

## COMMITTEE REPORT

**COMMITTEE:** Finance, Tax & Budgets  
**CHAIRPERSON:** Steve Allendorf, Chairman  
**DATE/TIME:** August 29, 2019 @ 6:32 p.m.

**PRESENT:**  Steve Allendorf       John Schultz       Staci Duerr  
                   Diane Gallagher       Vacant       Ron Smith  
                   Scott Toot       John Lang

Other Board members: None

Others: Laura Edmonds, Melisa Hammer, Angie Kaiser, Tom Lobacz, George Petitgout, Dan Reimer and Art Ricker

1. **Call to Order** – Steve Allendorf called the meeting to order at 6:32 pm.
2. **Roll Call** – A quorum was established.
3. **Approval of Minutes** – None.
4. **Citizens Comments** – None
5. **Unfinished Business**
  - a) FY2019/FY2020 Strategic Goals and Plans – The committee will dispense with this item tonight.
  - b) Update on Hotel/Motel Tax/Guest Accommodations/OTA's/Education and Enforcement – Eric Tison discussed that approximately 530 guest accommodation licenses are issued annually. There are several new applications that are currently in the review process. The economy doesn't seem to be affect the rental license portion of the County's tourism goals. We are continuing to monitor the online properties and have sent out three notices within the last five weeks, all three of which have at least followed up with us and at the moment are preparing to continue through to conclusion. Steve Allendorf commented that he saw on the news the other night that one of the Quad Cities communities on the Illinois side is developing an ordinance to address issues with Airbnb's. Melisa Hammer reported that County and GGMI representatives met a few days ago regarding a new contract and discussion was very positive. Scott Toot added that the Ad-Hoc DMO Committee will meet on September 3 at 5:30 p.m. which is before our Executive Committee meeting and the DMO contract will be on our agenda. GGMI has tentatively agreed to an 8% fee for administration and enforcement of the Hotel/Motel tax. They would like to eliminate the minimum year end fund balance requirement and would like a long term agreement for stability purposes. We discussed a 10 year contract with an annual review. Steve Allendorf commended the County representatives who have worked on this agreement for the progress that's been made and the cooperation that has been extended. We have come a long way in the last six or eight months. Toot felt this was the most positive meeting we have had. John Schultz commented that he is glad to hear that there is cooperation and this significantly alters his attitude on accepting a new agreement.
  - c) Update on evaluation process for a hiring freeze policy – Dan Reimer presented a draft policy that was for discussion only and was then reviewed and discussed by the committee. No action was taken at this time.

- d) Update on the Jo Daviess County Purchasing Card Policy – Dan Reimer reported that the JDC Purchasing card policy is discussed each month at the Department Head meeting. The number of policy violations, such as charges for sales tax, has been reduced significantly. There were no recommendations to amend the policy. Joe Kratcha recommended that we look into acquiring sleeves to keep County Purchasing cards in. Sleeves will help protect the card from the skimmers and also help distinguish from other debit and credit cards that are carried by employees.

