

FINANCE & RULES COMMITTEE
June 17, 2025

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

Legislator Osborne called the meeting to order at 2:32 p.m.

Legislator Osborne moved to approve the May 20, 2025 committee meeting minutes as recorded, seconded by Legislator Frost, and carried.

Audit Results Report – EFPR Representative

The audit results report was presented, emphasizing the thoroughness of the audit team and the organized process that began in March 2025. The audit yielded a clean, unmodified opinion, confirming that the financial statements are accurate and compliant with regulations.

A \$5.7 million increase in total assets and a \$2.8 million rise in net position were highlighted, despite a nearly \$13 million increase in total liabilities linked to health insurance estimates. Program revenue saw a decrease of \$3 million, largely due to a shift in accounting for retiree health insurance. The general fund experienced a nearly \$10 million decrease in assets, but the county remains in a healthy financial position with a fund balance of \$17.8 million.

BOCES Expansion Opportunities – Jeffery Ginger, Director of Career, Technical, Adult & Continuing Education and Stephen Todd, District Superintendent

Growth factors for BOCES and essential partnerships were outlined as there is a demand in the trades, at the local, state and national levels. Our local workforce development needs are EMS and nursing; water and wastewater tradesmen; solar installers and mechanics; and manufacturing and construction workers. The essential partnerships are county government; JCC; Fort Drum PW; and Workforce Development Agencies.

The breakdown of all BOCES enrollments is 52% Lewis County and 38% Jefferson County. Enrollment has slowly increased, and it is projected to be over 1,500 students in the 2025/2026 school year. Ideas for expansion are to include a heavy equipment operation; environmental conservation & forestry program with more hands-on learning; some adult education opportunities for things like water & wastewater operator certification and electrical wiring; and heavy equipment operations and solar installation.

Policy Restricting Electronic Device Use During Executive or Exempt Privileged Sessions discussion

A discussion was led on implementing a policy to restrict electronic device use during executive sessions to protect confidentiality. County Attorney Joan McNichol and Legislator Osborne emphasized the risks posed by devices, including accidental recordings and breaches of privacy. The policy aims to remind participants to manage their devices responsibly during sensitive discussions.

The following dockets were reviewed:

1. Authorizing a licensing and service agreement with SHI International Corp. effective August 1, 2025, through July 21, 2030, for software licenses & products under Cisco Meraki at a cost not to exceed \$26,500.20.
AYE 4 NAY 0
2. Approving and adopting the policy for Lewis County Legislators, legislative staff, County officers and/or officials, and any other invited participants attending an executive and/or exempt session of the Lewis County Board of Legislators or its committees/subcommittees restricting electronic device use during executive or exempt privileged sessions.
AYE 4 NAY 0
3. Authorizing the Lewis County Planning & Community Development Department to submit the online Consolidated Funding Application through the Smart Growth Community Planning and Zoning program on behalf of the Town and Village of Lowville.
AYE 4 NAY 0
4. Authorizing the Lewis County Planning & Community Development Department to submit the online Consolidated Funding Application through the NYS ESD Strategic Planning & Feasibility Studies program, in coordination with Beaver River Central School District, to complete an on-site childcare center feasibility study.
AYE 4 NAY 0
5. Authorizing the Lewis County Planning & Community Development Department to submit the online Consolidated Funding Application through the 2025 NYS Department of State Brownfield Opportunity Areas (BOA) program to complete a county-wide BOA inventory.
AYE 4 NAY 0
6. Authorizing the Lewis County Planning & Community Development Department in collaboration with the Highway Department, to submit the online Consolidated Funding Application through the NYS DEC Climate Smart Communities program, to complete a scoping and engineering study of County Route 22 (East Martinsburg Road).
AYE 4 NAY 0
7. Authorizing the Lewis County Planning & Community Development Department to submit the online Consolidated Funding Application through the NYS DEC Climate Smart Communities program, to investigate and define mitigation measures for certain dams in Lewis County.
AYE 4 NAY 0

8. Authorizing an IMA with the Village of Lyons Falls to provide grant administration services for the NY Forward Marketing, Branding, and Streetscape Enhancement Project by the Lewis County Planning & Community Development Department.

AYE 4 NAY 0

9. Approving appointments to the Jefferson-Lewis Workforce Development Board.

AYE 4 NAY 0

10. Re-appointing Eric Virkler of Lowville, NY, to the Development Authority of the North Country effective August 5, 2025 to August 5, 2029.

AYE 4 NAY 0

There being no other business to come before the committee Legislator Nellenback moved to adjourn the meeting at 3:01 p.m., seconded by Legislator Frost, and carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Cassandra Moser, Clerk of the Board