

**WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE  
MINUTES**

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2022  
3:30 P.M.**

PRESENT: Leigh J. Benton, Chairman  
L. Stephen Brescia, Kevin W. Hines, Laurie R. Tautel,  
Michael D. Paduch, Barry J. Cheney

ALSO

PRESENT: Katie Bonelli, Chairwoman  
Thomas J. Faggione, Majority Leader  
Peter V. Tuohy, Legislator  
Betsy N. Abraham, Legislative Counsel  
Harold J. Porr, III, Deputy County Executive  
Karin Hablow, Commissioner of Finance  
Kerry Gallagher, Deputy Commissioner of Finance  
James P. Burpoe, Commissioner, General Services  
Alicia D'Amico, Deputy Commissioner of Procurement and Compliance,  
Department of General Services  
Brendan Casey, Commissioner of Emergency Services  
Allen Wierzbicki, Deputy Commissioner, Emergency Svcs/Emergency Comm.  
Kenneth T. Jones, Undersheriff  
Ann Putnam, Principal, Probation Officer  
Deborah Slesinski, Budget Director

Chairman Benton opened the committee meeting at 3:30 p.m. by asking everyone to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance. All committee members were present with the exception of Legislators Anagnostakis and O'Donnell who were absent.

Mr. Brescia moved to approve the request, In the 2019 Capital Plan, proposed Capital Project No. 71 funding was intended to be split \$850,000.00 in 2019 and \$850,000.00 in 2020; however, it was not submitted for review in the 2020 Capital Plan. Requesting approval and supplemental appropriation of \$850,000.00 that was proposed to be included in 2020 Capital Plan (bonding), seconded by Ms. Tautel.

Mr. Burpoe explained that he is here today to accept the \$850,000.00 as well as ask for supplemental appropriation to complete the project for the E911 Building. This would put them in compliance with the next generation security for the building. He added that the capital project consists of two parts, it was approved in 2019, and he did not come back to committee in 2020 because of COVID-19; therefore, he is asking that this be approved to move forward.

Motion carried. All in favor.

Mr. Hines moved to approve the request to accept and appropriate proposed Capital Project No. 57 for \$2,795,000.00 to finance the upgrade of the phone system and redesign of the E911 Emergency Communications and 311 Mental Health Crisis Call Center. The phone system upgrade will coincide with Information Technology's (IT) countywide project to upgrade hardware and increase security to prevent cyber-attacks (bonding), seconded by Ms. Tautel.

Mr. Casey stated this capital project was mentioned at the budget hearing last year. The current phone system at the E911 Center has reached its end of life so it must be replaced and with the 311-call line increasing, they felt it would be a good idea to redesign the entire system.

Motion carried. All in favor.

Ms. Tautel moved to approve the request for supplemental appropriation for Axon laser and body cam. This is a follow up on the recommendation of the Police Reform Committee, \$725,000.00 (bonding), seconded by Mr. Benton.

Undersheriff Jones stated that the process for the laser and body cameras has been long and a joint effort not only by the Sheriff's Office, but the County Executive's Office, and Susan Whalan in the Law Department. They have come to an agreement on a suitable contract and are ready to commence with the project of installing body cameras for the deputies who are on patrol.

Mr. Paduch asked how many body cameras will be purchased.

Undersheriff Jones replied there is one for every deputy on patrol, uniformed deputies, and investigators, so the total amount of body cameras that will be purchased is one-hundred fourteen.

Ms. Tautel asked if Axon was chosen through a sole source or the result of a bid.

Undersheriff Jones replied this went through the Law Department; therefore, it was not sole source or done through the bidding process.

Ms. Tautel then asked how this camera and vendor were chosen.

Undersheriff Jones responded the Law Department did their due diligence and approved the contract which was shown to the County Executive.

Mr. Benton commented that he is sure Mr. Burpoe was also involved in the process.

Ms. Tautel stated that she is confused and asked that Deputy County Executive Porr speak to this.

Deputy County Executive Porr explained this was given a vigorous review by the Law Department, the County Executive, the Department of General Services, and the Sheriff's Office.

