Onondaga County Legislature

HASSINA K. ADAMS **Clerk**	**NICOLE WATTS** **Chairwoman**	**SPENCER BERG** **Deputy Clerk**

WAYS & MEANS COMMITTEE MINUTES – JULY 28, 2026
MAURICE BROWN, CHAIR

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. Brown, Leader Hernandez, Leader May, Mr. Burtis, Mr. Bush, Mr. Romeo
ABSENT: Ms. Denton
ALSO PRESENT: Chairwoman Watts, Mr. Knapp, Mr. Meaker, Mr. Kelly, Mr. Thompson, Ms. Block, Mr. Ryan, Mr. Eriksen; also see attached list

Chair Brown called the meeting to order at 1:07 p.m., and the previous meeting's minutes were approved.

1. **DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE:** Kristi Smiley, Chief Fiscal Officer
   a. Calling for a Public Hearing on the 2027 County Budget (*Sponsored by Mr. Brown)*

   - Legislative body calls for public hearing

A motion was made by Ms. Hernandez, seconded by Mr. Romeo, to approve this item; Ayes: 6 (Brown, Hernandez, May, Burtis, Bush, Romeo). MOTION CARRIED.

2. **ONONDAGA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION:** Martin E. Voss, Commissioner
   a. Authorizing the County of Onondaga to Act as Lead Agency for the Canalways Trail Salina Extension Project, Phase I & Phase II, PIN's 3756.22 & 3757.02 Under the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA); Determining the Classification of Type I Actions; Accepting and Adopting the Negative Declarations for the Projects; and Authorizing the Filing, Distribution, and Publication of the Negative Declarations (*Sponsored by Mr. Ryan)*

   - Requesting Ways and Means Committee approval of the SEQRA for the Loop the Lake final phase, the Canalways Trail Salina Extension
     - Documents provided to the committee include an explanation of the project, phasing of the project, and negative declaration for the project's environmental impacts
   - Final segment of a project the community has discussed for years, in fact decades
     - Connects from where the trail currently terminates on Murphy's Island, where there is a turnaround over Lake Creek and the CSXT railroad tracks, back onto Onondaga Lake Parkway, along the parkway beside the salt ponds with a boardwalk, under the railroad bridge, and daylights out at Bloody Brook on the Onondaga Lake Park side
   - Project broken into three phases:
     - Phase one starts at Onondaga Lake Park and works back toward the railroad bridge; first segment
     - Second segment runs from Murphy's Island toward the parkway, including a new bridge over the parkway similar in design and scale to the existing bridge

    - Last segment connects the two pieces under the existing railroad bridge, where there is room for at least a six-foot multi-use trail
- Parks department has asked for this project for years; very close to being able to start the final pieces
- Today's approval is for the SEQRA; must approve it again at session next week, after which it goes to the State of New York in Albany and then to the FHWA for approval
    - Hopes to have final design approval for the overall project this year

Questions/Comments:

- Mr. Thompson: It was a pleasure talking to you at the facilities meeting about this subject, and I'm excited to hear it's moving forward. I wanted to present a question I've seen in a couple of the Facebook groups I'm part of that maybe you could speak to. Will the construction impact the roosting eagles in that area, the bald eagles at Murphy's Island and along that shoreline? I know there have been extensive environmental impact studies done; if you could just briefly speak to that concern, I know a lot of folks are curious about it
- Mr. Voss: We're restricted in the time of year that we can do construction because of the roosting eagles, so we won't have construction equipment deployed during roosting season. That's one of the many steps we have to go through with various regulatory agencies, Fish and Wildlife, DEC, everybody; they all have different fingers in the pot on this project. One of the major restrictions is when we can actually do work there, and roosting season is a non-starter

A motion was made by Mr. May, seconded by Ms. Hernandez, to approve this item; Ayes: 6 (Brown, Hernandez, May, Burtis, Bush, Romeo). MOTION CARRIED.

