

2023

THIRD ANNUAL SESSION

NOVEMBER 8, 2023

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 the 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 E. Wells
Inlet	ABSENT
Lake Pleasant	ABSENT
Long Lake	Clay J. Arsenault
Morehouse	William G. Farber
Wells	ABSENT

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

Public Comment: No one present

Reports of Standing/Special Committees:

Mr. Farber: Stated that he was able to look at the Morehouse and Arietta tower sites with Tracy Eldridge, Highway Superintendent. They discussed what was feasible for him to do to help with the sites and what would need to be part of the general contract. He was very encouraging in terms of his ability to help and build the roads. They discussed the utility connections and whether that was something he could do or if it had to be part of the general contract.

Mr. Farber stated that he had a chance to follow up with the Sheriff on the resolution that they are working on with respect to the change to the Employee Handbook. He would like to request a committee meeting for either Internal Management or EP/ER to look at whether there is anything that the Board is willing to do regarding the issue of employees transferring in. It is an issue that didn't come up before, so it requires a committee meeting and some discussion. The Sheriff feels that it may be hard, in a field like law enforcement, to get somebody that is in the position to transfer and put in 20 full years. Would there be a possibility of a prorated share of health insurance cost for people that have worked for the County for 10 or 15 years that doesn't force the full 20 years just to be eligible for anything? He would like to schedule a meeting for the following week.

Mr. Rhodes: Stated that he has limited information regarding Dan Stec's survey regarding broadband. He had presented a resolution the day before at AATV. It should be sent out to the

towns for their support. Mr. Farber stated that AATV has discussed this. They have seen the survey that Dan Stec did. It shed light on the way people now use their cell phones, the importance of cell service when it comes to 911, as well as it showed that people really are open minded to the idea that substantially invisible is not the right standard to consider cell towers. He further discussed and encouraged towns and counties to pass it.

Mr. Arsenault made a motion to enter an Executive Session to discuss personnel in the Public Health department, seconded by Mr. Snyder. Carried.

A motion was made to open the session by Mr. Arsenault, seconded by Mr. Farber. Carried.

No action was taken in the Executive Session.

2024 Budget Review (*continued*)

The Budget Officer stated that with all the changes from the last meeting they have picked up about \$331,000, so currently they would need to reduce by another \$70,000 to stay under the tax cap.

Mr. Snyder asked if they were going to reduce the District Attorney by 5%. Mr. Snyder stated that they are reducing all of them, including the newly elected Treasurer that has experience. The Budget Officer stated that the DA's salary is \$126,040 in the tentative budget. The Chairman asked if the current District Attorney's salary was reduced when he started? Mr. Arsenault stated that his salary increased by 1.9%, which was COLA. Mr. Farber stated that the Board was very deliberate about reducing elected officials across the board by 10% in their first year for a long time. When the current DA came on it was around the time when the Board was transitioning and less inclined to look at things that way, so the Board made an entirely different decision. He also stated that it was during the discussion about making the DA a full-time position. The current DA thought he was going in full-time, and it was close to the end of the year that they found out the Governor had vetoed the legislation. He stated that he wasn't sure what the right thing was to do. They had discussed the salary for 2024 at a previous meeting and decided to leave it flat at \$126,040 without the 4.5%. He stated that it might be complicated enough that they may want to make sure they have input from the other 4 Supervisors. Mr. Rhodes stated that they should revisit it and he agreed with the 5% reduction. This was because of the experience and what they did with the Treasurer's salary. Mr. Arsenault stated that the 5% reduction would bring it to \$119,700. Mr. Rhodes thought it would be important to get other input. Mr. Farber asked if the Budget Officer had heard back from the incumbent DA on the request to clarify a couple of the line items. He stated that with some of the contractual line items the Board could set them where they think they should be and if that looks like they are shaving \$15,000 off his request they could simply put \$15,000 in the contingent. They discussed calling the incumbent and having the conversation regarding the budget for the office. The Budget Officer stated that he would reach out today.

Mr. Baker stated that the increase for A.1355.401, Real Property Tax Map Maintenance, from \$7,000 to \$8,000 was for a laptop and A.1355.402, Real Property Tax Travel, from \$2,000 to \$2,500 was for the new Aide's training. Mr. Baker discussed the new technology in their office.

