

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: BUDGET

DATE: OCTOBER 14, 2009

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS GERAGHTY
BELDEN
O'CONNOR
CHAMPAGNE
KENNY
SHEEHAN
MERLINO
TAYLOR
STEC

OTHERS PRESENT:

FREDERICK MONROE, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD
PAUL DUSEK, COUNTY ATTORNEY
HAL PAYNE, COMMISSIONER OF ADMINISTRATIVE & FISCAL SERVICES
JOANN MCKINSTRY, DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OF ADMINISTRATIVE &
FISCAL SERVICES
JOAN SADY, CLERK OF THE BOARD
SUPERVISORS BENTLEY
GIRARD
GOODSPEED
PITKIN
SOKOL
STRAINER
THOMAS
VANNESS
PAT AUER, DIRECTOR, PUBLIC HEALTH
WILLIAM LAMY, SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
CANDY KELLY, DIRECTOR, OFFICE FOR THE AGING
CHRISTIE SABO, OFFICE FOR THE AGING
RICHARD KELLY, PERSONNEL OFFICER
MARGARET SING SMITH, DIRECTOR, YOUTH BUREAU
PATRICIA TATICH, DIRECTOR, PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
SHEILA WEAVER, COMMISSIONER, DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
BUD YORK, SHERIFF
RICK HAAG, WARREN COUNTY CONSERVATION COUNCIL
JAMES SEELEY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CORNELL COOPERATIVE EXTENSION
DAVID CEDERSTROM, *THE CHRONICLE*
DON LEHMAN, *THE POST STAR*
THOM RANDALL, *THE ADIRONDACK JOURNAL*
AMANDA ALLEN, SR. LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST
Please see attached sign in sheet for all other meeting attendees

Mr. Geraghty called the meeting of the Budget Committee to order at 9:00 a.m.

Referring to the minutes from the October 7th Committee meeting, Mr. Merlino noted that page 13 included the Committee's action to abolish the Major position within the Sheriff's Office. He apprised that although he had voted in opposition of the abolishment, the minutes failed to reflect this and he asked that they be corrected. Joan Sady, Clerk of the Board, advised that the minutes would be corrected.

Motion was made by Mr. Kenny, seconded by Mr. Merlino and carried unanimously to approve the minutes from the October 7, 2009 Committee meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk of the Board.

Copies of the meeting agenda were distributed to the Committee members, a copy of which is also on file with the minutes.

Proceeding with the agenda review, Mr. Geraghty announced that Item 1 pertained to a presentation by Rick Haag, of the Warren County Conservation Council (WCCC), in response to the Committee's decision to eliminate funding to the WCCC.

Mr. Haag distributed copies of the 2001 New York Summary of National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife Associated Recreation, as produced by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, a copy of which is on file with the minutes. He apprised that the documentation reflected participation and expenditures associated with wildlife related activities across New York State. Mr. Haag said that the \$1,000 stipend received from the County was used primarily to cover travel and meal costs associated with State meetings; he added that the County's contribution equated to approximately 1.5 cents for each of the 63,303 residents of Warren County to assist in operating the WCCC. He advised that the WCCC worked with all area fish and game clubs in the County to promote outdoor activities for adults and children, which also helped to increase related revenues and expenditures within the County by both residents and visitors to the area. Mr. Haag said that the WCCC also worked with NYSDEC (New York State Department of Environmental Conservation) and the Adirondack Conservation Council and the Conservation Fund Advisory Board, as well as the Lake George Fishing Alliance and a number of other organizations in an effort to promote fishing, hunting and conservation type activities. He concluded that the stipend received from the County was spent wisely in connection with the activities of the WCCC.

