



Onondaga County Legislature

JAMIE McNAMARA
Clerk

JAMES J. ROWLEY
Chairman

TAMMY BARBER
Deputy Clerk

401 Montgomery Street • Court House • Room 407 • Syracuse, New York 13202
Phone: 315.435.2070 • Fax: 315.435.8434 • www.ongov.net/legislature

WAYS & MEANS COMMITTEE MINUTES – MAY 23, 2023 BRIAN F. MAY, CHAIR

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. Ryan, Mr. Burtis, *Ms. Abbott, Mr. Knapp, Mr. Kinne, Mrs. Ervin
ALSO ATTENDING: Chairman Rowley, Ms. Gunnip, Mr. Olson, Mr. McCarron, Mr. Bush, Dr. Kelly;
also see attached

Chair May called the meeting to order at 11:28 a.m. *The minutes of the previous meeting had been distributed, and there were no objections to waiving the reading. There were no corrections to the minutes, and the minutes were approved.*

CONSENT AGENDA

1. TRANSPORTATION:

- a. Amending the 2023 Onondaga County Budget to Make Funds Available for Use in Connection with the New York State Pave-Our-Potholes (POP) Program, and Authorizing the Execution of Agreements (\$1,287,185) (*Sponsored by Ms. Cody*)
- b. Amending the 2023 Onondaga County Budget to Make Funds Available for Use in Connection with the New York State Pave-NY Program, and Authorizing the Execution of Agreements (\$1,930,777) (*Sponsored by Ms. Cody*)
- c. Amending the 2023 Onondaga County Budget to Accept \$1,167,993 in Extreme Winter Recovery Funding from the New York State Department of Transportation and Authorizing the Execution of Agreements (\$1,167,993) (*Sponsored by Ms. Cody*)
- d. Amending the 2023 Onondaga County Budget to Accept \$720,622 in Additional CHIPS Funding from the New York State Department of Transportation and Authorizing the Execution of Agreements (\$720,622) (*Sponsored by Ms. Cody*)
- e. Amending the 2023 County Budget to Pay in the First Instance 100 Percent of the Federal and State Aid Eligible Costs at a Maximum Amount of \$13,300,000 for the Construction and Construction Inspection Phases of the Old Liverpool Road Paving Project, PIN 3756.27, and Authorizing Execution of Agreements (\$13,300,000) (*Sponsored by Ms. Cody*)
- f. Amending the 2023 County Budget to Fund in the First Instance 100 Percent of the Federal Aid Eligible Costs at a Maximum Amount of \$4,426,450 for the Design (Scoping I-VI) and Construction Phases of the Teall Avenue Pedestrian and Safety Improvement (C.R.228) Project, PIN 3950.82, and Authorizing Execution of Intermunicipal Agreements (\$4,426,450) (*Sponsored by Ms. Cody*)
- g. Amending Resolution No. 76-2022 (*Sponsored by Ms. Cody*)
- h. Authorizing the Acceptance of Property Acquired for Highway Purposes from the New York State Department of Transportation and the Subsequent Transfer Thereof as Surplus County Property Consistent with the Purpose and Intent of Resolution No. 144 – 2021 (\$20,000) (*Sponsored by Ms. Cody*)
- i. Authorizing an Intermunicipal Agreement with the City of Syracuse for Constructing Highway Improvements as Part of the Onondaga Boulevard Paving Project, C.R. 240, PIN 3756.75 (\$700,000) (*Sponsored by Ms. Cody*)
- j. Authorizing an Intermunicipal Agreement with the City of Syracuse for Constructing Highway Improvements as Part of the Teall Avenue Paving Project, C.R. 228, PIN 3950.82 (\$200,000) (*Sponsored by Ms. Cody*)

2. OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENT:

- a. Amending the 2023 Onondaga County Budget to Accept Grant Funds from New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Non-Agricultural Nonpoint Source Planning and MS4 Mapping Grant Program for the Protection and Restoration of Water Resources Through the CNY Stormwater Coalition MS4 Mapping Project (\$396,000) (Sponsored by Ms. Abbott)

A motion was made by Mr. Knapp, seconded by Mr. Burtis, to approve the Consent Agenda. Ayes: 6 Absent: 1 (Abbott); MOTION CARRIED.