They have a flat screen tv on the wall that can project tax maps and aerial photographs. He encouraged the Board to stop and see it.

The Budget Officer stated that the current County Clerk had discussed changing how additional hours are used as opposed to temporary clerk. She requested an additional temporary clerk line and to reduce the additional hours line. The Budget Officer added \$15,335 to A.1410.105, Temporary Clerk. That is based on a calculation of hours per week that she would potentially need somebody. Then he reduced A.1410.108, Additional Hours, to offset some of it. A.1410.106, Motor Vehicle Clerk #3, is a new position in 2024 so the tentative is Grade, COLA and Step. A.1410.109, Motor Vehicle Clerk #4, is an open position. The Chairman confirmed that this wasn't the position she had discussed for the records room.

The Clerk of Board stated that they added a line to County Attorney. A.1420.403, Court Expenses; the Assistant County Attorney has incurred quite a few different court expenses that they haven't had in the past.

The Budget Officer stated that the Personnel Officer had requested her salary to be \$82,000 and that hadn't been discussed so the tentative amount of \$70,566 was with the 4.5% COLA for Department Heads. Mr. Arsenault stated that he has yet to receive the proposal from the Department Head.

The Budget Officer stated that there was an increase to Personnel A.1430.404, Printing/Advertising, to \$7,500. Mr. Farber stated that he thought it was attributable to advertising because they are having a lot of problems filling positions but also thought that she was going to get the Board some information on some new ideas for advertising. Mr. Arsenault stated that he would touch base.

The Budget Officer stated that the tentative budget number for Election Commissioners included the 4.5% COLA. Mr. Rhodes confirmed that they were up for appointment in 2024. The Board further discussed.

Board of Elections A.1450.103 and A.1450.104, Deputy Commissioners, was increased from \$1,600 to \$7,500. The explanation was that there are 49 working days a year per Deputy at \$19.21 per hour. Increases support the 30 days of open polls in 2024. Mr. Farber confirmed that it wasn't a change in rate, it was a change in number of hours.

Board of Elections Dem. Temp Clerk A.1450.105 and Rep. Temp. Clerk A.1450.106, was increased from \$1,280 to \$2,000 and that was based on an 18 working day schedule.

Board of Elections A.1450.107, Voting Machine Technician, was increased because of the additional primary in 2024.

The Budget Officer stated that one of the Commissioners is apparently doing the programming now, so it eliminates the programming cost. The Clerk of the Board stated that A.1450.108, Programmers, has a tentative amount of \$1,400. The Budget Officer stated that amount is for ballot proofing.

Board of Elections A.1450.109, Election Workers, increased \$40,000 to \$73,528. The justification was for 27 days of early voting, 30 days of open polls, training of 100+ poll workers and they are requesting an increase in pay from minimum wage to \$17 per hour. The Budget Officer amended the amount to minimum wage or \$15 per hour and used the hours they provided. Mr. Farber stated that he is in support of the idea of going from \$15 to \$17 per hour for the poll workers. He honestly thinks the jobs are thankless for the day of primary and election. He knows when they adjust it, it is a large increase because they are paying the same thing for early voting. The Budget Officer asked if Mr. Farber was proposing to leave it at the department request amount \$73,528? Mr. Farber stated that it looked like an excessive amount of money and if you look at the grand scheme, he is less comfortable with the computation on the number of hours. They further discussed the hours and requirements. Mr. Farber asked for a copy of the department requests for the Board to review. The Budget Officer confirmed that they wanted him to include the page on replacing the voting machines. The amount would be \$250,000. They do have a grant to help with the cost in the amount of \$53,000.

Recess for lunch at 12:10PM.

