



Onondaga County Legislature

401 Montgomery Street * Court House, Room 407 * Syracuse, New York 13202
(315) 435-2070 * Fax: (315) 435-8434

JAMIE McNAMARA
Clerk

DAVID H. KNAPP
Chairman

KATHERINE FRENCH
Deputy Clerk

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MINUTES – SEPTEMBER 15, 2020 **CHRISTOPHER J. RYAN, CHAIRMAN**

MEMBERS PRESENT: *Mr. Rowley, Ms. Kuhn, Mr. Holmquist, Mr. McBride

ALSO ATTENDING: Chairman Knapp; please see attached

Chairman Ryan called the meeting to order at 12:02 p.m. *A motion was made by Ms. Kuhn, seconded by Mr. McBride to waive the reading of the previous committee meeting. Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED. A motion was made by Mr. McBride, seconded by Ms. Kuhn to waive the reading of the previous committee meeting. Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED.*

1. JUSTICE CENTER OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE:

- a. Confirming Re-Appointment to the Onondaga County Justice Center Oversight Committee
(Dr. Jennifer Yolles)**

Chairman Ryan said Dr. Yolles has an impressive resume, is doing great work and is highly recommended by Ms. Mims.

A motion was made by Mr. Holmquist, seconded by Ms. Kuhn, to approve this item. Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED.

Chairman Ryan asked that the departments talk about how the department has been doing, how COVID has affected the operation of their department, how they are doing with staffing, what the legislature can do to help, and what does the department foresee with potential budgetary questions and concerns with the budget in the fall.

*Mr. Rowley arrived at the meeting.

2. EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS: Julie Kolakowski Corn, Commissioner; Sean Sparks, Public Safety Shift Supervisor; Kevin Spraker, Supervisor of Dispatch Operations

a. INFORMATIONAL: Update

- Budget bare bones; doing everything to meet austerity; projecting to go over budget \$30,000 - \$50,000
- Have not lost core functions; 911 working and meeting demands; concerned it is not sustainable
- Able to meet budgetary requirements, but some major plans and purchases on contingency side pushed
- Cannot fail; have redundancies built in, but pushed those to the right to meet budget requirements
- Fine now, but if something breaks, have to fix; question where money will come from
- Center is doing well; amazed by employees every day; all essential personnel, and they have adjusted to different safety protocols including wearing masks all the time while on phones and radios
- Looking at Plexiglas and barriers to alleviate stress on employees; everyone coming in every day doing best they can
- COVID – biggest requirements are cleaning supplies, masks, wipes and hand sanitizer; \$30,000 in supplies cut down to \$11,000 due to austerity; couple hundred left; hit max for year
- Going to be ok and made purchases; may need more; working with budget analyst
- Emergency Management has been helpful providing masks and other PPE; Facilities augmented cleaning staff – very helpful; but supplies have been a struggle

- Maintaining CAD addresses in data base – software system used to communicate with Police, Fire and EMS vehicles; will be upgraded by end of year
- Worked with Health Department – every night get list of addresses of COVID quarantine patients (no names); add addresses to database and flag them for first responders; tremendously successful in helping with low rate COVID to first responders; time consuming and labor intensive – overtime cost
- Hiring freeze; not able to hire anyone this year; plans for Deputy Commissioner of Administration and Technology on hold; not able to hire anyone, which is really difficult in E911
- Have to maintain staffing for state mandates; have to answer 90% of calls in 10 sec or less; have to have someone staffing the floor at all times; typically hire 12 per year; lost 12 this year; did not get deputy position
- Funded 5 positions, but could use 12 to make up for retirements; lost another 3 today; 24 total unfunded positions and 13 eligible to retire; could lose 40 next year, which is a lot for a staff of 150
- Need pipeline of people; doing best to meet mandates and serve County; otherwise public safety will suffer
- If do not hire, then overtime goes up; no win situation; little savings, but not sustainable; have to have influx of people to promote and move up the ranks into key positions (senior people close to retirement)
- Contingency money – identified \$62,000 in next year's budget on contingency; i.e. radios – did not repair or get new batteries, did not use generators at tower sites, software and hardware upgrades on hold
- Parking lot falling apart; infrastructure – capital project on the books for a while

Chairman Ryan asked if contingency includes the things that they were planning on doing, but have not been able to do (i.e. the roof, fence, mobile communications network). Ms. Corn responded that everything that was approved is happening including the CAD update, the mobile data project and the imagery. The things in the operational budget are what she is discussing.

Mr. Sparks:

- All critical things are up and running; do have secondary buildings in field that house state and federal partners, ancillary equipment served by a second generator
- Taken 4 generators offline - no longer maintaining and purchasing fuel; if power goes out, then tell state and federal partners that they cannot afford to keep generators running
- Spending money for OCICS running; radios - doing required maintenance; ancillary systems out there that are running with older technology - not investing in upgrading (some statewide channels, repeater channels)
- Things not covered by main public safety system

Chairman Ryan requested a list of the ancillary projects that are being put on the back burner.

Ms. Corn:

- Did not accomplish training, which is critical for staff; very limited training; unable to use training room until recently
- Did not put in budget, but will be on wish list; budget is \$700,000 less in pro forma budget than last year
- Need \$250,000 – \$500,000 back to meet critical needs
- Training - getting recertified is ~\$3,000; if wait, then have to certify all over again for \$9,000; need to certify 40 people to be trainers on the floor
- Discovery Law impact – forced sweeping criminal justice reform; affected 911 recording system – have to provide recordings for court proceedings in less time; more work
- Previously had 2 part-time employees on as needed basis for recordings, but now have 4 part-time and 1 fulltime
- Part-time budget increased; will need for next year for to meet mandate and demand

Ms. Kuhn asked if the call volume had an up or down shift during the pandemic. Ms. Corn responded:

- Call volume went down due to lack of activity, then ramped up again during the riots and protests; steady ever since
- Average calls per day are 1,700 to 2,000; during COVID it was down to 1,500
- Riots and protests – Syracuse Police asked E911 to have dispatchers on site; helped with planning when able; worked with the EOC; good learning experience and partnership

Chairman Knapp said earlier Ms. Corn mentioned the department anticipating being over budget by \$30,000 - \$50,000 and asked what the main driver is. Ms. Corn replied that it is her understanding that she cannot combine any salary or overtime savings with the supplies and maintenance line. The recording system upgrade is critical for helping the discovery problem, and they are working with IT to automate it. Mr. Spraker commented that the money they planned for was cut. Chairman Knapp asked if this is off the scaled down contingencies, and Ms. Corn said yes. The original budget was fine, and they have met the austerity cut. Overtime is staying at a reasonable rate, since no one is going anywhere, but that rate will skyrocket.

Mr. Rowley asked if the major projects that they issued debt for are continuing, and Ms. Corn answered absolutely. The issue is in the operational budget where they build in cushion in case a generator fails, a radio breaks, or chairs have to be replaced.

Chairman Ryan thanked Ms. Corn for her time and said he appreciates what they are doing. Chairman Knapp thanked Ms. Corn and her department as well.

3. **PROBATION DEPARTMENT:** Phil Galuppi, Commissioner a. **INFORMATIONAL: Update**

- COVID – doing good job with providing services to public and working remotely
- Probation has 83 employees - 65 probation offices, 9 supervisors, 3 administrators and clerical staff
- Started bringing employees back 2 days a week
- Providing services and focusing on case management - checking in on people to make sure basic needs met
- As crisis continued, focused more on rehabilitation; continuing with home visits from porch at safe distance, or inside with PPE and social distance
- Relief from state with mandate; not bringing probationers into public or office; doing remote with video conference or home visits
- Increased use of technology:
 1. Remote breath monitor - (i.e.) DWI offender, will put monitor on residence and give schedule of when to randomly blow into unit, can test from home and ensure leading sober life; balancing efficiency of units and costs
 2. SCRAM units on leg like GPS bracelet, which monitors their sweat and tracks blood alcohol level; generally for DWI offenders, but have offenders with another charge using it

- Proactive enforcement searches slowed down during crisis; started picking that back up, doing (i.e.) searches for guns
- Done well given fact people not coming to building; if someone sentenced at court, need to contact immediately by phone/video to go over sentencing, conditions and other information
- Careful on violent violations on probation – working with jail to control population; only incarcerate those when there's a true public safety issue
- Slow time while courts closed - not processing cases or sentencing; now courts are back in action doing sentencing, violations of probation, etc.; things are picking up
- In 2020, started working in DestiNY for community interaction; positive interaction with customers; if see someone that should not be there, then take proactive approach to have them removed in a friendly way
- DestiNY likes Probation's interactions with shoppers; done infrequently, but asked Probation to do regularly; contracted with them, and started in August; has gone well; appreciate getting reimbursed for work in the community
- June Early Retirement Incentive (ERI) – lost 2 probation officers and 1 clerical; expect 2 more probation officers to take ERI by end of year; down 4 probation officers and 1 clerical by end of 2020; significant hit
- Right now managing because of lower numbers with the courts not in full gear
- Increased use of smart phones - all probation officers have department issued cell phones for safety measures and communication; also use flip phones with capability of calling
- Smart phones allow for things like video conferencing and taking pictures of evidence (i.e. recycle bin of beer cans)
- COVID – increased smart phones to probation officers; less than half of the officers have smart phones; great help, but cautious of every dime out of department
- Holding our own for 2020; 2021 – as probationers coming back in, will be busier; well equipped
- Budget is tight, and they are watching every dime; will be down 4 probation officers at end of year
- As soon as courts open full gear, will get requests; not all on probation, but pre-probation; i.e. requests for presentence investigations; once those are done, then person is on probation 8 weeks later
- Courts opening by (i.e.) October, will feel it in full process by November and December; certainly cannot be down 4 people in 2021; know the business is coming; have salary saved some and will continue to do so
- Would like to replace at least 2 probation officers sooner than later

Ms. Kuhn asked if parolees are not allowed to be in the mall, and Mr. Galuppi answered no, they are more than welcome at the shopping center. If a probation officer sees a probationary at the mall, it will be a friendly encounter. At the same time, if the person is being a “knucklehead”, then the probation officer will tell them to go home, and they will discuss it in the next week. This will be a better outcome; instead of a police officer encounter. Ms. Kuhn asked if Mr. Galuppi has any data regarding the violent violations increasing, since there is no consequence. Mr. Galuppi answered that there are some concerns. For example, during COVID there were no drug or alcohol tests. A couple weeks ago, Mr. Galuppi said to his officers, that if they need to do a drug screen, then do it from a safe distance (went through protocol for testing). Mr. Galuppi said there was an increase in technical violations, but he cannot say that as a result they are committing more crimes. With confidence, he can say yes, but he cannot show any data on that. The police arrests, with the exception of violent crimes, is down. Is crime down, or are the police not making the same arrests as they did a year ago?

