

2022

THIRD ANNUAL SESSION

NOVEMBER 9, 2022

The Board convened at 10:30 A.M. in the Supervisors' Chambers at the Court House, Lake Pleasant, New York, with the Chairman, Brian E. Wells presiding. Mr. Wells led the members of the Board of Supervisors in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, and an opening prayer.

The Clerk, Mrs. Laura Abrams, called the roll with the following Supervisors answering:

Arietta	Chris D. Rhodes
Benson	Phillip C. Snyder
Hope	ABSENT
Indian Lake	Brian Wells
Inlet	John Frey
Lake Pleasant	ABSENT
Long Lake	Clay J. Arsenault
Morehouse	William G. Farber
Wells	Nick Mauro

Also present: Beth Hunt-Treasurer and Barry Baker-Real Property Tax Director/Budget Officer

Public Comment: No one present.

Reports of Standing/Special Committees:

Mr. Farber: Stated that they had their bi-weekly call with C&S. They are making progress on all of the tower sites. They discussed getting the battery backup on Blue Mountain. He also stated that he still needed to speak with Sean O'Brien, Fire Coordinator, and Jill Dunham, Emergency Services Director, regarding the EMS Coordinator position and hours.

Mr. Mauro: Stated that there is a committee meeting this afternoon with the Board of Elections.

Mr. Frey: Stated that we are continuing to go through the budget with Barry Baker, Budget Officer.

2023 Tentative Budget Review:

Expenditure Follow-up:

The Budget Officer stated that he would like to start by going back through some of the expenditures. He had followed up on most of the items.

There was an additional one identified this morning. The requested amount was wrong for A.1165.407, District Attorney-Books. It was supposed to be \$6,000.

The Budget Officer stated that for A.1170.102, Public Defender Admin Staff, 4% wasn't applied during the request or tentative stage. The 4% would be \$19,287. Also, during the follow up Sterling Goodspeed, Public Defender, discussed that New York State had expressed concern over the salaries for the Assistants and they both agreed that \$60,000 minimum would be a starting place. A.1170.105, Second Assistant, is at \$60,000 and A.1170.104, Assigned Counsel Panel Coordinator Asst, he hadn't applied the 4% so that should be that percentage on top of \$60,000 making it \$62,400.

The Budget Officer stated that they previously discussed raising A.1185.403, Coroner Autopsies. He verified the Board was comfortable increasing it to \$20,000.

The Budget Officer stated that there was a question regarding Board of Election Commissioner salaries. It will be discussed later.

The Budget Officer asked the Board if \$175,000 for A.1990.401, Contingent Fund is acceptable. Mr. Rhodes stated that his only hesitation is the uncertainty of expenses like fuel. The Budget Officer was asked if he had a recommendation. The Budget Officer stated that he reduced it to \$175,000 and wasn't sure if that was too much. Mr. Farber stated that he felt that the Budget Officer's take on it was accurate. Mr. Frey stated he was comfortable with \$175,000.

The Budget Officer discussed the request for early retirement for Probation. He had reached out to the Probation Director, and she is getting some numbers on how many other counties, statewide, have adopted early retirement. He also asked about the pre-trial funds that came in. Her indication was that the \$60,000 that came in could be used for anything regarding pre-trial but could also go back out to the town local justices. He feels it is something the County could use and take advantage of. Mr. Farber asked how they would send it back out to town justices and for what purpose. Wouldn't they have to tie it to some actual expenditures and what would they need to look like? He doesn't feel that they will have good information in time to put it in the budget. They would have to deal with it with a resolution that appropriates it and funds it when they come up with a plan. Mr. Frey stated that they had discussed a possible vehicle. Mr. Frey stated that as they move forward and it's available each year maybe they could get a better handle on supplies or other things needed in each town, but he agrees with Mr. Farber that the timing is too short.

Beth Hunt, Treasurer, addressed the question on the Stop DWI rollover. She stated that in 2021 the rollover amount was \$10,742 and right now they have around 15,000. Ms. Hunt stated that there will probably be more expenses by the end of the year. Mr. Farber stated that the good news is that they are not coming close to spending the \$11,000. That's why only getting \$5,000 or \$6,000 in revenue is less daunting but probably working those two so they better align the expenses and the revenues makes sense.

The Budget Officer asked Ms. Hunt if she had worked on both the Public Health and Community Services insurance, and she had not yet. The Public Health telephone account was discussed. They have a commitment to pay half of the internet upgrade with Community Services. There have been credits applied to the account due to overpayments during the changeover. Those credits will end in the beginning of 2023. The Clerk of the Board stated that she would talk with Erica

Mahoney, Public Health Director. The budget request will not cover the actual cost for 2023. Mr. Farber further discussed why those departments were paying for the upgrade. The Budget Officer stated that \$50,000 could come out for both A.4189.4104, HRI COVID ELC 6448-01 and A.4189.4105, HRI COVID ELC School. The consensus was the best way to deal with those is by resolution. Mr. Farber asked if there was a revenue that needed to come out as well. The Budget Officer stated that there was.

