

FINANCE AND RULES COMMITTEE MEETING
February 19, 2019

Present: Legislators Bryan Moser, Richard Chartrand, John Lehman, and Tom Osborne. Also Chairman Larry Dolhof, Legislators Jerry King, Andrea Moroughan, Randy LaChausse, and Greg Kulzer.

Others Present: County Manager Ryan Piche, County Attorney Joan McNichol, Chris Boulio, Lindsay Burriss, Ann Nortz, Candy Akin, Adam Zehr and reporter Nick Altmire.

Committee Chairman Bryan Moser called the meeting at 5:55 p.m.

Election Commissioners Ann Nortz and Lindsay Burriss made a power point presentation (slides attached) about the Board of Elections. Lewis County Board of Elections maintains voter registration data for approximately 17,000 active voters within the 17 towns, 7 villages, and 5 school from 36 election districts. The staff consists of Democratic Commissioner Lindsay Burriss and her deputy Nicole Demo, Republican Commissioner Ann Nortz and her deputy Angela Peters, 8 Technicians, 6 Greeters, 4 Audit Team workers, and 165 inspectors.

The Election dates for 2019 are March 19th for the Village of Lowville, May 21st for all School Elections, June 25th for the Primary Election, and November 5th for the General Election. In 2015 the Board of legislators urged NYS for a unified primary election date for Federal, State and local primary elections by adopting resolution 177-2015. In 2019 the State has chosen June 25th as the uniform primary election date, which eliminates the local/state primary in September. Lindsay estimates that this will save the county approximately \$35,000 to \$40,000.

Designating Petitions can be signed starting February 26th and need to be filed between April 1st and April 4th. Independent Petitions can be signed starting April 16th and need to be filed between May 21st and May 28th. The Offices to be filled in 2019 are District Attorney, Sheriff, County Clerk, County Treasurer, all 10 Legislator seats, All 17 Town Offices, and several Village positions.

Effective for the November 2019 Election there will be early voting required. Lindsay and Ann have decided to have three sites as the state requires at least one accessible location for every 50,000 people and with our county being so spread out they feel this is the best solution to make it "accessible" for all residents. The cost for inspectors alone will be around \$25,000 as there are certain hours that the sites have to be open for the 18 days prior to the election, including Saturday & Sunday's and major holidays.

Legislator Moser disagreed with the number of sites and firmly believes that one site is sufficient and furthermore would like to know what the state deems as "accessible". Legislator Dolhof wondered if the Legislators have any say in how many sites are used or if that is left solely up to the discretion of the Election Commissioners. Ann stated that she feels, as Commissioner, it is her responsibility to hold fair, accessible elections for all Lewis County residents and that three sites for early voting are necessary to fulfill that obligation.

Lindsay went on to explain the need for electronic pollbooks as each of the three sites for early voting will need to have every election district ballot available as you won't know who might show up at the site to vote. This machine allows the ballots to be printed as needed. Also, this electronic system will keep track each day of who voted in order to assure that no one can vote twice.

Legislator Kulzer stated that it may not be up to the Legislators to choose how many sites are required but they do control the budget which is where the Board of Elections gets funded. In response Lindsay pointed out that she is hoping the state will cover most costs as they have budgeted for election reform, which is what this is. Legislator Kulzer pointed out that one site might be easier to handle versus having three separate ones. It was pointed out that the state allows up to seven voting sites per county.

Ann went on to explain that their current voting machines are old (2008) and are not in the best condition. They have been causing more and more problems with repair parts and working properly. They would like to purchase new ICE voting machines from Dominion which would include a warranty. They are roughly \$10,000 per unit but Ann & Lindsay are meeting with a Dominion rep soon to go over details. They might be able to get a trade in value on the old machines or look at other financing options to lower the overall price. They would like to replace all the units at once so they aren't training workers on different machines, this would be needing 30 machines to replace all the old ones.

Ann concluded the presentation by stating that their central count system is going to be delivered in March. This machine will allow them to count absentee ballots in a fraction of the time and with more accurate results. They had ordered this machine in December after receiving permission from their committee members.

