

FINANCE & RULES COMMITTEE
September 16, 2025

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

Legislator Osborne called the meeting to order at 2:29 p.m.

Legislator Osborne moved to approve the August 19th committee meeting minutes as submitted, seconded by Legislator Frost, and carried.

2026 Budget Personnel Requests – Caitlyn Smith, Director of Human Resources

The discussion focused on the 2026 personnel budget, with key elements being outlined, such as the differentiation between headcount and full-time equivalents to ensure precise labor cost evaluations. The proposed budget reflects a reduction in headcount from 325 to 285, leading to an estimated compensation decrease of around one million dollars across various departments. New position requests included a DMV examiner, salary increase to the Assistant District Attorney, Highway CDL Trainee/Trainer, Probation Supervisor promotion, Senior Community Development Specialist promotion, and a stipend for the Fort Drum Transportation Route, which would increase overall compensation by \$81,000.

It was pointed out that some adjustments would be budget neutral, such as substituting security personnel with a DMV examiner. Additionally, the need to consider future labor cost implications stemming from union contracts and salary studies in subsequent budgets was highlighted.

2026 Budget Capital Requests – Brian Hanno, Director of Purchasing

Brian Hanno provided an update on capital equipment and project planning, highlighting the importance of a strong capital plan that typically represents about 3% of annual operations. He reported that the current equity in equipment stands at approximately 50%, with various departments, including the Sheriff's office and Highway department, requesting replacements for items such as firearms and snowplow trucks. Brian noted a \$200,000 decrease in the capital projects budget compared to the previous year, while outlining key projects like bridge construction and road maintenance. He stated that funding for these projects would not necessitate new taxes due to a significant available fund balance.

The following dockets were reviewed:

1. Proclaiming the Year 2025 as the Centennial Year of the New York State Association of Counties.

AYE 5 NAY 0

2. Supporting New York State Senate Bill S8481 authorizing Local Governments to opt out of certain CLCPA mandates.
AYE 5 NAY 0
3. Accepting and appropriating CDBG 636IT566-25 funds in the amount of \$274,710.00 in the Planning & Community Development accounts for the CDBG Imminent Threat program.
AYE 5 NAY 0
4. Authorizing the application for the 2025 Northern Boarder Regional Commission (NBRC) Catalyst Program funding in an amount not to exceed \$3,000,000.00 to implement roadway, complete streets, and other supportive infrastructure projects in the Village of Port Leyden.
AYE 5 NAY 0
5. Authorizing the undertaking of the Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience Plan through the Planning and Community Development Department in collaboration with the Adirondack North Country Association (ANCA).
AYE 5 NAY 0
6. Adopting the Health Plan Fund Balance Policy
AYE 5 NAY 0
7. Adopting Local Law No. 7-2025 "A Local Law to Authorize Overriding the Tax Levy Limit Established by General Municipal Law 3-c (A/K/A "2% Tax Cap") for the Lewis County 2026 Budget."
AYE 5 NAY 0
8. Standard Work Day Reporting for Chairman Dolhof and Deputy Election Commissioner Hannah Wilson.
AYE 5 NAY 0

There being no other business to come before the committee Legislator Osborne moved to adjourn the meeting at 2:48 p.m., seconded by Legislator Nellenback, and carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Cassandra Moser, Clerk of the Board