3. <u>COUNTY LEGISLATURE</u>:

a. Authorizing the Transfer of the Traffic Control Signal Located at Gillespie Avenue and West Genesee Street in the Town of Camillus from the Town of Camillus to the County of Onondaga Pursuant to Section 10 of the Municipal Home Rule Law for Purposes of Repairing Same (*Sponsored by Mr. Bush)* – Martin E. Voss, Commissioner

- Town of Camillus has an older traffic signal installed at Gillespie Avenue approximately 20 years ago
    - Town of Camillus had it installed by a developer; should've gotten a permit from the county to do so but did not
- Town is no longer able to take care of the signal; does not have the equipment, materials, or personnel
- County has offered to relieve the town of that burden and absorb it into its network
    - At some point in the future, county will modernize the signal and include it in its network along with the Miovision cameras and other equipment being installed throughout the county highway network
    - Conservative estimate of the cost is in the hundreds of dollars per year to maintain
    - If the signal is eventually replaced, that cost will be built into a federal aid project in the area
- Not a significant expense beyond staff time for the county's traffic crew to service the signal when it goes down
- Happy to support the Town of Camillus, as towns are not set up to maintain traffic control devices and are not going to purchase a Miovision system like the county

A motion was made by Mr. Bush, seconded by Mr. Romeo, to approve this item; Ayes: 6 (Brown, Hernandez, May, Burtis, Bush, Romeo). MOTION CARRIED.

b. Resolution Calling on the New York State Legislature to Pass, and the Governor to Sign, the Good Food NY (New York) Bill S.7638.B/A.8091.B, Enabling Municipalities to Engage in Values-based Food Procurement (*Sponsored by Mr. Block, Mr. Knapp)* – Ms. Block, County Legislator

- Asking to pass the Good Food Bill at the state level
- Bill supports adopting values-based procurement throughout New York
  - County already participates in values-based procurement; bill provides the framework for all municipalities to adopt it
- Benefits of values-based procurement:
  - Makes it easier for public institutions like schools to serve healthier, New York-grown food
  - Puts county dollars back into the community
  - Promotes equity in the food system
  - Incentivizes sustainable and humane farming practices

Questions/Comments:

- Mr. Knapp: This is a really good piece of legislation the state is considering; thanks to Legislator Block for pushing this forward. The current system is based on lowest bid wins, and it really favors the large national conglomerate-type food suppliers that aren't looking out for the best interest of our local farms or community. My favorite example of this is that our local school districts are forced to buy Washington State apples because they have contracts with the big national distributors, when we have the best apples grown in the world a few miles down the road. And from a sustainability standpoint, which Legislator Block already mentioned, how foolish is it to truck thousands of pounds of apples 3,000 miles from the West Coast when we've got the best ones in the world right here. I highly encourage that we support this
- Mr. Brown: I'll just add, thank you both for promoting this. This is so important, making sure our children have access to healthy food, but also streamlining; there's so much, especially in state government, that we do differently that creates waste. This streamlines that process, and I think ultimately society will be better for it

A motion was made by Mr. Bush, seconded by Mr. Burtis, to approve this item; Ayes: 5 (Brown, May, Burtis, Bush, Romeo) Abstain: 1 (Hernandez). MOTION CARRIED.

c. Confirming Appointment to the Onondaga County Justice Center Oversight Committee (Bonnie Gail Levy) (*Sponsored by Mr. Garland)* – Nicole Watts, Chairwoman

- Multiple seats open on the Justice Center Oversight Committee; committee putting forward one of those appointees today, Bonnie Gail Levy
- Ms. Levy is an attorney; resume available in the agenda packet
- Wealth of experience working with people in the justice center as well as those who work there as employees, with a good deal of insight; will be an excellent asset to this committee

Questions/Comments:

