



# Onondaga County Legislature

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Clerk

**TIMOTHY T. BURTIS**  
Chairman

**TAMMY BARBER**  
Deputy Clerk

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## **WAYS & MEANS COMMITTEE REVIEW OF THE 2025 TENTATIVE BUDGET BUDGET REVIEW DAY 4 – SEPTEMBER 17, 2024 COLLEEN A. GUNNIP, CHAIR**

**MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. May, Ms. Abbott, Mr. Romeo, Mr. Garland**

**MEMBERS ABSENT: Mr. Ryan, Mr. Knapp**

**ALSO ATTENDING: Chairman Burtis, Mr. Meaker, Ms. Cody, Ms. Harvey, Mr. Olson, Mr. McCarron, Mr. Bush, Mr. Brown, Ms. Hernandez; also please see attached**

Chair Gunnip called the meeting to order at 9:41 a.m.

**COMPTROLLER:** Marty Masterpole, Comptroller

*641010 Total Salaries - The 2025 Executive budget 641010 Total Salaries line of \$2,097,366 does not include the Comptroller's request to create and fund four Accountant I and one Accountant 2. We also request to fund an existing Accountant I and unfund an Account Clerk 2 as well as five Account Clerk 3's. These changes would represent an increase of \$42,858 to the 2025 budget or a total regular salaries budget for 2025 of \$2,140,224.*

*These changes to the Comptroller's Office roster and budget are needed as we try to add additional financial duties to the Comptroller's claims review division and payroll audit functions. Additional duties would include financial analysis, increased accounting duties and the production of more audit reports. Changing roles in these units warrant higher-level titles, which are more financial in nature.*

*641030 Part Time Salaries - Flat to year over year adopted budget*

*693000 Supplies - Flat to year over year adopted budget*

*694130 Maintenance Utilities and Rents - Flat to year over year adopted budget*

*694080 Professional Services - Flat to year over year adopted budget*

*694100 All Other Expenses - Flat to year over year adopted budget*

*694010 Travel and Training - Flat to year over year adopted budget*

*We suggest the 641010 appropriations increase be funded by additional ROT revenue in the Comptroller's budget as we increased ROT collections and penalties due to ROT audits.*

- Accomplishments
  - Received grant funding from NYS Archives and Legislature to continue digitization process of old payroll records
    - Work more efficiently using computers for research
    - Up-to-date personnel records are digitized; some records required to store are not completed yet
  - 14 audits completed, 8 pending
    - WIC Grant under Nutritional Program for Women, Infants and Children
    - American Rescue Plan
    - Children & Family Services Childcare
    - Economic and Community Development – Shape Program and installing ramps for those homes
    - ROT (Room Occupancy Tax)
    - Sheriff accounts including (i.e.) poundage account
    - Annual audit for SWCD, which helps to keep SWCD costs inline; SWCD reimburses county
    - Green infrastructure projects
    - Complete ACFR (Annual Comprehensive Financial Reports)

- 2025 budget proposed
  - Includes raises and standard increases for staff and CSEA contract (3%)
  - Account Clerk 3 positions
    - Mostly in payroll and auditing, as well as claim review
    - Would like to expand on duties to include accounting
    - Next step up is Accountant 1
    - Total amount for changes is \$42,858 in 101
    - Asking for additional ROT to fund personnel changes in 101 account
- ROT audit
  - Quarterly ROT is self-reported by hotels to County Finance
  - Hotels report what they did in business
  - Comptroller goal to audit 25% of each hotel annually (4 year cycle)
  - 2 auditors go on site and everything reported is verified
  - Auditors usually find mistakes or miscalculations
  - Finance takes reporting, takes payments and oversees collections
  - Comptroller works hand-in-hand with Finance to say (i.e.) hotel X misreported numbers and owe additional money
  - Finance then seeks the money from that hotel
  - Team averaging ~\$150K/year; last 4 years just over half a million misreported tax; north of 95%
  - Hotels are not fighting the number, which is credit to audit team

