

**Finance Meeting  
July 26, 2023**

Attendees

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

Absent: George Haynes

Staff: Sherri Falcone, Zebadiah Cohen, Penny Bishop

Mr. Merrill called the meeting to order at 10:40 a.m.

On a motion by Mr. Taggart, seconded by Mr. Tuthill, the draft minutes of the July 12 meeting were unanimously approved.

Real Property Tax Services – Sherri Falcone

Mrs. Falcone reported that they will need new computers because programming is becoming more difficult for some of her staff. She introduced Zebadiah Cohen who explained that they are being forced into using a new program. The program they are using has actually melted the computer two or three times in the past. In answer to Ms. Molé, Mrs. Falcone said they need two new computers. Carl and Zeb do the GIS configurations and they hope to make it through the year with the current equipment. In reply to Mr. Merrill, she said the cost is \$9,000. Mr. Taggart moved to authorize the purchase of equipment as soon as possible to avoid an equipment failure altogether. The motion was seconded by Mr. Gladstone and unanimously carried.

Mr. Marshfield asked about the Pictometry budget for 2024. Mrs. Falcone explained that starting this year, Pictometry services will be paid through the Department of Emergency Services. The cost of approximately \$20,000 will be divided by the number of parcels and this will be paid annually as opposed to a three-year contract.

Mr. Merrill referred to the July 13 Sales Tax report which was distributed to committee members. The report shows a .5608% increase compared to the same time period last year. A six-month operating summary report dated through June 30 was also distributed for review with questions, if any, to be discussed at the next committee meeting.

Clerk of the Board – Penny Bishop

Mrs. Bishop noted she will be adding county-owned properties from the tax auction for insurance coverage. The first property is the dilapidated Main Street Fleischmanns lot, and she expects to add several more lots in the near future. Mr. Merrill relayed that Mrs. Shields notified him that the Fleischmanns property was secured by Buildings & Maintenance on July 21. The Treasurer had indicated to him that they know of someone who may be interested in buying the building.

Mr. Merrill referred to an issue of three outstanding payroll checks from 2010 and recommended the Clerk contact the auditor on how to properly handle the uncashed payments. Mrs. Bishop will reach out to Thomas Smith of EFPR Group for guidance.

Mr. Kosier stated his bookkeeper has about a dozen boxes of old files that need to be shredded. He

asked if towns are allowed to bring these boxes to the County for shredding. Mr. Tuthill advised that Mr. Montgomery would be the one to contact about using the shredder.

Mr. Kosier reported that their ambulance service is up and running. They have two ambulances running in Stamford to cover the north end of the county and they are doing great, noting their response times are 15 to 20 minutes. He asked if the county would still need the AMR contract with the extra services now available. Mr. Merrill stated that contracting with AMR was the intended purpose to fill the gap until we no longer need them. There is no answer yet if AMR services will still be required as they need all the data to re-evaluate the contract. Mr. Marshfield said the last he knew, the revenues were approximately \$60,000 a month. In reply to Ms. Molé, Mr. Kosier indicated their ambulance workers are paid. He said next year the Towns of Kortright, Stamford, and Harpersfield will each budget \$100,000 to keep the ambulance service operational. In addition, they have funding from the Robinson-Broadhurst Foundation for another two years. The goal of Robinson-Broadhurst was to help get the service initiated. Mr. Marshfield acknowledged that other towns do not have the opportunity to work with that Foundation. Mr. Gladstone will ask Emergency Services to provide updated AMR reports. Mr. Marshfield said the next ARPA meeting is scheduled for September 12 and he will ask Steve Hood to give an update on the ambulance service then.

Mr. Taggart shared his concern with the resolution in support of the Bramley Mountain Fire Tower. The county has put \$50,000 into this project and will still be responsible to take it down when required. He is aware this is a big liability risk. Ms. Molé said she believes the tower would be a good thing for the County.

In reference to Resolution No. 127, Mr. Marshfield asked what the full cost is for the command trailer. Mrs. Bishop said the full cost was \$166,332 and public safety received a grant for \$99,971 last fall that has already been applied towards the purchase. She indicated there a similar not-prefiled resolution for today's Board meeting from the Sheriff's Office to pay the command trailer in full.

Mr. Taggart asked for clarification of the local law being introduced that will provide real property tax exemptions for volunteer firefighters and ambulance workers. Ms. Molé confirmed the exemption is for county taxes only. People will have to decide which exemption is better for them, the NYS Firefighters Credit of \$200 or 10% of the assessed value of the primary residence. They will have to choose one or the other because they cannot take both exemptions.

Mr. Marshfield shared that the state plans to keep the 2% tax cap which is unfortunate because most municipalities will be forced to go over the cap. It is his understanding that MMIS will be an additional \$1 million next year.

Travel, equipment, and vacancy requests were approved as presented. There were five not-prefiled resolutions including budget amendments from Emergency Services for the command trailer, Planning for receipt of a grant from the O'Connor Foundation for the IRT, and Economic Development for receipt of funding for a Community Development Block grant as well as the payment of audit resolution.

Upon a motion, the meeting adjourned at 11:20 a.m.