- Mr. Burtis: This is really just a housekeeping item for numbers 3.c. and 3.d.; in the packet there are no appointment letters, just their resumes. I believe it's customary and necessary that there be appointment letters, so it's just a point to bring up as we look to go forward. There is a resolution in the packet
- Mr. Brown: Yeah, there should be an appointment letter as well
- Ms. Watts: We will make sure that is added by the time we get to session

A motion was made by Ms. Hernandez, seconded by Mr. Romeo, to approve this item; Ayes: 6 (Brown, Hernandez, May, Burtis, Bush, Romeo). MOTION CARRIED.

d. Confirming Appointment to the Onondaga County Water Authority (Madeline Nyblade) *(Sponsored by Ms. Watts)* – Nicole Watts, Chairwoman

- Another committee the legislature has a responsibility to appoint to; two individuals past their tenure, one of those seats being filled today by Madeline Nyblade
- Ms. Nyblade's resume included in the packet; professor at SUNY ESF with a good wealth of experience in the water field
- Excellent cross-section of experience with both activists and professionals; will be a helpful, trusted voice in the ongoing conversations the community is having around the impact of advanced manufacturing and the semiconductor industry on the county's water, and helping navigate these issues

A motion was made by Mr. Romeo, seconded by Ms. Hernandez, to approve this item; Ayes: 6 (Brown, Hernandez, May, Burtis, Bush, Romeo). MOTION CARRIED.

e. A Resolution Repealing Resolution No. 481-1980, and Creating the Onondaga County Accessibility Council (*Sponsored by Ms. Watts, Ms. Block)* – Nicole Watts, Chairwoman

- Relates to the initiation of a restart of an accessibility council
- As mentioned in the program committee last week, defunct former Council on the Disabled that this resolution would officially put to bed; not active since 1999
- Would be replaced with the Onondaga County Accessibility Council
- Looking to ensure the county is as excellent as possible when it comes to accessibility for people with all different access needs
- Number of different bodies would be responsible to make designees, including the legislature, the county executive, the Commission on Human Rights, Information Technology, Facilities Management, and the Law Department
- County looking to officially start this committee this session and make appointments to it next month

Questions/Comments:

- Mr. Burtis: I don't have any problem with the resolution, but in the wording it says, "whereas the Onondaga County Legislature has determined that the Council on the Disabled is inactive, outdated, and reflects ableism." I'm not sure what you mean by that
- Ms. Watts: Ableism, if you're familiar, is essentially language that puts people who have abilities to see or abilities to hear, for example, as having a kind of prioritized language. Calling someone disabled instead of a person with disabilities would be an example of ableism, and that's the language that was set up in the original structure, which is why we felt it was important to update the language to reflect respect for individuals and to use the nomenclature that is accepted today

A motion was made by Ms. Hernandez, seconded by Mr. Romeo, to approve this item; Ayes: 6 (Brown, Hernandez, May, Burtis, Bush, Romeo). MOTION CARRIED.

4. <u>COMPTROLLER</u>: Martin D. Masterpole, Comptroller

a. INFORMATIONAL: County Policy Regarding Budget Transfers and Discussion of Legal Budgets

- Received communication from Chairman Brown and Clerk Adams relative to item five on the agenda, to discuss the outside counsel budget and where it stood; request came the previous Friday
- Expressed concern as to where the outside counsel budget stood
    - Communications going back to late April or May regarding where the outside counsel budget stood relative to the proposed 2026 budget, which raised concerns among members of the legislature
- Here to answer questions from the Chair and members of the legislature

Questions/Comments:

