

Finance & Rules Committee Minutes February 24, 2026

Members Present: Committee Chair Michael Montigelli, Legislators Robert Cantwell, Philip Reed, Daniel McBride, Frances Calarco, Board Chair William Johnson

Others Present: Legislators Tina Bartlett-Bearup, Patrick Jareo, Christopher Boulio, Corey Grant, Anthony Doldo, County Administrator Ryan Piche, Deputy Administrator Dylan Soper, County Attorney John Sabik, Conf. Asst. for Fiscal Affairs Kristy O'Shaughnessy, County Auditor Stefanie LaPier, Human Resources Director Valerie Nugent, Information Technologies Director Sean Vincent, I.T. Security Analyst Sean Isenbergh, Insurance Director Matthew Roy, Confidential Secretary Jill Jones

Chairman Montigelli called the meeting to order at 6:14 p.m.

County Administrator Ryan Piche presented the Finance & Rules Committee strategic priorities for 2026 that were adopted by the Board at the February Session. The presentation was originally scheduled for the January Committee meeting that was cancelled because of bad weather, however Chairman Montigelli felt it was still beneficial to do the presentation. Mr. Piche outlined each of the ten goals that focus on the following key areas: financial and labor management, economic development, legislative advocacy, operational efficiencies and community and employee relations.

Information Technology Director Sean Vincent and Deputy Administrator Dylan Soper presented an overview of the AI Policy and training program to the Committee. They defined AI as the simulation of human intelligence (learning, reasoning, problem solving) with key types identified as machine learning, generative AI (primary focus), and agentic AI. The strategic goal of the policy is that AI is intended to innovate and improve efficiency, empower teams with better tools, and meet resident expectations for modern service delivery. Potential applications include draft communications (emails, press releases), summarizing long documents and meeting notes, creating first drafts of policies and training materials, and assisting with data analysis. Policy highlights include: scope—it applies to everyone; approval—departments may use AI, but IT must approve any tool prior to use; oversight—human-in-the-loop review of all AI-generated content is mandatory; data security—use of protected or confidential data in AI tools is strictly prohibited. They said the approved platform for County employees is Google Gemini which is integrated into Google Workspace for tracking user input and maintaining security. Risks include privacy/security concerns, copyright issues, and inaccuracies (“hallucinations”), and advised that non-approved platforms may be blocked. Employee training includes security, meeting transcription (Google Meet), research, and document drafting across various Google Workspace apps. They listed the AI Committee membership noting that it included representatives of Information Technology, Administration and a diverse representation across county departments. Director Vincent emphasized that AI is not meant to replace employees, it is a tool employees can use to be more efficient with their time.

Chairman Montigelli offered Privilege of the Floor, however no one present wished to speak. The Committee approved the minutes of the December meeting, as written. Legislators Boulio, Doldo and Grant left the meeting.

Chairman Montigelli introduced a resolution Amending the 2025 County Budget for Sales Tax Distribution and entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator McBride seconded by Legislator Reed and there being no debate, the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented.

Chairman Montigelli introduced a resolution Authorizing an Agreement with the New York State Board of Elections for the 2025 General Election Grant and Amending the 2026 County Budget in Relation Thereto and entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator Calarco seconded by Legislator Cantwell and there being no debate, the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented.

Chairman Montigelli introduced a resolution Authorizing an Agreement with the New York State Board of Elections for an Absentee Ballot Postage Grant and Amending the 2026 County Budget in Relation Thereto and entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator McBride seconded by Legislator Cantwell and there being no debate, the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented.

Chairman Montigelli introduced a resolution Reappropriating Unspent Grant Funds for Board of Elections, Authorizing an Amended Agreement with the New York State Board of Elections for a Ballot by Mail Grant and Amending the 2026 County Budget in Relation Thereto and entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator Reed seconded by Legislator Cantwell and there being no debate, the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented.

Chairman Montigelli introduced a resolution Authorizing an Agreement with the New York State Board of Elections for Vote By Mail Postage Grant and Amending the 2026 County Budget in Relation Thereto and entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator McBride seconded by Legislator Reed and there being no debate, the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented.

