



FINANCE, LEGAL AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

August 15, 2023

10:30 A.M.

ATTENDANCE:

Legislators: Chair Sauerbrey, Ciotoli, Brown, Mullen, Monell, Standinger, Roberts, Flesher, and Weston.

Staff: Legislative Clerk Haskell, County Attorney DeWind, Treasurer McFadden, Deputy Treasurer Chandler, Chief Accountant Jerzak, Safety Officer Holbrook, Personnel Officer Parke, Public Defender Awad, Assigned Counsel Administrator Graven, Assistant District Attorney Lillian Reardon.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES: Legislator Ciotoli asked for a motion to approve the July 11, 2023, minutes. Legislator Mullen made the motion seconded by Legislator Brown and was unanimously carried.

FINANCIAL: Safety's and Law's budget are tracking well.

OLD BUSINESS:

- Litigation: There has been no movement for the New York City lawsuit since the last Committee meeting. The Emergency Orders still continue for Tioga County. Additional litigation matters will be discussed during executive session.
- In Rem: There has been no progress with New York State's new bill pertaining to In Rems in the Senate. The County auctioned off 20 parcels under tax foreclosure on August 10, 2023, at the Quality Inn in Owego. 150 people total attended with 75 bidders. Highest bids resulted in a total sales income of \$342,000, for a surplus of \$208,000, which will be put into a reserve account. There was discussion regarding staff time and resources for genealogy research costs to comply with what we expect will be required through the new In Rem process.
- Motorola Tower Project: The project continues to move forward.
- Title VI Recertification: The County has been recertified for three years.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Public Defender's Budget: Public Defender Awad presented the budget, noting that there are no changes for 2024. A grant through the Office of Indigent Legal Services (ILS) covers any additional expenses. There have been no changes to this budget in 5 years.

- ILS's Budget: Assigned Counsel Administrator Graven presented the budget. New York State recently increased the assigned counselor rate from \$75 to \$158 per hour. There is a County mandate for an assigned counsel fund. The costs and budget will be changing, and there may be a request for more funds this year. Total expenditure so far this year is \$175,000. New York State reimburses the County for some costs through the Hurrell Harring Grant. The total budget for 2023 is \$368,526 and the projected need for 2024 could be \$115,000 more. New attorneys have been added to the assigned counsel list.
- District Attorney's Budget: Assistant District Attorney Lillian Reardon presented the budget, noting a zero budget with some considerations. The County has experienced an increase in homelessness and violent crime which are impacting their office. The Traffic Diversion program and temporary staff have been helpful. There is no request for additional funds at this time for the 2024 budget, but the District Attorney may request additional funds in the future for expenses related to trials.
- Safety's Budget: County Attorney DeWind presented the budget with no changes for 2024.
- Legal's Budget: County Attorney DeWind presented the budget. There were costs associated with hiring of a new Assistant County Attorney, necessitating the need for an increase in the Training/Dues, and Books object lines. Advertising needs for Fair Housing and Compliance was not included in the 2024 suggested budget, necessitating an increase in the Advertising object line. The propose 2024 budget has a slight increase from the 2023 budget projection in the amount of \$3,650.
- Real Estate Assessor: The County plans to hire a third party to assess the current value of properties eligible for foreclosure due to non-payment of taxes. The Legislature approved splitting the expense with the Land Bank.

PERSONNEL: Secretary to the County Attorney is on vacation August 8 until August 16, 2023.

RESOLUTIONS: AUTHORIZE TRANSFER OF FUNDS FOR PURCHASE OF OFFICE CHAIR FOR THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE; EXECUTE LEASE AND EASEMENT AGREEMENT OF PROPERTY LOCATED AT SOUTH APALACHIN ROAD, APALACHIN, NEW YORK TO INSTALL, HOUSE, AND MAINTAIN A COMMUNICATIONS TOWER; EXECUTE LEASE AND EASEMENT AGREEMENT OF PROPERTY LOCATED AT 54 DODGE ROAD,

SPENCER, NEW YORK TO INSTALL, HOUSE, AND MAINTAIN A COMMUNICATIONS TOWER; EXECUTE LEASE AND EASEMENT AGREEMENT OF PROPERTY LOCATED AT 246 DAVIS ROAD, TOWN OF RICHFORD, NEW YORK TO INSTALL, HOUSE, AND MAINTAIN A COMMUNICATIONS TOWER; EXECUTE LEASE AND EASEMENT AGREEMENT OF PROPERTY LOCATED AT 110 C BABCOCK ROAD, NICHOLS, NEW YORK TO INSTALL, HOUSE, AND MAINTAIN A COMMUNICATIONS TOWER; MODIFY 2023 BUDGET AND APPROPRIATION OF FUNDS SAFETY OFFICE were moved into full Legislative session without further questions.

PROCLAMATIONS: None

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Mr. DeWind asked for an executive session to discuss litigation matters. Legislator Mullen made the motion to enter into executive session, seconded by Legislator Brown at 11:40 A.M. Legislator Brown made the motion to exit from executive session and was seconded by Legislator Flesher at 11:58 A.M.

ADJOURNMENT: Legislator Ciotoli adjourned the Finance, Legal, and Safety Committee meeting at 11:59 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Erin Riddle

Secretary to the First Assistant County Attorney