- Mr. Brown: Before I go to the legislators, I do have questions. I want to back up just to get us all on the same page. Can you give a brief, overview of what happens after the budget is passed and the new fiscal year begins?
- Mr. Masterpole: Very high level, legislature passes the budget, it's put in place
    - First, pre-encumbered dollars, when services are put out to bid; those then become encumbered dollars, meaning awards with the anticipation of being spent; the number of checks, dollars for checks out the door
    - As the Comptroller's Office, it's been past practice, this is nothing new, when we get to an over-budget situation, it's at the purview of the Comptroller's Office as to whether we want to override budget. I'd be lying if I said it didn't happen regularly, and then we clean them up, if you will, with end-of-year transfers. I'd say I had more communication previously with CFO Morgan, and some communication from my staff with CFO Smiley, but when we get to, especially if it's in the first half of the year or first quarter, it's like, what are we doing here? Are we going to the legislature? Are there going to be budget transfers to cover some of these unanticipated costs?
    - For example, this raised an eyebrow to me; actual outside counsel spending in 2023 was approximately $954,000
        - 2024 actual spending was $1,970,000
        - 2025 actual spending was $2,560,000, for a three-year average of $1.8 million
        - Budgeted $893,000 for 2026; we had three years' worth of history averaging $1.8 million, and we budgeted $1 million less than that
        - I suppose it wouldn't surprise anybody that all of a sudden in the first quarter we're over our outside counsel budget, but that may be going back to a budgeting question more than a "what's happening" question
        - From polling vouchers, numbers, or claims, all the above, as to what has happened, I don't think there's anything out of the ordinary. The county faces lawsuits, we get in car accidents, we have incidents at the jail, sheriffs are always a target, maybe justified or unjustified, of legal action. These things happen. But when it raises to this level, and then you reached out, is why I'm here
- Mr. Brown: I do want you to clarify, just for calendar year 2026 that we're in, you said $893,000 was budgeted?
- Mr. Masterpole: Correct
- Mr. Brown: Have we broken through that in expenses?
- Mr. Masterpole: Expenses, no. Currently, expenses are at $375,000. The big number that raises eyebrows to me, I guess should be anticipated, is encumbered: $979,000. So my analogy is we are definitely over our budget already, and these conversations, the initial communication between members of my staff and FinOps, was in April, which is a few months ago now
- Mr. Brown: So as long as it's encumbered, it's not actual spend. My understanding is that spends over $7,500 need to come through us in order to get approval. These wouldn't need to, until they're actually spent

- Mr. Masterpole: Those are budget transfers over $7,500. I guess we're looking at two separate things; interdepartmental transfers, I don't know if I'm wording that correctly, but if you're transferring within your budget up to $7,500, it does not need legislative approval
  - If it goes over that dollar amount, would it? This didn't need legislative approval because there was no transfer, and the expenses aren't over budget, but the encumbrances are significantly over budget
- Ms. Smiley: First, to talk through the budget transfer process; typically any expenditure over $7,500 comes to this legislature. There is a caveat to that; there are items that are statutory requirements that we historically clean up with year-end authority, like foster care or other expenses
  - Historically we have done the same with this account, as well as we have to provide legal services for these types of things, so historically we have done that. Now, talking to some of the individual expenses, there have been some anomalies in the last year
  - A large portion of the overages in 2025 were related to family court and the inability to have attorneys on staff, so we covered that with contractual expenditures; as you guys know, that was moved into Children and Family Services last year, so it's not part of this year's budget
    - We covered that with year-end savings from salaries and other components; that was an anomaly of probably over a million dollars in that account, I can get the exact figures. Historically we've budgeted around the $900,000 mark, based on previous litigation, that the Comptroller talked about
  - In '24 and '25 there were some anomalies of different things; there were even odd-year election-related items that were significant; there was other litigation that is not the typical practice. One of the concerns, and we are analyzing this account for sure for the 2027 budget, is that I'd be hesitant to overbudget for any potential expenditures, because we'd be over-taxing
  - We've been able to cover this with savings in other accounts over the last couple of years, still not taking us over budget in total, but we are analyzing the expenditures
  - This is one of the accounts we have historically used year-end authority for, in terms of mandated services, which is why a transfer has not come over so far this year. The Comptroller is asking us to do so this year; I'm a little confused about the policy change on that and why we're not continuing to use year-end authority
- Mr. Brown: Can I ask a follow-up? You just mentioned it, the 2025 even-year election legal expense; do we know how much that cost, with hindsight?
- Ms. Smiley: I can certainly provide that; I don't have it at my fingertips, but we can provide it
- Mr. Masterpole: In fairness to that, this legislature took action
- Mr. Brown: That was us. Yeah, that was this legislature; we took action to appropriate dollars for that; I voted against that. Just, the political legal expenses can mount
- Mr. Masterpole: For clarification, there's been no policy change in the Comptroller's Office. The policy change, in my opinion, is that it came to my attention in Q1, and when we're blowing a budget in the first quarter, that becomes alarming to me. That would be my policy change, where I found it maybe later, or if it was billed later, encumbered later. And this also to Kristi's defense, communications between my staff and either Kristi or my staff and Steve Morgan at the time happened. I understand these things happen, coming from a different account, but then I was asked to come here and do this, which is why I'm here
- Mr. May: I'm very confused now. Is this an intervention? Are you simply making us aware? Is there a policy change? Is this not subject to year-end transfer? I know it's a bunch of questions, but I'm just trying to sort out what I'm hearing and why I'm hearing it
- Mr. Masterpole: It's not a policy change. I don't believe it's an intervention; that wasn't the intent. It's informational; I was invited to the legislature to provide an informational update, and we are providing an informational update. I don't believe there have been any changes
- Mr. May: I know the budget gets busted in a lot of different ways every single year, you mentioned it yourself. This is the first time in my recollection that we're talking about something like this, and it just

