

**FIRST DAY
ANNUAL SESSION
November 1, 2016**

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Chairman Michael A. Tabolt.

Roll Call: All Legislators were present.

Chairman Tabolt offered the Invocation, and led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

The Chairman announced approval of the September 27 and October 4, 2016 meeting minutes.

There were 17 persons present.

REPORT OF THE RULES AND LEGISLATION COMMITTEE:

The Rules and Legislation Committee had met and recommended to waive the rules to allow action on late resolutions.

Lawrence Dolhof
Bryan Moser
Craig Brennan

Dated: November 1, 2016

Legislator Moser made a motion to waive the rules, seconded by Legislator Dolhof and carried.

PRESENTATION OF COMMUNICATIONS AND NOTICES:

NYS Senator Joseph Griffo acknowledged receipt of the Board's resolutions increasing the District Attorney salary and directing the County Treasurer to pay according to law; and urging State Budget amendment to requiring the State to reimburse counties for the increased DA salary.

The Board acknowledges receipt of resolutions adopted by the Delaware County Legislature urging State Legislation to fully reimburse counties for District Attorney salary increases; and urging Governor Cuomo to sign the Public Defense Mandate Relief Act authorizing the Indigent Legal Service Office to adopt, promulgate, amend or rescind rules and regulations that would require the State to reimburse counties for public defender services.

Resolutions adopted by the Essex County Legislature supports the Memorandum of Understanding among public and private organizations regarding recreational access to Adirondack State lands; by the Washington County Legislature calling on the Governor and State Legislature to more equitably and efficiently impose the 9-1-1 surcharge on all wireless communication devices and use revenues to finance life saving County services; and also plan for next generation 9-1-1 by creating a department that supports County public safety answering

points and enhances local emergency dispatch services; and by the Seneca County Legislature calling upon the Governor and State Legislature to work with New York's Congressional delegation to amend and improve the Family First Prevention Services Act of 2016, to ensure essential fiscal resources are maintained to support families in need.

REPORTS OF COUNTY OFFICERS AND DEPARTMENTS:

Lewis County Budget Officer Liz Swearingin has submitted the 2017 Tentative County Budget, copies of which have been distributed to each Legislator attendant to the following budget message:

BUDGET MESSAGE

November 1, 2016

To : Chairman, Michael Tabolt and County Legislators
Re: 2017 Tentative Budget

Dear Legislators:

Enclosed for your review and consideration is the proposed 2017 tentative budget for Lewis County. First, I would like to thank the Lewis County Legislators, especially the Ways and Means Committee and the Lewis County Department Heads and their teams for their hard work and thoughtful discussion we have had over the past several months regarding the 2017 budget. I am very confident that our department heads fully appreciate the important role they play, not only representing their individual disciplines, but also their role as guardians of our taxpayers' hard earned money. I would also like to personally thank County Treasurer Patty O'Brien, whose professionalism and tireless work ethic make this budget manageable and also keep this County in strong financial condition. As the tentative budget stands right now we have:

A decrease in the tax rate per \$1000 from \$7.44 to \$7.32

A decrease in the fund balance from \$920,000 to \$820,000

In 2008 the tax rate per \$1000 was \$7.74 today it is at \$7.32. Use of fund balance to balance the budget was at \$2.6M in 2012 the current proposed budget is at \$820,000 a 68% decrease.

Three years ago we set some financial goals / guidelines to ensure sound long term fiscal management:

- Continue to target a general fund balance of \$11M or 10% of our combined hospital and county operating budget
- Maintain our A+ Credit rating
- Maintain County Service levels
- Lower the use of fund balance to \$500,000 or less by 2021 to account for the loss of windmill money

We are conservative with our spending and continue to fund all major projects without increasing the tax levy. The \$11M radio project is paid for and the JCC extension college will be paid for with the remaining \$4M from the windmills.

2017 Budget

Currently, we are not under the tax cap, we still have a \$156,000 gap to close. The initial budget came in about \$1.2M over the tax cap. We've done 3 things to drive that number down:

1. We have reviewed every single department line by line and eliminated many year over year increases
2. We removed \$391,500 of "what if" items; should they occur, they will be covered by contingency funds.
3. We initially planned for a 20% increase in healthcare premiums which would have been a \$600,000 increase to the budget. After much deliberation with the Ways and Means and with the Chair of the Insurance Committee, the current recommendation, which you will see as a resolution in your packet, is to increase healthcare premiums by 10% starting January 1, 2017 and a 10% increase every 6 months until the self-funded insurance fund reaches the required \$4M.

