

RULES, ENACTMENTS AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE
MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 23, 2023
3:30 P.M.

PRESENT: Thomas J. Faggione, Acting Chairman
Michael Amo, Barry J. Cheney, Kevin W. Hines, Michael D. Paduch, Kathy Stegenga

ALSO

PRESENT: Katherine E. Bonelli, Chairwoman
Betsy N. Abraham, Esq., Legislative Counsel
Steven M. Neuhaus, County Executive
Harold J. Porr, Deputy County Executive
Alicia D'Amico, Director of Operations and Cost Control
Richard B. Golden, Esq., County Attorney
Donna Badura, Assistant County Attorney
Langdon Chapman, Commissioner, Human Resources
Alison Tyack, Deputy Commissioner, Human Resources
Alan Sorensen, AICP, Commissioner of Planning
Kerry Gallagher, Commissioner of Finance
Samantha Sweikata, Commissioner of General Services
Paul Wiley, Director, Real Property Tax Service
Gretchen Reardon, Deputy Budget Director
Dina Sena, Budget Analyst
Erin Sztendor, Budget Analyst

Mr. Faggione opened the meeting at 3:30 p.m. and requested everyone stand for the Pledge of allegiance. All members were present with the exception of Legislator Sierra, who was excused and Legislator Ruszkiewicz, who was absent.

Mr. Faggione moved to request a Local Law to create new Department of Information Technology Services, and to transfer the functions of the Department of General Services pertaining to the administration and delivery of information technology services to the new Department of Information Technology Services, seconded by Ms. Stegenga.

Mr. Porr addressed the committee stating that Information Technology Services needs to develop better project management methods including their current projects with more to come. Future projects include working with the Emergency Management Office and District Attorney's Office while interacting with the Departments of Finance and Budget on a daily basis with essential IT support. Just last week they had 279 events of malware, 2,454 inbound malicious emails, 3,539 blocked websites, 1,451 events of firewall intrusion and 4 firewall advanced threats. After Suffolk County was hacked it took them nearly a year to catch up because they were not ready. The time has come for them to invest and update Orange County's IT operations, with creating a standalone department being the first step. Things change, requirements change and needs change, and they need to look closely at their Information Technology Department on how to enhance it, expand it and recreate it.

Ms. Stegenga stated that she is 100% in agreement, and they should not only be looking at what they need today but for the future. Scammers and hackers are at least a year or two ahead of them and they need to be more proactive. They are looking to create the position of Chief Information Officer (CIO), but would the department also have a commissioner, deputy commissioner and secretary and what is the budget for this department and how many new employees will be needed. Mr. Porr replied that as projects come in and the need increases the appropriate personnel will be hired. Many of the personnel hired may not be county employees but consultants which is why they need someone who can blend those resources together with the Chief Information Officer reporting directly to the County Executive.

Mr. Cheney asked what the hierarchy would be and what administrative positions would be added to the new department that may currently exist in General Services. Mr. Porr replied that they will minimize hiring as much as possible and will use existing services, if possible, but it will be a standalone department. The department will have a Chief Information Officer, Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner.

Mr. Cheney asked how similar or dissimilar the job classifications/qualifications of the Chief Information Officer would be compared to the current Deputy Commissioner. Ms. D'Amico replied that they are requesting a change to the local law because of the CIO position. To achieve that they must have the separation of the IT Department and the CIO, which is enhanced, and would not be the same as what the Deputy Commissioner does right now. The CSEA staff is grandfathered in and will remain but as they move forward, they are looking to change titles and bringing them up to date, but they also want the ability to hire a CIO with that caliber to drive the department strategically under the direction of the County Executive.

Mr. Cheney stated that in the descriptions for both the powers and duties and the department that cybersecurity was not mentioned.

Ms. D'Amico responded that cybersecurity will be separate as the Chief Information Officer will oversee operations and the Chief Security Officer (CSO) will be another high-level position that is already contracted and will continue to be contracted.

Mr. Cheney asked who would manage the Chief Security Officer's (CSO) contract in the future. Ms. D'Amico replied that it would be handled by the Chief Information Officer.

Mr. Cheney commented that the local law states that the Chief Information Officer "at the request of the Orange County Community College may assist them with duties otherwise described" and is that not be a problem in this case but a problem relative to the County Attorney's office. Mr. Golden replied that it is separate because of the way that the Charter and Administrative Code outlines the Law Department.