Chairman Knapp commented that they are out there getting it done, and he understands and appreciates everything they do. Mr. Galuppi said thank you, and he appreciates the support the Legislature has given him. Chairman Ryan and Ms. Kuhn also said thank you.

4. INFORMATIONAL: Fire Advisory Services Board

Chairman Ryan welcomed Mr. Vigil and Mr. Van Dyke, and he would like to initiate and create a better working relationship.

Chairman Knapp said the Fire Advisory Services Board has been around a long time, and the most recent enabling resolution was in 1995. Since that time, there have been new legislators, new County Executives and new members on the board. This is a good time for a quick update on the status of the volunteer fire service in the county. There may be some tweaking to the resolution in the next month to reflect the 25 years that have passed.

Mr. Van Dyke:

- Have not had an open line of communication with the County Executive's Office; would like to open it
- Charter says they are here to serve the Fire Coordinator and County Executive
- He would like to open it up to ask: what does the Legislature need from the board? What can the board look into?
- Working with County Fire Chiefs Board to try to have unified front and work together; different committees for fire service; come together and work as a team to come up with ideas to make fire service better
- Some departments take ~2,000 calls a year with a 100 members, and others fielding 150 calls a year with 12 members
- Try to come up with a cache of policies and resources; smaller departments do not have resources to investigate and come up with policy; have a very generic step in right direction, so not reinventing the wheel

Chairman Knapp said Legislator Ryan and himself met with the board at the Manlius Fire Department and there are great training facilities there that would be a huge help to smaller departments. Three important things are training, recruitment (challenge for volunteer fire departments), and a general message together to pull everyone in the same direction. Chairman Knapp added that they wanted to open the line of communication back up, so everyone knows who to talk to.

Chairman Ryan stated that he believes all the members appreciate the value of what the volunteer firefighters do for the county.

Mr. McBride said a couple years ago there was talk of a regional training center, and he asked if that was still on the table. Mr. Van Dyke responded that it is nothing the Fire Advisory Board has been involved in. He's heard the same conversations. Mr. Vigil commented that they sent a letter to the previous County Executive, but they did not get an answer. Mr. Van Dyke added that for a county this size to have one center to go to would be good. Monroe and other counties have big training facilities that everyone in their counties can use. He thinks a combined training facility would be helpful.

Chairman Ryan said he appreciates their time, and he looks forward to the board letting the legislature know what they may need.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 12:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



JAMIE McNAMARA, Clerk
Onondaga County Legislature

ATTENDANCE

COMMITTEE: **PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE**

DATE: **SEPTEMBER 15, 2020**

NAME (Please Print)	DEPARTMENT/AGENCY
Warren Virgil	Onond Co Fire Advisory Board
Greg VanDyke	Onond Co Fire Advisory Board
John DeSantis	Leg
Julie Corn	911
S. SPARKS	911
Ken Spraker	911
Phil Galuppi	Probation
Sandy Miller-Martus	FinOps
Yvette Velasco	LAW
Diana Green	Friends of

* * *

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION COMMITTEE MINUTES - SEPTEMBER 15, 2020 CASEY E. JORDAN, CHAIRMAN

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. Holmquist, Mrs. Abbott-Kenan

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mrs. Tassone, Dr. Chase

ALSO ATTENDING: Chairman Knapp, Mr. Bush, Ms. Kuhn, Ms. Cody; see attached list

Chairman Jordan called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. *A motion was made by Mr. Holmquist, seconded by Mr. Jordan, to waive the reading of the proceedings from the previous committee. MOTION CARRIED. A motion was made by Mr. Holmquist, seconded by Mrs. Abbott-Kenan, to approve the minutes of the previous committee meeting. MOTION CARRIED.*

1. **WATER ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION:** Frank Mento, P.E., Commissioner
 - a. **2020 Transfer Resolution**

Mr. Mento:

- Transferring surplus balances from salaries, employee benefits, travel and training, and maintenance, utilities and rents accounts to supplies and materials for chemicals
- A critical process was down and not using chemicals in 2018 & 2019; now running and the reason for the shortfall
- No net impact on the budget; chemical usage accounted for in 2021 budget

In answer to Chairman Jordan, Mr. Mento said that their budget will finish the year in the black.

A motion was made by Mr. Holmquist to approve this item.

Chairman Knapp asked if there was also a price increase. Mr. Mento responded that two things contributed to the deficit, increased chemical use, and a price increase. Chairman Knapp said that he wanted to be sure this was part of the record.

Seconded by Ms. Abbott-Kenan. Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED.

2. **ONONDAGA COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT:** Mark Burger, CPESC, Executive Director
 - a. **INFORMATIONAL: Ash Tree Update**

Mr. Burger:

- Introduced Craig Dennis, Board President, and Teresa Link, Arborist
- 50% of the program complete, cutting from the epicenter out

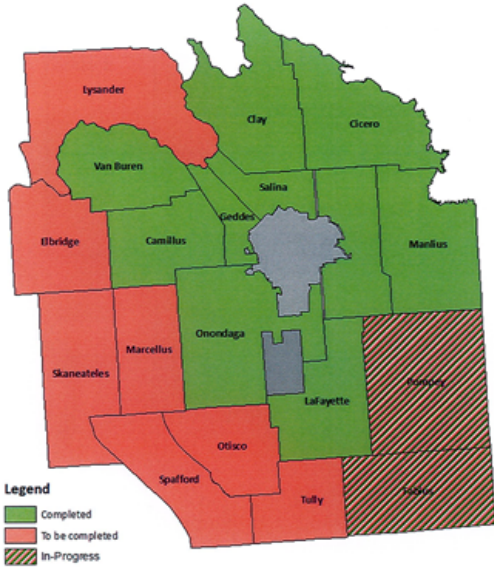
Onondaga County Ash Tree Management:

Project Status and Plans for 2021 (Phases VII, VIII)



Produced by Teresa Link
Conservation District Technician
Onondaga County Soil & Water Conservation District

Status of ash tree removals along County highway right-of-ways:



Onondaga County Ash Tree Management Program

Key Points

Ash trees removed	16,420 trees
Non-ash trees planted	2,457 trees
County ash trees injected	397 trees
Ash tree removal contracts	43
Number of grants secured	6 grants
Grant money secured	\$261,000
Number of MWBE contracts	10
Total spent with MWBE businesses	\$349,857.74
Percent MWBE business in 2020	25.7%
Total spent with Onondaga Earth Corps (OEC)	\$177,661.23
Community outreach tree planting events	6 events
Volunteer participation in planting events	157 volunteers
Value of volunteer participation	\$15,970.04
Speaking engagements	13
Conservation technical assistance regarding EAB	44

- OCSWCD held a contractor training in 2019. Topics included safety and Department of Labor requirements
- Impeccable safety record with contractors on our projects. Weekly safety checks by OCSWCD
- Supported 3 other counties regarding ash tree management (St. Lawrence, Oswego and Tompkins)
- Supported the Towns of Cicero, Clay, DeWitt, Marcellus & the Village Skaneateles regarding ash tree management
- Costs of ash tree removals have come in, on average, 50% lower than projected during the planning and budgeting of this project. This is due to our procurement policy and competitive bidding amongst contractors
- OCSWCD continues to support OEC, an inner-city job readiness program, by planting around 300 trees per year

- Very active in planting non-ash trees especially in county parks; inject about 400 trees high-value trees per year
- Respectful of legislator's wish – only grind public safety hazard stubs
- Very successful with minority women-owned business and bringing new contractors along in this business
- Kudos to the team for all they do

In answer to Chairman Jordan, Mr. Burger said that this is exclusively for ash trees on county-owned land and county-owned highway right of ways.

Chairman Knapp said that this is an example of a project that is way ahead of schedule and under budget. Mr. Burger and his team have done a masterful job of leveraging bids for the projects and working with minority women and veteran-owned businesses in an industry that doesn't have a lot of those businesses in it. No one has been injured and we are ahead of the game compared to our neighbors.

Mr. Burger shared that he is grateful to live in this county with the leadership, especially during this COVID-19 crisis. He is thankful for all their efforts to keep everyone safe and gainfully employed.