*Ms. Abbott arrived at the meeting.

REGULAR AGENDA

1. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: Martin Skahen, Director

- a. Authorizing the Onondaga County Executive to File the 2023 Action Plan for the Community Development Block Grant, Home Grant and Emergency Solutions Grant Programs (\$3,267,206) (Sponsored by Mr. Burtis)

2023 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BUDGET-FINAL

5/11/2023

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GRANT	2022	2023	
County	\$1,929,511	\$ 1,962,532	1.7%
Clay	\$266,774	\$ 303,603	13.8%
Total Grant	\$2,196,285	\$ 2,266,135	3.2%
Reprogrammed Balances			
Program Income	103,719	\$ 107,310	
Total Available	\$2,300,004	\$ 2,373,445	
Capital Projects	\$752,028	\$ 815,218	
Housing Rehabilitation	350,000	\$ 350,000	
Housing Rehab (Prog Income)			
Commercial Rehabilitation	\$150,000	\$ 150,000	
Rehab Delivery	450,000	\$ 450,000	
Administration	439,257	\$ 453,227	
Housing Counseling	5,000	\$ 5,000	
Fair Housing	\$50,000	\$ 50,000	
Homeownership (Prog Income)	103,719	\$ 100,000	
Contingency	0	\$ -	
Total	\$2,300,004	\$ 2,373,445	
CDBG FLOAT LOAN			
Home Ownership Activities			
HOME GRANT	\$720,844	\$ 731,487	1.5%
Housing Rehabilitation	540,633	\$ 548,615	
Lead ->2014; 2015->Shape-Up	0	\$ -	
Home Ownership Subsidies	0	\$ -	
Non-Profit Housing Activities	108,127	\$ 109,723	
Administration	72,084	\$ 73,149	
Total	\$720,844	\$ 731,487	

- Steering Committee meets twice, projects presented to committee and week later ask Mr. Skahen to recommend what is good use of money; Steering Committee discusses and has final vote on what gets funded
- Town of Clay has been taking their full portion the last few years
 - Prior to that, Clay would apply and were guaranteed a \$50,000 project in the town and village
 - Remaining funds went to the other municipalities (do not do that anymore)
 - (Because of the extra funds) Changed parameters of Block grant allowing municipalities to apply for projects up to \$150,000
 - It is not feasible anymore; it eliminates municipalities from getting funding
 - Will be eliminated for next year
 - Always advised municipalities to send \$50,000 application, then also a \$150,000
- Going forward, sticking to \$50,000 grants to get as much money to as many municipalities as possible
- Managed to fund everyone who applied with a couple exceptions:
 - Geddes
 - Have \$50,000 project from 2020 out to bid and another \$50,000 project in 2021 still working on
 - Committee felt they could take year off to let the town catch up
 - Town of Salina and village of Manlius
 - Both only submitted \$150,000 applications; not able to fund those
 - Town of Cicero
 - Applied for \$50,000 project for senior center – county currently has \$1M program for senior centers
 - Advised the town to go through that program for funding, as it is for that exact purpose
 - Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE)
 - Did not fund last year or this year; CCE still trying to spend money from 2021
 - Since 2017, have not been good about spending the funds
 - Have to discuss the Community Forest Program – does not seem to be priority
 - Community Development spends a lot of time trying to get them to spend money
 - Community Development has to spend money, otherwise HUD will put them on slow spending category
 - When grantees are not spending money that is scarce, have to talk to them about priorities going forward

Questions/Comments from the committee:

