

For the Public Hearing on the 2025 County Budget

My name is Jill Hurst-Wahl and I am a member of the Onondaga County Public Library Board of Trustees.

Thank you for the funding you gave to OCPL for this fiscal year 2025. As a library system, OCPL supports and works with its 21 member libraries from Tully to Brewerton, and Skaneateles to Minoa. Across those 21 member libraries there are 32 busy library locations.

With personal and household budgets tightening, public libraries are increasingly important to residents who want access to physical materials including books, magazines, and what is known as “the library of things” which are physical items that can be borrowed, as well as digital material which includes ebooks, online databases, music, and videos.

How are our libraries used? For example:

- Parents and caregivers with small children use storytime and other programs at our libraries to engage children in activities which will help them become skilled learners and readers.**
- Students – those in K-12 public, private, and charter schools, as well as those who are homeschooled – use our public libraries when they need materials to help with homework, school reports, and to satisfy their curiosity.**
- Adults use the libraries for help with job searches, to learn new technologies, to find people with similar interests, and much more.**

While many folks come to their public library, our libraries also bring their services to where people are, including farmers markets, eldercare facilities, daycare centers, and community events.

Funding for OCPL helps all of our public libraries across the County, because OCPL's services assist each of them. Therefore, thank you for supporting OCPL's 2026 budget of over 17 million dollars. Your willingness to fund OCPL acknowledges the importance of public libraries in your communities. Thank YOU for supporting libraries.

Good evening. I appreciate that this public hearing is being held at 5:00pm and not in the middle of the work day but this is the second year that this public hearing is being held on a Jewish holiday. I hope this legislature is more mindful of this in the future.

The 2026 county budget continues last year's theme of maintaining the status quo. Onondaga county residents and employees will keep managing, surviving but this budget doesn't help us thrive.

I am glad to see some much needed investment into county facilities so we have healthier and safer buildings for our county employees to work in and technology upgrades to be able to provide the services residents rely on effectively and efficiently.

It is also nice to see federal and state aid increasing to help cover the increasing demand and cost of day care, foster care, family assistance and special children services. But having 100 families on a waiting list for child care assistance while the county has over \$200 million in the rainy day fund is concerning.

This year the legislature voted to spend \$27 million of our reserves to buy land for semiconductor supply chain companies and \$5 million for the Onondaga County Housing Initiative Program. When we are in a housing crisis these spending choices do not align with what we need. The housing crisis we are in makes the houses we do have unaffordable, we are seeing the highest increases in rent because we do not have enough supply and so much of our current housing is in need of repair.

When rent prices increase housing assistance goes up as well increasing the county budget. With the federal government budget cuts coming, I am here to advocate that when the need arrives to tap into our reserves that we prioritize people. Non-profits have lost funding, people are losing their jobs, the need for services are increasing and I hope the county steps up to care for residents. Instead of layoffs & cutting jobs like Onondaga county did during COVID. I want the county to invest in services & our workers so that we can provide for our residents and help them through this challenging time.

Thank you.

Elaine Denton
Manlius, NY

Christine Herb

- Legislative request for 2026 - remarks 10.02.25, 3 minutes

Good evening, Chairman and Legislators.

My name is Christine Herb, I am a nurse practitioner, a support group leader and most important, the mother of a daughter who has suffered terribly for 2 decades from tick-borne disease. I'm here on behalf of the Central New York Lyme & Tick-Borne Disease Alliance. The Alliance is now six years old, and in those six years we have gone from an idea to an essential regional resource, leading education, awareness and prevention around one of the fastest growing public health threats in our county.

Onondaga County has recognized this threat and, importantly, has recognized the value of having a strong local partner to address it. We are deeply grateful for your past support, which has allowed us to bring life-saving information into schools, neighborhoods, workplaces and doctors' offices. Because of your investment, tens of thousands of county residents now have better tools to protect themselves and their families from tick-borne illness.

Our accomplishments are tangible. We have trained health care providers to better recognize and treat tick-borne disease. We have built strong collaborations with schools and youth programs to teach prevention strategies early. We have worked with community groups, outdoor organizations and municipalities to increase awareness where risk is highest. And we have become a trusted local voice in a field that can often feel confusing and overwhelming to the public.

But the threat is not standing still. Tick populations are exploding, disease incidence is climbing and residents are looking to us—and to you—for leadership. As we look to 2026, we have ambitious, practical goals:

1. Expanding outreach into underserved communities, where prevention knowledge is lowest and risk is often highest.
2. Deepening our partnerships with local health systems so early recognition and treatment become the norm, not the exception.
3. Continuing to educate youth, who are among the most vulnerable.

To achieve these, the Alliance is requesting \$100,000 in County support. This investment will allow us to sustain and scale proven programs while responding quickly to new challenges as they arise.

Make no mistake: your support over the past years has positioned Onondaga County as a leader in proactive public health around tick-borne disease. With your renewed investment, we can continue to protect families, strengthen our healthcare and community systems and keep the County ahead of the curve on a threat that is only growing.

We look forward to having your help in ensuring that prevention, awareness and action remain strong in 2026 and beyond. Thank you.

I WISH I could tell them about the call I got yesterday re a provider who'd been to the summit & learned about Lyme. He saw a 4-yo who presented w bone cancer AND bc of his new info, identified Lyme. Connected w Kris, who told him anaplasmosia and babesia can present as bone cancer. Now at Upstate Ortho for further tests. This is what County \$ helps us do.

Jacqueline
LaSonde

CNY Works

Program Narrative

Accountability

CNY Works: Federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funds are awarded to Onondaga County per Title I of the WIOA – Workforce Development System for Adults, Dislocated Workers, and Youth. The Onondaga County Workforce Development Board (CNY Works Inc.) reimburses Onondaga County for the following costs: staff salaries, wage and fringe benefits, client payrolls, and miscellaneous interdepartmental bills. These costs will support the provision of career development, case management, job search assistance, skills development, training, education and support services for unemployed/underemployed job seekers at risk youth in Syracuse and Onondaga County.

[7 years of waiting ~~for~~ to employ 2 Available persons, Applications submitted, calls/emails ^{judicemails} NOT ANSWERED]

— Flexible Lead Program = INCREASE

does this include
Removal of LEAD
PIPES?

If so What is the ~~order of~~
Priority given to the most
Affected communities?