

**WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

**TUESDAY, MARCH 28, 2023
3:30 P.M.**

PRESENT: Leigh J. Benton, Chairman
L. Stephen Brescia, Thomas J. Faggione, Kevin W. Hines, Barry J. Cheney

ALSO

PRESENT: Katie Bonelli, Chairwoman
Betsy N. Abraham, Esq., Legislative Counsel
Richard B. Golden, County Attorney
Carol Pierce, Deputy County Attorney
Matthew Nothnagle, Chief Assistant County Attorney
Kerry Gallagher, Commissioner of Finance
Michael Schreiber, Deputy Commissioner of Finance
Andrea Concannon, Deputy Commissioner of Finance
James S. Brooks, Commissioner, Dept. of Parks, Recreation and Conservation
Deanna Crawford, Deputy Commissioner, Dept. of Parks, Recreation and Conservation
Laurence LaDue, Commissioner, Valley View Center
Vini Tankasali, Deputy Commissioner, Fire Services
Paul Wiley, Director, Real Property Tax Service
Timothy A. Davidian, Director, Probation Department
Deborah Slesinski, Budget Director
Gretchen Riordan, Deputy Budget Director
Elizabeth Matis, Budget Analyst
Paul G. Martland, Vice President of Admin./Finance, Orange County Community College

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, O'Donnell and Paduch who were absent and Legislator Sierra who was excused.

Mr. Brescia moved to approve the request resolution to have the **¾% increase to the sales tax extended** for the period beginning December 1, 2023 and ending November 30, 2025, seconded by Mr. Hines.

Ms. Gallagher stated this is a requirement so the county can continue with the sales tax extension.

Mr. Benton commented that this is something that has been done for years.

Motion carried. All in favor.

The next agenda item was a Sales Tax Update which included County of Orange Sales Tax Received Year-To-Date (County Portion Only) and a 4-Year Gross Sales Tax Comparison (on file in Clerk, Legislative Office).

Mr. Faggione moved to approve the request to amend Resolution No. 334 of 2020 to reflect the correct fund/organization combination and to move the budget. Supplemental appropriation is requested, seconded by Mr. Cheney.

Ms. Slesinski explained Legislative Request 211 of 2020 has a Schedule A, but there was a different organization number on it, so the error needs to be reversed.

Motion carried. All in favor.

Ms. Slesinski addressed the committee with an update regarding the General Fund Status Report as of February 2023 (on file in Clerk, Legislative Office).

Mr. Cheney moved to approve the request to accept and appropriate insurance funds for the fire damage to The Ruth and Jim Ottaway Building in the Arboretum located at Thomas Bull Memorial Park. Upon approval, a new capital project will be created, \$512,241.90, seconded by Mr. Faggione.

Mr. Brooks stated this request is to accept funds from the insurance company for the fire that occurred.

Mr. Hines asked if that is "all in" or a deductible.

Mr. Brooks replied there was a deductible and that is the net from the insurance company. He stated the RFB will be going out within the next week or two.

Motion carried. All in favor.

Mr. Cheney moved to approve the request for supplemental appropriation to the Parks 2023 Operating Budget for arboricultural and forestry consulting and fencing services, \$61,000.00, seconded by Mr. Faggione.

Motion carried. All in favor.

Mr. Cheney moved to approve the request for supplemental appropriation to the capital projects budget for the deck replacement at the Graham Skea Lodge, Stony Ford Golf Course, Montgomery, NY. Upon approval, a new capital project will be created, \$157,686.00 (bonding), seconded by Mr. Hines.

Mr. Brooks explained that this is part of their preventive maintenance program which is done during the winter months and the deck has gotten progressively worse. The decking and railing need to be replaced and will be done in-house, one section at a time because the bids came back too high. He stated this is a safety issue and needs to be repaired as soon as possible.

Motion carried. All in favor.

Mr. Benton moved to approve the request for supplemental appropriation to the capital projects budget in the amount of \$100,000.00 for Parks Historical Structures Initiative, Reconstruction of Powder Mill Structures. Upon approval, funds will be added to Capital Project No. 719. In the 2023 Capital Plan proposed Project No. 115 was for \$300,000.00. This is an additional amount of \$100,000.00 (bonding), seconded by Mr. Brescia.

Mr. Brooks stated he received the bids back from the contractors and realized they are short on funds to complete the first phase which is the hatched area.

Mr. Benton thanked Mr. Brooks and Ms. Porr for all they have done on this project.

Mr. Cheney asked about the construction schedule (starting and completing).

Mr. Brooks replied he would like to think within 45 days and the timeline would be 9 months.

Motion carried. All in favor.

Mr. Brescia moved to approve the request for supplemental appropriation to the capital projects budget for a Retaining Wall at 30 Harriman Drive. This project has been approved under the 2023 Capital Plan as proposed Project No. 80. Upon approval, a new capital project will be created \$315,000.00 (bonding), seconded by Mr. Faggione.

