



Onondaga County Legislature

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WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE REVIEW OF THE 2022 TENTATIVE BUDGET WATER ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION – OCTOBER 8, 2021 TIM BURTIS, CHAIRMAN

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. May, Mr. Rowley, Mr. Ryan, Mr. McBride, Mr. Williams, Mrs. Ervin

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mr. Rowley

ALSO ATTENDING: Mrs. Tassone, Ms. Cody, Mrs. Abbott-Kenan, Ms. Kuhn, Mr. Holmquist, Mr. Bush, Dr. Kelly, Mr. Kinne; also please see attached

Chairman Burtis called the meeting to order at 9:57 a.m.

WATER ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION: (5-8) Shannon Harty, PE, Commissioner

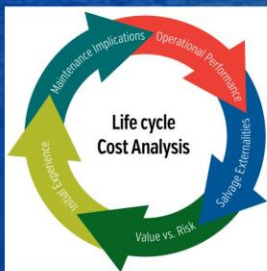
Ms. Harty:

- Shout out to Management and Budget and the Legislators – been through a lot in 2021
- Rustan Petrala, Paul Smith and David Snyder with her today – half of the staff have never participated in a WEP budget presentation
- Tried to continue what was presented in August – excited to show where we will go in 2022
- Want to get back to core functions – bolster our team and assets
- Collecting data to make good financial decisions for the future
- Sewer consolidation with the disconnected ownership continues to be a challenge – will continue to move this forward and fund in the 2022 budget
- Continued investment in 2022 for infrastructure – to include helping building out for 2022
- Organization structure wasn't working – distributed engineering resources – lacked resources to move forward



- Four core business units – maintain plants – boots on the ground – vital piece
- Regulatory and technical services – single leader can coordinate – data collectors, monitor and optimize operations – metering and finding out where the water is coming from – includes the lab at Henry Clay – plumbing control is a regulatory issue
- Capital planning and implementation – construction and engineering – so important because capital dollars drive the budget
- Administrative services – people that are working behind the scenes to assure payroll and computers are working
- Infrastructure and capital programs – takes it on a super level – takes the information and plan – life cycle cost analysis will be important as we take on more assets so can adequately plan

Infrastructure and Capital Programs



Asset Management

- Streamline work order process
- Collect more data
- Improve capital and manpower prioritization and budgeting

Engineering

- Develop standards to save time and improve project quality
- In-house skills to respond faster to emergencies and small, turn-key investments
- More project managers to keep projects on schedule and budget

Construction Inspection & Administration

- Increased construction personnel

Fleet Management

- Apply asset management strategies to vehicles



J. Ryan McMahon, II
County Executive



- Spend money on outside engineers – need internal engineers for smaller projects and be able to react quickly without RFPs
- Pulling fleet into this group - vehicles need to have a life cycle assessment – this will drive financial plan
- Sewer consolidation and maintenance – 1,600 miles in 2027 – number goes up every time we sign a lease agreement – have doubled the miles of sewer – looking to sign on Lysander and Van Buren – will continue to increase – with every municipality on to include Syracuse will end up with 1,600 miles

Sewer Consolidation and Maintenance

- Increasing assets County is fully responsible for O&M and Capital Investment
- Improved work order procedures to document maintenance & inspections to identify and correct deficiencies
- Collection System Capacity modeling, metering and management
- New dispatch and public communication to improve public interface and education
- Data driven decision making for the next phases



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- Need a maintain a solid work order process – develop a system that will show maintenance issues – how do we get there
- Public communication – disconnect in understanding – residents don't know who owns what – educate the public on how they could help us – engage the public and use them as a resource – data driven decision making
- Capital projects in 2022 – will be making significant investment – about \$30m in WEP owned assets – number will go up to \$60m – will layer in sewer consolidation – by 2024 will be at \$84m – shows the importance of the capital improvement plan



- Sludge dryer at Metro – currently remove and haul away – key project will be to dry it out and decrease the costs
- Continue with energy conservation projects – looking to hold the line on utilities
- Baldwinsville and Meadow Brook Limestone will have a large project, – installing new pump station and force main in 2022
- Robust engineering program will be needed to make these improvements
- Oak Orchard project will be more than sewage expansion

Ms. Kuhn:

- Given the rain in August – what kind of overflows do we have and does it overflow into the lake?

