

**Finance & Rules Committee**  
**July 30, 2019**  
**Minutes**

**Members Present:** Committee Chair Michael Montigelli, Legislators Robert Cantwell, William Johnson, Daniel McBride, James Nabywaniec, Carolyn Fitzpatrick, Board Chair Scott Gray

**Others Present:** Legislators Philip Reed, John Peck, Jeremiah Maxon, and Robert Ferris, County Administrator Robert Hagemann, Deputy Administrator Sarah Baldwin, County Attorney David Paulsen, Information Technology Director and Conf. Asst. for Fiscal Affairs Gregory Hudson, District Attorney Kristyna Mills, Election Commissioners Babette Hall and Jude Seymour, Highway Superintendent James Lawrence, Treasurer Accountant Anne Converse, Confidential Secretary Jill Jones

Chairman Montigelli called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

Chairman Montigelli introduced Christine Watkins, Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) Executive Director for a presentation, and Ms. Watkins introduced Trail Coordinator and Certified Forester Pat Crast. She said the Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) was established by the former Board of Supervisors and is the local leader in natural resource conservation in the County from the perspective of farming, municipalities or private industry and they work with a number of agencies, groups, and organizations to help protect the resources that are within the County. She outlined the services their agency provides for agriculture, natural resource conservation, and forestry. Their services for agriculture, which has been the mainstay of their organization, include: soil group worksheets for ag exemption qualification through the Ag Value Assessment Program; tiered planning, funding, and NY grown and certified program services related to agricultural environmental management; administering the Climate Resilient Farming grant; comprehensive nutrient management planning - an agronomist was hired to provide these services. They have also leveraged \$6.5 million (total budgets \$10 million) in funding over the last 10 years for farms to implement conservation practices, funding that is only available through SWCD

She stated that there are 5500 acres of County Reforestation Property they manage for recreational and timber purposes. They estimate that the standing timber value of the properties is \$7.5 million, the annual growth value is \$285,000, and SWCD has secured \$300,000 in state and federal funding for projects on the properties. There are 12 miles of multi-modal recreational trails, 8 miles of trails on County forest land which provide a key link between Oswego and Lewis Counties for both ATVs and snowmobiles, and there are 2 day use parks with pavilions. Having a certified forester on staff allows them to provide a high level of management of the timber assets, and they have also undertaken a forest regeneration project to promote desirable species; timber sales have generated \$270,000 in the last 5 years. She said they are looking at a Carbon Credits program through the Nature Conservancy that could have potential annual revenue of \$100,000 and requires a certified forester to prepare, update and administer a

forest management plan, which they are currently working on. The timber harvest schedule will continue as planned while getting paid for carbon credits.

Ms. Watkins said they also provide permit assistance for concentrated animal feeding operation programs (CAFO), mined land plans, water quality permits, and stormwater plans and permits. They provide contractual stormwater services to the Stormwater Coalition which includes 9 communities and the County. In terms of shared services they have provided: a Forest Service grant for tree planing and green infrastructure projects for the Stormwater Coalition communities; culvert and bridge assessments in 3 sub watersheds covering 5 towns in southern Jefferson County in conjunction with the North Atlantic Aquatic Connectivity Collaborative (NAACC); a Hydroseeder machine and material to County Highway in conjunction with wetland mitigation that needed to be done at the County Emergency Management Tower in the Town of Champion - they provided planting materials, oversaw planting and will monitor same per the Army Corps of Engineer requirements; and completed Ash Tree Survey for the County Highway Department. They also have a tree and shrub program that has provided 60,000 low cost trees and shrubs in the last 5 years to County residents. Chairman Montigelli thanked the Executive Director for her presentation and commended her for the improvements at the agency over her tenure the last 6 years.

Chairman Montigelli introduced Sue Mitchell, Director, North Country Library System (NCLS) for a presentation and Ms. Mitchell introduced staff member Angela Newman, Youth Services Consultant. Ms. Mitchell made a power point presentation to the Committee (copy attached for file reference) concerning NCLS, saying that it is one of the first library systems developed in the State, they provide services for 65 libraries in four counties in the North Country, and 25 of those libraries are in Jefferson County. They provide technical assistance and training, shared resources, delivery of materials (100,000 books per year), disperse aid o/b/o NYS, including construction aid to libraries through the Dormitory Authority because they are part of the State Education Department. NCLS disperses about \$1 million/year to libraries for projects and help them apply for SAM grants as well as other State, Federal and local funding for projects. Nearly 100% of the time the libraries hire local labor and use local materials for their projects. She said libraries are very current and relevant in Jefferson County as NCLS circulated 315,000 books, nearly 30,000 ebooks were downloaded this year, there are 51,000 library card holders, 57,000 computer sessions and 115,000 Wi-fi sessions were initiated which is important as they are gearing up for the 2020 census which will be online. She said they are working on kiosks and information concerning the census as libraries will play a significant role as 20% of people in Jefferson County do not have internet access at home.

