

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: BUDGET COMMITTEE

DATE: FEBRUARY 29, 2016

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS: THOMAS
MERLINO
CONOVER
GIRARD
STROUGH
BEATY
BROCK
SIMPSON
SOKOL

OTHERS PRESENT:

KEVIN B. GERAGHTY, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD
PAUL DUSEK, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
AMANDA ALLEN, CLERK OF THE BOARD
SUPERVISORS BRAYMER
FRASIER
SEEBER
WOOD
MICHAEL SWAN, COUNTY TREASURER
JOANN MCKINSTRY, ASSISTANT TO THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
TRAVIS WHITEHEAD, TOWN OF QUEENSBURY RESIDENT
DON LEHMAN, *THE POST STAR*
CHRISTINE SCANLON, *SUN COMMUNITY NEWS*
MOLLY GANOTES, LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST

Please note the following contains a summarization of the February 29, 2016 meeting of the Budget Committee; the meeting in its entirety can be viewed on the Warren County website using the following link:

<http://www.warrencountyny.gov/gov/comm/Archive/2016/budget/>

Mr. Thomas called the meeting of the Budget Committee to order at 9:01 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Girard, seconded by Mr. Merlino and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the previous Committee meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk of the Board.

Commencing the agenda review, Mr. Thomas stated the purpose of the meeting was to discuss a source of funding for the SUNY Adirondack, Nursing, Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (NSTEM) project and the Court Expansion Project totaling \$620,000.

Mr. Conover suggested reducing the anticipated sales tax revenue projections during the budget process. Mike Swan, County Treasurer, informed based on what was received; projections for sales tax revenue were on track. Mr. Thomas spoke of new revenue from the Medicaid settlement in the amount of \$339,000 that would be paid over a five year period. Mr. Strough mentioned the property on Gurney Lane Road was a valuable asset and could be sold for a one time advance in revenue. Mr. Swan advised money from tobacco settlements in the amount of \$100,000 were expected and would be distributed through an escrow account. He apprised the SUNY Adirondack NSTEM Project was financed through a short term note for \$3.5 million. He said in the following year the Court Expansion Project, as well as the remaining funding for the NSTEM Project would be financed through a bond that would pay off the short term note. He advised the reason was to finance the exact amount needed to finish the projects. Mr. Merlino indicated he was working on a tax plan that he would unveil at the March 18, 2016 Board Meeting. Mr. Thomas remarked eliminating 3-4 Warren County positions would leave more money in the budget. He informed the issue with invasive species was being reviewed by the County Attorney, as it had been discussed to allocate the \$250,000 from the Occupancy Tax reserve rather than from the General Fund for this expense. Chairman Geraghty expressed the need to collect \$102,000 in grant money from the Watershed Coalition. Paul Dusek, County Administrator, informed the problem with collecting grant funds was complex as the process took time and involved other municipalities. He stated the other problem was the Board approved projects before funding was available. Mr. Girard expressed there were unforeseen expenditures that frequently occurred.

Continuing with action item number two on the agenda review, Mr. Thomas questioned who would operate the Floyd Bennett Memorial Airport or if it should be sold. Ms. Seeber inquired if leasing the Airport was an option. Mr. Dusek reported the Economic Development Corporation (EDC) hired a consultant to study different airport options and what operating plan would be best for the Floyd Bennett Memorial Airport.

Mr. Simpson suggested taking a look at increasing the sales tax rate by 1%. Mr. Swan expressed a 1% increase in the sales tax rate would result in a nearly \$16 million revenue increase. A brief discussion ensued.

Travis Whitehead, Town of Queensbury Resident, expressed that it was important to maintain the Performance Evaluation Report for the Siemens contract. Mr. Swan indicated he was instructed to stop paying for the report. Mr. Whitehead indicated paying \$8,000 a year was a small amount to ensure a \$4 million guarantee. Chairman Geraghty advised the \$8,000 was being paid by the purchaser of the former Westmount Health Facility.

There being no further business to come before the Budget Committee, on motion made by Mr. Simpson and seconded by Mr. Strough, Mr. Thomas adjourned the meeting at 9:56 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Molly Ganotes, Legislative Office Specialist