3. **OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENT:** Travis Glazier, Director; Marty Voss, Commissioner a. **INFORMATIONAL: Murphy's Island Update**

Mr. Glazier:



- Barrier wall with concrete slab allows for deep water fishing, one of the few places on Onondaga Lake where this is possible without a boat
- Fishing pier will be going in and allow for 12 to 15 feet of depth



- Part of the new trail segment on Honeywell property, an NRD project
- Credit goes to the legislature for due diligence in taking time to understand the NRD process and recognizing the value of these projects





- Elevated wetland pond on left; difficult to see that the more distance water has the pillars Mr. Voss will be speaking of
- This is the last curve before going over the bridge over the railroad

- Trees on right left during NRD remediation process
- Trail will be county supported as part of the Loop the Lake Trail; not paid for with county dollars
- Heavily used section of the trail; trails have been a huge asset throughout COVID-19, timing very fortunate, able to open additional segments of the trail

Mr. Voss:

- Mr. Glazier and the county executive set the agenda and terms for Loop the Lake, DOT builds the parts sponsored by the county and Parks maintains the assets when complete
- Much teamwork and a lot of progress in the last 2-years
- Images of the trail from October 2019 to the present were displayed



- A viewing platform is located on the west shore; can see the entire city skyline
- The piece completed in 2019 brought us from the west shore lot, down the hill, across ditch A, to the boat launch; 2020 Honeywell piece brought us from the boat launch and pump station to Harbor Brook; DOT currently constructing from Harbor Brook to Hiawatha
- A massive bridge will go from Harbor Brook along the southwest shore of the lake, then over the CSX tracks landing on Roth Steel property and ending at Hiawatha



- The viewing platform above will have a view of Onondaga Lake
- Bridge has 7 segments, all weathered steel; 3 segments installed on Thursday
- Segment 4 is 220 feet and will go over the railroad tracks
- 30-minute drone video provides a good picture of the work and the trail path <https://vimeo.com/457038152/b82389c71f>
- Project on track; anticipate opening this segment at the end of this construction period
- Once at Hiawatha will get down to Murphy's Island
- Salina extension is the next segment; just awarded for design
- Each step has complications; incredible accomplishment over the last 4 years
- Great asset for the community, all socioeconomic segments of the community participate in its use

Mr. Glazier:

- Mr. Voss's team is doing a great job with these complicated issues
- Wetland permit issued for Murphy's Island, very extensive process, remedial work continues
- Feasibility Study under review by the DEC; DEC expects to have ROD in place by year-end
- Hasn't been a ton of environmental progress, permit good for 10 years; now continue work with DOT and design team to determine the next steps in the process, the final extension will be planned from Murphy's Island

Chairman Jordan asked if the location for the trail had been determined for Murphy's Island. Mr. Glazier responded that it is in the wetland permit. There was a 90 day public comment period and a public hearing; received over 300 comments.

Chairman Jordan asked that legislators be provided with a map showing the location for the trail on Murphy's Island.

In answer to Chairman Jordan, Mr. Glazier said that the lake bottom is overseen by the DEC. However, the DEC indicated that anchors are not an issue for capping areas. Chairman Jordan said that this does not seem right; some of it already slid without anchors being used.

Chairman Jordan asked if the Look the Lake project was on budget. Mr. Voss responded that their segment is within budget. It is the largest federal aid project Onondaga County has ever been involved with and the money is obligated on the 5-year revolving schedule through SMTCC. All the resources are in place and they have all the approvals needed to finish the project by the end of the construction season.

Chairman Jordan asked if any portions of the trail were being put on hold due to current budget constraints. Mr. Voss responded not that he is aware of. It is federally funded so the money was obligated 3 or 4 years ago under a federal transportation program.

Chairman Jordan said that monies have approved for the trail. Mr. Voss said that the project now under construction is federally funded' the only local portion is the 5% share, which was funded in work plans 2 to 3 years ago.

Chairman Jordan asked if the next segment would be from Hiawatha Boulevard to Murphy's Island. Mr. Voss responded that Hiawatha Boulevard is becoming part of the trail to take you from where the trail ends, next to the gates of Metro, and over the creek to connect to the Creek Walk. From the Creek Walk, you can go into the City of Syracuse or behind the mall to the Lake Lounge. The next segment to be built is on Murphy's Island. The Salina Extension will take you from Murphy's Island, over Ley Creek, behind the mall, and to the gate of Onondaga Lake Park.

In answer to Chairman Jordan, Mr. Voss said that the next segment is locally funded and he has had no discussion with the executive's office about putting this on hold.

In answer to Ms. Kuhn, Chairman Jordan said that the Onondaga Lake Lounge was being funded by the city. Mr. Voss said that it is part of the Creek Walk. Ms. Kuhn said that she thought this wasn't going to happen because the bid was over budget. Chairman Knapp said that the county is going to manage the bid process but the city is funding it; hasn't heard the city is not moving forward.

Chairman Knapp asked the timing for the next leg to the Creek Walk. Mr. Glazier said that the bridge Mr. Voss just reviewed doubles as part of the state's Empire State Trail, which is scheduled to open at the end of 2020. State DOT has a project for signage and improvements along Hiawatha for crossing to connect to the Creek Walk, which will also be done by the end of 2020.

Chairman Knapp asked if there was a rough estimate of when the next segment in design would start construction. Mr. Voss answered that it could start in 2021, probably a one-season project, working through how it will be built, and hanging chads have to be addressed before moving forward which they are now working on.

Chairman Jordan adjourned the meeting at 1:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



KATHERINE M. FRENCH, Deputy Clerk
Onondaga County Legislature

ATTENDANCE

COMMITTEE: Environmental Protection

DATE: September 15, 2020

NAME	DEPARTMENT/AGENCY
PLEASE PRINT	
Diane Green	Friends of Onondaga Lake Bald
Alison Koez	Onondaga Audubon Eagles
Joanne Niedzwicki	Friends of Onondaga Lake Bald
Teresa Link	OCSWCD
Craig Dennis	OCSWCD
Mark Binger	OCSWCD
Frank Wietro	OCDWEP
Hazel Paulross	Onondaga Nation HEIF
Awhenijast Myers	Onondaga Nation
John DeSantis	Leg

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COUNTY FACILITIES COMMITTEE MINUTES – SEPTEMBER 15, 2020 DEBRA J. CODY, CHAIR

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ms. Kuhn, Mr. Bush

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mrs. Tassone, Mrs. Ervin

ALSO ATTENDING: Chairman Knapp, Mr. Jordan; please see attached

Chair Cody called the meeting to order at 2:58 p.m. *A motion was made by Ms. Kuhn, seconded by Mr. Bush to waive the reading and approve the minutes of the previous committee meeting. Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED.*

1. PARKS AND RECREATION:
a. Tour – NBT Bank Stadium

Chair Cody stated that Mr. Wixson offered a tour of the stadium to see the improvements that have been made.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



JAMIE McNAMARA, Clerk
Onondaga County Legislature

ATTENDANCE

COMMITTEE: COUNTY FACILITIES COMMITTEE

DATE: SEPTEMBER 15, 2020

NAME (Please Print)	DEPARTMENT/AGENCY
Brian Kelley	PARKS
Darcie Lesniak	Leg.
John DeSantis	Leg.
Isabelle Harris	C.E.
Mary Beth Primo	C.E.
Archie Wixson	FACILITIES

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PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES - SEPTEMBER 16, 2020 KEVIN A. HOLMQUIST, CHAIRMAN

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. McBride, Mrs. Abbott-Kenan

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mr. Williams, Mr. Kinne

ALSO ATTENDING: Chairman Knapp, Ms. Kuhn, Mr. Bush; *see attached list*

Chairman Holmquist called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. *A motion was made by Mr. McBride, seconded by Mrs. Abbott-Kenan, to waive the reading of the proceedings from the previous committee. MOTION CARRIED. A motion was made by Mr. McBride, seconded by Mrs. Abbott-Kenan, to approve the minutes of the previous committee meeting. MOTION CARRIED.*

1. ONONDAGA COUNTY CULTURAL RESOURCES TRUST:

- a. Confirming Reappointments to the Onondaga County Cultural Resources Trust (Regina McArthur, Gregory Lancette)

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

2. VISIT SYRACUSE: Danny Liedka, President/CEO

- a. Designating Visit Syracuse as the Agency Authorized to Make Application to the New York State Department of Economic Development and to Receive Matching Funds Therefrom Under the New York State Tourist Promotion Act for 2021

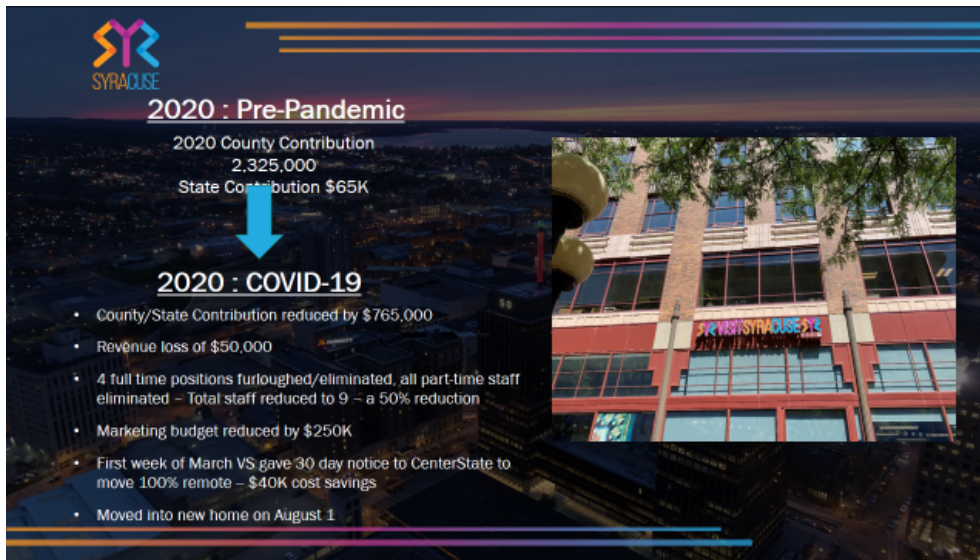
Mr. Liedka:

- Annual renewal requires matching funds
- These funds dried up this year; need designation on the record to be eligible for these funds if they come back next year

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

b. INFORMATIONAL: Update

- Thanked legislators for their leadership in unprecedented times, doing a great job
- Visit Syracuse greatly affected by COVID-19