Ms. Mitchell said NCLS looks at outputs, which is all the numbers cited above, but also is focused on outcomes. To that end she said libraries are: community builders and respond to local community needs with collections and programming, address social problems (have provided narcan training), champion democratic values, provide resources for small businesses, and help revitalize depressed neighborhoods; serve as the “people’s university” and offer remote access to collections and educational offerings, catalysts for addressing social problems; serve as centers for the arts and give voices to local artists, provide access to non-mainstream points of view, deliver opportunities for free classes and encourage art appreciation and participation;

serve as community centers for diverse populations and provide information, resources and support for patrons with disabilities, immigrants, LGBTIQ patrons, and prison populations reentering the community post incarceration; are champions of youth by teaching teens life skills, offering free tutoring, homework help and summer reading programs. She said libraries provide system-wide initiatives with broadband and wi-fi services, mobile maker labs, wi-fi and chromebook checkout program, census 2020 support, senior planet technology training, fine-free children's library cards, they are seeking a grant for the Imagination Library Program, and have launched the Talking is Teaching Campaign.

Ms. Newman outlined the Talking is Teaching Campaign which is a public awareness campaign for early literacy that encourages grown ups to talk, read and sing with the young children in their lives because it helps to get young children ready to read. She said our area has English Language Arts test scores that are lower than the State average, and we know that when children enter kindergarten ready to read it is a predictor of future grade level reading and school success, and the best way for us to do that is to encourage brain development from birth to 5 years old. Ms. Newman said the Talking is Teaching Campaign addresses that need, and she detailed the three components for the program to motivate behavior change: trusted messengers in community touch points, environmental prompts and paid media, and high quality tools. When children are reading proficiently you will see more school success and higher graduation rates, and ultimately adults who are critical thinkers and problem solvers and that is their goal. Ms. Newman and Ms. Mitchell answered questions of legislators related to their programs. Chairman Montigelli thanked Ms. Mitchell and Ms. Newman for their informative presentation and enthusiasm for their work.

Chairman Montigelli introduced Tim Dermady, Foundation President, Disabled Persons Action Organization (DPAO) for a presentation. Mr. Dermady distributed a booklet listing their services, and said DPAO was founded in 1974 by Joseph Rich (then a TV and radio anchor), and their mission is to provide quality and effective individualized services for developmentally disabled children and adults in Jefferson and Lewis Counties. They serve over 500 families in both counties, and Mr. Rich started as a volunteer over 45 years ago, retired as the Executive Director and is still very involved as the DPAO Foundation President. Mr. Rich was unable to make it tonight and sends his best to everyone. The funding requested from the County goes toward their concert series and is 10% of their budget. The concert series is on every media outlet in the County: for TV they are on Channel 7, Fox TV, ABC 50, CW, NBC Watn., Spectrum Cable and Castle Cable; radio they are on Community Broadcasters stations Majic 103 and the Border 106.7, the Stevens Media Group which includes Froggy 97 and Z93, Tunes 92.5; they are also involved with the Northern New York Newspaper Corporation that includes the Watertown Daily Times and many others. Because they are a not-for-profit they are matched at least one to one in the media so if they buy 100 TV spots they are given another 100 for free. Also, because Mr. Rich has been around so long and is so well known in the area they are provided with thousands of no charge or public service announcements over radio and TV throughout their concert series. In kind donations totaled more than \$100,000 last year, so the money the County provides is magnified many times over. He said it isn't just that the County logo is on all the TV spots, Jefferson County is mentioned in the press releases, and is thanked at the concerts, but the advertising campaign brings in thousands and thousands of concert goers to

the County who then spend money throughout the community. He introduced Mike Campbell who can provide the economic impact of the concerts to the community.

Mr. Campbell said DPAO has brought some of the largest names in entertainment to the area over the last 40+ years which has added to the quality of life and, equally significant, to the financial impact of the community. In 2016 they enlisted the services of the Center for Community Studies at JCC to identify the economic impact the series has on the area, and in 2018 it was updated. The results found that from 2012 to 2018 the concert series created an economic impact of \$13.9 million; the average annual attendance was 9,700 people, and on average each concert attendee spends \$212. In 2018 DPAO invested \$590,000 in the concert series and the economic impact was over \$2 million. Mr. Campbell said he has a lot more data if legislators are interested and have questions. Chairman Montigelli thanked both gentlemen for their presentation.

Chairman Montigelli offered privilege of the floor, however no one present wished to address the Committee. The Committee approved the minutes of the June meeting as written.

Chairman Montigelli introduced a resolution for Payment of Legislators' Expenses and entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator Nabywaniec seconded by Legislator Fitzpatrick and there being no discussion, the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented.

Chairman Montigelli introduced a resolution Amending the 2019 County Budget Relative to Additional State Aid for Board of Elections and Authorizing Agreements in Relation Thereto and entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator Johnson seconded by Legislator Fitzpatrick and there being no discussion, the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented.

Chairman Montigelli introduced a resolution Amending 2019 County Budget in Relation to Employment & Training Department and entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator McBride seconded by Legislator Cantwell and there being no discussion, the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented.

