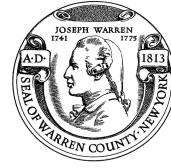


# Warren County Board of Supervisors

**BOARD MEETING  
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2018**



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 10:01 a.m.

Mr. Ronald F. Conover presiding.

Salute to the flag was led by Supervisor Sokol.

Roll called, the following members present:

Supervisors Leggett, Diamond, McDevitt, Braymer, Loeb, Driscoll, Frasier, Simpson, Strough, Wild, Beaty, Sokol, Thomas, Geraghty and Conover- 15; Supervisors Hogan, Dickinson, Merlino, Magowan and Hyde absent- 5

Supervisor Magowan entered the meeting at 10:02 a.m.

Commencing the Agenda review, motion was made by Supervisor Leggett, seconded by Supervisor Strough and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the October 19, 2018 Board Meeting and the November 2, 2018 Special Board Meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk of the Board.

Supervisor Merlino entered the meeting at 10:03 a.m.

Proceeding with the Agenda review, Chairman Conover declared the Public Hearing on Warren County Community Development Block Grant Project No. 1197PF20-14, Countryside Adult Home Wastewater Connection open at 10:03 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 Conover then called for any public comment; there being no response, he declared the Public Hearing closed at 10:04 a.m.

Supervisor Hyde entered the meeting at 10:05 a.m.

Patricia Tatch, *Associate Planner*, apprised she had distributed a copy of a handout which provided an update regarding the status of the Countryside Adult Home Wastewater Connection Project; a copy of which is on file with the items distributed at the November 16<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting. She stated today's public hearing was the second of the two required for the funding awarded to the County in 2014. She stated they had been fortunate to be awarded funding for this purpose, as there had been a number of issues with the septic system at Countryside Adult Home which would no longer be applicable once it was connected to the town's waste water system. In addition, she apprised this would also protect the aquifer that was located at the foot of the hill below the Facility, as well as the Town's water system and the Schroon River. She proceeded with providing a brief summary of the information included in the handout and she thanked the County, as well as the Town of Warrensburg for providing funding and labor assistance on the project.

Chairman Conover stated that he hoped the project team carried out whatever was necessary to finish the work as soon as possible and remained within the budget. He asked that Ms. Tatch to keep him apprised of the progress of the status of the project and to take the necessary steps to ensure no issues

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arose that prevented it from being completed on time.

Moving along, Chairman Conover declared the Public Hearing on Warren County Sewer District (Industrial Park) Assessment Roll open at 10:14 a.m. and he asked Mrs. Allen read the Notice of the Public Hearing aloud, which she proceeded to do. Chairman Conover then called for public comment.

Supervisor Loeb asked where the Warren County Sewer District was located and Mike Swan, *County Treasurer*, responded that there were several parcels located by the Airport within the vicinity of the Washington-Warren IDA (*Industrial Development Agency*) whose sewage was processed by the Washington County Sewer District. He said the Washington County Sewer District only billed the County for the parcels that were located within the Town of Queensbury which the County then developed the Sewer District (Industrial Park) Assessment Roll and then each of these properties were billed on a per gallon basis.

Chairman Conover once again called for any comments on the Public Hearing on Warren County Sewer District (Industrial Park) Assessment Roll, and there being no more, he declared it closed at 10:17 a.m.

Continuing, Chairman Conover declared the Public Hearing open on the 2019 Tentative Warren County Budget at 10:17 a.m. and Mrs. Allen read the Notice of Public Hearing aloud. Chairman Conover then called for any public comment; there being no response, he declared the Public Hearing closed at 10:19 a.m.

Continuing with the Agenda review with the report by the Chairman of the Board, Chairman Conover advised he had met with Dave O'Brien, *Chairman, Lake Champlain-Lake George Regional Planning Board*, and Beth Gilles, *Acting Executive Director*, on October 26<sup>th</sup> to review what they were presently working on. He said later that day he had attended a meeting with Kevin Hajos, *Superintendent of Public Works*, and representatives from the Fund for Lake George to discuss the initiative to reduce salt use on County roadways during the winter season. He said he was pleased the County was getting more involved in this initiative as it moved forward. He acknowledged Supervisor Thomas for his work in developing the 2019 County Budget. Chairman Conover concluded his report by providing a summary of the meeting he had attended on November 13<sup>th</sup> with Ryan Moore, *County Administrator*, and Supervisor Thomas where they did a presentation for the Adirondack Regional Chamber of Commerce entitled "State of the County" at the Six Flags Great Escape Lodge & Indoor Water Park.

Chairman Conover then called for the reports by Committee Chairman on the past months meetings or activities.

Supervisor Magowan thanked Supervisor Thomas for his efforts preparing the 2019 County Budget which, he noted, was not an easy task to carry out.

Supervisor Sokol stated he, as well would like to thank Supervisor Thomas and the Budget team for their work on the 2019 County Budget. He informed the Finance Committee had met on November 1<sup>st</sup>, approving proposed Resolution Nos. 434-435, 452-454 and 458. He brought the Board members attention to the two proposed floor resolutions, the first of which pertained to autopsy services. He apprised earlier this year Terry Comeau, *County Coroner*, had went before the Finance Committee to discuss issues with the rates charged by Albany Medical Center. He said Mr. Moore had been working diligently on the two floor proposed Resolutions before them today which he asked Mr. Moore to elaborate on.

Mr. Moore stated the County had received a letter on October 12<sup>th</sup> from Albany Medical Center notifying

that the morgue and toxicology services they provided to the County would be terminated effective November 30<sup>th</sup>. He said this resulted in a strong reaction from the New York State Police, who also used Albany Medical Center for these services, as well as twenty-one other Counties in the State. He informed NYSAC (*New York State Association of Counties*), the State Association of County Coroners and Medical Examiners, as well as the State Association of Funeral Directors also got involved resulting in Albany Medical Center agreeing to continue providing limited morgue services at a higher rate than the current contract which the Counties had until November 20<sup>th</sup> to agree to that rate otherwise their services would be suspended. He stated the first of the two proposed floor resolutions concerned these rate changes and the second one pertained to authorizing a contract with NMS Labs to perform forensic toxicology services for the County. He said since Albany Medical Services had committed to terminating the agreement to perform toxicology services on November 30<sup>th</sup>, it was necessary to enter into an agreement with NMS Labs to ensure the County had a toxicology service provider in place. He informed the County Coroners had worked diligently beside his Office to come up with alternatives; however, he said, he believed these were the best options available at this time. He advised Glens Falls Hospital no longer provided morgue services and Ellis Hospital had indicated they would, but since their morgue space was limited they would have to store bodies in rented trailers. He added the County's forensic pathologist did not have practicing rights at Ellis Hospital and both the District Attorney and law enforcement community had indicated to him how imperative it was to continue to use this particular forensic pathologist. He advised the CEO (*Chief Executive Officer*) of Saratoga Hospital had indicated to him they did not handle criminal autopsies there, but they did handle hospital and unattended deaths. He said when he asked if the County could utilize their space the CEO indicated to him they could assist upon occasion, but they could not be the full-time provider of these services for the County, as they did not have adequate space to accommodate the request.