Mr. Hines asked when the two departments were merged. Mr. Porr replied in 2015.

Mr. Hines asked if the Chief Information Officer was subject to confirmation by the Legislature. Mr. Porr replied yes.

Mr. Hines asked about the layout of each department regarding commissioners and deputy commissioners. Mr. Porr replied that the Departments of General Services and Information Technology Services will have their own commissioners.

Mr. Hines asked for the cost. Mr. Porr replied that they do not have the cost today but if approved they will have a budget for this department on October 1st.

Mr. Hines pointed out that they asked on numerous occasions for the amount they saved after merging the two departments; however, no one was able to tell them that.

Mr. Hines agreed that they need someone in charge of computers because the District Attorney has been asking for it for years and the current District Attorney does not feel they are fast enough to accommodate his needs.

Mr. Hines asked who was currently running the IT department. Mr. Porr replied the Commissioner of General Services.

Mr. Hines asked if the Chief Information Officer would have one or two deputies. Mr. Porr replied probably only one deputy for Information Technology Services. He reiterated that this will be a blend of county employees and consultants as more and more of the specialty type skills will be handled by consultants.

Mr. Hines emphasized that they would need a lot of employees as the legislature continues to struggle on occasion. He's in favor of this; however, he needs to ensure that they have confirmation of the position, and they must be kept in the loop regarding the budget because this is going to grow into a large-scale monster. He recalls being told that they would save a great deal of money with the merger, and he does not think they saved a dime.

Mr. Hines asked if they would be keeping the same software and hardware. Ms. D'Amico replied that they are working with the software they have but they must keep a constant eye on it, and it cannot be left up to departments to decide whether they upgrade or not. It must be made at the IT level because when something is outdated it becomes susceptible to breaches. For years the merger was done well, and served its purpose; however, they have outgrown it and it is at a totally different level on how it must be operated. They have departments that are overloaded and handling it themselves, but they cannot operate that way any longer. The issue is that they became decentralized and since the issue with Suffolk County it must be reined in and become centralized.

Mr. Hines asked for the grade level of the proposed Chief Information Officer. Mr. Chapman replied that it would be either a grade 28 or grade 29.

Mr. Hines asked if there was anyone in-house with that skill set. Ms. D'Amico replied no.

Mr. Faggione commented that in 2022, there was a 95% increase in the amount of cyberattacks on local county and state governments. Suffolk County was attacked with ransomware, and they wanted \$2.5 million and as of now Suffolk County has spent \$5.2 million trying to find out what happened. When the crash happened, they had dispatchers answering 911 calls with paper and pencil. Having someone from the top down who is ultimately responsible and will answer to the County Executive and is subject to the legislatures confirmation gives him faith that their systems will be stronger and for those reasons he will support this today. The average cost of a data breach globally was \$4.35 million in 2022 and represents a 2.6% increase from the previous year. For the twelfth year in a row the United States has led all countries and regions globally with an average data breach cost of \$9.4 million in 2022.

Chairwoman Bonelli commented that when she was transitioning to Chairwoman the Legislature's needs had grown exponentially and the individuals working with their department are outside consultants, not county employees. She was pleased to see that will be consistent under the new configuration and she applauds the proactiveness of this. The world is a different place since 2015 and after seeing what happened in Suffolk County it would be shameful if they did not take advantage of someone else's problem and ensure they don't make the same mistakes. She understands that this is the initial step with the next step being the creation of a position with Civil Service which will include the full job description. If this passes at the September session the cost for the new department will be included in the budget process.

Mr. Amo applauded their forward thinking; however, it would have been helpful to have a draft organizational table.

Mr. Amo stated that he would be making an amendment to the local law to read as follows: "for the Orange County Legislature, all units of Orange County Government, and all other local governments or entities that may contract with Orange County for such services" in Section 14.02. (2) and (4). The legislature is not a unit of government, but a branch of government and this makes it clearer that the Orange County Legislature is a branch of government or something other than a unit of government. They are not equal to the Department of Planning, Department of Purchasing and/or Department of Finance. They are a separate branch and more or less equal to the County Executive's Office.

Mr. Amo motioned to amend the local law to read as follows: "for the Orange County Legislature, all units of Orange County Government, and all other local governments or entities that may contract with Orange County for such services" in Section 14.02. (2) and (4) four locations, seconded by Mr. Paduch.