#### Questions/Comments from the committee:

- The Comptroller's Office is asking to create and fund four Accountant 1's and one Account 2
  - Comptroller:
    - Correct, currently have one Accountant 1
    - Accountant 2 will act as supervisory roll and oversee the Accountant 1's
- What does this do to head count in the department?
  - Comptroller:
    - Neutral; headcount remains the same
    - Concerned that there is not an active Accountant 1 list
    - People in Account Clerk 3's would be moved to Accountant 1 (make more money)
    - Will add duties and want them working within title
    - Do not want to eliminate the Account Clerk 3 positions, in case the current employees do not pass the test (for Accountant 1) and have to move back
    - Do not want to lose the staff
    - Will work with Personnel to go through necessary process for the new position duty statements
- When appropriating ROT to departments, is that not a function of revenue (percentage), or is it a number to the department?
  - Finance:
    - Flat dollar amount; in Comptroller's budget is just shy of \$50K
  - Comptroller:
    - Comptroller's gets some, but asking for more
  - Finance:
    - Amounts were set years ago in effort to maximize what is being pushed out to community
    - Have not raised what house takes to manage the program
    - Finance, Comptroller's, Law and Carpenter's Brook all get a piece
    - Amounts have not been modified in quite some time
  - Comptroller:
    - Amounts have not been modified since the rate went up; no change to internal formula
- How off are hotels, and how much ROT is the county collecting due to mistakes?
  - Comptroller:
    - Total of \$13M in ROT
    - Audits averaging \$150K/year; small percentage
    - Hotels that do more business probably make mistakes or are hedging a bit

- i.e. Putting someone tax exempt who was not tax exempt
- Built into the NYS legislation
- There are very strong incentives for hotels to make sure they get it right
  - Comptroller:
    - Yes
    - Also depends on how rooms are defined
    - Only doing rooms currently
- Comptroller's has 32 authorized positions with 28 filled; are the 4 funded?
  - Comptroller:
    - All funded positions are filled; President of CSEA is technically a staff member, but reimbursed by union
  - Finance:
    - Delta between authorized positions and other page (in budget book) is funded vs. authorized
    - Detail pages in each department budget is funded and is general and grant funded
    - Authorized is just authorized
- Please explain Other Wages 2024 with the amount dropping from \$75K to \$4k
  - Comptroller:
    - Asked retired Chief of Staff Bill Ryan, who began digitization process, to come back part-time to finish
    - Some covered with vacancies in audit division of 101 line and the rest funded by Archives Grant
    - Mr. Ryan will be done shortly
- Will Comptroller's be seeking another grant from the state for 2025?
  - Comptroller:
    - Did not get 2024, but will apply again for 2025
    - Most of what staff is using is on the desktop
    - IT has done great job, but would like the other stuff done

**COUNTY CLERK:** Emily Bersani, County Clerk; Elizabeth Ducett, Accountant 1

#### ***A641010 Total - Total Salaries***

*The County Clerk's Office is requesting an increase in total salaries by \$112,038 to allow for adjustments to Management Confidential Grades (Deputy County Clerks) and CSEA contract increases. The Deputy positions assigned to the Clerk's office are vital to the successful operation of this department. If you consider the complexity of the NYS laws regarding real property, taxation, criminal proceedings, civil actions, etc., combined with the NYS Office of Court Administration and the local Unified Court System, the responsibilities assigned to these positions should in themselves justify the need for a higher Grade. Furthermore, Deputies must ensure policies that relate to legal filings and document recording are carried out accordingly by the rest of the staff, and that the individuals performing the indexing, retention, and archiving of all legal and land records are adequately trained and supervised. In the current Grade structure, some staff make a higher wage than their supervising deputy. The proposed Grade changes will eliminate this issue.*

#### ***A694010-Travel and Training***

*The County Clerk's office is requesting an increase in the Travel and Training budget by \$3,364. As a new County Clerk, training is imperative to success. The NYS Association of County Clerks (NYSACC) is an invaluable resource for information sharing and knowledge transfer. The NYSACC hosts two annual conferences (Spring and Fall), where clerks from across the state gather to share best practices and work through common issues to help each other better interpret the laws and regulations of NYS. In addition to the State-level conferences, the NYSACC also hosts regional meetings throughout the year, which also require travel to different counties. These opportunities for professional development in the County Clerk's office would be beneficial to ensure we are serving the public efficiently and effectively.*

*In 2024 the County Clerk's office has been focused on creating efficiencies within the department and improving the public's perspective on local government by providing quality customer service and representing Onondaga County out in the community. We have revitalized the FAVOR card program for Veterans, launched an advisory committee on property records, re-structured the staff to foster cross-training, and built partnerships with other local government agencies. Our*

*office, to date, has handled more than 45,000 transactions resulting in over \$25 million processed in our office. In 2025, we will continue to analyze our services to push this office forward and meet the needs of Onondaga County.*

