

ERIE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

REGULAR SESSION

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2020

ALL PRESENT

President Shenigo called the meeting to order and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

On motion of Mr. Old and second of Mr. Shoffner, Board approves the minutes of the **September 30, 2020** Commission meeting; Roll Call: All Aye

Pete Daniel re Various Issues.

General Fund Forecast. The General Fund Forecast, which will be presented today, is a precursor of our budgetary policy guidelines. Erie County's health insurance is also a part of this process. Pete received the recommendation from the Cost Containment Committee for next year. The recommendation is to keep the employee/employer costs the same, increase the spousal inclusion benefit by \$25.00 to \$275.00 per month for those hired before 1/1/18, removal of \$200.00 single and \$400.00 family co-insurance on the High Deductible Health Plan, while the maximum out-of-pocket remains the same, and recommend negotiating a 28% increase to stop loss with Medical Mutual due to having three large stop loss claims in 2019 and 2020. We are locked in on costs for administrative fees, medical, dental and vision through 2022.

On motion of Mr. Old and second of Mr. Shoffner, Board accepts the changes and approves the Cost Containment Committee's recommendations for **Erie County's health insurance for 2021**; Roll Call: All Aye

Public Comment/Media Questions re Agenda Items.

Roger Hunker, APEX Energy, passed out an update to the solar project, which is now named Wheatsborough Solar Project. When doing research, they discovered that in California there was already a Bed Rock Solar Project so they changed it to Wheatsborough because this was the original name of Groton Township. Apex is anticipating more studies on the land to take place the first part of November, once the crops are cleared for the season. Mr. Hunker has spoken with the Bellevue and Margareta Superintendents about this project and will be speaking with the Margareta School Board in December. The first public meeting will be virtual and taking place at the end of the year. The plan is to file the permit in early January of 2021 and construction to start in early 2022. Mr. Hunker also mentioned that there are several company's ready to purchase the power, but APEX needs to get further into the project before purchase agreements can be made.

Finance Department re General Fund Forecast.

Finance Director Ed Widman and Assistant Finance Director Melissa Tomaro were present for this session. Based on the 2019 Long-Range Variance Analysis, our projections were very close to actual, only off by \$512,763.

The following 2020-2024 revenue and expense forecasts do not include sunset sales tax, lodging tax, and CARES Act reimbursements.

Revenues:

- There will be little to no growth in revenues until 2022. There has been a significant downturn in investment rates and the Feds indicated that interest rates will likely stay near zero through 2022.
- Sales tax remains down in 2021 and is forecasted to be \$15,460,000 compared to \$16 million in 2019.
- The Nexus pipeline property tax addition has brought in \$225,000 in 2020, but this will be depreciating by 5% per year beginning in 2021. These funds may be included in the capital funding.
- The increased State reimbursement for indigent legal defense covers current two-year State budget only, ending July 1, 2021. This reimbursement percentage will remain unknown after this date.

Expenses:

- Operating expenses are at current spending with minimal growth.
- No capital funding in 2020 and pay increases are not included in 2021 and thereafter.
- Health insurance premiums will not increase in 2021 but will likely increase by 10% thereafter.
- \$220,000, the cost of one murder trial per year, is included for 2021. Mr. Old mentioned that we should think about adding additional funds into this account, as there have been several murders this year.
- Child custody costs reflect the current two-year State budget, which will end on July 1, 2021. Expenses are expected to return to previous levels in 2022. The state mandated additional funds for child custody cases, spending \$1,350,000 on these cases. With less children in custody, hopefully these costs will be lower.
- While no annual capital allocations were estimated in 2020, future year allocations have been included as a total. Mr. Shenigo noted issues the Jail and Courthouse are having with their HVAC systems and we need to start thinking about replacing these systems, which will be a huge expense. We need to think about increasing the jail capital budget in 2021 for this project. Pete noted that the Facilities Department has fixed both issues temporarily, but these systems are 30 years old and will need replacing soon.
- Restarting the funding for an extra pay period.

Ed said that the General Fund only meets structural balance in 2020 and unless economic conditions improve sooner, the General Fund balance will continue to decrease through 2024.

Pete stated, two questions the Board needs to address during this budget process are: do we stick with balancing revenues to expenses, or because we have reserves, should we use some reserves to keep the budget balanced? Mr. Shoffner said the commission could also consider choosing a percentage of our yearly revenue to set aside as our total reserve. The total reserve would be a combination of our rainy day fund and our cash reserves. Whatever that percentage turns out to be, it would give us what are true reserve dollar amounts would be moving into the next year. We could prioritize making sure those reserve totals are met first before dealing with our yearly budget process. We could then know how much we needed to set aside to refill our surplus percentages or it would tell us if we had a true surplus moving into our budget cycle. Pete noted that we committed to using rainy day funds for the early retirement and the OPERS two-year buyout plans for county employees. He stated once rainy day funds are used for these plans, the fund will be down to \$2 million.