- More than a 1/3 of the budget was vaporized, had to rethink what we were doing, could not compromise the future for the current situation
- Had to make tough choices; ½ of the budget is payroll and benefits
- No conventions to service, able to pull that money back; marketing and sales team budget are the most untouchable but had to be reduced
- Became an independent company in April 2017; staff prepared and completely remote in March of 2020,
- Signed lease agreement in the fall of 2019 for our own space; new office is located in the State Tower, perfectly spaced with an air infiltration system that keeps employees safe, temperature scanners and hand sanitizers, ready to do business based on the current climate; invite all to come and view, located on the 1st floor, across from City Hall Commons



- Prepared 2021 budget based on the number provided from the county budget
- Have to absorb transportation costs; pre-COVID 45 people could go on a bus, post-COVID costs could triple or quadruple, it is unknown, probably the biggest weakness
- To service events have to prepare with technology, i.e. touchscreens, virtual assistant and things of that nature, costs will escalate



- Can write this year off, 1st quarter was a big challenge to create confidence level
- Now able to compete with NYC for people who are no longer comfortable there; currently down to us and Atlanta for a major piece of business that was going to NYC, 10 million-dollar impact, pitch all the advantages of coming to this area, i.e. ability to space, Health department and county government have this under control, rapid testing



- Started in this position in 2017 with one month, probably exceed 55,000 room nights booked this year, almost double what we had 3 years prior; proud of the sales team, thinking differently, reassuring customers that this is a great place to do business, if 2021 hangs on it should be a pretty good year and 2022 will be even better



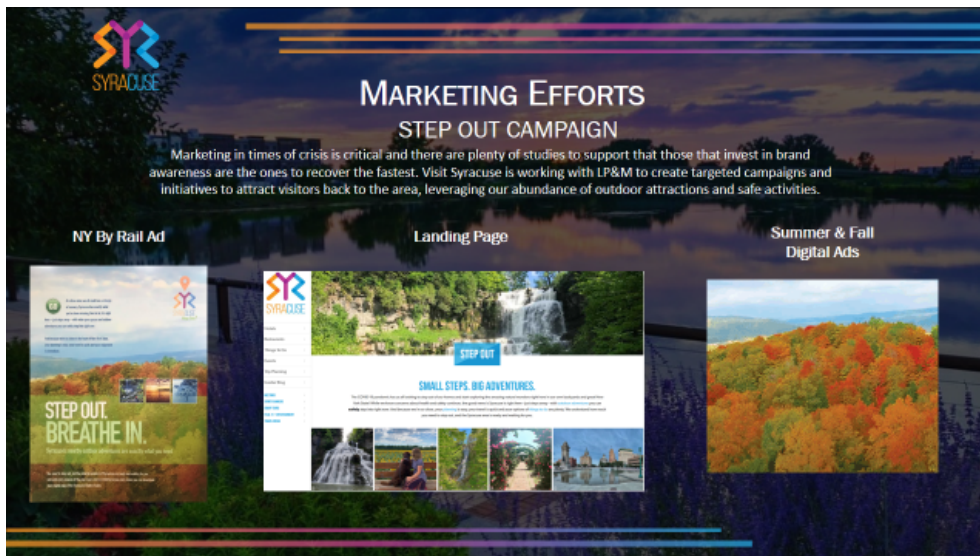
- Do a great job with what we have, a small but mighty marketing team
- Almost 22,000 website visitors per month, average 4 to 5 clicks, in over 3.5 minutes; find information appealing and are coming back
- Bookings previously managed through a third-party with heavy commissions, now pull the data from every hotel, able to get the rate they want, with a true representation of the inventory, don't pay any fees; book direct started in January, easily saving hotels \$200,000 in fees thus far
- Neighborhood page created so that those working from home can continue to communicate with their friends



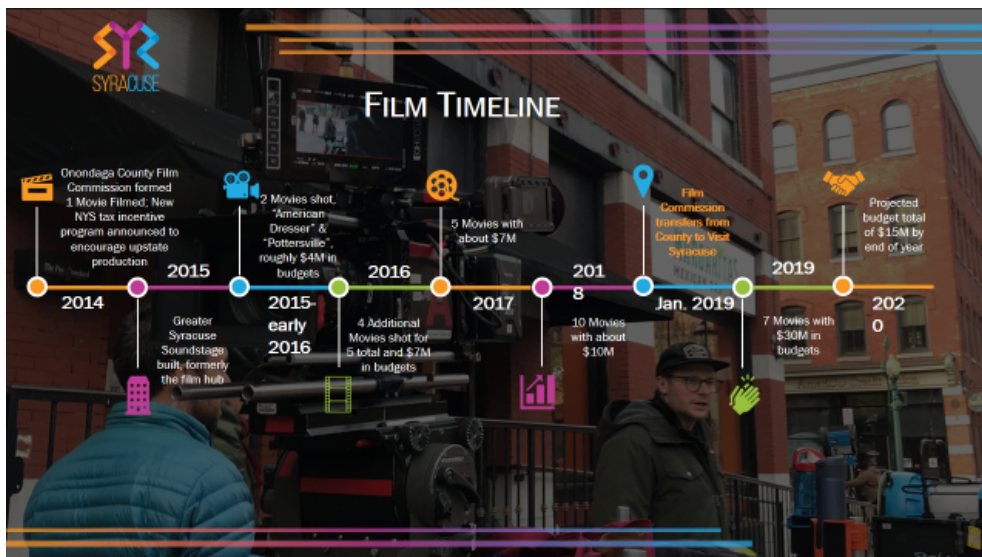
- People are dying to get out and do something, mostly outdoors, paying special attention to that



- Lobbied elected federal officials for support, not eligible for PPE money, haven't seen much push, hope it changes in the future; quotes are from region colleagues

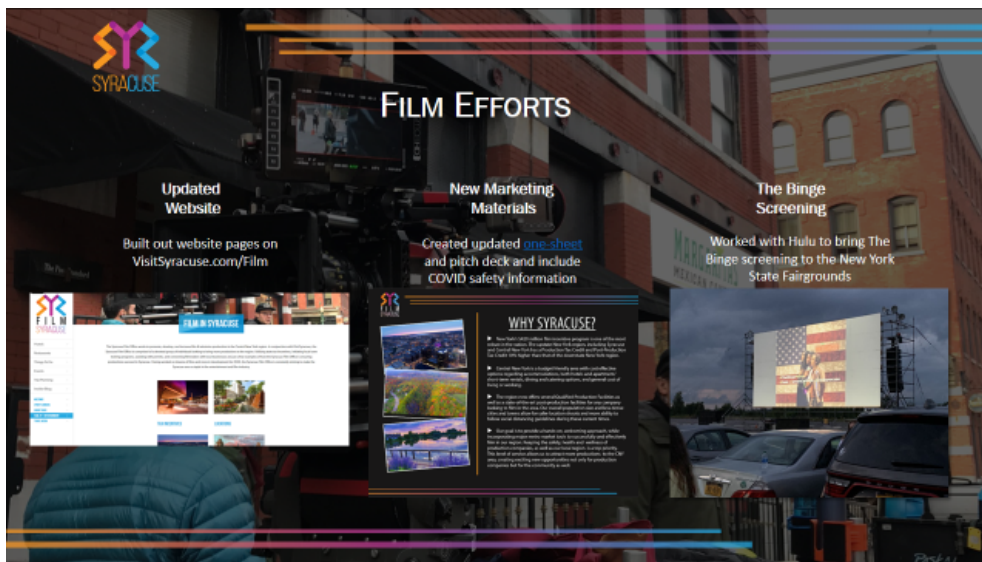


- Ads are all about the great outdoors, piggybacking and aligned with airport message; studies show that those with brand awareness are the first to recover, focused on that
- Hired local marketing company for a small amount of money, doing phased approached ads, each will be different as the consumer changes almost daily based on restrictions for coming to NYS, are prepared to be nimble
- Step Out replacing Do Your Thing campaign; played portions of 3 video ads, important to have real people doing real things – not actors



- Film moved from the county to VS in 2018, went from \$7 million to well over \$32 million, were on track to do \$50 million in movies this year, COVID ate into our ability to do things, didn't quit, got other venues certified for the tax credit, i.e. Oncenter, Red House, fairgrounds, have safe venues for movies; shooting commercial today for Subaru
- Now will do about \$20 million in film for this year, exceeding promise of \$15 million; promised \$20 million for next year, essentially tripling what we said we would do
- Producers given the royal treatment, word spreads fast, we are the total package, film is well served in our office





- Proud of our film efforts and those will continue in the future

Chairman Holmquist said all appreciate their efforts and their ability to quickly pivot with the pandemic. Mr. Liedka is always looking ahead and very transparent with the legislature. Mr. Liedka responded that the support is appreciated, and don't be surprised to see another proposal from him to take another entity to another level. He is all about moving forward and helping generate sales tax, which makes the world go around. It is all the team, who are doing 3 and 4 jobs but no one is complaining. They are appreciative to have a job and know they can help to bring people back based on their efforts.

In answer to Mrs. Abbott-Kenan, Mr. Liedka said that they have 9 staff, 4 are full-time. Mrs. Abbott-Kenan asked the areas affected. Mr. Liedka responded that they lost an administrative assistant, a convention services coordinator, a marketing person, part-time film people, and part-time personnel for the Preble site. Don't want to go on this way forever, especially from a marketing standpoint and the ability to buy business. We are doing the best we can and hope this is temporary.

Mr. McBride said that Mr. Liedka seemed very optimistic or bullish on 2021 and asked what his gauge was. Mr. Liedka responded that he doesn't know that he would use the term bullish. The first quarter is concerning and is the marker for him; whichever way that goes will tell him what the rest of the year will do. Don't believe we will be back to normal until 2022; a lot on the books for 2021. Something changes every day; our message is don't comprise your convention based on what is happening today, wait as long as you can. Can give a better update month by month.

