

Budget and Capital Committee
April 28, 2008

Budget and Capital Committee
April 28, 2008
3:30 p.m.
Scott Heyman Conference Room

APPROVED

Present: N. Shinagawa, M. Hattery, P. Mackesey, J. Dennis
Excused: K. Herrera
Legislators: C. Chock, M. Sigler
Staff: S. Whicher, N. Jayne, M. Lynch, County Administration; D. Squires, Finance; P. Carey, Department of Social Services; B. Grinnell-Crosby, Health Department; M. Pottorff, Legislature Office

Call to Order

Mr. Shinagawa called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

Changes to the Agenda

A resolution was added to the agenda entitled Appropriation from Contingent Fund – Replacement Pay – Department of Probation and Community Justice.

There was discussion of how to proceed with the resolution entitled Establishment of 2009 County Financial Goals. It was agreed that information that will be included in this resolution will not be known until after the budget retreat and this Committee will meet prior to the next Legislature meeting on May 6th to take action. The resolution will be placed on the Legislature agenda pending committee action.

Approval of Minutes of April 14, 2008

It was MOVED by Mr. Dennis, seconded by Ms. Mackesey, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, to approve the minutes of April 14, 2008, as submitted. MINUTES APPROVED.

Chair's Report

Mr. Shinagawa had no report other than discussion of the budget retreat.

Finance Director's Report

Mr. Squires was not present at this time.

Report from the County Administrator

Mr. Whicher reported Rollover information will be a little late this year because the auditors have just concluded their work. He also reported on a meeting he had with the Sheriff about the 2007 budget and stated they have decided to hold off from making any comment until the middle of the year. He stated two very good meetings were held and they were very positive and constructive.

Mr. Whicher distributed a memorandum and resolution concerning the Board of Elections storage building search. Arel LeMaro, Director of Facilities, is working on getting a

review on the City building code and whether machines could be stored in the third floor of the Old Library on a temporary basis. The resolution proposing to amend the Capital Program will be presented to program committees in the next couple of weeks and the full Legislature in late May.

Report from the Public Information Officer

Ms. Lynch reported there is a publication based in Albany entitled the “Legislative Gazette” that is widely distributed. In 2004, Tompkins County had a supplement to one of the issues of this paper. She said she was contacted and asked to do another supplement in the June 20 issue of this paper. Ms. Lynch said she will be working with Mr. Koplinka-Loehr and also with prospective advertisers. Topics slated for inclusion are: tourism, shared services (e.g. the Public Safety Communications System and the Tompkins County Council of Governments health benefits service initiative), sustainability programs, purchasing consortium, area development, and the Empire Zone. Ms. Mackesey suggested discussing the routes being used by garbage trucks to transport garbage.

**RESOLUTION NO. - APPROPRIATION FROM CONTINGENT FUND -
REPLACEMENT PAY – DEPARTMENT OF PROBATION AND
COMMUNITY JUSTICE**

It was MOVED by Mr. Dennis, seconded by Mr. Hattery, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, to approve the following resolution and submit to the full Legislature:

WHEREAS, the Department of Probation and Community Justice had an employee out on disability for greater than two months in the Core Probation Services Program, and

WHEREAS, the Fiscal Policy of Tompkins County allows for replacement pay from the Contingent Fund, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Public Safety and Budget and Capital Committees, That the Director of Finance is hereby authorized to make the following adjustment to his books for 2007:

| | | | |
|-------|----------------|-------------------|---------|
| FROM: | A1990.54440 | Contingent Fund | \$8,232 |
| TO: | A3142.51000585 | Probation Officer | \$5,965 |
| | A3142.58800 | Fringes | \$2,267 |

SEQR ACTION: TYPE II-20

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Discussion – Budget Retreat

Mr. Whicher referred to a document that has been included in Legislator’s budget retreat packets entitled “2008 budget reduction ideas”, and noted dollar amounts are not exact figures but approximations. He said the purpose of this document is to extract rough information as to what areas are seen as priorities of Legislators and he will be conducting a similar exercise with department heads.

Ms. Jayne reviewed updated information with the Committee for tomorrow evening's budget retreat. It was stated that numbers have changed since last meeting because of minor changes and also a calculation error in salary figures. Ms. Jayne said the format for the retreat will be the same as last year with an overview presented in the beginning, followed by a break-out into small groups, and then report-outs by each group. Mr. Whicher explained that the Budget and Capital Committee Chair will select the groups and they will produce a number for the tax levy increase/decrease, accompanied by an explanation as to why they are suggesting the number.

Ms. Chock asked for a definition of the items listed on the "2009 Budget Reduction Ideas" document.

At this time the Committee reviewed the General Revenue Summary and also the 20-year Capital and Debt Program debt service. Ms. Jayne noted that \$552,000 was used in order to stabilize the one percent Capital Program increase in 2009. Other noted figures contained in the document include:

- 8.58% - tax levy increase that is needed to achieve a maintenance of effort;
- 5% - tax levy increase is being recommended by the County Administrator
- \$1.3 million – amount budget would need to be decreased by to reach 5% levy increase

Ms. Jayne will provide Legislators with information at the retreat on what assumptions were made when figures were developed.

Mr. Dennis said he would like there to be discussion about the property tax that could be forwarded to the State Legislature. He said the County is not the biggest perpetrator of the high taxes but receives much of the blame. Mr. Dennis said he would like to move this discussion to a venue where Legislators and the public could start talking about the property tax from a global perspective. Mr. Hattery suggested the discussion begin here and be followed by the formation of a subcommittee or ad hoc group. Ms. Lynch said the Public Information Advisory Board could also assist with this. Mr. Whicher said the idea of having ongoing discussion about this is a good idea.

Capital Program

Mr. Whicher explained that the Capital Program was established with the continuous need to add one percent to the tax levy each year. This was done in order to stabilize the impact on the tax levy while maintaining the County's infrastructure. Mr. Whicher said this needs to be looked at each year.

Finance Director's Report

Mr. Squires reported he just finished producing information to file a year-end report with the State that is due this week. At a previous meeting he had reported that the General Fund ended with a balance below the previous year; however, it now appears it was actually above.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Michelle Pottorff, TC Legislature Office