- Veteran Favor Card Program
  - Provides discount card to veterans in Onondaga County
  - \$5,000 balance in Favor Card account (sponsorship program)
  - Revitalized list of active participants
  - Honored a veteran women owned business
  - Printed promotional flyers and information
  - Getting ID printer, so veterans can get photo ID
  - Able to use resources available
- Started Advisory Committee focused on Real Property Services
  - Gets people together (abstractors, attorneys, lawyers, housing) - anyone in Onondaga County interested
  - Helps improve services by listening to what is working, what is not working
  - Discussion about new laws – learning about the laws and how to implement
  - Clears up confusion for (i.e.) abstractors
  - No resources used
- Focusing on partnerships and forming relationships
  - City of Syracuse partnership
    - DBA's in Clerk's office and city interested in those starting a business in the city
    - Anyone registering with city address is shared with permit office in city
    - City reaching out to provide permitting information and licenses
    - Costs no money
  - Active in NYSACC (New York State Association of County Clerks)
    - All County Clerks across NYS get together to share best practices and knowledge
    - Talking about new laws including Transfer on Death Deed and Judicial Security Act
      - ✓ Very new and struggling to navigate
    - Association invaluable to County Clerk and deputies
  - CSEA Union Leaders and Staff
    - Most of the office is CSEA – want to know Clerk cares and employees feel valued
    - Learn contract, what is in bounds, and take action when needed
- 2025 Budget
  - Analyzed staff on roster and made changes for 2024 budget
  - As opposed to hiring 5 more staff, make roster changes instead
  - Records Preservation Assistant
    - Previous title was Photo Copier
    - Team in basement inundated with requests for genealogical searches
    - Been helpful and made big impact
  - Promoted Information Aides
    - Front desk receptionists
    - Recording Clerk vacant funded and Recording Clerk unfunded
    - Swapped two Recording Clerk positions for Information Aides (2 for 1)
    - Can now task Information Aides with Recording Clerk duties
    - No need to hire more staff; saved \$35K in budget
    - Both employees received a raise
  - Fill vacancy on accountant team
    - Have Accountant 1 and Account Clerk 3
    - Need to make sure transition from someone leaving is seamless
  - Excessive accrual of overtime
    - Implementation of tighter policy
    - Process now requires a request and approval
    - Have to show specific project working on
    - Folks were accruing 2-3 weeks of overtime, but in Clerk's office, no need to stay beyond contracted hours
    - As needed, it will be approved

**Questions/Comments from the committee:**

- Please explain the Service to Other Government increase
  - Mortgage tax reimbursement from NYS, which goes up with salary increases
  - Take 5 employee salaries and benefits, supplies, CAT, IT and indirect costs – divide amount charged for the year by the number of people working on roster and multiply by 5 to set anticipated revenue
  - This year used prior year resolution; next year will be using 2024
- What is the reason for the interdepartmental revenue jump?
  - Finance:
    - Actual from 2023 is more in line with 2025; continue to get better in developing and calculating charges
    - Not necessarily an increased level of service, but getting to right amount
    - Expectation to see charges more stable on year to year basis
- Is that the same for the decrease under appropriations for interdepartmental charges?
  - Finance:
    - Yes, those ebb and flow based on service departments providing service to non-service departments
    - Different mechanisms to track expenses incurred by service departments and allocated to departments servicing
  - Clerk:
    - Largest interdepartmental charges are IT, DA and recording
- What was the Records Preservation Supervisor promoted to?
  - Assistant was promoted
  - 2024 budget adjusted shows difference
  - Supervisor already existed
  - The previous title was Photo Machine Operator
- With the promotion of the Information Aides to Recording Clerks, are the Information Aide positions still needed?
  - Clerk:
    - Still need Information Aides – will do their tasks plus be able to record
    - Information Aide positions would now be vacant
  - Finance:
    - Budget is now funding the unfunded Recording Clerk and paying for it by unfunding the Information Aides
    - Other changes include grade changes for the First Deputy Clerk, Principle Deputy Clerk and Deputy Clerks
    - County Clerk worked with Personnel to regrade the positions appropriately
- Are there currently any vacant positions?
  - Vacant First Deputy that is funded
- Was the County Clerk looking at the out-of-title work, or was it mentioned by the (i.e.) union?
  - No one mentioned it
  - Nature of County Clerk’s office is that there is lots to do with overlap; naturally folks were being asked to help
  - Sub-teams in department include DBA and passports counter, Judgements/UCC counter, civil actions, criminal actions, deeds and mortgages, etc. – nature of work similar, but different specific functionalities
  - When short staffed in one area, may need to call someone else, but do not want anyone working out of title
  - Clerk worked with everyone to analyze gaps and strengths

**DISTRICT ATTORNEY:** Joseph Coolican, First Chief Assistant District Attorney; Michelle Robbins, Administrative Officer

*As the turmoil of the pandemic and its aftermath fades, I am ecstatic to tell you that this Office has emerged stronger, more efficient, and more effective than ever.*

*The generational change in this Office’s salary structure has had its desired effect. Assistant District Attorney retention is outstanding. We have been able to fill additional positions utilizing funds from the many state and federal grants this office receives without impacting Onondaga County taxpayers.*

*The quality of our recent attorney hires has never been better. We have become a destination of choice for many of the top graduates of the Syracuse University College of Law as well as regional experienced, practicing attorneys. This month alone we are adding two admitted attorneys. Each comes to us from private firms after learning about this office from current Assistant District Attorneys.*

