

Office of the Onondaga County Legislature

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

DEBORAH L. MATURO
Clerk

J. RYAN McMAHON, II
Chairman

KATHERINE FRENCH
Deputy Clerk

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION COMMITTEE MINUTES - APRIL 15, 2015
MICHAEL E. PLOCHOCKI, CHAIRMAN

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dr. Chase, Mr. Burtis, Mr. Shepard, Mrs. Rapp

ALSO ATTENDING: Chairman McMahon and *see attached list*

Chairman Plochocki called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. *A motion was made by Dr. Chase, seconded by Mr. Shepard, to waive the reading of the proceedings from the previous committee minutes. MOTION CARRIED. A motion was made by Mr. Shepard, seconded by Dr. Chase, to approve the minutes of the proceedings of the previous committee. MOTION CARRIED.*

1. **WATER ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION:** Tom Rhoads, P.E., Commissioner; Michael Lannon, P.E., Deputy Commissioner
 - a. **A Resolution Calling a Public Hearing for the Purpose of Considering an Increase in the Estimated Maximum Cost of Proposed Improvements for the Metro Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvements (\$5,627,294)**

Mr. Rhoads distributed the following information and reviewed it with the committee:

Metro WWTP 002 Bypass Treatment Project

The Metro WWTP 002 Bypass Treatment project was initiated in response to the renewed Metro WWTP SPDES permit issued in March 2012. The revised permit requires more restrictive limits for fecal coliform (200 colonies/100 ml) and residual chlorine (0.1 mg/l). As a result, additional infrastructure will need to be designed and constructed to meet the SPDES permit limits for the 002 bypass discharge (April 2017).

This project includes the design and actual construction of the disinfection system upgrades. The following is a list of significant components for the construction of new process tankage (the majority of these components would also apply to the re-purposing of the former tertiary tanks):

- Increase the bypass tank volume to allow greater chemical contact time.
- Dewatering system and force mains.
- Sodium bisulfite feed facility; including tank, enclosure, and chemical feed system.
- Sodium hypochlorite feed system improvements.
- Improved flow monitoring (Parshall flume).
- Cleaning system (sloped floors and wash-down).
- Special Environmental Conditions.
- Considerable geotechnical work for pile supports and tank construction.



Original Project Cost: **\$20,200,000**

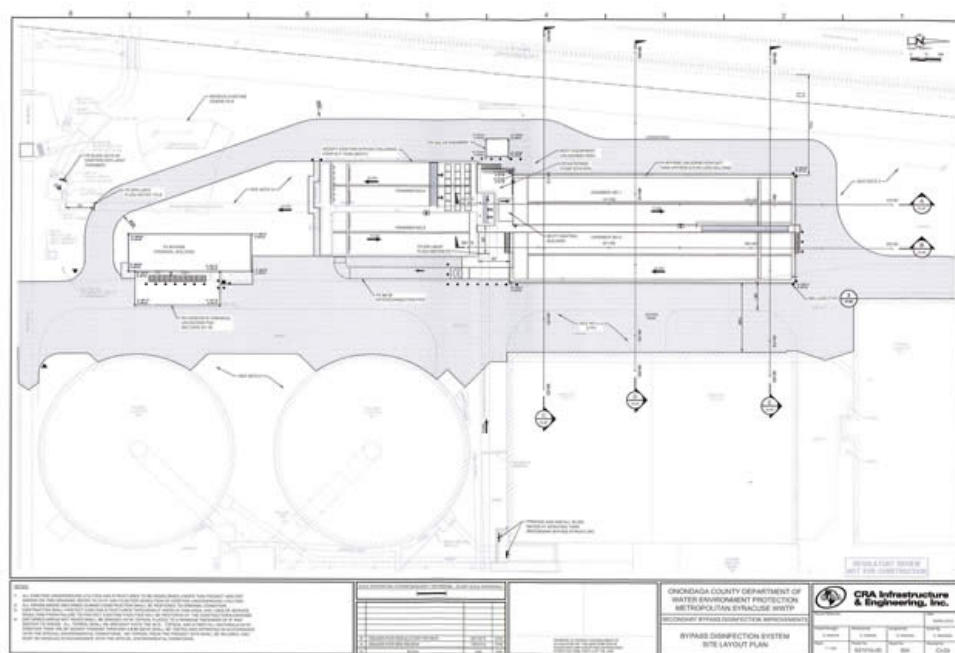
Project Cost Increase: **\$5,627,294**

New Total Project Cost: **\$25,827,294**

Revised: 4/15/15

Metropolitan Wastewater Treatment Plant Bypass Project - Listing of Major Cost Increases

Item #	Capital Cost Increase Item	Amount of Increase
1	Soil Contamination Special Environmental Conditions - new project element	\$2,308,230
2	Geotechnical - Additional piles and increased length	\$1,682,374
3	Geotechnical - Sheet piling	\$898,364
4	Metro SPDES permit - Tertiary Gates - new project element	\$436,472
5	National Grid Costs - burying and relocation of electric line - change of plans	\$139,341
6	Misc. Cost Increases	\$162,513
	Additional Capital Monies Requested	<u>\$5,627,294</u>



- Project required by SPDES permit
- Building 2M gallon tank, fits inside rectangular block (**see maps above**), serves as contact for chlorination – contact time 30 minutes at peak flow
- Reuse existing tank for additional chlorine contact time and dechlorination, returning waters to lake without residual chlorine and all pathogens killed
- Previously area was a manufactured gas treatment plant, residual item left to National Grid, Superfund site, requires long piles almost 300 feet long

Mrs. Rapp asked if this was the best location to build on. Mr. Rhoads said that they do not have any other spot to build this on. They are also right up against the railroad and had to relocate a National Grid utility line to make this project work.

- Just requesting public hearing, back next month to answer questions on project and bonding

In answer to Dr. Chase, Mr. Lannon said that the current tank has been in place since 1978. Dr. Chase asked if this would continue to function during construction. Mr. Rhoads said that they have a very detailed schedule, about 660 construction days and this tankage will be off line for a minimal time. In answer to Dr. Chase, they reviewed the maps and Mr. Rhoads confirmed that the new tank would butt up against the old. Mr. Lannon added that a new chemical building was also associated with this on the left. Mr. Rhoads said that they are repurposing the old tank, adding new flooring, flow monitoring, measuring and piping, at a significant savings.

- \$1.98M of increased costs will be paid for by National Grid, still negotiating, about 85.8% of special environmental conditions; need authorization for full amount to create 1 large contract, National Grid items managed through contract and appropriately paid for – full amount required to enter into a contract
- EFC bonding, back next month for project approval

In answer to Mrs. Rapp, Mr. Rhoads said that whenever they add additional bond costs, they are adding cost to the annual sewer use fee. He will come back next month with the figures.

In answer to Mr. Burtis, Mr. Lannon said that the original engineering estimate was from 2012 and a month later, they secured the funding in January 2013. In answer to Chair Plochocki, Mr. Rhoads said that CRA was the engineer. Chair Plochocki asked they attend the next meeting. Mrs. Rapp said that they would be paying them if they came in and they need to figure out if it would be worth it. Chair Plochocki said that over the next month they would confirm this.

In answer to Chair Plochocki, Mr. Rhoads confirmed that this has not gone out to bid - bid date will be this summer and hope to have engineer working on the project just after Labor Day; changes need to be operational by April 2017, very tight timeline.

Dr. Chase asked if CRA were local engineers. Mr. Rhoads:

- Buffalo closest main operation, have Syracuse office, recently merged with GHD (formerly Stearns & Wheeler) of Cazenovia
- Do good work, recent Oak Orchard project had good bid documents and engineering estimates; doesn't want to throw them under the bus for additional conditions and learnings at Metro campus
- National Grid explicit that contaminated materials be disposed of at the highest pedigree, increases costs, additional piles and pile length, geotechnical sheeting required due to closeness of rail and poor soil, tertiary gates new SPDES requirement, relocating utility line totals up to \$5.6M increase (**see graph on page 1**)

Dr. Chase asked if they had already started looking at bids before adding this on. Mr. Rhoads said they had not and believe that there could be complications, as they have to take bids from the low bidder and if there were two different low bidders they would have a morass of special environmental conditions managed by one low bidder and excavation being managed by another. The costs would likely furiously multiply.

Mr. Burtis said that this was for disinfection and would not provide more capacity. Mr. Rhoads:

- Primary requirement - do better job of disinfection, add dechlorination
- Auxiliary benefit from increased tankage, about 120M gallons of wastewater will receive final tertiary treatment – have TMDL permit on phosphorus, all phosphorus from 002 project and main outfalls are merged into a joint permit
- Not getting additional capacity

In answer to Mr. Burtis, Mr. Rhoads confirmed that it was 71 feet to the centerline of the Susquehanna Railroad right of way. There are also two Conrail tracks after that (**see large map above**). Mr. Burtis said that this was close. Mr. Rhoads agreed, adding that there is also an OCWA line and National Grid high power line.

