



Onondaga County Legislature

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WAYS & MEANS COMMITTEE MINUTES – NOVEMBER 19, 2024 COLLEEN A. GUNNIP, CHAIR

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. May, Ms. Abbott, Mr. Romeo, Mr. Ryan, Mr. Knapp, Mr. Garland
ALSO ATTENDING: Chairman Burtis, Mr. Brown, Ms. Hernandez; also see attached

Chair Gunnip called the meeting to order at 10:42 a.m., and the previous meeting's minutes were approved.

1. FACILITIES MANAGEMENT: Archie Wixson, Commissioner
a. 2024 Transfer Resolution (\$150,000) (*Sponsored by Ms. Cody*)

- Move funds to cover postage (went up twice) and increases in contracts for trash and cleaning services
- Try to project with expected escalation; these went beyond that

A motion was made by Mr. Knapp, seconded by Mr. Ryan, to approve this item. Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED.

2. PLANNING: Troy Waffner, Director
a. 2024 Transfer Resolution (\$2,410,000) (*Sponsored by Mr. Knapp*)

- Funding would go to Greenways/Blueway Plan development - \$375K
- Also creation of development fund for municipalities to get projects designed and implemented

Questions/Comments from the committee:

- Has any money been expended to date, or has it all been sitting in contingency?
 - Legislature placed \$2.41M in contingency; there is also money not in contingency that is being used
- What is the process and timeframe for developing an application, scope and parameters?
 - Have draft application designed
 - Working on scoring criteria; by end of year should have final document to be sent out at beginning of year
- Will someone from the Legislature be on the panel to make decisions on which municipalities receive funding (i.e. Chair of Planning Committee)?
 - Absolutely can do that
 - More eyes involved, makes it a better program

A motion was made by Ms. Abbott, seconded by Mr. May, to approve this item. Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED.

3. EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS (E911): Sean Sparks, Public Safety Shift Supervisor
a. Resolution Authorizing a License Agreement with the Town of Cicero for the Use of the Pompey Radio Tower Site (Sponsored by Mr. Olson)

- Request from town of Cicero to collocate on Pompey tower for use of Highway Department rolling fleet

A motion was made by Mr. May, seconded by Mr. Ryan, to approve this item. Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED.

b. A Local Law Authorizing an Amendment to the Lease of Property Located in the Town of Elbridge from Eagle Point Farms, LLC for a Communications Tower (\$15,000) (Sponsored by Mr. Olson)

Mr. Yaus presented this resolution.

- Res. No. 117-2024 – exercise option to purchase involving farm owned by Eagle Point Farms that is looking to sell
- Farm straddles 2 counties; Onondaga County has 50'x50' communication tower on land from 2008 lease
- Part of lease had option to purchase for square footage rate in purchase sale agreement, if Eagle Point sold land
- Did not want to lose right, but created stir with it being a big deal for the community and some disagreement with terminology of rights, how it is exercised, and purchase price; complicated by subordination agreement with an ag trust
- It is ag trust land, which created complications
- Negotiated with lessor, and this is good compromise that pleases all parties
- E911 asked for expanded site, which was agreed on – will be 75'x75' site
- Got an extra 15 years on the lease; now going out to 2048; 2033 will be last renewal
- One payment of \$15,000 for duration through 2048
- Negotiated down collocation on communication tower; instead of 75/25 will split 50/50 with landlord
- Conservation easement probably with NYALT

A motion was made by Mr. May, seconded by Mr. Knapp, to approve this item.

Questions/Comments from the committee:

- This is a one-time \$15,000 payment through 2048?
 - Yes, saves \$30K over the course, plus an extra 15 years for free
- Was the farm sold?
 - Purchase of sale is pending resolution of this
- County is going to continue to lease
 - Yes

A vote was taken on the item. *Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED.*

4. SHERIFF: Maureen Murphy,
a. Personnel Resolution (Sponsored by Mr. Olson)

- Add Accountant 1 to Sheriff's Office payroll
- Putting in place after recommendations from audit to have more professional accounting oversight with civil accounts

Questions/Comments from the committee:

- Years ago, moved finance function out of dept., but this is separate function within dept. that is highly transactional
- Not audit, but accounting function to deal with transaction activity with experienced professional dedicated to process

A motion was made by Mr. May, seconded by Mr. Knapp, to approve this item. Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED.

