

Strategic Planning and Government Committee
Monday July 28, 2008
10:00 A.M.

PRESENT: Arthur Ospelt, Chairman; Legislators Milferd Potter, James Oldenburg, Lee Walker, John Proud

EXCUSED: Legislator James Bryant, Legislator Mike Kunzwiler

STAFF &

GUESTS: Donald Dodd, Legislator Margaret Kastler, Chairman Barry Leemann, Fred Maxon, Chris Gosek, Carol Thompson, Phil Church, Terri Somers

The meeting was called to order at a 10:00 A.M. by Chairman Ospelt

MINUTES – The minutes of the May 29, 2008 meeting were approved upon motion by Legislator Walker, seconded by Legislator Potter with all in favor

JAIL OVERCROWDING

District Attorney Donald Dodd appeared before the Committee to discuss “bottlenecking” at the County Jail. DA Dodd explained that there is room for 159 inmates at the Jail with a variance for 10 additional inmates. He explained that through June of this year, the jail had approximately 124.7 inmates or 79 percent capacity. Last year the rate was 133.26 or 84 percent capacity. There are convicted as well as non-convicted individuals making up the jail population. There are also parolees. The count for parolees this year is approx nine per day as compared to 11 per day last year. He continued to explain that the judges determine who goes to jail, not the DA. Early releases are determined by the parole board. DA Dodd stated that Oswego County moves cases through the system much quicker than the State average. He explained that the majority of people go through Judge Hafner. He requests Probation to get additional information (PSI). This can take 60 to 90 days and therefore an individual is locked up in jail during that period. He stated that Judge Hafner is the only one who uses this approach out of five judges. With regard to the question of Video Arraignment the DA explained that currently Oswego County is not authorized to use it. He further explained that this was a pilot project that will expire in December.

PURCHASING POLICY REVISION

Fred Maxon presented the purchasing policy revisions. It has been approved by the Finance and Personnel Committee. Motion by Legislator Oldenburg to authorize the changes and accept the policy, seconded by Legislator Walker. All in favor.

WEAPONS BAN POLICY & UPDATE

The committee asked for copies of weapons policies from around the State.. Attorney Mitchell has several which will be copied and placed in the committee member mailboxes. The State has not finalized procedures on workplace violence act regulations. Administrator Church stated that the impact on insurance would be minimal. He went on to explain that any law would have to comply with the State. No action was taken at this time.

INTER-MUNICIPAL MEETING – DISCUSSION

Administrator Church stated that if you recall, the Legislature Chairman, during his State of the county address, set out several goals and one of those was to hold another InterMunicipal Committee meeting this year. This committee has jurisdiction over relations with other governments – local and state therefore it is being brought before this committee to get your input on the timing and the type of topics you would like to see. The fall would be a good time – avoiding the months that are a little more intense dealing with the budget. Phil’s suggestions were Cooperative Purchasing. We are hearing that there will be some financial stress coming down from the State and one of the ways to lower our expenses are to get lower prices on what we buy. We have had discussions with BOCES exploring this idea of working together on some cooperative bidding to increase our volume to get better prices. If we enter a cooperative intermunicipal agreement with BOCES over the next few months we hope to have the bugs worked out. It would be a good topic to bring up because the other towns, villages and cities may want to join with us on this. ‘We are looking at things like fuel, copy paper and even vehicles. If we did a fleet bid including the cities, towns and schools on a yearly basis, we may get better prices. Second topic is efficiency in local government. The governor has a report on how government should work better together for efficiency and shared services. They have people available to come around and explain what their vision is. Also there are State grants available for municipalities to access to assist them with studies on financial analysis on consolidation and shared services and that might be a good topic. Third topic is workers comp enforcement. Discuss how current system is set up and how we can work together and maybe close some cases that have been around a while. Those costs have risen and it would be to our benefit to look into this.

Art Ospelt cautioned the committee not to put too many topics on the agenda at one time. Oldenburg asked if the highway plowing could be merged to some degree to eliminate duplication of services. Also insurance (liability and health) could be discussed. Legislator Walker discussed the City of Oswego buying black top from the County which would be cheaper. Margaret Kastler questioned delivery of products. Where are they stored and would it be more expensive to have to go after these things. Administrator Church explained that those matters would be a part of the bid process.

Legislator Proud stated that every legislator should encourage their town supervisors and board members to attend the meeting. They should also bring their own list of matters of importance to them.

Leg Potter said the legal process needs to be brought up. Agreements between the Towns should be written in the event something is damaged it would explain who would be responsible. Attorney Mitchell stated that there are agreements currently between the towns.

Legislator Proud suggested a central theme – How can we save money – which will get everyone’s attention. Legislator Ospelt suggested that the committee go forward with what we have now. Following further discussion the month of October was suggested for this meeting.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made to go into executive session by Legislator Proud, seconded by Legislator Oldenburg with all in favor.

Motion to end executive session at 11:35 by Legislator John Proud, seconded by Legislator Milferd Potter with all in favor.

ADJOURN

There being no further business a motion was made to adjourn by Legislator Lee Walker, seconded by Legislator Milferd Potter with all in favor. Meeting adjourned at 11:35 A.M.