Chair Plochocki asked why they would not receive the full amount for the contaminated soils. Mr. Rhoads said that some costs for moving excavation dirt would typically be theirs. They are asking National Grid to take on the additional incremental costs associated with their dirty dirt. Chairman Plochocki said that \$2.3 million was not all for soil contamination, it was also for excavation and related costs. Mr. Rhoads said that there is also some dirty dirt from other things around the lake, i.e. Allied.

Mrs. Rapp said that they were being forced to do this. Mr. Rhoads said that there was a permit requirement and if they do not do this they will be under a consent order and it will become more expensive. Mrs. Rapp said that it was nice to know what was going on but they are doing this.

Dr. Chase said that they want to move on this soon. Mr. Rhoads agreed, adding that they are asking the DEC to expedite review and will be on an expedited bidding process. This will be a \$25 million dollar project over 24 months, a million dollars per month. A hesitation of one month can cost them \$1 million dollars.

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

b. Authorizing the County of Onondaga to Enter into an Intermunicipal Agreement with the City of Syracuse for the Implementation of Green Infrastructure to Mitigate Stormwater Runoff and Combined Sewer Overflows along CSO 052

Chair Plochocki said that items b & c are similar and could be discussed together.

Mr. Rhoads:

- No funding with IMA; Save the Rain project funded through Midland CSO abatement budget, already authorized
- City property, formerly Garzone's, green project sized to manage stormwater and local flooding; County construction, City to own and maintain project once complete

Mrs. Rapp asked what they were going to do there. Mr. Rhoads said that it would be like a stormwater pond because they are going to be capturing stormwater from the streets, preventing it from entering the sewer and managing it in a way that prevents some of the local flooding issues. Dr. Chase said that the flooding comes into the Corcoran fields. Mr. Rhoads said that there is engineering to hold the water and release it slowly. It has to go through Corcoran's stormwater system without the City's stormwater system below it overflowing. It is more of a stormwater project than a green infrastructure project. In answer to Mrs. Rapp, Mr. Rhoads said it was all gravity, no pumps.

Dr. Chase asked if they would be taking down the building. Mr. Rhoads said that he did not think so; it would be in the woods behind it. Previous owners allowed illegal dumping there, which is causing more flooding. Hope to resolve all the issues as part of their project.

- Item C on Crehange Street, no appropriations, sewer separation project
- Small CSO – about 1 block, overflows over 20 times per year into Onondaga Creek
- City responsible for storm sewer once separated; standard IMA, all storm sewers in City currently City's responsibility

- Project estimated to be \$280k, no exchange of funds, strictly IMA

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

c. Authorizing the County of Onondaga to Enter into an Intermunicipal Agreement with the City of Syracuse for the CSO 061 Sewer Separation Project

A motion was made by Mrs. Rapp, seconded by Dr. Chase, to approve item c. Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED.

d. Amending Resolution No. 66-2004 Regarding a 2004 Stipulated Judgment between Honeywell International Inc. and the County

Ms. Tarolli distributed and reviewed the following:

MEMORANDUM OF SUPPORT
Resolution Amending the 2004 Stipulated Agreement Between the County and Honeywell

BACKGROUND

- In 2004, the County and Honeywell settled a ten-year old lawsuit, originally filed by Allied-Signal, Inc., regarding contamination of Onondaga Lake.
- One portion of the settlement agreement provided for Honeywell to pay the County "Remedial Use Fees" on Honeywell-owned properties surrounding Onondaga Lake and its environs.
- The purpose of the fee was to motivate Honeywell to clean up the properties to a standard suitable for industrial use, commercial use, or public benefit use (collectively, "productive use").
- The settlement agreement was not intended to be a revenue generator, but to deter Honeywell from returning the properties to an unproductive use (e.g., landfills). Said another way, the fees provided the County with a "stick" to incentivize Honeywell to remediate the properties to a level of productive use.
- Over the last several years, the County and Honeywell have disputed significant terms of the settlement agreement, including the amount of fees owed, which parcels are subject to the fees, and when the fees actually terminate.

PROPOSAL

- After much negotiation, the County and Honeywell have come to the following proposed terms.
- More clearly define when the fees terminate (i.e., parcels are available for productive use) by applying a DEC standard for completion.
- Add a "Carrot" to the "Stick" - At the end of the 5+ year suspension period, for properties made available for productive use, the fees terminate. That is the "Carrot". For any parcel not made available for productive use, Honeywell is responsible for fees retroactive to 2014 and fees going forward. That is the "Stick".
- Honeywell will pay the County \$950,000 within 30 days of entering the order.

BENEFITS TO THE COUNTY

- County receives \$950,000 now, without protracted litigation.
- Accelerates an increase in real property tax revenues.
- Provides an economic incentive to accelerate remediation and to remediate to an objective measure of productive use.
- The objective measure is a DEC certificate of completion.
- Supports and leverages multi-million dollar investments made by state and local governments in the Solvay/Goddes revitalization, the State Fair improvements, and the Amphitheater, Lake Trail and Creek Walk developments.

County/State/Private Development



- Lawsuit over contamination of the lake, originally filed by Allied in 1994
- Green properties owned by Honeywell (**see above map**), multiple tax parcels, lumped together in groups
- County had no control of remediation, had foresight to use Remedial Use Fees as motivation for remediation to productive use; Honeywell required to pay fee for each parcel on top of property taxes
- Now more focus on the lake, i.e. Creek Walk, Loop the Lake Trail, Westside Revitalization Projects; 1 parcel of 19 has been remediated, considered how to speed up remediation and compliment County lake improvements
- Current administration conducted audit of fluent properties, fee begins when remediation starts, much legal dispute about this portion of the settlement, i.e. when are fees owed, when do they start, how do you know property has been remediated
- Proposal resolves issues without litigation for 2004-2014 and adds "carrot to the stick"; not all properties are subject to fees as remediation hasn't started, fees will be terminated for each parcel fully remediated (made available for commercial, industrial or public use) within suspension period, any property not fully remediated will owe fees retroactive to January 2015
- Will use new standard to identify when parcels have reached productive use – DEC certificate of completion, hard fought battle, County wanted objective measure in place
- Property tax revenue increases with remediation

Mrs. Rapp said that the end goal was to have all the properties become private development. Ms. Tarolli said that the end goal would be to remediate it to a standard in which someone would buy the property or it becomes some type of productive use for the community. Mrs. Rapp said that before O'Brien and Gere built downtown they were talking about a piece on the Creek Walk. If remediated this could be a valuable piece of property. Ms. Tarolli said that the goal of working with Honeywell to get the property remediated faster seems to benefit everyone.

In answer to Mrs. Rapp, Mrs. Tarolli confirmed that Honeywell is supportive of this. They negotiated for a long time and both parties are happy with the settlement. It was a negotiation so one has to give a little and prioritize what they want. Mr. Burtis asked the amount of the original lawsuit. Mr. Mendez said that Honeywell was claiming that the County, and particularly the sanitary district, was responsible for approximately one-third of their cleanup costs, which the County estimated to be in excess of \$130 million. Ms. Tarolli said that settling the lawsuit in 2004 and getting the County out of that was one of the big victories.

Mr. Burtis said that this is one portion of the settlement and asked if there were other portions to come. Ms. Tarolli said that she did not think so. The Federal Court still has oversight over the settlement from 2004. This is one small portion that they knew they would need to address. With so much focus on the lake, now seemed the appropriate time.

Dr. Chase asked if Honeywell could choose what they wanted to remediate. Ms. Tarolli said that Honeywell has to work with DEC; all must be remediated and DEC will be pushing them to do so. In addition, this is an economic incentive for Honeywell to complete parcels during the 5+ year's suspension.

Dr. Chase said that there were residential properties and Ms. Tarolli agreed. Ms. Tarolli said that the map does not list all the properties Honeywell owns, there are many more. The map (**see page 6**) shows the parcels that they currently know DEC is going to be make Honeywell remediate.

Mrs. Rapp asked for an example of a public benefit use. Ms. Tarolli said, a walkway or something the public could actively use that compliments what the County is doing around the lake; the County has to agree. Chair Plochocki said that many are and have been working on a way to connect the Loop the Lake Trail with a walkway going over these cleaned sites providing for a whole network. Ultimately, they would need to get everyone on board with this, i.e. County, Honeywell.

In answer to Mr. Burtis, Ms. Tarolli said the remedial use fee is a formula, the greater of \$25,000 per tax parcel or 50% of the assessed value.