*Our continued partnership with the Syracuse Police Department, as well as our other G.I.V.E. partners, has led to a 39% reduction in the number of shooting victims in the City of Syracuse year to date compared to 2023, and a 46% reduction compared to the 5-year average.*

*We have taken 23 trials to verdict resulting in 21 guilty verdicts so far in 2024. During 2023 in Onondaga County there were 3,940 felony and 5,453 misdemeanor arrests. Grand Juries issued indictments in 610 cases presented by our Assistant District Attorneys, while another 296 cases were resolved by felony guilty pleas without the need to be presented to a Grand Jury. In Syracuse City Court alone there were almost 13,000 traffic tickets.*

*We recognize the challenges this office and community faces with Micron, I81, and other positive economic development, and how we need to be aware of the possibility that fraud will occur along with Labor Law violations. We will be vigilant and will work with all to maintain the positive reputation we have earned by ensuring that the economic resurgence that the County Executive has spearheaded not turn into an opportunity for the unscrupulous amongst us to unlawfully profit.*

*I thank you for your efforts in ensuring the citizens of Onondaga County continue to be well served by the outstanding men and women of the Onondaga County District Attorney's Office.*

- General pay raise from last year had desired affect
  - Numbers of Assistant DA's was as low as 35, and currently at 46
  - Assistant DA's handle up to 4,000 felony arrests in county and ~5,500 misdemeanor arrests
  - Every arrest requires interaction with Assistant DA (ADA)
  - In much better place than last couple years
- Gratified to earn grant money under various programs
  - Aid to Prosecution Grant, GIVE – Gun Involved Violence Elimination, Officer Victim Services and Discovery
  - Able to use funds to include new application obtained for AXON (provides body cameras to law enforcement)
  - Every law enforcement agency (i.e. OCSO, SPD) utilizes body worn cameras
  - Seen investigation prosecution of crimes evolve since 2020 with more and more prosecutions based on video evidence (body worn cameras, ubiquitous Ring videos, or store videos)
  - In old days, would knock on doors, but now look for cameras on doors
  - Application used for video evidence of whatever the source to explain and prosecute crimes in Onondaga County
- Office of Court Administration
  - Created new IT bureau to upgrade certain courtrooms around state
  - Will create more video screens, new microphones
  - Hopefully plan to include more Wi-Fi and internet accessibility
  - Important ADA's access database in court; currently do not have ability to do it
  - Plan to give secure channel to move to paperless system and increase efficiencies
- Grant money utilization
  - Every ADA now has laptop to take to court for exhibits or other tools to prosecute cases
  - Every courtroom will have dedicated laptop for ADAs handling daily calendar to access databases
  - Whether it is for updates or accessing police reports from the police reporting system
- GIVE grant – gun violence is down in city of Syracuse in most categories by 35%
- Still have challenges including (i.e.) Bail Reform
  - Many people (i.e. pan handlers) in past would get services through Justice Center, but now cannot be arrested
  - They are only given an appearance ticket
- Raise the Age (RTA)
  - Juvenile offenders committing crimes (i.e. burglaries or holding firearms) with no real repercussions for actions
  - See repeat offenders with some getting caught 3 times with a gun still on the street
- Public safety up there with personal finances and health
- Stand in better position than previously in 2020 in answering the challenges
- Grant money tremendous help with initiatives and increase ADA numbers without impacting county taxpayers

**Questions/Comments from the committee:**

- Please go through the personnel changes proposed for the 2025 budget
  - DA:
    - When DA’s Office received pay raise, many ADA positions were unfunded (~11)
    - Utilizing grant money to backfill positions in 2025 budget
    - Flexibility to add 12 Assistant District Attorneys (some are double encumbered)
    - 2 positions are Investigators
- How will these positions be funded?
  - Finance:
    - As indicated all are funded by grant dollars
    - Most recently passed NYS budget included significant increases for grants at DA’s Office
    - Budgeting for part of Discovery Grant in operating budget
    - Driving local down year over year
- Is the grants budget increase in 2024 (in 101) being used?
  - Finance:
    - Yes; in 2023, DA was understaffed; spending in 2023 was lower and handling grants differently
    - Restructure of pay scale helped
    - Now able to pay for additional resources through the enhanced grant dollars from state
  - DA:
    - Hiring good people
    - Syracuse University Law School graduates (top of class) and Vermont University Law School
    - Great lateral hires including a formal Federal Judge Clerk
    - Hired experienced defense attorneys
    - Not only attracting lawyers, but experienced lawyers to be trained as prosecutors
- Is the enhanced grant funding an admission on the effects of the new laws, and is there concern it will go away?
  - DA:
    - Been assured by the current administration, that as long as they are in place it is not going anywhere
    - Going to Public Safety Symposium in Albany to discuss further
    - It is a direct result of legislative changes and trying to balance the table
    - Discovery Reform was devastating to DA’s Office with additional workload; trying to shift that to technology
    - Some recent court decisions have loosened the reigns
      - ✓ Previously cases could be dismissed if an innocuous piece of evidence with no bearing on innocence or guilt was left out
- Please clarify the jump in State Aid
  - Finance:
    - Discovery grant mentioned
- Please explain the Grants with \$350K under miscellaneous and \$350K under special services
  - Finance:
    - Grants continue to increase from NYS; anticipate it continuing, so this is a placeholder
    - For Aid to Prosecution, which can be used for variety of things
    - Propose grant budget at this level, but controls at higher level; dollars can be used for various expenses
- What is the DA’s goal number for staffing?
  - DA:
    - Can never have too many
    - Before pay raise and unfunded positions, DA had 50, which would be the mark to reach
    - Depending on grant money and positions being able to be funded, flexibility is key
- What is the change in the automotive equipment?
  - Finance:
    - Support vehicles for DA’s Office, which depends on the status of their fleet

