

**WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

**TUESDAY, JULY 27, 2021
3:30 P.M.**

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

ALSO

PRESENT: L. Stephen Brescia, Chairman
Barry J. Cheney, Legislator
Betsy N. Abraham, Legislative Counsel
Harold J. Porr, III, Deputy County Executive
Dan Bloomer, Director, Operations and Cost Control
Matthew J. Nothnagle, Chief Assistant County Attorney
Kerry Gallagher, Deputy Commissioner of Finance
Erik Denega, Commissioner, Dept. of Public Works
Robert Gray, Deputy Commissioner, Dept. of Public Works/EF&S
Louise Vandemark, Commissioner of Elections
Laurence LaDue, Commissioner, Valley View Center
Donna Strecker, Director of Finance, Valley View Center
Eric Ruscher, Director, Real Property Tax Service
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 Legislator Sutherland who was absent.

Mr. Kulisek moved to approve the request for revenue shortfall in Capital Project No. 834 for Transfer Stations Various Vehicles to be covered by Capital Reserve so that project can be closed, \$121,036.17, seconded by Mrs. Bonelli.

Mr. Gray reiterated that this is an amount of money that would have been received from the DEC as a reimbursement, however, the paperwork was not processed in time. He is writing them a letter asking them for reimbursement because the paperwork was received on time and not his fault, they did not process it on time.

Mr. Benton clarified that the vehicles were from 2006.

Mr. Gray stated that is correct and they have proof that the information required was submitted on time.

Motion carried. All in favor.

Mr. Hines moved to approve the request for supplemental appropriation and modification to the existing 2021 Capital Plan to purchase 155 voting machines over a five-year period, which is 31 machines at \$338,285 a year. Thirty-one new voting machines were received in 2019 and the delivery of 2020 was postponed to this year. Request to modify the existing plan to receive 93 more machines instead of receiving just 31 machines in 2021, 2022 and 2023 for a total of 155, \$1,014,855.00 (bonding), seconded by Mrs. Bonelli.

Ms. Vandemark explained that they are requesting that a modification to their existing plan be approved and that they need to receive 93 voting machines instead of only the 31 machines allotted for 2021. She added that it has been difficult to train election inspectors on three different machines. This would allow them to train inspectors on one type of machine while assisting with the logistics of assigning inspectors to work at polling sites.

Mr. Benton asked if the machines will be ready to use for November.

Ms. Vandemark replied no.

Mr. Anagnostakis clarified that they already have 31 machines.

Ms. Vandemark replied yes.

Mr. Anagnostakis then asked if those machines were used in the last election.

Ms. Vandemark replied no. They were training machines used only for early voting.

Motion carried. All in favor.

Mr. Kulisek moved to approve the request approval and appropriation of funds for a proposed 2021 capital expenditure for the water sewer treatment plant, \$250,000.00 (Appropriated Surplus), seconded by Mr. Minuta.

Mr. LaDue stated there are funds in the Capital Project for the sewer treatment plant and over the last three years, they have spent over \$400,000.00 on repairs, so they are seeking additional funds to ensure to make sure the plant is kept up to permit.

Mr. Benton commented that everyone knows there have been issues with the plant equipment, therefore, these funds are very much needed.

Mr. Kulisek asked if there is a plan to replace the entire plant.

Mr. LaDue replied they are planning on conducting a study regarding the major components of Valley View to see where the focus will be in the near future.

Mr. Kulisek stated the entire plant needs to be replaced. He suggested they look into this right away because it is paramount things get done and they should also look into RFP's before the plant is too far gone.

Mr. Benton and Mr. Paduch agreed with Mr. Kulisek.

Mr. Minuta commented that he too agrees and there needs to be a masterplan done, so the plant can be entirely replaced.

Mrs. Bonelli pointed out that there was a Valley View Advisory Committee meeting held last Tuesday and they are working towards a parcel that encompasses a masterplan. She stated they are moving ahead, but taking baby steps.

Mr. Kulisek asked if the Department of Public Works is involved in this process.

Mr. LaDue responded no, they are not.

Mr. Kulisek asked why they are not involved when they are very experienced.

Mr. LaDue replied they have gone to the plant for a tour about three to four years ago.

Mr. Kulisek suggested that the Department of Public Works should sit with someone from the executive side of the house to get direction on this process.

Motion carried. All in favor.

Mr. Paduch moved the request approval and appropriation of funds for a proposed 2021 capital expenditure to continue upgrading patient care mechanical lifters, \$70,000.00 (Appropriated Surplus), seconded by Mr. Hines.

