



Onondaga County Legislature

JAMIE McNAMARA
Clerk

DAVID H. KNAPP
Chairman

MELANIE VILARDI
Deputy Clerk

401 Montgomery Street • Court House • Room 407 • Syracuse, New York 13202
Phone: 315.435.2070 • Fax: 315.435.8434 • www.ongov.net/legislature

COUNTY FACILITIES COMMITTEE MINUTES – JANUARY 19, 2021 VIRTUAL DEBRA J. CODY, CHAIR

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ms. Kuhn, Mr. Bush, Mrs. Tassone, Mrs. Ervin

ALSO ATTENDING: Chairman Knapp, Dr. Chase, Mr. Donnelly, Ms. Primo, Mr. Morgan, Mr. Wixson, Mr. Kelley, Mr. Nicotra, Mr. Zabriskie, Mr. Carter, Ms. Velasco, Ms. McNamara, Ms. Lesniak, Mr. Paro, Mr. DeSantis

Chair Cody called the meeting to order at 10:32 a.m. *A motion was made by Mrs. Ervin, seconded by Ms. Kuhn to waive the reading and approve the minutes of the previous committee meeting. Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED.*

Chair Cody took the agenda items out of order.

2. **PARKS AND RECREATION:** Brian Kelley, Commissioner

a. **A Resolution Authorizing Rehabilitation of the Oneida Shores Park Shoreline in and for the County of Onondaga, New York, at a Maximum Estimated Cost of \$300,000, and Authorizing the Issuance of \$300,000 Bonds of Said County to Pay Costs Thereof (\$300,000)**

- Boat ramp for Oneida shores; last year received \$320,000; remaining \$300,000 will complete project; bids were around \$550,000

Mr. Bush said the resolution says if there are funds available from the 2020 budget, then they will use those funds instead of bonding. Mr. Kelley commented that he's not sure how the resolution reads. Last year, Parks received \$320,000 based on the engineer estimation, but the bids came back at \$550,000 - \$600,000. This \$300,000 will allow for the project to be completed. Mr. Bush said if there are funds leftover in the 2020 budget, then why would they not be used for items that were cut. Ms. Lesniak stated that the language is standard language in bonding resolutions related to surplus, but 2020 is not going to yield surplus. Mr. Bush said he was concerned with programs that were cut in the budget. Chairman Knapp stated they will use cash whenever possible before bonding.

Ms. Kuhn commented that she shares Mr. Bush's concern regarding the budget cuts in the service sector and early retirements that were not replaced. It may be a standard, but this is not a standard budget year. Chairman Knapp said this is not a discussion for Facilities, but they will have discussions when that happens.

Mrs. Tassone asked if any work has been started at Oneida Shores, and Mr. Kelley responded no. It will be fall of 2021 after Labor Day.

A motion was made by Mrs. Tassone, seconded by Mr. Bush, to approve this item. Ayes: 4 Noes: 1 (Kuhn); MOTION CARRIED.

b. A Resolution Authorizing Various Improvements to Parks and Recreation Areas in and for the County of Onondaga, New York, at a Maximum Estimated Cost of \$2,160,000, and Authorizing the Issuance of \$2,160,000 Bonds of Said County to Pay Costs Thereof (\$2,160,000)

- Infrastructure and rehab account; \$2.1 mil makes up projects going towards infrastructure and buildings
- Have 13 parks from Baldwinsville to Fabius; each have their own buildings and provide direct service to public
- Most are actual needs; directly affects service providing to public; longer things sit, fall into disrepair and safety issues

A motion was made by Mr. Bush, seconded by Mrs. Tassone, to approve this item. Ayes: 4 Noes: 1 (Kuhn); MOTION CARRIED.

c. A Resolution Authorizing Engineering and Survey Costs in Connection with Veterans Cemetery Lawn Crypts in and for the County of Onondaga, New York, at a Maximum Estimated Cost of \$100,000, and Authorizing the Issuance of \$100,000 Bonds of Said County to Pay Costs Thereof (\$100,000)