In regards to the forensic toxicology services, Mr. Moore advised the County Coroners performed an extensive search, but the other companies they conversed with were "middle men" for NMS Labs. He said because of this the Coroners all felt that NMS was the County's only option for these services. He added both the Purchasing Department and the County Attorney's Office were aware of both of these contracts.

Mr. Moore informed the County Coroners were participating in a Stakeholder Work Group that was tasked with developing a better long-term strategy to address the forensic toxicology and morgue services. He stated there had been discussion about the possibility of developing a regional center which he noted, he and the other Counties he had conversed with would be comfortable with as long as the New York State Police would take the lead on this. He offered privilege of the floor to Tim Murphy, *County Coroner*, to answer any detailed questions the Board members may have on these two contracts.

Mr. Murphy apprised that Albany Medical Center was more than doubling the rates they charged for morgue services from \$860 to \$2,000. He stated the issue with Saratoga Hospital was that the County's Forensic Pathologist only practiced there on a limited basis; therefore, he said, the remains would have to be there only during the days and times he was there. He added another issue was that the Funeral Home who transported the body there would have to wait until the autopsy was complete and then take the remains with them. He apprised the Funeral Homes would be unwilling to wait because they were the ones who picked up and transported the body, did not necessarily mean they would be the funeral home selected by the deceased loved ones to handle the service, as well as the fact that there was no refrigeration in funeral homes. He stated although Ellis Hospital had indicated a willingness to provide these services for the County the services would be on a limited basis, as well as the fact that the bodies would have to be stored in a refrigerated truck. He requested on behalf of himself and the other County Coroners to approve the new rates charged by Albany Medical Center.

With regard to the contract with NMS Labs, Mr. Murphy apprised he felt it could be less expensive over the long-term. He pointed out Albany Medical Centers rates for toxicology services was rather high and upon occasion it took up to a year for the results to come back.

Mr. Leggett questioned how many autopsies were performed on an annual basis and Mr. Murphy replied he thought it was around 50 to 60 per year as compared to the well over 100 per year they used to do. He stated they had been able to reduce this figure through the assistance of Dr. Bachman, who was the County Coroners Physician, and Law Enforcement.

Mr. Loeb advised one of the reasons Glens Falls Hospital discontinued their autopsy services three years ago related to the fact that the pathologists, who already had a significant workload, were not being compensated for providing these services. Mr. Murphy stated the representatives at Glens Falls Hospital had indicated to him their issue was they were experiencing trouble locating pathologists who wanted to perform autopsies and he was aware specifically of three pathologists who left because they were required to perform autopsies. Mr. Loeb informed that this was a nationwide issue, as it was no longer economically viable for hospitals to provide these services. He added he felt a task force should be set up on the State level to investigate how a solution could be developed, as he believed this would become an issue for other areas in the State such as Syracuse, New York City, etc. Mr. Murphy interjected that Syracuse, Albany and New York City had regional centers to handle these services. He stated the County Coroners Organization had set up a Committee to come up with a short-term solution, as well as a Committee to develop a long-term one. He stated in order to set up a regional center here all twenty-one Counties would have to come together and agree on that, adding the cost would be around \$21 million.

A motion was made by Supervisor Sokol, seconded by Supervisor Simpson and carried unanimously to bring proposed Floor Resolution No. 1 to the floor regarding the rate increase charged by Albany Medical Services for morgue services.

A motion was made by Supervisor Sokol and seconded by Supervisor Braymer and carried unanimously to bring proposed Resolution No. 2 to the floor regarding authorizing a contract with NMS Labs for toxicology services.

Mrs. Allen announced proposed Floor Resolution No. 1 would now be proposed Resolution 461 and proposed Floor Resolution No. 2 would be known as proposed Resolution No. 462.

Supervisor Sokol offered privilege of the floor to Mr. Swan to provide the monthly update regarding the County's finances. Mr. Swan stated that sales tax remained up by 5% as compared to the prior years collection, adding he believed this trend would hold steady through the end of the year. He remarked he believed this additional revenue would assist with paying some of the one-time expenses in 2019 that Supervisor Thomas had left out of the 2019 County Budget.

Supervisor Braymer questioned whether Mr. Swan was aware of the balance in the Gaslight Village Parking Fees Budget Account and Mr. Swan replied in the negative.

Chairman Conover requested that Mr. Hajos report on the good news the County received yesterday concerning The Bridge NY Program. Mr. Hajos stated that the County had submitted an application for work on two bridges and four culverts under the program and yesterday they were notified by the Governors Office that the County was awarded funding for one bridge and three culverts for a total of \$5.5 million in funding.

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Supervisor Leggett inquired how the Mortgage Tax payments were appropriated proportionally back to the Towns and Mr. Swan responded he was unsure, as this was handled by the County Clerk's Office. Chairman Conover stated he would have the County Clerk forward that information on to Supervisor Leggett.

Supervisor Thomas thanked those who had acknowledged him for his work on the 2019 County Budget. He apprised the Budget Committee had met on October 23<sup>rd</sup> to review the particulars of the 2019 County Budget following which he presented the 2019 proposed County Budget at the November 2<sup>nd</sup> Special Board Meeting. He said another Budget Committee meeting was held on November 8<sup>th</sup> during which they thoroughly discussed several proposals to amend the 2019 Tentative County Budget. He acknowledged everyone who had attended the meeting, as he believed it was very meaningful.

Supervisor Hyde indicated she had nothing to report.

Supervisor Geraghty stated that the Personnel & Higher Education Committee had approved proposed Resolution No. 451 and 460 which he requested support of. He reported on yesterday's meeting of the Intercounty Legislative Committee of the Adirondacks in Herkimer County where they toured a new Tractor Supply Distribution Center which had yet to open. He informed one of the topics of discussion at the meeting was the issue with autopsy services which were handled in different ways all across the State.

Supervisor Leggett reported the Criminal Justice & Public Safety Committee had met on October 22<sup>nd</sup>, approving proposed Resolution Nos. 438-439 and he provided a brief summary of each.

Supervisor Diamond advised the County Facilities Committee had met on October 23<sup>rd</sup>, approving proposed Resolution Nos. 436 and 437 which he requested support of.

Supervisor McDevitt provided a brief summary of proposed Resolution No. 440, *Approving the Memorandum of Agreement Between the Five Counties of Clinton, Essex, Hamilton, Warren and Washington and the Lake Champlain-lake George Regional Planning Board.*

Supervisor Braymer thanked Supervisor Thomas for his work preparing the 2019 County Budget, as well as for scheduling the November 8<sup>th</sup> Budget Committee meeting where they had a productive discussion regarding potential changes. She said she believed a compromised position would be brought forward later in the meeting.

