

2024

SECOND ANNUAL SESSION

NOVEMBER 13, 2024

The Board convened at 10:30 A.M. in the Supervisors' Chambers at the Court House, Lake Pleasant, New York, with the Deputy Chairman, Steven M. Tomlinson presiding. Mr. Tomlinson led the members of the Board of Supervisors in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

The Clerk, Mrs. Laura Abrams, did the opening prayer and called the roll with the following Supervisors answering:

Arietta	Chris D. Rhodes
Benson	Phillip C. Snyder
Hope	Steven M. Tomlinson
Indian Lake	ABSENT
Inlet	ABSENT
Lake Pleasant	Betsy A. Bain
Long Lake	Clay J. Arsenault
Morehouse	Anthony Fernandez
Wells	Beth Hunt

Also present: Barry Baker-Real Property Tax Director/Budget Officer and Jodie Small-Treasurer

Public Comment: No one present

Reports of Standing/Special Committees:

Mr. Rhodes: Last week there was a 911 call routing meeting. The Town of Inlet Supervisor put a stop work order on the work the County is doing at the shelter. On Thursday Dan from DPW was there working, the Sheriff had him leave the job site. The Sheriff and Tim O'Neill, Emergency Services Manager, met with Andy Kalil and Herb Schmid on Friday. They explained the call routing process and what the County was trying to do. Mr. Kalil and Mr. Schmid had not gotten the information from the Supervisor and were very understanding and supportive. The stop work order still hasn't been lifted. Time is getting short, once we get snow, they won't be able to finish the project. They did keep Nokia and Midstate on schedule in regard to microwave installation on Blue Mountain, McCauley Mountain and the Inlet Site. He is hopeful that they will do those sites and that the Town of Inlet raises the stop work order so they can finish that before the snow. Mr. Arsenault asked if he was able to talk with Mr. Frey about the situation. Mr. Rhodes stated that he had thought Mr. Frey had sent an email copying everyone stating that if the Board starts to play fair, he will consider lifting it. He added that he wasn't sure why the County wasn't considered as playing fair. We are just doing the best they can. We had to do the resolution to get all the cellular phone calls in and then the County could ask to break away Inlet the way that they want but it has to go through this process. Mr. Fernandez asked what the grounds were for the stop work order. Mr. Rhodes stated that it was because we didn't table the resolution. Mr. Fernandez stated that

isn't grounds, Mr. Rhodes agreed. Mr. Arsenault asked if the stop work order was even legal. Mr. Rhodes stated probably not but that Mr. Frey has the contract with Corasanti. He thought for sure that Mr. Schmid and Mr. Kalil would have gone back on Friday, and they would have heard something. Mr. Snyder asked if they knew they could break away from the 911 calling later. Mr. Rhodes stated that they did.

Mr. Arsenault: Stated that he hoped to get the budget work done.

Mr. Fernandez: Stated that the new Public Health Director started yesterday. He is going to be doing a review of the office. Victoria Fish, Emergency Preparedness Coordinator, resigned and he's familiar with doing the reports that she was required to do. On Friday they will be discussing the policy on uniforms.

Tentative Budget Review:

The Budget Officer stated that if the Board wanted to stay under the tax cap, then they would have to stay within \$9,876,000 for the total taxes to be raised in 2025.

The Budget Officer stated that they didn't have a tax auction in 2024 but are anticipating one in 2025. There will be some revenue coming in for those properties, but the County won't be able to retain as much as they did in the past. The Treasurer further discussed the change. There is a time period where property owners can come forward and claim excess funds.

The Budget Officer discussed the funding of the County Manager position and that he left the Chairman and Board salary flat, and the Budget Officer position would be eliminated. Mr. Rhodes stated that he wanted to go on record that he strongly opposed the County Manager position. The taxpayers are paying Supervisors of each town to perform this duty. The only way he would consider it is if they reduced the Chairman of Board salary by \$10,000 and the Town Supervisors salaries by \$90,000. That would cover the \$100,000. They have the Budget Officer at \$7,200 which could go towards the health benefits. He stated that they would still be well behind with all the fringe. He also stated that the system could use some reorganization and restructuring; they would need Department Heads to be involved. He asked if the Supervisors were having trouble dealing with extra work. Do they want to lessen the workload? Is the Chairman overwhelmed? He is Supervisor of the largest town in the county and he's the Chairman. Mr. Arsenault stated that he didn't think any of them knew it was in the budget, he wasn't prepared for the discussion today. He thought everyone knew how he felt. He thought it would be a good reorganizational tool for them to have a County Manager. They are one of the very few counties that don't. The County has Department Heads making well over \$100,000. He doesn't feel that it's a burden on the taxpayers at all. They could find \$100,000 in the budget quite easily. He thinks they'd be remiss not to at least have a serious discussion about it. They have to find the right person to take the job. Ms. Bain asked if they are going to find the right person for \$100,000. Mr. Arsenault stated that was the next thing, there are Department Heads making over that so they aren't going to find anyone for \$100,000. Ms. Bain stated that the person they want isn't going to be a friend or relative of someone right here in the community. They are going to want someone that's going to come in with an open mind and go to each department and be able to see what the issues are and try to get them resolved. Mr. Arsenault stated that there would have to be a job description. Mr. Rhodes

