



# Onondaga County Legislature

**JAMIE McNAMARA**  
Clerk

**JAMES J. ROWLEY**  
Chairman

**TAMMY BARBER**  
Deputy Clerk

401 Montgomery Street • Court House • Room 407 • Syracuse, New York, 13202  
Phone: 315.435.2070 • Fax: 315.435.8434 • [www.ongov.net/legislature](http://www.ongov.net/legislature)

## **WAYS & MEANS COMMITTEE REVIEW OF THE 2023 TENTATIVE BUDGET BUDGET REVIEW DAY 4 – SEPTEMBER 21, 2022 BRIAN F. MAY, CHAIR**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Mr. Ryan, Mr. Burtis, Ms. Abbott, Mr. Olson, Mrs. Ervin

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Mr. Kinne

**ALSO ATTENDING:** Chairman Rowley, Ms. Gunnip, Ms. Cody, Ms. Kuhn, Mr. McBride, Mr. Knapp, Mr. Bush, Dr. Kelly, Mr. Garland; also please see attached

Chair May called the meeting to order at 9:13 a.m.

### **EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT:** (4-11) Dan Wears, Commissioner

#### **2022 INITIATIVES & ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

*Throughout 2022 we have continued to reduce our response support for the COVID-19 Pandemic and have expedited our return to our “normal” operations and our 2022 initiatives. This past year, we have secured federal funding to complete renovations at 420 Electronics Parkway and completed architectural designs for the eventual renovations. Most of our physical assets have transitioned to the new facility to improve response times within the County. Throughout the past year we have worked to implement WebEOC. We are now using the new software during daily operations to maintain situational awareness and have almost completely implemented the software for use during an activation of the emergency operations center. We will continue to find additional uses of this platform to help different agencies and organizations better coordinate information sharing.*

*Working with emergency medical services (EMS) agencies we have completed data analysis to better understand the state of the EMS system, we have helped implement a tiered response system and implemented Nurse Navigation with the Department of Emergency Communications to reduce impacts on EMS agencies.*

*Year to date we have supported over 300 calls for service/assistance, which includes fires, inclement weather, search and rescues and others. We have assisted the Syracuse Airport and 174<sup>th</sup> Air National Guard on the transition of fire service and assisted with training for neighboring volunteer agencies. By the end of this year, we will have completed implementation of a new code enforcement software, which will improve the process for permit applications and issuance of permits.*

#### **2022 BUDGET REVIEW**

*Our fiscal year 2022 budget is expected to come in under budget due to our use of federal grant programs.*

#### **2023 BUDGET OVERVIEW**

*The 2023 budget includes standard salary and wage increases consistent with the baseline budgeting approach, as well as increased cost in supplies, maintenance, utilities & rents and contractual services due to inflation and contract escalators. The 2023 budget does include the addition of 1 new funded position an Administrative Assistant to help with work related to the covid health emergency and planning for future emergencies. The 2023 Transfer to Grant Expenditure line includes \$750,000 for public safety initiatives. Additional information is available in the one-time initiatives handout attached below.*

#### **2023 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

*In 2023, we will continue to enhance our utilization of WebEOC to improve cross-disciplinary information sharing and incident management capabilities. We will also continue to work towards, and expect to receive, emergency*

*management program accreditation through NYSEMA and NYS DHSES. Fire and EMS agencies throughout the County and state continue to face their respective challenges and we will prioritize support to these agencies, as we have in 2022 to help develop solutions to the challenges confronted.*

**INITIATIVE – PUBLIC SAFETY GRANTS - BUDGET: \$750K**

*Over a decade ago, the county purchased radios for numerous police/fire/EMS agencies to address issues of inoperability. As technology has progressed, there is a need for new radios. This program will allow smaller public safety agencies to apply for grants for radio replacement.*