smacks political as hell to me. I don't know why, but it's hard for me not to think that way, and I want you to know that, because I'm not sure what we're trying to accomplish here. To the CFO's point, and as someone who's made a lot of budgets, as have you, you don't budget or tax for the bad, and you don't budget or tax for things you don't control. So again, I'm back to it, and I think that's sound logic in terms of creating a budget, so why are we talking about this today? What's the endgame?

- Mr. Masterpole: I'll respectfully disagree, humbly. I'm here under no political pretense; I'm here to provide information that was requested of me, which I've always tried to do regardless of who sat in those chairs. Secondarily, there has been no policy change. There have been discussions between FinOps and Phil Britt, who's here with me by phone, email, and other communications, relative to where we stand. And look, we could be having a similar conversation with DSS or others
- Mr. May: We've never had this. This is the first time, in my recollection, that we've ever had a conversation like this. You want to pivot, change direction, do something different, that's entirely your prerogative as independently elected to do your job, and I respect that all day long
- Mr. Masterpole: Respectfully, I was invited here to provide this; I wasn't invited before; that's the difference. If I was invited before, we would have had the same conversation
- Mr. May: So, what is the endgame? This is all still subject to our normal budgetary procedures when budget is busted or when things change, just like when accounts are low we take some of that money to move it to other areas. What's the intent of this conversation today?
- Mr. Masterpole: Our endgame is what it's always been from January 1st of 2020, at least when I walked in the door, and I believe I can speak for comptrollers before me. What's the plan? We have a budget that exploded in this budget line, and we know why it's sensitive right now; everybody's talking about how much an outside legal action could cost. I'm already getting questions as to how this relates to item five, and who knows when those bills will come in, in two months, you know how that rolls. How we resolve this is really how we've always resolved it, the plan comes up, and it's going to be handled. Respectfully, in my opinion, if we are talking about year-end transfers in September and October, that's one thing; when you start talking about blowing a budget line in March, and what we're going to do to fix that, I'm not pointing fingers at anybody, but a plan needs to be in place, and as I stand here today I don't know what that plan is, other than we're going to go to year-end. If that's the answer, that's the answer, but I think the legislature should be aware that we went over budget in March and we're going to handle it in year-end transfers
- Mr. Brown: As chair of Ways and Means, I called them in because I'm new to this; I am not as seasoned as you and CFO Smiley. So when I hear that we're over budget, I would like to know why. I think especially pertinent, as we consider legal action going forward, I would like to know what the precedent has been, how this has worked before, because for me, I'm not comfortable just going over budget, and it seems like we're doing that. I want to know what's the ramification
- Mr. May: I respect and appreciate that, I really do. And since we're on the subject, I'd like to ask for a much more comprehensive representation from your office on how the whole budget looks, all the accounts, running hot, running light, and what you guys think, because if we're looking for a strategy, let's look for a strategy, and not just bring one thing to light
- Mr. Masterpole: As the process has played out, I don't believe the process has changed. We have budget overrides occasionally, maybe more than occasionally, but certainly not in March. I hate to sound like a broken record, but that's just what it is. Maybe I'll point the finger at me; when I should have realized we were at an average of $1.8 million in outside counsel over the three years, I should have been louder and said, why are we budgeting a million dollars less than this? That falls in all of our laps, but I'm here reporting it; maybe I should have found it sooner, I didn't, and I'm here to report what the actuals are
- Mr. May: Sooner could have been '24 or '25 from the looks of it
- Mr. Masterpole: Yeah, probably; '23 was within $100,000, that's pretty reasonable, but the other ones were not

