

MINUTES

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Wednesday, May 9, 2023 9:00 a.m.

Present: Supervisors Leonard, Groat, Robusto, VanLaeken and Miller, County Administrator Rick House, Fiscal Assistant Brian Sams, Auditor Kristen Scott, Information Technology Director Matt Ury, Purchasing Director Chris O'Connor, Real Property Tax Director Karen Ambroz, Land Bank Director Mark Humbert, Land Bank Deputy Director Kaleigh Flynn, Treasurer Patrick Schmitt and Deputy Treasurer Steve Watrous. Supervisor Bender was not present for the meeting.

Minutes from the April 12th Committee meeting were approved as written.

The following transmittals were referred to the Finance Committee:

--Authorization for the Sheriff to sign an agreement with Newark-Wayne Community Hospital to use their facility located at 6692 Middle Road, Sodus, for training purposes at no cost to the County. Approved 4-0.

--Authorization for the Sheriff to sign an agreement with Oak Park Marina in the Town of Huron for boat space dockage. Approved 4-0.

--Authorization to allow step increases for part-time Deputy Sheriffs based on experience. The increase is requested for recruitment and retention purposes. Approved 4-0.

--Authorization allow for step increases for part-time Correction Officers at the Sheriff's Office. Approved 4-0.

--Authorization to amend the Sheriff's budget to pay \$37,400 in unanticipated training expenses. Approved 4-0.

--Authorization to amend the County budget and transfer \$909,875 from the County's General Fund for operating costs associated with Wayne County Emergency Medical Services. Approved 4-0.

--Authorization to purchase four portable radios and pagers for EMS for a cost not to exceed \$10,215 for the new Countywide Ambulance System. Approved 4-0.

--Authorization for the Chairman of the Board to sign a three-year agreement with EMS Billing Services for the provision of medical billing for Wayne County Advanced Life Support/Wayne County Emergency Medical Services. Approved 4-0.

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--Authorization to create and fill four Paramedic, 12 Emergency Medical Technicians, six Substitute Emergency Medical Technicians and one Emergency Medical Services Supervisor position in the Wayne County Emergency Medical Services Department. Approved 4-0.

--Authorization to transfer \$50,000 from the General Fund into the capital project account for the Public Safety Radio Project. Approved 4-0.

--Authorization for the Emergency Management Services Department to accept 2022 State Homeland Security Program grant funding of \$141,106 and amend the budget. Approved 4-0.

--Authorization for the Emergency Management Services Department to accept 2021 State Homeland Security Program grant funding of \$43,829 and amend the budget. Approved 4-0.

--Authorization to declare two vehicles, a snowmobile trailer, boat motor, two sets of 18" truck tires and gas water booster heater in the Highway Department surplus and dispose of according to County Policy. Approved 4-0.

--Authorization for the Chairman of the Board to sign an agreement between the Highway Department and All Ways Concrete Pumping to provide maintenance on a culvert on Ridge Road in Ontario for a price not to exceed \$5,000. Approved 4-0.

--Authorization for the Chairman of the Board to sign an agreement between the Highway Department and Stimm Associates Inc. for grout services on a culvert on Ridge Road in Ontario for a cost not to exceed \$19,218. Approved 4-0.

--Authorization for the Chairman of the Board to sign an agreement between the Public Works Department and Lu Engineers for environmental remediation services for underground tanks and contaminated soil at the east end of the County's Highway Facility in Lyons for a price not to exceed \$19,143. Approved 4-0.

--Authorization for the Chairman of the Board to sign a proposal between the Public Work Department and Lu Engineers for design services for retrofitting a propane simulator at the County's Fire Training Drill Tower and making needed modifications to the building to allow for the installation of the unit for a price not to exceed \$37,470. Approved 4-0.

--Authorization for the Chairman of the Board to sign a three-year agreement between the Public Works Department and Cummins Inc. for emergency generator maintenance services for a cost not to exceed \$44,031. Approved 4-0.