Mr. Golden asked for some leeway as he understands where they are going but he was not sure if that would be consistent with how the Charter and Administrative Code is laid out as to calling everything but the Orange County Legislature a unit of government. He understands that Mr. Amo wants to ensure that the Orange County Legislature is included in a specific way and the executive branch does not have a problem with that. However, because this is an amendment to the Charter and Administrative Code, he needs to ensure that this language will not create problems in that it is framed and phrased differently someplace else in the charter. It can be done but he would ask that instead of that specific language he have the leeway along with Legislative Counsel Abraham to redraft the local law.

Legislative Counsel Abraham agreed and within the context of Charter and Administrative Code perhaps there is a little research they need to conduct to ensure conformity so there isn't a question as to why the Legislature is mentioned separately within just this department as opposed to possibly other departments.

Mr. Faggione commented that this is a local law and must sit on the desks for ten days. If they vote today any amendments to the language would have to be made within that window.

Both Legislative Counsel Abraham and Mr. Golden agreed that it could.

Mr. Amo commented that as the Rules, Enactments and Intergovernmental Relations committee they have the authority to regularly review the Charter and Administrative Code to ensure it is consistent. To have the branch of government known as the Orange County Legislature be listed and clear throughout the Orange County Charter and Administrative Code would be even better.

Mr. Golden added that the wording in this local law was largely taken from the current Orange County Charter and Administrative Code with respect to the Departments of General Services and Information Technology. He thinks the language Mr. Amo would like to add is fine and he understands why but they will not see that in every department, and he is still not sure that the Orange County Legislature is not a unit of county government. They need to ensure that it is consistent and does not create any ambiguity within the Charter and Administrative Code.

Mr. Amo added that if it's the appropriate thing to do he would be willing to add the amendment to any places within the Charter and Administrative Code so that unit is defined correctly.

Mr. Golden responded that unit is defined correctly but he cannot recall if it includes the Orange County Legislature. If it does it could be reworded to read: "the Orange County Legislature, all other units of Orange County Government." The Charter and Administrative Code is well laid out with respect to the executive branch, legislative branch, units of government but he needs to verify it.

Mr. Faggione stated that they would vote on the motion to amend the local law as stipulated by Mr. Amo, subject to the language of Legislative Counsel Abraham and Mr. Golden.

Mr. Golden stated that with the assistance of Mr. Chapman who reviewed the Charter and Administrative Code it states that unit is defined very broadly as "any part of county government which include the Legislature and any offices thereof including any independent agency board, commission, or committees receiving county funds or on a budget bases by appropriation. He thinks this is correct and includes the Legislature and is also similarly phrased in all other departments and does not bring out the Legislature even though some other departments support the Legislature such as IT. He would prefer that it not be changed so that it does not look like this is different from everything else however, they determine the Charter and Administrative Code.

Mr. Amo asked Mr. Chapman if branch is defined in the Charter and Administrative Code. Mr. Chapman replied no and read the following excerpt from the Charter and Administrative Code: "unit shall mean any part of County government, including officers thereof, and including also any quasi-independent agency, board, commission or committee receiving County funds or on a budgeted basis by appropriation." Legislators are officers of the County and to him it is clearly drafted correctly.

On roll call, the vote on Mr. Amo's motion to amend the local law by adding "for the Orange County Legislature, all units of Orange County Government, and all other local governments or entities that may contract with Orange County for such services" in Section 14.02. (2) and (4) in four locations, was defeated by the following vote:

Motion defeated 2-4 with Legislators Amo and Paduch voting in favor and Legislators Cheney, Faggione Hines and Stegenga voting against.

On roll call, the vote on the local law as originally presented was defeated by the following vote:

Motion defeated 2-4 with Legislators Cheney, Faggione, Hines and Stegenga voting in favor and Legislators Amo and Paduch voting against.

Mr. Golden suggested they pause the vote on this item and allow him time to look over the Charter and Administrative Code to see if this can be resolved.

Legislative Counsel Abraham pointed out that because the vote was already taken, they would need a motion to reconsider it.

Mr. Hines pointed out that the Chairwoman could vote. Legislative Counsel Abraham replied that it would be up to the Chairwoman.

Chairwoman Bonelli asked that they consider pausing the vote to allow Mr. Golden and Legislative Counsel Abraham a chance to resolve the issue and see if they can come up with a recommendation.

