

Onondaga County Legislature

JAMIE McNAMARA Clerk

DAVID H. KNAPP Chairman

MELANIE VILARDI Deputy Clerk

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WAYS & MEANS COMMITTEE MINUTES – JULY 27, 2021 TIM BURTIS, CHAIRMAN

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. May, Mr. Rowley, Mr. Ryan, Mr. McBride, Mr. Williams, *Mrs. Ervin ALSO ATTENDING: Chairman Knapp, Ms. Cody, Ms. Kuhn, Dr. Chase; also see attached

Chairman Burtis called the meeting to order at 9:38 a.m. A motion was made by Mr. McBride, seconded by Mr. May to waive the reading of the minutes of the previous committee meeting. Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED. A motion was made by Mr. May, seconded by Mr. McBride to approve the minutes of the previous committee meeting. Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED.

- 1. <u>COMMUNITY SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD</u>: Brian Donnelly, Deputy County Executive a. Confirming Reappointment to the Community Services Advisory Board (Sarah Merrick)
- Everyone knows Sarah Merrick, Commissioner of DSS-Economic Security; resume included

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

- <u>CULTURAL RESOURCES TRUST</u>: Brian Donnelly, Deputy County Executive
 a. Confirming Reappointment to the Onondaga County Cultural Resources Trust (Robert Petrovich)
- Bob Petrovich, Director of Economic Development, reappointment; resume included in packet

Mr. Donnelly responded to Mr. Rowley that he believes all of the picks are by the County Executive. Mr. Rowley asked if the CRT can borrow on by itself, and Mr. Donnelly said it does. Mr. May asked if they have ever borrowed. Mr. Donnelly replied that he would have to research that. Mr. Rowley requested their debt outstanding, as well as a P&L for last year.

*Mrs. Ervin arrived at the meeting.

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

b. Confirming Appointment to the Onondaga County Cultural Resources Trust (Ryan Smith)

• Ryan Smith is young; moved here recently; he expressed interest in serving on the CRT; resume included

Chairman Burtis said he has spoken to Mr. Ryan, and he seems to be an excellent young man ready to serve.

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

- 3. <u>ONONDAGA COUNTY RESOURCE RECOVERY AGENCY</u>: Brian Donnelly, Deputy County Executive a. Confirming Appointment to the Onondaga County Resource Recovery Agency (Luis Torres)
- Luis Torres expressed interest in serving; County Executive put forth name; resume included

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

4. <u>WATER ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION</u>: Shannon Harty, Commissioner a. Personnel Resolution (Sponsored by Mr. McBride)

Oak Orchard

Liverpool

Solvay

Onondaga

North Syracuse

Syracuse

DeWitt

Minoa

Manlius

Baldwinsville Seneca Knolls

Camillus

. Ryan McMahon, II



- County-owned public sewer <u>utility</u>
- Six wastewater treatment plants and 400+ miles of sewer
- Provides service to 75% of Onondaga County
- Single largest public health benefit and vital for economic development





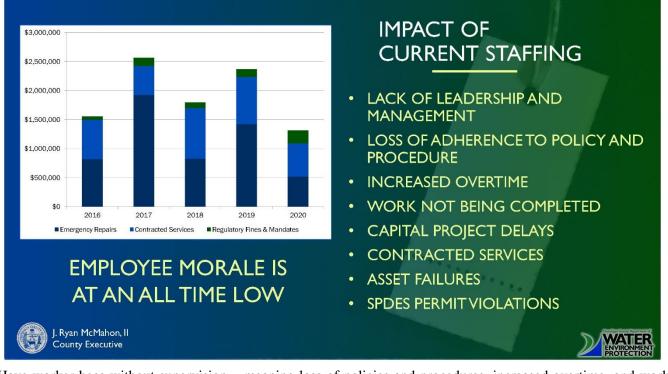
WHO IS WEP?