- Mr. Romeo: I'll second that, look at the whole budget situation current, based on where we are with everything, just to get a picture
- Mr. Masterpole: It's a lot easier to go to overs than unders, because we don't have to override unders, but I digress
- Mr. Romeo: The override piece is something I have a question on, in terms of process, not just right now but overall; currently we have a $7,500 requirement for budget transfers to come to the legislature for approval, but your office has the discretion to do the budget overrides. How do those two things play out, where there's a requirement for us of $7,500
- Mr. Masterpole: If the $7,500 rule didn't exist, you guys would be here all day every day doing budget transfers, because the budget is so huge and there are so many fluctuations, all the above. So that's probably a good number; maybe it should even, I'm speaking against myself, maybe that number should go up and give the departments more discretion
    - I hate to overburden the legislature with things, but I hope you know that I have the utmost respect for all of you; maybe we should report more often that; we just had an override, and here it is. Then it becomes, you feel like you're picking on departments; DSS, I hate to say it's the biggest offender, but it becomes the biggest unknown. Who's going to be here for services? What is going to happen? How do we budget for that? What's reimbursed, if it's reimbursed, do you care that it went over budget? Those things play out like that. I'm going to agree with Legislator May a little bit; this is a hot topic because everybody's talking about outside counsel right now
- Mr. Romeo: My other statement or question is to my fellow legislators; if $7,500 is an overburdening number that we then just don't follow our own rule of $7,500, I would like to see us come up with something that does make sense
- Mr. Masterpole: There is no transfer; the rule's in place, and nothing is being transferred. The $7,500 rule is you're reallocating budgeted dollars to another budgeted line, one will go up and one will go down in this situation. This isn't really violating a rule, because there's no transfer to cover it yet. The intent, and I'm going to speak to Kristi, I don't want to put words in her mouth, the intent usually is we handle these with year-end transfers; we do it every year, it's common practice, you guys have seen them in the past. It's nothing new; this is just new because it went way over quick, and now there's an agenda item that might require more of it
- Ms. Smiley: There are parameters around this. First of all, anything over $7,500 does come here. We also send monthly reports to the county legislature, even of the ones that are under $7,500, so people are aware. The second component is there are guidelines around what we use year-end authority for; it is not for our maintenance account or different things we bring out throughout the year, they are for specific things that have statutory requirements that we have to do, like if a payroll account is over, we will run that into the red and clean it up with year-end authority if it can't be done prior to that.
    - There are only certain accounts that we would ever run into the red or ask, working with the Controller, to do so. It's not a discretion of, I do it for every account because we don't want to come over right at this moment; there are parameters around that, and we can certainly talk about that
    - The year-end transfer authority has those parameters in it; that year-end report is reviewed with the chair of Ways and Means, we go through each one of them, and then they are signed off and sent back to me for approval before the Comptroller posts anything. So there are different components around it; it's not that we're taking liberties with just any accounts, there are strict parameters around what we do use year-end authority for
- Mr. Romeo: It would be helpful to understand what those parameters are, in terms of what we can expect
- Mr. Brown: So when we do the year-end transfers, we pretty much look at where we went under, and then we're able to use that to pay for where we went over and balance it

