

**WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

**TUESDAY, MAY 23, 2023
3:30 P.M.**

PRESENT: Leigh J. Benton, Chairman
L. Stephen Brescia, James D. O'Donnell, Thomas J. Faggione,
Kevin W. Hines, Barry J. Cheney

ALSO

PRESENT: Harold J. Porr, Deputy County Executive
Matthew Nothnagle, Chief Assistant County Attorney
Kerry Gallagher, Commissioner of Finance
Michael Schreiber, Deputy Commissioner of Finance
Andrea Concannon, Deputy Commissioner of Finance
Laurence LaDue, Commissioner, Valley View Center
Christian Farrell, Director, Veterans' Service Agency
Paul Wiley, Director, Real Property Tax Service
Timothy A. Davidian, Director, Probation Department
Deborah Slesinski, Budget Director
Gretchen Riordan, Deputy Budget Director
Paul G. Martland, Vice President of Admin./Finance, Orange County Community College
Kevin Roberts, Ulster County Legislator

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 Legislators Anagnostakis, and Paduch who were absent, and Legislator Sierra who was excused.

Mr. Brescia moved to approve the request to reallocate State Aid (Raise the Age funds) to Capital Project No. 323 (Body Worn Cameras) in the amount of \$126,609.29. This reallocation will negate the need to issue bonds for Capital Project No. 323, seconded by Mr. Hines.

Mr. Davidian stated this is the last time they will be able to give money back to this project. This request is funding from Raise the Age, so he is asking that it be approved so the funds can be reallocated to the capital project for body cameras.

Motion carried. All in favor.

Mr. Cheney moved to approve the request for supplemental appropriation to the capital projects budget to purchase two (2) John Deere Gators (#TH 6x4) currently on State Bid. This is not in the 2023 Capital Plan. Upon approval, a new capital project will be created, \$30,000.00, seconded by Mr. Faggione.

Mr. Farrell explained that they currently have two gators, one is a 2007 and the other is 2014, but are inoperable; therefore, he is requesting they be replaced. The gators are used for multiple things throughout the cemetery grounds.

Mr. Benton asked why the gators were not listed in the capital plan.

Mr. Farrell replied that this type of equipment is not normally replaced.

Motion carried. All in favor.

Mr. O'Donnell moved to approve the request for supplemental appropriation of funds for a proposed 2023 capital project expenditure to replace beds utilized for resident care. The inventory of beds has reached economic life. Replacement and modernization are necessary. This is proposed Capital Project No. 132. Upon approval, a new capital project will be created, \$515,000.00 (bonding), seconded by Mr. Faggione.

Mr. LaDue stated they have replaced mattresses in years past, but since he has been at Valley View, beds have not been purchased. They have reached the end of their useful life and the quote he received is for 260 beds. Furthermore, this expenditure can be capitalized onto the Medicare rate at 75%.

Mr. Benton clarified these are not lift beds.

Mr. LaDue stated that is correct.

Motion carried. All in favor.

Mr. O'Donnell moved to approve the request for supplemental appropriation for a new capital project for the carbon filtration water project. This project is not included in the 2023 Capital Plan. Upon approval, a new capital project will be created, \$375,501.00 (bonding), seconded by Mr. Faggione.

This request is for the carbon filtration water project (summary of project on file in Clerk, Legislative Office) because the water has tested high. Mr. LaDue stated that the carbon filtration will alleviate the problem and was approved by the Orange County Department of Health.

Motion carried. All in favor.

Ms. Gallagher addressed the committee with 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. Benton asked if we are expecting another payment for the month of May.

Ms. Gallagher replied no, we are done for the month of May, but there will be three payments in June.

The next agenda item was an update regarding the General Fund Status Report as of April 2023 (on file in Clerk, Legislative Office). She stated that at the end of April there were 350 vacant funded positions. In May of 2022, there were 333 vacant positions and in March of 2020 (before COVID-19), there were 189 vacant positions. Regarding Legislator O'Donnell's request last month for identifying the number of what it would cost to fill all the vacant positions, she stated that if they were to fill 350 vacant positions for the next 18 pay periods, it would cost approximately \$21.6 million.