- Average Annual budget of \$95 million
- A diverse team of operators, maintenance mechanics, electricians, operators, engineers, biologists, chemists, laborers, clerks, and more.
- Complex conveyance and treatment facilities that utilize advanced technology and computer systems to maintain 24-7 reliability

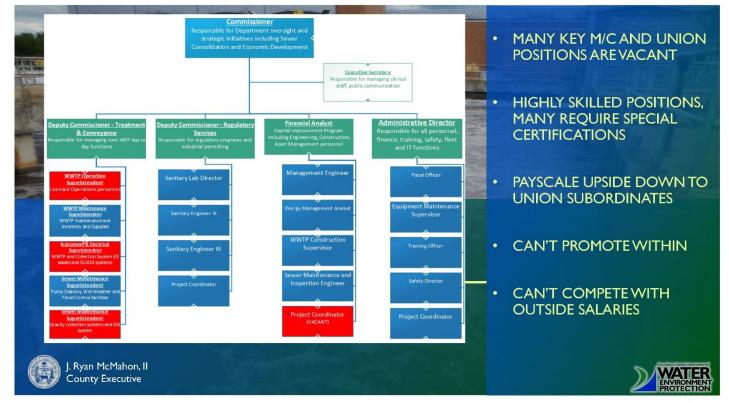
Treating over 33 billion gallons of wastewater a year



- If maintained 390 personnel with 2% raises annually, then 101 trend would be much higher
- Hiring freezes, early retirement, COVID restrictions, etc. started in 2020; 101 line started dropping; head count down to 325 active personnel
- Plays out at management level; certain operations (i.e. I&E instrument and electrical) are operating at 50% or lower staff levels; need to keep things running
- Vacant unfunded some unfunded over time; looking at COVID austerity and 2020, vacancies are higher than normal
- Early retirement is also part of vacancies; senior field staff in I&E had tremendous turnover; on management level lost 2 superintendents; certainly saw loss in senior staff; largely maintenance and I&E crews (core function)



- Have worker bees without supervision meaning loss of policies and procedures, increased overtime, and work not getting done since there are not enough people to do it
- Do not have project managers for capital projects, which means those are getting delayed
- Hiring out services including maintenance and electrical workers, which is expensive versus doing in house
- Biggest thing right now is asset failure with force mains failing; (i.e.) major pump at metro pulling today; falling behind on maintenance; pumps not meeting capacity; working with DEC to get back into compliance
- Workforce sees it, are frustrated, are trying to keep up, and are tired; cannot continue like this



- High level organizational structure; Commissioner with 4 key organizational groups
- Far left is core functions treatment and conveyance; people working day in and day out running plants and managing collection systems

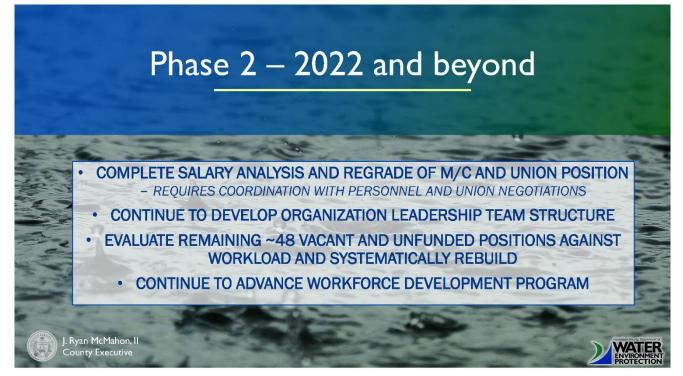
- Red boxes are vacancies
- WWTP Operations Superintendent responsible for overseeing all 6 WWTPs and coordination; vacant since last June; Ms. Harty has been covering duties along with another sanitary engineer to help fill in
- Head operators not getting attention and support needed
- I&E superintendent retired earlier this year; vacant since beginning of April
- I&E Engineer union position vacant for 2 years senior level union management turning over with early retirement
- Lower left is sewer maintenance largest division; 80-100 people in division; responsible for 166 pump stations, 400 miles of sewers, and contracted services with towns and village; currently managed by a single superintendent
- Lot to oversee and make sure work delegated consistently; policies being adhered to
- Challenge as commissioner WEP's core function is undermanaged
- Why cannot fill vacant positions management positions; usually promotion from union position below; union positions are grade 12 or 13, and make base salary from \$70,000 \$85,000 plus overtime
- 3 red MC positions are grade 34 with starting salary of \$71,000; upside down; disincentive to take promotion; union people do not want to step into it; want to promote within because they have knowledge, experience, and know systems
- Trying to draw from outside, but cannot compete with outside private salaries



