

**Finance Committee Meeting
July 9, 2025**

Attendees

Committee: Art Merrill, Wayne Marshfield, Wayland Gladstone, Joe Cetta, Eric Wilson, Tina Molé
Absent John Kosier, George Haynes
Staff: Amy Merklen, Penny Bishop

Mr. Merrill called the meeting to order at 10:35 a.m.

On a motion by Mr. Marshfield, seconded by Mr. Wilson, the June 25 committee meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

The Sales Tax report for the July 1 payment was reviewed. The report indicates an increase of 14.0589% relative to last year. A report of 2025 transfers from contingency was reviewed. The contingency balance is \$783,105.05. A Summary of Revenues, Expenditures, and Changes in Department Balance was distributed.

Mr. Merrill referenced that the HR Committee met recently and one of the issues they found out about is that the budget line for prescriptions was going to run out of funds very soon due to a huge increase in reimbursements. He understands that when the last payment was made, the fund was left nearly empty. The Clerk stated there were insurance reserves carried over for years and all of the reserves have been used up as well as the amount budgeted. She said one type of prescribed drug in particular is being used a lot and has proven to have many health-changing benefits. Mr. Merrill indicated they anticipate a continued increase in the use of this drug and his proposal is to move \$1M from sales tax revenues to cover prescription reimbursements. There is \$15.5M in sales tax revenue to date which was budgeted at \$21.5M. He would prefer do a budget amendment to take money from sales tax revenue and use it for insurance. Any unused funds would remain as a reserve. A few years ago the insurance reserve was large so they have been very conservative when budgeting so as not to build the reserve up. In reply to Mr. Wilson if a generic brand or alternative drug could be used, Mr. Merrill said he understands generics would not be available for this particular medication for 21 years. Ms. Molé stated similar medications are available. In reply to Mr. Marshfield, Mr. Merrill said the remaining cost for this year is expected to be close to \$500,000 as usage continues to go up.

Mr. Marshfield made a motion to appropriate \$1M from sales tax revenue to cover the county portion of an unexpected increase in the cost of prescriptions. The motion was seconded by Mr. Gladstone and unanimously carried.

Discussion was held regarding 911 call center purchases of amenities that are needed because these employees have to stay in the call center for the duration of their shift. Committee chair explained that under the circumstances of the department working 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year, the committee would approve the purchase. County Attorney Amy Merklen warned that these employees are entitled an hour lunch and 2 breaks, which is the same as all county employees. Every employee is entitled to that. Every department is busy, and this work should not set that department apart in that regard.

Ms. Merklen reported that her office has been doing some shredding to help with storage issues, and she would be speaking with the Department of Social Service to see if they would be paying for a portion of all of the shredding costs as much of the shredding is from their client files. Ms. Molé said that the County Attorney has taken an inventory the files. Ms. Merklen indicated there are over 400 boxes in storage offsite and approximately 150 boxes stored in the basement of the County Office building. She confirmed that once the shredding is completed, this would give Social Services additional storage space. In reply to Mr. Marshfield, Ms. Merklen said New York State Archives promulgates a list of records and the associated retention period which would need to be adopted by the Board. The Clerk indicated the Board has previously adopted the NYS Local Government Records Retention Schedule. She also said that when the Behavioral Health Facility was built, the second floor was intended for storage. Ms. Molé said that storage project would not be done this year. In reply to Mr. Wilson, Ms. Molé said that the Buildings and Maintenance Superintendent plans to build cages and storage rooms that can be secured. The Clerk noted that the capital fund account for the BHF facility has not been closed because this storage work has not been completed. Mr. Merrill stated that every department should be shredding every year according to the state retention schedule which for most records is seven years. This would also save the cost of paying for records storage.

Mr. Cetta questioned a statement made at the last meeting, that based on law the Treasurer could not provide a report of what sales tax revenue is attributed to short-term rentals. He had asked the Treasurer to bring in a copy of the law. He believes the Board would have every right to know what the sales tax revenue is based on short-term occupancy.

Mr. Wilson questioned the statement Sidney received from the previous quarter of cannabis sales tax. The payment received was less than expected for the sales recorded for the quarter.

Travel, equipment, and fill vacancy requests were approved as presented.

The meeting adjourned at 11:18 p.m.