In the next 3 weeks we will find the additional tax cap money. Don't miss the bigger picture, the long-term story. The taxpayers of Lewis County cannot continue to bear the rising costs of healthcare. In the last 3 years we have been able to find offsets to wage and healthcare premium increases, but the ability to keep finding another \$700,000 to \$800,000 year after year to cover these increases is getting smaller and smaller. This is no one's 'fault'...it is what it is, we just have to solve it.

As you know we have a union / management healthcare committee which is working hard on this issue.

Financial Summary

Revenues increase \$865,000 year over year, but expense grew by \$1.1M. Covering the difference plus the reduced use of fund balance leads to a tax levy of \$15,523,677. Given the \$87M increase in taxable land value, that equates to a 7.32 rate per \$1000.

	2016 Adopted Budget	2017 Tentative Budget	Year over year differences
Total Revenues	27,921,646	28,787,605	Revenues are higher by \$865,000
Total Appropriations	43,964,478	45,131,282	Expenses are also higher by \$1,166,804
Balance to Be Raised by Taxes	16,042,832	16,343,677	\$300,845 must be raised by taxes
Less: Applied Fund Balance	920,000	820,000	Continue to decrease fund balance by \$100,000
Real Property Tax	15,122,832	15,523,677	Net real property tax increase of \$400,845
Taxable Value as of 11/1/2016	2,033,493,706	2,120,899,953	\$87M increase in taxable land value
County Tax Rate	7.44	7.32	

While State and Federal Aid are up slightly year over year, there is a discretionary increase of just under \$200,000 in projected sales tax. Over the last 2 years, Lewis County's actual sales tax revenues have exceeded the budget by over \$2.5M in 2015 and will likely exceed the budget in

2016 by just over \$1M. Recognizing that a quick turn in the economy can lead to rapid loss of sales tax, but recognizing that we have been very conservative, the recommendation is to increase the sales tax projection.

60% of the increase in expenses is driven primarily by healthcare and wage increases.

Summary

The 2017 Lewis County budget is a fiscally responsible budget. The final budget will be under the tax cap.

On a home with a taxable value of \$100,000 the county tax bill would reduce from \$743 to \$732.

The 2017 Lewis County budget is respectfully submitted for public comment and approval.

Liz Swearingin
Budget Officer

Legislators have received copies of the Treasurer's October report, the 10/25/16 Solid Waste and 10/5 and 10/27/16 Highway Audit Reports.

The 7/19/16 meeting minutes of the Health Services Advisory Committee have been received and placed on file.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES:

Legislator Philip Hathway, Ways and Means/Buildings and Grounds Committee Chairman, reported the State has rejected the proposed New Bremen two-way roadway for CDL testing because it is too far from Lowville where the balance of the test would be conducted. Instead, the State will direct applicants to Verona, Rome or Tupper Lake. Chairman Tabolt has talked with Jefferson County officials who are also having issues with this requirement. They will explore use of a site on Fort Drum.

Legislator Hathway reported the public safety building water upgrade project is complete; the records storage building lighting upgrades have been done; and the sign has been erected at the Court House parking lot entrance.

Legislator Hathway credited Chairman Tabolt and Legislators King and Chartrand for facilitating teleconferences with the Public Service Commission on the solar array connectivity project. National Grid's initial \$729,000 quote for facility upgrades has been reduced to as low as \$200,000. Concurrently, the County's estimated cost has been reduced from \$633,000 to a maximum of \$163,000, substantially less than the Board's approved amount of up to \$500,000. He also thanked County Attorney Joan McNichol for spearheading the communication and negotiations. Construction is on schedule to begin next spring. National Grid has affirmed they can do their preparation work this fall.