Mr. LaDue explained this is a yearly request to continue upgrading patient care mechanical lifters as the current ones have reached their lifespan.

Mr. Benton clarified that these funds will be used to replace 14 mechanical lifters.

Mr. LaDue stated he is unsure if all of these will be replaced, but he will determine which ones need to be replaced first. He added the average life span is 7 years, so they will use the ones they can if they are safe to use.

Motion carried. All in favor.

Mr. Kulisek moved the request approval and appropriation of funds for a proposed 2021 capital expenditure for engineering services. Engineering to perform a facility wide condition assessment relative to buildings, grounds, mechanical, structural, roofing, electrical systems, plumbing and code compliance, \$172,500.00 (Appropriated Surplus), seconded by Mr. Benton.

Mr. LaDue stated he would like to have a consultant and/or engineer service to do an assessment of the major components of the facility, so they can provide a report on where it stands. From there, he will be able to prioritize what needs to be fixed going forward in the future.

Mr. Benton asked how long this is anticipated to take.

Mr. LaDue replied he is unsure because it will need to go out to bid.

Mr. Minuta asked how the cost was derived.

Mr. LaDue responded that they received a quote from GPI for engineering services (see attached).

Mr. Paduch asked how much money is left in the unrestricted balance.

Ms. Strecker replied that as of now is approximately \$50 million.

Motion carried. All in favor.

Ms. Gallagher addressed the committee with the next agenda item was a monthly update regarding the County of Orange Sales Tax Received Year-To-Date, County Portion Only (see original minutes).

Mr. Benton asked that a 2019 graph be provided for next month's committee meeting so they can compare it to 2020 and 2021.

The next agenda item was a Budget update. Ms. Slesinski stated that the department will be using our current PSB system to create the recommended budget. While they were able to validate data, they were not able to complete a full budgeting process and she did not have confidence that the data would flow through all aspects of the budget. They are still trying to do a comparison, so they know how to proceed. She is hoping to prepare the 3-year average for accounts that was distributed last year in the Hyperion System, but it is taking a bit longer than anticipated. Either way everyone will have that information before legislative budget hearings. The budget analysts are reviewing and preparing for the County Executive Budget Hearings which begin Wednesday, August 4th and continue through Thursday, August 12th. As suspected, the county did get the full 2% on the tax cap growth factor. She stated that she is still evaluating all receipts on sales tax, hotel tax, and casino money to determine a valid number for the 2022 budget. Even though the sales tax is up, she would like to follow the trend and use a conservative number in the 2022 budget. The department has made some very tough decisions for the 2021 budget, such as lowering the use of fund balance by over \$6 million dollars and implementing an 80% austerity in personal services. She is hoping that by making those choices this year, they will not be as hard pressed for 2022. Furthermore, as of July 16th, there are 327 full and 23 part-time vacant positions, for a total of 350 positions, with a year-to-date savings of \$13.9 million. They have also authorized many hiring requests, but the process does take some time to see a decrease in this number.

Mr. Paduch thanked Ms. Slesinski for her hard work and dedication. He then asked if the austerity could drop to 80%.

Ms. Slesinski replied yes, it could. Some departments put in their own austerity while others take it out and allow the Budget Department to determine what the number should be.

Mr. Paduch then asked if there is an account for each department as to what their spending was during the pandemic, so it can be replenished.

Ms. Gallagher responded that they are still working on that as invoices are still be submitted.

Mr. Paduch expressed his concerns on how to spend FEMA funds and how legislators should be able to be a part of the County Executive's budget hearings.

Mr. Benton indicated that is a separate branch of government.

Mr. Porr stated that the county charter states that the process for the executive recommended budget is developed by the County Executive's Office in conjunction with department heads and will remain that way for the 2022 budget.

Mr. Paduch moved to discuss deed sale parcels,
seconded by Mrs. Bonelli.

Mr. Ruscher stated that the first deed sale parcel is in the Town of Booming Grove (28-6-4), has a minimum bid of \$2,750.00 and an amount of \$2,750.00. He recommends that it be approved. Parcels two and three in the Town of Chester (8-1-27, 8-1-28) have the same bidder. Mr. Ruscher stated that both bids are above the minimum bid; therefore, he recommends it be approved. The fourth and fifth parcels are in the Town of Mount Hope (102-1-18, 9-2-12) and exceed the minimum bid, so he recommends they be approved. Parcel number six is in the Town of New Windsor (60-1-29), has a minimum bid of \$1,000.00 and an amount bid of \$2,300.00. He recommends it be approved.

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

The meeting adjourned at 4:31 p.m.