

JOINT GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS AND FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
SEPTEMBER 19, 2023

GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Fedler, O'Brien, Haff, Hicks

GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: Shaw, Rozell, Fisher

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: O'Brien, Haff, Hicks, Fedler, Skellie, Hogan, Clary, Wilson,

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: Rozell, Griffith

SUPERVISORS: Henke, Hall, Nolan

Debra Prehoda, Clerk of the Board

Al Nolette, County Treasurer

Melissa Fitch, County Administrator

Roger Wickes, County Attorney

AGENDA AS PRESENTED IN COMMITTEE NOTICE:

- 1) Call to Order
- 2) Accept Minutes – August 31, 2023
- 3) Consider 2023 Departmental Budget Requests:
  - A. Legislative Board/Clerk of the Board
  - B. County Administration
    1. Request Waiver from Procurement Policy for Electric Sign Installation
  - C. County Attorney
  - D. Real Property
  - E. County Clerk/Historian
  - F. Treasurer
  - G. Buildings & Grounds/Parks
    1. Budget Amendment .4 to .2
  - H. Board of Elections
- 4) Other Business
- 5) Adjournment

Chairwoman Fedler called the Government Operations Committee meeting to order 11:07A.M. joining the Finance Committee already in session in the Supervisors classroom Room B214.

A motion to accept the minutes of the August 31, 2023 Government Operations Committee meeting was moved by Mr. O'Brien, seconded by Mr. Fedler and adopted.

**CONSIDER 2023 BUDGET REQUESTS:**

LEGISLATIVE BOARD – Debra Prehoda, Clerk of the Board, presented the 2024 budget request:

Expenses: A.1010

Personal Services	\$436,000
Equipment	\$ 1,700
Contractual	\$ 2,950
Benefits	\$214,914
Total	\$655,564

Revenue: \$0. Highlights: Personal services budgeted with 2.5% increase. Contractual: – Increase of \$285 over 2023. Currently do not have a microphone for the podium only a handheld and requesting one like the other microphones in the room at a cost of \$1,700.

CLERK OF THE BOARD – Debra Prehoda, Clerk of the Board, presented the 2024 budget request:

Expenses: A.1040

Personal Services	\$242,500
Equipment	\$ 0
Contractual	\$ 15,725
Benefits	\$111,528
Total	\$369,753

Revenue: \$0. Highlights: Personal Services with 2.5% increase. Personnel Request: Account Clerk/Sr. Account Clerk to learn the audit process due to the part time Sr. Account Clerk stepping down and would like to keep the part time person for four months at 40 hours per month during the learning process. Unsure how quickly the position would be filled. Equipment – none and Contractual – basically the same as last year.

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR – Melissa Fitch, County Administrator, presented the 2024 budget request:

Expenses A.1230

Personal Services	\$312,200
Equipment	\$ 0
Contractual	\$ 72,190
Benefits	\$138,387
Total	\$522,777

Revenue: \$0. Highlights: Personal Services: 2.5% increase. Staffing request to increase the Purchasing Coordinator from grade 15 to grade 18, \$7,300, that person has taken on a lot of responsibility over the years from what it used to be and has undergone a lot of training. She is looking for the position to be comparable with the Benefit Specialist in the Personnel Department. Cell phone destruction is budgeted at \$500 but has not been used. Mr. Haff suggested possibly donate the cell phones to a program, i.e., women’s shelter. Equipment: None. Contractual: Contract Expenses: \$500 put in the printing line for the Tax Flyer that is included with the tax bills. Contract expenses includes Labor Negotiations Attorney hourly and flat fee. The Chairman and Vice Chairman expressed some displeasure with bond counsel and missing a meeting. The last time the contract was renew, the County did not go out for RFPs for that service just renewed. The Treasurer expressed he has been very pleased with the bond counsel services. The County Attorney stated the Labor Attorney is also the bond counsel. Included travel plan: (2) NYSAC conferences.

Waiver - \$50,000 was put in the budget for a Washington County electronic sign for messaging to the public. Requesting a waiver from the Procurement Policy for the installation of the sign and would like the same company that is providing the sign to also install it. A motion to approve waiver from Procurement Policy for installation of electronic sign was moved by Mr. O’Brien and seconded by Mrs. Fedler. Discussion. Funding for the sign came in two installments of \$25,000. The motion to approve a waiver from Procurement Policy for installation of electric sign was moved by Mr. O’Brien, seconded by Mrs. Fedler, and defeated. Messrs. Haff and Hogan opposed. The cost to install is around \$12,000, \$35,700 for sign plus installation \$12,000 totaling \$48,000. The sign in front of the Municipal Center is deteriorating and hard to read. Mr. Hogan asked if people really need a sign to find the County Building. Is there an issue? Mr. Campbell stated it is not about finding the building but getting information out. Mr. Hogan asked what messaging is not getting out there at a cost of \$50,000. The County Administrator stated if the committee does not want to go with an electric sign, then you could just replace the sign that is out there or no sign at all. Mr. Haff would like something not electronic. The County Attorney stated a portable electric

sign has been used this year to let people know about car seat checks, rabies clinics, and things of that nature. Mr. O'Brien stated during the pandemic covid vaccine clinics were on the portable sign. An electronic sign out front could advise people of mobile DMV sites. No consensus on going forward with any sign.