stated that he didn't see the justification for the position. Mr. Arsenault stated that he thinks that everyone is doing their job at the County. He also stated that he would continue doing the same duties that he is doing. It's just having somebody to organize all of it and be able to come to the Board with an unbiased opinion on what departments may or may not need, he thought that would be a helpful tool for the Board. Ms. Bain stated that with Department Heads she doesn't think the Board communicates well enough with them and she has had that brought to her attention quite a few times. She thinks that the Board needs to work on that because that would make them a lot stronger and not need a County Manager. The Board discussed further if there is a need for the Chairman to be in the office daily and what else is required. The Deputy Chairman stated that a lot of Town Supervisors don't make a lot so to cut the position of the Supervisors, he isn't in favor of, but he thought there were a lot of ways like Mr. Arsenault stated where they could accommodate. Mr. Arsenault stated that it is a big decision to add this high-level position to our county government. Mr. Arsenault asked what the Chairman's thoughts were regarding putting it in the budget. The Budget Officer stated that he thought it was to open it up for discussion as it has been discussed in the past. Mr. Rhodes stated that another idea would be the Deputy Chairman taking a bigger role and receive an additional salary which would come from reducing the Chairman salary. Mr. Fernandez stated that where he previously worked, they had a County Manager, and he set the tone. Ms. Bain stated that this Board would be less involved. Mr. Fernandez stated that the process was that the County Manager would be gathering information so the Supervisors could come and make their decisions. The County Manager is going to get more power as time goes on. The Supervisors aren't going to have as much interaction with the Departments. Mr. Snyder stated that the County Manager isn't going to have free reign and do whatever they want. Mr. Arsenault agreed and stated that there is still going to be Committee meetings. Mr. Fernandez stated that he liked getting the Deputy more involved and adding an additional salary, taking some of the weight off the Chairman and see how that works. Mr. Snyder stated that he thought they needed to wait until the Chairman is back. The Deputy Chairman stated that they all are Supervisors and with or without the Chairman they still need to make a decision. Mr. Rhodes stated that personally he didn't want to take a pay cut but is trying to manage the funds properly. The Deputy Chairman stated that to have a Deputy more involved means you have to have a Chairman that's willing to let a Deputy be more involved. Mr. Rhodes agreed they need to work together. Mr. Arsenault stated that he was intrigued by that. He has a very open mind. The Deputy Chairman stated that what they discussed upstairs regarding the assessor position is just as important to him as adding this position. If they feel they can move on then that's \$100,000 right there that would fund that position. Mr. Rhodes agreed. Mr. Arsenault stated that maybe we are on to something with that, remove this \$100,000 position and put it towards the salary of the assessor and do Mr. Rhode's idea. Obviously, they have to have this discussion with the Chairman; cutting the Chairman's salary and giving some to the Deputy Chairman. Mr. Rhodes stated that they would need to come up with a plan for who does what. It was decided that there would be a Finance Committee meeting on November 15th to discuss it further.

The Clerk of the Board discussed A.1010.406, Law Books. The contract is coming up next July and she has already started working with them about changing the way we are doing our online law books.

The Deputy Chairman discussed Deputy Clerk, 1040.102. He asked if they were reducing the hours back to 35. The Clerk of the Board stated that she thought that it was staying at 40 hours.