- Onboarded a lot of people in 2017-2019, but did not have great training and management in place to set up for success
- This resolution reflective of phased workforce redevelopment; filling and getting senior management team; reestablishing policies and procedures; organization and structure
- Once policies in place, then train and educate supervisors on how to onboard employees; when new employees are here, they have great place to orient and train
- Also need to look at re-grading salaries; challenge as it has to go through Civil Service and Personnel correct salaries and justified



- Looking for advance stepping sataries for core supermendent positions, have calculates, and know what is needed to reach them to fill the positions; redevelop leadership team
 Systematically understanding workload with existing positions: vacant funded which to fill, how will they fill them.
- Systematically understanding workload with existing positions; vacant funded which to fill, how will they fill them, and are the people in them ready to onboard and fill



Mr. Williams asked if the 18 CSEA remaining positions are vacant due to not finding people, or they do not pay. Ms. Harty responded that those are positions that they were not hiring at the end of 2020 due to delays in hiring. These are positions that need to be filled, and they are working systematically to find candidates. She said they have not been actively recruiting, but they would like to.

Mr. McBride asked what Ms. Harty's timeline is with the phase approach. Ms. Harty answered phase 1 would

be carried through the end of 2021, and phase 2 and beyond will be in the 2022 budget. Ms. Harty suspects this will carry on into 2023 and 2024 because it will take time to adjust the system.

Mr. Burtis asked for more information on the creates, abolishes, and placements. Ms. Harty explained:

- Went through entire roster in each division and reviewed the work each division does, as well as career paths
- Create Clerk 1 at Grade 2 instrumental in supporting SCADA and alarms; for Henry Clay division; supporting pump station alarms, pump station field crews, answering phones
- Currently phone calls come into Metro board dispatch manned by grade 9, 11 or 13 WWTP operator; not best use
- Create Instrumentation Maintenance Coordinator maintenance doing field work on level sensors and meters; coordinator is senior position for crews; have one in south, but not north; north crews have no supervisor
- Position on roster years ago and abolished; no one took promotion; bringing back because those people need a supervisor
- Create 2 Water System Construction Engineers existing position; these 2 will be part of capital projects team; to continue projects, have had superintendents and Ms. Harty do project management, which takes time from core functions, or projects are not getting managed
- These 2 positions necessary to ensure projects are getting done, assets are being replaced, and programs advancing
- Abolish WWTP Maintenance Worker grade 5; I&E personnel; pushing everyone from grade 5 to 7; looking at union pay scale and competing with private salaries, need to be grades 7, 9, 11, 13 and above; does not meet pay scale
- Abolish Custodial Worker been vacant; does not meet career paths; do not use
- Abolish Research Aid IT department; not title or job spec used; technology changed

Mr. Rowley said it all looks fine, and he would like to know the net number for the increase on the incumbent positions. Mr. Morgan responded the total cost for the remainder of the year is \$130,000, so the annual would be about \$300,000 based on 26 pay periods. Ms. Harty said she can get back to Mr. Rowley on the actual salaries.

Ms. Harty responded to Mr. Rowley that the intent is to hire people in the vacant positions at the advance step. Those positions do not have an incumbent, but they have candidates for them.

Mr. Ryan appreciates all of the information, and he is slightly apprehensive about the upgrades with the MC titles. There are a lot of departments with staffing shortages, and there are certainly reassurances with the creates in phase 1 and phase 2. Mr. Ryan is hopeful the Legislature will see some of the creates in the budget, and he looks forward to seeing the majority of this coming in the next couple months. They need to get on the right path and get the staffing needed.

Mr. May said it is refreshing to get a business case for things a department wants to do. Too often it seems like pulling teeth, because the Legislature is not getting information, or it is with filters. Mr. May stated they took over CSO last year and another this year, and he asked how that factors into this. Are there adds specifically for these, or are they folded into the general needs? Ms. Harty responded:

- Lease agreements in 4 areas in Meadowbrook and 2 in Baldwinsville; taking on full responsibility for all the extra miles
- At this point, not including staff or adding new, because there is not a clear picture to justify new positions
- Not in there yet, but will be in 2022; some efficiencies have been gained
- i.e. I&E division one area that is wasteful is pump stations; 160 plus stations; currently use old copper networks for alarm systems; as those fails, the I&E workers have to go out and check them manually; now WEP owns them and can set them up with cellular communication systems, which can be checked remotely
- What are workers doing, now that they are taking on all these pump stations; how can they get them back to highest and best practices

Mrs. Ervin asked if Ms. Harty will look towards management positions for folks of color, as it is still a problem over there. Ms. Harty replied that she agrees, and said that it is not just people of color, but also women. WEP is a very technical department, and a lot of women are on the sewer maintenance crews. It is encouraging to them to see a female commissioner.