Chair Plochocki said that he could not stress enough how happy he is for this moment. In particular, the benefit to the County of an objective measure with the DEC completion certificate. Ms. Tarolli reiterated that it was hard fought battle and thanked the Chairman.

Dr. Chase said that it would be nice to develop the area right off from 690 and 695; perfect for companies to setup shop. Ms. Tarolli said that with the Counties input she agrees. Mrs. Rapp said that O'Brien and Gere's vision was to have their facility there with mixed use, i.e. retail, housing and density on the lake.

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

2. LAKE IMPROVEMENT: Tom Rhoads, P.E., Commissioner
a. ACJ Update

Mr. Rhoads:

- Distributed Save the Rain First Quarterly Report 2015 (*on file with Clerk*) http://issuu.com/savetherain/docs/2015_q1_str_quarterly_report/1?e=3766671/12342983
- Reviewed Commissioner's report (*see page 8*);
- Capture on target, moving to water quality projects
- Upstate Freshwater Institute (UFI) white paper confirms they are reaching water requirements for bathing in northern 2/3rds of Onondaga Lake
- Long term programs with green infrastructure are less expensive than all gray
- Gray Projects tab contains CSO 063 project, small road closure on Erie Blvd. West, likely occur next week – local traffic only
- Opening up GIF projects, 138 applications received, completed 74 projects, public/private program
- Several stories regarding the lake under Legislative & Media tab; all discussion about costs are difficult, hopes report helps them to understand the investments are worth it
- Financial updates contain all contracts, change orders, everything for each project and 3 main CSO abatement budgets; talked about 2 projects funded out of Midland budget today

Three main points in this Report:

1. This quarter the County completed and delivered the ACJ-required 2014 Annual Report. The April 1, 2015 submittal details the progress and status of all green and gray projects completed in 2014. In accordance with Section 14-H of the 4th Stipulation of the Amended Consent Judgment (ACJ), the Report also includes the County's green infrastructure outreach plan, post-construction monitoring information, and a Stormwater Management Model (SWMM) update.

For the calendar year 2014, at the close of the most recent program season, Onondaga County reported via SWMM that its combined sewer overflow capture is 95.3%. It is worth note to recognize that the 12/31/15 capture requirement of the ACJ is 91.4%, 12/31/16 capture is required to be 93%, and 12/31/18 capture is required to be 95%. With the submission of the 2014 Report, the County reports 95.3% capture, thereby, meeting total CSO capture requirements four years ahead of schedule. The 2014 Report also describes the following notable projects in progress:

- CSO 063 Conveyances is a pipeline project to convey the Emerson Street CSO area to the Lower Harbor Brook Storage Facility. With the completion of this project in 2015, the County anticipates further benefits to water quality in the lower reaches of Harbor Brook and the southern section of Onondaga Lake.
- CSO 061 is a small area in the Crehange Street section of the City. After careful consideration, it was determined that this CSO can best be abated by sewer separation. The basis of design for the work was recently submitted to the DEC and this project will close a CSO that overflows approximately 22 times in the typical year. This project will improve water quality in the Midland area of Onondaga Creek.
- CSO 052 will be mitigated by a green infrastructure project at South Avenue and Armstrong Place at the location formerly known as Garzone's. The County and City have worked effectively together on this project to mitigate both combined sewer overflows and reduce local stormwater flooding in this neighborhood. The project is now under contract with local engineering firm, Environmental Design and Research (EDR) of Syracuse. This project is in the Midland sewershed area of Onondaga Creek. EDR also is now engaged to develop a green infrastructure project at the Southwest Community Center, again in the Midland area. At this writing, additional Save the Rain green infrastructure projects are in the procurement phase on State Street and in CSO 060/077.

All of the above projects are targeted specifically toward water quality and environmental/community benefits, now that global capture compliance has been accomplished.

2. As part of this Quarterly Report, the WWTP/AMP tab includes a recent white paper on the status of the County's efforts on Onondaga Lake and how the Lake is responding, and measures toward its designated uses. This technical paper, as prepared by the highly respected Upstate Freshwater Institute (UFI) is well worth your review and reflection. It doesn't do justice to a 59-page technical paper to try and reduce it to one pull quote. Please read it for yourself and

absorb the level of achievement that the County and its Save the Rain program have accomplished by successful major investments in advanced wastewater treatment and combined sewer overflow capture – water quality standards in the northern two thirds of the Lake now meet New York State Standards for public bathing.

3. And finally, I close with a recent observation from an Associated Press news story regarding the Pittsburgh, PA combined sewer long-term control plan. The Mayor of Pittsburgh is actively lobbying the state regulatory agency to provide an 18-month time extension to the current multi-billion dollar control plan in order to incorporate green infrastructure solutions to reduce the overall costs of that program. To paraphrase Yogi Berra, "it sounds like déjà vu all over again". County Executive Mahoney was successful in getting a third stipulation to the ACJ to gain time to study green infrastructure alternatives, and with the fourth stipulation of the ACJ, those green infrastructure elements were made part of the final plan to rebuild neighborhoods, reap water quality benefits, meet combined sewer capture requirements and reduce the overall costs of the long-term CSO control program. A quick excerpt of the Pittsburgh story is attached. I believe that upon reflection, this story shows but another example of why the Save the Rain program is among the programs of national leadership.

Chair Plochocki said they appreciated the concise but appropriately detailed summary and asked if there were any further questions.

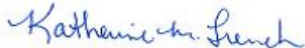
Dr. Chase said that people here for the Final 8, were very impressed with uses for Save the Rain; many questioned how the rainwater got from the roof to the restrooms. Things that we now take for granted, others are paying attention to. Mr. Rhoads:

- Similar to people coming back from spring break down south where they do not have a recycling program
- Madison Quinn works hard on the public education component; things at the Dome were private and state initiatives that helped resolve Save the Rain CSO abatements
- Need public involvement in stormwater projects, WEP makes their concepts and designs available for all, are different ways to manage stormwater, make it a resource part of the project and benefit the environment at the same time

Dr. Chase suggested that the committee look into the deer situation as Lyme disease is a big problem. The committee discussed the things tried in other areas without much success. Chair Plochocki said that perhaps they could have someone come in and give more details. Mr. Skeval said that Dr. Paul Curtis of Cornell University would be addressing the Council on Environmental Health (*July 21, 2015*) and was the states leading authority on dealing with urban and suburban deer issues.

The meeting adjourned at 10:19 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,



KATHERINE M. FRENCH, Deputy Clerk
Onondaga County Legislature

ATTENDANCE

COMMITTEE: *Environmental Protection*

DATE: *4/15/15*

NAME	DEPARTMENT/AGENCY
PLEASE PRINT	
<i>T. Rhoads</i>	<i>WEP</i>
<i>Michael Lannan</i>	<i>WEP</i>
<i>Darcie Lesniak</i>	<i>Leg</i>
<i>Madison Quinn</i>	<i>WEP</i>
<i>MARYBETH PRIMO</i>	<i>Co Exec</i>
<i>Bill Kinne</i>	<i>LEG</i>
<i>DAVID SKERVAL</i>	<i>CCRE NON.</i>
<i>Chris Rauber</i>	<i>DOT</i>

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COUNTY FACILITIES COMMITTEE MINUTES - APRIL 15, 2015 JUDITH A. TASSONE, CHAIR

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mrs. Rapp, Mr. Shepard, Mr. Ryan

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mr. Dougherty

ALSO ATTENDING: See attached list

Chair Tassone called the meeting to order at 10:32 A.M. *A motion was made by Mr. Shepard, seconded by Mrs. Rapp, to waive the reading of the proceedings from the previous committee minutes. MOTION CARRIED. A motion was made by Mrs. Rapp, seconded by Mr. Shepard, to approve the minutes of the proceedings of the previous committee. MOTION CARRIED.*

1. PARKS AND RECREATION: William Lansley, Commissioner

a. For the Skä-noñh-Great Law of Peace Center: Amending the 2015 County Budget to Accept Grant Funds and to Make Such Funds Available for Use and Approving the Classification of a Type II Action under the State Environmental Quality Review Act (\$65,000)

Mr. Lansley:

- Distributed replacement copies of resolution (*on file with Clerk*), added SEQRA statement required for grant funding, no impact, not historic building
- Grant funds from Reismann Foundation and CNY Community Foundation, municipality grants applied for on behalf of OHA and transferred directly to their account, unrestricted funds

Mrs. Rapp said that unrestricted funds was unusual and great. Chair Tassone said that Mr. Tripoli would be very happy about this. In response to Mrs. Rapp, Mr. Lansley confirmed that these funds were part of OHA's plan. Mr. Stevens said that on behalf of the property they applied for three grants, believes they are still waiting to hear on the third grant.