Mr. O'Donnell clarified that the funds are budgeted and go into the general fund at the end of the year.

Ms. Slesinski stated that is correct.

Mr. Benton stated that the next agenda item is a Q&A RE: the 2024 Financial Summary Forecast.

Ms. Slesinski pointed out that the summary includes all the budgeted funds and the 2023 adopted budget compared to the modified budget has a big variance which they are working on. The projection she has for 2023 is a \$31 million surplus.

Ms. Gallagher and Ms. Slesinski then briefly reviewed a handout regarding an ARPA Funding update (on file in Clerk, Legislative Office).

Mr. Brescia moved to approve the request for supplemental appropriation of recently approved ARPA funds by the Legislature for roof replacement, building envelope renovations and other repairs to Morrison Hall, and roof replacement on Horton Hall, both on the College's Middletown Campus. Engineering, project plan development, regulatory review (per historic buildings) and project bidding will take place in 2023 and Q1 of 2024. Actual renovations and roof replacements will be completed in 2024 or Q1 of 2025 at the latest. The requested \$5,000,000.00 represents 50% of the total projected project cost of \$10,000,000.00. The remaining \$5,000,000.00 will be supplied by the State of New York (ARPA funds), seconded by Mr. Cheney.

Mr. Martland stated that this request is straightforward. At the previous legislative session, the ARPA funding for this project was approved and the college recently held a meeting with the finance teams from the county and the college. At that meeting, it was suggested that it would be appropriate for the college to ask for the full \$5 million through a resolution to get the process started. At this point, their only spending money is on engineering. There will be two contractors who will be doing the engineering for both projects and will take place over the summer and complete by October.

Mr. Cheney asked why the work should be split between two firms.

Mr. Martland replied the two projects in Morrison Hall need to be the same firm because they direct one another. The Horton Hall project is a building of similar age but has a different roof, so there is no economy of scales having one firm do both roofs. Furthermore, they saved \$80,000.00 by splitting it up.

Motion carried. All in favor.

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

The first deed sale parcel was in the Town of Goshen (24-1-91.4) and had a minimum bid of \$1,250.00 and amount bid of \$1,300.00. Mr. Wiley recommended that it be approved. Parcels 2a and 2b were the same piece of property in the Town of Newburgh (11-1-122.2). Mr. Wiley recommended that parcel 2a be approved because the amount bid is higher.

Motion carried. All in favor of Mr. Wiley's recommendation to accept deed sale parcels 1 and 2a and deny parcel 2b.

Mr. Faggione moved to adopt a resolution of the Orange County Legislature in support of the Town of Newburgh's opposition to the possible siting of the Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency Landfill in the Town of Plattekill, seconded by Mr. Benton.

Mr. Benton explained that this is a proposal and has been in the news, therefore, he feels it is appropriate to bring it to committee because it is not a good idea. He introduced Ulster County Legislator, Kevin Roberts and asked that he comment on this since it is his district.

Mr. Roberts expressed his concerns about this proposal as there are two sites and this can become troublesome due to the lake on the property as well as the creeks that run through it.

Mr. Hines asked if the Ulster County Legislature took a position against this.

Mr. Roberts replied no, the vote will take place next month because it was inconclusive last month due to a tie.

Mr. Brescia commented that he is in support of this.

Mr. Benton stated that he is glad the Ulster County Legislature and Resource Recovery Agency realize that the carbon footprint for trash trucks is from the start to the landfill and back.

Mr. O'Donnell thanked Mr. Roberts for addressing the committee and bringing it to the attention of the chairman.

Mr. Cheney clarified that there are two sites under consideration after the original study.

Mr. Roberts stated the original report was done in 2021 at the request of the DEC, it was given to them, and they picked the areas. After the report was put out, it was put on the back burner and no longer discussed until a board member was not reappointed and leaked it to the press.

Mr. Cheney asked if the legislature has the authority to override the Resource Recovery Agency.

Mr. Roberts replied yes because they do not have bonding capabilities.

Motion carried. All in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 4:12 p.m.