

# Warren County Board of Supervisors

**BOARD MEETING  
FRIDAY NOVEMBER 18, 2016**



The Board of Supervisors of the County of Warren convened at the Supervisors' Room in the Warren County Municipal Center, Lake George, New York, at 10:00 a.m.

Mr. Kevin B. Geraghty presiding.

Salute to the flag was led by Supervisor Dickinson

Roll called, the following members present:

Supervisors Conover, Leggett, Girard, McDevitt, Braymer, Brock, MacDonald, Frasier, Simpson, Dickinson, Merlino, Strough, Seeber, Beaty, Montesi, Sokol, Thomas, Wood and Geraghty -19; Supervisor Vanselow absent-1

Motion was made by Supervisor Simpson, seconded by Supervisor Frasier and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the October 21, 2016 Board Meeting and the November 4, 2016 Special Board Meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk of the Board.

Commencing the Agenda review, Chairman Geraghty extended privilege of the floor to Teri Ross, *Assessor for the Town of Queensbury/President of the New York State Assessor's Association*, who proceeded to make a short presentation regarding changes to the STAR Program which were impacting homeowners in Warren County and throughout the State; a copy of which is on file with the items distributed at the November 18<sup>th</sup> Board meeting. Concluding the presentation, Ms. Ross requested that the Board consider adopting a resolution supporting the letter Ms. Ross had written to the Governor asking that the administration of the STAR Program be returned to the local Assessors.

Chairman Geraghty thanked Ms. Ross for her presentation and advised the matter would be referred to the Legislative & Rules Committee for further discussion. Ms. Ross encouraged anyone with questions to contact her.

Continuing with the Agenda review, Chairman Geraghty declared the Public Hearing on Warren County Sewer District (Industrial Park) Assessment Roll open at 10:14 a.m. and he requested that Amanda Allen, *Clerk of the Board*, read aloud the Notice of Public Hearing, which she proceeded to do. Chairman Geraghty then called for any public comment, but none was made; he advised that they would leave the Public Hearing open while they proceeded with the Agenda review to allow anyone wishing to speak on the Assessment Roll to do so.

Continuing, Chairman Geraghty declared the Public Hearing open on the 2017 Tentative Warren County Budget at 10:16 a.m. and Mrs. Allen read the Notice of Public Hearing aloud.

Privilege of the floor was extended to any members of the public wishing to speak on the 2017 Tentative Warren County Budget.

Travis Whitehead, *Town of Queensbury Resident*, voiced his concern pertaining to the fact that the Board would be voting on a proposed Budget which did not address certain items such as the NSTEM (*Nursing, Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics*) and Court Expansion Projects and what their

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projected impact would be on the Budget over the next few years. He pointed out in previous years a Multi-Year Plan which projected the impact on the Budget over a four year period had been completed and he questioned whether this Plan had been updated, as the previous one he had reviewed was completed on November 6, 2015. He said this plan had estimated about \$500,000 of funding would be transferred from the Unappropriated Surplus for this years Budget but according to the proposed Budget before them the actual amount transferred was around \$2 million. Furthermore, Mr. Whitehead questioned how the Board could hold the first and only Public Hearing one hour before they would vote on the proposed Budget, as it did not appear that the public had a chance to make comments such as his which he believed supported a lack of transparency in regards to the budgeting process. He inquired whether an updated Multi-Year Plan had been prepared and Supervisor Thomas responded they were currently working on updating the Plan which he estimated would be completed around the beginning of 2017. Mr. Whitehead suggested that the Board postpone making a determination on the proposed Budget until the Plan was available. Supervisor Thomas pointed out that the Multi-Year Plan had only recently been implemented over the past few years, prior to which the Board voted on the Budget without any future projections. Mr. Whitehead commented although many were supportive of the NSTEM Project, they were concerned with whether the County could afford to pay for its portion of the Project since it was a significant expense. He added another concern of his pertained to whether the County was brushing aside Mr. Schermerhorn's proposal that was projected to save around \$400,000 at the Airport which he felt they should seriously consider but he was not confident in their ability to carry out such a task. He concluded by stating that he was unsure how they could move forward when they had been unable to maintain a good tool such as the Multi-Year Plan.

Mark Westcott, *Town of Queensbury Resident*, advised that Mike Swan, *County Treasurer*, had indicated to him he felt the proposed Budget was appropriate based upon the current circumstances. He commended Supervisor Thomas for his efforts; however, he noted, he was also concerned with the lack of the Multi-Year Plan. He stated he reviewed the Multi-Year plan from last year which projected future deficits between \$2.3 million to \$3.4 million commencing in 2017. He relayed Mr. Swan's concern that the County was heading toward a position where borrowing would be required in order to make the necessary monthly payments and to cover payroll, as soon as 2019. He mentioned he thought it was imperative that the Board understand this before they moved forward with approving the proposed Budget. He mentioned the monthly Budget Report from the Treasurer Office in May of this year indicated that the money saved in the Fund Balance at that time had already been expended and spoken for in future years. He noted this report did not include funding for the Court Expansion or NSTEM Projects. He re-stated his concern that the Board would approve the proposed Budget today without any knowledge of the future impacts to the Budget and he requested that they hold off on voting until the Multi-Year Plan was readily available to assist them with making an informed decision. Next, Mr. Westcott pointed out the Budget directly related to the County's bond rating which was essential for future projects such as the ones required for the Court Expansion and NSTEM Projects. In regards to the proposal received from Mr. Schermerhorn pertaining to the Airport, Mr. Westcott requested that they seriously consider it and solicit feedback from the Pilot Association . He apprised it was rather clear that a significant amount of money could be saved at the Airport which could be better spent on other initiatives.

Ann Marie Castezlano, *Operating General Manager, Wingate Hotel/Warren County Lodging Association*, advised she had some concerns which related to her struggles to operate a hotel under an unhealthy business model. She said one of her concerns pertained to the fact that the County was using funds from the Unappropriated Surplus, as well as the Occupancy Tax Surplus. She mentioned she would like to outline some of the struggles she had as an operator to generate occupancy tax funds which were as follows: while the amount of occupancy tax generated had remained level, she had dealt with increasing costs associated with franchise fees; wages impacting both hourly and salary and employees;

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OTA Fees which consisted of Expedia, Travelocity, etc.; taxes and/or expiring Empire Tax Zone credits; utilities; give backs to guests; and advertising and Chamber dues. She requested that occupancy tax funding be used in a more transparent way. She stated the main concern of the Warren County Lodging Association was that the funding be used for its purpose of "getting more heads for beds" which she did not believe was occurring. She informed the members of the Warren County Lodging Association were knowledgeable and aware of what was changing in the industry because they had to be in order to be successful versus the Tourism & Occupancy Tax Coordination Committee who were not as well informed as they should be. She remarked as an operator of a hotel, she believed there were initiatives that were not being driven such as Book Direct which had a significant value to the hoteliers since it alleviated the 17.5% expense they were paying to companies such as Expedia. She said moving forward with this initiative would result in the collection of additional occupancy tax funds. She noted she had brought this to the attention to the former Director of Tourism but no action was ever taken on it which was disconcerting to her. Ms. Castezlano advised she was firm on her intent for transparency and accountability which she felt was not discussed often enough. She remarked that the use of occupancy tax funds for invasive species efforts did not place heads in beds nor did purchasing a piece of property in the Town of Stony Creek, as well as many other items occupancy tax funds had been used for which was of significant concern to the local hoteliers. She stated the goal for everyone was to grow this region into a year round destination which she felt could be achieved by purchasing the Forum building in the Town of Lake George and using it as a convention center. She encouraged the Board to consider her suggestion seriously, as it would allow for events to take place during the winter months.