Ms. Harty:

- Facility designed for 84.2 million gallons per day (“mgd”) – can push 126m through with tertiary treatment – we bypass at 126 mgd – still providing some treatment – over 210 million gallons a day then treatment plan is bypassed – averages less than once a year that this happens
- August storm event highlighted the departments resiliency - flooding in Camillus – sent a wave down through the rest of the collection system – we will use this data to help us with future planning

Ms. Kuhn:

- Will projects help us?

Ms. Harty:

- Project cycle is 5-7 years – so we will spend 2022 understanding where projects are needed – timing depends on the size of the project – can't go out and start patching things

- Key highlights of budget – focused budget on where department most needed strategic plans – held other accounts constant as much as possible

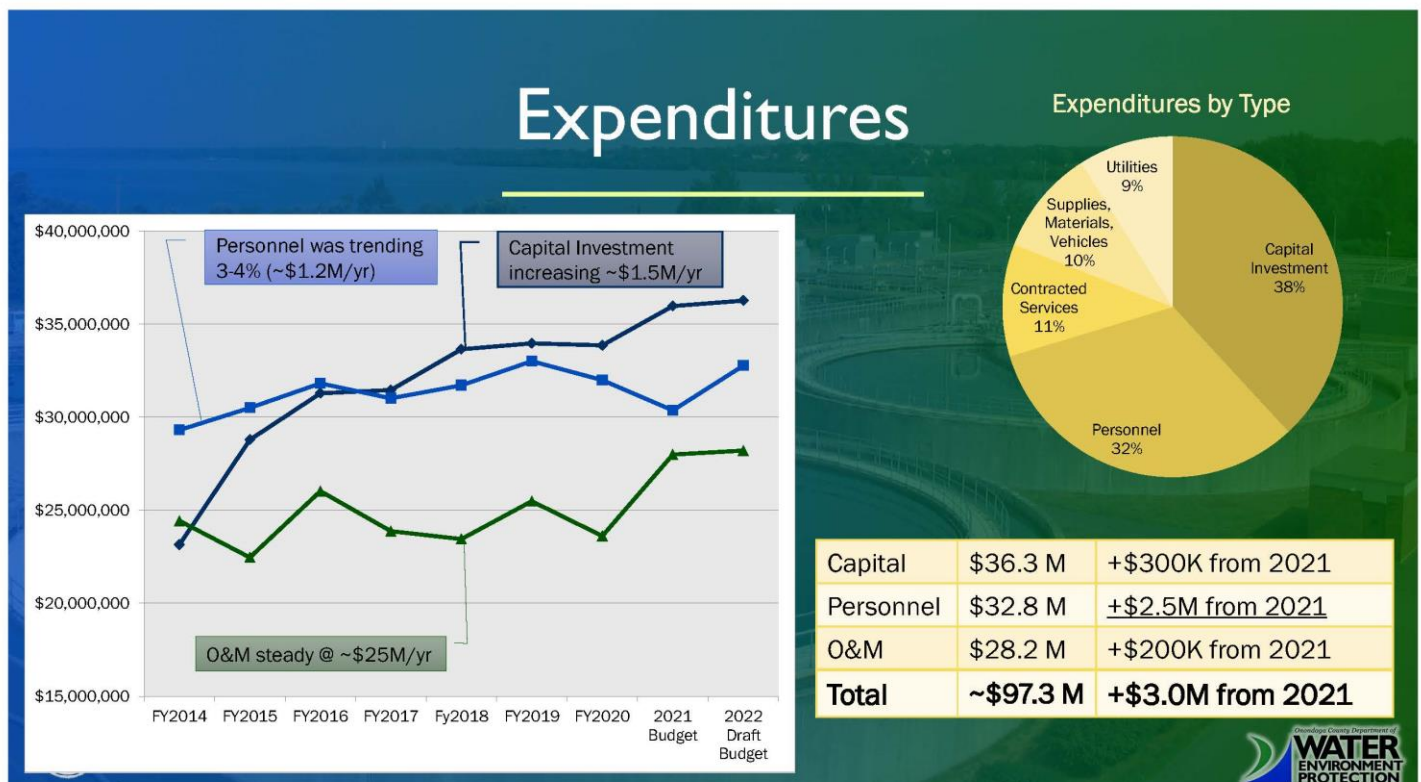


Key 2022 Budget Highlights

- Budget increase requests focused on critical resource needs to support core functions and strategic plans
- Held current funding levels for as many other accounts as possible to minimize budget spike
- Consideration for supply chain and utility market volatility