5. LOCAL LAW: Ben Yaus, First Chief Deputy County Attorney
a. A Local Law in Relation to Establishing a Demonstration Program Imposing Owner Liability for Failure of an Operator to Stop for a School Bus Displaying a Red Visual Signal and Stop-Arm
(Sponsored by Mr. Olson)

- Implementing pilot program; extended for second 5 year term
- Facilitate with local school districts and open to all municipalities; Jamesville-DeWitt reached out to sign up
- New state law allows local municipalities to set up administrative system to issue fines for those running school bus stop-arms with camera installed
 - Camera automatically feeds into vendor system
 - Vendor issues tickets
 - If person does not pay fine, representative from county will go to court
- Program has 90% first ticket payment turnaround
- No cost to schools
- Contractor will install cameras on buses and enter into agreement with school, along with county
- When applicable, privately owned bus company will be part of the agreement as well

Questions/Comments from the committee:

- Is there anything prohibiting an individual district or municipality from implementing this on their own?
 - No, but when the county passes this law, it will supersede localities abilities to do it
 - This prevents overlapping; not giving 2 tickets per offense
 - County can have entire jurisdiction of county; each locality is limited to their individual jurisdiction
 - Village or town jurisdictions are not within full school district boundaries
 - Program is open to every district – open enrollment style, but rolling
 - Contract with county as whole with every school district; initial districts are to roll it out and get standardized MOU
 - Every district can reach out
- Please explain how the money works
 - County pays for the install of the equipment
 - All through contract and paid via revenue split with vendor
 - County will have expenses initially
 - ~100 DOT signs – letting anyone entering jurisdiction know that cameras are in effect
 - Administrative costs – salary for the person reviewing footage

REQUEST: Financial proforma or example from another county

- Is it possible to get financial proforma or an example from another county?
 - Yes, have gathered information over the years and can update
 - Program has been proven profitable for counties that have it
 - No one has lost money, but some brought in about \$100,000 (minus admin costs)
 - Less violations means less employee time with reviewing
 - Program should be self-sufficient to pay for initial expenses
 - May be extra money, but idea is hopefully not (as that means people are not stopping for buses)
- Does the county have to be the financial facilitator?
 - Statute itself says the school district cannot incur a single cent
- In the instance of a school bus crossing county lines (i.e. Skaneateles School District into Cayuga County) and a person passes a bus in Cayuga County, what happens?
 - Out of county jurisdiction; stops at county line
- Have any municipalities in Onondaga County already approved this?
 - Believe the City has program, but not up and running yet; County cannot operate in the city
 - Village of North Syracuse has not; they were advancing process, but are waiting based on what county does

- It should be the state that does this
- Does the county notify the municipalities that are within a school district opting in?
- Is the county splitting the revenue?
 - Revenue split is with Verra Mobility and County
 - Yes, county will notify the municipalities
 - Eventually hopefully all school districts opt-in; lot of interests
- If the state made it a statewide program, what would the state do?
- State would manage whole program, so there would not be an issue with county lines crossing
- County would mandate schools use it, then state manages program and gets revenue
- To clarify, there is no deadline for schools to opt-in
 - Anytime of the year, but imagine they would want to before school year or during break
 - Implementing would be after start of school year or a break to have time to install cameras
 - Process for MOU will take time
- For those districts that do not own their school buses, the county works with the transportation company
 - Yes, direct contracts with transportation company
 - Broome County – fully operational program in 2022
 - 1.5 years operating and made \$400,000 revenue (profit not admin or other expenses)
 - Long Island realizing significant revenue in first year
- If a neighboring county opts into the program, can Onondaga County and that county enter into an agreement?
 - Would be an IMA that would come to this body
 - May be a difficulty with vendors, but could be worked out
 - Could transport tickets to another vendor, as it is still a picture of the violation with date/time stamp
 - Should be everything needed to prosecute in either county
 - Great idea; there will be more talk about this
- Is this a pilot?
 - Yes
- NYS should be the lead on this
- Section 8 – reporting requirements has lot listed with number of fines, number of notices, etc.
- Not sure how long it will take to get buses outfitted, how many cameras – lot of expense for a great cause
- What happens if they contest a ticket? What will that do to an already difficult court situation?
 - Law:
 - Real program with training component, light staffing component, attorney work for courts
 - Once there is more knowledge and education, hopefully numbers will go down with (i.e.) employee time
 - Finance:
 - Upfront costs for installing equipment is on Verra, not County
 - Verra will install equipment and get paid back from sharing fees from fines (Law agreed)
 - Upfront cost is signage, which county will absorb, and administrative aspect of running program
 - Director of Security will run
 - Expectation that revenue generated should more than offset costs of the program
 - Will take time to understand what this program will produce, what it costs to run; will report back on data points
 - Law:
 - Verra will handle reporting and compile the data
- Is the contract with the vendor 5 years?
 - Fresh 5 year term; 3 year with 2 options to extend; sunsets end of 2029
- Were there other bidders when it was bid out?
 - Yes; one not in position to bid and one other bidder; percentage for split of revenue was best with Verra