Mr. Cheney motioned to reconsider the vote on agenda item no. I., to create new Department of Information Technology Services, seconded by Ms. Stegenga.

Motion carried. All in favor.

Mr. Faggione stated that this agenda item would be addressed at the later part of the meeting and moved on to agenda item no. II.

Mr. Cheney moved to request three (3) local laws to provide real property tax exemptions for the following:

- i. Members of volunteer fire companies and ambulance services
- ii. The un-remarried surviving spouses of formerly enrolled members
- iii. The un-remarried spouses of such volunteers killed in the line of duty

per New York Real Property Tax Law Section 466-a, recognizing the essential functions of volunteer fire fighters and ambulance service workers in the community. The adoption of the local law to provide the exemption included in shall also repeal and replace the existing Local Law No. 5 of 2005 to conform to the terms of NYRPTL Section 466-a, seconded by Ms. Stengenga.

Mr. Wiley presented a summary of the proposed local laws. In December 2022, legislation was signed replacing the existing Real Property Tax Law (NYRPTL) 466-a and allows an opt-in for local taxing jurisdictions to provide a property tax exemption of up to ten percent for volunteer firefighters and ambulance workers. The new law replaces existing Real Property Tax Law 466-a through 466-k. This new law replaces the existing law Sections 466-a through 466-k; the new law takes effect immediately and sunsets the existing laws after three years on December 9, 2025, allowing time for new local laws and resolutions to be adopted. This means that the existing exemption will stay until it is replaced, or, if not, then the current exemption will expire. Any change would apply as of March 1, 2024, taxable status date. The existing exemption was capped and limited the amount of the reduction; the new law effectively removes that cap and adds some other changes. Orange County had adopted Local Law 5 of 2005 at ten percent with the cap and included a lifetime exemption. The new 466-a allows for up to a ten percent reduction in assessment for a volunteer firefighter or ambulance worker's primary residence, with no cap. It would only apply to the portion of property that is exclusively for residential purposes. The volunteer must reside within the community that is served by the district in which they volunteer and must meet minimum service requirements of between two and five years as set by the taxing jurisdiction. The taxing jurisdiction can also allow a lifetime exemption for those that have served for twenty or more years and may allow an un-remarried surviving spouse of an eligible volunteer to retain the exemption. If a volunteer takes the property exemption, they cannot also take the New York State Income Tax Credit which is currently up to \$200.00. Governor Hochul had considered changing that, and rumor has it that it is still on the table and could increase up to between \$500.00 and \$800.00. There is the possibility that the State may raise the Income Tax Credit, but that is only a rumor at this time, and speculating on the impacts of such a change is beyond the scope of this analysis. Most volunteers take the \$200.00 income tax reduction as it is significantly higher than the property tax exemption; however, the new 466-a is not capped and will allow for potentially higher reductions in property tax bills, making it more likely that volunteers would choose it instead of the income tax deduction. According to the Deputy Commissioners of Fire Services and Emergency Medical Services, there are an estimated 2,000 to 2,500 volunteer firefighters and about 700 volunteer ambulance workers currently in Orange County and some are members of both and at most they are looking at 3,200 volunteers. It is difficult to estimate how many would be eligible for the exemption, as they do not know how many of the volunteers own their own residential properties, live in the district they volunteer or how many have the required years of service within a district in which they reside. Last year, the average County taxes for a \$360,000.00 home was \$988.00 and a ten-percent reduction would work out to \$98.80. Even if every one of the volunteers qualified and owned a single-family residence, and if the County were to adopt the full ten percent of the exemption, the maximum of the exemptions would total \$316,160.00 based the above numbers. This would not be an actual cost to the County but shifts the \$316,160.00 of the tax burden to the rest of Orange County taxpayers and works out to be around 0.002% of the overall County taxable value.

Mr. Paduch asked if the volunteers need to apply annually. Mr. Wiley replied no, there will be a onetime application.

Mr. Paduch asked about the exemption and deceased members. Mr. Wiley replied that an annual certification would be done by each fire company to the Assessor's Offices. The assessor would then know who within the fire district can apply and what exemptions can be given.

Mr. Hines asked if the local laws are their language or the State's. Mr. Wiley replied it's a combination, but they used the state language for the basis.

Mr. Hines asked if the following was part of the state law or theirs: "volunteer must live in the municipality where you serve." In his community they have three fire districts in the Town of Cornwall and some of his volunteers live in other tax districts and these local laws would box them out. Mr. Wiley replied that it is the state's wording.