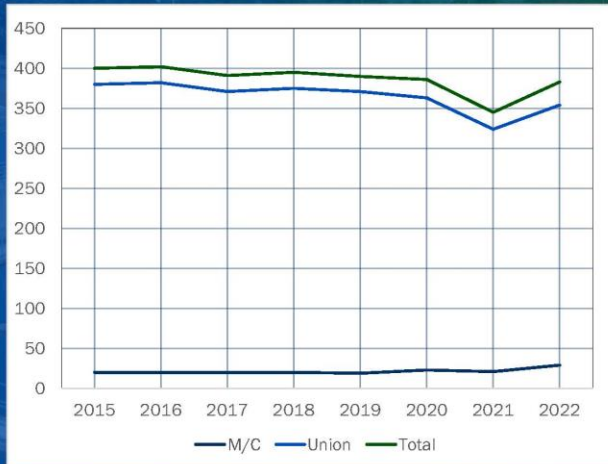
- Supply chain has had an impact – so much unknown – focused on what we knew and could justify
- Expenditures – pie chart shows how we spend our money – capital investment either cash or debt payments – 1/3 is personnel – 1/3 is operations and maintenance



- Line graph shows how we are trending – personnel is trending 3-4% - O&M has been level through operation efficiencies, capital investments to reduce spending

- Historic personnel headcount – slight decline over the years – dip in 2021 was hard for the department – became a hardship – ratio of management to staff is lean – question if staff is given the oversight needed – driving rebuilding and restructuring

Historic Personnel Headcount



- Historically around 400 personnel
- Steady decline of headcount since 2015 with large dip in 2021 (COVID)
- Management to Staff Ratio historically at 5-6%
- A low Management to Staff ratio could result in under-management and negatively impact succession planning and staff development.



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- 2022 personnel changes – taking a hard look at the strategic organization – created new management positions to oversee build out programs – need to set policies and training positions – requesting 383 funded positions to include management to be able to support those positions

2022 Personnel Changes

Proposed staffing changes to support restructuring, Sewer Consolidation and Infrastructure Strategies

	2021 Funded Positions (unfunded)	% of Workforce in 2021	New Positions for 2022	Existing Unfunded funded	2022 Funded Positions (unfunded)	% of Workforce in 2022
Management/ Confidential	21 (4)	6%	6	3	29 (3)	7.6%
Union	324 (48)	94%	11	21	354 (26)	92.4%
Total	345 (52)		17	24	383 (29)	

38 new/refunded positions are in addition to 19 current vacancies authorized to hire

= 57 positions to fill



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Mr. Williams:

- Asking for 38 new positions – how many are management – Ms. Harty answered that 9 total - have 4 open now and asking for 5
- Are you having a problem filling and is it the same for union – Ms. Harty answered it's difficult because of pay and finding the right people – it is the same for union – need to develop relationships
- How many are entry level vs skilled – Ms. Harty will get back with that information

Mr. Ryan:

- Trying to compare Morgan's numbers with Harty's numbers

Ms. Venditti:

- List shows detail creates – net funding shows plusses and minuses for the creates – detail was sent over prior

Mr. May:

- Page 21 funded and unfunded agree with the slide – 397 authorized on the 101 line?

Ms. Harty:

- Bottom line numbers is where we are looking to go based on 383 positions – so we can spend 2022 to evaluate the remaining positions to see what is actually needed

Mr. Ryan:

- CE budget goes from 345 to 383

Mr. Morgan:

- Handout has the 38 and provided additional detail - summary is that budget is going up 38 positions in 2022

Ms. Harty:

- Will be a lot of work but will get us back to where we need to be
- Fleet program – based on availability and volatility – taking a harder look at vehicles to see if we need to contract out and/or rent – small crane truck is needed to help with consolidation – will allow staff to pull pumps in the field

2022 Fleet Program







Large Vehicles/Equipment (\$736,000)

- Packer Truck
- Small Crane Truck (new to fleet)
- Forklift
- 6 Wheel dump
- Bobcat Skid Steer
- Bobcat Mini-Excavator