--Authorization for the Chairman of the Board to sign a supplemental agreement between the Public Works Department and LaBella Associates for additional work on the Countywide Emergency Medical Service Project for a cost not to exceed \$66,100. Approved 4-0.

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--Authorization to transfer \$143,301 into the General Fund from the H Project Account balance and close Building Project accounts. Approved 4-0.

--Authorization for the Tourism Department to accept the low bid of \$18,287 from Dual Print and Mail for the printing 40,000 Wayne County Travel Guides. Approved 4-0.

--Authorization to issue requests for proposals for a qualified environmental firm to assist the Economic Development/Planning Department in administering Federal Revolving Loan Fund monies. Approved 4-0.

--Authorization to abolish the position of Senior Planner and create, and fill the position of Planner in the Economic Development/Planning Department. Approved 4-0.

--Authorization to expand the Business Park Feasibility Study to include the former Butler Prison site utilizing funds from the Industrial Development Agency. Approved 4-0.

--Authorization to create and fill a temporary Secretary position in the Economic Development/Planning Department to allow for overlap training. Approved 4-0.

--Authorization to set a date for a Public Hearing on the County's Comprehensive Housing Plan. This is the second Public Hearing held for the updated Plan. Approved 5-0.

--Authorization to establish pay rates for Election Workers during early voting. Approved 4-0.

--Authorization for the Chairman of the Board to sign a contract between the Public Health Department and Health Research Inc. to receive \$129,427. Approved 4-0.

--Authorization to approve paying \$7,498 from the General Fund for emergency repair work due to a leak in the Nursing Homes cooling system. Approved 4-0.

--Authorization to abolish the position of Telephone Operator and create, and fill the position of Receptionist at the Nursing Home. Approved 4-0.

--Authorization to write-off uncollectable accounts for the Nursing Home totaling \$1,558,223. Approved 4-0.

--Authorization for the Chairman of the Board to sign a contract between the Department of Social Services and ARC Wayne for the provision of outreach services for the Home Energy Assistance Program for a two-year cost of \$121,793. Approved 4-0.

--Authorization to amend Board Resolution #198-23 for the appointment of an Assistant Department of Social Services Attorney. The original request asked for a transfer of funds that is not necessary. Approved 4-0.

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--Authorization to purchase tables and chairs for the newly renovated lunchroom in the Department of Social Services and transfer \$24,110 to make the purchase. Approved 4-0.

--Authorization for the Chairman of the Board to sign a three-year contract between the Department of Aging and Youth and Liturgical Publications for printing the *Three-Score* quarterly newsletter for an annual cost of \$3,000. Approved 4-0.

Ken Lauderdale, past Western Regional Off-Track Betting (OTB) Corporation Board Member representing Wayne County, came into the meeting to inform Supervisors a bill passed as part of the State budget to change the structure of the Western Regional OTB Board of Directors. Mr. Lauderdale said the bill reduces the input of rural communities and gives disproportionate power to the Cities of Buffalo and Rochester. The change was made without any input or consultation from regional stakeholders. The bill immediately removed all current OTB Directors—Mr. Lauderdale held one of these positions. A new Board of Director will be formed to give more power to larger municipal governments and take away the voices of smaller and rural counties. The OTB Corporation will now have a weighted vote for Board members. The past Board of Directors, with a representative from each of the 15 counties in the western region, had one vote each in decision-making. Voting will now be on 100 possible votes with Wayne County allowed three votes. The change negatively alters the balance representation formula previously provided by the State Legislature and Governor.

Mr. Lauderdale said he would accept appointment to the new OTB Board, or the Board of Supervisors could make another selection. He reviewed what he does as a member of this Board. Last year, Western Regional OTB distributed over \$8.4 million to all member municipalities in surcharges and earnings. Even though revenue from OTB could be greatly reduced to Wayne and other small counties, Mr. Lauderdale stated the need for Wayne County to have a representative on the Board. Committee members unanimously supported Mr. Lauderdale filling the newly created Western Regional OTB Board of Director's position to represent Wayne County. A transmittal was handwritten. Approved 4-0.