Reconvened at 1:10PM

Budget Review (*Continued*)

Board of Elections - Mr. Farber stated that he thought they should make preliminary adjustments. It's difficult because they don't have the final expenditures for this year yet. Mr. Arsenault asked if they would be comfortable in reducing the Deputies down to \$5,000. The Board agreed. Mr. Farber asked what the rate difference was between Deputies and Temp Clerk. The Budget Officer stated that it was \$19.21 vs. \$16.59. Mr. Rhodes discussed A.1450.109, Election Workers. The requirement is 6 people at each polling site and there are 2 to 6 people. If they did 60% of that number that they requested at \$73,000 it would be \$44,000. So, that is roughly around 3 to 4 people at each site, on average. He thinks that \$45,000 would be a starting point as opposed to their request. Mr. Farber stated that they aren't sure where this year is, but they discussed the numbers in 2022 to compare. They decided to reduce the request for Election Workers to \$60,000. The Chairman stated that for A.1450.405, Software Support, they have requested \$60,000 and total activity is \$11,000. He asked if that was due to quarterly billing. The Budget Officer stated that A.1450.411, Miscellaneous Supplies was a typo at \$7,500 it should be their requested amount at \$26,000. Mr. Farber stated that A.1450.414, Travel, he thought the request for \$10,500 seemed high based on the history. They further discussed and decided to see if the Commissioners would come in to discuss during a meeting. Mr. Farber discussed other counties upgrading voting machines. The Board continued to discuss the Board of Elections budget.

The Budget Officer stated that A.1620.105 Bldg Proj Supervisor, was part of Mr. Eldridge's proposal. The request was for \$5,000 additional making it \$80,012. He reduced the amount and put in \$75,012 for the tentative. This is based on the percentage increase. The Board discussed having a Committee Meeting with Mr. Eldridge to discuss the future of the Buildings Department. The Budget Officer stated that there were other positions that are asking for the same \$5,000 stipend plus another full-time cleaner. He will be keeping the part-time cleaner. Mr. Arsenault confirmed that the other full-time cleaner was not included in the budget. The Budget Officer

stated that at entry level would be another \$38,148. He stated that Mr. Eldridge had a 5-year plan number. Mr. Farber asked what the 5-year total was. The Budget Officer stated that the 2023 number was \$630,000. Mr. Farber stated that the reality is that they have put some large amounts of money into the building reserve in anticipation of the fact that they had a 5-year plan. He is not suggesting that they take the whole amount out of the building reserve but he's trying to figure out how the building reserve intersects with how much they budget annually with how you get some of these projects caught up. Mr. Farber stated that if there was no other demand for the ARPA money, they could use it coupled with monies from the building reserve. He stated that by years 2 and 3 they will run out of things that are already funded and run into a bigger gap. He also asked about A.1620.402, Electric Expense-LP and if the request of \$35,000 was adequate when total activity was already over. The Budget Officer stated that they might have renegotiated the contract. Mr. Farber stated that they had but it doesn't seem like enough. He thought the same with A.1620.403, Heating Expense-LP. The Chairman asked if they should increase A.1620.402 by \$5,000. Mr. Arsenault added A.1620.409, Heat/Lights-IL.

The Budget Officer stated that when they looked at the unallocated insurance it looked like it was going to be a 6% increase. He put A.1910.401 at \$148,000 for tentative but he thought with the chargebacks, \$140,000 would be a good number so it can be reduced.

The Budget Officer stated that the 2-grade increase for Corrections Officers is in the tentative budget. A.3110.120, 911 Coordinator, and A.3110.121, 911 Administrator, should both be increased to \$2,000. He stated that he went back to the Sheriff and discussed both A.3110.202, Automobile, and A.3110.401, Car Upkeep. The Sheriff and Confidential Secretary were both comfortable with the tentative numbers. A.3110.408, Enforcement Schools, was increased to \$20,000. Mr. Farber assumed it was in anticipation of filling the position but it's also the impetus for the conversation about what they can tell people that might be interested in transferring in.

Sheriff - The Budget Officer stated that Raise the Age is no longer in the Sheriff's budget. Mr. Farber asked why. Mr. Farber stated that the costs are within the budgets so they can isolate the cost associated with them providing that direct Raise the Age service. It is a line item that hasn't been expended because they have not had any children in those age brackets that they were serving directly and providing direct service to. Mr. Farber stated that this should be checked and confirmed. The Budget Officer stated that Stephanie Hutchins, DSS Principal Account Clerk, was going to send him a Raise the Age flow chart. They confirmed that there was \$500 for Raise the Age under Probation.

