

**WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2019
3:30 P.M.**

PRESENT: Leigh J. Benton, Chairman
Mike Anagnostakis, Katie Bonelli, Janet Sutherland,
Kevin W. Hines, James M. Kulisek, Michael D. Paduch, Joseph J. Minuta

ALSO

PRESENT: L. Stephen Brescia, Chairman
Barry J. Cheney, Legislator
Antoinette Reed, Legislative Counsel
Harry Porr, III, Acting County Executive
Mary Pat Smith, Assistant to the County Executive
Matthew Nothnagle, Chief Asst. County Attorney
Donna McCarey, Deputy Commissioner of Human Resources
Erik Denega, Commissioner, Dept. of Public Works
Travis B. Ewald, Deputy Commissioner, Engineering Division
Louise Vandermark, Commissioner, Board of Elections
David C. Green, Commissioner, Board of Elections
John McCarey, Director, Real Property Tax Service
Amanda Dana, Director, Tourism
Deborah Slesinski, Deputy Budget Director
Tim Tucker, Budget Analyst
Deanna Crawford, Budget Analyst
Marie Abbruzzese, Senior Budget Technician

Chairman Benton opened the committee meeting at 3:32 p.m. by asking everyone to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance. All committee members were present with the exception of Legislator Sutherland who arrived at 3:52 p.m.

Mr. Paduch moved to approve the request confirmation of appointment of Deborah Slesinski as Budget Director of the Orange County Department of Budget, seconded by Mr. Anagnostakis.

Mr. Porr stated he is asking for confirmation of the County Executive's appointment of Deborah Slesinski for the Orange County Budget Director position. In terms of process, Mr. Blair left the county in 2015 and since then they have received many resumes as well as interviewed seven or eight people for the position. In the end, the best selection was Ms. Slesinski.

Mr. Benton thanked Ms. Slesinski for her great work with the legislature and teaching them a lot when it comes to the budget.

Mr. Paduch seconded Mr. Benton's comments.

Mr. Anagnostakis commented that he has seen a remarkable improvement in the department since Ms. Slesinski took over.

Mr. Porr added that the Budget Department also recruited Deanna Crawford from the Department of Public Works and Gretchen Riordan from the Health Department who are both now budget analysts.

Mr. Kulisek stated that any questions asked during budget time were answered right away and the budget team was very receptive of any requests the legislators had.

Motion carried. All in favor with the exception of Legislator Sutherland who had not yet arrived.

Mr. Minuta moved to adopt a resolution approving the release of the County's interest in and to a certain deed sale parcel to the previous owner of record, to wit: Town of New Windsor, Section 81, Block 3, Lot 3.-4. The County took title to the property and the owner claimed bankruptcy prior to the public auction. The property taxes have now been paid, seconded by Mr. Kulisek.

Mr. Nothnagle stated this is a fairly routine where someone pays their taxes before the auction in order to get their property back.

Motion carried. All in favor with the exception of Legislator Sutherland who had not yet arrived.

Mrs. Bonelli moved the request for supplemental appropriation under proposed Capital Plan Project No. 31 of 2019 for replacement of thirty-one (31) Dominion ImageCast voting machines, \$338,285.00 (bonding), seconded by Mr. Hines.

Mr. Green explained that in May/June of 2018 a capital project was submitted to replace 155 Ballot Marking Devices (BMD) which was approved on the condition that it be done over five years. The amount of \$338,285.00 being requested is for the first portion of the machines.

Mr. Benton clarified that this will be an annual project.

Mr. Green stated that is correct.

Mr. Benton then confirmed that the machines are handicap capable.

Mr. Green stated yes, they are handicap capable.

Mr. Anagnostakis asked what the life expectancy of the machines are.

Ms. Vandermark replied the life expectancy is 10 to 15 years.

Mr. Green stated that the machines are eleven years old.

Mrs. Bonelli pointed out that this passed unanimously at the Rules Committee meeting last week.

Mr. Paduch asked if the machines are maintained every year.

Ms. Vandermark replied that the machines only receive maintenance when needed.

Mr. Green stated that there are state mandates included in the cost.