The Deputy Chairman stated that he hadn't heard any discussion of why they were reducing it. The Clerk of the Board stated that the Budget Officer reduced it in the tentative budget. The Budget Officer stated that it was tied to the County Manager. The Clerk of the Board stated that wasn't the conversation that was had. The Budget Officer stated that she was granted 35 to 40 hours to work on EMS grants. He took that she was due 3%. He believes that is what that number would be plus a step. The Deputy Chairman asked if they should change it back to 40 hours. The Clerk of the Board stated that the Budget Officer had mentioned the County Manager position as a reason for reducing it and she hadn't heard that. She had a discussion with the Deputy Clerk. She is not doing as much now that Carrie O'Neill, Sheriff's Confidential Secretary, and Tim O'Neill, Emergency Services Manager, have taken on more. She is still monitoring all the grants and keeping track of them. She believes she is also checking the quarterlies with Ms. O'Neill. She is not spending as much time as she did in the beginning. The Clerk of the Board stated that she was not sure that the Sheriff and the Confidential Secretary were thinking that the County Manager would be involved in the grants. Mr. Rhodes stated that he hadn't heard that either. The Clerk of the Board stated that it should be a conversation with the Emergency Management Department. She is doing less for Emergency Management, but she could always use her. Her office is covering a lot. The Deputy Chairman stated that he would like to see that money go back in. The Clerk of that Board stated that she needs her and she further discussed the office responsibilities. Mr. Rhodes stated that he supports putting it back in at the Clerk of the Board's request. Mr. Arsenault agreed with that. Mr. Rhodes stated that if they were not going to do the County Manager position, then that keeps the work on the Clerk of Board's office. The Deputy Chairman agreed the position should be 40 hours. The Clerk of the Board thanked the Board. Mr. Arsenault confirmed with the Budget Officer that the budget would be increased. The Budget Officer stated that he would make sure that was the correct number and add it for the next meeting.

A.1040.410, Computer Maintenance. Mr. Arsenault asked if the contract had gone up. The Clerk of the Board stated that it goes up constantly. The contract covers all the licenses, she is paying for everybody's Microsoft licenses. Every time we add new employees there is an increase for the multiple fees that are per employee.

Mr. Arsenault discussed the DA's salary. He stated that he thought they were going to fund that because the State was going to reimburse it. Mr. Rhodes stated that if it goes full-time then the State will reimburse a portion so it will still increase the County contribution close to \$30,000. Mr. Fernandez asked if the Board was going to ask the DA for some information, to see what's going on? It's a quarter of a million dollars. The Budget Officer stated that it's the same amount that is paid throughout the state. It is the state rate for judges if they are full-time. Reimbursement from the state is currently \$72,189. The Deputy Chairman stated that he thought this was going to be contingent on the State approving it. They further discussed the DA's office. Mr. Arsenault asked if her Committee Chair should reach out and ask her if she wants to come in. Mr. Snyder stated that he thought she wanted full time but he would like to leave it where it is. The Deputy Chairman stated that if her Committee Chair is good with leaving her part time he was too. Mr. Snyder stated that he didn't feel her case load was that large. Mr. Fernandez stated that they did give her a 5% raise when she took office. The Deputy Chairman stated that the DA's biggest request was for her Confidential Secretary. The Clerk of the Board stated that she requested a grade increase and she thought that the DA was going to send down a resolution for it after the committee but she didn't. Mr. Arsenault stated that it was a 30% increase. Mr. Snyder asked if she was requesting \$63,350.

The Budget Officer stated that it would be a grade increase and she would receive a step in 2025. He knew she was discussing it with Personnel. It would also be an increase to 40 hours from 35. Ms. Hunt asked if the DA also said that she wasn't going to hire an Account Clerk. Mr. Arsenault asked if the Board was good with \$67,208 for the Confidential Secretary. The Deputy Chairman stated what the Board needs to remember, is if she gave up that position then they can't go back. Mr. Arsenault asked about the 1165.106, ADA. He stated that it went from \$66,000 to \$55,000. The Budget Officer stated that she requested \$55 per hour for 1,000 hours. Ms. Hunt stated up to 1,000 hours. The DA has requested funding the ADA position as PT. They further discussed and stated that the DA needed to do a resolution to increase the Confidential Secretary's hours and change the grade. The Deputy Chairman confirmed that at this time they were not requesting the DA position to be full time. They need more justification, Mr. Rhodes thought that was probably why the State denied it previously. The caseload isn't there.

Recess for lunch at 11:45AM

Reconvened at 12:50PM

Tentative Budget Review: (*continued*)

The Board discussed the Treasurer's salary. The request for 1325.101, County Treasurer was \$96,000. The Board approved the request.

Mr. Rhodes discussed the Sheriff's salary at \$131,178. Part time Emergency Services Director is in the budget separate, that is 3645.104, budgeted at \$15,000.

Other Reports:

Mr. Rhodes: Stated that Mr. Frey's stop work order had been lifted.

As there was no further business, the Deputy Chairman recessed the meeting until November 15, 2024 at 10:30 AM.