



# Onondaga County Legislature

**JAMIE McNAMARA**  
Clerk

**TIMOTHY T. BURTIS**  
Chairman

**TAMMY BARBER**  
Deputy Clerk

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## **WAYS & MEANS COMMITTEE MINUTES – MARCH 25, 2025 COLLEEN A. GUNNIP, CHAIR**

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

Chair Gunnip called the meeting to order at 10:37 a.m., and the previous meeting's minutes were approved.

### **1. APPOINTMENTS:**

**a. Recommending Appointments to the Central New York Regional Transportation Authority**  
(Theresa Wheatley, Mike Becallo, Matthew Cushing, Greg Popps, Robert F. Cuculich, Louella Williams, Colette Matthews-Carter, James Beebe, Tina M. Fitzgerald) *(Sponsored by Mr. Burtis)*

- Legislature recommends names to the Governor for appointment (same names submitted last year)
- Governor did not take any action last year; will reach out to Senator Ryan to help the Legislature push this forward
- Some vacancies, some expired terms

*A motion was made by Mr. Knapp, seconded by Mr. May, to approve this item. Ayes: 6 Absent: 1 (Abbott);*  
**MOTION CARRIED.**

**b. Confirming Appointment to the Onondaga County Industrial Development Agency (Garard D. Grannell)** *(Sponsored by Mr. Burtis)*

- Garard Grannell is the founder and CEO of Mohawk Global and is an SU grad
- Will fill Kevin Ryan's expired position

*A motion was made by Mr. Knapp, seconded by Mr. May, to approve this item. Ayes: 6 Absent: 1 (Abbott);*  
**MOTION CARRIED.**

**c. Confirming Appointment to the Trust for Cultural Resources of the County of Onondaga**  
(Nathaniel J. Stevens) *(Sponsored by Mr. Knapp)*

- Nate Stevens a long term staple at Economic Development
- Important organization that plays critical role in helping county as liaison with arts community

*A motion was made by Mr. May, seconded by Mr. Knapp, to approve this item. Ayes: 6 Absent: 1 (Abbott);*  
**MOTION CARRIED.**

\*Ms. Abbott arrived at the meeting.

**2. WATER ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION:** Shannon Harty, Commissioner**a. Personnel Resolution** (*Sponsored by Ms. Abbott*)

**Purpose:** *The Onondaga County Department of Water Environment Protection (WEP) has identified critical management positions that require title modifications to better align with their current roles and responsibilities. WEP is seeking legislative authorization to abolish the following existing titles and replace them with more appropriate designations.*

**1. Employee and Labor Relations Division**

- *WEP, in coordination with the Department of Personnel, proposes abolishing the Employee Relations Officer (ERO) (L109599) position and replacing it with Administrative Officer (WEP) (both Grade 33).*
- *The ERO title includes union negotiation duties, which must be performed within the Department of Personnel. The Administrative Officer (WEP) title allows WEP to recruit candidates with the appropriate skills and experience for the role without the constraints of union negotiation duties.*

**2. Administrative Function – Community Relations and Public Outreach**

- *To enhance community engagement and public outreach, WEP proposes replacing Project Coordinator (L109178 – Grade 31) with a Director of Community Relations (Grade 35).*
- *This position will be responsible for developing and implementing strategic communication programs focused on basement backups, community development, recruitment efforts, and construction project updates.*

**3. Asset Management Function – Fleet Management**

- *WEP's Equipment Maintenance Supervisor (L105510 – Grade 34) has assumed increasing responsibilities for managing fleet operations across multiple departments, including the Sheriff's Department and County Parks.*
- *To support expanded GPS fleet management, cloud-based Fleet Asset Management, and proactive maintenance, WEP proposes abolishing the current position and replacing it with a Fleet Manager (Grade 35).*

**Summary:** *These adjustments will enable WEP to optimize its workforce, improve efficiency, and ensure that job roles reflect their evolving responsibilities.*

**Fiscal Impact:** *There is no increase in authorized, funded positions and no fiscal impact to the 2025 Operating Budget.*

- Continuing redevelopment and refinement of roster; working closely with Personnel on civil service job descriptions
- Making sure have right job duties; positioning department for what is coming in the future
- Abolish 3 positions and replace with 3 positions
- No net change to funded roster; 3 modifications to make sure WEP has job titles that match what is needed
- Administrative Officer
  - Swapping out an Employee Relations Officer – same grades
  - Position will be working to help establish policies and procedures
  - Current job title has duty of union negotiations that WEP does not do, Personnel does it
  - Same titles, but taking out responsibility of union negotiations
- Director of Community Relations – Grade 35
  - Engagement with community - (i.e.) order controls, basement backup, flood districts, recruiting, getting into schools
  - Need higher level management position to develop the strategic messaging and programs
  - Abolish vacant Project Coordinator position at Grade 31
  - Will help WEP get out into the community better
- Fleet Manager
  - Currently have Equipment Maintenance Supervisor at Grade 34
  - Person in position has taken incredible initiative:
    - Recognizing there is a huge investment in the WEP fleet
    - Recognized need for better tools
    - Took on full fleet GPS program
    - Put WEP on cloud based asset management program to ensure proactive preventative maintenance being done
  - Taken on tremendous increase in responsibilities; want to make sure the job duties and job specifications match