- CCE – does ton of great stuff with county support; need same accountability as municipalities
 - Did not fund them last 2 years, working on spending down plan for 3 years
 - Revised plan multiple times to get them to spend it down; need to figure out what is going on
- Community Development doing great job and Steering Committee does great job spreading wealth with limited funds

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

2. SYRACUSE/ONONDAGA COUNTY PLANNING AGENCY (SOCPA): Dan Kwasnowski, Director

a. A Local Law Amending the Onondaga County Charter and Onondaga County Administrative Code to Establish a Department of Planning

- Authorizes County Executive to enter into new agreement with city of Syracuse for county to provide planning services
- City wants to take over zoning administration, which county provides currently
- Last fall, Assistant Director of Zoning at SOCPA took different job
- Talked with County Executive and Mayor, and the Mayor wanted to go in different direction
- City has been modernizing their building permit program and working on software to streamline and get permits out faster; also wanted to incorporate zoning
- Will ultimately lead to better approvals with rezoning coming inline – anticipated for adoption by Common Council on June 7th for start date of July 1st; city budget kicks in July 1st
- New agreement plan is for city to takeover zoning by July 1st
- County will still provide long range planning to City; city will fund a Planner 2 position (providing service currently)
- Mr. Kwasnowski has been fulfilling Assistant Director position since last fall – doing all zoning administration and overseeing the work of the Planners; 2 positions have been left open
- Currently 2 months behind on applications, but catching up; will be leaving city in good position to take over

- Positive change for the city; working on transition with anticipation of this
- Working with Finance on the budget; 2 year lag on abstract; nothing will hit budget for 2 years
- Finance:
 - 2023 abstract will be reconciled during 2025 budget; current year budget will not be amended, already set
 - Abstract already charged to city and paid; 2025 reconcile will include credit back to city with this change
 - 2024 budget – adjustments in terms of the 1 position being charged back to the city
 - Working on how to disseminate remaining people city did not need with the existing structure of department
 - Legislature will able to get better idea of where department going in staffing perspective; will be presented during 2024 budget process
- 2 employees are taking jobs with the city

Questions/Comments from the committee:

- Local Law will not be voted on until it hits the floor in June; conversation went well in Planning Committee
- Alignment will be better; familiar with the value of services SOCPA provides
- Please confirm that this is the city’s initiative, and there is one position they will continue to reimburse the county for
 - That is right

3. WATER ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION: Shannon Harty, Commissioner

- a. A Resolution Approving Proposed Improvements for the Onondaga County Sanitary District Consisting of Phase I of the Ley Creek/Liverpool Force Mains Replacement/Rehabilitation Project in and for the County of Onondaga, New York** (*Sponsored by Ms. Abbott*)
 - b. BOND: A Resolution Authorizing the Issuance of \$25,000,000 Bonds of the County of Onondaga, New York, to Pay Costs of Improvements for the Onondaga County Sanitary District Consisting of Phase I of the Ley Creek/Liverpool Force Mains Replacement/Rehabilitation Project (\$25,000, 000)** (*Sponsored by Ms. Abbott*)
- Both are off cycle asks – did not ask for funding for construction in fall, because of construction bid and pricing volatility; did not want to ask for money, then have costs escalate when going to bid this summer
 - Bid mid-sized construction projects and have seen more competitive pricing and stabilizing; confident with budget request today
 - 2 part resolutions – 1st is project authorization under Article XII; 2nd is bond resolution establishing funding
 - Ley Creek – 2 force mains from Metro to serve town of Salina
 - Liverpool coming along Parkway
 - Ley Creek coming down Rt 81
 - Combining at DestiNY and onto Metro property
 - 2 phases:
 - Funding for \$25M for contract 1 and 2
 - Take over Liverpool and Ley Creek force mains before DestiNY property
 - Will come back with 3rd contract for new force main coming onto Metro property
 - Anticipate advertising later summer (August) to start construction in spring 2024
 - Ley Creek facility built in 1967 – recently had major leak with consent order from DEC
 - Liverpool facility built in 1960 and has had several leaks

A motion was made by Ms. Abbott, seconded by Mr. Knapp, to approve items 3a and 3b. Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED.