Mr. Paduch clarified there was no RFP.

Undersheriff Jones stated that is correct because there was not a competitive bidding price product for a variety of reasons. This company integrates with existing systems that other companies could not.

Mr. Benton pointed out that he will get a more elaborate explanation from Mr. Chapman and Mr. Burpoe before the next legislative session.

Motion carried. All in favor.

Mr. Hines moved to approve the request for supplemental appropriation for parking area repairs/upgrades/traffic markings, \$600,000.00 (bonding), seconded by Ms. Tautel.

Undersheriff Jones stated that on the way to the jail there are a few of the drains that have collapsed which has created several issues. The parking area lines, and traffic markings have been obliterated, so the funds for the project will fix the drains, reinstall the lines in the parking lot as well as restore the parking lot before more work is needed.

Motion carried. All in favor.

Ms. Tautel moved to approve the request for supplemental appropriation for Probation Department's body cams/tasers as contained in proposed Project No. 100 in the 2022 Capital Plan, \$166,000.00 (bonding), seconded by Mr. Paduch.

Ms. Putnam addressed the committee by stating that the Probation Department is requesting fifty-five body cameras to equip officers who will be conducting field visits as well as additional cameras for officers and supervisors who may need to also conduct field work. The body cameras through Axon have the interoperability allowing them to work in conjunction with other agencies who are out conducting operations such as the Sheriff's Office and other police agencies. Axon has a playback multi-camera feature, docking stations for recharging the batteries, can be activated manually by touching them or automatically by moving his/her side arm from the holster, the overall financial cost is the same and the yearly restructuring may be different, but the cost revenue will remain the same. Furthermore, the department will be receiving a cost credit for the tasers they are currently carrying. They are happy with this proposal and ask that the committee approve the request.

Mr. Benton asked what other police agencies within the county use this company.

Ms. Putnam replied offhand, no, but there are other agencies within the county that utilize the taser.

Ms. Tautel asked Ms. Putnam if she knows the amount of credit the department will receive for the current tasers and how many will be returned.

Ms. Putnam replied no, she is unsure, but will find out before the legislative session.

Mr. Cheney commented that there is a significant difference in cost between the Sheriff's Office and Probation Department and would like to further understand why that is. He then asked if the department is getting the software and backup for the cameras and if it will be same system as the Sheriff's Office or different.

Ms. Putnam replied that it is her understanding that they will have access to storage to be able to store the video download. As to whether they will be on the same system as the Sheriff's Office, she would imagine they will have different access.

Mr. Cheney requested a summary document of what is included in both projects.

Mr. Paduch asked how much storage comes with the package.

Mr. Hines responded that it is a cloud-based system and that is another reason why Axon was chosen, and he does believe the storage is being paid for by the Sheriff's Office. He stated that most agencies including the State Police have Axon and a lot of the smaller agencies do not have it because they only have a few cameras. Regarding the sole source, he stated that it was for the Sheriff's side and the Law Department worked hard on the contract.

Motion carried. All in favor.

Ms. Hablow addressed the committee with an update regarding Sales Tax which included the County of Orange Sales Tax Received Year-To-Date (County Portion Only) and a 4-Year Gross Sales Tax Comparison (see original minutes).

The last agenda item was an update on the Budget Department.

Ms. Slesinski stated this year she decided to prepare a General Fund Budget Report (see original minutes) for the committee which shows the comparison of 2022-2021 general fund. She pointed out the few changes in the revenue case such as the county tax for 2022 and how it is not posted yet.

Regarding the revenue for 2021, Ms. Tautel asked Ms. Slesinski why the county lost so much funding for state-aide.

Ms. Slesinski replied that there were a lot of accruals last year because the state held back a lot of money, but there will be a reversal that will happen in July of this year and be posted back to January.

Mr. Paduch asked what the current balance is in the fund balance.

Ms. Slesinski responded that once the audited financials are complete, she will have an answer, possibly within the next week.

In closing, Ms. Slesinski stated that as of February 10, 2022, there are 336 vacant positions with an average savings of \$2.7 million.

The meeting adjourned at 4:09 p.m.