## 6. New Business

- a) Report and update on the Jo Daviess County Veterans Assistance Program – Art Richter – Art Richter introduced his counterparts Tom Lobacz and George Petitgout. Richter reviewed the formation of the Veterans Assistance Program and provided an update. They have serviced seven clients and two clients are pending. Richter just received two more requests today. In order to make the citizens of the County aware of the program they have circulated posters and cards that they have given out to various places. They did visit the VA offices in Dubuque and in Freeport. They have visited all of the food pantries. They have visited all of the veteran’s service organizations which are the nine congressionally approved. They have dropped off cards and posters at the County and also the City of Galena. The poster outlines what the qualifications are for becoming an applicant. They have also established a Facebook page. They have also had two ads in the newspapers. George Petitgout reported the financial status of the program. The County has allocated \$3,601.93 to the program. This year they received two donations totaling \$616.00. Their operational expenses to date are \$557.85. Benefits that went out to the veterans total \$1,486.66 leaving a balance in the checking account of \$2,175.42. Tom Lobacz then brought the committee up to speed on the application process.
- b) Discussion and possible action on FY2020 Veterans Assistance Program Fund (083) – Steve Allendorf made a motion to move forward the FY2020 Veterans Assistance Program Fund (083) with an appropriation of \$22,368. Seconded by John Lang and motion passed.
- c) Discussion and possible action on a request for mobile device reimbursement for Victim Witness Coordinator – John Hay, States Attorney, joined the meeting via conference call. The Victim Witness Coordinator has not previously received reimbursement for a mobile device. However, in the past couple of years she has started to take more calls outside the office hours. She takes calls week nights as well as weekends. Hay believes there is a need for immediate contact and also public safety needs. Hay will be able to cover the additional expense in his current budget and no additional appropriation will be needed for this reimbursement. **Scott Toot made a motion to approve a request for a mobile device reimbursement for Victim Witness Coordinator. Seconded by Staci Duerr and motion passed.**
- d) FY2020 Jo Daviess County Budget Update – Dan Reimer, County Administrator, discussed that we are about half way through the budget process and three of four Joint Committee Budget Review meetings have been completed. The first of three budget workshops begins on October 2<sup>nd</sup>. Reimer reviewed the FY2020 budget process to date; the next steps include the preparation of draft budget documents which will be completed by the County Administrator’s office.
- e) Review Round 2 General Fund Revenue Estimates – Reimer reviewed the general fund target spreadsheet and after the September 4<sup>th</sup> budget review meeting and Round 2 revenue estimates the General Fund indicates a deficit of \$275,223.

- f) Review FY2020 unfunded requests – Dan Reimer reviewed the current list of Unfunded Requests for the FY2020 Budget. We will discuss the requests further during the Budget Workshops.

## 7. Staff Reports

- a) **Chief County Assessment Office** – Laura Edmonds, Chief County Assessor, reported that the Township assessor's information has been entered into the system and they are still looking at some documents in a couple of townships. She completed a tentative abstract today and all of her numbers come out perfect. Edmonds was on vacation last week so she had her coworkers go through the exemptions for open spaces to make sure they had them in. Three were missing and since then they have come in and applied. Board of Review will come in on September 19<sup>th</sup> to do final signatures on senior freezes and disabled veterans. Tomorrow is the last day to apply for the Chief Deputy position and she has one application which is in-house.
- b) **Treasurer's Office** – Melisa Hammer, County Treasurer, reported that the second installment of property taxes is due on September 3, 2019. Two weeks ago she ran a report and we had 21 million to collect. She did not have a chance to run a new report to date, but believes we have approximately 15 million to collect yet. Hammer reviewed a comparable report on interest rates for savings and certificates of deposit. We are looking at an increase of about \$25,000 in interest over prior year. Hammer reported that she has started some of the remodeling for her office. We are working at it as we can.
- c) **Grants Administrator** – Trina Orr, Grants Administrator, was not in attendance.
- d) **County Administrator** – Dan Reimer, County Administrator, reviewed the General County revenue and expense summary. We are about two-thirds or 67% through the year. Our revenues are at 60.2% and our expenditures are at 62.6%. Reimer reviewed the Revenues/Expenditures Compared to Budget – Fund Summary for the 8 months ending July 31, 2019. Totals are very close to last year. We are ahead on overall revenue by about \$900,000 and on the expense side we very close to prior year. Reimer anticipates that the overall County budget should come in with a small surplus at year end, similar to last year. The committee briefly reviewed the Payroll Summary Report. Reimer then reviewed several updated economic statistic charts. Sales Tax Receipts, Hotel/Motel Tax Receipts, Transfer Declarations, New Home Building Permits and State Shared Revenue.

## 8. Citizens' comments - None

9. **Board Member Concerns** – Scott Toot commented that when we met with GGMI, Colin Sanderson was there and he seemed very optimistic about the future of Eagle Ridge with the new on-site owner as opposed to a corporation. They will be making some changes and renovations. Ron Smith commented that he read another article that stated the Federal Government will be picking up another trillion dollars' worth of debit in the next couple of months. That will bring it up to about \$23 trillion.

The next Finance, Tax & Budgets Committee meeting will be on Thursday, September 26, 2019 @ 6:30 p.m.

Scott Toot made a motion to adjourn at 8:12 pm. Seconded by Steve Allendorf and motion passed.