Chairman Knapp asked if more companies might opt to save money by doing things virtually rather than having conventions. Mr. Liedka responded that he sees this as a concern, and that is why they are trying to look into other ventures; have to put rooms on the books one way or another.

Chairman Knapp asked if he thought hotels would go under because of this. Mr. Liedka answered that corporately managed hotels won't go away; smaller ones will be in jeopardy.

Mr. Liedka thanked the committee for their time.

3. SYRACUSE-ONONDAGA COUNTY PLANNING AGENCY: Dan Kwasnowski, Director
a. INFORMATIONAL: Update

Mr. Kwasnowski:

- Excited, have a strong planning program, the office never closed, administrative tasked have all been on target
- Completed Ag District renewal process in the Spring
- **GIS:**
 - Shout out to Mr. Jordan, worked tirelessly from home daily preparing the dashboard for tracked county cases, continues to do so, coordinates with the state and county health departments; received many compliments on the website information and ease of use
 - GIS department has been super busy throughout COVID
 - Procured new aerial imagery for the county, helps with planning efforts, also helps developers see what is currently on the ground; will fly again this fall
- **Empire State Trail:**
 - is being done by CNY RPDB/SMTC, just received the final mapping draft, project runs across the county to the Northern end of Onondaga Lake
 - Will focus on how to take advantage of the trail to get people off the trail and into villages and commercial centers; good timing, will lead to a long list of capital projects
 - Will help residents and visitors enhance the quality of life
 - Hope to have a plan out within the next couple of months
- **Farmland Protection Plan:**
 - Ready to kick off, setting up contract with a consultant
 - Ag and Farmland Protection Committee has oversight, will focus on agritourism, where outdoor and agritourism intersect, what draws people out
 - Should kickoff in January 2021
- **Town Planning Grants:**
 - Working with towns, county executive award announcement should be soon; 6 awards, working with towns to ensure they can still provide the match and the scope is still good
 - Trying to align with the budget season for towns

- **Countywide Plan:**

- Past 2-years have been working with town supervisors, mayors, legislators, and the county executive to determine what the themes will be
- Currently, have a \$100,000 grant from Empire State Development; the plan will kick off in 2021
- Excited about all these plans, engagement is the challenge; like working from the ground up and bringing resources to address problems either in the short or long term
- Engagement will be a moving target, hope to be in communities in person by spring; need consultants to augment staff and bring the best technology so we can get our communities on the ground, very important to this plan
- Should take off in January

- **Agriculture Council – FoodPlan CNY:**

- Plan being formulated by a professor from ESF and SU; should hit the ground soon
- Pandemic pointed out that things can go wrong when the food system breaks down; county executive and chairman were very focused and engaged on the need for this plan
- i.e., farms contracted to provide milk in 6-gallon bags had no gallon jugs and had to dump milk when Wegmans was limiting milk sales to 1 gallon; shed light that this plan was needed
- Ag and food industry processing, packaging, and storing is a huge potential economic developer for this county; have ag and transportation systems need to bring the two together and be a hub for reducing waste
- Packaging and the way it can be marketed is a big part of what we could do in the county to provide jobs
- Looking forward to planning coming out and implementing that in the future

- **City Planning Projects:**

ReZone:

- March and April developed policy amendments, fairly technical; hopefully up for adoption by year-end
- Developers and councilors are now asking for it; current zoning terrible, need the law for people to be able to develop projects predictably

Lakefront Area Local Waterfront Revitalization Program Plan Update:

- Interesting plan, fairly large contract
- Opportunity to relook at this area; land use zoning is set, can focus on tourism, trails, mobility, and using the market; leads to capital funding
- Key is to look at the development and see how this can all work together; should be hitting the ground in January

City Parks/Rand Tract/Bird Sanctuary Recreation Plan

- Located on the southwest corner of the city; very large track, part park
- Working with ESF on a recreation plan to renew the park; effects the city, Town of Onondaga, Geddes, etc.
- **Zoning Administration:**
- Office never stopped, moving along strong; much work next year on resetting processes to make things more efficient
- **SMTC:**
 - Working on 4 projects to improve pedestrian safety in the town and village of Skaneateles, village of Manlius, and in Mattydale

Chairman Holmquist said that the bottom-up approach, meeting with community leaders to hear their needs, has been a game-changer. Mrs. Abbott-Kenan echoed the Chair's comments.

Mrs. Abbott-Kenan asked the timeframe for riding a bike on the Empire State Trail. Mr. Kwasnowski responded that certain sections are open now. Per Mr. Glazier, the spring of 2021 will be the kickoff.

Chairman Knapp echoed Chair Holmquist and Mrs. Abbott-Kenan's comments as well. He also gave a shout out to Don Jordan, Robin Coon, and the rest of the SOCPA team for their effort, time, and enthusiasm in the Ag Council program.

Chairman Knapp asked if they will be able to catch up next year. Mr. Kwasnowski answered that he is cautiously optimistic; will be stretched fairly thin.

In answer to Chairman Knapp, Mr. Kwasnowski said that the Pictometry images are accessible for all via their website. Chairman Knapp said that this is a handy tool for legislators and residents. Mr. Kwasnowski said that it is a huge asset used by thousands.

Chairman Holmquist- thank you well done

A motion was made by Mr. McBride, seconded by Mrs. Abbott-Kenan, to adjourn the meeting. Motion Carried.

The meeting adjourned the meeting at 10:12 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



KATHERINE M. FRENCH, Deputy Clerk
Onondaga County Legislature

ATTENDANCE

COMMITTEE: Planning & Economic Development

DATE: September 16, 2020

NAME	DEPARTMENT/AGENCY
PLEASE PRINT	
Carol Eaton	Visit Syracuse
Danny Liedka	Visit Syracuse
John DeSantis	Leg
Dan Kwasniewski	SocPA
Megan Costa	SocPA
Writte Velasco	LAW
Anne Marie Manatta	Veterans
Gady Meiti	Veterans
Tim Frateschi	Leg

* * *

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE MINUTES – SEPTEMBER 16, 2020 JULIE ABBOTT-KENAN, CHAIR

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dr. Chase, Ms. Cody, Mr. Bush

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mr. Kinne

ALSO ATTENDING: Chairman Knapp; also see attached

Chair Abbott-Kenan called the meeting to order at 10:31 a.m. *A motion was made by Dr. Chase, seconded by Ms. Cody to waive the reading and approve the minutes of the previous committee meeting. Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED.*

Chair Abbott-Kenan took the agenda items out of order.

3. HEALTH DEPARTMENT: Dr. Indu Gupta, Commissioner

a. Amending the 2020 County Budget to Make Funding Available for use in Connection with a Grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and Authorizing the Execution of Agreement (\$840,946)

- Grant acceptance from CDC for case investigation; awarded \$840,946
- Period starting July 1st – June 30, 2022; extension needed - even with vaccine, work will continue
- Will help in hiring people for contact tracing; more individuals can help with schools and other communities open

A motion was made by Dr. Chase, seconded by Mr. Bush, to approve this item. Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED.

b. INFORMATIONAL: COVID-19 and School Openings

- School no different; phase 3 – 4 opening more businesses; more engagement in community; school last of all
- Will be fair to say everything the community was going through prepared them for school opening
- When community closed, there were fewer contacts, would isolate and quarantine; now 1 person can go everywhere (i.e. school, doctor, market), so following path of person who carries virus is very complicated
- 1 investigation used to take 45 minutes to an hour, and now it can be half to a whole day for contact tracing
- School – 2 cases; will do case investigation; take information from positive person
- Confirm findings with school and health office/teacher; trace and identify how they can look at areas of where they went; make recommendation to school whether classroom should suspend or quarantine kids
- Plan to be very restrictive; case in classroom error on side of quarantining all students and teacher, because everyone coming from different households; some people more careful than others; school needs to learn about cohort;
- Learn to respect each other's boundaries; families need to learn that to keep school open, they must limit activity when kids come home
- Parents need to understand that they play a crucial role with continued opening of school; same as teachers and all staff
- What happens in everyone's life, impacts work place
- Zoom meetings – accessible to all; important for Superintendents to feel Health Commissioner is there to help and support every day; same as health staff, teachers, parents and staff
- Testing - working with County Executive and at forefront of testing; several talks with Upstate and Emergency Management; highest priority is symptomatic kids or staff; how to get them tested at warp speed and bring back
- Testing negative one day is not free ride to do what they want
- If sick, do not go to school; parents need to be proactive with temperature checks; not feeling well or behaving unhealthy; some younger children do not have a way to express stomach ache or body aches

- Parents or guardians need to watch out; keep kids home when sick and contact health care provider
- (i.e.) Kid at school fine, but middle of day start getting symptoms; nurse has isolation room and PPE protection; will send child home; testing very important
- Symptomatic testing highest priority; (i.e.) kid or teacher in school has symptoms and do have report back within less than 24 hours (4 hours trying to achieve), then do not have to shut down if negative
- Some questions are if they are doing physical distancing, then what difference does it make
- Being more strict – do not know how it will happen in closed space; how will it play out in late fall and winter with windows closed, etc.
- Out of one case, are there any more cases? Quarantine will keep kids out and avoid further shut down
- Principle of pandemic has been to work aggressively in beginning phases - once there are more cases, then shut down school; have to be stricter in beginning; make sure parents responsive and kids being tested
- Kids testing negative will come back; if tested positive, do not need COVID test again; once positive, could stay positive for weeks; if positive, then they will be in isolation or quarantine, and release them; no test requirement for that
- If child or staff has symptoms and has been excluded from school, then they can only come back with negative test
- Debate with state - physician note says child does not have symptoms related to COVID – is that acceptable? Might consider, but no documentation for that; until then, test has to be negative first
- Asymptomatic cases; kids could be carrying it; that is the reason to distance, hand wash and limit movement; measures can prevent and avoid transmission

