



# Onondaga County Legislature

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## WAYS & MEANS COMMITTEE MINUTES – FEBRUARY 22, 2021

### VIRTUAL TIM BURTIS, CHAIRMAN

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

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Mr. Rowley

**ALSO ATTENDING:** Chairman Knapp, Ms. Cody, Ms. Kuhn, Dr. Chase, Mr. Bush, Mr. Kinne, Mr. Donnelly, Ms. Primo, Mr. Morgan, Mrs. Venditti, Mr. Mento, Mr. Weber, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Yaus, Ms. Velasco, Mr. Frateschi, Ms. McNamara, Ms. Lesniak, Mrs. Vilardi, Mr. Paro, Mr. Frantzis and Mr. DeSantis

Chairman Burtis called the meeting to order at 9:32 a.m. *A motion was made by Mr. May, seconded by Mrs. Ervin to waive the reading and approve the minutes of the previous committee meeting. Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED.*

#### 1. TOBACCO ASSET SECURITIZATION CORPORATION:

- a. **Confirming the Re-Appointment of the Independent Director and Appointment of a Director to the Onondaga Tobacco Asset Securitization Corporation (Peter Seitz, James J. Rowley)**

Chairman Knapp:

- With departure of Legislator Jordan, who served on this committee, Legislator Rowley has offered to step up
- Mr. Seitz's appointment is up for renewal; many remember him as a longtime member of the Finance Department, and he did a great job; he continues to serve on this committee
- Both very high quality individuals

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

#### 2. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY: Kevin Sexton, Chief Information Officer

- a. **Amending the 2021 County Budget to Make Funding Available for use in Connection with a Grant from the United States Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Statistics, and Authorizing the Execution of Agreements (Sponsored by Mr. Holmquist)**

- Won grant in 2019 from Department of Justice Statistics for \$731,862 - converted Law Enforcement Record Management System to be compliant with NIBRS (National Incident Based Reporting System) data collection reporting
- It allows more detail to be collected and reported with crimes committed, as well as elements of the crimes themselves
- Much different than current system – UCR recording (Uniform Crime Reporting)
- Last summer, opportunity to apply for supplemental funding as part of original grant to bring in more resources for assistance with development, testing, documentation and training
- Awarded the funding last fall; unable to accept funds due to glitches in their system; now resolved
- Asking to amend budget in amount of \$336,000

*A motion was made by Mrs. Ervin, seconded by Mr. McBride, to approve this item. Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED.*

**3. FINANCE, DIVISION OF REAL PROPERTY TAX SERVICES: Don Weber, Director****a. Approving and Directing the Correction of Certain Errors on Tax Bills**

- Manlius – property wholly exempt; unpaid school taxes taken off for Colonial Village; moving sewer tax between one parcel to the other
- Clay – part of town sewer district; parcels taxed, but sewers not in place; town correcting to remove the charges

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

**b. Authorizing the Transfer of Tax Delinquent Property to the State of New York**

Mr. Morgan:

- State approached County Executive regarding parcel at intersection of 290 and Green Lakes Road in town of Manlius
- State wants to redevelop intersection for pedestrian and bike trail gateway; image shows parking lot and trail head that leads up to Green Lakes State Park and trails
- Property on the furthest east end of the parking lot; delinquent taxes; has not paid since 2011; ~\$1,800 owed
- According to the state (remaining 4 properties) – 2 are under contract with option of state purchasing; other 2 under negotiation; state hopes to close on all properties in 2022; with work beginning to transform into trail head
- County Executive is supportive
- Resolution allows for transfer of property to state for \$1
- Property has no structures; just vacant land

Mr. Kinne asked how much the total tax revenue is that they are losing from all of the properties. Mr. Weber responded that he does not have that, but it can be calculated. Mr. Morgan commented that they do not have control over what the other property owners do with the state; only this one piece of property.

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

**4. COUNTY LEGISLATURE:****a. Standard Work Day**

Chairman Burtis said this is a Standard Work Day for Melanie Vilardi, who is doing a great job.