Kathy Monsul, *Fort William Henry/Warren County Lodging Association*, thanked Supervisors Merlino and Dickinson, Chairman Geraghty, as well as representatives of the Tourism Department for taking the time to meet with the Warren County Lodging Association and discuss what they felt was required to move in the right direction. She informed that she was fully supportive of what Ms. Castezlano had just stated in that the purpose of occupancy tax was to put heads in beds. She pointed out the Tourism Industry made up about 20% of the economy for the region. She said her company had gone from employing 220 for the summer months to currently employing 110. She said the reason she had laid off so many employees was because as of last week according to the Smith Travel Report the County had an occupancy rate of 37% as compared to 53% in Saratoga County which had the about the same number of rooms available. She added Saratoga County was down 14% from the previous year at the same time due to some foolish decisions they had made regarding supply which was why she was requesting that the County consider this as they reviewed its strategy for tourism and where it should grow. She mentioned last week in Warren County there were 6,700 rooms booked which left 12,000 rooms vacant. She suggested that they reduce the amount of the Occupancy Tax Reserve and use these funds to increase tourism in the region. She continued, another suggestion she had concerned the fact that they should no longer fund events that did not increase occupancy in the region. She indicated they were awaiting a report that should provide them with data to assist them with determining how to move forward and increase tourism in the County. She pointed out the County was currently behind their closest comp sets of Saratoga and Essex Counties which she equated to the lack of investments made here; she noted both Essex and Saratoga Counties used their occupancy tax funds to advertise and promote their Counties and not on items such as invasive species efforts. She reminded the Board when occupancy tax was instituted it provided an immediate \$1 million increase to the General Fund for the County because the Tourism Department was no longer funded through it. She informed hoteliers such as herself spent an enormous amount of time and effort to bring occupancy tax funds into the County. She provided the following statistics pertaining to the tourism industry in the region: the tourism industry made up over 20% of the local economy; 6,000 direct employment and 3,000 indirect employment; and Warren County taxpayers benefitted by \$2,436 because of tourism in the County. She commented by keeping such a large balance in the Occupancy Tax Reserve and/or

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providing funds for things that did not boost the number of heads in beds here would not assist with growing the amount of occupancy tax collected in Warren County. She explained the 37% occupancy rate the County achieved last week impacted the hoteliers in a negative way because they had fixed costs that they could not reduce regardless of occupancy. She apprised the County would benefit by investing occupancy tax funding in things that would assist them in becoming a year round destination rather than seasonal. She said this would not only increase the amount of occupancy tax collected but also sales tax, as well as dramatically decrease the unemployment rate that occurred during this time of year. She requested that the Board use every dollar of occupancy tax funds to promote and market the region thereby increasing the number of room reservations here rather than transferring them to the General Fund.

Laura Kohls, *Town of Queensbury Resident and business owner*, advised she was also present today to discuss tourism, how it was the number two industry in this area and how the County needed to do a better job disbursing the money collected by their businesses in the form of occupancy tax, as its sole purpose was to drive the tourism industry. She mentioned they should take some time to determine how they could achieve a positive return on their investment for every dollar of occupancy tax that was expended, as the current process of wastefully expending the funds in an attempt to try different things was not working. She remarked she believed the formula for occupancy tax funds should be operated under the same formula used by businesses and homeowners to balance their budget which was analyzing whether the items occupancy tax was allocated for was generating enough revenue to justify its use. As an example she stated 250 rooms would need to be reserved for every \$1,000 of occupancy tax allocated in order to remain at the same level of last year as which did not take into consideration growing it to bring in not only additional occupancy tax funds but also sales tax and attracting more tourists here. She commented there were multiple events funded that she believed did not generate enough room reservations to make a return on the investment. She pointed out the Town of Chester expended \$40,000 in occupancy funds on a tow rope which she highly doubted generated \$1 million in room rental to pay for itself. Another instance was when the Town of Thurman awarded \$40,000 in occupancy tax funds to the Thurman Train Station and yet no reporting had been provided as to what the funds did or did not do. She apprised an event she felt was justified in receiving the \$50,000 awarded to it was the Warrensburg Garage Sale since the attendance reported there was 60,000. She requested that they look seriously at the return on investment for every dollar of occupancy tax that was expended to ensure it was being used wisely to promote the region and use it to drive occupancy to refund the supply engine and not just expend it on things that were not justifiable. She re-stated that they all had to do this for their businesses which was why she thought the County should be held to the same standard, as well.

Frank Dittrich, *Warren County Lodging Association*, advised the messages the Board was hearing today pivoted on occupancy tax and the strong opinion that the hoteliers had that it was intended for the use, promotion and smart investment of those dollars to improve tourism within the County. He clarified their discussion today concerning tourism did not refer in any way to the Tourism Department for the County. He said what the hoteliers were referring to was the County in total and all the energy required to fuel the number two industry in this area which they believed had the opportunity to become number one. He added that occupancy tax funding was the fuel required in order to achieve this goal. He quoted the law pertaining to the use of occupancy tax funds as follows: "Occupancy Tax dollars are intended to be allocated only for tourism promotion and tourist and convention development". He continued, further it stated, "such tax shall be allocated through promotion of tourist activities, conventions, trade shows, special events and other directly related and supported activities". He informed the purpose of the occupancy tax fund was not to solve shortfalls in the general expense budgets nor was its purpose to fund local activities, as its sole purpose was to fund the development of tourism to grow this area. He reminded the Board all of them were present today because citizens

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of their communities elected them to represent them which was why they should consider those who voted for them that were out of work today because their career was in tourism industry. He remarked they as a group which included both the public and private sector were not doing enough to improve their current standing. He informed the hoteliers located within the County were competing for guests with Central New York, the Finger Lakes, Niagra Falls, Essex County, etc. He stated according to the data he had pertaining to tourism performance, the Counties across New York State had improved 1.6% while Warren County's rate was well below this at 0.8%. He advised his point was not to be critical of the Tourism & Occupancy Tax Coordination Committee but rather to ensure that they all worked together to do a better job moving the County with its significant assets forward. He reviewed a number of items occupancy tax had been expended on such as invasive species, land purchases, wages, etc. which he believed did not generate any incoming tourists. He pointed out it was exponentially harder for the hoteliers to generate the same amount of occupancy tax this year than the previous year because fewer visitors were coming here. As previously mentioned, he stated, the only reason they could provide the same amount of funding was because they raised their room rates. He advised Saratoga County had to reduce their rates due to over development there which would impact Warren County, as well causing the hoteliers here to reduce their rates thereby decreasing the amount of occupancy tax generated for promotion. He remarked the members of the Warren County Lodging Association felt there was more opportunity to grow Warren County by using occupancy tax to fuel the tourism engine while still providing the additional funding the County needed for the General Fund in the form of sales tax, wage tax, other income, property purchases, etc.

