

**FINANCE & RULES COMMITTEE**  
**January 16, 2024**

Present: Tom Osborne, Chair; Jeffrey Nellenback, Vice-Chair; Herb Frost; Vincent Nortz; and Barry Lyndaker.

Legislator Osborne called the meeting to order at 2:34 p.m.

Legislator Osborne moved to approve the November 21, 2023, committee meeting minutes as recorded, seconded by Legislator Nellenback, and carried.

**2024/2025 Proposed Goals for Finance & Rules Committee – Ryan Piche, County Manager**

Ryan Piche reviewed the goal adoption process timeline beginning with December 2023 when Legislators and Department Heads were asked to consider goals for the upcoming legislative term. At the January 2, 2024, Board of Legislators Organizational meeting a draft copy of the Committee Goals were distributed to legislators for their input. During the time between January 2<sup>nd</sup> and January 16<sup>th</sup> the draft goals were edited to reflect feedback received from legislators. Today the draft goals are going to be discussed and adopted by each Committee. After that they will be forwarded to the full board on February 6<sup>th</sup> for adoption.

Finance & Rules Committee Goals are as follows:

1. Establish Community Engagement Specialist Position and Develop a Community Engagement Plan
  - a) Lead: Everyone.
  - b) Enhance community engagement efforts.
  - c) Prioritize community engagement in daily operations.
  - d) Hire new position.
  - e) Form and adopt community engagement plan.
  - f) Place special emphasis on engaging with Town and Village governments.
  
2. Work with Economic Development Partners to Clean-Up Vacant Properties
  - a) Lead: Ryan Piche, County Manager; Joan McNichol, County Attorney; Casandra Buell, Planning & Community Development Director; and Naturally Lewis, Inc.
  - b) Facilitate Glenfield School Reuse.
  - c) Facilitate Lyons Falls School Reuse (execute grant).
  - d) Work with codes to eliminate blight throughout the County.
  
3. Continue Broadband Expansion Program
  - a) Lead: Ad Hoc Committee for Broadband Expansion.
  - b) Complete current grant work.
  - c) Complete Spectrum expansion and hold ribbon cutting.

- d) Work with Frontier on expansion program.
4. Explore Options for Bed Tax Collection
    - a) Lead: Eric Virkler, County Treasurer.
    - b) Work towards greater participation in bed tax program
    - c) Ensure fair application of bed tax collection.
  5. Enhance Land Use and Taxation Policies for Energy
    - a) Lead: Everyone!
    - b) Update UTEP for solar.
    - c) Update template local law for solar development.
    - d) Engage with National Grid on transmission plans/policy.
    - e) Bottom Line: Stay on top of this issue & make sure our interests are represented.
  6. Develop and Codify Employee Appreciation Initiatives
    - a) Lead: Caitlyn Smith, Human Resources Director.
    - b) Develop a plan for consistent employee appreciation.
    - c) Evaluate and refine appreciation luncheon.
    - d) Establish consistent recognition for longevity milestones and retirements.
  7. Implement County Assessor and Data Collection
    - a) Lead: Candy Akin, Real Property Director.
    - b) Establish new positions.
    - c) Work with Towns to gauge interest in assessing services.
  8. Regular Updates for Audit, Budget, & Health Insurance
    - a) Lead: Legislator Osborne.
    - b) Health Insurance Premium Discussion coming this spring.
    - c) Audit presentation coming this summer.
    - d) Address results of State Comptroller's audit.
    - e) Budget planning August – October.
  9. Work with Towns and Villages on Water/Sewer Infrastructure
    - a) Lead: Ryan Piche, County Manager; and Legislators.
    - b) Leverage Southern Lewis and Central Lewis Water Studies to assist municipalities in making plans for infrastructure upgrades.
    - c) Leverage historic federal investment in infrastructure funding.
    - d) Assist municipalities in project planning, grant applications, and project executing.
    - e) Consider short-term financing options for municipalities.

The following dockets were reviewed:

1. Authorizing an agreement between Human Resources/Civil Service and Governmentjobs.com d/b/a NeoGov to implement the upgrades and training for its Civil

Service Software System as outlined in its proposal at a total cost of \$222,043.31 to be paid in annual installments over a three-year period. *There was a brief discussion and explanation given that NeoGov took over egov which was used for the original implementation of the Civil Service software, now this will focus more on the Human Resources side.*

AYE   5              NAY   0  

2. Authorizing subrecipient agreement with Snow Belt Housing Company, Inc. to administer and deliver projects under the 2023 CDBG grant award of \$621,950.00 for housing rehabilitation projects in Lewis County, additionally if the County is awarded \$300,000.00 under its Microenterprise application, it is authorized to enter into a subrecipient agreement with Naturally Lewis to administer and deliver those projects.

AYE   5              NAY   0  

3. Authorizing acceptance of the Wholesale Waiver Agreement proposal of \$1,772,321.00 offered by NYS Workers' Compensation Board to settle payout amounts for 17 open and ongoing claims, and to appropriate the funds into the correct Self-Insurance Fund account. *There was discussion on this as to what benefits the county will get from accepting this proposal. One thing is that there would be no more reimbursement requests being filed with the state, there would be no more waiting to receive the funds. It is a gamble because some claimants could live past live expectancy, or some could pass away before hitting life expectancy. This recommendation came from our Third Party Administrator NCAComp, Inc. who has worked with several counties on this process. One point was made that NYS Workers' Compensation Board may be reimbursing counties now but who knows what could happen in the future.*

AYE   5              NAY   0  

4. Authorizing the Lewis County Treasurer to participate with Modern Bank N.A. in making pooled CD deposits under CDAR's up to \$20,000,000.00 in FDIC insured amounts in accordance with the County's Investment Policy.

AYE   5              NAY   0  

The following motion was made:

1. Legislator Osborne moved that the Finance & Rules Committee approve the proposed 2024/2025 Finance & Rules Committee Goals and forward them to the full board for adoption, seconded by Legislator Nellenback, and carried.

With no other business to come before the committee Legislator Osborne moved to adjourn the meeting at 3:05 p.m., seconded by Legislator Nellenback, and carried.

Respectfully submitted,  
Cassandra Moser, Clerk of the Board