Supervisor Loeb reported on the October 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Support Services Committee where no resolutions were requested.

Supervisor Driscoll indicated he had nothing to report on.

Supervisor Frasier advised the Health, Human & Social Services Committee had met on October 29<sup>th</sup>, during which they approved proposed Resolution Nos. 444-446 and she provided a brief overview of each.

Supervisor Simpson informed Cornell Cooperative Extension did not meet last month, but they were rapidly closing off the pole barn on the back of the property. He said the next meeting was scheduled for November. Supervisor Simpson advised the Public Works Committee had met on October 23<sup>rd</sup>, approving proposed Resolution Nos. 449 and 450 and he provided an overview of each.

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Supervisor Merlino apprised he had no report from the Tourism Committee, as they had not met last month. He stated the Park Operations & Management Committee had met on October 22<sup>nd</sup> during which they approved proposed Resolution Nos. 447 and 448 which he provided a brief overview of. Supervisor Merlino encouraged any Supervisors with questions concerning proposed Resolutions before them to contact the respective Committee Chair before the meeting to allow them to get answers to them prior to the Board Meeting. He stated to the best of his knowledge the balance in the Gaslight Village Parking Fees Budget account was somewhere between \$15,000 - \$18,000, but he would provide Supervisor Braymer with a more definitive figure following the conclusion of the meeting. He acknowledged Supervisor Thomas for his work preparing the 2019 County Budget, apprising this was the first time during his tenure where a meeting was scheduled to allow Supervisors to present possible changes. With regards to the Tourism Department, Supervisor Merlino pointed out no money had been taken out of the County Budget to support that department, as it was fully funded with occupancy tax funding. He apprised he felt it was important for the residents to be aware they were not paying into occupancy tax unless they stayed at one of the local hotels. Motels or bed and breakfast establishments.

Supervisors Strough, Wild and Beaty indicated they had nothing to report on.

Continuing to the report by the County Administrator, Mr. Moore recognized the following people for their years of service to the County which he said he was greatly appreciative of

- \* Michelle Rodriguez for 25 years of service to the Probation Department;
- \* Linda Ellis for 25 years of service to the Sheriff's Office;

Mr. Moore read aloud a listing of the meetings he attended since the October 19<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting; a copy of which is on file with the items distributed at the Board Meeting.

At the conclusion of the report by the County Administrator, Mr. Moore informed that a change had been made to the Report of Equalization and Apportionment of the County Tax Levy as a result of an Article 7 settlement reached between the City of Glens Falls and the Mills Apartments. He said as a result of this agreement the assessment rolls had to change in order to remove approximately \$1.9 million from the equalized full value in the City resulting in a reduction to the County property tax for the City by \$6,968 which had to be shifted to the other towns according to their revised percentage of the County-wide equalized full value. He encouraged any of the Supervisors interested in reviewing the financial impact to the other towns to contact him. He stated as a result of this change proposed Resolution No 459, *Levying Tax - City of Glens Falls - 2019*, which specified the City's share of the County's property tax also had to be revised. He explained the initial amount was \$4,028,690.71 and the new amount was \$4,021,723.19. He added the County tax rate now rounded up to \$3.98.7 per thousand as opposed to the previously recorded \$3.98.6 per thousand meaning there was an increase of .3 per thousand as compared to the 2018 tax rate.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Mary Elizabeth Kissane, *County Attorney*, to provide a report from the County Attorney. Ms. Kissane indicated she had nothing to report on.

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

Reports from:

1. Warren County Probation Department Monthly Reports of Criminal and Family Workloads for September of 2018 (*emailed to the Board 11.15.18*)

Minutes from:

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1. Counties of Warren & Washington IDA & CDC Approved minutes from the October 16, 2017 annual meeting of the Audit & Finance Committee (*emailed to the Board 10.29.18*)
2. Counties of Warren & Washington Civic Development Corporation August 13, 2018 meeting (*emailed to the Board 10.29.18*)
3. Counties of Warren & Washington Industrial Development Agency August 13, 2018 meeting (*emailed to the Board 10.29.18*)
4. Counties of Warren & Washington Civic Development Corporation October 17, 2018 Executive Committee meeting (*emailed to the Board 11.15.18*)

Letters/emails from:

1. East Shore Schroon Lake Association Letter clarifying their August 26, 2018 correspondence to indicate they are supportive of the proposed ban on single-use plastic bags only if it is reasonably likely to reduce plastic in the environment (*emailed to the Board 11/15/18*)
2. Fitzgerald, Morris, Baker, Firth Providing Notice of a Public Hearing regarding the KDBF Ventures, LLC Project in the City of Glens Falls (*emailed to the Board 10.24.18*)

Other:

1. Adirondack Park Local Government Review Board Resolution No. 5 of 2018: Opposing the Adverse Abandonment of the 30-Mile Section of Railroad Commonly known as the Sanford Lake Branch or the Tahawus Line, Between North Creek and the Former Tahawus Mine, in the Town of Newcomb, NY (*emailed to the Board 11/15/18*)
2. Capital District Regional Off-Track Betting Corp. September payment in the amount of \$3,433 (*emailed to the Board 11.17.18*)
3. Town of Johnsbury Resolution No. 140 of 2018 allowing the Tax Collector to accept partial payments of Town and County taxes (*emailed to the Board 11.7.18*)
4. Warren-Washington Counties IDA & CDC Proposed 2018 Budgets (*emailed to the Board 11/2/18*)
5. Washington County Board of Supervisors Resolution Nos. 270 and 271 of 2018 appointing Travis Whitehead and Brian Campbell to the Warren-Washington Counties IDA & CDC (*emailed to the Board 11/15/18*)

Continuing to the reading of resolutions, Mrs. Allen announced proposed Resolution Nos. 434-460 were mailed; she informed that proposed Resolution No. 459 was amended after mailing and a motion was needed to approve the revision. The necessary motion was made by Supervisor Simpson, seconded by Supervisor Leggett and carried unanimously. She announced that both of the proposed Floor resolutions had been brought to the floor and she reminded them they were now referred to as proposed Resolution Nos. 461 and 462.

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

Supervisor McDevitt stated he did not have a request for a roll call vote, but he would like to request that one of the resolutions before them today be amended. Chairman Conover apprised he would return to Supervisor McDevitt as soon as the request for roll call votes had been addressed.