Jim Fitzgerald, *President, Warren County SPCA*, thanked the Board for their support over the past two years. He remarked he believed the Warren County SPCA had kept up with the high standard of reporting required of them by the County. He pointed out the tourism industry had benefitted from the services provided by the SPCA, as they had addressed a significant number of calls from hoteliers requesting assistance with abandoned animals at their facilities. He mentioned that they felt maintaining their professionalism during the peak tourism season was a support system to this industry, as well. In regards to some concerns that had come to his attention pertaining to the smaller municipalities, Mr. Fitzgerald apprised they were addressing the cat issues located there including the cases involving hoarding. He informed although the bulk of their services was concentrated in the Town of Queensbury and the City of Glens Falls which he attributed to population, he wanted to provide assurances that the calls received from within the smaller municipalities were being taken care of, as well. He reminded them the SPCA had partnered with National not-for-profits to implement the "North County Initiative" Program which supplied those who could not afford the cost of spaying or neutering their cats with coupons to allow them to have their cats spayed or neutered for a reduced rate which was affordable to the owners.

Kevin Markham, *General Manager, Ramada Inn*, stated that the business owners who spoke before him were all residents here that were requesting that the County review the policy pertaining to occupancy tax funds. He informed the hoteliers were the ones who pushed the Board to institute the occupancy tax within Warren County, as it had originally been rejected by the Tourism Committee. He stated that the purpose of occupancy tax was for promotion and to increase tourism; however, he noted, this had not occurred. He advised the goal of the hoteliers was not to criticize but rather to provide assistance in ensuring the funds were allocated properly thereby creating an entity that would boost tourism and push the County ahead of the neighboring Counties. He encouraged the Supervisors to review the Star Report, as it provided incite into what the Counties Warren County was competing with were doing to market tourism there. He suggested that they listen to the business owners who were asking for assistance with making Warren County a year round destination, as this was essential in order to move forward.

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Supervisor Dickinson advised in response to the comments made regarding occupancy tax, he felt it was imperative that he outline his position as a Supervisor in respect to occupancy tax and tourism. He apprised that last year a large portion of the occupancy tax policy was revamped to allow for additional funding that had previously been set aside in the Occupancy Tax Reserve to be allocated to other items such as events. He continued, a large bulk of the funding was redirected away from the County distribution and into the Towns of Lake George, Bolton, Queensbury and the Village of Lake George to be distributed at their discretion. He attributed this change to the fact that the Towns of Queensbury, Lake George, Bolton and the Village of Lake George collected the bulk of the occupancy tax for the County. He said the purpose for the change was that they felt the Towns and Village were more knowledgeable as to which events occurring there were deserving of the funds. He apprised that the Town of Lake George established a Committee in conjunction with the Village of Lake George to award the additional funding. Supervisor Dickinson apprised that the Tourism & Occupancy Tax Coordination Committee had moved forward with obtaining two separate professional reports that would assist the County, as well as the local business owners with determining what was going on with tourism County-wide. He said the goal was to use the data compiled within these reports to develop strategies relative to the use of occupancy tax funds going forward. He pointed out although the smaller municipalities used occupancy tax funding for things that could be construed to some as a misuse such as the Town of Chester using it to purchase street lights or the Town of Stony Creek using funds to purchase additional land to grow their trail system, these decisions were carried out in an effort to increase tourism there. He explained the street lights allowed those traveling on Route 8 to be aware businesses were open there and the land purchased in Stony Creek would allow the Town to expand upon their trail system in hopes of attracting more hikers, horseback riders and snowmobilers. He stated while he concurred that some of the occupancy tax funding had been expended frivolously by the County, he said they had reorganized the program in an attempt to get a better handle on the items the business community was seeking. He pointed out when the Town of Lake George awarded funding to an event they required hard data which substantiated whether it was worthwhile to continue funding the event or not. He apprised they had been more thoroughly scrutinizing the applications for occupancy tax funding and providing less money to events that could not justify receiving it. Supervisor Dickinson stated that he had lived in the Town of Lake George his entire life during which time he had observed many unhealthy changes to the Lake pertaining to invasive species which was a serious issue. He reminded them that Warren County was the first to take action against invasive species by providing the funding to commence a mandatory boat inspection/wash station program on the Lake, as well as funding for the other water bodies located in Warren Country to assist them with prevention and/or eradication efforts. He pointed out the program had been funded and was made successful with occupancy tax funding which was why he was fully supportive of it being used for this purpose. He advised some of the issues pertaining to invasive species within the Lake could never be fully eradicated such as eurasian milfoil which meant it would be a constant battle each year that was very costly. He remarked using occupancy tax funds for invasive species efforts was an appropriate use of the funds. He encouraged anyone with concerns to contact him directly. He commented that the County could not be anymore transparent than they currently were with occupancy tax, as they did everything they could to be aware of how the money was allocated and whether it was worthwhile to both the County and the business owners.

Supervisor Montesi stated that someone had previously relayed Mr. Swan's concerns pertaining to the balance of the General Fund in future years not being sufficient enough to cover the County's payroll. He asked Mr. Swan what the current balance of the General Fund was and Mr. Swan replied that the balance was around \$16 million. Supervisor Montesi inquired when the issue with payroll would occur and Mr. Swan responded that the issue was projected to occur in 2019 and 2020 if the County continued to spend in the same manor it had been.

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Supervisor Seeber apprised she was pleased to hear that the report from BBG&G had been received; however, she stated, she was disappointed it had not been received in time to assist them with making decisions concerning occupancy tax going into the next year. She advised the goal had been to have the qualitative and quantities analysis available before the end of the year but she was unsure whether a statistical report had ever been ordered, as she did not recall them authorizing one. She indicated she looked forward to reviewing the report put together by BBG&G, as it was directly related to occupancy tax. She remarked she was disheartened with the fact that they were at this point within the budget following multiple discussions over the last eight months with the business community in an attempt to resurrect the occupancy tax advisory group and incorporating two members of the Lodging Association into the Occupancy Tax Committee. She said they had also discussed having training on the Star Report but nothing ever came to fruition. She continued, a number of changes had been discussed that pertained to occupancy tax funds which would allow for the money to be used to put "heads in beds", reviewing the County's return on investment and driving that occupancy tax up. She voiced her concern with the fact that the Board had unanimously approved appropriating occupancy tax funding to the Town of Stony Creek for the purchase of land to expand upon their trail system, as she had just been made aware that occupancy tax reports for 2015 from the Towns of Stony Creek and Johnsbury had not been submitted as of yet so she was unable to review them. She mentioned she felt there was a way the Board could do a better job in terms of their transparency and the after action reports to ensure that the funds were expended wisely. She continued, stating her understanding as to why the business community had concerns about how occupancy tax funds was being allocated. She inquired whether the report completed by BBG&G made recommendations pertaining to the 2017 County Budget, as one of the points of the analysis being done was to assist the County in determining how the funds could be expended more appropriately to result in a return on investment.