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

2. TRANSPORTATION: Brian Donnelly, Commissioner

a. Amending the 2015 County Budget to Fund in the First Instance 100% of the Federal and State Aid Eligible Costs at a Maximum Amount of \$3,040,000 for the Construction and Construction Inspection Phases of Various Federally Aided Local Projects and Authorizing the County Executive to Enter into Agreements to Implement the Intent of this Resolution (\$3,040,000)

Mr. Donnelly:

- Items 2a and 2b first instance resolutions for federal aid projects; grouped projects, 2a for construction, 2b for projects in design
- 2a – 2 projects: 1) Old Liverpool Rd Safety Project, remove slip ramp at Old Liverpool Rd and Electronics Pkwy, add pedestrian accommodations

In response to Mrs. Rapp, Mr. Donnelly said that it would be a T intersection. Mrs. Rapp said there have been many accidents there. Chair Tassone agreed and said that this has been in the works for a while. There is also a problem with people turning into Vicky's Ice Cream. Mr. Donnelly said that it would all be remedied as part of the project.

- 2) South Bay Paving Project, from Route 11 to Bear Road
- Both projects bid, in process of getting under contract, construction this summer
- Barrett currently doing small production of asphalt, should open full production within 5-12 days - leads to full paving season across the board

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

b. Amending the 2015 County Budget to Fund in the First Instance 100% of the Federal Aid Eligible Costs at a Maximum Amount of \$1,684,000 for the Design (Scoping I-VI) and Right-of-Way Incidentals of Various Federally Aided Local Projects and Authorizing the County Executive to Enter into Agreements to Implement the Intent of this Resolution (\$1,684,000)

- Design projects, 80% federal, 20% local, 6 projects: bridge maintenance, bridge painting, Buckley Road paving, Old Route 57 paving, West Taft Road paving, Tully Farms Road bridge replacement

Chair Tassone asked where Old Route 57 was located. Mr. Donnelly said that it was Route 57. Every county road has a route number and the route number is actually 91. It was formerly a state road and known as 57, which has become its traditional name. Rather than change it they felt it was better to leave well enough alone.

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

c. A Resolution Authorizing the Reconstruction and Construction of Improvements to Various Highways in and for the County of Onondaga, New York, at a Maximum Estimated Cost of \$5,960,000, and Authorizing the Issuance of \$5,960,000 Bonds of Said County to Pay the Cost Thereof (\$5,960,000)

- Items 2c & 2d bond resolutions, item c - highway purposes, item d – bridge purpose; 2 separate resolutions each year due to length of bonding terms – bridge longer than highway
- Resolutions correspond with 2015 Highway Plan (*on file with Clerk*), plan amount \$1.5M, same as last year
- CHIPS \$5.639M; next month requesting acceptance of additional \$583k, state approved \$50M winter severity increase to CHIPS, not part of current work plan, waiting on fund clarification, typically 10 year useful life, because of severity waiting to see if funds can be used for repair
- Previously authorized hot & cold mix paving, budgeted \$265k per mile, was \$250k, \$800k in residual funds from 2014 rolling into 2015; last year about \$1M – relatively consistent
- Bond Issue same as last year \$6.8M, just under \$6M for highway, just over \$800k for bridges
- Federal aid increased to \$11.1M, last year \$4M

Mrs. Rapp said that the increase of federal aid was surprising. Mr. Donnelly said that last year the TIP was a design phase year, and this is the construction phase. This is not cash in hand - they will be reimbursed. The funds shown are to represent what the \$825,000 in local share, as part of the bond issue, will ultimately gain the County in federal funding.

- Total work plan \$25.8M
- Bituminous service treatment largest change from last year, programed 26 miles in 2014, 64 miles in 2015; all cold mix roads need slurry seal when first paved, should be retreated every 5 years, have done less surface treatment as funds reduced last few years, seeing damage, taking different strategy, doing more surface treatment – “bigger bang for the buck”, hold roads from deteriorating to point of repaving; going away from slurry seal, looking at oil and stone, plow blades pulling up slurry seal, experimented last year with oil and stone on a few miles of road

In answer to Mrs. Rapp, Mr. Donnelly said that a slurry seal was a liquid bitumen, a very thin coating on top of cold mix to make it watertight. Last year's experiment with oil and stone held up well with very little damage from the plows. Mrs. Rapp said that it was old technology. Mr. Donnelly said that the technology and equipment is better now, it is a fine, clean stone. They no longer have residual stone everywhere and it provides for a smooth driving surface that holds up well to the plows.

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

d. A Resolution Authorizing the Reconstruction and Construction of Improvements to Various Bridges in and for the County of Onondaga, New York, at a Maximum Estimated Cost of \$840,000, and Authorizing the Issuance of \$840,000 Bonds of Said County to Pay the Cost Thereof (\$840,000)

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

3. CNY ARTS: Stephen Butler, Executive Director; Catherine Underhill, Managing Director, Symphoria

a. Amending the 2015 County Budget to Make Funds Available to CNY Arts for Distribution to Musical Associates of Central New York, Inc. (\$68,750)

In response to Mr. Butler, Chair Tassone confirmed that legislators had received the emailed Symphoria information (*on file with Clerk*).

Mr. Butler:

- Present on behalf of Symphoria, request release of contingency funds
- Remain on track, ticket sales up 3%; significant marketing grant from Symphony Foundation to further increase ticket sales and develop audiences
- Itzhak Perlman coming in November, will be big event; received \$35k economic development grant for event, event within calendar year but after fiscal year
- Symphoria has lag time from Symphony Foundation funds, major foundation, exists to support Symphoria in many ways; plan to end year in the black with increased audience

Chair Tassone said that this was beautiful.

Mrs. Rapp asked if they were retaining and adding to their musicians. Ms. Underhill:

- Added several on 1 year contract, new music director, starts in September, core remains at 50 – may grow depending on 1 years
- Some internal auditions also, had to replace 1 musician who left; hurrying to grow and increase compensation to musicians and capacity to retain them
- New director previously here for Masterworks, here again May 9 for Final Masterworks – Mahler 5 and Jon Nakamatsu piano concerto, also here for final Spark concert, a collaboration with WCNY, community celebration with near Westside community organizations, much will be free and outdoors

In answer to Mr. Ryan's questions:

- Spark concert to be held in WCNY parking lot; ticketed event can tour the building
- Outside stage, participatory activities

- WCNY co-collaborator, meeting with number of neighborhood organizations on Monday, previously met with some, i.e. La Liga, Near Westside Initiative, Martin, La Casita, all will be involved
- Funded in part by IDEAS grant

Mr. Butler:

- Initiative to develop and engage audiences in Syracuse, used to springboard CNY Arts social marketing system as calendar directory
- Local funders put together funds for marketing implementation grants, Symphoria receiving last grant

Mr. Ryan said that there should be outreach to Fowler, Blodgett and Delaware schools. Ms. Underhill agreed, adding that many of those kids go the La Liga afterschool program so they have great connection to the school community. Mr. Ryan asked if they had spoken to the Westside Residents Coalition. Ms. Underhill said that they should be at the meeting on Monday. Mr. Ryan said that many businesses do a lot of good work down there and this is awesome. Ms. Underhill said that this was good for Symphoria because they know from the IDEAS initiative funding and the research completed that they are not drawing from the near Westside. This is an opportunity to demystify what they do, present who they are, engage community members in music making, celebrate the community in that way and connect with all of these grassroots organizations serving the community effectively.

Mr. Ryan said that the Rockwell building is almost full and he suggests cultivating the businesses within that building. In answer to Mr. Ryan, Ms. Underhill said that the event would be on Saturday, May 30, late afternoon, early evening, and outdoors. Ms. Underhill said that this was a great idea and she will look into it.

- Pinckney Hugo new marketing firm, located in same area; hopefully will see refreshed and invigorated marketing materials as they make new season more public

Chair Tassone said that they are doing a great job.