- 2025 funding for 1 vehicle and current year budget is for 2 vehicles
  - DA:
    - Have Investigators that need vehicles with sirens (like police vehicles)
    - Maintenance costs increase and have to continue to cycle the vehicles
- How new is the computer initiative for ADA's and courtrooms?
  - DA:
    - Courtroom computer is not in effect at this point
    - Have the technology in DA's Office, but waiting on the Office of Court Administration
    - Anticipate in next few weeks the state will have an electrical contractor come in to quote rewiring courtrooms; should happen within next 6 months
    - ADA's currently have a cart with a big screen TV that has to be plugged in to display evidence
    - TVs would also be permanent in the courtrooms
    - ADA's now have laptops, but always had desktops
    - Grant money has helped and allowed DA to give laptops to each ADA
- What will happen to the laptops in the future concerning the hard drives and replacement?
  - DA:
    - DA has an IT person assigned to them
    - Laptops will need to be replaced, but they are brand new; do not anticipate replacement in the near future
    - Idea is to have laptop in every courtroom – city or county
    - Individual ADA will have one for evidence or exhibits, but also be able to walk in court to do daily calendar
- Please explain the Interdepartmental Charges
  - Finance:
    - Represents charges from service departments
    - i.e. Finance, Personnel, IT, Facilities, Law, Purchasing
    - Charges determined and allocated differently based on type of services provided
    - Time and energy tracked, valued and charged accordingly
- What about services of the DA's Office related to Social Services?
  - Finance:
    - It works both ways
    - i.e. Department that is not a typical service dept. that provides services for another dept., there are charges
    - Some interdepartmental revenue is budgeted – billing out for services

**SHERIFF**: Sheriff Tobias Shelley; Undersheriff Jeffrey Passino

## 2024 INITIATIVES & ACCOMPLISHMENTS

*At the start of 2024, the Onondaga County Sheriff's Office completed the 2023 Fiscal Year within our overall budget. As we progressed through 2024, we have maintained our commitment to fiscal responsibility. Looking forward, we will continue to focus on prudent budget management in support of public safety and attainment of Onondaga County's long-term goals.*

### ***Pistol License***

*Within the Pistol License Unit of the Onondaga County Sheriff's Office we have formulated new and more efficient methods to streamline our Pistol Permitting processes. The newly instituted processes have significantly reduced lead times by approximately 96%. The reduction of the wait-time from, 9 months (36 weeks), to the current wait-time of 1-2 weeks for pistol permit applications has resulted in greater revenues as well as significantly improved customer service being provided to the public in a timelier manner.*

### ***Law Enforcement Training***

*The Onondaga County Sheriff's Office with the support of the County Executive and County Legislature is proud to have launched the Law-Enforcement Jiu-Jitsu Program in 2024, which has successfully trained 46 deputies to date. This program aims to better train our law enforcement officers thus increasing success rate of training, retaining new employees, protect Onondaga County from excessive force claims, injury claims and hopefully reduce the likelihood of deadly force encounters.*



## 2024 BUDGET REVIEW

*During Fiscal Year 2024 the Onondaga County Sheriff's Office has been committed to the responsible management of this budget. This agency will continue to seek alternative funding sources to supplement the approved budget.*

## 2025 BUDGET OVERVIEW

*The Onondaga County Sheriff's Office has submitted the 2025 draft budget, focusing on several key areas: additional vehicles, personnel changes, fee increases, capitalized equipment, the Jiu Jitsu Law Enforcement Academy Training Program, and adjustments to the Special Patrol Resource Officers (SPRO) program. Each of these items will either enhance or is a mandatory requirement to ensuring the high level of public safety that the Onondaga County Sheriff's Office provides to the public.*