COUNTY ATTORNEY – Roger Wickes, County Attorney, addressed his 2024 budget request:  
Expenses: A.1420

Personal Services	\$681,250
Equipment	\$ 0
Contractual	\$ 52,450
Benefits	\$238,515
Total	\$972,215

Revenue \$184,000 comes from Workers' Compensation fund to pay towards the two Safety Officers. Personnel request: when the Safety Officer position was reinstated, the reinstatement did not keep pace with the salary schedule, so the reinstated base salary was set lower and has not kept pace with the salary schedule we have now. This would be a \$5,700 increase. The County Administrator and Personnel Officer both endorse looking at the base to see where it should have been so that it keeps pace on the schedule where we are now. Still one Attorney down and trying hard to recruit. The intern program worked well. Contractual – Additional costs due to the addition of second Safety Officer.

REAL PROPERTY – Laura Chadwick, Director, addressed 2024 budget request:  
Expense: A.1355

Personal Services	\$ 400,349
Equipment	\$ 0
Contractual	\$ 27,805
Benefits	\$ 101,430
Total	\$ 529,584

Revenue \$147,505. Expenses: Contractual: Ed and training increased because discontinued previous program and need to get on ARC Pro and training is \$1500 per person for two employees. Travel plan submitted.

Retirement and Workers Compensation lines have increased. The Treasurer stated because we are relying less on fund balance.

COUNTY CLERK – Stephanie Lemery, County Clerk, addressed the 2024 budget request:  
Expense: A.1410

Personal Services	\$ 827,858
Equipment	\$ 0
Contractual	\$ 120,700
Benefits	\$ 345,428
Total	\$1,293,986

Revenue \$1,640,000. A major increase is in the use tax revenue. State approved new percentage with online but not increasing revenues due to mortgages slowing down. Revenue on DMV side is up. From January to now, they have processed 2749 walk ins on DMV side and 394 on County Clerk side. The State is increasing online transactions to 10.7% from 3%. From February 2021 to

the first two weeks in July, the state was asking for help and Washington County did over 12,000 transactions for the State. Expenses: Personnel – Index Clerk grade 9 to Senior Index Clerk grade 11, \$2,800 and Account Clerk to Index Clerk, half a year from a grade 8 to grade 9 \$2,300. Contractual: Right now, County Clerk receives 12.75% with walk ins and if done on line 3.25% after they meet the \$400,000, State receives all the first \$400,000, and as of January 1<sup>st</sup> will get 10.7% in person and online and no threshold. Projecting revenue should go up \$145,068. At the County Clerk’s conference in October there might be some federal money that the county clerks can get and will pass that information along.

TREASURER: Al Nolette, County Treasurer, addressed the 2024 budget request, summary attached:

Expenses: A.1325

Personal Services	\$576,700
Equipment	\$ 0
Contractual	\$109,450
Benefits	\$205,444
Total	\$891,594

Revenue \$203,160. Contract with LCLGRP for \$10,000 to do their books and contracts with three schools for collections. Expenses: Travel plan – Deputy Treasurer goes to new World training out of state and NYSAC and Finance School training for Treasurer. The two biggest changes in his budget: telephone is out, and auditing serves is in and out of the County Administration budget. Need to investigate the mail system in general. Personnel: Received notification yesterday that one of the Payroll Clerk’s is transferring to a different department and that is a significant blow to his operations. He met with the Personnel Officer this morning is going to be proposing is taking one of the Payroll Clerk grade 14 positions and downgrade to a Bookkeeper at grade 13 and take the other Payroll Clerk grade 14 and increase to a grade 15 making that person a senior and responsible for the supervisory duties and training which will result in a savings of \$337.

Other accounts under the Treasurer:

A.1362 Tax Advertising & A.1364 Tax auction properties – Are both expense categories that are related to tax auction properties. A.1950 taxes on county property and added a 2% increase. A.1985 is the sales tax distribution.

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS – Matt Jones, Superintendent, addressed the 2024 budget request:

Expenses: A.1620

Personal Services	\$1,262,194
Equipment	\$ 34,600
Contractual	\$1,303,756
Benefits	\$ 387,851
Total	\$2,988,401

Revenues: \$180,000. Personnel – overtime is related to snow removal and if doing a project before the department starts work. Equipment – purchasing desks and chairs for different departments. Contractual: held even this year on expenses.

Replacement pump for the jail, \$28,000. Since he has been here it has been replaced once and there was always a stocked spare due to the delivery time of six to eight weeks. This does not

meet the definition of an emergency purchase. It is a JWC pump. The Treasurer stated this is over \$20,000 and must follow the process, GML rules. This can be bid out but does not make definition of emergency.