The meeting adjourned at 10:52 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Katherine M. French

KATHERINE M. FRENCH, Deputy Clerk
Onondaga County Legislature

ATTENDANCE

COMMITTEE: **COUNTY FACILITIES**

DATE: **April 15, 2015**

NAME	DEPARTMENT/AGENCY
PLEASE PRINT	
<i>Brian Donnelly</i>	<i>DOT</i>
<i>Nate Strano</i>	<i>Parks</i>
<i>Ben Conroy</i>	<i>Parks</i>
<i>Steve Butler</i>	<i>CNY Arts</i>
<i>Bill Kinne</i>	<i>Leg</i>
<i>Katherine Underhill</i>	<i>Symphonia</i>
<i>Darcie Lesniak</i>	<i>Leg</i>

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PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES - APRIL 16, 2015 KATHLEEN A. RAPP, CHAIR

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. Plochocki, Mr. Burtis, Mr. Knapp

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mr. Liedka

ALSO ATTENDING: Chairman McMahon and see attached list

Chair Rapp called the meeting to order at 10:35 A.M. **A motion was made by Mr. Plochocki, seconded by Mr. Burtis, to waive the reading of the proceedings from the previous committee minutes. MOTION CARRIED. A motion was made by Mr. Plochocki, seconded by Mr. Burtis, to approve the minutes of the proceedings of the previous committee. MOTION CARRIED.**

1. **SYRACUSE-ONONDAGA COUNTY PLANNING AGENCY:** Don Jordan, Deputy Director-GIS Services

a. Calling for a Public Hearing on the Proposed Inclusion of Viable Agricultural Lands within Certified Agricultural Districts Pursuant to Section 303-B of the New York State Agriculture and Markets Law

Mr. Jordan:

- Annual additions to ag districts; open enrollment January 1-30 each year, landowners can request their land added to a district
- Increase of over 250 acres, requests reviewed and approved by Farmland Protection Board
- Public Hearing, June 2, 2015, prior to session

In answer to Chair Rapp, Mr. Jordan confirmed that all additions were at the landowners' request. The towns will receive notification of the public hearing and any objections may be heard at the hearing.

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

2. GREATER SYRACUSE LAND BANK: Katelyn Wright, Executive Director; Vito Sciscioli, Board Chair; James Corbett, Vice Chair; Dwight Hicks, Secretary

a. Annual Report

Ms. Wright said that the Land Bank Act requires them to report annually to the local governments that created them **(report on file with Clerk)**

Mr. Sciscioli:

- Ms. Wright will go over the numbers, approximately 2k properties overall, working through City backlog, mainly City properties, won't be able to foreclose on them until 2016; remember initial reason for the Land Bank creation as Ms. Wright goes over the numbers
- Sewer use charges are an issue, recently paid \$144k, significant expense, worry about sustainability going forward

In answer to Chair Rapp, Ms. Wright said that they are exempt from property taxes but are charged for special assessment taxes, i.e. street sweeping. The largest of which is the sewer use fees levied by the County. As they try to figure out if, they can help the City implement the foreclosure policy and address the scale of the vacant property problem that will involve hundreds to close to 2,000 properties cycling through their inventory at any given time. While they hold them, they are liable for special assessments. The check for \$144,000 was for much of 2014 and the first two quarters of 2015. They are projecting the sewer use fee could be \$250,000 per year, once they reach peak inventory in 2017. They make money when they sell a property but these are upfront costs, which they are carrying now.

1Mr. Knapp arrived at the meeting.

Ms. Wright said that many of their properties do not make revenue on the backend. Overall their goal is to breakeven. Chair Rapp said that this was like Community Development. Ms. Wright said, "Exactly".

Mr. Fisher:

- No liability assumed when property first transfers to Land Bank, all taxes, fees, etc. are wiped out during foreclosure
- Begin accruing new sewer use charges by legislative policy; sewer unit charges are not taxes, within legislatures power to change

Chair Rapp said that if the property is vacant, they are not using the sewer. Mr. Fisher said that the Executive's Office asked the Law department to research how to change this and if it was something that the County Executive could just do, the answer was no. Each year the Legislature assess sewer use charges based on a local law. Ms. Berger said that there is a set of resolutions going back to the 1970s' setting the sewer unit charge. They would have to go through a whole process to change this, including public hearings. Mr. Fisher said that this is something that the County Executive would encourage the Legislature to look into. They are trying to help the City and County take unproductive property and get it back on the tax rolls and money is being spent to pay for sewer use charges that are not used. Chair Rapp said that this was an unintended consequence.

Mr. Fisher said that until this gets resolved the board made the decision to take cash and pay it. Mr. Corbett said that they are not asking to go back, but this is a "catch 22". Currently there is \$500,000 held in the contingency account and it seems redundant; have to pay \$250,000 and are asking for \$500,000. Chair Rapp said that they are simply taking from one pocket and putting it into another. Mr. Corbett said a resolution has been written that could be brought forward to the Legislature.

In answer to Chair Rapp, Mr. Fisher said that the County Executive's office asked the Water department to draft the resolution and provide it to the Chairman of the Legislature. He believes the Chairman has reviewed it, but does not know if he has decided on any action. Mr. Corbett said that this might be a good caucus question.

Chair Rapp asked the turnaround time for properties. Ms. Wright:

- Varies widely, 2014 took in 340 properties, returned 76 to productive use, to date received 550 through City foreclosure, returned 120 to tax rolls, moving at about 20%; learned a lot in first year, think they can go faster, don't think they will turn all around in same year
- If City foreclosure rate continues will hit peak inventory in 2017, burn off over next several years, to group of properties unattractive for traditional development, if demolish many structures and sell those that can't be renovated to private investors, will be left with much vacant land, will evolve into land trust model
- Much vacant land in the City can't be developed, due to floodplain or small parcels, working to attract next-door neighbors to acquire side lots too small for development; generally things going according to plan, side lot sales are working, using financial incentives to attract people, many currently using lots without paying taxes, better for everyone long-term, back on tax rolls with maintained space

Mr. Sciscioli:

- Doing many things to control operating expenses, 1) Trying to control sewer charges, 2) Refining operating experience, number of contracts on maintenance of property, 3) Sale of property critically important
- Dynamic tension between selling as quickly as possible and the right thing for neighborhoods, try to balance, number of City councilors press for quick disposal of property, understandable pressure but experience has shown disposing property quickly often resulted in unsustainable things for the neighborhoods regarding their plans or development opportunities, i.e. sell to LLC who tries to rent the property without making any renovations; City auction has experienced LLC changing name, same group of people milk the property, run up code violations and don't pay taxes again – Land Bank is carefully vetting, using mortgage encumbrances to ensure people do what they say they are going to do

- Need continued government support though balance sheet looks healthy, will be a debate at the Common Council and something the Legislature will likely discuss, demolition costs biggest financial threat; did wonderful things because of County's previous funding with respect to demo, interest in deconstruction and keeping things out of the landfill, will be major issue going forward, need to think about how they can do this - via 6 projects completed were able to show how this can be done more cost efficiently to equal cost of demolition; demolitions would wipe-out their fund balance in 1 year, 48 currently backlogged, \$25k each = \$1.2M

In answer to Chair Rapp, Ms. Wright said that they have demolished 35 properties to date. Mr. Sciscioli confirmed that all were in the City, at this point.

Ms. Wright:

- Need to identify appropriate funding source for demolition candidate owned in the Town of DeWitt, optimistic town will be interested in taking ownership once down; located next to creek, town interested in expanding their green belt
- If City forecloses on 800 vacant buildings, 20%-25% will be demolition candidates, some grant funding currently available, would still need additional \$2M to take down in traditional demo cost; want to incorporate deconstruction and sustainable practices into demo program, completed 6 projects in 2014 with County funding
- 2014 received \$500k from the County, \$200 restricted to deconstruction, learned abatement is the cost barrier in deconstruction - most demolish done with asbestos variance, treats all material as asbestos and does not pay for asbestos abatement, to deconstruct one must first abate, a cost this community is not used to bearing, \$6k-\$30k for an individual house and can't predict what you get

Chair Rapp said that most of these houses would have asbestos because they were built before 1970. Ms. Wright said there are 10 Land Banks across the state and collectively they are able to speak with one voice for more effective lobbying. This past week, the state made a legislative change with the passage of the budget. Land Banks will now be exempt from the Department of Labor's asbestos abatement charges, a savings of \$2,000-\$4,000 off the average project.

Mr. Sciscioli asked Mr. Corbett to address contingency funds and the real benefit of unrestricted funds. Mr. Corbett:

- \$500k in contingency for 2015; 2014 funds were debated and received late with restrictions
- Unrestricted funds allow leverage, can be shown as an asset, with leveraging could become \$1M
- All legislators have areas they represent that could use this service, can't get into much of it because the money is being held up
- Requesting 1) Passage of new law pertaining to removal of sewer use unit charge, 2) Release of contingency funding ASAP; hands are shackled, need funds to make the best use and perhaps double

Chair Rapp said that this year there is \$500,000 in contingency, with no restriction on it. Mr. Corbett said that this body stipulates the restriction. Chairman McMahon said to clarify, Mr. Corbett is asking that they not put restrictions on the funds and the Legislature has not yet decided. Chair Rapp said that they had not discussed this.