- c. **A Resolution Approving Proposed Improvements for the Onondaga County Sanitary District Consisting of the Clarifier and Gallery Asset Renewal Project at Metro WWTP in and for the County of Onondaga, New York** (*Sponsored by Ms. Abbott*)
- d. **BOND: A Resolution Authorizing the Issuance of \$69,000,000 Bonds of the County of Onondaga, New York, to Pay Costs of Improvements for the Onondaga County Sanitary District Consisting of the Clarifier and Gallery Asset Renewal Project at Metro WWTP (\$69,000,000)** (*Sponsored by Ms. Abbott*)

- Part 1a of Metro 1970 annex upgrades; Metro is the largest wastewater treatment plant (WWTP)
- Majority built and upgraded in 1978; reaching end of useful life
- \$69M request to upgrade clarifiers and concrete, as well as mechanicals related
- 2 subsequent phases:
 - Substation upgrade and replacement
 - Harbor Brook pump station
- Will be back at the legislature this fall under CIP schedule

A motion was made by Mr. Knapp, seconded by Mr. Burtis, to approve items 3c and 3d. Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED.

4. ONONDAGA COMMUNITY COLLEGE:

- a. **Adoption of the Annual Budget for Onondaga Community College for the Fiscal Year September 1, 2023, to August 31, 2024, and Authorizing the County Executive to Enter into Contracts with Other Governmental Units in Which Appropriations and Revenues are Approved by the Adoption of the 2024 Budget (\$9,872,000)**
- b. **BOND: A Resolution Authorizing Learning Environment Upgrades at Onondaga Community College in and for the County of Onondaga, New York, at a Maximum Estimated Cost of \$13,000,000, and Authorizing the Issuance of \$6,500,000 Bonds of Said County to Pay Costs Thereof (\$6,500,000)**

Chair May presented

- 2 requests – no increase in operating; evidence of good adjustments and adaptations to market and trends OCC has experienced; have responsible budget with no increase costs to taxpayers
- Bond – phase 2 for learning environment; \$6.5M

A motion was made by Mrs. Ervin, seconded by Ms. Abbott, to approve item 4a. Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED.

A motion was made by Mr. Ryan, seconded by Mrs. Ervin, to approve item 4b. Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED.

5. PROPERTY PURCHASE: Ben Yaus, First Chief Deputy County Attorney

- a. **Authorizing the Purchase of Real Property Located at 439 and 451 Solar Street in the City of Syracuse (\$1,713,000)** (*Sponsored by Ms. Cody*)

- Purchase of property along Inner Harbor; 2 tax parcels from Cor for price of \$1.713M
- Also full SEQR review included – built upon prior; familiar area that has been studied
- 2003 – city did full environmental review for entire lake front, zoning amendments, full environmental assessment with negative declaration
- 2013 – Cor did full final environmental impact statement and review for entire purchase from city
- 2015 – Phase 1 environmental assessment of property
- 2008 – Site investigation work plan
- SUNY ESF also proposed campus on site; did some delineations, max loads for flood plains, prelim borings on the site
- Existing buildings removed; clean open site
- Small portion of site located in flood way – will work with city and FEMA requirements for flood plain construction
- Petroleum found in some borings, but nothing of concern; not a remedial site; will be dealt with DEC standards for any materials that have been moved

- Not intrusive building – going above, no sub or basements
- Will have vapor intrusion barrier, which is common practice for area; everything else done by permits
- WEP did capacity analysis
 - All discharge will go to WEP through county owned infrastructure and pipes to Metro
 - Confirmed capacity
- Completed new traffic impact study built upon prior studies with Cor
 - Consulted with city and NYSDOT – both have signed off
 - No substantial impact for traffic
 - Existing infrastructure sufficient; took planned I81 improvements into consideration
 - Comprehensive review with planned and contemplated work

