



FINANCE, LEGAL & SAFETY COMMITTEE

July 9, 2024

10:30 a.m.

ATTENDANCE:

Legislators: Chair Sauerbrey, Ciotoli, Monell, Flesher, Roberts, Brown, Standinger, and Mullen

Staff: Legislative Clerk Haskell, County Attorney DeWind, Deputy Treasurer Chandler, Safety Officer Holbrook, Chief Accountant Douglas, Accountant Schurter, Public Defender Cline, Clerk Fahey, ILS Administrator Graven, County Administrator Bailey

- APPROVAL OF MINUTES:
 - Legislator Ciotoli asked for a motion to approve the June 11, 2024, minutes. Legislator Roberts made the motion seconded by Legislator Brown and was unanimously carried.

- FINANCIAL:
 - Safety's budget is tracking well. Ms. Holbrook is working cooperatively with departments to pursue grants alleviating the need to use County funds for these purchases. Due to ongoing outside counsel litigation costs Legal's "Legal Fees" object line could potentially require an influx of funds in the coming months.

- OLD BUSINESS:
 - Litigation: The In Rem litigation is in process, one case is coming to a motion to dismiss while civil litigations are in a holding pattern.
 - In Rem: The new redemption date for all delinquent taxpayers is August 11, 2024. The new foreclosure process does provide for re-establishing former liens should property be sold back to the prior owner by the Legislature. There are still details to be worked out with the Court regarding implementing these details. Court now has an online form on how to claim funds from properties that have been foreclosed on. There are major issues that will need to be addressed such as how properties will be appraised, what this process will look like, and the impact appraisal cost will have on this year and ongoing year's budgets. Mr. Humes is continuing to work on the new required

extra steps for service and will be submitting a petition in August for the County to take title of the properties listed on the Treasurer's spreadsheet.

- Ethics Board: The Ethics Board met last month to review annual policy review attestations and financial disclosure statements. Chair Davis and Vice Chair Ceccherelli were reelected to their positions. Starting this year and going forward thank you letters will be sent to County employee board liaisons whose board has a one hundred percent (100%) compliance rate.

- NEW BUSINESS:

- Budget: Legal will be adding a line for translation services. This line will be zero based with funds pulled from "Legal Fees". Contemplated salary adjustments could impact the budget and Legal would like to explore which budget hosts the In Rem expenses including appraisal work. These currently are all in the treasurer's budget.
- Services Expo: This event was well attended. Ms. Holbrook was instrumental in the set up of this event. Fair housing had birdhouses for children to paint and Mr. Humes was on hand to speak with the public regarding the foreclosure process.
- Compliance Programs: Most of the County's compliance programs sit in the Law Department with some shared duties with Personnel. The County does not have a stand-alone compliance program or officer. The investigations can take up a good deal of County Attorney time unless sent to outside counsel at no small expense. Currently workplace violence claims are taking up quite a lot of time as these claims need to be investigated immediately. Mr. DeWind suggested looking at a compliance program coordinator, which is fairly common in other counties, to not only investigate workplace violence claims but to also ensure the County is complaint will state and federal guidelines.
- Contracts: Legal has reached out to departments to ensure all contracts are being entered into MUNIS in a timely manner.
- ILS Budget: Ms. Graven stated the state is allowing some of the funds from Year 6 to be rolled over into this year. However, for the 2025 ILS budget seven hundred thousand dollars (\$700,000 USD) is going to be requested to cover the increase of assigned counsel rates and new discovery demands. The state will reimburse twenty-five percent (25%) of assigned counsel vouchers up to one hundred seventy-five

thousand dollars (\$175,000 USD) which is split between ILS and the Public Defender's Office. The Public Defender's case load is higher however ILS has a majority of the high-profile cases. There are two high profile cases that will be going to trial by the end of this year requiring interim vouchers to be approved.

- Public Defender's Budget: Mr. Cline stated the Public Defender's budget will be zero based.

- PERSONNEL:

- 2nd Assistant County Attorney Position: A resolution is being presented to increase the salary range for this position. Mr. DeWind noted his appreciation for the work Personnel did and his hopes that with a more competitive salary there will be an increase in applications.
- Secretary to the 1st Assistant County Attorney Position: An offer has been made and accepted for this position with a start date of July 15, 2024.

- RESOLUTIONS:

- APPOINT SECRETARY TO THE 1ST ASSISTANT COUNTY ATTORNEY LAW DEPARTMENT; AUTHORIZE ACCEPTANCE OF YEAR SEVEN FUNDING FROM THE NYS OFFICE OF INDIGENT LEGAL SERVICES AND ACCEPT YEAR SEVEN FUNDING FOR HURRELL-HARRING GRANT AND AMEND 2024 BUDGET; REQUEST AND TRANSFER OF CONTINGENCY FUNDS & MODIFY 2024 BUDGET ASSIGNED COUNSEL; TRANSFER OF FUNDS BUDGET MODIFICATION DISTRICT ATTORNEY; AUTHORIZE ACCEPTANCE OF A GRANT FROM THE NEW YORK STATE DIVISION OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE SERVICES, ESTABLISH NEW BUDGET LINE AND AMEND 2024 BUDGET; AUTHORIZE ACCEPTANCE OF A GRANT FROM THE NEW YORK STATE DIVISION OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE SERVICES, ESTABLISH NEW BUDGET LINE AND AMEND 2024 BUDGET; ADJUST SALARY RANGE FOR 2ND ASSISTANT COUNTY ATTORNEY LAW DEPARTMENT were moved into full Legislative Session without further questions.

- PROCLAMATIONS

- N/A

- EXECUTIVE SESSION
 - N/A

- ADJOURNMENT:
 - Legislator Ciotoli adjourned the Legal & Safety Committee at 11:53 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Freyvogel

Secretary to the County Attorney