## 2025 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

**Vehicles** - *In addition to the \$325,000.00 allocated in the 2025 proforma budget for vehicles, we request an additional \$1,088,400.00 to acquire a total of 35 vehicles for Patrol, Criminal Investigations, Custody, Corrections and Civil. This request is for a total of \$1,413,400.00. The increase in the vehicle line is to account for a recommended 12% replacement plan to balance vehicle maintenance and sale value of the existing fleet. We are aware of changes in the automobile market that will prevent us from purchasing the less expensive unmarked vehicles (Chevy Malibu) as they will no longer be manufactured. This change will account for a necessary increase of approximately \$8,900.00 per unmarked vehicle. This price increase for the number of vehicles requested would total an additional \$72,000.00.*

**Positions/Salaries** - *We request to add another Administrative Aide (\$51,695.00) position to our roster. The funding for this additional position will be reallocated from the current funded, unfilled Clerk 2 position (\$41,283.00) and current funded, unfilled Typist 2 position. (\$41,283.00).*

*Special Patrol Resource Officers (SPRO's) will now be paid by school districts as independent contractors, working on an authorized secondary work permit by the Sheriff, resulting in a reduction in our 103 expenses for 2025, and an equivalent reduction in revenues.*

**Fee changes**- *Due to changes in law and increased costs of paper, ink, postage, etc., we propose an increase in pistol permit and civil process fees, which will result in higher county revenues.*

**Large Equipment Purchases**-*We request the addition of a capitalized equipment line in the amount of \$131,587.00 for purchase of large equipment at both the Justice Center and Jamesville Correctional Facility. Each of the anticipated purchases are mandated to provide for incarcerated individuals housed in Onondaga County correctional facilities.*

*Justice Center- Two kitchen ovens at \$40,262.00 (\$80,524.00), one clothes washer at \$32,694.00 and one clothes dryer at \$8,081.00.*

*Jamesville Correctional Facility- New upgrades for security cameras, to include installation and training at the cost of \$10,288.00.*

*Please note that during the preparation of the 2025 budget, several capitalized purchases were determined to be necessary and mandatory for the proper functioning of our correctional facilities. This administration was diligent in our mission to ensure fiscal responsibility and with the assistance of Onondaga County Finance Department we were able to identify alternate funding to fund these purchases.*

**Training**- *We request an additional \$47,500.00, as was provided in 2024, for our Travel and Training line to support the Law Enforcement Jiu Jitsu program for police/custody/correction recruits. We currently have a 3-year contract for this program as this program was approved and funded by the Onondaga County Legislature for the 2024 fiscal year. This program was developed to meet community expectations of law enforcement by providing increased training, better understanding and application of use of force and meet the public-demand to provide law enforcement with alternates to deadly force. This program aims to better train our law enforcement officers thus increasing the success rate of training, retaining new employees, protect the agency from excessive force claims, injury claims and hopefully reduce the likelihood of deadly force encounters. A significant portion of this program is the "Program Study". The vendor will provide an independent 5-year study to evaluate the effectiveness of the program on the law enforcement activities of those who*

*participated in this curriculum. There is insufficient data at this time to prepare this study due to the short amount of time that has passed since the implementation of this program. One immediate, probable effect, of the program is that in 2024 we had zero employment terminations based upon a failure to successfully complete Defensive Tactics training after each recruit completed the Law Enforcement Jiu Jitsu program.*

**Capital Project Plans-***A capital project plan has been submitted for the purchase of a new helicopter. Our current airship, nearing 26 years of service, is increasingly costly to maintain, and its communication and operation capabilities will soon be inadequate for Law Enforcement functions. It should be noted that the “build time” for a new helicopter is approximately 2 years thus making it imperative that this project be initiated at this time to account for the aging airship sustainability during the build time. The Onondaga County Sheriff’s Aviation Unit provides an essential public safety function and lifesaving service to the citizens of the Onondaga County and surrounding counties.*