- Lawn crypts at Veterans Cemetery; 2021 - engineering to set up lawn crypts; Mr. Stanczyk and Mr. Kelley took trip to look at national cemetery in Bath, NY; they use lawn crypts for burials
- Lawn crypts are pre-dug holes with concrete crypts to accommodate caskets; instead of 4x10, they are 3x8
- All uniform; up to 700 extra burials per acre; all pre-dug, so no heavy machinery around other graves
- After dug, only takes 2 people to do burials; currently takes up to 3 or 4
- Worked with Veterans Advisory Board as well

A motion was made by Mrs. Ervin, seconded by Ms. Kuhn, to approve this item. Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED.

3. FACILITIES MANAGEMENT: Archie Wixson, Commissioner

a. A Resolution Authorizing the Construction of Improvements at the Oncenter Facility in and for the County of Onondaga, New York, at a Maximum Estimated Cost of \$500,000, and Authorizing the Issuance of \$500,000 Bonds of Said County to Pay Costs Thereof (\$500,000)

- Repeat of resolution done every year; Oncenter improvements; 2011 – came up with plan to make yearly investment of \$500,000 into Oncenter Complex – Convention Center, Conv. Center Garage, War Memorial and Civic Center Theaters
- Determined half million investment into facility will avoid large scale investments that normally would have to do if let things go for years without maintaining them
- Previously did suits, lighting upgrades, concession areas and veterans exhibits with War Memorial
- This is nuts and bolts for facility to function and be able to market; held back this year on performing last year's work
- Did improve front of Convention Center; nice job restoring broken concrete and precast base on columns, painted structural steel and did an acid wash to face of building; now more presentable
- This year's funds is upgrading security in all three buildings; rekey entire facility – Convention Center, War Memorial and theaters; improve ADA opportunities in theatres; update kitchen equipment and ballroom in Convention Center

Chair Cody asked how the vaccination site at the War Memorial worked out. Mr. Wixson:

- It was successful; War Memorial a good site - Health Department and Emergency Mgmt did great job setting it up
- Moved vaccination site to Convention Center, because started making ice; Syracuse Crunch will have reduced season this year; starts in 3 weeks; tomorrow they start painting white base coat, then layer ice

Mrs. Ervin asked Mr. Wixson what they are planning to do this year. Mr. Wixson responded:

- Would like to do seating replacement in the Carrier Theater (no ADA)
- Keying all three main buildings, which requires study and detail – coming up with master key way; different levels of security; Facility's architect working on with ASM
- Estimate for rekeying Civic Center was \$76,000 in 2010; assuming to double that for the amount of doors
- Also kitchen equipment replacement at Convention Center for full food service

- Held back on any other capital asks for Facilities Department; this is ongoing investment, did not want to interrupt; will come back next year for normal capital requests

Chair Cody stated these are needed improvements that they can hopefully take advantage of soon.

A motion was made by Mr. Bush, seconded by Mrs. Tassone, to approve this item. Ayes: 4 Noes: 1 (Kuhn); MOTION CARRIED.

1. ONONDAGA COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY: Christian Zabriskie

a. A Resolution Authorizing the Purchase of a Bookmobile in and for the County of Onondaga, New York, at a Maximum Estimated Cost of \$260,000, and Authorizing the Issuance of \$260,000 Bonds of Said County to Pay Costs Thereof (\$260,000)

- Bookmobile - mobile library goes around county to do outreach to senior centers, summer camps, library closures, etc.
- Allows to reach deep into county and areas that are a “library desert”; great coverage in county, but certain communities could get more services - come in with technology, programming, children story time
- Is an ask at difficult time, but long term purchase; not off the rack; each one custom built and designed by user to do what they need and want
- Allocate funds, but will not see the tool for some months, or up to a year; long term process; not incurring staffing issues or extra costs until delivered
- Gone through books and staffing, confident can staff and run on current budget for next year
- Some Bookmobiles are 40-50 years old and still servicing; will help in servicing county