Ryan reported the balances of the Special Legislative Contingency Fund - \$99,942.00; Contingency Fund - \$200,000.00; Capital Data Processing Fund - \$73,968.81; and Capital Equipment Fund - \$641,440.28, of which \$162,572.32 is the Highway portion. There were sales tax receipts of \$12,452,580.70 through 12/31/2018, well above the budgeted level. The Internal Service Fund has a balance of \$4,664,094.96 effective 12/31/18.

Currently the county has brought in an additional 1.4 million dollars in sales tax revenue than what was budgeted for 2018. The books are not finalized for 2018 yet but hopefully next month Patty will be able to provide a presentation on the final 2018 numbers. Ryan believes most departments were on target, the only ones over budget would be the Sheriff's department, Social Services due to unexpected IGT payments, and Office For the Aging due to trouble in revenue reporting. Ryan also briefly explained that in 2019 there may be some additional sales tax revenue from online sales but that was not put in the budget in case it doesn't come to fruition.

Legislative Chairman Dolhof asked Real Property Director Candy Akin to explain the service of scanning and digitalizing documents for the public. Candy has had interest from outside parties for office to scan and digitalize large documents. She would like to offer this service and charge

a fee of \$25.00 for up to 500 pages and then an additional \$0.02 per page for anything above 500. Legislator Moser expressed his concern that it might take away revenue from a local business. Candy explained that they already offer this service for the Building Codes Department free of charge. There was some discussion on whether or not this would be a copyright infringement depending on what the document is. Joan was asked to look into this further and report back to the committee before any further action is taken.

Joan reported that the Electric Charging Stations have been installed and it is up to the county to come up with a fee for public use. The average cost per kWh over the last two years has been 11 cents. It was suggested to start with 20 cents/kWh and adjust it after a couple months if necessary. Charge Point, which is the company that installed these units, gets 10% of any fee we charge in addition to \$250/year as a maintenance fee.

Ryan reported that he and Joan are still working on the P-Card policy for the county and hope to have that soon.

The following dockets were then approved:

Dockets

1. Resolution for correction of Tax Bill pursuant to the franchise agreements between Time Warner Cable, TCI and the Towns of Croghan, Denmark, Diana, Greig, Lewis, Leyden, Lowville, Lyonsdale, Martinsburg, New Bremen, Turin, Watson, and West Turin which allowed them to deduct from taxes the franchise paid to the Towns in the amount of \$3,528.88.
2. Resolution to direct County Treasurer to adjust, apportion, and charge back such amount in the manner prescribed by law, in connection with the following State land:
 - a. Town of Montague ó Parcel 333.00-42-00.421; Deduct \$15.36 from Town Tax amount.
 - b. Town of West Turin ó Parcel 333.00-54-00.541; Deduct \$0.12 from Town Tax amount.
 - c. Town of West Turin ó Parcel 333.00-54-00.542; Deduct \$0.84 from Town Tax amount.
3. Resolution to extend the contract with Mass Mutual as the administrative agency and Financial Organization and the State Street Bank and Trust for trustee services, for the Lewis County Deferred Compensation Plan. Pursuant to terms of the existing contract, the Board shall hereby extend the contract for a one-year period through December 31, 2019.
4. Resolution to approve transfer of funds in the Highway Department Accounts to replenish the Machinery fund balance from County Road Fund in the amount of \$150,000. *Discussion: Ryan explained in response to Legislator King's question that the Machinery fund balance has been slowly draining over the past several years and is now at a zero balance. This should have been caught in the budget preparation but wasn't. It doesn't charge enough in maintenance fees to self-sustain. Ryan suggest that Patty explain this when she returns because it is a complicated.*

Legislator Chartrand asked that for next month if everyone could show up 30 minutes prior to the start times of the Health and Human Services Committee as well as the Finance and Rules Committee it would be greatly appreciated because most of these meetings are only lasting 1.5 hours, not 2. This would help move things along better. The Committee agreed.

Legislator Lehman made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:55 p.m., seconded by Legislator Chartrand. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Cassandra Moser, Deputy Clerk to the Board of Legislators
Encl.