Budget amendment is to replace office equipment and some other aging items due to the water incident in Probation. Insurance will cover a certain percentage of this expense. Motion to amend Building and Grounds budget transferring funds from A. 1620.4420 Outside Services and increasing A.1620.2010 Office Equipment in the amount of \$22,000 was moved by Mr. O'Brien, seconded by Mr. Hicks, and adopted. The Superintendent must pay for items and then get reimbursement. The Treasurer stated if there is insurance reimbursement coming then the insurance funds should be recognized and fund the expense of the office equipment, so the insurance funds are paying the expense. The Superintendent stated it is unknown what he will receive from insurance. The budget amendment will be forwarded to the regular Finance Committee meeting for consideration.

BOARD OF ELECTIONS – Tom Rogers and Jeff Curtis, Board of Elections Commissioners presented the 2024 budget request:

Expenses: A.1450

Personal Services	\$373,790
Equipment	\$ 0
Contractual	\$ 78,700
Benefits	\$111,983
Total	\$564,473

Revenue \$0. Negative revenue figure because the Treasurer had to reverse what they purchased and returned, printers, and there will be a new claim for new items. Expenses: A presidential election next year so will have another election cycle and primary and more inspectors increasing the regular earnings and other budget lines for related costs for extra election costs. Costs go up by 1/3 due to the extra election cycle. Contracts are down because Clear Ballot that they used to have for scanning and had to pay \$2,000 per election and they do not have to do this with the new HART voting machines because everything is included. Printing mail check cards are an expense. in the printing line. Conferences and training - \$5,000 requesting the Deputies also attend to get a chance to train. Inspectors will cover the office.

**OTHER BUSINESS:**

The joint Government Operations and Finance committee meeting adjourned at 12:45 P.M.

*Debra Prehoda, Clerk  
Washington County Board of Supervisors*

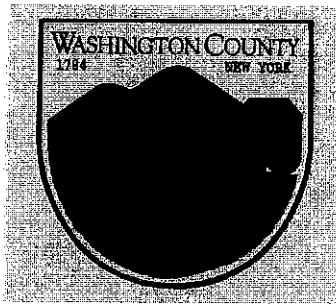
**Washington County Office of the Administrator**  
**Proposed Overnight Travel Plan for FY 2024**

**NYSAC Fall Conference – County Administrator**

NYSAC Fall Conference is a 3-day, 3-night conference held in New York State. Exact location and dates are to be determined for 2024.

Conference fees are expected to be approximately \$500 including participation in all workshops, plenary sessions, events, and all meals. Transportation costs (car pool / mileage) is to be determined depending on location. Hotel room rate per night is expected to be approximately \$200 per night.

NYSAC Legislative Conference, 1-night. Hotel room rate per night is expected to be approximately \$200 per night.



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Laura B. Chadwick, CCD  
Director

## MEMO

To: Brian Campbell, Budget Officer,  
Melissa Fitch, County Admin.  
Debbie Prehoda, Clerk Board of Supervisors  
From: Laura Chadwick, Director RPTS  
Date: September 19, 2023  
Subject: Travel Plans

For the 2024 Budget I am submitting my Travel Plans.

I plan to attend the County Directors meeting held in conjunction with NYSAC. Our meeting is held at the Indigo Hotel. This is a three-day conference. The training is presented by the County Directors and NYSORPTS/Tax and Finance.

This conference is a three-night stay and the conference fees are \$100. which includes all meals.

I also plan to attend the County Directors Conference. This conference is mid- October. It is a 3-day conference. It will be held in either Lake George or Saratoga so there is no need for overnight stay. The conference fee is \$100. and includes all meals.

The County assessor needs continuing ed classes. The Annual assessor' training is a 3-day conference and has recently been held locally. The fee for this conference \$200. There are also one day seminars put on through the Assessors Assoc. at a cost of \$110.00 each and hope to have staff complete at least 4 courses.

The funds for the above are included in my budget. The Assessor and I have 12 hours of continuing education we must receive annually. They are partially reimbursable through New York State.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me at any time.

Thanks

**WASHINGTON COUNTY  
BOARD of ELECTIONS**

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August 10, 2023

To: Government Operations Committee  
Finance Committee

From: Board of Elections  
Jeff Curtis  
Tom Rogers

Re: Travel Plan: Conferences, A1450.4180

Board of Elections attends 2 conferences each year.

Election Commissioners Association and the NY State Board of Elections holds a joint Winter Conference in January. It's usually held in Albany.

We also attend a Summer Election Commissioners Association Conference. That date and location is confirmed at the Winter Conference.

Since we are unsure of the exact location of the conference at budget time, we have included money for both conferences in the 2024 budget.

Thank you,

Jeff Curtis  
Commissioner

Tom Rogers  
Commissioner