The Budget Officer discussed the Community Services budget. He stated that when he had reached out to the department regarding A.4310.402, The Budget Officer stated that account numbers A.4310.407, MH Insurance, and A.4310.408, MH Rent, were part of the rent discussion that is ongoing.

The Budget Officer discussed the Department of Social Services budget. The Budget Officer stated that he and Ms. Hunt are still working on Medicaid. Account number A.6110.401.

Mr. Farber suggested that the Board have OFA come in and do a presentation. There have been some questions along the way and he was struck by her comment of not hearing from the County. The Budget Officer stated that Ms. Parks, OFA Director, had said that no one had requested a budget since 2017.

The Budget Officer stated that A.8189.401, Solid Waste Capital Reserve, was not being put in the tentative budget. The request and tentative should be \$95,000 and the revenue for that is A.2376.0100.

Ms. Hunt discussed social security and medicare. She stated that she is still working on it but recommends increasing.

Revenues:

The Budget Officer asked the Board what the objective was for the budget. He stated that if they wanted to increase the compensation above the 4% across the board there is probably money available to do it.

The Budget Officer discussed that there were a lot of tax foreclosure properties in 2022 which is why the actuals are up on A.1051.0000, Gain from Sale of Tax Acquired Property. The online auction was to the County's benefit. He stated that it didn't look like there were too many properties going into 2023. Mr. Farber verified that \$10,000 was a good number.

The Budget Officer stated that he was conservative with his estimate for A.1110.0000, Sales and Use Tax. He was waiting for the third quarter numbers to be finalized. The County is currently at \$3.9Million; the fourth quarter has historically been \$1.2Million. He doesn't see where that is going to change for 2022 which would mean a \$1Million surplus in sales tax. He suggested leaving it flat at \$4.1Million and felt that would be safe. Mr. Arsenault verified that the tentative budget was around 8% and asked what it equated to in dollars. The Budget Officer stated that the expenditure was up approximately \$700,000 and revenues are down \$200,000. Mr. Arsenault asked if that meant the County was over the tax cap by \$700,000. The Budget Officer stated not

quite but approximately \$550,000. With the tentative budget as presented, increasing the estimate of sales tax revenue to \$4.1Million and then a decrease in expenditures of \$50,000 or increase of revenue, the County would be under the tax cap at 2.56%. Mr. Farber asked if they could put \$4.2Million in for sales tax for the moment. Mr. Arsenault stated that things are already starting to go sideways in the housing market and people aren't spending as much money. Do they think the County will have a banner year in 2023? Mr. Farber stated that he agrees with the Budget Officer in that the 4th quarter is usually really solid for the County. Things would have to go really south not to come really close to \$4.8-\$4.9Million. He is not suggesting they go that high with the sales tax number but they could certainly go at least as much as last year or a little bit more without being terribly risky. Mr. Arsenault asked the senior Board members if they were comfortable going to \$4.1Million. Mr. Frey stated that \$4.5Million would be the max for him but that doesn't mean they should go that high. In the forecast that he has been reading it says that the spending habits going into Christmas season are more towards travel than gifts. Hamilton County benefits from being a travel location but we aren't one of those warm weather travel locations. If that trend continues next summer, will people be spending more money here with us generating that sales tax? Mr. Frey and Mr. Farber further discussed the County doing well around online sales tax. The Board agreed with \$4.2Million.

Mr. Farber asked if Ms. Hunt or the Budget Officer had the 5-year numbers for Public Health and CHHA. Account numbers A.1610.0000 and A.1610.0100, Nursing Charge Receipts, Ms. Mahoney had reported to the Board that they have done really well in the last few months in terms of catching up on some back billing. He's not sure how much of the fact that the County is at \$172,000 relates to that versus where they anticipate being. He stated that when they were doing the budget in 2022, they were concerned with the vulnerability of the CHHA charges and rightfully so when the 2021 actuals were down significantly.

Mr. Arsenault asked if someone could walk him through A.2401.0000, Interest and Earnings. The request is \$30,000 but the tentative is \$120,000. Ms. Hunt stated that it is from good investments. She further discussed that she was able to invest over the year and the benefits from contracting with Three+One finally caught up. It is a lot of work, but she has figured out when the County needs the money and when they don't. She stated that she estimated by the end of the year just in investments it would be \$91,000. She stated that there are three more CD's that will be maturing this year and have made around \$62,000. The rates are increasing and might be higher than 4.7%. All the investments she has made for 2022 that mature in 2023 will be in February, March and August. There are two more that she can rollover or reinvest. She has been taking advantage of the treasury bills because they seem to be the highest. They had done a liquidation and moved \$3Million back in to cover Public Works. Once they receive the NYS tax money in January, she will be able to invest some of that money. She is hoping to be able to invest and it will be mature at the end of 2023 because that would make the County \$160,000. Ms. Hunt stated that she has been reinvesting the interest as well as the principal. This year she will put it in A.2401 so it will show better.

