**LEGAL/SAFETYCOMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES – April 13, 2021**

PRESENT: Legislators Sauerbrey, Balliet, Standinger, Hollenbeck, Monell, Mullen, Sullivan, and Weston, County Attorney Peter DeWind, Treasurer Jim McFadden, Stephanie Jerzak, Chief Accountant, Katie Chandler, Deputy Treasurer, (and County Attorney Secretary Diane Stephens – Minutes)

ABSENT: Legislator Roberts

Meeting convened at 10:30 a.m.

**Minutes** - On motion of Legislator Sullivan, seconded by Legislator Mullen and unanimously carried the minutes from the March 9, 2021 were approved. .

**YTD budget** - Financials are tracking well. Main expenditure is for Roemer (monthly outside counsel fee).

**New Business:**

* **Cooperative Agreements:** The annual cooperative agreements for chargebacks will be signed after adoption of the resolution at today’s Legislative meeting. The numbers are about the same as last year, although the chargebacks for Public Health were pretty heavy in 2020 due to COVID issues. Legislator Standinger commented that these agreements enable some departments to received reimbursement from the State for certain costs.
* **Legislative updates:**

Marijuana: Attorney DeWind stated that the legislation regarding marijuana in NYS is effective immediately. The County will have a role in the collection and distribution of sales tax from the sales. Legislator Mullen stated his concerns that others would be affected by second hand inhalation of marijuana smoke. Attorney DeWind stated that it could impact a CDL driver’s drug test and how that will be handled. He stated that all laws currently in place regarding cigarette smoking in public will apply to smoking marijuana.

State budget: Attorney DeWind reported that it appears the ILS grant will be fully funded.

* **Western County Attorney’s Meeting**: Attorney DeWind reported that he attended this meeting on April 9. One of the topics discussed was the In Rem tax foreclosures. He is hopeful that by May 1 the rules that are currently in place will be suspended and the 2018 and 2019 foreclosure process can go forward. However, Judge Marks of the Office of Court Administration has rules in place to keep this from moving forward.
* **Request to conduct a workplace violence investigation**: Attorney DeWind reported that the Town of Owego Supervisor asked for assistance from the County’s Safety Officer in investigating a current matter at the Town of Owego. A discussion took place regarding a shared services agreement, making the Safety Officer position a full time position and offering this service to other municipalities within the County. Concerns were stated by Legislators regarding whether there would be enough interest by other municipalities, payment for the service, the time spent by the Safety Officer doing work for other municipalities instead of the County, and that the Safety Officer is already busy with County work. Although they aren’t entirely opposed to the idea, at this time it doesn’t seem feasible. The consensus of the Legislators to the request by the Town of Owego is no.
* **Claims and Litigation**: There are no new claims. The Opioid claim is proceeding.
* **Appraisal of county real property and buildings**: An appraisal was conducted by NYMIR. There is a slight change in the valuation of some properties with some increasing and some decreasing. Smith Bros. has asked whether the County would like to adjust the coverage to reflect this, which would result in an additional premium. The consensus of the Legislators was to wait until next year to address this.

Attorney DeWind mentioned that a lot of counties have a hybrid of insurance coverage where NYMIR is used but with some portions covered in-house by the county itself. This helps keep the cost of coverage down. Attorney DeWind stated that we could take a look at having One Group see how this could work for us. The front end work would be handled by the County and he would handle the legal ground work such as 50-h hearings. Chair Sauerbrey voiced her concerns that Attorney DeWind was already busy and at this time was not in favor of him taking on more work. Legislator Sullivan agreed but stated that they shouldn’t lose sight of the option of hiring another attorney vs. paying a higher premium to NYMIR for this service.

* **Executive**: None

Meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.