Legislator Hathway reported proposals from SmartWatt (a/k/a National Grid) at no charge and Larsen Engineers at \$2,000 for a comprehensive energy study and long-term plan of County buildings. SmartWatt has previously completed County lighting upgrades, but resulting study upgrade projects would be at County expense. Larsen Engineers' proposal includes NYSERDA grant application preparation and submission between \$50,000-\$250,000 for the actual upgrades. Legislator Hathway made a motion to approve the Larsen Engineer proposal, seconded by Legislator Chartrand and carried.

Legislator Hathway made a motion to authorize County Treasurer Patricia O'Brien to re-fill a Full-time Account Clerk, due to promotions, effective upon the date of retirement of Deputy County Treasurer Cindy Wiedrick, seconded by Legislator Brennan and carried.

Legislator Roscoe Fawcett, Jr., Social Services/Office For Aging/Employment and Training/Youth Bureau Committee Chairman, reported that on-line HEAP applications are being accepted and processed by DSS and Office For the Aging, but paper applications may not be sent out prior to the start of the season on 11/14/16. A robotic phone message will be sent to every person who has been pre-approved, alerting they do not need to submit an application.

Legislator Fawcett reported that everyone is subject to a wand search by a security officer prior to entering the Social Services building.

Legislator Bryan Moser, County Officers/Junkyards/Veterans' Services/Human Resources Committee Chairman, reported the Junkyard Review Board is reviewing their By-laws, the County Junkyard Law and considering information provided by Sr. Building Codes Officer Ward Dailey related to inspections, violations and the compliance process.

Legislator Moser deferred discussion on the CITEC agreement until the authorizing resolution is introduced.

Legislator Moser informed that Veterans' Services Counselor Stephen Kilionski is out for an undetermined length of time to care for a family member with stage 4 cancer, requesting everyone's thoughts and prayers.

Legislator Jerry King, Courts and Law Enforcement/Emergency Services/Fire Coordinator/ Building Codes Committee Chairman, reported that EF Johnson personnel are making software upgrades to resolve radio reception issues. They are swapping out 35 radios at a time for fire, law enforcement and emergency personnel, to assure that all devices have the latest technology.

He also reported the Sheriff's continued efforts to recruit and fill vacant positions.

Legislator Lawrence Dolhof, Economic Development/Planning/Recreation, Forestry & Parks Committee Chairman, reported that Bernier, Carr & Associates (BC&A) are progressing the business park project toward "Shovel Ready" status. County officials continue to pursue the Harrisville HDK property owner for desired use of that property.

The next business breakfast will be held on 11/15 at Ridgeview Inn. The informal meetings have had good attendance and information exchange, providing the setting for initiation of the Cuisine Trail and Coordinated Finance Applications (CFA's).

Legislator Dolhof reported 16 attendees at the 10/17 Small Business Seminar providing access to representatives from several administrative and funding institutions to assist with their business initiatives.

The Manufacturing Day was coordinated with Jefferson County IDA and Economic Development officials to provide high school students an opportunity for on-site tours at Viking Cives, Onmiafiltra, Interface, Grand Slam and Qubica/AMF. The students relayed appreciation for the educating experience, otherwise not provided through textbooks.

Legislator Dolhof reported receipt of a revolving loan fund application to be reviewed by the designated committee on 10/27/16.

Legislator Dolhof proudly reported the Lyons Falls Pulp & Paper demolition project was on-time and within budget. There was a ceremonial opening last week at the site, and the planned water tower collapse occurred thereafter without incident.

Legislator Craig Brennan, Taxation/Information Technology Committee Chairman, reported the Committee would make their recommendation next month after reviewing the Town of New Bremen's request for the County to clean up an abandoned and blighted property.

Legislator Brennan relayed a plea from Sheriff Deputy Mike Leviker for property owners to visibly display their 9-1-1 address on their residence or mailbox to enhance law enforcement or emergency personnel response and residents' safety.

Exemption questionnaires were sent out to all schools and municipalities requesting any changes be submitted to the Real Property Tax office by 11/18/2016.

Legislator Brennan reported that Mohawk Networks has nearly completed the fiber connection on the Harrisville tower for internet services to area residents. Verizon allowed use of their lines to reduce the length of fiber installation required. Harrisville and Lake Bonaparte residents anxiously await the services that should be active within three weeks.