Supervisor Magowan requested a roll call vote on proposed Resolution No. 436, *Proposing a Lease Agreement with Schermerhorn Aviation II, Inc. ("Rich Air") to Provide Full and Limited Fixed Base Operator Services (WC 02-18) for the Floyd Bennett Memorial Airport and Setting a Public Hearing for Same.*

Supervisor Braymer requested a roll call vote on proposed Resolution No. 443, *Amending Resolution No.*

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*400 of 2018, Authorizing the Transfer of Town of Queensbury Tax Map Parcel No. 240.-1-60 to the Lake George Land Conservancy Following the 2018 Warren County Tax Foreclosure Action and Deleting Outstanding Taxes and Foreclosure Charges for Years 2016, 2017 and 2018 on Tax Map Parcel No. 240.-1-60, to Correct the Dollar Amount of Taxes and Charges to Be Deleted, which, she noted, she would abstain from voting on.*

Chairman Conover once again called for any requests for roll call votes; there being no response, he returned to Supervisor McDevitt to address the Board regarding his request to amend a proposed Resolution. A motion was made by Supervisor McDevitt to amend proposed Resolution No. 459, *Adopting Budget for Fiscal Year 2019*, to reflect the changes included on the sheet he had distributed prior to the meeting; a copy of which is on file with the items distributed at the November 16<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting. Chairman Conover inquired whether there was a second to the motion and the necessary motion was made by Supervisor Braymer.

Chairman Conover advised his understanding of the proposed amendment was that it would be a reduction to the 2019 County Budget in the amount of \$74,434 which would result in a reduction to the property tax levy. Supervisor Braymer interjected that some of the changes that were being proposed would not come off of the property tax levy because the savings were being transferred to a Contingency Fund. She added the portion that would decrease the impact to the property tax levy would also be removed from the expenses portion of the County Budget, as well. Chairman Conover asked Supervisors McDevitt and Braymer to be more specific regarding their motion and Supervisor McDevitt deferred to Supervisor Braymer. Supervisor Braymer stated the request consisted of deleting the Human Resources Clerk (part-time) position, as well as reducing the appropriation from the Contingent Account by \$51,000 for a total reduction to the property tax levy in the amount of \$74,434. She said the remainder of the changes pertained to a shift in funding which Mr. Moore had assisted her with coming up with the proper budget codes to move the funding for the salary increases that were more than the standard 2.6% rate into a Contingency Fund to allow the Board members to distribute the money as they saw fit once Mr. Moore developed a more balanced and appropriate system for awarding pay increases to the most deserving employees. Chairman Conover informed he felt the best way to deal with this was in two parts, the first of which would be to delete the Human Resources Clerk (part-time), as well as to reduce the appropriation to the Contingent Account for a total reduction to the property tax levy in the amount of \$73,434. Mr. Moore added there would also be a reduction to gross appropriations.

Mr. Geraghty questioned whether these had been vetted and voted down by the Budget Committee and Chairman Conover replied in the affirmative. Mr. Geraghty requested roll call votes on any proposed amendments to the 2019 County Budget.

Supervisor Loeb recalled being criticized by the Treasurer's Office for not having a sufficient balance in the Contingent Account a few years ago and he surmised the balance should likely be even greater now due to inflation. He said the motion before them would reduce the balance of the Contingent Account even further resulting in further criticism from Treasurer's Office.

Supervisor Braymer stated the proposed amendment had been discussed at the Budget Committee meeting, but it was shot down, with a vote of four in favor and seven opposed. She said she believed it was important to bring the proposed amendment to the floor for discussion by the full Board. In response to Supervisor Loeb's comments regarding the criticism from the Treasurer's Office, Supervisor Braymer pointed out the proposed balance in the Contingent Account was \$623,000 which was well above the suggested amount by the Treasurer's Office of \$250,000. She stated although a large portion of this balance was earmarked for the Police Benevolent Association she was confident that Mr. Moore



and the negotiating team would get the County the best possible deal which would allow the balance to be reduced by \$51,000, but remain at the desired \$250,000 funding amount. She stated since the County was in good financial standing she felt it was appropriate for them to reduce the impact on the tax levy to provide some relief to the County taxpayers.

Supervisor Diamond asked whether there would be an impact to the tax levy for the City of Glens Falls if the proposed amendment was adopted and Chairman Conover replied in the affirmative. Supervisor Diamond remarked he could see no harm in reducing the Contingent Account by \$51,000 since it appeared the County would exceed its expenses by around \$1 million and he was fully supportive of the Budget amendment being proposed by Supervisors McDevitt and Braymer.

With regards to the proposed deletion of the Human Resources Clerk (part-time), Supervisor Leggett informed he could not tell where the funds were coming out of as depicted on page 22 of the Salary Schedule of the 2019 County Budget. He inquired whether a reduction to the property tax levy would adversely impact how much the tax cap could be raised next year if necessary. Chairman Conover apprised next year would be based on what was referred to as a growth rate, but the amount referred to as "carried forward" would be reduced. Supervisor Thomas stated this was referred to as a carry over along with the growth rate and the inflation factor. He said they were permitted to raise taxes 2.7% or \$1,100,050; however, he said, currently the increase in the tax levy was an increase of \$1,051,000 or 2.41%. Mr. Moore added he believed they would lose the carry over from last year that would have gone into their calculation for this year for the following year; however, he noted, to the extent that they did not go up to this years limitation under the State Tax Cap could be used as a carry over for the 2020 tax levy.

Chairman Conover inquired how the increase in price for autopsies would impact the 2019 County Budget. Mr. Moore stated he had asked the County Coroners to provide him with an estimate as to how much additional funding may be required to cover the increase, as there was currently \$100,000 budgeted for this purpose. He said the Coroners estimated based on the number of autopsies done in 2017 that an additional \$85,000 would be required to cover the cost which would have to be allocated from the Contingent Account or the Fund Balance. Chairman Conover explained an appropriation from the Contingent Account was from within the County's operating budget and an appropriation from the County's Fund Balance was from its savings and he asked Supervisor Thomas to speak to this, as well. Supervisor Thomas apprised this was similar to the proposal that he had made where he removed several one-time expenses from the 2019 County Budget which totaled around \$1.3 million because he felt these could be funded in 2019 if the Board determined they were necessary. He said although these were one-time expenses, once the funds were appropriated into the County Budget it was difficult to reduce, as it was necessary to locate other revenue or make cuts to reduce that appropriation. Chairman Conover informed the \$85,000 would more than likely be appropriated from the Contingent Account because if they used the Fund Balance they would have to make up those funds or they would be depleting the Fund Balance by that amount each year.

Supervisor McDevitt remarked he felt it was necessary to discuss the rationale and motivation for what was being proposed here. He said the significant question was going forward in Warren County the equity of how employees were awarded pay increases within the confines of the system. He informed that his intent was to limit employees to a 2.6% increase, as he believed this was a generous percentage to be given. He apprised he was questioning why some Department Heads were being given a 5% pay increase while others were only receiving 2.6%. Chairman Conover interjected that they would address this in the next motion, as the one before them now related to the deletion of the Human Resources Clerk (part-time), as well as the reduction of the Contingent Account balance.