As there were no questions from the Committee Mr. Geraghty thanked Mr. Haag for his presentation and introduced James Seeley, Executive Director of Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE), who had also requested permission to address the Committee. Mr. Seeley distributed a folder of information regarding the programs offered by CCE, as well as the associated benefits to Warren County residents. He noted that the folder also included a document outlining the impact to residents resulting from the proposed reduction in funding to the CCE, which included a notation that the proposed 47% funding reduction could result in the abolishment of seven employees and a decrease in State funding. Mr. Seeley briefly reviewed the documentation provided for the Committee's benefit, copies of which are on file with the minutes. He concluded that a funding reduction of the magnitude proposed could conceivably close the Warren County CCE office. Mr. Seeley questioned whether a final decision would be made as to the fate of the CCE funding at the October 16th Board meeting and Mr. Geraghty replied that unless the Committee decided to alter their previous decision, the issue would be voted on at the upcoming Board meeting.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Sheila Weaver, Commissioner of the Department of Social Services (DSS), who reminded the Committee that at their prior meeting they had approved her reorganization plan designed to reduce staffing as a budget savings measure. She said that it was her understanding that the position eliminations would not occur until December 31, 2009 and it was now apparent that November 1st would be the abolishment date, which would not allow for the proper implementation of her reorganization plan. Ms. Weaver noted that the two current Director positions were to be replaced with one Deputy Commissioner position; however, she said, she had expected to be allowed a transition period wherein the Deputy Commissioner would be trained in all facets of the position, prior to the elimination of the Director positions, allowing for a seamless transition to occur. She advised that if the reorganization were to take place prematurely, both the HEAP (Home Energy Assistance Program) and employment programs would suffer catastrophically as there would not be any employees who were properly trained to oversee them, likely leading to constituent complaints for applications not being processed in a timely manner. Additionally, Ms. Weaver apprised the Committee that in meetings with Mr. Geraghty she had been able to reduce her budget by an additional \$300,000, which they might not be aware of as the reductions were made outside of Committee meetings.

Mr. Taylor stated that he had been under the impression that the position eliminations would take place on

December 31st and he questioned when the November 1st date had been determined. Mr. Geraghty replied that the November 1st date had initially been indicated in order to harness all possible savings within the 2009 Budget, but he noted that this date was not set in stone and could be altered. Mr. Stec suggested that a December 1st elimination date be used as a means of compromise to allow the proper amount of training while still maintaining some savings in the 2009 Budget. Mr. Geraghty stated that in light of the information presented by Ms. Weaver, each position to be eliminated should be reviewed independently to determine the elimination date most appropriate to County operations.

Continuing to Agenda Item 2, Mr. Geraghty announced that the agenda included a draft resolution from NYSAC (New York State Association of Counties), "Urging the Governor and the State Legislature to Reduce State Spending Without Shifting Costs for State Programs to County Government". He suggested that a similar resolution be adopted by Warren County to be forwarded to NYSAC and subsequently to the State Legislature and any other pertinent parties.

Motion was made by Mr. Stec and seconded by Mr. Sheehan to adopt the aforementioned draft resolution.

Mr. Kenny said he felt they needed to go one step further and begin identifying unnecessary mandated programs to be eliminated without the State's consent and Mr. Stec said he agreed with this statement. Mr. Champagne noted that there were a number of regulations that had been determined many years ago and were still in place, regardless of the fact that they were no longer appropriate. He added that he felt the mandated programs should be reviewed closely to determine which regulations could be eliminated as the removal of some of the useless regulations would help to reduce costs to Local Governments.

Mr. Geraghty called the question and the motion to approve the above referenced resolution was carried unanimously, thereby authorizing the necessary resolution for the October 16th Board meeting. *A copy of the documentation supporting this request is on file with the minutes.*

Mr. Geraghty advised that the next item on the agenda was to review the alternatives to position abolishment as presented by the Planning & Community Development Department and the Personnel/Human Resources Department. Patricia Tatich, Director of Planning & Community Development, provided a one page handout to the Committee that detailed 'Alternative B', which had been approved by the Planning & Community Development Committee. She explained that this alternative would involve applying for and using the maximum level of administrative funding from the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP), funding from New York State Home Program Award and the CDBG-HHHN Project (Community Development Block Grant-Hudson Headwaters Health Network), and revenue from the Warren County Local Development Corporation (LDC) for loan portfolio management and small business assistance. She added that the LDC was amendable to the concept of Alternative B. She apprised that Alternative B had originally called for a contribution of \$8,000 from the Warren County Tourism Department for completion of the Annual Tourism Study; however, she added, at the request of the Planning & Community Development Committee that amount was eliminated from Alternative B. She explained that Alternative B would generate revenue totaling \$130,584. Ms. Tatich expounded that the proposed total administrative budget for 2010 included 41% revenues from non-County sources. She added that by using Alternative B there would be a 33% reduction from the 2009 budget. She noted that the Planning & Community Development Department provided the County with a 16 to 1 total return on investment. She requested that the Committee approve Alternative B which would allow the Department to maintain the current staffing levels.