Chairman Montigelli introduced a resolution Amending the 2026 County Budget and Capital Plan for Board of Elections Relative to Help America Vote Act Funds and entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator Cantwell seconded by Legislator Reed and there being no debate, the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented.

Chairman Montigelli introduced a resolution Authorizing an Agreement for the New York State Board of Elections Technology Innovation and Election Resource Grant and Amending the 2026 County Budget in Relation Thereto and entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator Calarco seconded by Legislator Cantwell and there being no debate, the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented.

Chairman Montigelli introduced a resolution Transferring County Safety Officer Position to the County Administrator's Office and entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator Reed seconded by Legislator McBride and there being no debate, the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented.

Chairman Montigelli introduced a resolution Approving Jefferson County Administrative Policies and Procedures Relative to Artificial Intelligence (AI) and entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator Calarco seconded by Legislator Cantwell and there being no debate, the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented.

Chairman Montigelli introduced a resolution Amending the 2025 County Budget in Relation to Health Benefits and entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator Cantwell seconded by Legislator McBride and there being no debate, the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented.

Chairman Montigelli introduced a resolution Authorizing the Extension of an Agreement with NCA Comp for the Administration of Workers' Compensation Claims and entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator Calarco seconded by Legislator Reed and there being no debate, the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented.

Chairman Montigelli introduced a resolution Authorizing Jefferson Community College Additional Project Funding to be Reimbursed Through Awarded Grants in Relation to Facilities Master Plan Project for Campus Revitalization and Deferred Maintenance and Amending the 2025 County Budget and Capital Plan in Relation Thereto and entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator Cantwell seconded by Legislator Reed and there being no debate, the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented.

Chairman Montigelli introduced a resolution Authorizing an Amended Agreement with Granicus for Registration and Permitting in the Short-Term Rental and Occupancy Tax Management System and Amending the 2026 County Budget in Relation Thereto and entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator Reed seconded by Legislator Calarco and there being no debate, the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented.

Chairman Montigelli advised that if there were no objections the other jurisdictional committee resolutions would be dealt this as a block and legislators could pull out any resolution to discuss or vote on separately if desired. Legislators did not express objections to approving those resolutions in that manner.

On a motion by Legislator Reed seconded by Legislator Cantwell and unanimously carried, the Committee approved the following General Services Committee sponsored resolutions:

- ✓ Amending an Agreement with New York State Department of Transportation in Relation to Airport Runway 10-28 Rehabilitation
- ✓ Amending the 2026 County Budget and Capital Plan to Recognize 2025 Revenue from the Passenger Facility Charges for the Watertown International Airport

- ✓ Authorizing an Agreement and Amending the 2026 Budget in Relation to the New York State Emergency Services IP Network Readiness Grant Program
- ✓ Reappropriating Unspent Grant Funds for the Fire and Emergency Management Department and Amending the 2026 County Budget in Relation Thereto
- ✓ Amending the 2026 County Budget in Relation to 911 Phone System Support
- ✓ Authorizing an Agreement with Stantec Consulting Services Inc. in Relation to the Oxbow-Rossie Road (CR 25) Over Vrooman Creek Project and Amending the 2026 County Budget and Capital Plan in Relation Thereto

On a motion by Legislator Reed seconded by Legislator McBride and unanimously carried, the Committee approved the following Health & Human Services Committee sponsored resolutions:

- ✓ Amending the 2025 County Budget Relative to Community Services Preschool and Early Intervention Program Expenditures and Associated Revenues
- ✓ Extending an Agreement with Fort Drum Regional Health Planning Organization, Reappropriating Opioid Settlement Regional Abatement Funds and Amending the 2026 County Budget in Relation Thereto
- ✓ Accepting Stipend from the Fort Drum Regional Health Planning Organization and Amending the 2026 County Budget
- ✓ Accepting New York State Shelter Arrears Eviction Forestallment (SAEF) Program Allocation Funding from the NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance and Amending the 2026 County Budget in Relation Thereto

There being no further business of the Committee, on a motion by Legislator McBride seconded by Legislator Cantwell and unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned at 6:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Ryan Piche
Clerk of the Board