**Questions/Comments from the committee:**

- Which of the abolished positions are funded?
  - All 3 funded; not changing any funded headcount
  - Net impact the same
- Glad to see WEP is making the move with the labor relations position; will be a better fit for the office
  - Recognize the need; received good feedback from local municipalities and legislators

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

**3. HEALTH:** Steve Morgan, CFO

**a. Authorizing the Onondaga County Center for Forensic Sciences to Donate Surplus Equipment to the Syracuse University Forensic and National Security Sciences Institute** (*Sponsored by Dr. Kelly*)

*PURPOSE: To donate three Traceable Jumbo Refrigerator/Freezer Thermometers that have depreciated to \$0 to the Syracuse University Forensic and National Security Sciences Institute (FNSSI) for further use in an educational setting.*

*BACKGROUND: The Onondaga County Center for Forensic Sciences Laboratories is requesting permission to donate items in surplus which have depreciated to \$0 to the Syracuse University FNSSI. As a non-profit educational organization, FNSSI is in need of equipment and could use items past their useful date as a means of teaching. FNSSI works toward furthering the same vision as the Center for Forensic Sciences Laboratories. As a close partner in the field of forensic science, the Laboratories considers donation to FNSSI the best use of the equipment that has outlived its usefulness in the forensic lab. The following items are proposed donations:*

<u>Item</u>	<u>Qty</u>	<u>Date Out of Service</u>
Traceable Jumbo Refrigerator/Freezer Thermometer	1	10/8/2019
Traceable Jumbo Refrigerator/Freezer Thermometer	1	2/15/2018
Traceable Jumbo Refrigerator/Freezer Thermometer	1	10/6/2020

*BUDGET IMPACTS: There are no budgetary impacts.*

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

Chair Gunnip took the agenda items out of order.

**5. FINANCE:** Steve Morgan, CFO; Amy Wilkinson, Assistant Director of Real Property Tax

**b. Memorializing New York State to Enact Legislation (A3104/S5512) in Relation to Extending the Authorization to Impose an Additional Rate of Sales and Compensating Use Taxes in Onondaga County, and Requesting and Concurring in the Preparation of a Home Rule Request**

- Biannual Home Rule Request for additional 1% in sales tax - state identified bills in Senate and Assembly
- First step is supporting the bills and indicating approval moving forward
- Once it makes its way through state legislature, will come back with final piece implementing and imposing the 1%

**Questions/Comments from the committee:**

- How long has the county been doing this?
  - Additional 1% in place for ~20 years
  - Under Governor Cuomo, state would include language to not require this every other year; localities would be able to do this without going through the state legislature; unless wanting to raise it
  - Routine continuance of additional 1%
- Is this a statutory requirement?
  - In order to continue levying and receiving 1%, have to go through this process

- The current sales tax sharing agreement structure says the 1% is the city’s
- If the 1% does not come through, it would be a problem
- Part of the reason that the state legislature still wants a role, is to ensure the dollars are shared in an equitable way
- Internal position to not do memorializing resolutions
  - This is not really a memorializing resolution, but a Home Rule request
- Is anyone above the 8%?
  - Believe Erie is at 8.75%; can look into it; most are at 8% and some are at 7%

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

**a. Approving and Directing the Correction of Certain Errors on Tax Bills**

- 2 WEP corrections; one 6 year correction and one unit correction

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

**4. COUNTY CLERK:** Emily Bersani, County Clerk

**a. Authorizing New York State Reimbursement for 2025 Expenses of the Recording Officer for the County of Onondaga for Administration of Mortgage Taxes (\$543,300)**

- Reimbursement from NYS for Clerks working on mortgage tax apportionment; 1 Clerk III and 2 Recording Clerks

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

The meeting was adjourned at 10:52 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



JAMIE McNAMARA, Clerk  
Onondaga County Legislature

**ATTENDANCE**

**COMMITTEE: WAYS & MEANS COMMITTEE**

**DATE: MARCH 25, 2025**

NAME (Please Print)	DEPARTMENT/AGENCY
Nancy Lowrey	Dean .ED.
Amie McKinson	property tax
John Desantis	Leg
Emily Bersani	Clerk
Jill Husicki	Clerk
Kristi Snellon	Finance
Shannon Harris	ocdwsp
Steve Morgan	CFO
Ben Yaus	Law
Darcie Lesniak	Leg
Ethan Lamontagne	Leg
Joe Fratelli	Leg.
Jim Beuse	Leg.