Mr. Humbert and Ms. Flynn updated the Committee on the following Land Bank projects:

- There is a buyer very interested in purchasing the Rando property in Macedon. The Land Bank is working to prepare the property for sale.
- The most recent grant application submitted by the Land Bank was not funded. It was amended and funds re-applied for. The Land Bank also applied for Environmental Protection Agency funding. The Town of Lyons applied for RESTORE NY funding. Mr. Humbert is working with Lyons businesses that may be affected if these grant funds are received and remediation work done. Community Development Block Grant funding received by the Land Bank has been successfully closed out.
- There are 10 properties listed on the County's 2023 tax foreclosure list the Land Bank will request to take ownership of, they will be individually reviewed later in the meeting.

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The monthly activities report for the Information Technology Department was included with the agenda. Staff installed 18 copiers, established a new Help Desk ticket system and balanced the figures for property tax collection. The new Help Desk ticket system provides the user with an update on the status of their request, and maintains an inventory of County computer equipment. Work continues on American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funded security projects. Mr. Ury said some new Wi-Fi access points were tested, that went well. They will be installed in the Public Safety Building utilizing grant funds. The switches in the County Clerk's Office scheduled for replacement in 2024 will not be replaced until 2026, as the manufacturer extended their useful life. There is a data conversion project underway at the County Clerk's Office. Mr. Ury stated the importance of having records digitized for security and for public access. Other ways the County could use a digitalization system were noted.

Mr. Ury reviewed information obtained while attending the State IT Conference last week. All municipalities remain concerned about IT security.

Mr. Ury presented a transmittal requesting authorization for the Chairman of the Board to sign an agreement with Toshiba Business Solutions for a cost not to exceed \$1,300 for maintenance of the Kip wide format scanner located in the Real Property Tax Department. The unit only comes with a 60-day warranty. Approved 4-0.

Mr. House reviewed a discussion held at the Government Operations Committee meeting last week regarding utilization of electric voting poll pads. Their usage will require connectivity issues be resolved in each polling site. Mr. Ury said he has a meeting set up for Friday with the Board of Elections to discuss this undertaking; he will have a better handle on the workload following that meeting.

Mr. Groat questioned if the project with the County's IT Department and municipalities to digitize records is ongoing. Mr. Ury said it is. The cost of \$2,000 covers licensing for the laser fiche product. The County recently updated its servers and storage, so it would be easy to add town records to the County's 'cloud'.

Items included in the County's 2024-2028 Capital Plan that affect the IT Department:

- 2024: \$120,000 to replace outdated security cameras.
- 2025: \$120,000 to replace outdated security cameras.
- 2026: \$35,000 to replace remaining outdated security cameras.
- Ms. Scott is working alone this week, as her Audit/Contract Specialist is on vacation. There is an individual interested in the Internal Audit Clerk position; the position will be offered to him later this week. During April, the Department audited 2,026 invoices and approved 2,017 for a total cost of \$7.3 million.