Ms. Wright:

- Land Bank created to take ownership of abandoned and vacant properties and convey to private individuals
- Early on figured there would never be enough money to renovate all properties, received some grant funds from Office of Attorney General for renovations; in general business model uses public funding up-front for one-time cost of taking title, stabilizing property, marketing for sale, then uses private investors to renovate; private investors won't pay for demo or deconstruction, is the reason they need public subsidy
- Blown away by amount leveraged on private side - sold 120 properties, buyers investing \$5M in renovations
- Working on long-range financial forecast, budget hearing with City on Monday, will ask for funding in upcoming year; looking at variables the Land Bank, City and County can control and figuring range of variables they may face in the future
- Without adequate funding on the frontend, only leverage is taking in fewer properties; want to take in 800 properties, takedown 20% too blighted for renovation, make 80% available for private investors, can't get to this point without enough public funding on frontend to work them through the pipeline

Chair Rapp asked if the County shared in any of the upside from the private investments. Ms. Wright said that they all go back on the tax rolls. Last year the Land Bank got \$1.5 million from the City, \$500,000 from the County, some grant funding from the attorney general and \$1 million in sales. Over time, they expect that they will be getting a lot less from government sources, with more money coming from sales. They do not share the revenue with the local governments but it means they have to ask for less operating support. Chair Rapp said that the Land Bank has a funding source. Ms. Wright said that it would help them become more self-sufficient over time.

Ms. Wright:

- November 2012 City began aggressive tax collection, sent out collection notices, 50% paid, delinquent collections up \$7.6M in the City and at least \$1.5M in the County

Chair Rapp said that of the 340 properties, three foreclosed outside of the City. Being a suburb person, she was very hopeful that this would be used countywide. Mr. Corbett said that there are reasons. Ms. Wright:

- More familiar with statistics in the City, just one division of code enforcement, every town and village has their own code enforcement and would have to track down the numbers; 1800 vacant building in the City, only 1/3 can be foreclosed for tax delinquency, most effective way take title quickly and cheaply, also raises revenue by threatening foreclosure and getting people to pay
- City has backlog, hasn't collected in a long time, many properties becoming available, County has been very effective collecting taxes, fewer homes eligible for foreclosure
- 2014 asked County to foreclose on handful of properties, received 3 via foreclosure, 2 were vacant lots turned over to St. Camillus Residential Health Care for low-income housing tax credit project, parcels key part of their project, tax foreclosure extinguishes liens and provides clear title, owners for those parcels passed away, heirs unable to get clear title, 3rd property single family house in East Syracuse, gave to Community Development for renovation with attorney general grant funds received
- January 2015 received 6 via County foreclosure, 1 in Village of Jordan, 2 in Village of Baldwinsville, demolition candidate in the Town of DeWitt, and vacant family home in Village of East Syracuse and Jamesville; single family home in Jamesville on MLS, interesting inquires, hope for complete offer very soon, 3 competing offers for East Syracuse property - board will vote on Tuesday, partnered with Mayor and code officials for outcome they would like, screen buyers to ensure they have a good track record and financing to complete the project, received property for \$1, paid \$4,500 in taxes, will sell for about \$9k, buyer will invest \$50k-\$60k in renovations; would like to see owner occupant, difficult to do without subsidy when property is very distressed; shows they can work with village officials, helped vet the buyers
- Spoke at Mayor's Association, explained process is slower than auction but has better outcomes

Mr. Corbett said that some houses have terrible code violations but pay their taxes, wonders if there is a way for the home entity to condemn the property through codes. Ms. Wright said that local officials can file abandonment proceeding. It is time consuming and requires much education for the attorney filing the cases. She is not sure that each village would have the capacity to do this. Chair Rapp said that they had one in her village and she believes that it took 10 years to go through the whole process. Ms. Wright said that she

wonders if there is a way to share that skill throughout the municipalities. Mr. Corbett said that there has to be a way. The Village of Jordan has three or four of these, all rundown, still paying their taxes but a couple of them no one has lived. To fix up two or three of these in a small village, and turn them into vibrant housing with whole ownership, has more impact than doing an entire block in the City. As someone that was a County representative, he understands the angst of looking at 2,000 properties in the City and 10 in the County but it is because of the restrictions. He can guarantee with less restriction or more creative ways of acquiring them, they would be able to do that.

Chairman McMahon:

- Agrees with everything Mr. Corbett just said and was the reason part of the 2014 money was earmarked to address issues in Jordan and Baldwinville; not saying Mr. Corbett wouldn't understand the need there but the Land Bank has a board, if they gave funding without restriction what guarantee would they have that the process would have started
- Legislature realizes the value and put the money in; now the question is does it make sense for them to do this or are the board members here today willing to commit to the fact of what Mr. Corbett said –that they know there are other properties in Jordan; have maps showing various issues of vacant housing in villages

Mr. Corbett asked how they get those houses. Chairman McMahon:

- That is the challenge, Legislature only has so much money for housing and sees this issue popping up in villages, question is how Legislative resources can best be spent
- Amazing number of vacant properties recently popped up in Valley area of his district
- Land Bank challenged with convincing them that \$500k in unrestricted funds is best use

Chair Rapp said that the Valley would be located in the City. She is talking about Mattydale where every fourth house is condemned. Chairman McMahon said that he was talking everywhere. To Mr. Corbett's point, there is a centralized problem in the Village of Jordan. In the Village of Baldwinville, there are 40 vacant properties in one of the most affluent towns. Mr. Corbett again questioned how they could legally get them. Chairman McMahon said that the Land Bank might not be the right vehicle. That has been the delay in this process; it is not that they do not think the Land Bank is doing a great job. Chair Rapp asked if legal had looked at ways they might be able to obtain these properties. Chairman McMahon said that there are other ways to do this. The Neighborhood Initiative would probably be the appropriate way to do it and they are looking for other funding streams to potentially address these issues.

Ms. Wright:

- Never the less, County experiencing increase in delinquent tax collection of \$1.5M; City \$7.6M of that diverted \$3M to Land Bank, hope for additional \$1.5 in coming year
- Looking at foreclosure projections for coming year, don't think they can help the City fully implement the program without the County chipping in a share of unrestricted cash, simply can't take on the number of properties the City would like without more unrestricted revenue

Mr. Sciscioli thanked Chairman McMahon for his perspective and for the past funds received.

Ms. Wright:

- In 2014 received \$250k for deconstruction, \$150k functioning as loan guarantee for potential losses, buyers are financing renovations with cash, many banks will not lend for 1-4 family detached rental housing, via Home Headquarters Key Bank offered \$1.5M pool of loan funds if they would guarantee any losses, \$150k from County combined with another \$150k from local foundations provides guarantee, last \$150k for Jordan, Baldwinville and Elbridge – able to get 3 properties there via the County at low cost
- Partnering with Home Headquarters to use the rest of the \$150k to purchase other vacants; frustrating, time consuming process compared to tax foreclosure, can't keep up with the speed of vacancies
- Would be interesting to discuss a way the County could provide technical assistance and training for local governments to file abandonment proceedings, don't have enough attorneys with this skill set

Chair Rapp and Mr. Burtis agreed that it would be helpful. Mr. Burtis said that they know the business better than town boards and this is a blight in some neighborhoods. Chair Rapp said that one house could ruin a neighborhood.

Mr. Burtis questioned acquisition expenses. Ms. Wright:

- Actual acquisition expense very low, \$1 each in the County, \$151 each in the City
- Deed recording charges - \$312 for each vacant lot, starts to outpace value of property for very blighted, may be unable to sell for more than \$1
- Most significant cost for buildings is stabilization, hire private contractors for inspections – advise on condition and what to do with property, turn off electricity, change locks and board up

Chair Rapp asked the average costs. Mr. Sciscioli said that it varies, as some require a lot of debris removal. Ms. Wright said the Addis building was a prime example, everyone thought they got a gem but the building has been a real pain. Mr. Corbett said that this building was an example of unexpected costs. Mr. Burtis said that from a cost average, it is still cheaper than anything else is.

Mr. Burtis asked how they determine which homes to renovate or sell as is. Ms. Wright:

- Grant funding for single family homes only, partnered with Home Headquarters to do renovations, must average \$50k per project subsidy, Home Headquarters puts \$150k into renovating project, sell for \$60k to income-qualified home buyer, \$50k fills the gap
- Evaluate each single family as they come in, take on those that are a good fit for the program; sometimes need more than \$50k to fill gap, Home Headquarters can combine with other funding sources

Mr. Corbett:

- Website contains mission statement
- Explains means to submit plan for home purchase, live-in owner has precedent

Mr. Burtis said that he was on the website a while ago. In his opinion, the person looking to live in the house does not have the desire or the ability to do the renovations, understand the financing or the options. What they really need is an agent that is well versed in this.