Mr. Stec stated that the directive that had been given to the Planning & Community Development Department had been to abolish one position and added that Alternative B did not eliminate a position. Mr. Kenny agreed and

noted that personnel reductions constituted long term savings. Mr. Geraghty stated that Department Heads had been directed to abolish the positions which had been listed or to locate other budget reductions that equaled the cost of the salary. Mr. Taylor said that not all departments were revenue generating and if the Planning & Community Development Department generated revenue at a rate of 16 to 1, it did not make sense to eliminate personnel and reduce the effectiveness of the Department.

Motion was made by Mr. Taylor and seconded by Mr. Merlino to approve Alternative B.

Mr. Merlino stated that it was difficult to discuss position eliminations as it meant taking away a person's livelihood. He added that he continued to be in favor of increasing the sales tax by 1% as a way to help balance the 2010 budget. He encouraged the Department Heads to endorse the one week voluntary furlough and added that if every County employee took advantage of the program a savings of \$1.25 million could be realized.

Mr. Champagne asked if the funds generated by Alternative B were new funds or if they already existed in the 2009 budget. Ms. Tatich replied that when they originally applied for the LWRP Grant they had chosen to apply as much of the funding as possible to the projects, as opposed to the administrative costs. She added that as long as the County was able to fund the Department they had been able to make that choice; however, she added, since the County would be unable to fund the Assistant Director position, the Grant funding which was allotted to administration would be utilized. Mr. Champagne asked if the County had been receiving less funding since it had not been utilizing the funding for administrative costs and Ms. Tatich replied in the negative and explained that the same amount of funding would be received; however, she added, instead of being utilized to complete projects in the Towns, it would be utilized for administration. She said that the utilization of the grant funding would change due to the economic status of the County.

Mr. Stec apprised that Alternative B did nothing to achieve the goal of closing the approximate \$7 million budget deficit. Mr. Kenny stated that the grant funding was available whether or not the Assistant Director position was abolished. Mr. Taylor countered that the Assistant Director was the employee who administered the LWRP Grant. Mr. Kenny suggested that an alternative position be selected for abolishment.

Referring to the \$8,000 for the Annual Tourism Study, Mr. Taylor explained that the Tourism Department would need to pay an outside agency to complete the Study if the Assistant Director position was eliminated. He explained that the Planning & Community Development Department had completed the Study for a number of years and added that if the \$8,000 could be spent on an outside contractor it could also be allotted to the Planning & Community Development Department for completion of the Study. Mr. Kenny asked why the Tourism Department should contract with an outside agency when the study could be completed by the Planning & Community Development Department and Mr. Taylor responded that the employee who completed the study was the Assistant Director.

Mr. Geraghty called the question and the motion to approve Alternative B failed, with Messrs. Geraghty, Belden, O'Connor, Champagne, Kenny and Stec voting in opposition.

Mr. Stec requested that the Planning & Community Development Department be directed to eliminate one position. Mr. Geraghty interjected that at this point it was his prerogative as to how the budget would be reduced and added that he would work with Ms. Tatich to determine where the budget could be reduced.

Mr. Pitkin suggested that the Committee be clear with the Department Heads as to whether they were expected

to eliminate position or reduce the budget elsewhere. He added that if the Committee continued to take both the positions slated for abolishment and the alternatives presented by the Department Heads, then they did not deserve nor would they receive straight answers to questions posed.

Mr. Geraghty stated that the next item for discussion was the positions slated for abolishment in the Personnel and Human Resources Department. Richard Kelly, Personnel Officer, said that his proposal was to protect the two employees in his Department who each have over 20 years of service. He proposed that the Human Resources and Personnel Departments share a clerical position and merge as one department and he would retire with the understanding that there would be a continuity of service. He expressed that it was imperative that employees be familiar with Civil Service Law and added that the savings to the County from his proposal would be the cost of his salary and benefits.

Mr. Geraghty recommended that the position slated for abolishment in the Personnel and Human Resources Departments be removed from consideration in favor of the proposal presented by Mr. Kelly. Mr. Champagne asked what the date of retirement would be and Mr. Kelly replied that his anniversary date was in January of 2010 and he would retire effective January 2010. It was the consensus of the Committee to withdraw the positions slated for abolishment in the Personnel and Human Resources Department due to the pending retirement of Mr. Kelly.