- The fact that Broome County is making \$400K is shocking and disappointing; what is the fine?
 - \$250 first fine, then goes up
- With work zone cameras, a person gets a bill in mail for ~\$50 and no points and nothing reported to insurance
 - Same here; just like state speeding work zone program; no points and cannot report to insurance
- If someone contests this, is there an avenue through local courts (as work zone program does not have one)?
 - Yes, local court process like a local traffic ticket
 - Under this local law, but similar to going to local court for violation
- The court has to notify county and contractor to say what happened
 - Yes; if it was (i.e.) malfunctioning or misread license plate
- Have heard concerns with (i.e.) school bus rolling from one driveway to next with stop-arm out
 - There is a way to contest it
 - (i.e.) Car stolen
 - All of these play in court

REQUEST: Copy of contract with Verra

- Yes, in process of negotiation
- Which county department does this fall under?
 - New Director of Security

6. WATER ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION: Shannon Harty, Commissioner

a. Authorizing the Execution of an Order on Consent Relative to the Settlement of an Enforcement Action Brought by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation *(Sponsored by Ms. Abbott)*

- Order of consent from NYS DEC related to noncompliance and failure of Ley Creek force main in early June
 - Had to do complete bypass to local creek tributary to Onondaga Lake
- Consent Oder requires WEP to do following
 1. Fine for failure to comply with regulations – under \$47K, which \$10K is payable upon execution
 - a. Remainder would become payable if WEP fails to comply with terms of consent order
 2. Pay \$40K towards environmental benefit project related to Tully Mudboils
 - a. Related to environmental quality tributary to Onondaga Lake
 - b. Upon execution will transfer funds to CNY Regional Planning and Development
- Ultimately order has 4 actions in schedule that WEP has to comply with – first 2 already met
 1. Submitting report summarizing what happened during this summer
 2. Update Emergency Response Plan – DEC looking for county to continue to improve response to reduce, if not eliminate, situations of non-compliance
 3. Submitting schedule for capital program to ensure pipe replacement
 4. Implementation
- Funding related to item 4 is something WEP will come back to Legislature for during capital program
- Already authorized the 1st phase; once farther along with design, will come back for 2nd phase

Questions/Comments from the committee:

- Are there any changes WEP has to make on the capital plan as a result of this?
 - No; started project in 2018/2019; already into design for 1st phase of construction
 - WEP was ready to go with 2nd until receiving information on soil borings
 - Nothing changed as result of this
 - Only benefit is that the execution allows WEP to leverage additional funding they cannot get to now
 - Currently have \$10M grant from DEC related to water quality improvement
 - Execution of this will increase county's scoring with Environmental Facilities Corporation, who is the primary funder of infrastructure

- When county's score goes up, project will be eligible for more grants under their umbrella
- It says the suspension is contingent on compliancy, so what is the timeframe?
 - Appendix A in order of consent, can see various milestones and completion dates; that is schedule to comply with
 - Item 1 – on or before Aug 30th; submitted engineering report summarizing final bypass – already completed
 - Within 30 days of force main repair (Aug 30th), had to submit Emergency Response Plan – already completed
 - Within 90 days of execution of agreement (end of March) – have to submit Capital Improvement schedule to DEC
 - Schedule will lay out design; when WEP will go out to bid for phase 1 contracts
 - Once DEC approves schedule, that becomes schedule for #4 that WEP has to adhere to
 - If WEP has issues with the schedule, will go back to DEC to negotiate amending schedule
 - DEC understands this is a complex project that will take a couple years
- Does the fine the county has to pay have to go to Regional Planning?
 - \$10K of penalty goes to DEC
 - \$40K environmental benefit project will be funded through Regional Planning for mudboils
- Are there any extraordinary expenses or slight adjustments to prioritization to the capital plan, or will the Legislature see a revision?
 - Not as a result of this

A motion was made by Mr. May, seconded by Ms. Abbott, to approve this item. Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED.

7. COUNTY CLERK: Emily Bessani, County Clerk
a. Mortgage Tax Apportionment

- 6 month remittance; collected \$5.4M with remittance of ~\$5.3M to towns and villages
- October 2023 – March 2024 up 13% on collections
- Compared to same 6 month period of last year, up 9%
- No control over it

A motion was made by Mr. Knapp, seconded by Mr. Ryan, to approve this item. Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED.