Ms. Wright:

- Many phone calls from people who want move-in ready house, steer to Home Headquarters, sells move-in ready product; same for Community Development, don't compete with them, sell different type of product
- RFP out for brokerage services, looking to expand real-estate agents listing their properties, would like them to play educational role for buyers on options available

Mr. Knapp said they turned over one house to Community Development and asked if this was for anything outside of the City, verses Home Headquarters. Ms. Wright:

- Contracted with Community Development to do 10 houses using attorney general grant funds; for first house Land Bank took title and turned over to them, since then, send Community Development to acquire property from the onset, write check for \$50k once renovations are complete, Community Development finds the home owner
- Past fall requested a number of houses be diverted from to the Land Bank from the auction, Community Development gets priority, only ask for houses Community Development is not interested in

Ms. Cerio asked how and when they would know if the Land Bank was going to get money from the Legislature. The Land Bank needs unrestricted money and needs to know the process. Chairman McMahon:

- Getting data points on the 2014 investments made in some villages
- Trying to solve problems, understand Land Bank's urgency, Legislature put money into the Land Bank, was not in Executive's budget
- Looking for another source of funds, won't need restrictions if funds increase, working on process, want to do the best thing for both urban and suburban
- Unrestricted funds are a leap of faith that the board will address various needs throughout the County

Ms. Wright said that the expectations are clear and if the Land Bank did not satisfy them, they would not get money next year. Chair Rapp said that the Legislature needed to discuss the range of opportunities. Ms. Wright said that there might be a better vehicle to acquire the abandoned homes. Never the less, every public dollar invested in the Land Bank is leveraging additional private dollars. Mr. Sciscioli said the report has a lot of detailed information and they could call with any questions.

Chair Rapp said that if the goal is to get the Land Bank more involved with the County they have to find a vehicle, which makes it an expedient process. Ms. Wright said that the six properties acquired through the County foreclosure in January, was a fruitful exercise. They hope to show results next fall and maybe ask them to divert more from the action.

Chair Rapp thanked the presenters and said she would call with any further questions.

3. OFFICE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: Julie Cerio, Director; Honora Spillane, Economic Development Specialist 3; Eric Vinal, Senior Economic Development Specialist, Steven Coker, Economic Development Specialist 2

a. Department Informational Report - Julie Cerio, Director

Chair Rapp said that most people would say the biggest issues in the County are jobs and the economy. Whereas, government does not create jobs, it should not be their main focus. The Economic Development office is their finger on the scale, helping, encouraging and incentivizing companies to live and grow here. She asked Ms. Cerio to provide an update on the great work they are doing and the three boards that they operate, noting that Mr. Burtis was new.

Ms. Cerio:

- Provided introductions, noted Kristi Smiley moved to Finance, Ms. Spillane taking on many of her duties, Mr. Cocker new to the office, performing Ms. Spillane's former duties, and Mr. Vinal from Film Commission
- On the road a lot, met with all town supervisors; run 3 boards: OCIDA, OCDC, and CRT, all do different things, everything posted on website, OCIDA and OCDC boards met monthly, CRT meets whenever there is a project; meeting notice, agenda and meeting materials sent to legislators, open meeting, welcome to attend
- OCIDA benefits 1) Sales tax exemption, 2) Mortgage recording tax exemption, 3) Pilots; OCDC provides service contracts-training grants
- Helped Byrne Dairy with Ultra Dairy expansion, on 2nd phase of 3

In answer to Chair Rapp, Ms. Cerio confirmed that they collect project fees to fund themselves. They do not ask for funds. Ms. Spillane said that they are the only Economic Development Office within Onondaga County that gets no public support from the state or local government.

- Syracuse Label of Liverpool buying land at Hancock Airpark, retaining jobs, streamlining operation, think they will expand and add employees once operating there

Mr. Knapp asked if there was any further space available in the Airpark. Ms. Cerio:

- Have space available, doing a great job selling property; Syracuse Label taking front section of cul-de-sac across from G.A. Braun, G.A. Braun wants to buy back section and expand to a subsidiary, 2 tiny parcels remain on far Southside of the park, have company interested, also long very narrow and thin strip that will be hard to get rid of, have some ideas and are in discussions
- Much of what they do is top secret information, companies don't want competitors to know what they are doing, sign confidentiality statements, can't talk about things until they are made public
- In talks with company trying to build hotel on former Howard Johnson site in East Syracuse, land locked by McDonalds, qualify for 485-b, helping with mortgage and sales tax exemption
- Helped SBB expand, moving into new space; clean room manufacturer
- Township 5 coming back to them, originally had plan for retail space (Kohl's), now doctors' offices; more jobs and better pay
- Recently had clean audit for all three groups

In answer to Chair Rapp, Ms. Spillane said that the IDA has about \$1.2 million in fund balance. Ms. Cerio said that recently restrictions came down from the comptroller for OCIDA. They are restricted almost to the point where their hands are completely tied and they cannot do anything with their funds. In answer to Chair Rapp, Ms. Spillane said the restrictions came from the state comptroller and the attorney general. Ms. Cerio said that they are trying to think of creative ways to use these funds; cannot transfer funds over to less restrictive boards.

Ms. Spillane:

- End of last year, after budgets went into the state for approval through the Authorities Budget Office, 2 opinions came out from the NYS Comptroller and the Attorney General, essentially said that IDA's specifically under Article 18-A of the General Municipal Law can no longer do things that are not explicitly listed among enumerated powers, Attorney General opinion states "We are of the opinion that these activities are not authorized" – included providing grants or loans from its own monies

In answer to Chair Rapp's questions, Ms. Spillane:

- Can bond but industrial bond revenues for-profit industry a dead market; can collect fees, acquire and equip; state now severely frowns upon any outlay of funds not defined by statute

- Cannot give money to another entity to acquire land, IDA could directly acquire land for White Pine
- January 13, opinion letter included legal ease "Nor do we believe that these activities are necessary for an IDA to completely exercise the powers granted by the Legislature"
- No longer able to provide sponsorships or employee training, training taken on by LDC
- Putting creative thinking caps to work, how to use funds within their mission

Ms. Cerio:

- OCDC took on management of Hancock Airpark from CenterState CEO, hard winter – some damage from snow, 2 large parcels sold, will subdivide as current division won't work for G.A. Braun and Syracuse Label, right of first refusal to all tenants for remaining property, a couple projects looking to go there if current tenants have no interest, 2 remaining parcels on Southside cannot accommodate 18 wheeler; very pleased with how they have done since taking over the hub
- Own White Pine, speaking with company looking to acquire entire parcel, not sure if it is a good fit or how legit it is, also have other ideas brewing; want to send out RFPs for sewers and roads, have funds, looking for IDA approval
- Provided training grant to medical answering service; provide training grants provided to anyone that needs them, OCC requests them each year, workforce development big part of Economic Development, need to matchup workforce with available jobs, OCC can quickly pull together programs that are non-degree programs, help with tuition

Ms. Spillane said that they contract for service with OCC to provide financial assistance to individuals who are looking for training in areas that they would like to see industries grow.

- Hitting the road with bond counsel, spoken to 3-4 organization that would be good bonding candidates, bonded with them in the past; fund themselves via bond fees, have 2 tentative bond projects – can't say whom, haven't signed yet, and 1 potential

In answer to Chair Rapp, Ms. Spillane said that OCDC has about \$1.5 in fund balance. Chair Rapp said that the funds were down. Ms. Spillane said that they had a large financial outlay last year, part of that was because of the restrictions from the IDA. Much of what they have done in terms of community work has transferred to OCDC. They are within the forecasted budget and are not in the business of sitting on money but using it to promote economic growth in the community. Chair Rapp agreed and said that she was glad to see this. Ms. Spillane said that they are \$200,000 down from last year.

Ms. Cerio:

- CRT usually bonds with SU every couple of years, SU had change of leadership, not doing projects
- Haven't had bonds lately, down on funds; big influx a few years ago when Legislature cut off funding to many art organizations, turned to CRT for help
- Recently helped Everson Museum of Art, had fiscal difficulties, preliminary report received yesterday, currently have great exhibit, people starting to come back, change in leadership and administration seems to have turned things around

In answer to Chair Rapp, Ms. Spillane and Ms. Cerio:

- Provided Everson with a \$100k package, \$50k spent on preliminary report used to request additional \$50k
- 1st \$50k used for HVAC upgrade, provides significant energy cost savings, and to bring in new exhibit - Prendergast to Pollock

Mr. Vinal:

- In position 1 year, Film Commission established to avoid Rochester takeover of Syracuse, Rochester has 20 year established Film Commission cranking out business, came into position when governor's film tax incentives increased
- Onondaga County has 10% boost in film credits not available downstate, offer up to 40% below the line production costs – get money back for all labor other than director, actor or producer to film in our area, post-production 45% back on all cost for editing, CDI and green screen work; credits driving business here

In answer to Mr. Plochocki, Mr. Vinal said that the money comes from the state.