William Lamy, Superintendent of the Department of Public Works (DPW), apprised that he had been on vacation during the last Budget Committee meeting, at which the Committee had approved the abolishment of the Director of Parks, Recreation and Railroad position. He reminded the Committee that he had been requested to either abolish the position or submit alternative budget reductions equal to the cost of the position's salary. He said that he had submitted the alternative proposal prior to leaving for vacation but the Committee had decided to take both the budget reductions presented and to abolish the position. He asked for direction from the Committee as to what was expected from the DPW and requested an appropriate amount of time to meet those expectations.

Mr. Stec pointed out that when Mr. Geraghty told the Department Heads that they could submit alternative reductions, they had been informed that there was a possibility that the Committee would take both the positions and the alternative budget reductions. Mr. Lamy requested additional time to provide an alternative that would include the abolishment of positions and would allow the DPW to retain the Director of Parks, Recreation & Railroad position. Mr. Geraghty said that he would work with Mr. Lamy and Mr. Belden to make the appropriate budget reductions.

Mr. Stec used the analogy that the County had been using a scalpel when they needed to be using a hatchet. He explained that if the County was going to close the \$7 million budget deficit, the departments would need to reduce their budgets by an additional 5% (net), on top of the budget reductions which had already been determined. He added that if it was necessary to abolish positions or reduce services then that was what the County needed to do.

Mr. Geraghty reminded the Committee that they had started with a \$6 million budget deficit and the goal had been to reduce the budget by \$4 million with \$2 million to be generated from FMAP (Federal Medical Assistance Percent). He said that to date they had reduced the budget by \$4,431,265 from the 2010 budget. He added that since then additional challenges had arisen, such as a loss of \$3 million in revenue from the Burn Plant, retirement costs of \$1.2 million, contract settlements, increases in the cost of health insurance totaling \$950,000, increase in unemployment insurance, increases in the cost of mandated transport for physically handicapped individuals, and an increase of \$502,494 for administration of the Food Stamp Program due to the State electing to no longer fund the Program. Mr. Geraghty acknowledged that the employees had helped to reduce the increase in health insurance

costs to \$400,000 by voting for the EPO (Experience Provider Organization) and thanked the employees for that assistance.

Mr. Stec complimented the Department Heads on the reduction of the 2010 budget by \$4,431,265. He noted that the increase in the 2009 budget had been 2.93% which was the lowest increase in ten years. He expounded that the taxpayers were not aware of the additional challenges which had arisen in 2009; however, he added, the taxpayers did not want a large increase to their property taxes in 2010 and expected the Board of Supervisors to reduce the 2010 County budget. He continued by saying that the Supervisors needed to do everything possible to achieve the result desired by the taxpayers, which was as low a tax increase as possible.

Mr. Geraghty stated that it would be a challenge to reduce each department budget by an additional 5%. He cautioned that if further reductions were made, the departments would be requesting additional funds in September 2010 in order to balance their budgets. Mr. Bentley stated that every constituent that he had spoken with had been in favor of increasing the sales tax by 1%, as opposed to further layoffs. Mr. Goodspeed asked Mr. Lamy if it would be possible to reduce the DPW budget by 5% and Mr. Lamy responded in the negative and added that he could not reduce the budget further without effecting the safety of the roads and bridges.

Discussion ensued pertaining to the DPW and the Director of Parks, Recreation & Railroad position.

Bud York, County Sheriff, apprised that the position of Major had been eliminated from the Sheriff's Department budget at the previous Budget Committee meeting. He said that the abolishment of the Major position had consequences that were devastating to the administration of the Sheriff's Office and the entire County. He expounded that if the Committee believed they would save a salary of \$84,678, they were mistaken. He explained that Civil Service Law required that the Major be demoted to a Lieutenant, a Lieutenant be demoted to a Sergeant, a Sergeant be demoted to a Patrol Officer and a Patrol Officer be eliminated. Therefore, he continued, the County would only save the salary of a Patrol Officer plus the difference between a Major's salary and a Lieutenant's salary. He stated that the County had spent over \$18,500 in order to train the Patrol Officer last year. He said that by abolishing one position, the County had demoted three individuals and terminated the employment of one person. He expounded that people should not be demoted because of political or fiscal concerns but should be demoted based on discipline, disobeying direct orders or poor performance. He advised that as the County Sheriff he would not endorse the demotion of the three individuals. He said that by taking the authority out of his hands, the Board of Supervisors had ruined the morale of the Sheriff's Office. He implored the Board to reconsider the ramifications of abolishing the position of Major in the Sheriff's Office.

