

**Finance Meeting
February 8, 2023**

Attendees

Committee: Art Merrill, Wayland Gladstone, George Haynes, John Kosier, Wayne Marshfield, Jeff Taggart, Mark Tuthill and Tina Molé

Staff: Beverly Shields, Sherri Falcone, Amy Merklin, and Penny Bishop

Mr. Merrill called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m.

On a motion by Mr. Kosier and seconded by Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Marshfield, the draft minutes of the January 25 committee meeting were approved.

Clerk of the Board – Penny Bishop

There were no reports to distribute. Mr. Merrill stated year-end reports should be available for the next Finance meeting.

Real Property Tax Services – Sherri Falcone

Mrs. Falcone reported there will be a correction of the 2021 and 2022 tax rolls in accordance with a court judgement by a Supreme Court regarding parcel 125001, 138.-3-14.11, Seritage KMT Finance vs. The Assessor, The Board of Assessment Review of the Town of Sidney and the Town of Sidney. The court order requires that the total assessed value of the 2021 Final Assessment Roll on said parcel be corrected to \$981,400 and the taxpayer is due a Town and County tax bill refund of \$18,331.37. A corrected town and county tax bill will be issued for 2023. She distributed a Board resolution to address the correction.

Mr. Haynes said he believes the building is in bad shape. It's an old building and Lambrecht Auction is going in.

In answer to Mr. Marshfield remarking about assessments increasing in the state, Mrs. Falcone explained they cannot assess properties based on purchase price.

Mr. Gladstone shared an example of a fictitious value based on current purchase price of property and what could be done to maintain the assessment at 100%. Mrs. Falcone stated she believes the inflated market numbers from the past two years should not be used for any calculations.

Treasurer's Office – Beverly Shields

Mrs. Shields expressed that the County investment policies have not been updated in many years. She distributed a draft of the updated policy and touched on a few of the changes.

She handed out a Board resolution to cancel taxes on 11 properties. The resolution also includes a statement that declares there are no outstanding delinquent taxes prior to 2010. In regard to Mr. Marshfield's question about the Hardenburg property on the list, she confirmed that Hardenburg Association owned the property but the road was subdivided and no taxes were paid. The County is making the subdivided property not taxable.

Mrs. Shields reported on some developments she learned about at a treasurer's meeting she attended last week. The state plans to change the way foreclosure proceeds are handled. She explained that once a

foreclosure property is sold, the proceeds will be used to pay off all liens on the property and any money left over will be given to the taxpayer. If the property owner does not claim the funds within a specific timeframe, the money will go to New York State unclaimed funds.

Mr. Merrill remarked this would be a reason to no longer hold a foreclosure sale. If the county would not get money from the sale, it would be another mandate the county has to pick up. Mrs. Shields explained the county can charge fees and would get their county taxes. She said this development is on the docket but has not passed yet.

Mr. Marshfield indicated that once properties are auctioned, the taxing authorities will be made whole.

Mrs. Merklen noted a letter was sent around with an agreement for a change in foreclosure payouts to villages. She said that at one time they offered to do village foreclosures but were advised not to.

Mrs. Shields stated the County does stipulations with all the villages except the Village of Walton. County Attorney Merklen and Assistant County Attorney Jeremy Rase are working on this with Dave from the Village of Walton. Mrs. Merklen is researching §1136 tax law as it is not defined in the agreement.

Regarding sales tax sharing, Mr. Taggart reported his findings of the percentage that some neighboring counties share:

- Chenango (4% Sales Tax) retains 50% of the first 3% sales tax revenue and distributes the remaining 50% to towns and villages based on property value. The additional 1% is retained by the county.
- Broome – Same as Chenango
- Delaware – Does not share
- Otsego retains 76% and distributes 12% to the City of Oneonta and 12% to towns and villages.

Ms. Molé reported that the County received its first payment from the Opioid Settlement last fall of approximately \$101,000. She has created an ad hoc committee to oversee the funds as the county will receive annual payments for a number of years.

Mr. Marshfield said he believes Mental Health would be a good place to start. Further he noted the Sheriff's Office and Department of Social Services are also affected by the opioid crisis and it would be valuable to have them represented on the committee. Mr. Merrill agreed that Doug Elston should be involved.

Mrs. Shields noted the tobacco money was included in the Treasurer's budget.

Mr. Merrill led a discussion for creating a dedicated account that would require the Opioid Committee to approve dissemination of funds similar to the ARPA account. Mr. Kosier inquired if there are stipulations or guidelines for spending the funds. Mr. Merrill stated a budget amendment resolution is not needed to accept the funds at this time but will be necessary once the Opioid Committee approves spending the funds. An account will be set up and tracked by Fiscal Affairs.

Mr. Marshfield announced the county has received an additional \$50,000 of a \$100,000 LATCF award under the ARPA. Mr. Merrill stated the funds will be added to the ARPA account and subject to that committee oversight.

Travel, equipment and vacancy requests were approved as presented. Meeting adjourned at 11:50 p.m.