Mr. Rhodes asked about A.3640.102, Emergency Mgt Part-Time EMS Coord., and A.3640.102, Emergency Mgt Part-Time Fire Coord. Tentative was at \$9,582.00 for both. Mr. Farber stated that he wasn't expecting an increase. He doesn't anticipate them needing over \$7,000. The Clerk of the Board confirmed that there wasn't a request for an increase; it was how Personnel's budget sheets came out. They agreed to change it to \$7,000.

The Budget Officer stated that Public Health A.4010.410, Maintenance in Lieu of Rent, decreased to \$6,000 based on actual numbers. Mr. Farber stated that for A.4050.410, PH Maintenance in Lieu of Rent, she increased to \$47,000. After discussing it was decided to change it back to \$6,500.

The Budget Officer stated that the request for A.4050.101, PH Director, was for \$133,977 and the tentative number of \$105,230 is 4.5%. They discussed the resolutions for Public Health. Mr. Farber stated that it isn't bad if they move it forward with the Director of Patient Services' salary in the budget because they are shifting money. That way if they had to go back part way through the year there would be some money to help cover that cost. If they were to take it all out and do a 3-month, 6-month evaluation to find out something isn't working then they would have to come up with the money. Mr. Arsenault confirmed leaving the \$105,230. The Budget Officer stated that A.4050.121, Director of Patient Services, is funded at the new hire rate of \$85,000. Mr. Farber asked about A.4050.127, Medical Director. There was nothing in the tentative budget. The Budget Officer stated that it was an open question that he didn't get a good answer on. His understanding was that Dr. Welch wasn't going to be here next year. The Board had not heard anything. Mr. Farber stated that there needs to be money for a Medical Director regardless of whether it's Dr. Welch or whoever. His fear is that if Dr. Welch is not going to be here then he is not sure they will be able to get anyone to do what he has done for the money he has done it for. For him it has been a labor of love. The Budget Officer stated that he had left it blank for the Board to discuss. Mr. Farber stated that it looked like the Department Head requested \$16,397 and he would support that. The Budget Officer stated that he thought Ms. Tomlinson had stated that Dr. Welch was retiring, and she had found a replacement.

Mr. Farber stated that it would be interesting to know how the utilization of Home Health Aides is going. They have grown in numbers and is it the right level of staffing? The Chairman stated that he was going to set up a meeting with Ms. Tomlinson and that was one of the things he wanted to discuss with her. He confirmed that there was going to be a state audit on 11/9 on Home Care. Mr. Farber further discussed the background of working with the State Health Department and how they have been open to working with Hamilton County to figure out how to solve difficult problems.

Mr. Rhodes asked about A.4310.425, MH HFM Prevention Council. Mr. Farber stated that as they went through the budget there were several places where Ms. Greene eliminated substance abuse prevention programs and what she is proposing to do is do it all through a contract. She eliminated those staff positions and added the money to the prevention council contract. That was the RFP she went through. He thinks it is becoming even more important that the county, Ms. Greene, and the Board maintain a solid relationship with the Prevention Council. As difficult as it is to fill prevention education positions and operate that program, he understands Ms. Greene's thinking. It was one of the means and tools they used much like the Home Run Program or Families First Contract with the schools. They used those vehicles to create relationships with the students in the schools that then made it easier for us to provide actual counseling. He thinks it makes perfect sense to have the Prevention Council do that. Mr. Farber asked about A.4310.430, MH Resource Officer Contractual, at \$35,000. The Chairman stated that they aren't doing Indian Lake School anymore. Mr. Farber stated that made sense for the drop from 2022 of \$109,000 down to \$76,000 for 2023 and he knew there was a partial year but not a further drop. He thinks that \$35,000 is a dramatic number. He couldn't remember where the county was with the Resource Officer, but he thought there were several schools that were continuing to participate. The Budget Officer stated that he would talk to Ms. Greene regarding this. Mr. Farber stated that this would also tie into the information he is getting from Ms. Hutchins.

Mr. Farber stated that he was struck that the total activity for A.6100.401, Medicaid to State, was \$458,399. He asked the Budget Officer if he could see what the current number was now.

As there was no further business, the Chairman recessed the meeting until November 15, 2023 at 10:30AM.