Questions/Comments from the committee:

- Highly debated issue previously with a vote that took place, which is done
- Current request is an administrative step in execution of process in accordance with law
- Went to Facilities Committee and passed in committee, but there was significant absence in meeting
- Want to continue dialogue, but ask that it center on matter in front of committee
- Item has been to committee and was considered; it will go to the floor in June

- Concerned about traffic study; hard to believe that with the supposed influx of visitors, the traffic as is can handle it
 - Consulted with NYS and I81 experts; consulted with city of Syracuse – both gave their signoffs
 - Based on prior traffic study that is not too dated; followed procedures and studied
 - Traffic impact a technical report – it determined the current infrastructure consistent

- All customary steps, agencies, and process has been applied to the initiative; SEQR here no different than (i.e.) grocery store in a town or village
 - Exactly

- Cor bought the property for \$1,000?
 - Yes, but there was a lot to it
 - Cor had to remediate every parcel, as well as deposit a substantial sum in a remediation account to remediate the parcels – confirmed it has been spent
 - \$1,000 is not all in
 - Under \$1,000 for each parcel, but escrow of \$265,000 for a1; \$298,000 for a2; \$394,000 for a3; \$792,000 for b2; \$986,000 for c – all went into remediation account for use on the site and has been spent

- The city does the assessed value of properties
 - Do not believe they are 100%

- Assessment for 451 Solar from 2015-2022 was \$661,000, and it doubled last year to \$1.2M
 - Assessed value off the property website is \$253,952 and \$1.2M
 - Total assessment of \$1,453,900 on property tax website

- Why did it double last year? Has there been a conversation between the city and county on why it doubled?
 - Did not go back to 2022 on the assessment; will look back at records
 - Was not aware of it jumping

- According to research done, it was assessed from 2015-2022 at \$661,000, then it went to \$1.2M
 - Could have been the time it was reassessed
 - In the meantime the Loft and Iron Pier were constructed, the site was remediated
 - There are reasons for assessment to go up; assume it is a function of reassessment

- Why would the county pay more than the assessed value?
 - Assessed value may not be 100%, and it is a guess
 - Full market value is what someone in free market would pay, which is in excess of \$2.254M
 - Within the range of that and the appraisal; slightly below the appraisal

- The appraisal was listed on the same real property tax site; city function
- Appraisal was done at \$1.758M – done by comparisons
- Have not seen piece of real estate sell for an assessed value for at least a couple years; at end of day it is market and economy trends that drive pricing
- Do not know anyone that bought house or commercial property for assessment
- \$85M aquarium is going on piece of property in city, so anything touching that property goes up to

Request: A copy of the appraisal done by JF Realty

- Yes; it was done on 4/18/22 for both parcels
- Was there an appraisal done on other parcels in surrounding area?
 - Used a comparison method; not sure exactly what parcels were looked at; does not list the properties
- It is an undeveloped parcel along Inner Harbor that is now earmarked for \$85M aquarium that someone wants to build
- Do not want taxpayers paying more than the county should; want to make sure appraisal done on comparables
- Spending \$1.7M for land purchase; Is there an expectation of how much more the aquarium will cost?
- Law provides for the legislature to discuss and debate land purchase
- Not unreasonable to set up schedule of reporting on budget process for investment; maybe have it come to Planning Committee – get an update on how things are going
- If the legislature approves purchase of the land, then the county is good to go to build the aquarium
- Legislative body has the right ask for whatever it wants, and there is evidence of cooperation from administration when asking for what this body wants (i.e. having seat at table for Opioid Settlement)
- Willing to get this set up with Legislator Burtis – committee can ask for information along the way and talk with constituents to give them updates
- Have discussed fear of cost overrun with prices being higher; legislature needs to understand what is going on
 - Originally went out for \$85M, but the number was at the height of inflation
 - Seems to be leveling off; numbers coming back down