Supervisor Merlino stated that the report from BBG&G was not fully completed as of yet, as the information he received yesterday was only about 3/4 of the entire report which he had been unable to review. He estimated that the full report would be completed by the end of next week. He advised he believed they needed to review the process they used to allocate occupancy tax funds to prevent them from continuing to go in the wrong direction with it. He encouraged all to attend the Tourism & Occupancy Tax Coordination Committee Meeting scheduled for this Monday, November 21<sup>st</sup> so they could discuss the matter further. He pointed out the County had received request for funding totaling \$1,300,000 of which they had \$175,000 available to allocate. He reminded the Board when occupancy tax was first implemented in the County 25% of the funds were allocated to the municipalities; however, he noted, in 2015 the formula was changed to provide more money for the municipalities. He explained the purpose of providing the additional funding to the municipalities was to allow for them to promote tourism there. He informed over the past few years the County had been generous with its allocation of occupancy tax funding and he remarked if they continued in this direction they could run into trouble within the next few years. He reminded them at the November 4<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting they decided to appropriate funds from occupancy tax to pay for a portion of the invasive species expense rather than cutting back on the expense. He indicated it was necessary for them to have a thorough understanding of what they were discussing and voting on.

Supervisor McDevitt stated he thought they could continue with the long-term economic vision pertaining to the runway extension while also thoroughly reviewing the savings proposed by Mr. Schermerhorn. He questioned whether anyone from the County had been in contact with Mr. Schermerhorn to discuss his proposal further and Chairman Geraghty responded that they were awaiting receipt of further details regarding the proposal from Mr. Schermerhorn's legal counsel.

Brian Reichenbach, *County Attorney*, stated that he had received a copy of the proposal by Mr. Schermerhorn which was very general as presented. He said he had advised the Chairman that they

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could move forward with this; however, he noted, he believed a bidding process would be required.

Supervisor Brock questioned whether the hoteliers were requesting that occupancy tax funds be awarded based upon metrics with events that generate more room reservations taking priority and Chairman Geraghty replied in the affirmative. Supervisor Dickinson apprised that BBG&G had prepared the Show and Go Report for the County and they were awaiting receipt of the metrics report. He said the goal was to use these two reports to assist them in determining how to move forward with occupancy tax funds. Supervisor Brock voiced his concern that some things could not be measured in that way such as invasive species. Chairman Geraghty interjected that the issue with occupancy tax would be addressed more in depth at the Committee Meeting on Monday.

Supervisor Seeber asked Mr. Swan whether he had any other concerns with the proposed County Budget for 2017 other than the lack of a Multi-Year Plan and he responded that he was concerned that the projected balance for the General Fund in the last Multi-Year Plan for 2019 was only \$7 million and a minimum of \$9.5 million was required to pay the bills. He explained funds were allocated from the General Fund during certain times of the year to cover the shortfall in order to pay the bills. He said these funds were returned once the revenue was received. He stated the Debt Service pertaining to the NSTEM and Court Expansion Projects needed to be addressed, as well. He remarked he felt the proposed Budget for 2017 was appropriate given the circumstances but he wanted to ensure they were aware it was necessary to consider the future, as well.

Supervisor Thomas reminded the Board he had brought up the exact same point at the November 4<sup>th</sup> Special Board Meeting, as he was fully aware that if they kept spending at the same rate and did not address the Debt Service they would severely deplete the General Fund to a point where it was no longer sustainable.

Chairman Geraghty once again called for any comments on the Public Hearing on the Warren County Sewer District (Industrial Park) Assessment Roll for 2017, and there being none, he declared it closed at 11:13 a.m.

Supervisor Girard advised that while he was appreciative of all the input provided today regarding occupancy tax he felt it was important for them to hear his perspective of who he represented on the Board. He stated all were allowed to voice their opinions as to how funding was spent at the Public Hearing concerning the County Budget and what direction they felt the County should go in. He informed that Finch Pruyn was located in the City of Glens Falls and was one of the largest contributors to taxes within the County. He stated large companies located within the County such as Finch Pruyn and Boston Scientific could argue they were not getting their "fair share". He stated as a small business owner in the City of Glens Falls his slow months were during June, July and August which was when the tourists were visiting the Lake George and Saratoga areas. He said this meant occupancy tax was working well for these areas during this time but providing no benefit to the City of Glens Falls. He informed there were many activities available in the City such as the professional baseball team at East Field or the art exhibits offered at the Hyde Museum which did not necessarily put heads in beds; however; he noted, they did enhance individuals stay in the region. He pointed out even though the City did not benefit greatly from occupancy tax during the peak tourist season, the residents of City were not complaining, as they expected the five Supervisors who represented them on the Board to push for them to get them the benefits they deserved. He remarked he felt the purpose of occupancy tax was more than just putting heads in beds, as he believed its purpose was to enhance visitors stay in order to ensure they would return here again. He apprised that while he was sympathetic to the concerns expressed by the business owners, occupancy tax concerned every municipality located within the County and he felt the process was fair.



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Supervisor Simpson informed that the Town of Horicon used occupancy tax to assist them with their winter carnival. He said he spoke to a number of attendees who were staying in Lake George that indicated they had never been to Brant Lake. He advised if this event had not occurred, they would not have been able to attract people to the northern portion of the County. He apprised there would be an issue if their were heads in beds but no events or attractions for them to attend.

Chairman Geraghty once again called for any comments on the Public Hearing on the 2017 Tentative Warren County Budget, and there being none, he declared it closed at 11:18 a.m.

Proceeding with the Agenda review Chairman Geraghty read aloud the listing of meetings he had attended since the last Board Meeting; *a copy of the list is on file in the Clerk of the Board's Office with the Items Distributed at the Board Meeting.* He thanked Supervisor Montesi for arranging the InterCounty Legislative Committee of the Adirondacks on November 17<sup>th</sup> to take place at the Angio Dynamics Facility in the Town of Queensbury. Chairman Geraghty reported that he had been notified by the New York State Department of Health that the County would be receiving \$2, 277,758 in Medicaid payments for the years 2014 and 2015.