Legislator Gregory Kulzer, Solid Waste/Transportation Committee Chairman, made a motion to award the low bid in the amount of \$114,175.00 to Vantage Equipment of Syracuse, NY for purchase of a 2017 Volvo front-end wheel loader for the Solid Waste Department. The motion was seconded by Legislator Brennan and carried.

Legislator Kulzer reported the solid waste building renovations to accommodate zero sort recycling are on schedule, again, expressing appreciation that the Development Authority of the North Country has agreed to finance up to \$600,000. The volume of recyclables received during the month of September exceeded the entire 2015 volume collected.

Legislator Kulzer announced an upcoming Highway Department bid opening for bulk oil; and that Deputy Highway Superintendent Stanley Samsa has announced his intent to retire in March 2017.

Legislator Richard Chartrand, Hospital Committee Chairman, is part of the Committee of four assigned to search for a Chief Executive Officer expected to take up to six weeks. A Committee has also been assigned to develop a management team organizational chart for reference into the future.

The Hospital August employee-of-the-month was food service helper Lisa Widrick. As an enthusiastic, always smiling, considerate, kind and upbeat employee, Lisa, said Legislator Chartrand, "Is a reflection of what makes Lewis County General Hospital so special".

In response to Legislator Hathway, Legislator Chartrand reported review and consideration of applicants and a letter of request for re-appointment to the Hospital Board of Managers, and will propose appointments at the next meeting.

He deferred to Legislator Andrea Moroughan who reported on the recent "Breast Cancer Awareness" dinner. She thanked Denise Hirsch and Joanne Dicob for the well attended fund raising event for the "Fund for Hope" that helps cancer patients with hotel, gas and other costs not covered by insurance. Since its 2008 inception, the fund has assisted 421 patients with \$79,383, 55 of which were assisted this year with \$9,205. Cancer survivor Kathy McIntosh was the guest speaker who shared her tumultuous 18-year journey. She urged more men to attend, while citing the highest number yet at the recent event.

Legislator Andrea Moroughan, Public Health/Community Services Committee Chairwoman, reported that Public Health has partnered with Fort Drum Regional Health Planning Organization and Jefferson and St. Lawrence County Public Health Departments to complete the community health assessment and the community health improvement plan. The Lewis County Health and Human Services Council has identified reduction of adult and child obesity as priorities.

The Public Health Quality Improvement Committee has completed three of eight planned meetings and have identified that 31% of the programs reviewed to-date are evidence-based. Director Penny Ingham is confident they will meet the 75% goal for evidence-based programs upon completion of all reviews.

Director of Community Services Patricia Fralick is co-chair of the Regional Planning Consortium charged with monitoring the implementation of Medicare Managed Care for people with mental health or substance abuse in the tri-county area. A recent meeting was organized with respective service providers to make sure that problems are properly identified as they arise and responded with appropriate solutions.

Legislator Moroughan reported the Watertown CREDO Community Center has opened its new opioid treatment program offering medication assisted treatment and counseling services. They are currently treating 30 persons from Jefferson and Lewis Counties.

Mountain View Prevention Services is partnering with The Edge Hotel to feature the educational documentary film “Chasing the Dragon” on 11/5/16. The film depicts the opioid and prescription medication abuse epidemic that is plaguing the country.

Legislator Moroughan reported attending the “Walk in My Shoes” event sponsored by Northern Regional Center for Independent Living that simulated the harsh realities of a life lived in poverty and related stress, and how communities may collectively address the issue.

COUNTY MANAGER REPORT:

Liz Swearingin commended the Sheriff’s Department for not having any workers’ compensation claims filed within the last four quarters.

She awaits the executed agreement from Jefferson Community College (JCC) to implement the educational facility, and Planning Director Frank Pace reported working on curriculum development. Ms. Swearingin stated that two steering committees would separately focus on building construction, and the other on curriculum development. An individual will be hired by JCC to act as the lead project advocate.

Liz Swearingin reported the last date for processing invoices in the current financial system will be 11/17/16, after which the core team will forward files to Tyler representatives to be converted into the new database and sent back to the County on 11/28/16. Every general ledger account will be checked by the core team for balance accuracy before the system goes live later that week.