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Chairman Conover called the question and the motion to delete the Human Resources Clerk (part-time) position and reduce the balance of the Contingent Account by \$51,000 in the 2019 County Budget failed, with a vote of 237 in favor (*Supervisors Diamond, McDevitt, Braymer and Beaty*) and 674 against (*Supervisors Magowan, Sokol, Thomas, Hyde, Geraghty, Leggett, Loeb, Driscoll, Frasier, Simpson, Merlino, Strough, Wild and Conover*), and 89 absent (*Supervisors Hogan and Dickinson*).

A motion was made by Supervisor Braymer and seconded by Supervisor McDevitt to reduce the salary increases of the following positions to 2.6%: Clerk, Legislative Board; County Human Resources Director; Human Resources Specialist; Director of Probation; Probation Supervisor #1; Probation Supervisor #2; and Princ Steno Confidential and allocate the funding above the 2.6% to a Contingency Account.

Supervisor Leggett stated this hit close to home because the Town of Chester had just adopted their 2019 Town Budget and as the Budget Officer for the Town he had put a significant amount of effort reviewing the town employees wages, adding this was the largest increase to their Town Budget. He apprised after reviewing the jobs performed by the Town employees he decided to award pay increases above the 2.5% that was typically awarded to all employees due to the employees doing work above and beyond their job duties. He advised he thought those given pay increases above the standard percentage had gone through the proper channels through the performance review process.

Supervisor Thomas advised he had never been comfortable with the manner in which the salaries were adjusted during his tenure as the Budget Officer. He said last year they went through the evaluation process and this year, as well with seventeen Department Heads obtaining the maximum score of five; however, he noted, they did not have substantial funds to compensate each one of these department heads. He informed this was why they did not necessarily use the evaluations when awarding pay increases. He added these types of raises had been done several times in past years at a cost that was substantially more than the total cost of these ones.

Supervisor Driscoll informed part of his fiduciary responsibilities as a County Supervisor was to look at ways to reduce the bottom line. He explained he had voted in opposition of the previous motion because he would like to explore with the Personnel & Higher Education Committee ways to better maximize some of the duties and responsibilities of the Department Heads and their staff, as well in order to address particular issues that would benefit the entire County. He said he found it striking that there were 856 full and part-time employees working for the County as of October 29, 2018. He apprised these were the ones who were providing programs and initiatives which impacted the quality of life for the residents of this County. He stated if there was an issue with a pay increase that was above the standard 2.6% given then he would like to explore through the Personnel & Higher Education Committee looking into having these employees working in different areas that would benefit the County as a whole.

Supervisor Beaty remarked he felt the largest thing they as Board members could have was credibility, fairness and honesty. He explained when seventeen Department Heads achieved the top rating of five and yet the Board offered pay increases above the standard 2.6% rate to only a handful of them it resulted in a credibility issue for all of them. He advised that some of the Department Heads had contacted him to inquire why they were not given a pay increase above the 2.6% rate, but he had no answer for them. He said if there was no consistency and fairness then what did they have here. He stated he was aware going into 2020 he and a few of the other Supervisors had recommended that the County Administrator come up with a solution to this issue and he questioned why they had to keep the issue moving forward just because pay increases had been handled in this manner in the past, apprising he felt this was a weak argument which was not fair to all the other employees in the County. He stated although he believed it was embarrassing at this late juncture he was going to have to

support maintaining the maximum 2.6% pay increase and not picking and choosing winners and losers when there were seventeen Department Heads who achieved the winning classification and yet they did not receive the winning compensation. He remarked he was confident that Mr. Moore would develop a solution going forward and he would like to fix the current issue in the sense of unfairness that he believed was being perpetrated on all the County employees. He concluded by stating he was fully supportive of the proposed amendment before them.

Supervisor Magowan apprised he had been self-employed for many years during which he would have loved a 2.5% pay increase in his wage every year, but he had to go with what the market was. He said he felt only providing some of the seventeen Department Heads with raises above the standard 2.6% rate could come back and bite them by not giving the other ones the same. He advised that he concurred with Supervisors Beaty and Braymer that they should hold off on giving the raises above the standard rate until a better solution was created.

Supervisor Wild stated he concurred with the comment Supervisor Beaty made regarding how the process they used to give out pay increases needed to be fixed and he was confident that efforts would be made to develop a solution for next year. He pointed out of the thirty-eight Department Heads in the County seventeen of them had achieved a five star rating which he found to be questionable since he equated a five star rating to walking on water and not doing their job. He commented it appeared that the bell shaped curve was skewed high, adding he felt they needed to fix this. He said they were present today with the trust of the public to do the best they could with the County finances and there could be other opportunities to save money within the hundreds of Budget Codes within the County Budget. He added there was also the issue of morale which had been discussed in Committee, as it was important for the Board members to consider the workforce that supported the County activities and how they supported them moving forward. He continued, the process was broken in the past as was discussed in the Committee meeting during an executive session because they did not want to discuss specific personnel in open session, but there were reasons given as to why these pay increases above the 2.6% were included in the 2019 County Budget which were valid. He said he felt they needed to move forward with the recommendations by the County Budget Officer as defined in the Committee meeting and work hard to develop a solution which fixed the process for next year to ensure the only ones who achieve a five star rating were truly exceptional employees. He stated it was necessary to develop a way to motivate the Department Heads and not give out across the board 2.6% raises. He concluded by stating he would be voting in opposition of the motion before them.

Supervisor Merlino apprised everyone was concerned with what they paid their colleagues and yet new Board members were paid the same salary as those who had been on the Board for a number of years. He stated there were plenty of Board members who obtained their health insurance through the County, but in his Town he had eliminated health insurance for the Town Board members because they could not afford to offer it and he suggested they cut offering health insurance to the County Supervisors as a way of saving money. He stated rather than taking away from the County employees they should cut the salaries of the new Supervisors, as well as no longer offering health insurance to Board members. He pointed out they were punishing the people who had to work for them, adding he believed he was only as good as his Town employees since the residents judged him by how well the roads were plowed, etc. He apprised another item that could be cut was the money paid to Supervisors for traveling to and from the County, as he did not believe they should be paid to travel to and from their jobs and he pointed out he did not take any money from the Town or the County for this purpose.

Supervisor Loeb expressed that he concurred with the spirit and a significant amount of the content Supervisor Merlino had just conveyed.