Before continuing the Agenda review, Chairman Geraghty recognized the following people for their years of service to the County which he said was greatly appreciated:

- \* Michael Burn for 30 years of service to the Probation Department
- \* Amy McBurn for 25 years of service to the Countryside Adult Home
- \* Alan Mead for 25 years of service to the Department of Public Works
- \* Tamara Barlow for 20 years of service to the Countryside Adult Home
- \* Ted Little for 20 years of service to the Office of Emergency Services

Chairman Geraghty then called for reports from Supervisors on the past months meetings or activities.

Supervisor Dickinson apprised that the Environmental Concerns & Real Property Tax Services Committee had met on October 24<sup>th</sup> and again on November 3<sup>rd</sup>, approving proposed Resolution Nos. 462-464.

Supervisor Merlino reiterated that the Tourism & Occupancy Tax Coordination Committee would be meeting on Monday, November 21<sup>st</sup>. Supervisor Merlino stated that the Park Operations & Management Committee had met on October 31<sup>st</sup> wherein the Committee authorized Jeffery Tennyson, *Superintendent of Public Works*, to continue the process on introducing WI-FI Service at the Festival Commons. He reported following the meeting it was determined that the price for WI-FI would increase if they did not move forward with the agreement proposed by the lowest bidder at this time at the proposed rate of \$99 a month for a three year term which was why he authorized Mr. Tennyson to move forward with the contract.

Supervisor Strough advised that he had no Committee Report but he had attended Jim Lieberum's, *Executive Director, Warren County Soil & Water Conservation District*, presentation pertaining to Stream Reconstruction and Plug Management which he felt was very informative.

Supervisor Seeber informed on October 20<sup>th</sup> she attended a meeting with SUNY Adirondack and Paul Smith College to discuss a partnership for a Hospitality Program. She apprised that the Warren County Lodging Association had offered to provide internships for the students involved in the Program. Supervisor Seeber thanked Jackie Figueroa, *County Human Resources Director*, for the efforts she had put forth developing evaluation forms which would be reviewed at the November 28<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Performance Evaluation Committee. She advised that the Ad Hoc Airport Advisory Committee would

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be meeting on Tuesday, November 22<sup>nd</sup> at 9:30 a.m. and she acknowledged Chairman Geraghty and Supervisor Conover's for assisting her with establishing this Ad Hoc Committee.

Supervisor Beaty stated that Shared Services did not meet last month; however, he noted, he had met with Julie Butler, *Purchasing Agent*, who indicated the savings achieved thus far was around \$110,000. He surmised the savings would be around \$500,000 on an annual basis. He encouraged the Towns who were not participating to do so.

Supervisor Montesi apprised that he was asked to represent the County at the weekly contractor meeting for Court Space Expansion Project. He provided an overview of the work being completed.

Supervisor Sokol reported on the October 24<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Health, Human & Social Services Committee, wherein they approved proposed Resolution Nos. 455-461 which he provided an overview of.

Supervisor Thomas called to the attention of the Board proposed Resolution No. 486, "*Amending Tentative Budget Providing Appropriations for the Conduct of County Business for the Fiscal Year 2017*" which he provided an overview of.

Supervisor Wood informed the Criminal Justice & Public Safety Committee had met on October 24<sup>th</sup> wherein they approved proposed Resolution No. 454, *Authorizing an Application for a Municipal Certificate of Need and Operating Authority for Ambulance Service for Warren County*, which she asked for support on. Supervisor Wood advised that the location of the public hearing pertaining to the Boreas Ponds Classification in Rochester and Canton had been changed and she encouraged all who planned on attending to check on the location before traveling there.

Supervisor Conover provided a brief overview of the November 3<sup>rd</sup> Finance, Personnel & Higher Education Committee meeting wherein proposed Resolution Nos. 452, 453 and 480-485 were approved. He called their attention to proposed Resolution No. 481, *Authorizing Renewal of Medicare Advantage Insurance Plans for Warren County Retirees over Age 65*, which he provided an overview of. He stated that proposed Resolution No. 482, *Authorizing Sale of Vacant Property on State Route 9 in the Town of Warrensburg and Conveying Quit Claim Deed*, pertained to the sale of vacant County-owned property in the Town of Warrensburg. He said the allocation of a public resource no matter if it pertained to sales tax, occupancy tax, mortgage tax, etc. was a balancing act of competitive interests. He reminded the Board there were those who would not have allocated funding to provide assistance to the Glens Falls Civic Center that were not members of the Board at that time, as the resolution adopted providing such assistance was done so with a unanimous vote. He continued, while some may not wish to allocate resources for the protection of Lake George and the other lakes in this County, they were not members of the Board then or now. He informed both the investment into Lake George, as well as the Glens Falls Civic Center resulted in an abundant amount of other Federal, State and private investments. He mentioned one of the elements of the occupancy tax plan was to provide additional funding in particular to both the Town and Village of Lake George to promote events and move forward with plans that the Village, Town and their business community felt were worthwhile. He pointed out the County did not place any restrictions for what the funding should be used for such as advertising or Festival Commons. He said he believed this benefitted the Town and the Village and he applauded them for coming together and allocating the funds wisely. He remarked his hope moving forward as they considered the future allocations of public resources was that they keep in mind the bigger picture which was that they needed to work together to achieve common goals that exist both County-wide and within their own municipalities.

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Supervisor Leggett advised that he had nothing to report on.

Supervisor Girard reported on the October 31<sup>st</sup> meeting of the County Facilities Committee, wherein proposed Resolution Nos. 465-470 were approved.

Supervisor McDevitt stated that he felt it was important for them to recognize and thank employers who have been located within the County for many years. He acknowledged Finch Pruyn, who employed approximately 650 people. He said he was pleased with their efforts to become more environmentally friendly pertaining to their reuse of waste within the facility which he referred to as sludge to produce a nitrogen rich fertilizer and soil enhancer, as well as electrical generation in the paper industry. He apprised if one or both of these applications proved to be successful it was estimated that Finch Pruyn would expend approximately \$5 million in order to bring these products to market. He commented he believed this meant Finch Pruyn was looking to the future to produce environmentally friendly products which would assist them in the process of becoming more efficient and ensure their stability and employee retention in the region. Supervisor McDevitt informed that according to an article featured in *The Post Star*, an announcement was forthcoming regarding job creation involving the old General Electric Re-watering Facility in the Town of Fort Edward, He commented he hoped that both of these items would result in the betterment of the community as a result of the establishment of well paying jobs in the community.

Supervisors Braymer and Brock apprised that they had nothing to report on.

