

The Legislature of Rockland County



MICHAEL M. GRANT
LEGISLATOR – DISTRICT 2
CHAIR, BUDGET & FINANCE COMMITTEE

Members Present:

Leg. M. Grant, Chair
Leg. A. Wolfe, Vice Chair
Leg. I. Schoenberger, 2nd VC
Leg. H. Cornell
Leg. J. Hood, Jr.
Leg. T. Earl
Leg. N. Low-Hogan
Leg. J. Murphy
Leg. P. Soskin
Leg. F. Sparaco

Others Present:

Leg. D. Jobson
Leg. A. Wieder
N. Doliner
S. Powers
T. Knight
R. VanCura
Leg. C. Carey
Leg. B. Kantrowitz
E. Yeger, Esq.
S. DeGroat
B. Riccaldo
Media
Leg. A. Paul
Leg. P. Moroney
Sheriff Falco
S. Grogan
P. Brennan

MINUTES
BUDGET & FINANCE COMMITTEE
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2014
7:00 PM

ROLL CALL

1. REF. #9500 (A) ACCEPTING REPORT OF BUDGET & FINANCE COMMITTEE AFTER ITS REVIEW OF THE ROCKLAND COUNTY PROPOSED 2015 BUDGET
(HON. MICHAEL M. GRANT, LEGISLATURE)

(SCHEDULES TO FOLLOW)

MOTION TO APPROVE: AS AMENDED UNAN
SCHOENBERGER/WOLFE

ADDED CO-SPONSORS: LEGS. WOLFE, SCHOENBERGER, CORNELL, EARL, HOOD, JR. LOW-HOGAN, SOSKIN, SPARACO

2. REF. #9500 (B) ADOPTION OF THE 2015 COUNTY BUDGET
(HON. MICHAEL M. GRANT, LEGISLATURE)

(SCHEDULES TO FOLLOW)

MOTION TO APPROVE: AS AMENDED UNAN
WOLFE/HOOD, JR.

ADDED CO-SPONSORS: LEGS. WOLFE, SCHOENBERGER, CORNELL, EARL, HOOD, JR. LOW-HOGAN, SOSKIN, SPARACO

3. REF. #9500 (C) APPROPRIATION OF BUDGET ITEMS FOR 2015
(HON. MICHAEL M. GRANT, LEGISLATURE)

(SCHEDULES TO FOLLOW)

MOTION TO APPROVE: AS AMENDED
SCHOENBERGER/SOSKIN

UNAN

**ADDED CO-SPONSORS: LEGS. WOLFE, SCHOENBERGER, CORNELL, EARL, HOOD, JR. LOW-HOGAN,
SOSKIN, SPARACO**

Leg. Schoenberger said that O'Connor Davies had identified an error in the County Executive's budget which understated expenses related to payments in lieu of taxes (PILOTS). The property tax levy proposed by County Executive Day exceeded the tax cap by \$100,004 because total payments in lieu of taxes was reported as \$160,000 and the correct figure was \$260,000. Failing to stay within the cap could have meant that the taxpayers would not be receiving tax rebates from the state.

Legislative Fiscal Analyst Nicole Doliner provided a breakdown on the amendments to the 2015 proposed budget with the tax cap fix (**schedule on file with clerk**). The major components include restoring cuts to the Sheriff's Dept. and contract agencies and it also preserves laundry and security positions through the year or until the sale of Summit Park is finalized.

Budget and Finance Chairman Grant stated in order to pay for these restorations, the Legislature opted to lower the deficit reduction allocation from \$10 million to \$5 million. The Legislature also slashed new unfilled positions and rejected salary raises in existing jobs. Leg. Grant noted that the Sheriff agreed to eliminate one vacant **Sargeant** position and reduce overtime in the jail. Leg. Grant also announced that a judge had thrown out three lawsuits trying to block the sale of the Summit Park Hospital and Nursing Care Center.