- Ms. Smiley: Correct. So it's primarily for interdepartmentals, employee benefits and salary accounts, and a few mandated services. Anything else that is going to go over budget comes over to this legislature throughout the year for anything over $7,500
    - Going back to laws 408, like we said, expense-wise it is not over budget; encumbrance-wise it sure is. Part of the requisitions and encumbrances are for specific litigation; we don't know the timing of that either, so it gets encumbered for what we think that's going to cost at the moment, and that may not come to fruition until 2027. So that's why we're trying to analyze those encumbrances, they may be a little high, we're trying to analyze exactly when those costs are going to be incurred as well. That one is a little more complex in terms of the structure of it
- Mr. Romeo: With the year-end cleanup, though, all of those costs are either encumbered or expensed already, so there really isn't a choice, right?
- Ms. Smiley: Most of them are encumbered at that point, that's what gets cleaned up in the year-end process. That's why I said there are very few accounts that we use year-end authority for, because there is a statutory requirement that we do those. We're obviously not going to not pay payroll or benefits, so it is very select items that are on that year-end authority that we have to do
- Mr. Romeo: I would just want a better picture of understanding that, because I don't right now
- Mr. Brown: I don't know if this is for the Comptroller or for the CFO; the legislature has funds set for outside counsel; would that be statutory? If the legislature went over its outside counsel budget, would that be the same as if the county went over?
- Ms. Smiley: I don't know that that would be the same thing, unless it was litigation, because it's using outside counsel when it could use inside counsel if there's no conflict; that's where things get a little sticky
- Mr. Masterpole: I echo that a little bit, but in my opinion it's a budget that we would override, because we're not going to tell you to stop in the middle of your trial because you don't have enough budgeted money
- Ms. Smiley: I agree. If its anything to do with litigation

5. Discussion of Proposed Legal Action Related to Declaratory Judgment Action Concerning Local Law A of 2026: Term Limits, Transmittal to the Board of Elections

Chairman Brown moved that the committee enter into executive session pursuant to Public Officers Law § 105, subdivision 1, paragraph (d), to discuss declaratory judgment action concerning Local Law A of 2026: Term Limits, Transmittal to the Board of Elections

A motion was made by Ms. Hernandez, seconded by Mr. Romeo, to enter Executive Session; Ayes: 6 (Brown, Hernandez, May, Burtis, Bush, Romeo). MOTION CARRIED.

Questions/Comments:

- Mr. May: Is County Law part of this conversation?
- Mr. Brown: Yeah, mandatory
- Mr. Ockenden: It is our position that we are adverse in this matter and will not be participating in this conversation
- Mr. Durr: Not just that we're adverse, we're also possible witnesses, so we cannot attend

A motion was made by Ms. Hernandez, seconded by Mr. Romeo, to return to open meeting; Ayes: 6 (Brown, Hernandez, May, Burtis, Bush, Romeo). MOTION CARRIED.

C. Adjournment

A motion was made by Ms. Hernandez, seconded by Mr. Romeo, to adjourn the meeting; Ayes: 6 (Brown, Hernandez, May, Burtis, Bush, Romeo). MOTION CARRIED.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Adams

HASSINA K. ADAMS, Clerk
Onondaga County Legislature

ATTENDANCE

COMMITTEE: **WAYS & MEANS**
DATE: **JULY 28, 2026**

NAME (Please Print)	DEPT/AGENCY/ORGANIZATION
Kristi Smiley	Finance