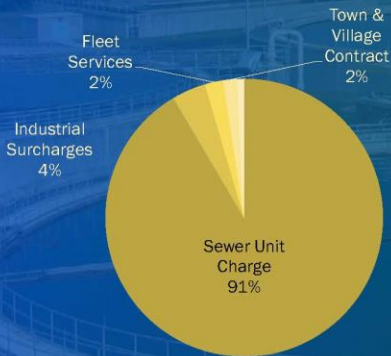
Light Duty (\$366,000)

- Pickups (8)
- Vans (2)

- Revenues – 91% comes from sewer unit charge – trends shows 2.9% increase – looking for similar increase in 2022

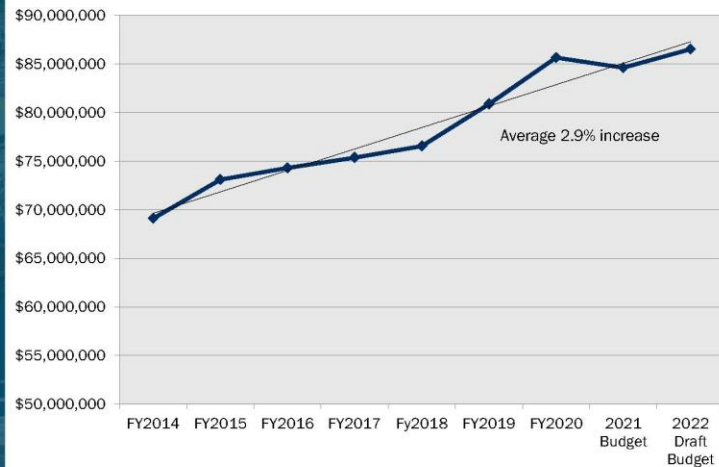
Revenues

Revenue By Type



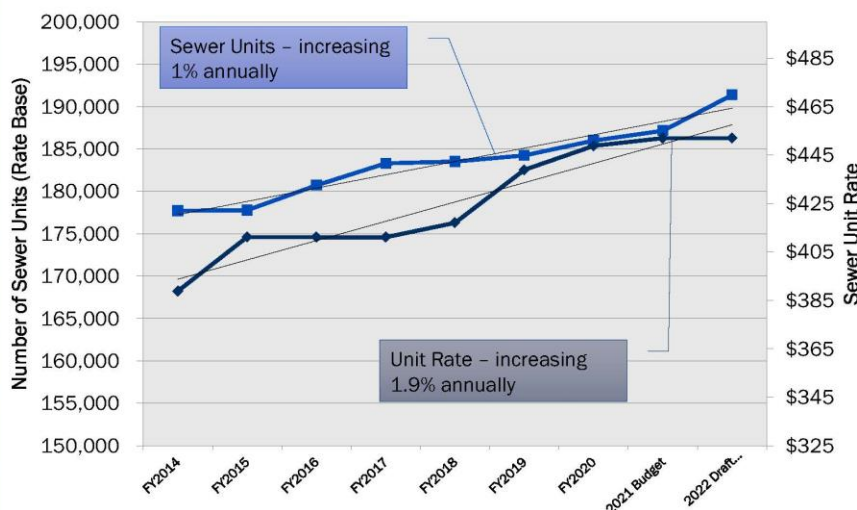
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Sewer Unit Revenue



- Sewer unit rate base – increases 1% per year – economic development, new homes, apartments and industries