Leg. Schoenberger said he felt this budget had a good outcome, restoring the Sheriff, security and contract agencies knowing that the not-for-profits have taken cumulative cuts in the past 5-6 years. Leg. Schoenberger also questioned the necessity of creating new positions in MIS and Purchasing in the County Executive's budget. Leg. Schoenberger said this could have all been avoided if the Administration had cooperated better with the Legislature months ago. He did not want to cast stones but there should have been better communication all along and he hoped this budget would become a learning experience for the Administration.

Leg. Cornell said today is "Giving Tuesday" and she thanked the non-for-profits for making everyday "Giving Tuesday". The work they do makes Rockland County the special place it is. She is very proud of this budget.

Leg. Hood, Jr. thanked Leg. Grant and said he can't imagine the hours him and Fiscal Analyst Nicole Doliner put in over this budget period. He is glad this budget committee found a way to fix it. He requested that everyone in the audience keep participating and remain vocal.

Leg. Wolfe acknowledged the audience members stating that sometimes the Legislator's speak to an empty room. He was glad to see that this has brought the communities together and hopes they keep this going and show the rest of the County the value County government brings. Leg. Wolfe said there will be a vote at the full Legislature meeting on Thursday and if passed, County Executive Day will have an opportunity to veto changes to the budget item by item. The Legislature then has an opportunity to override one by one (which requires a majority of 12 votes out of 17).

Leg. Wieder thanked Leg. Grant and stated this has been the best and most focused budget process he has been involved with since becoming a Legislator. This shows the government system works. Although not a member of the B&F committee he will support this budget on Thursday at the full Legislative meeting.

Leg. Low-Hogan thanked Chairman Grant for his leadership throughout this thoughtful process and was very happy with the result. Leg. Low-Hogan also recognized Fiscal Analyst Nicole Doliner for all her hard work. This budget restores fiscal authority along with our priorities, the non-profits which are the bedrock of our community.

Leg. Soskin thanked the audience members for their participation in this budget process and urged them to continue attending meetings and take a more active roll . Leg. SOSKIN is proud to have been able to restore services so needed by the community and plans on voting yes both tonight and at the full Legislative meeting on Thursday.

Leg. Earl noted how hard Fiscal Analyst Doliner, Legs. Grant, Schoenberger and Wolfe worked on this budget. Leg. Earl also wanted to acknowledge that no one has worked harder than Sheriff Falco to make his budget work. He is very supportive of the not-for-profits knowing what they do for the members of his constituency. They are not a wish list-they are a vital service.

ADDENDUM

1. REF. #6698 A- ACCEPTING AND APPROVING THE REPORT OF THE BUDGET & FINANCE COMMITTEE WITH REFERENCE TO MORTGAGE TAXES FOR THE PERIOD APRIL 1, 2014 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 30, 2014 (DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET & FINANCE)
(STPEHEN DEGROAT, COMMISSIONER FINANCE)
DL#2014-05008

MOTION TO APPROVE: UNAN
WOLFE/SCHOENBERGER

ADDED SPONSORS: LEGS. GRANT, WOLFE, SCHOENBERGER, CORNELL, EARL, HOOD, JR., SOSKIN, SPARACO

2. REF. #6698 B - AUTHORIZING THE CLERK TO THE LEGISLATURE TO EXECUTE A WARRANT TO THE COMMISSIONER OF FINANCE DIRECTING THE PAYMENT OF MORTGAGE TAX MONIES FOR THE PERIOD APRIL 1, 2014 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 30, 2014 (DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET & FINANCE)
(STPEHEN DEGROAT, COMMISSIONER FINANCE)
DL#2014-05010

MOTION TO APPROVE: UNAN
HOOD, JR./LOW-HOGAN

ADDED SPONSORS: LEGS. GRANT, WOLFE, SCHOENBERGER, CORNELL, EARL, HOOD, JR., SOSKIN, SPARACO

MOTION TO ADJOURN: 8:05 PM UNAN
LOW-HOGAN/CORNELL