Ms. Gallagher stated these funds were approved in the capital plan.

Motion carried. All in favor.

Mr. Faggione moved to approve the request for supplemental appropriation to the capital projects budget to purchase scoot wheelchairs. This will be a new project, not originally included in the 2023 Capital plan. Upon approval, a new capital project will be created, \$35,000.00 (bonding), seconded by Mr. Benton.

Mr. LaDue explained that they currently have five scoot wheelchairs which are lower to the ground compared and are an important safety device for the residents, so he is requesting funds to purchase ten additional ones.

Motion carried. All in favor.

Mr. Faggione moved to approve the request to accept and appropriate the proposed 2022 Capital Project No. 62 for \$290,000.00 to finance the update/refresh of the audio/visual equipment in the Fire Training Center classrooms and to replace the tables and chairs. This project was not included in the 2023 Capital Plan; however, it was included in the 2022 Capital Plan but was not brought to the Legislature to move forward. If approved, a new capital project will be created (bonding), seconded by Mr. Cheney.

Mr. Tankasali stated this is for an update of audio/visual equipment and replacement of tables and chairs in the Fire Training Center classrooms as the current equipment and furniture is 30 years old and has reached its useful life. Most of these date back to when the building was built in 1991/1992.

Mr. Benton asked if the old equipment and tables and chairs could be donated.

Mr. Tankasali replied yes, there are a few agencies that are interested.

Motion carried. All in favor.

Mr. Faggione moved to approve the request to accept Body Worn Camera (BWC) funding in the amount of \$114,000.00 from NYS DCJS. This is a one-time payment for the purchase of BWCs and software related to BWCs. Also request to appropriate \$14,000.00 for additional equipment and \$100,000.00 to be used to offset Capital Project No. 323. Bonding required to reallocate funds to State Aid, \$100,000.00 (bonding), seconded by Mr. Cheney.

Mr. Davidian stated that in the fall of last year, he discovered that DCJS was offering EWC funds. He inquired as to whether it would apply to the Probation Department which it did, therefore, he filed the grant application and was advised that it was approved. The \$114,000.00 will be put toward software related to BCW's.

Mr. Cheney asked about the life expectancy of the body worn cameras and software.

Mr. Davidian replied it should exceed five years. Built into the contract is that after year three, the equipment should be replaced with the newest technology so he would suspect that these will last through 2027/2028.

Mr. Benton asked how the equipment ages out.

Mr. Davidian replied that a lot of times they age by the display screens going blank, electronic components begin to fail, and the cartridges go bad meaning they get microfractures.

Motion carried. All in favor.

Mr. Cheney moved to approve the request for supplemental appropriation to use capital chargeback funds to offset a funding shortage on previously approved County Capital Project CP292-27197 (Bond Resolution No. 265 of 2021 of 12/2/21) which authorized \$350,000.00 to replace HVAC equipment in Orange Hall. The project recently went out to bid and the low bid is \$559,000.00 leaving a shortage of \$209,000.00. This request is to fund one half of the shortage.

The State of New York will provide the other half of the funds, seconded by Mr. Faggione.

Mr. Martland explained that the inflation and construction industry has increased, so it caught up to them from when they first introduced this project. There is no new money involved and this is the most logical way to proceed.

Motion carried. All in favor.

Mr. Benton moved to accept Mr. Wiley's recommendation to allow for a taxpayer in Blooming Grove 107-3-22 who had their 2022-2023 School District tax bill re-levied onto the 2023 County and Town tax bill, adding penalties and fees of \$937.32. The taxpayer mailed a check within the penalty free collection period for the school district tax bill.

The check was returned to the taxpayer on January 30, 2023 with "Return to Sender – Unable to Forward" message from the United States Postal Service. Address of payment and 9/16/22 postmark has been verified. Real Property Tax Director cannot remove fees and penalties from the County and Town tax bill where the payments were lost in the mail. Therefore, the Real Property Director has denied this correction of error. Legislative approval is requested to refund the penalties and fees from the 2023 County and Town tax bill which has been paid in full, seconded by Mr. Brescia.

Mr. Wiley stated this request is similar to last months as the payment did not get to the lockbox at the bank. This individual mailed the payment in early September, and it did not get back to them until January 30th. The bill was then paid along with the penalties before it was due, so he is asking that this be approved as it needs legislature approval. He further stated that this was done in the proper manner, the post office had issues.

Motion carried. All in favor.

Mr. Brescia moved to discuss deed sale parcels, seconded by Mr. Faggione.

Mr. Wiley explained that there is one deed sale parcel this month located in the Town of Deerpark (55-1-52.3), has a minimum bid of \$400.00 and an amount bid of \$1.00. He recommends the committee deny it.

Motion carried. All in favor of accepting Mr. Wiley's recommendation to deny the deed sale parcel.

The meeting adjourned at 3:59 p.m.