Sewer Unit Rate Base & Rates



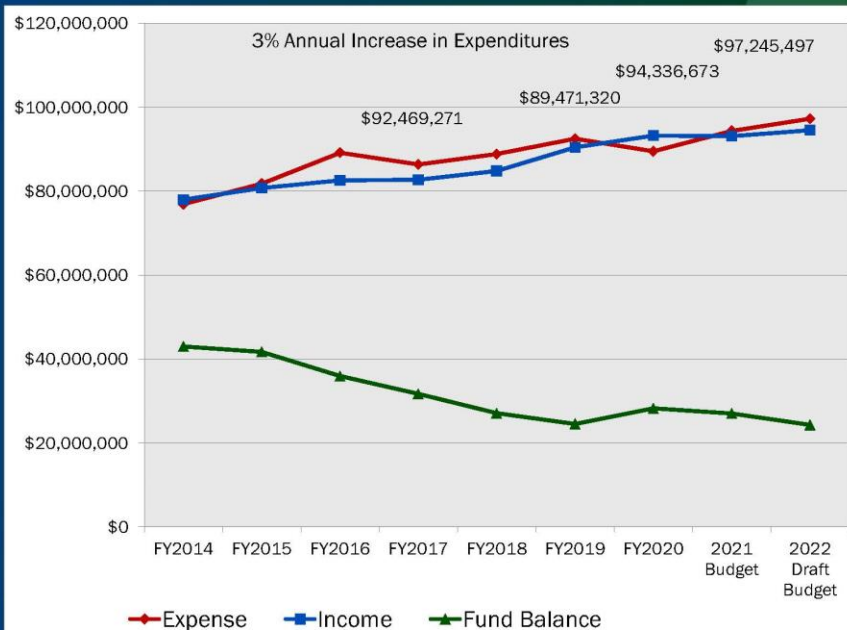
Rate base changes:

- Economic development (new homes, businesses, industries)
- Decrease of unit charge definition
- Increased water consumption (commercial/industrial customers)
- Development of new sewer unit assessment program



- Increase in water consumption – commercial consumption dipped a bit in 2020 – have seen significant recoveries – unit rate has trended at a 2% increase over the prior year – will continue to look at sewer units – city of Syracuse has over 35% of the units - will partner with city for accuracy

Historic Financials



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Mr. May:

- How do we compare nationally – not sure where we are now – state comptroller sets a number
- A few years ago the city had started to look at usage – caused people to be shocked – became clear that within city of Syracuse there was uncertainty as to how we valued those properties

Ms. Harty:

- Will provide where we are compared to others – either by household or whatever
- Met with Ann Gallagher from the city – felt like they are getting ahead of the curve – good program in place for multi-use properties – collects real property data and compares with water department and charges the greater of the two
- Comfort level – 80% there – acknowledged they have nuisances with multiple water sources – less than 1% difference when comparing with WEP units
- Historical trends – trend 3% per year – fund balance has been used historically – anticipating \$2.7m of fund balance will finish the year at \$24.5m if we use the \$2.7m

Mr. McBride:

- Three lines – 102 OT wages is flat and professional services dropped dramatically – any correlation?

Ms. Harty:

- Anticipating that when employees are hired the OT will be decreased – reduction in professional services driven by moving away from ACJ ambient monitoring and will have engineers in house
- 102 OT is flat because will take time to ramp up the new employees

Ms. Kuhn:

- Where are you with Syracuse and consolidation?
- How many pump stations are in Geddes and how many failed?

Ms. Harty:

- Holding conversations with the city – but not ready to take on – will focus on rebuilding
- All pump stations remained functioning - none of them failed – met with Geddes supervisor and confirmed all were functioning

Mr. Ryan:

- Dealt with Geddes for 6 long years when he was on the town board – we have made a lot of investments in the northern suburbs because we have had to – have also had some investments in Onondaga – all goes to Metro – hopeful that a deep dive into where our trunk lines are in city of Syracuse – putting more capacity through the pipes – have to understand where the problems are – people appreciate flat rates until your sewer backs up

Ms. Harty:

- Disconnected ownership does not allow us to go in and fix where those problems are in Geddes

Ms. Primo:

- Wrong to assume they are WEP assets – some of these should be addressed by the municipalities

Ms. Harty:

- Answered the question – neighborhood was built in the 50s and 60s – there were things that were done then like downspouts and floor drains connected to the sewer – health and safety issue – complicated component – will be work on the private and public side

Mr. Ryan:

- The conversation has to begin

Ms. Harty:

- This team will get there over the next 10 years

Mr. May:

- This body has been challenged with two major projects and three times Mr. Kinne has brought up the problem – indisputable problem in Geddes – challenged with a decision so need to be clear – the situation in Geddes is multifaceted – county, town and private component – private side could be a neighbor backing up someone's house – can't address those until the home is sold or in the process of selling – town infrastructure that we don't control – until all the pieces are put together it's hard to say what the problem is - goal of the county is to take over all the pipes – still a lot to know what causes this

Ms. Harty:

- Correct – the solution may not be to super-size these pipes – let's remove the inflow and infiltration and figure out what the next step should be – keep in mind \$105m in capital is built into the budget

Workforce Development:

- Began implementing Phase 1 of Department's Management restructuring. Created CIP Team, to include in-house engineering and expand project management capacities

Sewer Consolidation and Maintenance:

- Initiated Phase 2 – focusing on the BSK WWTP Service area including Towns of Lysander and Van Buren, and Village of Baldwinsville and executed a lease agreement with the Town of Van Buren.
- Increased use of Asset Mgmt. Sys. to manage O&M of collection sys. assets and target EPA CMOM standards.