Supervisor MacDonald reported that he had met with Mrs. Butler to discuss the amount of savings the County had realized from the Shared Services effort. He commended Mrs. Butler on the work she put forth to realize those savings. Supervisor MacDonald apprised that he had also met with Mr. Swan to discuss the how sales tax was collected, allocated and used within the budgeting process, as well as being educated on equalization rates. He apprised that he had met with the Mayor for the City of Glens Falls and Supervisor Merlino to discuss tourism. He thanked Supervisor Simpson for taking the time to show him some of the ongoing projects within the Town of Horicon and discussing what he hoped would occur there in the future. Supervisor MacDonald informed topics of discussion at the quarterly Town Hall Meeting he hosted in conjunction with Jim Clark, *5<sup>th</sup> Ward Councilman, City of Glens Falls*, pertained to the struggles regarding EMS Services on a County-wide basis, the study being conducted on the Geothermal Unit at the Warren County Municipal Center, the upgrades approved by the Board this year for the Airport, as well as the Runway Extension.

Supervisor Frasier advised she had nothing to report on.

Supervisor Simpson reported on the October 31<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Public Works Committee and provided a brief overview of proposed Resolution Nos. 471-479 which were approved there.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Brian Reichenbach, *County Attorney*, who advised that he had nothing to report on.

Supervisor Dickinson apprised that the tax foreclosure sale was a challenge both emotionally and time wise and he thanked Lexie Delurey, *Director, Real Property Tax Services*, Mr. Swan, Mr. Reichenbach and their respective staff for their work on it. He advised the sale consisted of forty-two properties with a total amount of back taxes due of \$177,865.35. He informed the properties sold for a total amount of \$625,275 resulting in a net gain of \$447,410.65. Chairman Geraghty noted that a portion of the proceeds from the sale were placed in a Reserve Account to address any environmental issues certain properties may have that the County acquired. Supervisor Dickinson inquired how much of the

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proceeds was set aside for this purpose and Mr. Swan responded that he did not know the exact figure but he was aware that it was a certain percentage of the proceeds from the sale. Supervisor Dickinson advised the Reserve Account provided the County with funds it may otherwise not have available to clean up properties so they could be sold at a future auction.

Resuming the Agenda review, Chairman Geraghty called for the reading of communications, which Mrs. Allen read aloud, as follows:

Reports from:

1. Report of Criminal and Family Workloads for September 2016 from the Warren County Probation Department.

Capital District Regional Off-Track Betting Corp. 2016 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter benefit distribution in the amount of \$27,284.

Warren and Washington IDA and CDC proposed 2017 Budgets.

Continuing to the reading of resolutions, Mrs. Allen announced proposed Resolution Nos. 452-490 were mailed; she noted proposed Resolution No. 481 was amended after mailing and a motion was needed to approve the revisions. The necessary motion was made by Supervisor Dickinson, seconded by Supervisor Simpson and carried unanimously. She informed that proposed Resolution No. 491 was prepared after mailing and a motion was necessary to bring the proposed Resolution to the floor. The necessary motion was made by Supervisor Montesi, seconded by Supervisor Simpson and carried unanimously.

Chairman Geraghty called for discussion and public comment on the proposed resolutions, as well as requests for roll call votes.

Supervisor Braymer requested a roll call vote on proposed Resolution No. 470, *Resolution in Support of Floyd Bennett Memorial Airport Runway 1/19 Extension Project*. She stated that she had tried to present a balanced approach that supported the Airport but was opposed to the Runway Extension due to the fact that she did not feel the extension was warranted. She remarked the monetary costs and environmental impacts greatly outweighed the benefits that she perceived to be very speculative. She reminded them a prominent businessman from the area had advised them against moving forward with the Project, as he did not foresee the County getting a return on their investment based upon the extension. She commented she did not feel the Board should be viewing this Project from the perspective of build it and they will come. She requested that they each take a step back and consider it just on the merits, as she believed they would determine it was not worthwhile to move forward with. She said if they were to move forward with the Extension she would like them to keep an open mind as they proceeded with the SEQRA process and she noted there were other options available such as extending to the north. She implored for them to vote in opposition of the proposed Resolution.

Supervisor MacDonald advised he would also like to comment on proposed Resolution No. 470, *Resolution in Support of Floyd Bennett Memorial Airport Runway 1/19 Extension Project*. He acknowledged that there had been an abundant amount of work exerted toward the Runway Extension Project which was why he was respectful of the time and effort put forth by some of the Supervisors and Department Heads to do thorough work on the Project. He said he had completed a significant amount of research in an attempt to make an informed decision on the Project; however, he advised, this had been difficult due to the fact that the matter had been politicized. He remarked in the end his decision was based upon priorities, as the total cost to the County would be around \$500,000 which he felt was rather significant. He commented setting aside the Court Space Expansion and NSTEM

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Projects, he could think of a number of things that the County's portion of funding for this Project could be better invested in such as infrastructure like roads or bridges or providing some sort of tax incentive based program to attract new business to the region. He stated another option was to not expend the funds and take the time to determine how they would fund the existing projects first.

Supervisor Simpson called their attention to proposed Resolution No. 491, *Resolution in Support of the Access Adirondacks Memorandum of Understanding among Public and Private Organizations Regarding Recreational Access to Adirondack State Lands*, which he was requesting support of. He explained this pertained to a non-binding agreement committed to the goal of increasing access and recreational opportunities on State land. He apprised if they so chose they could express their support of the proposed Resolution on Monday night at the Public Hearing scheduled for 7:00 p.m. at Schroon Lake Central School.

Supervisor Seeber requested a roll call vote on proposed Resolution No. 454, *Authorizing an Application for a Municipal Certificate of Need and Operating Authority for Ambulance Service for Warren County*, as she had several concerns pertaining to it. She informed the Certificate of Need had been brought up at the end of the October 24<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Criminal Justice & Public Safety Committee Meeting, leaving only a few minutes available for discussion. She stated that she was advised at that time a Board Resolution would not be required since no money was involved. She mentioned another concern of hers related to the fact at the conclusion of the meeting the Committee determined to move forward with an internal report that would be completed by the Office of Emergency Services to determine whether a Certificate of Need was needed. She remarked similar to the reports that were not received in time to make an informed decision concerning occupancy tax, the Board would be voting on an action without having the data present to make an informed decision. She indicated she could not comprehend why they were applying for a Certificate of Need without having the internal report available which would indicate whether it was needed or not. She remarked it appeared as if they had already determined the outcome before they got off the ground and she did not believe this was fair to the communities and in particular to the Town of Queensbury where many involved in the EMS field were opposed to this. She said she would have been appreciative of completing the report and presenting it to the Board so they could make an informed decision regarding the Certificate of Need.