On motion of Mr. Old and second of Mr. Shoffner, Board adopts resolution entering into an agreement with the **State of Ohio, Department of Youth Services**; Roll Call: All Aye (#20-235 - providing funding for operation of Northern Ohio Juvenile Community Corrections Facility)

On motion of Mr. Old and second of Mr. Shoffner, Board adopts resolution releasing funds collected pursuant to Ohio Revised Code Sections 3113.34 and 2303.201(D) to Safe Harbour Domestic Violence Shelter, Inc.; Roll Call: All Aye (#20-236)

On motion of Mr. Old and second of Mr. Shoffner, Board adopts resolution entering into an agreement with **Compass Minerals America, Inc.**; Roll Call: All Aye (#20-237 - rock salt for highway ice control during 2021 calendar year)

On motion of Mr. Old and second of Mr. Shoffner, Board adopts resolution **adopting the holiday schedule for employees of the Commissioners' Department for the year 2021**; Roll Call: All Aye (#20-238)

On motion of Mr. Old and second of Mr. Shoffner, Board adopts resolution declaring certain Erie County equipment surplus and ordering same to be sold by **Internet auction**; Roll Call: All Aye (#20-239)

On motion of Mr. Old and second of Mr. Shoffner, Board adopts resolution declaring certain items surplus and ordering same to be **discarded or salvaged**; Roll Call: All Aye (#20-240)

On motion of Mr. Old and second of Mr. Shoffner, Board adopts resolution entering into a maintenance agreement with **Blue Technologies, Inc.**; Roll Call: All Aye (#20-241 - maintenance agreement on a Lexmark XM1145 printer/scanner/fax for Sheriff's Office)

Board executes **Certificates of Retirement** to **Jo Dee Davis** and **Carolyn Ackerman**, The Meadows at Osborn Park.

Board reviews the following documents approved by the County Administrator Pete Daniel, per authority under Resolution No. 20-103 and No. 20-128:

- **Docket** dated 10/5/20
- **Then and Now** dated 10/2/20

Contracts:

- **Stanley Convergent Security Solutions, Inc.** in the amount of \$219,900.00 re system upgrades at the Erie County Jail.
- **Flynn, Py and Kruse**, in the amount of \$4,000.00 re providing legal services related to hearings in the matter of Case No. 18-1607-EL-BGN, Firelands Wind, LLC before the Ohio Powering Siting Board

Revised Auditor's Certificate:

- **Mobile Analytical Services, Inc.** in an additional amount of \$17,000.00 re providing laboratory services for DOES.
- **Ohio Telecom** in an additional amount of \$14,050.00 re providing internet services to Erie County for Facilities Department.
- **Ohio Telecom** in an additional amount of \$1,132.00 re providing internet services to Erie County for Facilities Department.

Personnel Action Forms:

DOES

- **Tanner Thompson**, Equipment Operator II - Landfill, successful completion of probation effective 9/20/20.

The Meadows at Osborn Park

- **Jodee Davis**, full-time RN Supervisor, retirement effective 10/31/20
- **Dale Douglas**, full-time Maintenance Aide 1, employment effective 10/13/20.
- **Brittany Mischler**, part-time STNA, rate change due to changing shifts effective 9/20/20.
- **Shanice Pace**, from part-time STNA to full-time STNA effective 9/20/20.
- **Audrey Sibert**, part-time STNA, resignation effective 9/29/20

Received letter from Sheriff Sigsworth re **Transportation of Prisoners Report**, per O.R.C. 325.07.

Received letter from Sheriff Sigsworth re estimate of \$250.00 to be charged for **gasoline credit cards** for the month of November 2020, per O.R.C. 301.27.

Received cover letter and copy of **Jail Meal and Turn Key Report** for the month of September 2020 from Sheriff Sigsworth, per O.R.C. 311.20.

Received letter from Environmental Design Group re **Sandusky Bay Pathway site visit notification for properties located at 301 Superior Street.**

Received **Monthly Financial Report** for the month ending September 30, 2020 from the Erie County Auditor, per O.R.C. 319.15.

On motion of Mr. Old and second of Mr. Shoffner, Board **adjourns** at 10:40 a.m.; Roll Call: All Aye

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