Mr. Stec voiced his opinion that if the Sheriff's Office enforced rules and regulations, that should include the Civil Service Law, which established the procedure that allowed employees with more seniority to be demoted to a lower position so that the employee with the least amount of seniority was eliminated. He explained that since the Major position was being eliminated, the savings to the County would be \$84,678, the salary for the Major position.

Mr. VanNess advised that there were pending retirements in the Sheriff's Office. He requested that the abolishment of the Major position be tabled and that Mr. Geraghty work with Sheriff York on budget reductions that would involve eliminating the positions of the retiring employees. Mr. Geraghty noted that the Sheriff's Office budget would also need to be reduced by an additional 5%.

Motion was made by Mr. Sheehan, seconded by Mr. Merlino and carried by majority vote with Mr. Kenny voting in opposition, to abolish all of the proposed positions with the exception of the positions listed for the Planning &

Community Development Department, the Personnel Department, the Human Resources Department, the Parks, Recreation & Railroad Division of DPW and the Sheriff's Office.

Mr. Geraghty noted that he would determine effective dates for the abolishment of the positions based on the needs of the individual Departments. Mr. Champagne explained that as Budget Officer, Mr. Geraghty had the right to make budget decisions and the Committee purpose was merely advisory. Mr. Geraghty acknowledged that was correct and added that the Board had the option to accept the budget as presented or to request changes.

Mr. Champagne stated that the option for the voluntary furlough was still available. He added that there must be employees who were willing to take a voluntary furlough to save the positions of their fellow employees. Chairman Monroe noted that the voluntary furlough program terminated on November 15, 2009 and suggested that the program be extended. Joan Sady, Clerk of the Board, said there was a resolution for the October 16, 2009 Board meeting that would extend the program until December 31, 2009.

Mr. Champagne noted that there was a belief among County employees that taking a voluntary furlough would send a message to the Supervisors that their position was not necessary. He clarified that the purpose of the program was to reduce the budget and not to determine which positions would be eliminated.

Mr. Geraghty advised that the next item for discussion was the elimination of non-mandated programs. He said the first program listed was Countryside Adult Home with an operational cost of \$665,586 and added that the Board had said they would not eliminate programs for the elderly.

Mr. Geraghty noted that the next program was the Floyd Bennett Memorial Airport with an operational cost of \$591,121. Mr. Kenny asked if it was possible to reduce the budget for the Airport. Mr. Lamy responded that the budget had been reduced from 2009 and added that there were two vacant positions which had not been filled. He reported that the Airport was at minimal staffing and an employee from the Highway Department would assist at the Airport this winter.

Mr. Geraghty said that the next program was the Fish Hatchery that had a budget of \$100,000 which had since been reduced to \$65,000. He added that he would like to work with Mr. Lamy to see if the budget could be reduced further.

Mr. Geraghty apprised that the next three programs were Health Services programs and he asked Patricia Auer, Director of the Health Services Department to address the Committee. Ms. Auer expounded that the Preventative Program and the Family Health Program were two programs that were established in order to maximize State funding. She explained that the programs could be operated under the CHHA (Certified Home Health Agency) but doing so would eliminate the State funding. She added that since they received \$300,000 in State Aid, the programs were worth retaining. Mr. Geraghty reported that the third Health Services Program was Tobacco Education, which the Committee had previously agreed to retain.

Mr. Geraghty advised that the next program was the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). Mr. Kenny voiced his opinion that the EAP paid for itself.