Supervisor Strough voiced his support of proposed Resolution No. 491, as he believed it was appropriate for them to adopt a resolution in support of making State land accessible to everyone including the disabled and elderly. In regards to proposed Resolution No. 453, Supervisor Strough informed that he communicated more than most with the EMS Squads in his community and he felt saving peoples lives was imperative. He mentioned this was not an Up-County or Down-County issue as some may like to present it as but rather a County-wide issue. He stated he was fully supportive of assisting the northern portion of the County with obtaining EMS services that could result in saving lives. Supervisor Strough informed that proposed Resolution No. 470, *Resolution in Support of Floyd Bennett Memorial Airport Runway 1/19 Extension Project*, which pertained to supporting of extending the Runway by 1,000 feet at a cost of \$400,000 to the County which equated to about \$6 per taxpayer would result in providing safety to current and future aircrafts. He stated due to its proximity both the City of Glens Falls and the Town of Queensbury would benefit most from having an improved Airport which was why it was unfortunate there were two representatives from these communities who were not in favor of the extension. He advised the extension would allow the Airport to better accommodate the business aircrafts that were currently located there and future ones. He referred to an article published in the *Albany Business Review* which outlined how important the business jet industry was becoming to current and future economic growth. He mentioned some would say the County should not invest in the Runway Extension because they were not supposed to be discussing future economic growth which he noted he was not supportive of. He pointed out there were a significant amount of

other Airports that changed their standards to require a 6,000 foot runway which others chose to ignore. In response to those who stated the funds could be used elsewhere, Supervisor Strough advised the grant funding for the Airport could only be used to improve Airports and if the County did not use it another community with an Airport would because 6,000 feet was the new standard length for runways. He listed a number of businessmen involved in the aviation industry who believed the County should move forward with the Runway Extension. He added that residents questioned why the County was not moving forward with the Project when he spoke to them about all the benefits that would be realized from it. He informed according to the multiple economic studies completed that pertained to the Airport, the County would receive a ten dollar return on every dollar invested there. He stated while he concurred with Supervisor McDevitt that they should further research efficiencies, the proposed Resolution before them today pertained only to the Runway Extension which was a separate issue than the efficiencies at the Airport. He remarked he thought the proposed Resolution summarized the significant amount of reasons the County needed to extend the Runway.

Supervisor Beaty remarked that he found it disingenuous that TV 8 stated three times they would like to hold a debate between Supervisor Strough and Mr. Westcott on the merits of the Runway Extension Project to which Supervisor Strough had not agreed to. He said it was perplexing to him that Supervisor Strough would bring forward proposed Resolution No. 470, *Resolution in Support of Floyd Bennett Memorial Airport Runway 1/19 Extension Project*, and yet he refused to debate the matter with an honorable man like Mr. Westcott. He pointed out there were a number of things associated with the Runway Extension that he found to be troubling such as the environmental concerns and seizing property owners land through the eminent domain process. As to the argument that it would provide for a safer Airport, Supervisor Beaty pointed out there had never been an accident at there due to the runway length. He reminded the Board that Phil Morris, a very prominent business man from the region, had voiced his objection to the runway extension, stating that it was not necessary, as it would not provide any economic benefits to the area. He continued, Mr. Morris suggested that the County take care of the businesses located here now and spend the money wisely rather than wastefully expending funds on the runway extension. Supervisor Beaty apprised that a few years ago before he was elected as a Supervisor, he had a conversation with Ross Dubarry, *Airport Manager*, during which Mr. Dubarry indicated to him that if it was his own money he would not expend the funds to extend the runway. In conclusion, he stated the only ones who would benefit from the Runway Extension were the handful of pilots who did not want to have to stop in Canada for fuel when they were traveling to Europe. He remarked he respectfully disagreed with anyone who felt this was a wise use of taxpayer funds. He requested that Supervisor Strough accept Mr. Westcott's request to debate him on TV 8 so that it could be done in a civil manner.

Mr. Whitehead advised he would like to comment on proposed Resolution No. 470, *Resolution in Support of Floyd Bennett Memorial Airport Runway 1/19 Extension Project*. He indicated his intention was to amplify a few things that had previously been stated. He apprised that if the resolution drafted by Supervisor Braymer which was supportive of the Airport but not the Runway Extension was before the Board today, he would be encouraging them to vote in favor of it. He proceeded to cite the following excerpt from proposed Resolution No. 470, which he noted was false information: "WHEREAS, in or about 2002, in the course of updating the Airport Master Plan for the airport, C & S Engineers assessed the then current and projected future needs of the airport and recommended an extension to the approach of Runway 1-19 (hereafter called "improvement") in order to accommodate the family of critical design airplanes/aircraft then currently operating and anticipated to operate at the Airport without imposing weight restriction or requiring an intermediate fuel stop when flying to medium or long haul destinations". He informed the portion that was false pertained to weight restriction and an intermediary fuel stop when flying to medium or long-haul destinations. He pointed out this was the exact wording included within the SEQRA document because SEQRA required that the damage that may

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be caused would be less than what would occur if the need was satisfied. He continued, if there was no need present than the County could not justify the damage that would be done. He referred to the last draft environmental assessment that was released which stated the following: "The purpose of the proposed project is to provide adequate runway length and required runway safety areas to accommodate the family of critical design airplanes/aircraft currently operating at the Airport and anticipated to operate at the Airport within the next five years". He pointed out this made no reference to weight restriction or fuel stops when flying to medium or long haul destinations. He explained this was a big issue because contained within the unreleased draft environmental assessment of which he had only been able to obtain portions of was wording referring to medium and long haul destinations. He informed about two years ago he pointed out that the draft environmental assessment clearly stated that the Airport did not have medium or long haul traffic there and for that reason there was no need to extend the runway. He noted both environmental assessment forms indicated that the Airport was a short haul traffic airport which required a 4,620 foot runway. He advised a Gulf Stream 360 jet could fly into and out of the airport with the current runway with the exception of being fully fueled which meant you may have to stop for fuel. He pointed out that there was no data available as to the number of times someone using the Airport had their trip hindered because they could not fully fuel their jet in order to land or take off there. He commented when they voted in favor of the proposed Resolution today they should be aware that there was no released draft environmental assessment that stated anything about flying to intermediate or long haul destinations. He reiterated the SEQRA process required that there be a need before moving forward with eradicating class one wetlands and destroying marl fen. He said the funds could be used in other areas, as the United States Congress had authorized the use of FAA funding to pay air traffic controller wages during an economic downturn in order to prevent layoffs. He said this was a good example of prioritizing, as the United States Congress felt it was more important to use the money to pay these salaries to ensure airport safety rather than for airport improvements. He remarked once they decided it was not that important than maybe they did not have to take it out of his pocket.

Mr. Westcott stated that reasonable people could agree to disagree such as he and his good friend Supervisor McDevitt did on the Runway Expansion and he noted he respected him for his point of view. He said what he could not comprehend was why Mr. Whitehead's request as an engineer, to meet with the engineers involved on the Project to review his findings and determine whether he was correct had been repeatedly rebuffed. He read aloud the following email he sent to Mr. Tennyson in response to a letter he received from him on June 16<sup>th</sup> to which Mr. Tennyson never responded to: "Dear Jeff, Thank you for your sixty-five page response that I received. Unfortunately in multiple cases you have misrepresented me but none the less there was progress made with your document. First in these sixty-five pages I still have not heard why you will not schedule a simple meeting with Mr. Whitehead with you and the C&S Engineers to go over his analysis. He was right with Siemens, why not take the time to put engineers together to see if he is on to something here. What does the County have to lose". He requested that they table proposed Resolution No. 470, *Resolution in Support of Floyd Bennett Memorial Airport Runway 1/19 Extension Project*, to allow for Mr. Whitehead to meet with Mr. Tennyson and the engineers from C&S to determine whether Mr. Whitehead's findings were correct.