Mr. Farber asked Ms. Hunt if the money for the tobacco settlement is really increasing. Mr. Farber stated that a lot of the counties capitalized that because they thought it would go away and so would the revenues. Hamilton County gambled by thinking that the revenue would stay and that it would stay at least at the same level. Mr. Farber also asked if there was other money in that

revenue. Ms. Hunt stated that she didn't think so.

Ms. Hunt and the Budget Officer discussed how the A.3014.0000, Tribal Compact Monies, was uncertain. They agreed to decrease from \$2,500 to \$500.

Mr. Arsenault asked if the County should expect to keep getting funding from the state for solid waste hauling. Mr. Farber stated they had taken it out of the state budget for last year and the County had fought to get it back in. It was something they get year to year, but the state is not obligated to put it in. He thought it would be something that should be followed up on. Mr. Farber and the Clerk of the Board further discussed the contracts.

Mr. Farber stated that he thought that nursing had reduced the Pre-K appropriations because the numbers were down, but it looked like they left revenue A.3277.0000, State Aid Education-Handicap Child 3-5 Program, at the same level. Those are tied together and if the appropriation is going to drop, they will have to anticipate the revenue. The Budget Officer stated that he would change that.

Mr. Farber asked if nursing increased the base grant, A.3401.0000 State Aid Public Health. He stated that it used to be a \$400,000 base grant. They could get in excess of \$400,000 but are only able to claim a percentage above that amount when the base grant is dollar for dollar. He knew that there had been a lot of conversations during the last budget negotiation about the fact that Public Health had been inadequately funded over the years. He was wondering if they had increased the base grant to \$500,000. He stated that if not then they end up having to anticipate the base grant at 100% and the remaining as a percentage. The Budget Officer stated that he would follow up.

Recess for lunch 12PM.

Reconvened at 12:40PM.

2023 Tentative Budget Review: *(continued)*

D Fund

The Budget Officer stated that Mr. Eldridge hadn't done a lot in Moose River Plains in 2022. Mr. Eldridge does expect to do more in 2023. Mr. Frey asked about the bridge going in. Mr. Eldridge stated they haven't done that yet. Both Mr. Farber and Mr. Eldridge stated that they thought DEC was doing it but hadn't heard. Mr. Frey stated that if the bridge goes in that he would like it named in Dave Corr's honor. He also stated that if DEC wasn't willing to do it maybe Hamilton County would be. Mr. Eldridge stated that he would follow up. Mr. Farber stated that the anticipated revenue is down for D.3089.0000, State Aid NYS DEC Moose River Plains. Mr. Eldridge stated that he thought it was an estimate. They didn't do very much in 2022 and he is not sure where they are at with the DEC contract. Mr. Frey confirmed that this was where the town billed back to as well.

Mr. Arsenault asked if \$20,000 for D.5020.0403, Engineering Services, Contractual, was enough. He knows that Mr. Eldridge had discussed Andy Bell retiring. Mr. Eldridge stated that Mr. Bell

is not retiring. He is going to be here for another year. He stated that when he does engineer work for larger project it comes out of the project account, but when there are things like safety flags then he takes it out of this account. When Andy Bell does decide to retire, they will have to increase it because it is going to cost more to get some of these things done.

Mr. Arsenault asked if \$350,000 for D.5110.404, Maintenance of Streets, Asphalt/Emulsions, was enough when 2022's budget was \$450,000. Mr. Eldridge stated that was the adjusted amount. He had moved \$200,000 that summer because of the asphalt prices. His beginning budget was \$250,000. He thinks that \$350,000 will be good.

Mr. Arsenault asked about D.5112.202, Permanent Improvement, Capital Projects. Mr. Eldridge discussed that it was CHIPs money. It all depends if there is rollover or increases. Mr. Farber stated that they never know what that amount is at this point.

Mr. Arsenault asked what bridges he was doing with the \$250,000 in D.5112.203, Permanent Improvement, Bridge Projects. Mr. Eldridge stated that was something they did every year and it was for local bridges that they can do inhouse.

Mr. Arsenault asked if \$210,000 budgeted for D.5142.402, County Snow Removal, Salt, Chloride, Sand, would be enough. Mr. Eldridge stated that it was. He looked and the prices for salt was the same as last year.

DM FUND

Mr. Arsenault stated that they had spent a lot on gas, oil and diesel as well as repairs. Mr. Eldridge stated that he had met with the Board previously and stated that parts have gotten very expensive. Mr. Arsenault stated that he wanted to know if there was enough money budgeted. Mr. Eldridge stated that he didn't know but it was his best guess. He was hoping some of the larger equipment repairs would go down. The biggest issues he has now is parts availability and cost. He feels the fleet is in very good condition. Mr. Arsenault asked if there was enough money budgeted for DM.5130.405, Machinery Gas, Oil and Diesel. Mr. Eldridge stated that he was hoping that prices would level off. There are a lot of variables.

As there was no further business, the Chairman recessed the meeting until November 15, 2022 at 10:30 AM.