Members Attending: Mr. Burke, **Ms. Curran**, Mr. Denesha, Mr. Forsythe, Mr. Gennett, Ms. Haggard, Mr. Levato, Mr. Lightfoot, Mr. Perkins, Mr. Reagen, Mr. Robinson, Mr. Sheridan, Mr. Smithers, Ms. Terminelli, and Mr. Webster

1. CALL TO ORDER AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA - Ms. Curran called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Due to extenuating circumstances, Legislator Gennett attended the meeting remotely from 1350 County Route 53, Brasher Falls, NY.

Mr. Levato moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Mr. Sheridan and Mr. Webster, and carried unanimously by a voice vote with fifteen (15) yes votes.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - Mr. Forsythe moved to approve the minutes of June 15, 2026, seconded by Mr. Levato.

Mr. Gennett left the meeting at 5:31 p.m.

The motion carried by a voice vote with fourteen (14) yes votes and one (1) absent (Gennett).

3. PLANNING – JASON PFOTENHAUER

A. Authorizing the Chair to Sign an Application to Apply for NYS Home Funding – Mr. Burke moved to forward this resolution to Full Board, seconded by Mr. Forsythe.

Mr. Gennett returned to the meeting at 5:32 p.m.

The motion carried unanimously by a voice vote with fifteen (15) yes votes.

Mr. Pfotenhauer reported that the County is a recipient of additional Septic Repair Funds in the amount of $400,000 to continue the program in St. Lawrence County.

4. PUBLIC DEFENDER – JAMES MCGAHAN

A. Authorizing the Chair to Sign a Contract with the New York State Office of Indigent Legal Services for the Provision of Indigent Legal Services Funds for the Contract Period of January 1, 2024 - December 31, 2026 – Mr. Forsythe moved to forward this resolution to Full Board, seconded by Mr. Webster, and carried unanimously by a voice vote with fifteen (15) yes votes.

5. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY – RICK JOHNSON

A. Authorizing the Chair to Sign a Contract with Tokio Marine HCC for Insurance Coverage and Modifying the 2026 Budget for the Liability and Casualty Reserve and Information Technology – Mr. Forsythe moved to forward this resolution to Full Board, seconded by Mr. Webster.

Mr. Forsythe suggested starting the insurance on January 1st, and a consensus vote was taken which determined there was not majority support for the suggestion, with seven (7) yes votes (Pekins, Webster, Lightfoot, Robinson, Forsythe, Curran, and Sheridan) and eight (8) no votes.

The motion to forward the resolution to Full Board carried unanimously by a voice vote with fifteen (15) yes votes.

B. Artificial Intelligence (AI) Information Update (Discussion) – Mr. Johnson

6. COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT – RUTH DOYLE

Ms. Doyle reported that Budget Reviews have started for the 2027 Budget. She also expressed thanks to the legislators for attending the ceremony for closing out the Public Safety Complex Building Project and unveiling the plaque. The Budget for the Project was $8.15M and the project came in under budget at $7.84M.

Next week, Ms. Doyle will attend the National Association of Counties conference representing St. Lawrence County and NYSAC as a member of the Rural Action Caucus and Programs and Services Committee. At the Finance Committee Meeting, Ms. Doyle will present the Mission, Vision, and Values for consideration.

7. OLD/NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Smithers asked if the Board had put together a resolution supporting nuclear facilities in the North Country, and it was confirmed that a resolution had been adopted addressing the issue.

Ms. Haggard thanked the eight (8) fire departments, first responders, and emergency services for responding to a serious fire in Potsdam at a hardware store this morning.

8. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Agriculture & Farmland Protection Board (Denesha) – No report

B. Alternative to Incarceration Board (Burke) – No report

C. Board of Trustees for Supreme Court Library (Haggard) – No report

D. Emergency Medical Services Advisory Board (Curran) – No report

E. Environmental Management Council (Terminelli) – Ms. Terminelli

F. Fire Advisory Board (Denesha) – Mr. Denesha

Mr. Gennett left the meeting at 5:58 p.m.

Rick Rusaw, Director of Emergency Services, was recognized to provide additional context to the report.

G. Jury Board (Sheridan) – No report

H. Local Government Task Force (Forsythe) – No report

I. Planning Board (Levato) – Mr. Robinson gave the report.

Mr. Denesha moved to go to Executive Session at 6:08 p.m., to discuss litigation, negotiations, personnel, and appointments, seconded by Mr. Levato, and carried by a voice vote with fourteen (14) yes votes and one (1) absent (Gennett).

9. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Gennett returned to the meeting at 6:13 p.m.

Mr. Gennett left the meeting at 6:27 p.m.

A straw poll vote was taken to authorize the County Administrator to resolve issues related to staffing with the County Clerk, which carried with fourteen (14) yes votes and one (1) absent (Gennett).

Mr. Smithers moved to go to Open Session at 7:19 p.m., seconded by Ms. Haggard, and carried by a voice vote with fourteen (14) yes votes and one (1) absent (Gennett).

10. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Reagen moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Levato, and carried by a voice vote with fourteen (14) yes votes and one (1) absent (Gennett).

Chair Curran adjourned the Operations Committee Meeting at 7:19 p.m., as there was no further business.