The Blue4U wellness program through Excellus Blue Cross/Blue Shield offers a free blood draw for selected tests and confidential report to any interested employee. Ms. Swearingin strongly urges approval for the \$10 gas or Walmart gift card incentive to greatly increase participation from the 87 employees last year. The blood draws will be offered during work hours on three days in December.

Ms. Swearingin then read her 2017 Tentative County Budget Message as printed above. She especially thanked Treasurer Patricia O’Brien for her tireless efforts.

She referenced requests from three outside agencies, as well as the additional IDA request, that were not included in the budget, but indicated further consideration dependent upon the level of sales tax revenues.

On behalf of the entire Board, Chairman Tabolt thanked Liz for all her efforts and commitment to formulate the budget.

COUNTY TREASURER REPORT:

Patricia O’Brien recited the balances of the Special Legislative Contingency Fund - \$249,168.00; Contingency Fund-\$361,987.00; Capital Data Processing Fund-\$128,169.66 and Capital Equipment Fund - \$239,059.28, of which \$137,213.98 is the Highway portion. She also

reported year-to-date sales tax revenue of \$8,221,729.18; and the on-target Hospital debt of \$2.6 million. There was a \$77,000 September deficiency for Internal Service Fund expenditures, with a balance of \$900,206.85.

Ms. O'Brien also reported the Hospital has pre-paid their December pension payment.

SPECIAL REPORT:

Chairman Tabolt reported that he and Legislator Chartrand had attended the 10/14/16 Fort Drum fall event.

He presented a proclamation for domestic violence awareness on 10/26/16 at the Lowville Theater prior to the free public movie showing of Safe Haven.

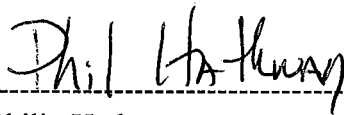
Chairman Tabolt reported that he and Terry Clark had attended the 10/27/16 Inter-County meeting in Plattsburgh that included a historical downtown tour. The group adopted a resolution to support and apprise State representatives of various desired recreational activities within the Adirondack Park. He intends to introduce the resolution for this Board's consideration. The final Inter-County meeting will be held in Warren County on 11/17/16.

REPORT OF THE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE:

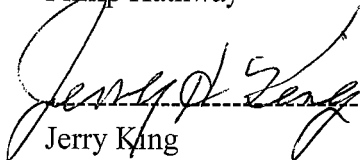
**REPORT OF
WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE
ON THE EXAMINATION OF CLAIMS**

To: The Honorable County Legislators

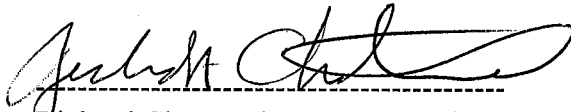
The Ways and Means Committee reports that they have examined the claims presented for payment in the total amount of \$ 1,130,838.34 and recommend that they be audited and allowed for the amounts claimed.



Philip Hathway Chair



Jerry King Committee



Richard Chartrand Committee

Dated: November 1, 2016

Approved on motion by Legislator King, seconded by
Legislator Dolhof, and carried.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Clerk of the Board Teresa Clark read proclamations executed by Chairman Tabolt declaring the month of October as “Domestic Violence Awareness Month”; and the month of November as “Epilepsy Awareness Month”.

On behalf of Village of Lowville Councilman Dan Salmon, Legislator Chartrand relayed thanks to the Board for waiving the tipping fees for the water treatment facility sludge; and that the water upgrade project was in progress.

In response to Legislator Hathway, Frank Pace explained the purpose of the 11/3/16 meeting is for the consultant to report about land use activities, some of which may be related to Fort Drum. Various County Department Heads and agency representatives have been invited to participate, but no Fort Drum officials are expected to attend.

At 6:48 p.m. Legislator Moser made a motion to enter executive session for County Attorney Joan McNichol to discuss terms of a professional services agreement and a specific personnel issue. The motion was seconded by Legislator Dolhof and carried. There was a 5-minute recess. Following the session, Legislator Moser made a motion to re-enter regular session at 7:45 p.m., seconded by Legislator Dolhof and carried.

There being no other business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned on motion by Legislator Chartrand, seconded by Legislator Kulzer and carried.