6. FINANCE: Ben Yaus, First Chief Deputy County Attorney

a. Authorizing the Compromise of Taxes, Interest and Penalties on Certain Properties Located Along Hillside Road in the Town of Lysander (\$71,159.65)

- Mr. Weber and Mr. Yaus worked on this with BP (Products of North America) and Buckeye (Pipe Line Company)
- Owned by Cold Springs Terminal (one individual) – one of the counties longest delinquent tax parcels
 - 4 tax parcels; owe substantial amount of back taxes
- On Seneca River (across Cold Springs bridge into Lysander; looking over river; used to have oil tanks there)
- Owner went into bankruptcy when the county tried foreclosing before
- 6 remedial parties – BP and Buckeye more actively involved in site
- BP and Buckeye reached out and came to compromise to tax issue and promote cleanup of the site
- Used to have giant petroleum silos on Seneca River – part of deal was tearing those down; in process of remediating
- 2 remedial parties involved need access from owner, which was proving difficult; have side agreement with owner for access that might expire soon
- Agreement:
 - Facilitates continued access through the owner
 - Will make localities whole with back taxes
 - Provides county \$71,000+ to compromise back taxes to 2022
 - Will allow county to bring them current, then owner will pay taxes going forward
 - Cleanup continues
- BP and Buckeye have separate order from DEC requiring them to fund \$1.5M in environmental benefit project
 - Something in impacted area that benefits community; brings people back to resources
 - Park there, Wegmans Dog Park; Long Branch Park

- BP and Buckeye agreed to spend the \$1.5M on county property and county approved project
- DEC must approve it, but county confident there will be a good project approved for that
- If the owner does not pay taxes going forward, then will handle through auction
- Property is hopefully cleaned up and further along; county will break even after many years

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

- Is there a large housing project being proposed at the property or next to it?
 - Not positive
- One in news lately is on other side of Rt 370; close proximity, but Hayes Road section; divided by Rt 370; not integral
- Buckeye Pipe Line – are they in the oil business?
 - Yes, they are an active company
- Why is the county giving Buckeye a discount? Oil and gas have gone up, so why not pay what they owe the County?
 - They do not owe the county, they are not the property owner
 - Buckeye is paying money on property they do not own to compromise on behalf of the owner to continue access
 - It is a good deal; not getting money from owner
 - If go by auction way, owner will go to bankruptcy
 - Owner has gotten BP and Buckeye to pay portion of the taxes
 - Not normal policy to have owner holding onto tax delinquent property, but this is an unusual situation
 - Oil site do not like to auction, as the county does not have petroleum protections
 - County does have protection under other types of environmental contamination
 - Under Petroleum Spill Law, do not have protections with chain of title
 - Do not generally auction petroleum impact sites
 - Still a great deal to get \$1.5M
 - BP and Buckeye’s other option is to pay fine to DEC, which is below \$1.5M; willing to do project vs. paying DEC

A vote was taken on the motion.

Ayes: 5 Abstentions: 2 (Kinne, Ervin); MOTION CARRIED.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



JAMIE McNAMARA, Clerk
Onondaga County Legislature

ATTENDANCE

COMMITTEE: **WAYS & MEANS COMMITTEE**
DATE: **MAY 23, 2023**

NAME (Please Print)	DEPARTMENT/AGENCY
Sue Tokley	OCC
Mark Mannin	OCC
Michelle Breckenbach	Syracuse.com
Marty Voss	DOT
Jessie McNamara	Environment
Briana KeKenny	//
Tom Papp	Parks
Ben Healey	Parks
Marty Skala	County Board
Donald Weber	Finance
Steve Morgan	Finance
Supervisor Henry	WER
Wendy March	Hemlock
Jacqueline LaSalle	Community
Jim Beebe	Leg.
Darcie Lesnick	Leg.
John DeSantis	Leg.
Tim Fratocchi	Leg.
Ben Yaw	Law