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Supervisor Braymer advised she found it ironic that they discussed cutting costs because the County's expenses outpaced the revenue it received and yet only a handful of people voted in favor of deleting the part-time position in the Human Resources Department that would not require anyone being laid off. She remarked that it was ironic that individuals discussed cutting expenses and yet they would not support a simple action which would cut expenses, but instead would be voting in favor of increasing cost over the long-term since there would be legacy costs associated with the creation of the position. With regards to the comments made by Supervisor Wild pertaining to improving the process and providing incentives to the Department Heads to do better, Supervisor Braymer called him out for not supporting the motion to set the money above the 2.6% aside in an account to be used for bonuses if employees did a great job, as she found this to be unreasonable. Supervisor Braymer informed she concurred with Supervisor Merlino that they as Board members needed to look at which impacted them such as the travel money which she had never requested, adding that it did not have much of an impact on her since she lived so close to the County. She stated there were some members of the Board who lived in other parts of the County who collected a substantial amount of money for traveling to and from the County.

Supervisor McDevitt informed it appeared that this discussion had come full bore, as a 2.6% pay increase was being characterized by the Board members as a 2.6% decrease. He stated he believed a 2.6% raise was substantial, as he was aware that a friend of his who worked for a large employer in the Town of Queensbury who purchased components for their industry throughout the world and dealt with tariffs had indicated to him the company he worked for was not offering pay increases this year due to the uncertainty of their worldwide marketplace. He remarked that he appreciated the fact that Mr. Moore was going to come up with a solution for the process going forward; however, he noted, he felt 2.6% was a fair and appropriate pay increase.

Supervisor Wild stated he would like to put the 2.6% pay increase into perspective and he explained the Collective Bargaining Units within the County were the ones that drove that figure. In response to Supervisor McDevitt's comments about getting a zero percent raise in the private sector, Supervisor Wild informed he had worked in the private sector and was familiar with not getting a pay increase. He pointed out that employees within the Collective Bargaining Unit were guaranteed a pay raise of 2.6% and he questioned how many times they would make cuts to the Department Heads before they were earning less than the employees who reported to them. He informed it was necessary to look at this from the perspective of the big picture to understand it was not just signaling certain individuals out, but rather that they were trying to adjust the big picture. Mr. Moore added the 2.6% pay increase was what the employees who were members of the CSEA (*Civil Service Employees Association*) would receive next year under the collective bargaining agreement.

Supervisor Leggett asked what the total dollar amount impacted by reducing the raises to 2.6% would be and Chairman Conover replied the discussion would continue on the matter until this figure could be calculated.

Supervisor Thomas apprised it was not that long ago when the Department Heads had not been provided with any raises for several years. He stated it had been his desire to offer all of the Department Heads a 3% pay increase, but there was not a sufficient amount of funding available to do so.

In response to Supervisor Leggett's question, Chairman Conover informed the total amount over the standard 2.6% was \$8,413.

Chairman Conover called the question and the motion to reduce the salary increases of the following

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positions to 2.6%: Clerk, Legislative Board; County Human Resources Director; Human Resources Specialist; Director of Probation; Probation Supervisor #1; Probation Supervisor #2; and Princ Steno Confidential and allocate the funding above the 2.6% to a Contingency Account failed, with a vote of 407 in favor (*Supervisors Magowan, Diamond, McDevitt, Braymer, Strough and Beaty*) and 504 against (*Supervisors Sokol, Thomas, Hyde, Geraghty, Leggett, Loeb, Driscoll, Frasier, Simpson, Merlino, Wild and Conover*), and 89 absent (*Supervisors Hogan and Dickinson*).

Supervisor Beaty apologized that he had been unable to present his proposed amendment to the Budget Committee due to having other commitments which required him to leave the Committee meeting before he had the chance to make his presentation. He said the County has had a record year for sales tax collection, apprising the latest figures from the Treasury Department indicated sales tax was up \$2.55 million over last year of which the County was entitled to half.

A motion was made by Supervisor Beaty and seconded by Supervisor Diamond to appropriate \$1.2 million in funding from the Fund Balance to reduce the County tax levy.

Supervisor Beaty apprised this would allow the taxpayers to reap the rewards of what they had been doing to contribute to making this a successful County. He stated he was well aware this may upset some of the Supervisors, but he believed when the County was doing well financially the County taxpayers should be able to participate in that just as they should when the County was in poor fiscal standing since they were what the County was made up of.

Chairman Conover stated he believed the motion before them was to appropriate \$1.2 million from the Fund Balance as a revenue to offset appropriations thereby reducing the County tax levy by that corresponding amount and Supervisor Beaty concurred.

Mr. Moore asked what the balancing side of the appropriation was, as they were required to decrease expenses by \$1.2 million or revenue would have to be increased by \$1.2 million. Supervisor Beaty advised his intent was to add \$1.2 million to the County's General Fund through the increase in sales tax revenue for the year and apply it to the County tax levy so it was reduced. Mr. Moore explained this meant they were reducing the appropriated Fund Balance by \$1.2 million, as well as reducing the County property tax levy by \$1.2 million. Mr. Moore informed 2017 ended with a General Fund Balance of \$19,470,218 and the Multi-Year Plan had been updated for what they knew would occur then and the final figure for 2018 was \$23,125,009. He said essentially the funds would be appropriated out of that amount in order to balance this budget without a tax increase. He continued, going forward if the revenue was reduced in this budget from the property tax by \$1.2 million from a five year perspective that \$1.2 million would come out every year resulting in a \$6 million impact over five years. He added the \$6 million continued to grow each year if they held that steady.

Supervisor Thomas apprised the current amount being appropriated from the General Fund Surplus was \$1,257,422. Chairman Conover asked Supervisor Beaty if he was recommending to increase that amount an additional \$1.2 million to \$2,457,422 thereby reducing the proposed increase to the County tax levy of \$1,051,849 to a tax cut of approximately \$148,000 and Supervisor Beaty replied in the affirmative.

Supervisor Simpson asked what the increase in expenditures were for the 2019 County Budget and Supervisor Thomas replied salaries were increased by \$1.2 million, but he did not know what the figures were for the other expenses off the top of his head. He said they had reduced the overall budgets by approximately \$500,000.

Supervisor Beaty requested that the Board members keep in mind that the 2018 County Budget was based off of the revenue received in 2017. He informed the revenue received in 2018 would be about 5.5 to 6% above what was received in 2017. He said they were being very conservative with budgeting revenue. He apprised if the amount of revenue they received in 2019 was maintained at the pace held during this year it would result in approximately \$2.5 to \$3 million additional revenue of which half would be appropriated to the County. He remarked he had no issue with the 2019 County Budget, as he believed Messrs. Thomas and Moore did a phenomenal job preparing it; however, he noted, he was a firm believer that the County taxpayers had a better handle on how to spend their tax dollars than the local and State government bodies did. He mentioned he fully understood and was supportive of the fact that they were required to have funding to carry out and offer the basic services, but his issue was that the County had a record year financially and yet they still did not reduce the tax levy and appraised value. He stated he felt his request to use \$1.2 million of the additional revenue to reduce the tax levy was conservative and was the right thing to do at this time nor was it a reckless request.