Mr. Rowley asked what the next CSO will be, and Ms. Harty said she does not know. Mr. May asked what municipalities in Meadowbrook are not included in the four participating. Ms. Harty answered the Town of

Dewitt and a small portion of the city of Syracuse.

Chairman Burtis thanked Ms. Harty for her time and information. It is a big, important job. Chairman Burtis made a suggestion to possibly go to the Metro plant for a future meeting, as it is a fascinating place.

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

- 5. <u>ONONDAGA COUNTY INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY</u>: Mary Beth Primo, Deputy County Executive Physical Services
 - a. Authorizing a Loan to the Onondaga County Industrial Development Agency (OCIDA) (Sponsored by Mr. Knapp)

Chairman Burtis stated that the committee will consider this resolution, but they will not be voting today.

Ms. Primo:

- OCIDA's role economic development dependent on having skilled and available workforce, being able to provide incentives that are attractive to companies, and available sites that are attractive (i.e. size, location, infrastructure, SEQR)
- State has done this before with creating sites that are important for economic development
- Governmental body having control of property makes transaction of acquiring title or lease much easer
- Hancock Airpark been a huge success; about ready to sign last title for last parcel
- Syracuse label expanded multiple times at 7th North St, then moved over there, expanding there now
- Opportunities to provide to local companies and those locating to north east or east coast in NYS
- i.e. lost opportunity 8 years ago; Byrne Dairy looking to build yogurt facility; traveled all over county to look at sites; could not find what they wanted (site big enough with infrastructure, quick close); yogurt facility with ag tourism
- Lost that to Cortland, NY; doing their second expansion; year later did start expanding Ultra Dairy here
- Resolution would help White Pine really significant and palpable opportunity to land huge project here, but only because County has White Pine; location near electric substation, big, infrastructure available, close to highway
- County Executive and Bob Petrovich have been meeting site selectors at conferences; that is what they are hearing
- OCIDA has opportunity to continue to develop sites in county, whether green or brown field; continuing White Pine; property for agribusiness park (take advantage of food produced in area)
- Would allow OCIDA to tap into loan; loans would be used for acquiring property, infrastructure, for local companies to expand, or attract other business
- Money would be paid back to county through proceeds of sales of properties or fees paid for benefits

Mr. May said the nature and type of request being made is not new to the Legislature. Mr. Morgan commented that there were funds granted to OCIDA as a fund balance resolution in the amount of \$2 million to support infrastructure at White Pine. Mr. May recalls there being a mechanism in the pilot to bring it together financially. Mr. Morgan said yes, the structure being proposed here would be a repayment.

Mr. May said the resolution is general and vague, because they cannot predict where the dollars will go. It would be helpful to the Legislature to have a better sense of what asset development means, and have that come to the committee in the way of a proforma (or forecasted) budget on how the dollars may (or could) be spent. The accounting has to be clarified much more as to where the money is coming from, how it will be appropriated, how it will be tracked, is it a specific project account, is it for a specific investment, is it a general project account to support the revolving loan approach, and is there a reporting mechanism behind it. Mr. May is guessing everyone would like more information, and the accounting is very important for this committee to oversee the project going forward.

Ms. Primo wanted clarification about what Mr. May is asking for. Mr. May asked what will it not be used for, and what it can be used for. Can it be used for land acquisition and eminent domain? Ms. Primo responded that she would defer to Mr. Morgan about the best way to set it up. Mr. Morgan said they will set up a project, requests will come in, and funds will be loaned out and accounted for in the project. As revenues come in, it will offset

that expense. Mr. May asked if it would be one big project account, and Mr. Morgan replied yes.