Dave Schwenker, *Town of Queensbury resident*, advised he was supportive of proposed Resolution No. 470, *Resolution in Support of Floyd Bennett Memorial Airport Runway 1/19 Extension Project*, for the following reasons: He informed as he had stated at previous meetings it pertained to an issue of safety and although no accidents had occurred at the Airport due to runway length as of yet they had occurred in multiple parts of the Country and they were terrifying.; Economic Development would be realized from the extension of the runway. He informed the County a company his sown owned and sister worked for used business aviation to travel to small towns. He added the same was applicable to a number of companies located here such as Irving Tissue, Target, etc. He said while he understood

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economic development due to a runway extension was difficult to measure, it was part of the infrastructure that attracted businesses.; and the County was competing with places that already expanded their runways for business. He referred to several airports located in New York State, Vermont and New Hampshire and the lengths they had extended their runways to. He apprised extended runways were part of the infrastructure for the long-term which included the future generation of jets and not the older models. In conclusion, he stated in terms of calculations as a pilot and retired engineer he disagreed with some of Mr. Whitehead's analysis regarding take off length.

Harrison Freer, *Town of Queensbury resident and pilot*, informed he fully supported extending the runway length. He indicated that he also believed that Mr. Whitehead's analysis was flawed in many different levels but especially the fact that he stated the County would be taking away eight acres of marl fen. He said adjustments had been made so that less than one acre of marl fen would be disturbed, thereby ensuring the bulk of what was present there was preserved.

David Strainer, *Town of Queensbury resident*, stated that Ogdensburg International Airport, which was located in the Town of Ogdensburg with a population totaling 11,000, current runway length was 5,200 feet but would be extended to 6,400 feet. He informed in order for them to extend the runway a road would have to be moved and their terminal extended for a total project cost of \$26 million which they felt was justified due to the impact on the local economy and that they were located within close proximity to Canada. He advised on April 16, 2016 Congresswoman Stefanik announced that an \$11 million grant from the New York State Department of Transportation had been awarded to assist with funding the project during which she noted her support of it due to the positive impact it would have on the economy there. He pointed out this area had almost five times the population of the Town of Ogdensburg. He stated the purpose of the runway extension was to generate more income thereby decreasing the Airport Budget. He remarked he believed the purpose of the Runway Extension was the same as the NSTEM Project at SUNY Adirondack in that it was an attempt to provide the locals with opportunity that would prevent them from leaving the region. He mentioned even if the Project did not generate any additional income there was still potential opportunity for the future. He commented he fully supported the airport and encouraged them to vote in support of proposed Resolution No. 470, *Resolution in Support of Floyd Bennett Memorial Airport Runway 1/19 Extension Project*.

Mr. Whitehead advised that the Essential Air Service Program was similar to the Airport Improvement Program; however, he noted, the County was not eligible to participate in this Program unlike the Ogdensburg International Airport because of its close proximity to Albany International Airport. He said this meant commercial airliner service would never locate here.

Supervisor Leggett asked for clarification purposes what the purpose and practical outcome of proposed Resolution No. 470, *Resolution in Support of Floyd Bennett Memorial Airport Runway 1/19 Extension Project*, was. Supervisor Strough informed the purpose and intent was to provide the public with a clear and precise explanation of the benefits of the Project and why they were moving forward with it.

Supervisor Braymer advised that the County did not have the special designation that the Ogdensburg International Airport had. She apprised no one had supplied her with the data pertaining to the number of additional passengers the Airport would receive as a result of the Runway Extension nor an estimate of the Additional air traffic they would receive. She stated the lack of data was the reason she could not support the Runway Extension. She said if someone were to supply her with similar data Congresswoman Stefanik referenced in regards to the extension of the runway at Ogdensburg International Airport than she may have a basis to change her opinion but right now there was nothing except the notion of "build it and they will come in the future".



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Supervisor Girard thanked everyone for their feedback today, as he felt it was beneficial for him, as Chairman of the County Facilities Committee, in determining how to move forward. He noted he found the dialogue and discussion today concerning the matter to be healthy.

During the roll call vote Chairman Geraghty commended Supervisor Thomas for his efforts in preparing what he felt was an appropriate budget, as he was well aware of the difficulties that accompanied the position since he had served as the Budget Officer before he was appointed to Chairman of the Board. He pointed out it was not the Treasurer's Office who instituted the report by the County Treasurer pertaining to the County finances but rather the Board that put that into place in order to provide for more oversight. He remarked he would also like to commend the Department Heads for cutting back their expenses and bringing forth responsible Budget requests for the following year. In regards to the pay increases, Chairman Geraghty advised although there was no formal system currently in place, an abundant amount of effort was exerted to determine the pay increases. He added they had held off on working on updating the Multi-Year plan because they were unsure of whether the proposed Budget would be adopted. He said following its adoption they would commence work on updating this, as they were well aware of its importance. He remarked he felt it was imperative for the public to be aware that the Board was responsible for adopting the Budget and it was they who had requested that the Treasurer's Office prepare the financial reports pertaining to the County finances. In conclusion, he stated he was fully supportive of the proposed County Budget for 2017 and he acknowledged Supervisor Thomas for his efforts in preparing it.

Chairman Geraghty called for a vote on resolutions, following which Resolution Nos. 452-491 were approved as presented.

Chairman Geraghty called for announcements.

Supervisor Dickinson wished everyone a happy Thanksgiving.

Supervisor McDevitt announced that the Hudson Falls High School Volleyball Team, which was a local team, was one of the teams playing the New York State Volleyball Tournament at the Glens Falls Civic Center and he wished them well. He also wished the Glens Falls Indians and Cambridge High School football teams well in their upcoming playoff games and he acknowledged the girls Swim team at Glens Falls High School for having a banner year.

Mr. Westcott questioned what the status of the study being conducted on the Geothermal Unit at the Municipal Center was and he inquired when the public would receive notification pertaining to the final audit and how this would impact the next payment to Siemens, as it was important for the public to be aware of the outcome. Mr. Reichenbach apprised they were discussing how to move forward with the County's legal counsel. Mr. Westcott asked Mr. Reichenbach if he could provide him with a time frame for that and Mr. Reichenbach replied that he could not provide a specific date but that it would be as soon as possible.

Chairman Geraghty wished everyone a happy Thanksgiving.

There being no further business to come before the Board of Supervisors, on motion made by Supervisor Dickinson and seconded by Supervisor Simpson, Chairman Geraghty adjourned the Board Meeting at 12:33 p.m.