Chairman Conover advised he felt it was important for everyone to be aware that this amendment in addition to the existing plan to appropriate approximately \$1.2 million from the Fund Balance in 2019 to fund one-time expenses would result in \$3.7 million of the Fund Balance being used in 2019. Supervisor Thomas stated his proposal consisted of using \$1,288,060 of the Fund Balance in 2019 for several requests that were made for one-time expenses that he did not include in the 2019 County Budget, as well as funding for the DPW Bridge program which was reoccurring expense. Mr. Moore informed the adopted all funds appropriation for this year was \$152,796,937 and the proposed all funds appropriation for 2019 was \$156,880,886.

Supervisor Loeb stated that he believed they would all love to find a way to cut the County tax levy; however, he noted, Supervisor Thomas had explained several times the implications of doing this through accessing the Fund Balance and using it as revenue. He said he felt it was necessary for them going forward to be cognizant of the fact that the public was well aware that the Fund Balance was almost double the amount the County needed to operate. He said he felt going forward it was necessary for them to find ways to give back these funds to the County taxpayers without causing the dangers Supervisor Thomas cautioned them about. He apprised one method he could be supportive of was to pay down the County's significant debt which impacted the County Budget every year. He suggested they appropriate \$1.5 million to pay down the debt instead, as this would have no impact on the revenue stream for next year, but it would impact the County's liability and be beneficial to the public.

Supervisor Diamond apprised the forecast for closing out 2018 looked rather healthy, as it appeared the Fund Balance would be growing several million dollar over what remained at the end of 2017. He stated the County Treasurer had mentioned that it was critical for the County to maintain a minimum Fund Balance of \$10 million and the high end of the policy was a balance of \$16 million. He suggested that the Board members act on Supervisor Beaty's recommendation, as the Fund Balance belonged to the County taxpayers since it was money that had been collected over several years through tax dollars either through having responsible department budgets or by over taxing the public. He pointed out the tables Mr. Moore had provided to them indicated in Table 3 that they would still have a Fund Balance of \$22 million even if they used funds from here to balance the budget which was a significant surplus. He pointed out the City of Glens Falls was not competitive with their tax rates, as they were currently at around \$42-\$44 per thousand dollar assessed value and something needed to be done to lower the taxes. He stated today was a great opportunity to use some of the Fund Balance while maintaining a healthy balance which would carry over into future years.

Supervisor Leggett stated according to his calculations the total increase for a \$200,000 house in the Town of Queensbury would be \$.60 and there would be an \$.80 increase for a home in the City of Glens

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Falls. He said he believed they would have a larger impact if they used the \$1.2 million to pay down the County's debt through the reduction of interest costs.

Chairman Conover informed the total amount of debt the County currently owed was around \$40 million and the constitutional limit for borrowing was \$155 million. He added the County had one of the best borrowing to assessed values in the State. Supervisor Thomas stated all of the debt service was backed by either levy or sales tax revenue. He advised it had taken three years to get the Court House Expansion and SUNY Adirondack STEM Projects to be supported by revenues and not money that was in savings. He asked the Board members to keep in mind that Supervisor Diamond was correct in stating that it took many years to accrue such a healthy Fund Balance. Chairman Conover thanked Mr. Moore for providing the tables which displayed the impact on the Multi-Year Plan under different scenarios.

Supervisor Wild informed he had looked at the 2019 County Budget in terms of the experience he had, apprising that the Budget was highly dependent on sales tax. He said because of this the County's Fund Balance had grown to what he would refer to as a "rainy day fund". He stated he had been told in 2008 and 2009 the sales tax figures collapsed resulting in the Board reducing budgets, staff and services. He advised he concurred with Supervisor Beaty and the others that since the County was in such good financial standing money should be given back to the County taxpayers, but he was unsure what the best way to handle this would be. He suggested they consider giving back each taxpayer \$20, as he believed this may be more appropriate. He stated it was important for them to be prudent of what the future holds, as they were limited by what actions they could take to raise money due to the State Tax Cap and he did not want to put them in another situation where they had to make cuts and raise taxes during a time when the taxpayers were already struggling financially. He said they should consider putting the \$1.2 million into a Contingent Account until they determined the most appropriate manner to move forward with which gave money back to the County taxpayers.

Chairman Conover reminded them a portion of the 2019 County Budget utilized funding from the Fund Balance to help keep property taxes lower while also remaining below the State Tax Cap. He said slightly more than \$1.2 million was appropriated from the Fund Balance into the 2019 County Budget and unless a reoccurring revenue was located to offset this than it would remain in the County Budget for several years. He added the Budget Officer was also recommending that \$1.2 million be allocated from the Fund Balance next year to fund one-time expenses.

Supervisor Geraghty apprised he was the Budget Officer during 2008-2009 when the County was struggling with its finances resulting in lay offs and he cautioned the Board members about relying on sales tax continuing to grow. He pointed out the financial crisis had come on rather quickly and took five years to recover from all of which was based on sales tax. He pointed out there were other revenues in the Budget that could collapse causing them to not be able to recover from this loss such as the revenue received from boarding inmates that were not from this County which was constantly in flux. He stated he would love to be able to give money back to the County taxpayers; however, he said, they would not be able to recoup the \$6 million that would be the total cost from allocating \$1.2 million from the General Fund this year to decrease taxes because this had to be carried over into future budgets. He added if they were not careful in future years they may have to impose a substantial tax increase should there be a downturn in the economy which was why he would be voting in opposition of the motion before them. He informed he was in favor of the proposal Supervisor Thomas had made to appropriate funds in 2019 to pay for one-time expenses.

Supervisor Strough stated the conversations that had been brought up which pointed out the County's dependency on sales tax were justified with historical examples provided. He said often times the desire was for the Fund Balance to provide future fiscal stability. He stated he understood how some

felt they had to be the “crusader of the day” by cutting taxes and reducing the Fund Balance; however, he noted, this sometimes lead to significant tax increases in future years. He informed in order to be fiscally responsible it was necessary to maintain an appropriate level in the Fund Balance. He advised he felt it was necessary for a policy to be developed which maintained an appropriate Fund Balance going forward, as the current one that was based on \$10 million to take care of cash flow was outdated because the expenditures had far exceeded that original amount. He surmised that the Fund Balance policy should be based on three months of expenditures or a percentage of expenditures to allow the policy to remain strong as the amount of expenditures changed. Supervisor Strough informed he would be voting in opposition of the proposed amendment, as he believed Supervisor Thomas and the Budget Team had developed an appropriate budget that allowed the County to remain in good financial standing in the coming years.