Mr. Hines asked if municipality is referring to the fire district or the town. Mr. Wiley replied that he is referring to the town and the fire district and volunteers must serve within that municipality.

Mr. Hines pointed out that the Salisbury Mills Fire District exists in the Town of Cornwall as well as the Canterbury Fire District, Vails Gate Fire District and the village of Cornwall-on-Hudson. He has volunteers in his fire department that live in all four of those districts but serve in his department. Would they or would they not be eligible because based on the way this local law is written he thinks municipality is defined as the fire district or village and not the town. Mr. Wiley replied that he reads it that the districts are within the County and the ten percent County exemption would apply; however, they may not get the town exemption if they live in a different town from where they volunteer but he would defer to Legislative Counsel Abraham.

Ms. Badura added that they might get the school district exemption.

Mr. Cheney referred to Section 3. (a) of the proposed local law.

Ms. Stegenga pointed out that they would have to be in the County of Orange, reside in a municipality that is serviced by the fire district, but it does not say that they have to be part of that specific volunteer organization.

Mr. Hines asked for clarification that they must live in Orange County, serve in Orange County and that it does not matter what district you volunteer for. Mr. Wiley replied yes, as far as the County is concerned; however, it does not include the town, village or school district.

Mr. Hines commented that everyone he knows within the fire district takes the \$200.00 tax credit. Yet, Mr. Wiley has stated that the average person would get a benefit of \$98.80 for County and the only way this makes sense if the other municipalities and school districts do it but if the school districts don't do it then everyone will still take the \$200.00 and this would be academic.

Mr. Hines stated that he went over this with Vini Tankasali last year and they came up with the 2,500 members; however, it will be a very small number of people that qualify because in the village of Cornwall-on-Hudson they possibly have eleven people that qualify and at the Canterbury Fire District twenty people qualify.

Mr. Wiley stated that his hope is that the \$200.00 state income tax credit will be

increased and added too so that people can have both exemptions versus one or the other; however, that is up to New York State.

Mr. Hines emphasized that if the school districts don't jump on it, it won't work and we are wasting our time.

Mr. Wiley commented that school districts are dragging their feet partly because they want to see what the County will do first before deciding. This was discussed at a school board meeting a few months ago and they are taking a very conservative wait and see approach and they have until March 1, 2024 to decide. Several school districts have jumped on board but not the majority.

Mr. Hines pointed out that even if this passes no one will see a tax credit until 2025.

Mr. Wiley replied that if it passes now, it will take effect on March 1, 2024, and affect the County taxes for January.

Mr. Hines referred to the second local law on the un-remarried surviving spouses of formerly enrolled members and would they have to live in the same house or anywhere in Orange County. Mr. Wiley replied anywhere within the County, and it would also apply to the third local law.

Mr. Amo commented that he does not see any issues and will support the local laws as the idea behind it is to motivate more people to get involved; however, this will not do much.

Mr. Paduch asked if the 10% was on the assessed value. Mr. Wiley replied yes.

Ms. Stegenga referred to the second and third local laws and asked for the difference between an un-remarried surviving spouse and an un-remarried spouse of someone who died in the line of duty. Ms. Badura replied that if a member dies in the line of duty, they would have had to be an enrolled member for at least five (5) years and the other is for the surviving un-remarried spouse of a formerly enrolled member with more than twenty (20) years of service.

Ms. Stegenga asked if that was a state requirement, and could they amend that because if someone is volunteering and their spouse dies, they deserve more than ten percent by giving that ultimate sacrifice. Ms. Badura agreed, but it is the state law and cannot be changed.

Mr. Cheney expressed his confusion about the \$200.00 tax credit where in the local law does it indicate that it is one or the other. Mr. Wiley replied that it is not in the state's law but on the application.

Mr. Cheney asked if they would have the latitude to structure their local laws so that it would not be an either or and enable them to take both the \$200.00 tax credit and the County exemption. Mr. Wiley replied that it could not be done because it's the State's income tax and the State's rules are that it be one or the other.

Ms. Gallagher interjected stating that there is a question on the state tax form when you file your tax returns asking if you have any other exemptions, deductions or are you taking the \$200.00. It's an "or" and they cannot have both.

Ms. Badura pointed out that the application/form states in BOLD that "if you receive this exemption, you cannot claim a New York State income tax credit for the same volunteer service."