Motion carried. All in favor with the exception of Legislator Sutherland who had not yet arrived.

Mr. Anagnostakis moved the request to reallocate the Assistant Director of Real Property Tax Service from a Grade 22 to a Grade 23, seconded by Mr. Minuta.

Mr. McCarey stated there was a desk audit done for Mr. Ruscher who does a lot of assessment work for the five towns. He is a good back-up and will hopefully be Mr. McCarey's succession plan so he can move on; therefore, it is highly recommended that he be upgraded.

Motion carried. All in favor with the exception of Legislator Sutherland who had not yet arrived.

Mr. Benton moved to discuss deed sale parcels, seconded by Mr. Hines.

The first parcel is in the Town of Newburgh (47-1-50.1) with a minimum bid of \$2,000.00 and amount bid of \$2,000.00. Mr. McCarey recommends that it be approved. Parcel numbers two, three, four, five, and six is the same piece of property and is in the Town of Warwick (40-1-32). The minimum bid is \$25,000.00 and the highest bid is parcel number two in the amount of \$86,042.00.

Motion carried. All in favor of Mr. McCarey's recommendation to approve deed sale parcels Nos. 1 and 2 and deny parcels 3, 4, 5, and 6.

The seventh and eight parcels are also the same piece of property located in the Town of Warwick (58-1-102) with a minimum bid of \$25,000.00. Mr. McCarey recommended that it be sold to the higher bid which was parcel number seven in the amount of \$25,500.00. Parcels nine and ten are in the Town of Woodbury (230-6-5) and has a minimum bid of \$4,000.00. Mr. McCarey stated that the parcel must be re-bid with a seal bid especially because it is the same piece of property.

Motion carried. All in favor of Mr. McCarey's recommendation to approve deed sale parcel No. 7 and deny parcels 8, 9, and 10.

Mr. Minuta moved the request for supplemental appropriation to the capital projects budget for Fleet Replacement. Funding is from the State Consolidated Local Street and Highway Improvement

Program (CHIPS). This project has been approved under the 2019 Capital Plan as Project No. 38, \$700,000.00, seconded by Mrs. Bonelli.

Mr. Denega stated this is equipment from the highway garage, not the motor pool. There are thirteen vehicles that are thirteen years and older with a lot of deterioration from salt and wear and tear.

Motion carried. All in favor.

Mr. Minuta moved the request for supplemental appropriation to the capital projects budget for Building and Grounds Equipment for Government Center. This project has been approved under 2019 Capital Plan as Project No. 39, \$170,000.00 (bonding), seconded by Mr. Hines.

Mr. Denega stated this request is for small equipment for the Government Center and reviewed the list of equipment (see original minutes).

Mr. Titsworth gave the committee further explanation of the equipment and where it will be used.

Motion carried. All in favor.

Mr. Anagnostakis moved the request for supplemental appropriation to the capital projects budget for Contaminated Soil Removal at various Orange County locations. This project has been approved under the 2019 Capital Plan as Project No. 36. Upon approval, a new capital project will be created \$100,000.00 (bonding), seconded by Mr. Minuta.

Mr. Denega explained this request is for soil contamination for the DPW garage that is underground. The levels have been monitored and mediation was complete and showed the levels have been decreasing. He is waiting on the DEC for approval to continue monitoring and treatment and would like to secure the funds in case they are needed.

Mr. Paduch commented that most of this is for monitoring the soil but the request states "contaminated soil removal."

Mr. Ewald stated that there is a treatment process which is a containing treatment process on their site that extracts water from the ground well, treats it, injects it back in and then there is a sampling and reporting process that takes place. The process is ongoing until they are released from the requirements. He added that the consultants asked that the DEC release them from the treatment and significantly reduce the sampling and monitoring for the next year to two years which would lessen the cost. After that he is hoping it will be completely closed out.

Motion carried. All in favor.

Mr. Minuta moved the request for supplemental appropriation to the capital projects budget for Intersection and Improvements. This project has been approved under the 2019 Capital Plan as Project No. 62. Upon approval, a new capital project will be created, \$100,000.00 (bonding), seconded by Mrs. Bonelli.