Ms. Kuhn said in light of the disaster of a budget due to the pandemic, the \$260,000 shows it includes a Librarian 1, Library Assistant and two Library Clerks, and she said she thought he did not need that. Mr. Zabriskie:

- All of that is covered in existing 2021 budget; \$260,000 is for the Bookmobile alone; staffing not that case
- Will bring back staff; will be able to absorb and roll out with staffing
- Believe this is a vote for hope and things to be better and different
- Other funds will come from operational budget

Ms. Kuhn said city libraries have been inaccessible to students doing distance learning, and she asked where they are with getting city libraries open on a reservation basis. Mr. Zabriskie:

- In good shape on that; aggressive changes based on staffing changes that were necessary; split model with libraries open every other day with 1 staff person to go between 2 libraries
- Remaining closed with public concerns; will open when Health Department comfortable
- Have PPE in place and breath guards in place; staff have masks and face shields; working out best practices
- Lot of suburban libraries are back to curbside; hope in next month maybe open up
- Exploring through another revenue line – increasing Wi-Fi footprint; people will be able to sit outside library or be in parking lot; have wider circle even when library is closed; working hard to get answers on that
- Better staffed than have been; built in elasticity, so if (i.e.) kid sick or COVID isolation, can better absorb that with reconfiguration; working with county, and they have been supportive

Chair Cody said it would be good news to get going in a month with the vaccine, and she asked if the suburban libraries are just doing curbside. Mr. Zabriskie:

- Case by case basis, but many are curbside; Baldwinsville was first to open and remained open, but might be the only in county who has; all have been open, but not accessible to come in and use space, lot have restricted it again

Mr. Zabriskie replied to Chair Cody that they were allocated federal funds from the state library, and everyone felt developing (Wi-Fi) infrastructure at the city libraries would be a good use of the funds.

Mr. Donnelly stated that they are meeting with the Health Department this week and hope to have good news on the city branches status by late this week or early next week.

Chairman Knapp commented that back when the layoff resolution was created, there was encouragement for furloughs, which they had libraries in mind (as opposed to eliminating positions). Mr. Zabriskie appreciated that, and said there are some specialties that were furloughed.

Mrs. Ervin asked if there are more backpacks for students. Mr. Zabriskie:

- Have them out; been in use throughout crisis; major lifeline for people; purchased more with Literacy Alliance; not sure of details, but know more coming in; could be going to specific bodies and groups
- Very much mandate; lifeline for a lot of people

Mr. Zabriskie replied to Ms. Kuhn that the backpack is a combined package. The hot spot alone does not do everything most people need, but with the laptop it is more powerful. It is a complete package.

Mrs. Ervin asked how soon they will have the Bookmobile if it's approved, and Mr. Zabriskie said probably a year. They would be looking at design and putting a wrap on it.

Mr. Bush asked for examples of other libraries that have Bookmobiles, and Mr. Zabriskie responded no one in Onondaga County, but Queens Library has two. Mr. Carter commented that they have one in Monroe County and in Erie County. Mr. Bush said they are not as vital as they once were in providing services. The Wi-Fi is a no brainer, but what about the additional costs for a Bookmobile with limited staffing. What happens to the programs those staff people run? Mr. Donnelly responded that they are not taking any staffing this year, and they are confident they can do it within their operating budget. This would not be put into effect until 2022. The Library can use existing staff, and they can reach communities that are not currently being reached.

Mr. Zabriskie:

- This is not new, but tried and true rule; read extensive article from Urban Libraries Counsel saying that Bookmobiles are having a renaissance
- Technology is more than a backpack; it is having tech classes, teaching a senior how to use the backpack or laptop
- Library becomes imbedded in community

Chair Cody said that was good information, and it has been talked about before. In light of the questions and information requested, as well as the budget, it may not be the time to consider this.

Chair Cody stated they will not be voting on this item.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:19 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



JAMIE McNAMARA, Clerk
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