- Ms. Scott met with Sodexo Representatives regarding contract and invoice procedures used when working/billing the County Nursing Home. She will continue to meet with Nursing Home administration and Sodexo to see how some expenses at the facility can be decreased in relation to the census or eliminated. The County's external auditing firm was on site at 16 Williams Street to gather some information to complete the Nursing Home's portion of the audit, and begin work on the County's portion. After review, external auditors made a recommendation to write off a portion of the Nursing Home's accounts receivable balance as bad debt, as it is no longer reasonable to be collected. This is being done through Board Resolution at the May meeting.
- Ms. Scott attended NYSAC Finance School last week; there was a lot of discussion on the newly passed State budget. The budget included language to raise assigned counsel rates in New York State for the first time in 19 years. Currently \$60/hour is paid for violation or misdemeanor cases and \$75 for felony or Family Court matters. New legislation increased the rate to \$119/hour for violation and misdemeanors and \$158/hour, depending on the location in the State, for felony or Family Court matters. The State put \$92 million in their budget to offset county costs related to increasing rates paid to lawyers assigned to represent low-income New Yorkers in criminal cases. Ms. Scott said half of the hourly rate is paid directly by counties; the other half may be reimbursed by the State if submitted for reimbursement within one year. The State adopted a time line on acceptance of reimbursements. She will review, update and distribute a copy of the County policy relating to assigned counsel fees and send to all assigned counsel attorneys and the Bar Association stating under no circumstances can bills be accepted if they are in excess of one year old. Ms. Scott noted the new rate went into effect April 1, 2023; this could make some billing made earlier in the year eligible for additional hourly rate payments. The need for the County's Assigned Counsel Administrator to assist in making attorneys in the program aware of changes in State regulations regarding assigned counsel billing was stated. Ms. Scott voiced concern that some attorneys are including mileage expenses on their bills, on top of their hourly rate for their travel time. A decision needs to be made if mileage reimbursements will be granted, on top of hourly reimbursements, to assigned counsel rates, whether this guidance is from the State or other sources. Ms. Scott noted the presiding Judge is responsible for approving assigned counsel vouchers; she will draft a letter and updated County Policy to Judges regarding new rates and mileage reimbursement on top of hourly rates for attorney travel time.
- Ms. Scott reported with the passage of the New York State budget, the State will withhold hundreds of millions of Federal dollars it usually passes to counties to help fund Medicaid; health insurance for low-income people. It was negotiated into the State budget that Federal funds assisting counties with Medicaid costs will be decreased over three years in the State budget. Mr. House said this will cost approximately \$1.5 million to the County's 2023 budget and \$4-5 million in 2024. New York counties pay more for Medicaid than any other municipality in the country.
- Ms. Scott noted there was also discussion on trends that the New York State Comptroller's Office is seeing while conducting municipal, more specifically County audits at the NYSAC Conference. The New York State Comptroller's Office is specifically reviewing County's

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- financial management and looking to see if recommendations made in prior audit reports have been implemented. Ms. Scott said she also attended a session with the Office of Inspector General regarding American Rescue Plan Act funding and the potential for upcoming audits. This session discussed the expectations the Office of the Inspector General has for the documentation of the use of ARPA funding.

During April, the Purchasing Office processed 63 purchase offers for a total of \$1.1 million. Mr. O'Connor created 37 new vendor accounts and modified 131 vendor records. Three Requests for Proposals and one competitive bid were released. He continues to work on several Requests for Proposals and bids. The position of Purchasing Clerk remains vacant. Mr. O'Connor is working on alternative ways to advertise the position.

Mr. O'Connor attended the Western Region SAMPO Conference in April. He stated the need for each county to have a written purchasing policy and to adhere to it, as that was one of the commonly cited issues during recent Comptroller audits. Examples of procurement fraud and how to spot it, in addition to a discussion regarding Software as a Service (SaaS) and software licensing, were some topics presented during the conference. He plans to review and update the County's Purchasing Policy over the next several months, as this should occur annually, and is working with the IT Department to get a website for the Purchasing Office.

The monthly report for the Real Property Tax Office was included with the agenda. Tax maps have been updated on the County website, the AutoCad conversion project is proceeding, and the Real Property Tax Auction is scheduled for June 23rd at 10:00 a.m. All properties included in the auction will be available for preview from June 1st-22nd at collarcityauctiononline.com; at this time, only 22 parcels are included in the sale. Ms. Ambroz hosted the Annual Board of Assessment Review Training on May 4th; 27 BAR members attended. Preparation for village tax bills is underway. The tentative assessment roll information was printed and provided to Assessors prior to the May 1st filing date. Staff processed 164 deeds in April.

Ms. Ambroz is working with assessors on charge backs placed on property tax bills. Charge backs are created when a property owner not entitled to an exemption benefitted from that exemption. At this time, the County has over \$52,000 in charge backs.

Ms. Ambroz questioned how the County would like to handle parcels included in the tax foreclosure sale that are land locked. Each parcel was reviewed through a PowerPoint presentation. Ms. Ambroz would like to offer the parcels through sealed bid to adjacent property owners, if approved by the Committee, and get the properties back on the tax roll. If bids are not received, the parcels will be placed in the tax foreclosure auction. Supervisors agreed the properties could be offered, through sealed bid, to adjacent property owners.