- 2023 came in under budget; 2024 not the same
  - This year there were 18 police recruits through academy – have to pay overtime to do the work they will do
  - Major incident on April 14<sup>th</sup> was expensive
- Pistol Permit Unit
  - Brought in \$111K to general fund
  - Brought down wait time from 58 weeks to 1-2 weeks
  - Started making people pay for appointments; if they no show, Sheriff’s keeps the money
  - Looking to increase application for Pistol Permit to \$60
  - \$3 charge for transfer – could be multiple guns
- Jiu Jitsu Program
  - 3 year contract
  - Of 46 recruits through the program in Police Academy, not 1 failed because of defensive tactics
  - Deputy hurt knee in booking costing \$105K; had to pay someone to do the work while Deputy was out
  - Asking to continue this in the future
- Grants
  - Gained Drone Program – took in \$367K for it
  - Seeking grants to augment budget
  - GIVE – brought in over 100 guns from detail
- Vehicles
  - Cars go 4.1M miles/year
  - Took back every possible take-home car
    - Over 20 cars including Lieutenants and School Resource Officers (SRO)
    - 1 Lieutenant and 1 Deputy have take-home cars per contract
    - Took every other take home car to better manage the program
  - Goal to trade in vehicles at 70K miles while they have trade in value
    - Currently trading in vehicles with 180,000 miles
    - Biggest part of vehicle budget is maintenance, and if they can bring that down by trading in before maintenance, will get better trade in value, better fleet, and lower costs
  - 12% of vehicle ask is not where they need to be for goal
- Combine 2 unfilled positions into 1
  - Want Administrative Aide for Investigations (\$30K in savings)
  - \$82,000 combining positions to one \$50K position
- Issue with SROs
  - Pension cap of \$35K – if retire from Sheriff’s and want to work at Sheriffs after retired, capped at \$35K
  - SROs reach that cap by June, and cannot come back in fall
  - Work around is to make them employees of school on work permit
    - Work for Sheriffs for training to wear uniform, then work for school
    - Just a Band-Aid into 2025
- Jails
  - Costs money to house people in jail
  - 1/6 of budget is inmate health care
  - i.e. Inmate costing \$42K/month in care for over a year
  - Inmate population has prevented Sheriffs from combing inmates into one jail; continuing to run 2 jails
  - Things are breaking that are expensive (i.e. clothes washer for \$32K); have to take care for inmates by law

- Air One
  - Pushing for aviation program to move in future
  - More than justified for the calls it takes and public behind aviation program
  - Cell phone has more technology then current helicopter
  - Helicopter has 2 year build time, projected in 2026, which will cost more

#### **Questions/Comments from the committee:**

- Does the Jiu Jitsu program have milestones and goals with reporting, or is it training for anyone?
  - Part of program is a 5 year study, which is part of the 3 year contract signed
  - 5-year study is to see if the program is working, is it preventing injuries, etc.
  - Do not have results of 1<sup>st</sup> year of study at this time
  - It is a national program
- Is the Jiu Jitsu program providing any metrics in the way of management?
  - 46 deputies goes through program and every one passed defense tactics
- How were the deputies chosen for Jiu Jitsu?
  - Defensive tactics mandatory, so it is part of the academy training
  - Recruits and candidates in the academy (Police and Corrections)
- Who sets the cap for the SRO's?
  - State Comptroller's office; Albany
- Is there any movement to change that?
  - Assemblyman Al Stirpe proposed bill to lift the cap to make it reasonable, but it died in committee
- Is there a fear that the state will come after the "Band-Aid"?
  - It is a statewide issue for Sheriffs
  - Less expensive to have retired officers in schools vs. fulltime officers
  - It affects those in Civic Center (security) if they worked at the Sheriff's office
  - If an officer came from Syracuse Police to work for the Sheriffs, the cap does not apply
- How is it okay for a retiree to earn \$35K from the Sheriffs, and another \$35K from the school?
  - Governor extended out for a year for retired officers to be exempt in schools
  - It will go away unless extended in 2025
  - State Troopers can be hired; cap does not apply to them
- Proposing filling an Administrative Aide and not filling a Clerk 2 and Typist 2; what area are those titles in?
  - Administration in personnel area
  - Benefits good, but pay not as good; hard to fill positions
  - New Administrative Aide will be in Criminal Investigation with Detectives
- What is the increase of \$1.8M under Contractual Expenses Non-Govt?
  - Finance:
    - Correctional Health Care contract
    - On boarded new provider and rate is comparable, but contracts have escalators
    - Also includes continued cost of mental health assessment placements that ebb and flow
- What about Maintenance/Utilities/Rents?
  - Finance:
    - New body camera program for Sheriff
    - Able to pay for expanded new program this year with grant dollars Sheriff secured
    - Sheriff's office looking for grants to fund, but county has to take on
    - Also includes \$425K for helicopter maintenance

