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Onondaga County Legislature

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Public Hearing Regarding the 2027 County Budget

October 1, 2026, 5:00 p.m.

Members Present: Leader Hernandez, Leader May, Ms. Denton, Mr. Bush, Mr. Burtis, Chair Brown

Members Absent: Mr. Romeo

Also Present: Chairwoman Watts, Mr. Meaker, Mr. McCarron, Mr. Knapp, Mr. Kelly, Mr. Garland, Mr. Thompson, Ms. Block, Mr. Eriksen, Mr. Ryan

Chair Brown called the 5:00 p.m. public hearing to order at 5:02 p.m. and stated that Resolution 128-2026, which authorized the public hearing, had been entered into the record.

The Clerk confirmed that the notice had been duly published.

Chair Brown welcomed everyone and thanked them for participating in the 2027 Onondaga County budget process. Chair Brown noted that the County Executive presented the proposed budget on September 15th, including a commitment to funding a new local development corporation, ONHOME, to invest in housing development, which the Legislature will vote to create on Tuesday. Since then, the Ways and Means Committee held 18 meetings to hear from every department. Chair Brown thanked the County Executive's team and CFO Smiley for their work throughout this process.

Chair Brown noted that, after careful review, the committee made a series of changes which strengthen the budget without impacting critical or mandated county services. These include additional funding for CNY Arts, a program manager in the Department of Social Services for food security programs, \$250,000 to the Agriculture Council, six school-based caseworkers in Children and Family Services, three Health Department staff for addiction services, and funding for Sheriff's Office emergency response vehicles. The committee also held certain accounts in contingency, requiring departments to return to explain programs and justify uses. These include the \$420,000 WEP federal lobbying contract, \$312,000 in Honeywell consent decree funds, \$250,000 for the local farm and food pilot program, and \$2 million for the Gen Z down payment assistance program. Chair Brown noted that this is not a perfect budget, but the Legislature's review made it better, and invited residents to share their thoughts in advance of final amendments and passage on Tuesday.

Chair Brown asked for speakers wishing to be heard and proceeded to call upon registered speakers in order:

1. Jill Hurst-Wahl, Member of the Board of Trustees of the Onondaga County Public Library (*Statement Attached*)
2. Kevin Revier
3. Aggie Lane (*Statement Attached*)
4. Melissa Carr Rowe, Executive Director of Central New York Lyme & Tick-borne Disease Alliance (*Statement Attached*)
5. Jared Shepard, Director of Research & Planning at CenterState CEO (*Statement Attached*)
6. John Przepiora, President of Greening USA (*Statement Attached*)
7. Maria Revelles, Organizer with Jobs to Move America (*Statement Attached*)
8. Lisa Warneke (*Statement Attached*)
9. Shemica Dunning, REAL Advocacy Fellow with Restoreforlife Inc. (*Statement Attached*)
10. Evette Williams, President of Restoreforlife Inc. (*Statement Attached*)
11. Latrelle Dunbar, REAL Advocacy Fellow with Restoreforlife Inc. (*Statement Attached*)

12. Sam Gruber
13. Donald Hughes, SustainCNY (*Statement Attached*)
14. Mark Coleman
15. Peter King (*Statement Attached*)
16. SeQuoia Kemp (*Statement Attached*)

The following are individuals who submitted statements via email:

1. Susan Flick (*Statement Attached*)
2. Anna Smith, Senior Campaign Researcher with Jobs to Move America (*Statement Attached*)
3. Marlund Chottiner (*Statement Attached*)
4. Catherine Cullivan (*Statement Attached*)
5. Bonita Sigel, President of Neighbors for a Better Micron (*Statement Attached*)

Chair Brown asked for speakers wishing to be heard. Hearing none, the public hearing was adjourned at 5:57 p.m.

A motion was made by Ms. Hernandez, seconded by Mr. May, to adjourn the public hearing. Ayes: 6 (Ms. Hernandez, Mr. May, Mr. Burtis, Mr. Bush, Mr. Brown, Ms. Denton) Noes: 0 Absent: 1 (Mr. Romeo); MOTION CARRIED.

The public hearing was officially closed on October 1, 2026 at 11:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Hassina K. Adams, Clerk
Onondaga County Legislature