Maps and photos of each property to be included in the County's on-line tax foreclosure auction were reviewed. Ms. Ambroz noted proposed changes the State is considering for the collection

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of unpaid debts when a home sells through the tax foreclosure process. Proposed legislation states surplus money generated by a tax lien sale must be given to the mortgage holder.

Each property scheduled to be sold through the County's tax auction was viewed. The Land Bank is taking title to 10 properties, and will again receive any profit made through the tax sale. Mr. Robusto stated some bidders get upset when they find out a property they were interested in was removed from the auction and given to the Land Bank. Ms. Ambroz noted there are several properties that were given to the Land Bank that have yet to be placed back on the tax roll. Mr. Humbert said some of the parcels are part of a larger project and have not been offered for sale. He stated most properties the Land Bank obtains are rehabilitated to make them livable and sold or demolished. Supervisors questioned what happens if a very low bid is received on a property with much higher value. Mr. Schmitt said the Board of Supervisors has the right to reject any bid received. Mr. VanLaeken reviewed the condition of a property located on Norsen Road in Arcadia and requested it be taken off the tax foreclosure sale list and given to the Land Bank. Photos of the property were reviewed. It was agreed the Land Bank would be given this property.

Mr. Schmitt stated write-offs for properties the County is foreclosing on for the tax sale total \$295,000. He also attended NYSAC Finance School where changes in tax foreclosure revenues were discussed. The change would not allow municipalities to keep excess funding from the sale as they have in the past, they would have to return any excess to the person who owns the property foreclosed upon. New legislation will not allow for the transfer of properties from the County to the Land Bank. The State should make a decision if they will change the way funds earned by municipalities during tax foreclosure sales are kept within the next few months.

The County Treasurer presented the following transmittals:

--Authorization to refund an erroneous tax payment of \$1,275.29. Mr. Schmitt reviewed how a Sodus resident erroneously paid property taxes on a parcel that was not theirs in the Town of Rose. The error was confirmed. Approved 4-0.

--Authorization for the Chairman of the Board to sign a contract with New York State Industry for the Disabled for a scanning project at a cost of \$69,976. The project is paid for with ARPA funding. Mr. Schmitt noted many old documents are stored in the basement of the William Street building; this is the best way to preserve them. Approved 4-0.

--Authorization to transfer property to the Wayne County Regional Land Bank Corporation. The 10 properties requested for transfer to the Land Bank will be remediated to improve the local community and placed back on the tax roll. One additional property on Norsen Road in the Town of Arcadia was added to this number earlier in the meeting. Approved 4-0.

Mr. Sams presented the following transmittals:

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--Authorization to set a date for a public hearing for the 2024-2028 Wayne County Capital Plan. Approved 4-0.

--Authorization to amend Board Resolution No. 247-23 to execute contracts for the Wayne County Fair. The new request is for two booths for the Tourism Department, not one. Approved 4-0.

--Authorization to adopt the mortgage tax report and authorize the County Treasurer to make payments to towns and villages totaling \$916,473. Approved 5-0.

Mr. Sams briefly reviewed the 2024-2028 Capital Plan. All Supervisors were provided with a copy of the Plan prior to today's meeting. The total cost of the five-year plan is \$84 million with roughly a 50/50 split between local and non-local funding. Parts of the plan were discussed in the Public Works, Public Safety and Economic Development/Planning Committee meetings. Proposed funding for each of the years:

- 2024: Total cost \$18.8 million with a County cost of \$9.7 million. The projects planned for 2024 were reviewed in additional detail.
- 2025: Total cost \$14.5 million with a County cost of \$5.5 million.
- 2026: Total cost \$10.4 million with a County cost of \$4.7 million.
- 2027: Total cost of \$22 million with a County cost of \$17 million.
- 2028: Total cost \$9 million with a County cost of \$4 million.

The meeting adjourned at 10:55 a.m. The next meeting of the Finance Committee is scheduled for Tuesday, June 13th at 9:00 a.m.