

SECOND DAY OF ANNUAL SESSION

Johnstown, NY

November 18, 2019

Roll Call – Quorum Present

Supervisors: Argotsinger, Blackmon, Born, Breh, Callery, Greene, Groff, Handy, Howard, Kinowski, Lauria, Perry, Potter, Rice, Wilson

TOTAL: Present: 15 Absent: 5 (Supervisors Bradt, Fagan, Selmsler, Waldron and Young)

Chairman Wilson called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. Following the Pledge of Allegiance, Chairman Wilson advised that the purpose of this morning's meeting is to conduct a 2020 Budget review.

Chairman Wilson then invited Finance Committee Chairman Richard Argotsinger to the dais to Chair the Budget Review session.

Chairman of Finance Committee Argotsinger thanked everyone present and said the oversight committees did a great job with the 2020 Budget. Mr. Argotsinger then asked Ms. Kuntzsch, Budget Director/County Auditor, to lead review of the 2020 Tentative Budget.

Ms. Kuntzsch provided a MS PowerPoint handout and a budget adjustment worksheet for the Board to review. She advised that the changes listed on the worksheet are minimal proposals since the Tentative Budget was released last week.

Supervisor Callery asked if the Highways and Facilities Department really needs the increase in account number A.1620.1620-4150 – EXP – Electric listed on the worksheet. Ms. Cowan looked up the current year-to-date for that account and advised that it is \$23,545.00. Supervisor Argotsinger called for a motion on the budget adjustment worksheet.

Supervisor Kinowski made a motion to approve the list of recommended adjustments as presented on the handout by Ms. Kuntzsch, seconded by Supervisor Groff and unanimously carried.

Ms. Kuntzsch reminded the Supervisors that all positions approved for 2020 are listed in the budget.

Ms. Kuntzsch advised that settlement funds from Montgomery County will go to reserves; however, the County's independent auditors stated that since the lawsuit was settled in 2019, the second payment may have to go into 2019 reserves instead of 2020. She stated that a budget amendment will be done if necessary and there will not be a change in the budget.

Mr. Stead asked for clarification regarding the appropriated fund balance to "D Fund". Ms. Kuntzsch stated that she appropriated some of its fund balance to even it out. She also stated that Highway had some additional roads in the budget that were in the county's levy. The final road list was limited to what would be covered by CHIPS funding for the year.

Mr. Stead asked why the budget is showing a \$300,000.00 cost to the tax levy in the Assigned Counsel Administrator's Office. He stated that there was supposed to be a zero-dollar cost to the County. Ms. Kuntzsch stated that the Rotating List of Attorneys payments are in that figure and the Public Defender's Office decreased approximately the same amount in the Assigned Counsel Administrator line item.

Supervisor Callery stated that tax levy is at \$11.08 for 2020 and last year it was \$10.76 with a difference being 32 cents per thousand. He advised that taking approximately \$896,000.00 from the fund balance will allow a zero percent increase for 2020.

Supervisor Born agreed and expressed that the taxpayers would be grateful to see no increase.

Supervisor Greene stated that he take \$550,000.00 from the fund balance to get close to a 1 percent tax increase.

Supervisor Groff agreed with Mr. Greene to apply a smaller amount from the fund balance. Supervisor Kinowski also agreed with Mr. Greene.

Mr. Stead advised that using an additional \$300,000.00 or \$400,000.00 from the fund balance isn't that much impact for a large budget.

Supervisor Callery advised that the County has always been healthy, and the only increases are from state and federal mandates. Mr. Groff advised that a small increase like this is minimal to tax payers. Supervisor Argotsinger asked what an additional \$550,000.00 would mean if it were taken from the fund balance. Ms. Kuntzsch stated that it would result in a \$10.89 per thousand, average tax rate and a 1.2 percent increase. A 13 cent increase from the 2019 Adopted level.

Supervisor Rice wants to know how that would affect the 2020 budget. Ms. Kuntzsch stated that approximately \$3,350,000.00 would be applied to 2020. The remaining fund balance would then be about \$15,850,000.00.

Supervisor Howard stated that it is very seldom that the County ever uses half of what it appropriates from the fund balance each year. He stated that usually it uses less than that. Supervisor Greene stated that \$300,000.00 to \$400,000.00 may not be that big of a difference.

Supervisor Rice stated that she would like to see a zero percent increase. Mr. Argotsinger stated that department heads are very conservative and each year the County gets half to three-quarters of the fund balance back. Mr. Lauria stated that a zero percent increase is the way to go because some towns have such poor equalization rates.

Supervisor Callery made a motion to apply \$900,000.00 in fund balance, or whatever amount is necessary, to achieve a 10.76 average county rate per thousand to reach the same average rate as 2019, seconded by Supervisor Handy. Supervisors Argotsinger, Breh, Greene, Groff, Kinowski, Perry and Wilson were opposed. Motion DEFEATED.

Supervisor Blackmon made a motion to apply \$700,000.00 in fund balance to reach a 7 cent increase from 2019, seconded by Supervisor Rice. Supervisors Breh, Callery, Greene, Groff, Handy, Kinowski, Perry, Potter and Wilson were opposed. Motion DEFEATED.

Supervisor Greene made a motion to apply \$550,000.00 in fund balance to reach a 13 cent increase from 2019 and a tax rate of \$10.89, seconded by Supervisor Perry and carried. (Supervisors Blackmon, Breh, Callery, Lauria and Potter were opposed)

Supervisor Waldron entered the meeting at 11:10 a.m.

The Board recessed at 11:18 a.m. until Monday, November 25 at 1:00 p.m.

Certified by:

Jon R. Stead, Administrative Officer/ DATE
Clerk of the Board