Chairman Montigelli introduced a resolution Amending the 2019 County Budget for Tax Software and entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator Nabywaniec seconded by Legislator Fitzpatrick and there being no discussion, the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented.

Chairman Montigelli introduced a resolution Appointing County Highway Superintendent and entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator Cantwell seconded by Legislator McBride and there being no discussion, the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented.

Chairman Montigelli introduced a resolution Amending the Policy of the Jefferson County Board of Legislators in Regard to the Abatement of Real Property and other Taxation for

Alternative Energy Projects and entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator Johnson and seconded by Legislator Nabywaniec. Chairman Montigelli asked County Attorney Paulsen to outline the changes that were made to the policy.

Mr. Paulsen explained that there has been a number of solar projects proposed to be located in Jefferson County and the change to the policy would set up a procedure under which solar projects less than 25 megawatts are evaluated for a 15 year pilot under RPTS §487. After consulting with a specialist in appraisal of these projects, John Zukowski, we would be appraising the projects on an income basis. We would expect an appraisal be done by an expert in the area of energy projects, and looking at the project both with full tax credits being applied to the project, as well as without. The PILOT would be negotiated based on those appraisal parameters. He said this is being driven in part, because there are two options for these developers: filing under §487 which would be negotiating directly with the County, or to approach the IDA and negotiate under their UTEP policy which is also 15 years. He said the County has tried to harmonize our policy with the UTEP policy, and the changes that were made on page 4, mirror the UTEP policy including the factors on page 5 that the County can look to for renegotiating the various levels of abatement. The other change, which occurred just yesterday and is on legislators desks, is on page 3 the second paragraph we have taken out the reference to putting a floor in the amount of megawatts that we will consider a PILOT for, rather than saying 2-25 megawatts, we are now saying that as long as it is a project that is proceeding under the community distribution agreement model, we will expect a PILOT as we have seen a couple that are less than the 2 megawatt under that model. That definition will leave out any specific individual developments, someone who is using solar to provide electricity to their homes, and also leave out any business that chooses to use solar to provide electricity specifically to their business, but it will include anyone who is using the model of generating electricity through solar and then distributing it to third parties. There being no discussion, the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented.

Chairman Montigelli introduced a resolution Authorizing Grant Agreement, State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQR) Determination, and Amending the 2019 County budget in Relation to a 2019 Community Development Block Grant Award from the NYS Office of Community Renewal and entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator McBride seconded by Legislator Cantwell and there being no discussion, the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented.

On a motion by Legislator Nabywaniec seconded by Legislators Cantwell, McBride, Johnson and Fitzpatrick, and unanimously carried, the Committee approved the following General Services Committee sponsored resolutions:

- ✓ Authorizing Agreements in Relation to Construction of the Aircraft Rescue Fire Fighting Facility at the Watertown International Airport and Amending the 2019 County Budget and Capital Plan
- ✓ Amending the 2019 County Budget and Capital Plan in Relation to the Watertown International Airport Environmental Assessment Land Acquisition and Obstruction Removal
- ✓ Authorizing Agreements with New York State Department of Transportation in

- Relation to a New York Statewide Opportunities for Airport Revitalization (SOARS) Marketing Grant for Watertown International Airport
- ✓ Amending the 2019 County Budget in Relation to FY17 and FY18 Homeland Security Grant Program Funds
  - ✓ Authorizing the Implementation and Funding in the First Instance 100% of the Federal Aid and State "Marchiselli" Program Aid Eligible Costs of a Transportation Federal-Aid Project (CR 189 over Grunley Creek), Appropriating Funds Therefor and Amending the 2019 County Budget and Capital Plan
  - ✓ Amending the 2019 County Budget in Relation to the Highway Department CHIPS Funding
  - ✓ Amending the 2019 County Budget to Recognize Insurance Recovery and Allocating Same in Sheriff's Department Budget

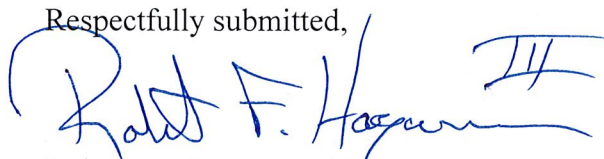
On a motion by Legislator Fitzpatrick seconded by Legislator Cantwell and unanimously carried the Committee approved the following Health & Human Services Committee sponsored resolution:

- ✓ Amending 2019 County Budget Relative to Additional Revenue from U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for Domestic Violence Supportive Services for Coordinated Entry Funding

Chairman Montigelli entertained a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss the employment of a particular individual. A motion was duly made by Legislator Johnson seconded by Legislator Nabywaniec and unanimously carried. The Committee entered executive at 7:15 p.m. The Committee returned to open session at 7:20 p.m. on a motion by Legislator Johnson seconded by Legislator Fitzpatrick and unanimously carried. It was the unanimous consensus of the Committee to hire an Assistant District Attorney at a Grade VI Level C, annual salary of \$65,023.

There being no further business of the Committee, on a motion by Legislator Johnson seconded by Legislator Cantwell and unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Robert F. Hagemann, III  
Clerk of the Board