Motion carried. All in favor of the three local laws.

Mr. Cheney moved request to apply for, accept, and appropriate a Federal Transit Administration Grant, the matching NYS grant and the local match. These funds are apportioned to Orange County via the Federal 5307 funding program. The total FTA Grant amount is \$1,976,000.00, the NYS match is \$247,000.00, and the local share is \$247,000.00. \$221,000.00 of the local share will be provided by the municipalities and local operators of service, and \$26,000.00 is required from the county as their portion. The total amount is \$2,470,000.00. These funds will be used to purchase Dial-A-Ride replacement vehicles for paratransit and demand response services; both of which are operated within Orange County. This project has been approved under the 2023 Capital Plan as proposed Capital Project No. 122. Upon approval, a new capital project will be created, seconded by Ms. Stegenga.

Motion carried. All in favor.

Mr. Amo moved request to apply for, accept, and appropriate NYSDOT Public Transportation Modernization and Enhancement funds. The State apportions funding to counties, cities, and regional authorities to upgrade and enhance public transportation services. Orange County's total apportionment of these funds are \$6,720,000.00. The funds would be used for partial design and construction of the Erie Street building. The total application amount is \$6,720,000.00. These funds are 100% State money, no County match is required. This was not a proposed project in the 2023 Capital Plan. Upon approval, a new capital project will be created, seconded by Ms. Stegenga.

Mr. Sorensen explained that when they first learned that the County was considering the new Erie Street building for this campus they looked to see if they had any available funding they could bring to the project. They quickly identified that they had access to Public Transportation Modernization and Enhancement Program (MEP) funds for this purpose. The \$6.720 million represents what they anticipate would be cost for their portion of the building that would house the Planning Department, Transit Orange and Orange County Transportation Council.

Mr. Paduch asked for clarification because the grant states that it is for transportation services and are they allowed to use it for a new building. Mr. Sorensen replied that they checked with the NYSDOT and yes, it is allowed and an eligible activity. They administer Transit Orange and contract with different bus companies to provide transit services throughout the county. They have

sixteen different contracts with operators, some are with municipalities and the county directly provides the paratransit services and the primary function is the administration of those activities.

Mr. Cheney referred to the legislative request and the disconnect because the County Attorney indicated that SEQRA would have to be performed prior to the appropriation of monies for construction yet they are seeking authorization to apply, accept and appropriate the funds.

Mr. Cheney asked if the \$6.720 million was for construction. Mr. Sorensen replied yes.

Mr. Golden clarified that the Finance Department will not be allowed to release any funds until SEQRA has been completed with respect to construction.

Mr. Hines asked if it would be located on this campus and location. Mr. Sorensen replied that his understanding was that it would be, and they are looking at two sites.

Mr. Hines asked if it would only be offices and no garages. Mr. Sorensen replied that they are not anticipating bus garages, only offices.

Mr. Hines asked about the size of the building.

Mr. Cheney pointed out that this is the building that is intended to house the Health Department also.

Mr. Hines asked for clarification that this building was not solely for the Planning Department and just their contribution to the office that will be built for his department and staff. Mr. Sorensen replied yes.

Motion carried. All in favor.

Mr. Faggione moved request to authorize the purchase of an unused 10-mile, 101-acre section of the former Erie Railroad right-of-way in Orange County from Open Space Institute. It is identified as the Schunnemunk Rail Trail, and consists of the following tax parcels: Town of Cornwall 1-1-64.2, 1-1-64.1, 1-1-166.2, and 29-1-12 Town of Blooming Grove 5-4-5.2, 5-4-8, 6-1-16, 9-1-17, 14-1-32, 18-1-4, 38-1-23,43-1-18, and 52-1-1, Town of Chester 3-1-3.1 Village of Washingtonville 113-3-11.22, 114-1-14, 117-1-1 and 120-1-14. The purchase will be reimbursed through a Federal Transit Administration Grant, New York State match and a local match that will be provided by the County. The total purchase price is \$2,362,500.00. The FTA grant will be \$1,890,000.00, NYS match will be \$236,250.00 and the County match will be \$236,250.00, seconded by Ms. Stegenga.

Mr. Sorensen stated that this is a major step in the development of the Schunnemunk Rail Trail.

Ms. Stegenga expressed her enthusiasm because the Town of Blooming Grove has been working to get something like this in place for 15 to 20 years.

Motion carried. All in favor.