Mr. Denega stated this is annual capital project for intersection improvements. There is \$144,000.00 remaining from the previous year, so this would bring them to \$244,000.00 if needed. An example of an improvement would be on Fostertown Road in the Town of Newburgh which warrants a signal light. The light will be designed this year and potentially bid toward the end of the year. He added that the interim fix will be a four way stop of blinking LED solar lights.

Mr. Ewald reviewed the list of intersection improvements (see original minutes).

Motion carried. All in favor.

Mr. Minuta moved to discuss Orange County Tourism to manage and grow Film Office. Request supplemental appropriation of \$49,900.00 to fund Film Office, seconded by Mr. Paduch.

Ms. Dana addressed the committee with a presentation regarding Orange County Tourism and the Film Office which included and Overview and Initiatives, 2019 OCN Y Film Office Projects, Production Expense Report, Maximizing Film and Television Production Opportunities in Orange County and the Proposed Annual Budget (see original minutes).

Mr. Hines asked Ms. Dana if she must hire staff.

Ms. Dana replied yes, she is hoping to get a competitive person to work in the Film Office, but they would be housed in the Tourism Office. She added that she would like to hire someone with a strong skill set in production for this year. The number seen on the sheet (see original minutes) is a part-time figure for a full year.

Mr. Hines asked if the other entity that addressed the legislature during budget time is still active.

Ms. Dana replied they are no longer active.

Mr. Hines asked why the entity is no longer in existence.

Ms. Dana replied because the funding was cut by the Orange County IDA who was the sole source funder for their operations.

Mr. Hines then asked if she has the historical data from 2016 and 2017 or if this data is new because of the tax break.

Ms. Dana replied that the tax break is everything. There was a jump in the numbers after 2018, but she will research the past numbers. She stated that the Film Office is on the rise and

all her partners within the region are tremendously busy with productions. Furthermore, this will be a thriving department.

Regarding the questions Mr. Hines asked, Mrs. Bonelli stated that when the county started to pay more attention to the film industry, it was under the Orange County Arts Council. At that point she was sitting on the Arts Council and it blossomed to the point where they decided to create their own office. The funding that was provided helped pay for salaries and was rendered that the IDA could not do that. She added that the Arts Council has information from when it first began, so to be able to answer Mr. Hines' question, the Arts Council will be able to give historical data prior to the film industry.

Mr. Hines asked how much money the IDA gave to the Arts Council.

Mr. Porr replied \$58,000.00.

Mr. Minuta commented that the film industry is unique and there is a tremendous need for sound stages within Orange County. He fully supports moving this forward.

Chairman Brescia stated that he has changed his opinion and supports it.

Mr. Benton asked Ms. Dana what metric and reports she will be providing the legislature with to show the progress.

Ms. Dana replied that they will be compiling a spreadsheet of all the inquires coming in, the amount of production, the budget on the productions and then do a post-production evaluation to see where the local vendors are coming from. Part of the database is going to be building up the local vendors so it can become instant economic development for the county. She stated that when she meets with the committee whether it be on a quarterly basis, she will have those numbers.

Mr. Kulisek commented that the Orange County Arts Council was very active and very gracious in the database provided. He asked Ms. Dana if there is anyone she is entertaining for the position.

Ms. Dana replied yes. She would love to hire the lady that was the consultant for the Arts Council in the Film Office because she has a degree in production, post-production and a rolodex a mile long of production companies. This is a competitive position which she is still working on with Human Resources because they need to come up with a title and a grade. She is hoping to be able to hire this lady.

Mr. Cheney commented that the Village of Warwick has had several shows, movies, and commercials filmed which is a benefit for the restaurants and a bonus for the whole town.

Mr. Minuta moved the request for supplemental appropriation of \$49,900.00 to fund Film Office, seconded by Ms. Sutherland.

Mrs. Bonelli clarified that the position still needs to be created and Ms. Dana is working in it with the Department of Human Resources and the monies requested are to utilize the position.

Ms. Dana stated that is correct.

Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 4:43 p.m.