8. COMPTROLLER: Marty Masterpole, Comptroller
a. Personnel Resolution

- Intent to fill positions with staff currently in Account Clerk 3 positions – rightsizing and adding duties
- When payroll processing was separated from payroll auditing of office, employees are really doing audit function
- This gives versatility in office; have Auditors on department audit side as well – fits into one job description
- Not 12 positions, there are 6
- 6 HELP positions will be filled and need accompanying regular Auditor 1 titles to go with it
- Initially the Account Clerk 3's will go into HELP positions
 - When program expires, then they will go into the regular Auditor positions
- Net 0 gain; Account Clerk 3 positions will go away; will not be funded or filled

Questions/Comments from the committee

- Are the grades the same?
 - 1 grade higher; Account Clerk 3 is an 8, Auditor 1 is a 9
 - No accompanying money; will make it work
- Talked about Accountants during budget
 - Initially looked at Accountant 1 positions, but after conversations with Personnel and Finance, felt Auditor title worked better and made more sense with CSEA rules

- 101 salaries line going to be close, but will be paid; may be over budget by a little

A motion was made by Mr. Ryan, seconded by Mr. Romeo, to approve this item. Ayes: 4 (Abbott, Romeo, Ryan, Garland) Abstentions: 3 (May, Gunnip, Knapp); MOTION CARRIED.

9. COUNTY LEGISLATURE:

- a. 2024 Transfer Resolution (\$25,000) (Sponsored by Mr. Burtis)**

A motion was made by Mr. Knapp, seconded by Mr. May, to approve this item. Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED.

10. FINANCE: Don Weber, Real Property Tax Director; Amie Wilkinson, Assistant Director

- a. Delegation of Authority to Approve Corrections to Tax Bills Resulting in Refunds or Credits Not Exceeding \$2,500**

- Annual resolution

- b. Bloody Brook Drainage District Tax – General Apportionment**
- c. Bloody Brook Drainage District Tax Town of Clay Apportionment**
- d. Bloody Brook Drainage District Tax Town of Salina Apportionment**
- e. Bear Trap – Ley Creek Drainage District Tax – General Apportionment**
- f. Bear Trap – Ley Creek Drainage District Tax Town of Clay Apportionment**
- g. Bear Trap – Ley Creek Drainage District Tax Town of DeWitt Apportionment**
- h. Bear Trap – Ley Creek Drainage District Tax Town of Salina Apportionment**
- i. Authorizing General Apportionment of Harbor Brook Drainage District Tax**
- j. Harbor Brook Drainage District Tax Town of Geddes**
- k. Meadowbrook Drainage District Tax General Apportionment**
- l. Meadowbrook Drainage District Tax Town of DeWitt Apportionment**
- m. 2025 City Drainage District Abstract**
- n. Onondaga County Sanitary District, 2025 City Abstract**
- o. Onondaga County Sanitary District General Apportionment**
- p. Allocation of 2025 Onondaga County Water District Special Assessment Among Zones of Assessment and Fixing Composite Rates for the Several Towns and the City of Syracuse within said District**
- q. Onondaga County Water District, 2025 City Abstract**
- r. Calling for a Public Hearing on the Assessment Roll for Southwood-Jamesville Water District (December 17, 2024 at 12:55 p.m.)**
- s. Calling for a Public Hearing on the Assessment Roll for Warners Water District (December 17, 2024 at 12:57 p.m.)**

A motion was made by Mr. May, seconded by Mr. Knapp, to approve items 10a – 10s. Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:31 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



JAMIE McNAMARA, Clerk
Onondaga County Legislature

ATTENDANCE

COMMITTEE: **WAYS & MEANS COMMITTEE**

DATE: **NOVEMBER 19, 2024**

NAME (Please Print)	DEPARTMENT/AGENCY
Maureen Murphy	OCSO
PASSINO, Newton, Shelley	OCSO
Troy Waffner	Planning
Mely Mastropolo	Comptroller
Sean Sparta	911
KRISH Smeu	Finance
Jason Dean	Finance
Anno Wilkum	Property Tax
Don Weber	Tax
Larry VanLise	COMPTROLLER
Tyle Woods	Comptroller
Emily Essi Bersani	County Clerk
Lynne Walker	County Clerk
Jill Haskell	County Clerk
SHANNON HARTY	OCPIGP
Isabelle Harris	CE
Ann Marie Dincho	Res.
Brian Duvally	CE