- How many vehicles were requested?
  - 35; no longer making Chevy Malibu (detective's drive)
  - Do not want to use American tax dollars to buy foreign cars
  - Next closest is a Ford Bronco at almost \$9K more
- Please explain the Drone program
  - Drone will not replace piloted helicopter
  - Use drones for:
    - (i.e.) July 2023 – mother, who was a retired Army veteran that knew how to shoot, stabbed her 3 kids; knew she had weapons, so Sheriff used expendable drone (\$450/each) to go in and find her
    - Every time at amphitheater using large drone (\$42K) to watch people in parking lot and watch traffic flow to find ways to make things more efficient
    - Large drone can take off from State Fair and look across at Onondaga Lake Parkway to read a license plate
    - Will need backup for it
  - Drone program is expanding, and Sheriff helps other agencies with drones
- Where does the fleet stand concerning average age and mileage?
  - Number of 2015 model year cars
  - Fleet has been behind, because there has to be investment in it
  - 230 cars and replacing 23; last year got 17, but does not get fleet where needs to be
  - If Sheriff gets the fleet to where it needs to be, there will be higher trade-in value, less cost for maintenance
  - Been paying for fleet with telephone money, which annually goes through committee in Albany to be stopped
  - If the telephone money stops, not sure how to pay for fleet
- Please discuss staffing
  - Police division has waiting list
  - Challenge is people do not want to work in jails
  - Holding steady in downtown jail with 236 members; Jamesville was 86 and now 80
  - Changed schedule in Jamesville to be more efficient, which added to workload; went from 70 inmates to 160
  - Overtime is the same, sick leave has gone down with better schedule and management
- What about recruits coming in?
  - Better schedule, less sick leave, higher morale, better recruiting
- Is overtime under control going forward?
  - Working hard to project why inmate population has gone up disproportionate to NYS
  - Last year up 17%, and this year up 23%
  - Trying to figure out why based on the Onondaga County population
    - (i.e.) Is it because of the number of cases in waiting, being in a crossroads with i81, proximity to border, closing state facilities, etc.
  - Concerned about inmate population increasing, and staff not increasing at same rate
- What is the take-home fleet down to, what are the uses, and who gets the take-home cars?
  - About half the cars are used for police division
  - Need more in police division due to overlapping schedules; never a time they do not have police on street
  - 48 people in detective division – most have take-home unmarked Malibus
  - Jails use fleet for transporting inmates
  - Little over 50 take-home cars for detectives, captains, and command staff (not everyone on command staff)
- Has the Sheriff done a study to see if there are reoccurring maintenance issues (for vehicles) to mitigate?
  - Lot of maintenance like personal car where it gets to point of nickel and diming
  - Trying to trade in vehicles before that point
  - Run amphitheater with cars that are headed to auction and steal parts off in-between
- Is the Jiu Jitsu program in place for extra training?
  - Trying to make things safer not only for officers, but the people they deal with

- Bulk of injuries are at the downtown jail during booking
- Will help on the street; body cameras have been a big help
- Would like body cameras to take to 5<sup>th</sup> floor where segregated inmates are
- Cameras on deputies may mitigate some lawsuits and help pay for the extra cameras
  
- Is there a policy in place as to when the body cameras are to be switched on?
  - Interim policy for body worn cameras, which meets federal standards (CALEA) – June letter of approval
  - Brought in body worn cameras, car cameras, taser cameras, and switch to turn on when drawing weapon
    - Did not put out new policy until everything was in place and everyone was trained
    - Interim policy was in place during the Rosello shooting
    - Did not have the new equipment
  - All in place now, and have current policy for new equipment and training
  
- Will the county use Air One to help other counties and aid in recouping any charges?
  - Surrounding counties are tight; Cayuga County and Madison County give the county money
  - When Cortland County calls (who does not pay), how can the Sheriff say no
  
- Hard to say no, but how can this be rectified when Onondaga County taxpayers are paying for it
- There was a concerted effort years ago to contact the surrounding counties to fund a couple hours of flight time for services, but the surrounding counties could not and did not
  - Surrounding counties do not pay for the county's Bomb Squad either that helps them

The meeting was adjourned at 11:16 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



JAMIE McNAMARA, Clerk  
Onondaga County Legislature

ATTENDANCE

COMMITTEE: WAYS & MEANS BUDGET REVIEW – DAY 4

DATE: SEPTEMBER 17, 2024

NAME (Please Print)	DEPARTMENT/AGENCY
Kristi Smiley	Finance
A. A. Sebyan	Personnel
Beth Mortas	Personnel
Stacey Rhoades	Personnel
Amy Lang	Personnel
Selena Pappas	Personnel
Many Washo	Financial Operations
Phil Britt	Comptroller
Sarah Graf	Comptroller
Jim Conroy	Comp
Evan Karalunas	Co. Clerk
Marcum Merrill	CO CLERK
Elizabeth Duca	Co Clerk
Sharon Walker	CO CLERK
Zander Sanders	CO CLERK
Marlund Clottiner	
Max Lund Clottiner	
Jason Dean	Finance
Tamara Hughes	Finance
Quinn Lyden	Comptroller
Rene Heedol	Comptroller
Jeremy Young	OCSO
Jon Hagenmeyer	DSBA
L. DELL	OCSO
T. SIBNEY	OCSO
T. PASSINO	OCSO
T. NEWTON	OCSO