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

**5. WATER ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION: Frank Mento, Commissioner****a. Authorizing the Execution of an Order on Consent with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Relative to the Settlement of the Amended Consent Judgment (Sponsored by Mrs. Tassone)**

- ACJ originally entered into in 1988; result of federal law suit by Atlantic States Legal Foundation (ASLF) and DEC
- Allegations in lawsuit were violations of Clean Water Act
- ACJ in place for 20+ years; spent significant amount of funds in gray and green infrastructure projects to bring lake and some tributaries back to standard; more work to be done
- County met all construction and capture requirements as stipulated in ACJ; reason why DEC and ASLF can join in partnership to take to next step
- Consent order a bridge from where ACJ is now to final outcome of monitoring plants through SPDES Permit
- 5 year bridge for additional project work on tributaries; during wet weather events, still get combined sewage that overflow into tributaries; county agreed to this; DEC and ASLF agreed - ASLF doing projects to support this
- Most are partnership projects – where another entity doing work; can claim additional benefit to tributaries

- Critical points of consent order - 5 year order; just between county and DEC; allows to exit federal oversight; contemplates opportunistic projects; revision of water quality standards in tributaries through Use Attainability Analysis
- End game of Use Attainability Analysis – county compliance; once compliant, then county at the end of the game
- Consent allows to not continue unlimited investment and time into ACJ
- After 20+ years committed to permits, other public outreach requirements and ACJ green and gray requirements – county has defined end game; 5 year window; this order is subject of many months of negotiations with DEC and ASLF
- Provides smaller subset of projects obligated to complete; good thing; next logical progression of where want to be
- Makes county solely responsible of what it can control - county and CSO's; not trying to control upstream areas, which contribute to tributaries; county's sphere of influence will be CSOs, tributaries and into lake
- Hope at end of 5 years, county will claim it is under compliance with Clean Water Act on tributaries; end this, and be in position where SPDES permits govern work going forward

Mr. Yaus replied to Chairman Burtis that the consent order was a mutual draft.

Mr. Ryan said the county will be settling what was brought forth by the ASLF, and Mr. Mento said correct.

Mr. Yaus commented:

- County has to petition the court; have already settled with ASLF, and ASLF agreed to petition court with no objection
- Through this consent order, DEC has also agreed; all parties have agreed
- This consent order does not kick in until the ACJ terminates through federal court action
- Time frame – as soon as this is executed and DEC executes, then county drafts letter to court with all parties signing
- Goes back to judge who says yay or nay; very optimistic

Mr. Ryan asked that if the tributaries are up to DEC standards in five years, then the county is out from under this. Mr. Mento responded:

- Yes; Use of Attainability Analysis will allow revisiting of water quality standard being violated right now in 3 tributaries
- Bacteria Water Quality Standard - natural with combined system; issues with CSO's with combined weather events; less frequent then when started; trying to clean up by virtue of projects

Chairman Burtis stated this is a big deal and quite the accomplishment. It is great work by everyone involved.

Mrs. Ervin said it is a welcome position to be in, after seeing this going on. Things are better and the water being clean was the intent, but with the all the legal struggles, Mrs. Ervin is thankful for everything everyone has done.

Mr. Yaus thanked the Legislature for their support and commitment over 30 years of the ACJ including litigation. Finding the end in sight is a testament to the investments, and what can happen when everyone works together.

Mr. Mento agreed with Mr. Kinne that this is a good thing to be doing. Mr. Kinne stated that he's been involved since 1992 when several legislators complained about doing this, and it is good to know it has all paid off. The county is in a much better position than in 1992 or 1988. It is an excellent project, and the taxpayers have benefited in the long run from all of the money spent.

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

***A motion was made by Mr. McBride, seconded by Mr. Williams, to adjourn the meeting. Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED.***

The meeting was adjourned at 9:59 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



JAMIE McNAMARA, Clerk  
Onondaga County Legislature