Infrastructure:

- Advanced over \$33M in major construction projects at three WWTPs and throughout the collection system to improve solids stabilization and disposal, improve biogas production, reduce energy usage/utility expenses, continued renewal of aging infrastructure, and improve sanitary sewer services to support econ. develop.
- Used Asset Mgmt. Syst. to prepare the entire WEP CIP and engage cross-divisional coordination
- Advanced negotiations to settle the ACJ and transition to Consent Order for LTCP of CSO Areas.
- Completed the **in-house** development of the NYSDEC required submittal of the *Pump Station Force Main Condition Assessment and Risk Analysis Report* and the *Flow Control Emergency Response Plan*.

2021 BUDGET REVIEW

- Stayed within 2021 budget while providing vital core services.
- Withstood a difficult year of commodity and supply chain short falls that impacted critical operational materials, supplies and fleet/vehicle acquisitions, and also impacted the current CIP construction projects thru increased lead times, longer project schedules and increased project costs.

SECTION 2:

2022 BUDGET OVERVIEW

- Proposed budget plan has held 2021 funding levels in majority of accounts to allow for funding increases needed to support Strategic Priorities and capital investments.
- Proposed funding increases in Debt Service (Infrastructure) and Personnel Salaries to be offset by one-time reduction and Cash-for-Capital (960) funding and increases in sewer unit revenues.
- Sewer unit revenue increases anticipated due to reduction in sewer unit definition and continued review of sewer unit assessment of commercial, industrial and mixed-use properties.

SECTION 3:

2022 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Workforce Development

- Expansion of administrative personnel to support workforce recruiting, onboarding, and training needs and restoration of funding to personnel for core functions in operations, maintenance, I/E, and fleet maintenance.

Sewer Consolidation and Maintenance:

- Initiate capital investment on Phase 2 leased infrastructure, continued investment in MBLS I/I abatement.
- Expand and fund collection system mtce. staff to meet expanding maintenance requirements of leased assets

Infrastructure

- Continue with ~\$45M in major construction projects to reduce sludge disposal expenses, reduce energy usage/utility expenses, renew aging infrastructure, and expand collection and treatment services to support economic development.
- Creation of new positions to support increased Asset Management functions, internal engineering analysis, and operational responsibilities.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:05 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



MELANIE VILARDI, Deputy Clerk
ONONDAGA COUNTY LEGISLATURE

ATTENDANCE

COMMITTEE: WAYS & MEANS AND ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION COMMITTEE DEPARTMENTS AND
AGENCIES

DATE: OCTOBER 8, 2021

NAME (Please Print)	DEPARTMENT/AGENCY
Carl Hummel	Personnel
Jessica Allen	Finops
Phil Britt	Comptrollers
Marty Masterpole	Comptrollers
Pete Headd	Comptrollers
Dustin Czarnecki	BOE
Mary Laber	BOE
Allison Nanno	BOE
Yvette Velasco	LAW
Michelle Sardis	BOE
Shannon Harty	WER
Dave Snyder	WER
Paul Smith	✓
RUSTAN FERRELA	✓
Meghan Murphy	DHB
Marybeth Rizzo	CE
MARTY VOSS	DOT
Ayanwa Moore	DOT
James Fenskan	DOT
Kim Hall Brian Kelley	✓ Parks
Tina Leatherland Ted Fox	
Jennifer Fricano	Fin ops

ATTENDANCE

COMMITTEE: **WAYS & MEANS AND ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION COMMITTEE DEPARTMENTS AND
AGENCIES**

DATE: **OCTOBER 8, 2021**

NAME (Please Print)	DEPARTMENT/AGENCY
Rachel Burkhardt	FINOPS
Penny Donahue	Fin ops
Kristi Smiley	FinOps
Tenesha Murphy	CE Office
Jed Fay	Parks/Zoo