and equipment for this expense. A motion to move forward with rate appeal litigation was moved by Mr. Scribner, seconded by Mr. Campbell and adopted.

Roger Wickes, County Attorney, stated the County authorized \$3000 to challenge the APA shoreline restrictions. He next step is to spend monies on an appeal and it will not exceed the amount of our commitment at this time. A motion to enter litigation on APA shoreline restrictions was moved by Mr. LaPointe, seconded by Mr. Henke and adopted.

BUDGET WORKSHOP – G. Hall, Budget Officer, distributed a list of “To Do” items for 2009, overview attached and a list of items for sub committees to work on is on file. Mr. Hurley suggested setting a goal for 2010 and he recommends a zero percent increase in the tax levy for 2010. Mandates will be added to the Human Services Committee “To Do” list.

The meeting adjourned at 12:47 P.M.