- Works with governor's film office, fills out applications, get people ready for the process; funds are received 3-6 months after project completes
- Shows people what Syracuse has to offer – diverse landscape, resources, architecture, snow, negatives such as Land Bank properties good for wire-type show; must utilize what we have and stand out from Rochester, Buffalo and Albany
- Sell everything as a phone call away, help with a hotel, restaurant, tourism and place to film – have access, i.e. jail cell; spent 2 hours at correctional facility, scouting for 2 projects, perfect thing to add to location database, i.e. film prison scene, takes 4-5 days, 100 people spending money in hotels, restaurants, bars and increasing tourism
- 50-200 temporary jobs created for each film, lasts 8-16 weeks, then get into post-production; Film House set to open in June or July, post-production could create another 200 jobs; this summer have potential project that could bring in 500 people for 5 months - living, working, renting space, entertaining
- Filmed Irrefutable Proof at various locations here and at SU, horror film, October release
- Makes sure everyone knows Film Commission exists, might receive strange phone calls, i.e. room needed a SU to make film happen, would be difficult to make cold call, need all aware
- Tax incentives require a certain number of days in area based on film budget and a day in a qualified sound stage – where bread and butter of the industry can really work, any building 7k sq. ft. with 16 ft. ceilings and proper sound dampening can be considered; in process of qualifying the Oncenter, will need space other than Film House
- NYS Fairgrounds film friendly, aerial photo of grounds same as Paramount Pictures or Warner Brothers studio lots, will have control over buildings to build sets, may crash cars on streets without issues; working to give people all access to complete films
- Process: get phone call from governor's film office or production, get sent script, read script, scout locations, send to production, keep sending until they like what they see; encourage people to send photos of cool houses, a barn, a lake in their back yard, all things easily accessed
- 48 Hours filming for Neulander project, have been here 30 days, setup at George & Rebecca Barnes home on James St., filming interviews for developing story there and at another residence, coming back for sentencing and wrap-up of project; American Pickers coming in May
- Sweetwater, one of the first films out of the Film House, about first African –American contracted to play in the NBA, using War Memorial to make Madison Square Garden, using older gyms in the area and Camillus Town Hall; cool project, will bring basketball community here
- Yard Duty, Steve Carell movie, looking to shoot in June; scouting every elementary school in the area, taking photos of schools with a nice playground or yard, story about maintenance man at a school, large actor attached to project; much of what they do is secret

Mr. Knapp asked if they were looking for an old or new elementary school. Mr. Vinal said that Jamesville was great, Tecumseh was good, anything with that kind of feel, Holy Cross not bad, Ed Smith ok but he needs to see what they want as interior; will have a feel once he talks to them further.

- Wooden Lake, shooting summer/fall, ideally will shoot in Skaneateles, sending photos; all 3 projects have budgets between \$10M-\$15M, looking for projects to spend time in production, then go to VFX and post-production at Film House
- Freeport, road trip film, \$2M budget, starts shooting in June
- 2 pilot episodes, shoot first episode then shop networks, if picked-up committed to filming entire project here – 1) The Undersigned, airs on channel 9, starts shooting next week, 2) 2 11 already in production

Mr. Plochocki asked if they could say what the pilots are about. Mr. Vinal:

- The Undersigned about underprivileged women who have been through a struggle and are helping police solve crimes, partnered with Vera House and SPD to shine brighter light on these women and what they have gone through, fictional story based on actual events; 2 11 wire-type show, crime drama focused on minority community
- I Kill Giants, potential Justin Nappi project, \$30M film, would shoot August-October, great script with Chris Columbus and 1492 Pictures, outdoor film about girl dealing with struggle of her mother passing away from cancer and fighting giants in her head, takes place in parks, lakes and woods – everything this County has to offer, give them access to County Parks and charge location fee, won't have easier filming experience than county-owned parks
- Carmen Basilio story filming 2016, Whistler-Films of Canada, \$20M film, press release next few weeks, did leg work over past year with everyone in Canastota, Boxing Hall of Fame and Mayor, on board and excited about project
- Salt City Horror Fest this weekend, Syracuse International Film Festival at Palace next weekend

Mr. Knapp asked who handles zoning and dealing with the local governments. Mr. Vinal said that he has been working with Ms. Cerio. They have submitted a permit of their own that will entail everything they need from production on the County side. The City has their own process, a special events permit with a special addendum. There are also insurance requirements. They work with state and local DOT to ensure that they are going through the right process when they need a road closure. He can oversee all of this, connecting with those people so that it is not a cold call where everyone is shocked to hear that they have to close down two blocks. Ms. Cerio said that they are trying to streamline the process so that it is countywide, a streamlined process for quick approval, so projects are not lost.

In answer to Chair Rapp, Ms. Cerio confirmed that they were involved in the film that was going to film here and went to Utica. Chair Rapp said that it was because there was not a streamlined process in place. Ms. Cerio said that it was the City. Mr. Vinal said that this was a learning curve and it was new for everyone. All are learning how to make this work and everyone has to come together to make this happen. In answer to Chair Rapp, Mr. Vinal said that they are seeing a little resistance from the City but are working through it. They always need backup. Mr. Knapp said that this was a chance to get the City on the map for something positive. Ms. Cerio said that they are trying to work through this and realize it is scary for people to have a car blowup in the middle of Hanover Square. They know there needs to be a process but other cities are doing this. Mr. Vinal said that if NYC could shut down 5th Avenue for a day to shoot Dark Knight, Armory Square could shut down for five hours. Ms. Cerio said that it was a work in progress. Mr. Knapp said that they shutdown Armory Square on a Friday night to move snow.

Mr. Vinal:

- Have created a film permit process that did not exist before, went from 10-14 day City approval, to 24-72 hour approval, huge jump in what they are trying to do; took meeting with NYC Film Commission - asked how they get permits completed quickly, what they do with parking, how they notify residents; trying to help people understand these things and educate the community on importance of this industry to the area
- Something might closed and business might not come in for a few hours, however when 50M people see that business, restaurant or store on the silver screen tourism will happen; not a disruption, is an economic tool to bring money to the area that would never have been here
- Industry can create jobs and retain talent that would usually leave for NYC, LA, North Carolina; much film industry talent at SU, Oswego, Binghamton, Ithaca, TC3, OCC
- Ultimate goal - develop industry here, give people a reason to stay in Syracuse, making LA and NYC salaries, and spending their dollars in our economy

Mr. Burtis asked if downtown Syracuse had ever hosted a film crew. Mr. Vinal:

- As far as production, Adult World was here 2-3 years ago, came in under the radar, film process was not set up, response was good, movie is great, cool exposure for the City
- Have to warm up to big production, need police on board, most determine number of personnel needed, part of discussion with the City, i.e. blowing up car, how many officers and fire fighters are necessary; need backups if City says no, working with everyone to gain support needed to make this successful, about bringing community together and being excited about film opportunities

Mr. Burtis said that downtown Syracuse would be a great goal to have. Mr. Vinal agreed saying that they try to mimic other areas that do not have the tax incentives, i.e. streets like Warren and Bank Alley are the most narrow streets in Syracuse, can look like Manhattan, Skaneateles looks like New England, Jamesville Quarry looks like outer space and old buildings are always good for horror movies.

Ms. Cerio said that they are in talks with the City, discussed mistakes made and are optimistic. Mr. Vinal said that they are lucky the project did not go to Florida. They put it to Utica, made the governor's home office happy and the project stayed in the state. Mr. Knapp said that he still likes the old Jamesville Penitentiary. Mr. Vinal agreed, adding that he had never seen how nice it was. The Orange and New Black could have filmed there entirely. Mr. Knapp said that the old one was a classic and perfect for Ghost Hunters. Mr. Vinal that there is no reason that they cannot set up and become a northeast hub for production, creating a sustainable industry for the entire year. Chair Rapp said that this would be exciting.

Mr. Knapp said that the state budget contains big money for rural broadband. In answer to Chair Rapp, Ms. Spillane said that this was separate from the \$500 million. It is to connect underserved areas. Mr. Knapp asked if it was the same template as before. Ms. Spillane said that they have not come out with the details. In answer to Chair Rapp, Ms. Spillane said that they are talking about connectivity rather than speed. The goal of the \$500 million is to provide speeds that are useable for the 21st century.

The meeting adjourned at 12:05 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,



KATHERINE M. FRENCH, Deputy Clerk
Onondaga County Legislature

ATTENDANCE

COMMITTEE: **PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

DATE: **April 16, 2015**

NAME	DEPARTMENT/AGENCY
PLEASE PRINT	
Kelly Fager	Law
BILL KINNE	LEG
Jim Corbett	Land Bank
Sue Stangor	Leg

* * *

WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE MINUTES

4.27.15 Ways & Means Minutes

DAVID KNAPP, CHAIRMAN

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