Mr. McBride asked if there are limits on how much a loan can be (per project), who is underwriting it, and when a project comes in is it 50% loan to value. Ms. Primo answered:

- It will not be driven by project; trying to create something to dangle in front of companies; be proactive for opportunities for properties that make sense for economic development; understanding what the market place is like
- Do not foresee buying a property after a company is ready to come in; it is about being proactive and collecting sites

Mr. Petrovich:

- Get requests all the time for different projects, and scramble to find accommodating locations for distribution centers, agribusinesses, tech business
- Do not have inventory of sites readily available to promote; companies come to look at county as location or through ESD or site selectors; all about site readiness, time to market shorten window as much as possible
- RFI's on company needing requirements for power or sewer; do not have inventory for everyone
- Lost opportunities in ag area, because county does not have an ag park
- Working diligently to get White Pine to market readiness; holistic approach to make sure have different segments of need readily available for folks that may want to locate; big push for time to market readiness; not as well prepared
- Core infrastructure like gas and electric; certain things have to be ordered and not readily available off the shelf like transformers or cables; does not have to be completely ready, but ready enough in span of 12 18 months

Mr. Ryan asked what the funding source of the loan is, and how much is it. Mr. Morgan replied stimulus funds, and the amount is up to \$20 million. Mr. Ryan asked if the funding source is stimulus money or American Rescue Plan money the county has received, and Mr. Morgan said yes. It is a grant expenditure, and the money would be taken out and put into a loan to OCIDA for any necessary investments or improvements. It would then flow back to the county in repayment and replenish it. Ms. Primo asked if the loan is based on OCIDA borrowing \$5 million or \$20 million right off the bat. Mr. Morgan responded it is on demand. Mr. Ryan asked if OCIDA's fund balance is around \$9 million, and Mr. Morgan said he can confirm that.

Mr. Ryan asked why the county is authorizing the loan if it is coming out of grant expenditures of ~\$44.2 million. Mr. Morgan stated the stimulus money is just shy of \$90 million. Chairman Knapp said the county received half. Mr. Ryan asked if that money would come out of the existing \$44 million, and Mr. Morgan answered yes. Mr. Ryan said \$1 million has been appropriated, and the Legislature has not voted on any of this yet. None of the expenditures or disbursements have come before the Legislature yet; nor do they anticipate it coming through. Why is the Legislature authorizing the expenditure? Mr. Morgan said they are authorizing the ability for the County Executive to do the loan. Mr. Ryan said if it is coming out of the stimulus funding, with the understanding the stimulus funding does not have to come through the Legislature, then why would the Legislature have to authorize it. Mr. Morgan said there are certain things the Legislature is required to approve, such as a real estate purchase or loan to the IDA.

Mr. Durr commented that it is past practice, so they are staying the course. It is giving authority, not funding.

Mr. Ryan said they do not need approval to use \$1 million for "Keep it Local", or to buy a piece of equipment, or however they want to disburse the \$44 million. Mr. Ryan asked that if the administration wants to give \$20 million to OCIDA, then they need permission to do so. Mr. Durr said correct. Mr. May asked if any other initiative by charter requiring legislative input or approval, would require oversight, and Mr. Morgan agreed.

Mr. Ryan said he is in favor of economic development, but he is apprehensive of taking \$20 million out of a number of other projects. It is a quarter of everything they are getting, in addition to the ~\$9 million they have.

Mr. Morgan responded to Mr. May that they are not pulling \$20 million out of the project; multiyear approach.

Chairman Knapp stated there will be a lot coming over to vote on with stimulus funds. They already voted on

the road plan, they have \$15 million for broadband expansion to authorize (10 days left in surveying areas), and there is \$25 million for the multisport complex which will come over. \$65 - \$70 million is coming over to be voted on, so there is a lot of input.

Mr. Ryan:

- When does the legislature have a say as to what is being appropriated out of stimulus? When do they not?
- Not into micromanaging, lot of good projects, have stimulus funding doing roads, restaurants, economic development
- When will the Legislature be in the loop and out of the loop?
- Opinion of many that resolution passed at budget gave the County Executive authority to spend stimulus, and disperse when they wanted and how; when will Legislature have a say or no say; look forward to communication
- What will come to the Legislature? Already \$1 million spent; another \$1.5 million approved; Legislature had no say

Chairman Knapp:

- If Legislature does not want to do broadband expansion, will vote it down; will have a big say
- Multisport park will have say; have had meetings with County Executive to discuss his plan and vision; seeking input
- Not made in a vacuum; Legislature will have a say as these progress; not all quite ready to come before Legislature
- If do not want to do something, will vote down

Mrs. Ervin stated that it is in the media that it is going to happen before the Legislature has any decision making powers at all. There was an article for \$20 million to OCIDA, which is not decided, but people see it out there thinking it is a fact. Chairman Knapp commented that the reason for the article was because it was on the agenda for a vote from the committee. Mrs. Ervin said it is not just this. She has been out of the loop, and she is getting calls about things that are not coming across their table. The media is calling talking about things that Mrs. Ervin does not know anything about. She should have an idea of what this body will vote on before it goes to the media.