Chairman Knapp said someone can test positive, then stay positive for a significant amount of time, and he asked if they know at what point they are not contagious and spreading it. Dr. Gupta responded:

- 10 days isolation period because virus shedding has diminished, still have virus, but not contagious by CDC
- CDC had 2 recommendations – do test or quarantine; people not turning negative; NYS Department of Health amended; test negative can happen in 3 weeks, 6 weeks or even 2 months; only exception is someone very sick and hospitalized
- Usually min of 2 weeks isolation, or discretion of Health Department; very rarely have to do that; hospital is 2 weeks

Chairman Knapp asked about the turnaround time for test results. Dr. Gupta explained:

- Significantly improved; more cases in west and south pushed back results to 7 days (sometimes more)
- Upstate turnaround is 24 – 48 hours, which most labs are doing; Community Health does as well
- Notified yesterday turnaround improved
- Quest did pool testing – have emergency authorization to do commercially; saliva test 4 in pool; (i.e.) 50 went to Community Health Center, then can pool those; if 40 tests done, then do 10 pools of 4 each
- All negative, then it's quicker; if testing positive, then dissect the pool; not many commercial have that; pool testing for surveillance or SU is just for education by Upstate Medical Center
- Trying to increase for schools; proposal that any child or staff showing symptoms can be tested; Upstate – nothing final at this point; asking to get turnaround in less than 24 hours; would make difference with contact tracing and also for school to provide guidance to parents and community
- Kids anxiety with school, buses; information is power; correct information is important; lose credibility if information not right
- Should reassure parents, administrator and community; goal to keep schools open; need parents participation as strongly and equally as administration and teacher participation
- People can always do better; parents have significant role; will get through it
- Not over yet; new normal; make sure wearing masks; important to follow what we preach; bus driver, kids in masks – keep to pods; no lunch room; create environment to feel safe; parents need to provide the same at home
- Need to have own bubble to feel safe - little more with vaccine, but still need to be careful; no guarantee

Chair Abbott-Kenan commented that they need to figure out how to address an increase of mental health availability here and especially with the kids (cannot leave their desk, cannot talk to friends, etc.). Dr. Gupta responded:

- Most have private care of mental health, counselor; NYSDOH – app called Headspace; free to New Yorkers for meditation; can do different amounts of time; work related stress as example
- Providing email with weekly updates on how many cases, active links, dashboard; first email mentioned Headspace; it gives school openings; very short; most website links are mobile friendly

Chairman Knapp stated that Chair Abbott-Kenan can forward the email updates to the rest of the legislators and staff. Chairman Knapp said that there was talk about buying testing equipment, so the County can do their own testing, and he asked if the county is still looking to do that. Dr. Gupta commented:

- Testing requires a lot of certification; do not have capacity to do it; nor recommend it
- County has partners that already have the infrastructure; unnecessary time spent; partner with hospitals and health care
- Significant testing capacity here; cannot test everyone, no reason to with low infection rate
- Going to do everything they can to find everyone involved for contact tracing; stop spread
- If person becomes symptomatic, they stay home
- Masks mean economy – protects everyone and creates a physical barrier for the virus

1. COMMUNITY SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD:

a. Confirming Reappointment to the Community Services Advisory Board (Beth Hurny-Fricano)

A motion was made by Mr. Bush, seconded by Dr. Chase, to approve this item.

Chairman Knapp commented that he knows Ms. Hurny-Fircano very well, and her work at Prevention Network is really important. Being a part of the board helps her with networking and grant discussion, and the board gets to share what they are seeing. Chairman Knapp highly supports the appointment.

Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED.

2. DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES-ECONOMIC SECURITY: Sarah Merrick, Commissioner

a. Authorizing an Intermunicipal Agreement with the City of Syracuse for Administration of and Reimbursement from the Second Round of HUD ESG-CV Funds to Address Homelessness in the City of Syracuse as a Result of the COVID-19 Pandemic (\$886,907)

Chair Abbott-Kenan stated that the grant goes to the city, and the County will administer the grant which helps keep people (who qualify) in their homes and rental properties. This was done in July as well.

Ms. Merrick:

- Second half of promised federal ESG funds from city to county totaling of \$1.4 mil to alleviate evictions and prevent people ending up in homeless shelters
- Resolution also shows the administrative funds city allowing county to use to offset staff time used to administer this
- Expectation was first round of funding released by Sept. 1st; no release of funds from HUD; sitting on 1,500 applications to process; between city and county money, estimate have enough to serve 2,000 households
- Waiting for HUD to release money to start helping people with their rent
- Calling city and Community Development office, and HUD says it's coming; now they think the earliest is Oct 1st all in one big payment; getting less optimistic; started preparing in April and getting pushed off continuously
- Courts are open now; evictions will happen; first wave of cases are landlords who were taking tenants to court prior to COVID-19; beginning to process those cases in courts
- Once through that, then begin to listen to cases with tenants and landlords with COVID-19 having direct impact; hoping the money will be released soon

Dr. Chase asked if there is anything they can do to push the process along, and Ms. Merrick responded that it's federal level. The city and county are trying to get HUD to move on this, so any influence they have at the federal level would be good. Ms. Merrick said they are prepared to use temporary assistance funds and an array of emergency aid they have for families and individuals; but those funds have a recoupment portion. Individuals will not have to repay the federal funds (like a grant). There needs to be pressure on the federal government to release the funds. Dr. Chase asked if the county used those assistance funds and the federal money came in, then can the county replenish the assistance funds. Ms. Merrick answered no and explained that the federal money goes directly to the landlords to pay back rent. They are looking at an application from all perspectives: are they eligible for temporary assistance, are they eligible for emergency assistance, are they eligible for ESG or Community Block Grant funds. Ms. Merrick said they are trying to pick which is the most beneficial to the individual and the county, but it all comes down to eligibility. Dr. Chase asked if the majority of people involved big landlords. Ms. Merrick replied that she has not pulled a landlord list, as the applications are waiting. They have not done the full process to issue payments, but she will run a report. Ms. Merrick explained that there are too many applications to be able to be eligible for temporary assistance. This is hitting the population that the ESG and Community Block Grant funds were meant to be used for - lower middle class. Dr. Chase said Syracuse Housing houses a lot of people, and she asked if the county could make a deal with them. Ms. Merrick responded that many individuals that have little to no income and live in Syracuse Housing Authority have a temporary assistance case. DSS has not stopped paying rent to those on temporary assistance, so that population should not be in jeopardy of nonpayment. These are people at 50% - 60% median income, which is a much higher level income than temporary assistance.

Mrs. Abbott-Kenan asked if there is a priority list for the eviction cases, and Ms. Merrick answered that it is first come, first serve. The department started accepting calls and walk-ins on September 1st when the money was going to be released, which is why they have 1,500 applications on the list.

A motion was made by Dr. Chase, seconded by Ms. Cody, to approve this item. Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED.

4. VETERANS SERVICE AGENCY: Anne-Marie Mancilla, Director; Cindy Meili, Information Aide
a. INFORMATIONAL: Update

2020 Review:

- VSA played essential role in PIE platform by:
 - Assisting veterans and eligible dependents to apply for benefits from the Department of Veteran's
 - Assist with income based claims for veterans and eligible survivors of veterans
 - Assist veterans to be eligible for VA benefits and healthcare
 - Alleviate local dollars by utilizing federal VA funds first
 - Assist in preparation, submission and grant of VA benefits
 - Promotes economic security and decreases poverty
- VSA continues operations onsite and remotely; maintain and strengthen partnerships through virtual meetings
- Assist clients with claims through mail and phone appointments; continue outreach via Facebook and county web page
- 2020 – collaborated with Upstate Medical University House Calls for the Homeless – established to provide medication, medical supplies and equipment and personal items to aid in the healthy benefit of individuals that they see
- Doctors ask if person is a veteran, and if they are, they get a weather proof handout; provided to individual with information to follow up with VSA and see if they are eligible for any benefit
- Local Law 1-2019 waived burial fees – VSA returned \$584,390 to community by way of burial plot reimbursement; since May 1, 2019
- Passing of local law increased veterans and families reaching out to VSA inquiring about a burial refund, which leads to more questions about other services and benefits
- Hired Onondaga County's only Veteran Outreach Coordinator in June 2019 to assist with influx of clients
- Part-time temporary position became full time under Information Aide in January 2020 – Ms. Meili
- VSA identified federal and state reimbursement funds to offset local dollars to pay for indigent burials, the county pays for, for veterans and spouses; potential for entire local dollar cost to be reimbursed
- VSA developed partnerships with local municipalities, active duty components and other agencies to ensure veterans, military personnel and families are made aware of what they may be eligible for
- VSA worked with Veteran's Service Advisory Board and community to fill and display several shadow boxes within the War Memorial representing veterans in the community
- Identified need for Masks for the Mighty – provided over 600 handmade masks to local veterans
- Collaborated with Onondaga County Parks to find unmarked burial sites at Veteran's Memorial Cemetery to ensure each has a government furnished headstone; work in progress
- Working with Veterans Treatment Court to develop procedures to assist justice involved veterans; as courts reopening, starting to become more active
- Partnered with NYS Department of Veterans Services to maintain accreditation at no cost to county – maintain training at no cost; NYS accredited two full time VSOs and Information Aide, which is new

- Usually NYS only accredits veterans, and Ms. Meili is a military spouse; step in right direction to open up field to military spouses; assist in promoting position to Assistant Director
- Job description for Assistant Director under review to see if modification can be made to include spouse of veteran; goal for 2021 - have Information Aide promoted to Assistant Director; working with civil service

Chairman Knapp asked if the volume has increased or stayed the same during the last six months with the COVID situation. Ms. Mancilla responded:

- Calls have increased; usually 20 – 25 per day; lot to do with mental health; length of calls increased
- Lot of offices are closed or not open fully, so when client calls in, there are a lot of questions
- Claims have decreased, because usually they are walk-ins

Chair Abbott-Kenan asked if everything is still happening from state and feds as far as receiving of benefits. Ms. Mancilla answered:

- VA did not miss a beat; never stopped anything; no leeway with benefits; timelines and deadlines never changed
- Sometimes 30 day or 15 day deadlines the VSA had to meet
- VSA went remote March 13th to ensure they would be able to do everything from home; did not miss any deadlines for claims; sometimes work with VA when (i.e.) a person could not get to doctor for records

Chairman Knapp stated that Ms. Mancilla and he sit on the Veterans Advisory Board together and making the VSA their own department was a big push that got done. The other big piece was the phone system, and Chairman Knapp asked if that was handled. Ms. Mancilla responded yes. If a veteran calls, they will get one of the workers at the VSA; it goes directly to Ms. Meili's phone. Chairman Knapp commented that previously it would go to the Department of Aging, and (i.e.) a 24 year old veteran may not think they are calling the right place; caused confusion. This was part of the reason to make the VSA their own entity.