Ms. Stegenga moved Legislative approval is requested for referral of the Orange County Comprehensive Plan 2023 Updates to the County and Regional Planning Boards for review and recommendations according to GML 239-d(5). The updates include revisions to the Comprehensive Plan as well as two (2) additional chapters: Supplemental Chapter 7: Orange County Bikeway Vision and Supplemental Chapter 8: Orange County Climate Resilience Plan, seconded by Mr. Cheney.

Mr. Sorensen explained that the Comprehensive Plan is updated every five years and the Commissioner of Planning is charged with moving forward with updates and revisions to the county's Comprehensive Plan with the last update done in 2019 and included supplemental chapter 6 which focused on transportation. The 2019 Comprehensive Plan also listed future supplemental chapters that should be undertaken, and they included non-motorized transportation and climate resilience. Supplemental Chapter 7: Orange County Bikeway Vision addressed the non-motorized transportation component and Supplemental Chapter 8: Orange County Climate Resilience Plan addressed the anticipated need for a plan to respond and to make the county and its facilities more resilient. The twenty-two page overview was updated to reflect and acknowledge the new supplemental chapters and a few typographical errors were found and corrected in the Comprehensive Plan introduction. This is the beginning process as the County Charter requires that the Orange County Planning Board make a recommendation to the Legislature, and General Municipal Law (GML) requires that the Legislature refer it to the Orange County Planning Board. The Planning Department will make the required transmittal to the municipalities, and he anticipates coming back next month with a supplemental legislative request to initiate the SEQRA process.

Mr. Cheney asked if any other changes were made to the Comprehensive Plan outside of the two new supplemental chapters and typographical errors. Mr. Sorensen replied that language was updated throughout the document to remain consistent, the demographics were updated to reflect the 2020 census, pie charts were added and the addition of the Orange County job count by industry to reflect the 2020 census.

Mr. Paduch expressed his concerns that the Legislature did not have any input on the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Sorensen replied that he is charged with updating the Comprehensive Plan and they have spoken about the Climate Resilience Plan and the Bikeway Vision with the first process to bring this before the committee, outside agencies and the Orange County Planning Board, his being the beginning of that process.

Mr. Paduch pointed out that the Comprehensive Plan states that "The department will continue to work with the Orange County Planning Board and County leadership to define the topics for future updates." However, there could have been other topics that they thought should have been included in the plan.

Mr. Sorensen replied that he followed the 2019 Comprehensive Plan which outlined what he should focus on and that was what he focused on. The Legislature will have the opportunity to review and comment on the plan and that revisions will be made, and he would welcome any guidance to the Comprehensive Plan that the Legislature would like focused on and and they would certainly do so.

Ms. Stegenga asked if Mr. Sorensen was requesting their referral to the Orange County Planning Board with the Comprehensive Plan and would there be time for them to include something different and/or new from the Legislature. Mr. Sorensen replied yes, and they would be asking for recommendations and comments on the three draft documents.

Chairwoman Bonelli commented that they are adding two documents with this action to the Comprehensive Plan which is a living document and it's the job of the Planning Department and the Commissioner of Planning to continue to be current with the plan and this is one of those topics. As far as legislative input, that is happening today. This was something that the leadership agreed to a long time ago and they are just following through. If anyone has an avenue they feel is worthwhile to pursue under this Comprehensive Plan, I'm sure they will entertain it. She knows that a tremendous amount of work has been going on behind the scenes to get this before the committee today.

Motion carried. All in favor.

Agenda Item No. 1, a Local Law to create new Department of Information Technology Services, and to transfer the functions of the Department of General Services pertaining to the administration and delivery of information technology services to the new Department of Information Technology Services was brought back before the committee for further action.

Ms. Stegenga moved to request a Local Law to create the new Department of Information Technology Services, and to transfer the functions of the Department of General Services pertaining to the administration and delivery of information technology services to the new Department of Information Technology Services, seconded by Mr. Faggione.

Chairwoman Bonelli stated that both the County Attorney and Legislative Counsel Abraham met and have a recommendation they would like to present to the committee regarding the amendment that was discussed previously in the meeting.