Mr. Geraghty stated that the next program for discussion was the Office for the Aging (OFA) which provided services for senior citizens including the Meals-on-Wheels Program. Mr. Kenny asked Candace Kelly, Director of the OFA, what the net loss was on the Meals-on-Wheels Program. Mrs. Kelly reported that the highest cost per

meal was \$2.91 with an average contribution of \$1.17 and the lowest cost per meal was \$2.04 with an average contribution of \$.92. Mr. Kenny suggested instituting a mandatory cost per meal of approximately \$2 and to subsidize those seniors who can not afford the cost. Mrs. Kelly explained that currently the senior citizens placed their contributions into a box; however, she added, if the cost was mandatory there would be administration costs as an employee would need to collect the fees. Mr. Champagne said he disagreed with a mandatory cost per meal and added that the best they could do would be to encourage contribution from those who can afford them. Mr. Geraghty suggested that a flyer be sent to senior citizen clubs informing them that the County wanted to keep the program going and that contributions would assist in the effort.

Mr. Geraghty said that the next programs for discussion were three programs in the DSS. Ms. Weaver stated that there was an error in the amount of the contract listed for Northeast Parent & Child, which was \$172,488 as opposed to \$59,773. She said that of the three programs she would be willing to eliminate the contract with Northeast Parent & Child. She noted that the St. Anne Institute Program and the Youth Bureau-Youth Court Program were pertinent to the County. She advised that the services provided by Northeast Parent & Child could be provided in-house, if necessary.

Motion was made by Mr. Stec, seconded by Mr. Champagne and carried unanimously to terminate the contract with Northeast Parent & Child.

Mr. Geraghty said that the next program listed was Westmount Health Facility and added that the Committee had previously decided to keep the program.

Mr. Geraghty reported that the next program for discussion was the Youth Bureau which cost \$30,927 and he asked Margaret Sing Smith, Director of the Youth Bureau, to address the Committee. Ms. Smith stated that the Youth Bureau budget included the salary for a part-time Director position and a part-time Administrative Assistant position. Mr. Champagne questioned the staffing levels for the Youth Bureau and Mr. Belden replied there would be two part-time employees. Ms. Weaver explained that the Administrative Assistant was a full-time employee and 50% of her salary was budgeted in the Youth Bureau and 50% of the salary plus fringe benefits was budgeted in the DSS. She said the Administrative Assistant would work 19 hours per week in the Youth Bureau and the remainder in the Child Support Unit of the DSS. Hal Payne, Commissioner of Administrative & Fiscal Services, explained that the \$30,927 was the cost of the salary of the two part-time employees. Mr. Girard stated that there had already been a presentation explaining this to the Committee and he did not see the need to rehash it. He added that he felt the same way about the funding for Cornell Cooperative Extension. He implored the Committee to leave the Youth Bureau as it was and he requested that the funding for Cornell Cooperative Extension be voted on by roll call vote at the October 16, 2009 Board meeting.

Discussion ensued.

Mr. Geraghty said that the last program for discussion was the Road Patrol in the Sheriff's Office. Mr. Stec suggested that the Road Patrol be retained and that Mr. Geraghty work with Sheriff York to reduce the budget by an additional 5%.

Chairman Monroe reported that there were discussions in Congress pertaining to the elimination of the Medicare Advantage Program. He added the County had just successfully negotiated with the Unions to utilize the Medicare Advantage Program, which saved the County several hundreds of thousands of dollars. He stated that he had a draft of a letter that would be sent to Congressman Murphy opposing the elimination of the Program and he would

appreciate the support of the Budget Committee.

Chairman Monroe said that the topic of increasing sales tax kept coming up and some Supervisors were in support of the increase if the only other choice was increasing property taxes. He advised that the County Attorney had discussed ways in which the sales tax increase could be dedicated to property tax reduction. He recommended that the County Attorney continue researching the options of what protections could be put in place to ensure that the sales tax revenue was dedicated to property tax reduction.

Mr. VanNess reported that Governor Paterson had announced that he wanted an additional \$2.5 billion reduced from the State budget. He added that the reductions would most likely be passed onto the counties.

Mr. Pitkin stated that he was in favor of a 1% increase in sales tax assuming that there were restrictions on what the revenue could be expended on. Mr. Merlino expressed his frustration with *The Post Star's* refusal to inform the constituents of the benefits of increasing sales tax by as much as 1%.

As there was no further business to come before the Budget Committee, on motion made by Mr. Stec and seconded by Mr. Belden, Mr. Geraghty adjourned the meeting at 10:31 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Amanda Allen, Sr. Legislative Office Specialist