Chair Abbott-Kenan thanked Ms. Mancilla for coming in.

A motion was made by Dr. Chase, seconded by Ms. Cody, to adjourn the meeting. Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:25 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



JAMIE McNAMARA, Clerk
Onondaga County Legislature

ATTENDANCE	
COMMITTEE: HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE	
DATE: SEPTEMBER 16, 2020	
NAME (Please Print)	DEPARTMENT/AGENCY
Anne-marie Manalla	Veterans
Cindy Meili	Veterans
Sarah Merrick	DSS-ES
Indu Gurb	DCHD
Steve Smorol	Fin ops
Yvette Velasco	LAW
Ryan Frantzu	Leg
John DeSantis	Leg

* * *

WAYS & MEANS COMMITTEE MINUTES – SEPTEMBER 21, 2020 BRIAN F. MAY, VICE CHAIR

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. May, Mr. Rowley, Mr. Ryan, Mr. Jordan, Mrs. Ervin

MEMBERS ABSENT: Chairman Burtis, Mr. Williams

ALSO ATTENDING: Chairman Knapp, Ms. Kuhn, Dr. Chase, Mr. Bush; also see attached

Vice Chair May called the meeting to order at 9:40 a.m. He stated that the budget process is typically done right now with departments coming in for overviews of their budget, and what they have done throughout the year. This year the budget is on a compressed schedule at

the end of the year, so the legislature is using program committees to get informed on what departments have been doing. It is great that they could start the process this month, and the staff was able to get the minutes out to be able to be prepared for today's meeting. Vice Chair May thanked the staff.

A motion was made by Mrs. Ervin, seconded by Mr. Rowley to waive the reading and approve the minutes of the previous committee meeting. Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED.

1. HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION:

a. Confirming Appointment to the Onondaga County/Syracuse Commission on Human Rights (Banabas Mbonimpa) (Sponsored by Ms. Kuhn)

Ms. Kuhn:

- Nominated Banabas, who is a refugee that spent 20 years in refugee camp in the Republic of Congo; he has been in the US since 2008, and Syracuse since 2013
- President of Congolese Community on north side - most recent refugee community to come to Syracuse; least integrated
- Appropriate appointment to have someone represent the Congolese Community

Vice Chair May stated Mr. Mbonimpa has a very interesting background and thinks he will be a great add.

A motion was made by Mr. Ryan, seconded by Mr. Jordan, to approve this item. Ayes: 5 Absent: 1 (Ervin); MOTION CARRIED.

2. WATER ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION: Frank Mento, Commissioner

a. 2020 Transfer Resolution (Sponsored by Mr. Jordan)

**From Account 641010 Total Salaries to Account 693000 Supplies and Materials, \$500,000
From Account 691200 Employee Benefits to Account 693000 Supplies & Materials, \$200,000
From Account 694010 Travel & Training to Account 693000 Supplies & Materials, \$100,000
From Account 694130 Maint, Util & Rents to Account 693000 Supplies & Materials, \$100,000**

- 2020 budget - transfer funds from 4 operating accounts into chemical account
- When budgeted in 2019 for 2020, looked at historical trend data for chemicals; chemical budgets in 2018 and 2019 were significantly lower than would be in 2020, because 2 processes were down and under construction/maintenance
- Budget cut to reflect historical trend; now back because the processes are up and running; need to accommodate payment of chemicals; chemicals also went up in price as a commodity and cost
- Managed budget to draw from other accounts with surplus and not dip into fund balance; did some projections and will finish year in the black despite this

Mr. Rowley said Metro was partially shut down in 2018 and 2019, but sewage was not shut down, so how was it treated. Mr. Mento responded:

- Portion of tertiary treatment down for construction; another portion down for maintenance
- Forced to contact DEC - critical pieces of process down; asked DEC to consider reducing limits of what the county discharges appropriately, or monitor limits appropriately, so not in penalty
- DEC agreed; part and parcel for practice; happens at all treatment plants across the state; had limits, and met the limits

Mr. Ryan said the salaries are down and asked if they were able to take out of that account because of a reduction, or because the budgeted salaries were not filled. Mr. Mento responded that it was a combination of both. There were budgeted salaries for people that were put on hold, and there are some personnel positions not filled, because they do not have proper candidates. There have been salary savings. Mr. Ryan asked how many positions are they down, and Mr. Mento replied that he's down over 50 positions.

Vice Chair May asked how finishing in the black relates to their fund balance. Mr. Mento answered that the fund balance budget for 2020 was around \$4 million, and the goal is to come in under that. Given everything that has transpired this year, he is confident that he will be able to meet it, or come in below it.

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

3. DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES-ECONOMIC SECURITY: Sarah Merrick, Commissioner

a. Authorizing an Intermunicipal Agreement with the City of Syracuse for Administration of and Reimbursement from the Second Round of HUD ESG-CV Funds to Address Homelessness in the City of Syracuse as a Result of the COVID-19 Pandemic (\$886,907)

(Sponsored by Mrs. Abbott-Kenan)

- Accept second half of city ESG COVID-19 funds; talked 2 months ago about having second round awarded
- Resolution shows where department will be able to use ~\$150,000 of total ESG funds for administrative costs, which covers mailings and staff working on project
- HUD has not released funds yet; supposed to be in summer, and now hopefully early October
- Did get information out about project early in September; already have 1,500 households on waiting list for process
- Estimated city and county money - little over \$4 mil; should cover ~2,000 households to prevent evictions; paying back rent, future rent and utility costs not paid during COVID

Mr. Rowley said the support for the resolution talks about the Salvation Army and Catholic Charities, and he asked why those two organizations, and what will they be doing. Ms. Merrick answered:

- ESG money and Community Block Grant money – HUD very specific with ESG funds that individuals receiving money are on verge of being homeless; fed government will not send extra case management to work with them to prevent them from becoming homeless
- County does not have a direct contract with the Salvation Army or Catholic Charities; city held funds back and are directly contracting with those agencies
- County referring to those agencies once application is processed and financial assistance is issued
- Administration fee is only for the county to cover staff time processing financial portion of applications

Mr. Ryan stated the homeless population is a bad situation that is becoming worse, and he asked what could be done for prevention. Is there anything else they are doing to work with the city to help facilitate? Ms. Merrick responded:

- Lot of effort trying to work with homeless population; right now lowest census in homeless shelters in 10 years, probably because of the moratorium on evictions
- Will evaluate everyone for eligibility for temporary assistance, or emergency assistance to adults and families
- Working with city; pockets of homeless groups starting to develop; lot of those people were formally homeless and in support of housing; need to beef up support for individuals and get them back to apartments they had
- COVID-19 is spiking people's mental health; really impacting this group that already have severe mental health issues
- Working in concert with the city to get wrap around services to get individuals back in support of housing
- If truly homeless, would make them eligible for temporary assistance; get them into shelter that has wrap around services to stabilize and move to permanent housing

Dr. Chase asked what happens if they do not get the money. Ms. Merrick responded:

- Do not know; will have to tap public benefit programs like temporary assistance
- People eligible for temporary assistance have no assets; HUD money helps those in 50% - 60% of state median average, which is the working poor; do not know what will happen

Ms. Merrick replied to Dr. Chase that the courts have started on cases that were brought to the court for eviction prior to COVID-19. This funding will not be able to help those people. When the courts get through those, then they will start looking at eviction cases that came in during COVID-19 period and take action. The action cannot happen until the moratorium is lifted.

Chairman Knapp stated that after the Health Committee meeting, Legislator Abbott-Kenan reached out to the federal delegation, including Congressman Katko, Senator Gillibrand and Senator Schumer's offices, to find out what is going on, and if they can help in any way. Chairman Knapp said he will reach out to her to see if she had any success with that.

Chairman Knapp asked if the county goes out annually to do the in person census of the homeless, and Ms. Merrick replied yes; usually done in the third week of January. Chairman Knapp asked about the factors for the census numbers in shelters being down, and Ms. Merrick replied that there are a lot of factors including one being that people are afraid of congregate settings (hard to provide 6' distance in shelter). Ms. Merrick said her department was working very hard with shelters during COVID, and anyone testing positive for COVID-19 was quarantined in hotels. They provided professional cleaning at shelters to mitigate spread. The biggest thing is that no one is being evicted, but once they start, individuals and families will not have a choice. Also, the weather is getting cold, which will drive people into the shelters.