Chairman Burtis noted that leadership is working with the County Executive's office, and specifically what they are doing here is authorizing a loan; which will be paid back. The idea is that it will come back to the county, but they do not know how much, or the time/terms/conditions.

Mr. Ryan asked if they were to appropriate any, would it be out of the current \$44,726,082. Mr. Morgan reiterated this legislation is authorizing the County Executive to do a loan. If it is approved, then if there is an initiative or project they agree to loan money out for, it would come out of that pot.

Mr. May said according to the way the Charter is written, there will be a variety of ways for the Legislature to weigh in on a majority of the decisions ultimately made. The way the Legislature weighs in will vary from project to project. Mr. May stated the concerns are valid, and any Legislator that is doing their job will share similar concerns. To Chairman Knapp's and Chairman Burtis' points, leadership is working to improve the situation to alleviate some of those concerns. Mr. May thinks they are in a decent spot to do that considering the control they have with these projects. To Mr. Ryan's point these are good things, but the Legislature has a role.

Mr. Rowley:

- Come off what Leader Ervin and Legislator Ryan were saying, the County Executive had no authority to spend any stimulus money without coming to Legislature in the first place
- No way the County Executive had authority under the budget resolution to spend any money; no stimulus money on the table at that time; resolution was for emergency purposes only; no authority to spend the money
- This resolution is defective; past practice give authority to County Executive to spend money, Legislature designates the source of funds, sets project account, and provides appropriations as part of resolution
- Support concept 110%, and want to give IDA money, but want done in proper format

Ms. Kuhn commented that she has read the rules/regulations for the rescue funds, and it is designed to help a community rebound from the pandemic in terms of public health, mental health, housing issues, small business, and economic development. Ms. Kuhn said she is only hearing about large projects, and she agrees with Mr. Rowley that she does not understand why everything is coming from the 14th floor.

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

a. Resolving the Impasse in Collective Negotiations Between the County of Onondaga and the Deputy Sheriff's Benevolent Association of Onondaga County, Inc. for a Successor Collective Bargaining Agreement

Chairman Knapp:

- Unfortunate impasse with DSBA union and administration; been working on this for several years; at point where Legislature must impose a settlement for 2019
- Only have role in salaries, nothing else; looked at as data driven decision what other bargaining units received in 2019; almost all were at 2% (MC's a 0%; OCSPA was 2.5% based on binding arbitration)
- Big issue still out there with negotiations is J-med situation causing scheduling overtime difficult; makes minimum staffing difficult; remains a big issue, but Legislature has nothing to do with that; only percentage
- Discussions recommended a 2%

Mr. Ryan stated that landing at 2% is great, and he is happy they are doing this. Chairman Burtis agrees considering J-med.

Mr. Durr commented that there needs to be clarification in the resolve clause. It does not change the terms; only clarifies. Mr. Durr would recommend not voting on it.

Chairman Knapp responded to Mr. Williams that this is in effect for 2019 and is retroactive. They will have to negotiate for 2020.

A motion was made by Mr. May, seconded by Mrs. Ervin, to adjourn the meeting. Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:56 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

JAMIE McNAMARA, Clerk Onondaga County Legislature

ATTENDANCE

COMMITTEE: WAYS & MEANS DATE: JULY 27, 2021

NAME (Please Print)	DEPARTMENT/AGENCY
Robust Petrovich	OCFOA/ED
Date Au	pouple
Ner th	FN
MB sino	CE
Tenesha Murphy	CE
Corl Hummel	Personnel
SHAWKON HAMIN	WOP.
Katelynn Ulrich	Spectivom
Brian Donnelly	CE
BOS Durr J	Law
Ben Yaus	Law
Steve Morgan	Financi
Nick Dars	Leg
John DeSantis	Lea
Tim Frateschi	Leg
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