Chairman Conover reiterated the proposed 2019 County Budget utilized almost \$2.5 million of the Fund Balance and it was due to the fact that there was a healthy Fund Balance that they were able to do so. He stated of that \$2.5 million, \$1.2 million was being appropriated into the operating budget and an additional \$1.2 million to cover one-time expenses.

Supervisor Diamond apprised that Supervisor Thomas had mentioned during the Budget Committee meetings that he would suggest to the Board members that one-time expenditures in 2019 that he wanted to keep off of the tax rolls and use the Fund Balance. He said he did not believe the Board members had agreed to those one-time expenses, as he was under the impression that this would be a discussion in 2019 which would require the Board members at that time to make those decisions. Supervisor Diamond suggested they carry the dialogue about those one-time expenses into 2020 and appropriate the \$1.2 million that it appeared everyone wanted to spend on one-time expenditures to keep the budget flat.

Chairman Conover called the question and the motion to appropriate \$1.2 million from the Fund Balance as a revenue to offset appropriations thereby reducing th County tax levy by that corresponding amount failed, with a vote of 279 in favor (*Supervisors Diamond, McDevitt, Braymer, Driscoll and Beaty*) and 632 against (*Supervisors Magowan, Sokol, Thomas, Hyde, Geraghty, Leggett, Loeb, Frasier, Simpson, Merlino, Strough, Wild and Conover*) and 89 absent (*Supervisors Hogan and Dickinson*).

Supervisor Loeb stated there was still a Fund Balance that would hang over them and there would still be that discomfort from the public as to why the Fund Balance was so significant and there was still all of this debt hanging over them. A motion was made by Supervisor Loeb and seconded by Supervisor Braymer to appropriate \$1.5 million to pay down the County debt.

Mr. Swan stated while he believed this was a great idea it was not possible due to all of the County debt being long-term bonded meaning there was no avenue available to pay it down early. He explained they were unable to make additional payments due to the way the debt was structured.

Supervisor Loeb withdrew his motion and Supervisor Braymer withdrew her second.

Supervisor Braymer apprised she thought there was \$529,987 of Debt Service that was a deficit this year and Mr. Swan replied the County’s total debt was around \$45 million. Supervisor Braymer stated she thought the Multi-Year Plan had indicated there was \$4.6 million of debt and Mr. Swan responded he was unsure where she was getting that figure from. Mr. Moore interjected that the \$4.6 million Supervisor Braymer was referring to was an appropriation in the 2018 County Budget to pay Debt Service. Supervisor Braymer questioned whether it was true that none of the \$45 million debt the



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County had could be paid down early and Mr. Swan replied in the affirmative, apprising all of the short-term notes had been paid off. He said what was left were long-term twenty year bonds that could not be paid off early. Chairman Conover asked that the Board members keep in mind that there would be plenty of opportunities in 2019 where funding was required in order for the County Government to carry out the tasks required such as additional road work, paying for expenses associated with the Raise the Age Program, etc. He stated using their Fund Balance to pay for these expenses would prevent them from having to borrow money.

Mr. Swan stated in 2005 the County had a \$25 million surplus which the Board at that time determined would use up to \$5 million a year to reduce the tax levy. He said in 2009 there was only \$3 million remaining which required the County Treasurer at that time to borrow money to make payroll every month and he asked that the Board members keep this in mind.

Supervisor Diamond stated in 2015 he had completed an analysis of the County tax levied in the City of Glens Falls and although it had been mentioned it was only a few cents he pointed out in 2015 Finch Pruyn was paying \$259,000 in County taxes. He asked what they told business owners who were struggling when the County had the opportunity to give back to them, but instead the money was going to be spent elsewhere or the taxes were going to be raised. He remarked these were his concerns, as a few cents may not have significant meaning to residential property owners, but it was meaningful to commercial properties with large tax bills who wanted to know what services they were getting in return.

Supervisor Sokol apprised Mr. Swan had read his mind because history spoke for itself, as there was a \$20 million surplus that got reduced to \$3 million in four years. He apprised during that time he could recall having to layoff up to forty people and he questioned who on the Board now would want to cut forty positions. He said he was stating this as an err of caution because although it appeared they were in good financial standing now there were other things that could be done such as allocating additional funding for road projects and rebuilding the County infrastructure which had been put on hold when they were in their financial crisis. He added during the financial crisis they had also entertained increasing sales tax, but they decided to do layoffs and make cutbacks elsewhere instead. He remarked he became nervous when he reviewed the Multi-Year Plan, apprising he wanted to ensure they were aware there were a few Supervisors remaining on the Board who had gone through the difficult time of making this surplus what it was today.

In regards to proposed Resolution No. 440, *Approving the Memorandum of Agreement Between the Five Counties of Clinton, Essex, Hamilton, Warren and Washington and the Lake Champlain-Lake George Regional Planning Board*, Supervisor Loeb advised this related to approving the Memorandum of Agreement between all member Counties and the Lake Champlain-Lake George Regional Planning Board. He said there was a portion of the agreement which dealt with the revolving fund status; however, he noted, it was his understanding that there may be a discontinuation of that fund program and he inquired what the status was. Mr. Moore stated there was at least one out of four or five loan programs that was being wound down and there were no plans to do additional loans from that particular program and the Regional Planning Board was collecting on the remaining debt that was outstanding.

There being no further discussion, Chairman Conover called for a vote on resolutions, following which Resolution Nos. Resolution Nos. 434-462 were approved as presented.

Chairman Conover called for public comments from anyone wishing to address the Board on any matter, but no response was given.

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Chairman Conover called for announcements.

Supervisor Braymer apprised that she wanted to comment on Revolution Rail Riders since Supervisor Hogan was absent and everyone had received an email from her requesting that the Board members provide assistance to Revolution Rail Riders. She said she was unsure of what type of assistance they could provide, but she felt they should do whatever was within their power to assist them. Supervisor Simpson stated he had called Revolution Rail Riders four times and left messages for them, but they never responded to him even after they had left a message for him. Chairman Conover apprised Mr. Moore had contacted them, as well, but he believed they were limited in what they could do since it was private property.

Supervisor Merlino advised he had just been informed there was \$11,000 in parking revenue in the Gaslight Village Account.

Chairman Conover reminded the Board members a group photograph would be taken in the Board meeting at the conclusion of the meeting.

Supervisor McDevitt informed he had received the email from Supervisor Hogan regarding Revolution Rail Riders, but he was unsure of what type of action Supervisor Hogan was seeking from the Board members. Chairman Conover advised Mr. Moore was aware of the situation and what could be done to address the concern. He said he believed this concern would arise next year and would be addressed as part of the County's process for the railroad.

Supervisor Sokol extended a happy Thanksgiving to everyone, adding he hoped they all had a safe and happy holiday.

There being no further business to come before the Board of Supervisors, on motion made by Supervisor Simpson and seconded by Supervisor Hyde, Chairman Conover adjourned the Board Meeting at 12:27 p.m.