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

4. HEALTH DEPARTMENT: Michelle Mignano, Deputy Commissioner

a. Amending the 2020 County Budget to Make Funding Available for use in Connection with a Grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and Authorizing the Execution of Agreement (\$840,946) (Sponsored by Mrs. Abbott-Kenan)

- Funding from NYSDOH, directed from CDC for localities to work on COVID tracking - not used to supplant current staff, but enhance contact tracing

Mr. Rowley stated the supporting documentation shows this funding is to support new personnel, which he is assuming is temporary 103 people. Ms. Mignano replied:

- Have for period of 2 years; do not need to use immediately; some will be used to hire part-time staff; helpful to have on weekends; identify those on board to reduce some overtime
- Grant funding from state - can use funding to support any staff underfunded or unfunded supporting COVID
- Volunteers and staff in other departments throughout county have been trained; everyone taking John Hopkins training, which was designed by CDC; 8 - 10 hour online training going over essential basics of contact tracing
- Ask volunteers come to Health Department and pair with case supervisors (senior level staff); will walk through and listen in with case investigators; have them go through a few calls, feel comfortable, then let them loose
- Constant support for them onsite; those working from home can take calls
- Looking to hire upwards of 10 part-time; put in funds to cover up to 4 - 6; depends how long it goes; try covering cost to county immediately; hopefully all looking forward to vaccine

Chairman Knapp commented that Nick Paro, on staff, took the course and participated in the contact tracing.

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

5. FINANCE DEPARTMENT: Don Weber, Director of Real Property Tax

a. A Resolution Approving and Directing the Cancellation of Void Taxes

- Resolution to write off delinquent taxes; part of Upstate parking garage owned by NYS; taxes should not have accrued
- When hospital was owned by Community, part was taxable, because it was rented to doctors for private practice; when transferred to NYS, should have been tax exempt
- NYS does not need to file exemption; hospital has to do with use; part was not used for tax exempt purpose before
- NYS always exempt; assessor should ensure the exemption is on the roll
- Waiving requirement to town and school – done in the past; total base tax is \$263,000 (rest are penalties and interest) - \$171,000 is school, \$26,000 is town and \$66,000 is county; absent this resolve clause, those municipalities would have been charged those amounts

Mr. Rowley commented this is very generous, and some counties in similar situations would not be so generous.

Mr. Weber answered Mr. Ryan that this is money the municipalities have already been made whole for.

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

Vice Chair May took the agenda items out of order.

7. COUNTY LEGISLATURE:

a. Calling for a Public Hearing on the 2021 County Budget

Vice Chair May stated that this sets the budget public hearing on Tuesday, December 1st.

A motion was made by Mr. Rowley, seconded by Mr. Jordan, to approve this item.

Mrs. Ervin asked if there will be enough space in the chambers for people to be present that day. Vice Chair May said that there clearly are limits, but in the past there have been issues, and there were alternatives (subject to the guidelines). Chairman Knapp stated that they are a couple months away, so who knows what will happen, but if they need to move the venue, they will. Vice Chair May said the resolution gives authority to set the public hearing.

Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED.

6. COMPTROLLER: Marty Masterpole, Comptroller

a. Comprehensive Annual Financial Report

- Received Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) in last week of May; posted May 26; purpose for brief overview and address concerns/questions
- CAFR dedicated to Jim Maturo, who retired after 37 years; Mr. Maturo always instrumental in quarterbacking the CAFR; have Phil Britt, who is now Deputy Comptroller over accounting; will quarterback in future
- Dec. 31, 2019 - sales tax \$4.4 mil over budget; \$3.9 mil over actual 2018 to 2019; resulting in \$6.9 mil operating surplus
- 10% goal for fund balance set by Legislature went from 10.8% in 2018 to 11.6% in 2019; \$10.8 mil over goal
- Concerns/highlights – cash came about \$600,000 increase over 2018, but general fund cash dropped from \$18 mil to \$9.8 mil; most or all because of state and federal receivables
- 2020 general fund cash could be concern if sales tax stays on course; could get to negative cash situation
- Debt up \$12.4 mil; represents just shy of \$9 mil in serial bonds, EFC loans just under \$4 mil
- Debt of increase serial bonds represents projects at Hillbrook and Zoo; also WEP debt involved
- Finance did refinance some debt and retired some debt; saved county \$3 mil

Vice Chair May asked if the general fund cash drop was because the county does not have the receivables, or are the receivables behind. The receivables being behind was a notable problem a year or two ago. Mr. Masterpole responded that receivables are up \$24 million due to a delay in collections, and Mr. Britt agreed. There is a hold back from the state paying the county what is deemed to be due. Vice Chair May stated that a couple years ago, the county was not reconciling what was owed, but it does not sound like the case here. It sounds like the county is pursuing the dollars, and the state owes the county the money. Mr. Masterpole believes the reconciliation is happening in a timely manner, and Mr. Britt concurs. Mr. Masterpole said this is money that has not yet arrived; everything that has arrived has been accounted for. Vice Chair May asked if the receivables were on time, would there have been an increase in cash. Mr. Masterpole stated that it seems they are all in agreement; yes that's true.

Mr. Rowley asked where the county is with pooled cash, and Mr. Masterpole answered that it seems the pooled cash is in good shape. Mr. Morgan added:

- Pooled cash at end of August was up to \$100 million; general fund cash has taken a beating
- Sales tax down 10%; county waiting on 10's of millions of dollars; all revenue goes to general fund
- Pooled cash is borrowed from other funds; county may end year in negative cash position in general fund, which will be noted in the financial statements; goal to borrow internally (not externally)
- On weekly basis analyzing cash, which continues to be tight; cash crunch in December and January, then town tax payments come in February; trying to bridge gap until town payments start coming in
- About to issue \$50 mil in general obligation debt early next month; replenish general fund cash used to upfront capital projects; will help

Mr. Masterpole said in the interest of checks and balances, he is willing to double check that and send it back, but he is in agreement with what Mr. Morgan reported.

Chairman Knapp thanked Mr. Masterpole for his work and said they accomplish things when they talk. Mr. Masterpole said he believes in strong communication and said to call, email or text.

Mr. Morgan commented:

- Covered general fund; ended second year with \$5 mil surplus; heading in right direction going into this year, until hit with pandemic; 2 successful years, but this year scrambling; doing best to close year as close to balanced as they can
- Fund balance increased – total fund balance is ~\$178 mil; everything pointing in right direction; pandemic crushing main revenue source; everyone knows lengths and measures taken to ensure keep county stable and viable
- Made hard decisions and put in place; will pay off for stabilizing finances and setting stage for 2021

Vice Chair May stated this is the close of business and said Mr. Ryan had a question he wanted to ask.

Mr. Ryan:

- Received email with list of abolishment's on Friday afternoon; bad situation, but also in addition to abolishment's there were furloughs (voluntary and involuntary)
- Look forward to a more in-depth conversation from Personnel or Finance about the details of the restructure and realignment; hopeful to have information requested through Ways and Means
- Need to get better handle on jobs left from bargaining unit and management confidential
- Hopefully in next week, will get some answers to questions and numbers; better grasp and overall picture of abolishment's and furloughs; also what is coming up next

Vice Chair May:

- Point taken; same questions exist from other legislators; good insight and information on what's taken place

- To land where the Republican Caucus landed, part of agreement (thanks to Legislator Jordan's leadership) was to receive that kind of information
- Strongly suggest Mr. Ryan and Mr. Jordan talk offline and decide what type of information would be satisfactory
- Send back through leadership, Chairman Knapp, Mrs. Ervin and Mr. May, to work with administration on communication process; billed as work in progress, and passed as something fluid
- Everyone deserves and wants to be informed
- Thank you for email over weekend; if do that, will have good flow of communication from administration to Legislature

Mr. Rowley asked Mr. Morgan if he intends to issue a third quarter forecast, and if so, when will it be available. Mr. Morgan responded that it will probably be right before, or during, budget for a solid forecast. Mr. Rowley said thank you.

Vice Chair May asked if the Legislature received a second quarter, and Mr. Morgan answered that they have been continuing to share information from a projection standpoint all year long. There was not necessarily a second quarter. The projection shows the various items including austerity measures taken, different sales tax scenarios and the ensuing potential gap that remains. It is an ongoing process that is continuously updated.

Mr. Ryan asked if everyone that left would still show on the payroll on Saturday. He will ask after.

Chairman Knapp stated that because of the way the Legislature handled this, there were seven abolishment's on Friday instead of 250. Giving the County Executive flexibility allowed him to reopen the retirement incentive, which 35 additional people have taken advantage of (over the 164 previously). There was also a batch of furloughs, which means the employees keep their benefits and can receive unemployment. As soon as this is over, they can come back. So far, the county has been able to make the best of a really bad situation.

Dr. Chase commented that Ms. Mignano discussed hiring part-time people, and she asked if the employees being affected by layoffs would be the first to be offered the part-time positions. Vice Chair May responded that this is not in the scope, or authority, of the Legislature. It would stand to reason that if someone were laid off, then they would have the opportunity to return, or have priority. Chairman Knapp said the Board of Elections needs help and received grant money, so there has been discussion of them offering part-time jobs to those employees that were furloughed, or laid off.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:34 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



JAMIE McNAMARA, Clerk
Onondaga County Legislature

ATTENDANCE

COMMITTEE: **WAYS & MEANS COMMITTEE**
DATE: **SEPTEMBER 21, 2020**

NAME (Please Print)	DEPARTMENT/AGENCY
Fuentro	OCIS/OPS
Phil Britt	Comptroller
Don Welber	TAX
M. Vileid	WSP
Y. Velasco	LAW
Isabelle	CE
Tenisha Murphy	CE
Sarah Morniel	DSS-ES
Michelle Mignao	Health
John Desantis	Leg
Darcei Lesniak	Leg
Steve Morgan	CE
Brian Donnelly	CE
Marty Mastropole	Comptroller