Mr. Golden addressed the committee and stated that the focus was around Legislator Amo's desire to modify the language to specifically include the Orange County Legislature. It's very clear in the Charter and he and Legislative Counsel agree that a unit of government includes the County Legislature so when it say all units of Orange County government it includes the Legislative Branch and executive units of the Executive branch as well. In that sense it does not need to be changed but if there is a desire to emphasize this language, he and Legislative Counsel agree that it would do no harm and still be consistent with the charter. If they were to include the following on page 2, Section 14.02 (2): "have charge of the management and processing of information and data for the Orange County Legislature, all units of Orange County Government and all other local governments or entities that may contract with Orange County for such services." This would also be changed in one place on page 3 and two places on page 4 in identical fashion. He and Legislative Counsel Abraham both agree that in the last line of the second paragraph in Section 1., they strike the word "all" and insert "both" branches of Orange County Government to make it clear that there are only two branches of Orange County Government although there are many units of Orange County Government.

Mr. Faggione thanked both Mr. Golden and Legislative Counsel Abraham for their time and this recommendation for the committee.

Mr. Amo motioned to amend a Local Law to create new Department of Information Technology Services, and to transfer the functions of the Department of General Services pertaining to the administration and delivery of information technology services to the new Department of Information Technology Services based on the recommendations presented by Mr. Golden, seconded by Mr. Paduch.

On roll call, the vote to amend the local law passed by the following vote:

Motion carried 6-0 with Legislators
Amo, Cheney, Faggione, Hines,
Paduch and Stegenga voting in
Favor.

On roll call, the vote on the local law as amended passed by the following vote:

Motion carried 6-0 with Legislators
Amo, Cheney, Faggione, Hines,
Paduch and Stegenga voting in
Favor.

Mr. Paduch moved resolution of the Orange County Legislature awarding grants to various municipalities pursuant to a Municipal Legislative Grant Program, seconded by Ms. Stegenga.

Chairwoman Bonelli explained that it was each legislator's responsibility to reach out to their respective districts to see if they were interested in applying for a grant that would total no more than \$4,999.00. Each legislator was permitted \$10,000.00 to spend and could cover multiple municipalities within their district. The criteria focused on recreation, parks and safety programs that would enhance the community. Twenty-four applications were submitted for consideration, and they came from fourteen legislators. Leadership and the Rules, Enactments and Intergovernmental Relations Committee Chairman met and reviewed each application to determine if they met the criteria and before the committee today is the result. There are twenty awards for \$4,999.00; three for \$3,332.00 (one legislator had three projects and had to stay within the \$10,000.00) and one for \$3,087.00 for a grand total of \$113,063.00 and will come out of the \$210,000.00 Municipal Legislative Grant Program.

Mr. Cheney questioned why the awards for \$3,332.00 were not for \$3,333.00 which would come to \$9,999.00 and still be under the \$10,000.00. Chairwoman Bonelli replied that it would be adjusted.

Mr. Paduch commented that each sponsoring legislator should have the opportunity to present the actual check to their municipality.

Chairwoman Bonelli responded that it would be up to the sponsoring legislator to make those arrangements with their municipality.

Mr. Amo commented that he is in favor of this but if this is done again, they need to look at another approach. He would suggest they create something that would benefit all municipalities such as countywide projects as opposed to just giving them a check.

Mr. Faggione stated that there will be three separate votes: city of Port Jervis, village of Warwick and the remaining grant awards.

On roll call, the vote on the city of Port Jervis grant award passed by the following vote:

Motion carried 5-1 with Legislators
Amo, Cheney, Hines, Paduch and
Stegenga voting in Favor and Legislator
Faggione abstaining.

On roll call, the vote on the village of Warwick grant award passed by the following
vote:

Motion carried 5-1 with Legislators
Amo, Faggione, Hines, Paduch and
Stegenga voting in Favor and Legislator
Cheney abstaining.

On roll call, the remaining grant awards passed by the following vote:

Motion carried 6-0 with Legislators
Amo, Cheney, Faggione, Hines,
Paduch and Stegenga voting in Favor.

Mr. Faggione moved resolution of the Orange County Legislature
proclaiming September 17, 2023 through September 23,
2023 as Constitution Week, seconded by Ms. Stegenga.

Motion carried. All in favor.

Mr. Faggione moved resolution recognizing September 15, 2023
through October 15, 2023 as National Hispanic Heritage
Month, seconded by Ms. Stegenga.

Motion carried. All in favor.

Mr. Faggione moved resolution of the Orange County Legislature
designating September 2023 as "Prostate Cancer Awareness
Month," seconded by Ms. Stegenga.

Motion carried. All in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 5:19 p.m.