- Recognize efforts of staff - without dedication and drive, would not be where they are today
- Secured funding to renovate building on Electronics Parkway for Emergency Operations Center (EOC)
  - Finished architectural design; now in engineering phase to bring design to reality
  - Main building for offices and EOC, but also occupy the garage for assets; will have impact on reducing travel time to get places, having assets in better location and better organized/managed
- WebEOC – collaboration with city, Syracuse University, Oswego County, and Upstate Medical
  - First time county has used web based incident management software
  - Using software to also organize daily tracking of situational awareness
  - Able to share in collaborative way – includes road closures, special events, available resources
  - Software – continue to build out and have fully implemented in EOC
    - When there is another large incident, will be able to better manage information and sharing of resources
- EMS systems - spent time with EMS agencies and directors
  - Completed comprehensive data analysis for full understanding of status of EMS in county
  - Continuing work on this and getting ideas from ambulance directors
  - Work on adding data points to help paint picture of where county stands as community with EMS
- 2 initiatives to better manage billable resources to help limit impact on EMS:
  - Tiered response system
    - Dispatch BLS (basic life support) ambulances to certain calls, versus every call with ALS (advanced life support); better manage personnel for calls
    - Limited number of call types approved - continue to expand number of calls where appropriate
  - E911 – Nurse Navigation
    - Plays into ways to have positive impact on EMS community
    - Will reduce calls dispatched; allowing more enhanced triage by medical professionals
    - Better to determine if an ambulance does have to be dispatched, or if there is alternative care to be provided
- Syracuse Airport changed who provides their fire service
  - County does not provide fire service
  - Planning and transition work with 174<sup>th</sup> and airport authority – they relied heavily on folks at EM
  - Continuing to work with them and provide additional training to local volunteer organizations adjacent to airport; better understanding of changes and impact; they will be called upon differently than in past
  - Ongoing effort this year and into next year, along with normal work at airport
- Year to date have supported over 300 calls for service or assistance to different organizations - some public safety
  - Includes fires, inclement weather, senior center evacuation in January, search and rescues
- 2022 Budget – anticipate coming in under budget; fortunate to support large portion of operations with grant funding
- 2023 Budget – salary wage increases in line with baseline budget model; increase cost of supplies and utilities
  - Positions
    - 1 position previously in budget is now being funded
    - 1 new title that is budget neutral to better define responsibilities for a person in the office
      - Creation of title and unfunding of current title person is in
  - Biggest addition is one time initiative:
    - \$750,000 in grants to provide radio replacements as radios age out for smaller EMS agencies
    - At a stage now where radios no longer serviceable or repairable
- Program – 2023
  - WebEOC – continue build out; great impact on cross disciplinary information sharing and management capabilities; still in infancy, but working to get more organizations in on a daily basis (county level)
- Last year, talked about accreditation through NYS Emergency Management Association and NYS Division of Homeland Security Emergency Services

- Ongoing project; by next year should report receiving accreditation; almost at finish line, submit by end of year
- Continue to work with fire and EMS to support them, as they are all struggling

**Questions:**

- \$750,000 Radio initiative — what does the \$750,000 do for the true need?
  - Do not know buying power it will get county, but do not get good deal buying one or two at a time
  - Probably somewhere around 230-250 portable radios can be bought
  - Some organizations working to replace radios on their own; radios visibly different, can tell who is replacing
  - Been a couple years since not being able to repair or get parts for the older radios
  - Will help smaller organizations
  - Will have criteria to define how to distribute money in equitable fashion based on needs
- Are the radios 13 years old?
  - System went live in 2010; radios came in just before that; roughly 14 years old
- Elaborate on “based on needs”
  - Some will look at financial need, some operational need
  - Would have to look if they replaced radios already
  - Focus on agencies struggling to replace the first tier of radios, versus those that can replace radios on their own
  - Will have to come up with criteria to do that in fair and equitable way; not first application in
- Initiative is for Fire/EMS, not police
  - That is the understanding; not police; if brought to public safety, it would be policy decision
- \$750,000 budgeted on grant line and used to offset costs for fire departments or EMS to join mobile, inoperability and Motorola’s, etc., correct?
  - Yes
- Would fire departments and EMS be buying off state contract at the price mentioned at Public Safety?
  - Depends if the county buys in bulk, or is reimbursable
  - Assumption that the county will do this to get best bang for the buck and get most radios on the street
  - Price with Sheriff’s Office – not sure when price expires, but is probably better than state contract
- How did EM get to the 250-260 number?
  - Did math of \$750,000 divided by the price that EM paid when last bought radios
  - Buying 10 is different than a couple 100; used same state contract price as last time
  - Will look back at price per radio
- Was there any discussion about reimbursing or buying for municipal police departments (village or town)?
  - Have not been involved with discussion as far as police; up for negotiation now
- \$750,000 – budgeting and taxing?
  - Yes, local tax dollars and local initiative
  - Money focused on greatest need; application based process where Mr. Wears and others in county would evaluate and make decisions based on greatest need
  - Fire and EMS is focus
  - It does not mean public safety agencies and smaller police forces could not potentially apply as well
  - Meant to be grant program where the county reimburses purchases
  - If evident the county can secure better price, then can pivot and once applications approved, can initiate purchase and distribute radios
  - Previously when buying radios:
    - Combination of multiple radio systems that had to be changed over with UHF, VHF and 800mhz
    - Used to have multiple systems communicating with E911 and had to get them all new radios
  - Current situation with buying radios:
    - Not in same situation as before; radio today may still be fine

- EM still using many radios originally purchased; need will depend on the department
- Need may be based on call volume; some using them less may have no physical damage
- How much is a safe number to study EMS issues in county to come up with model to help struggling agencies?
  - \$250,000 - might be high or low; never bid out that kind of work
  - Writing individual plan depends on firm, \$20,000 – \$30,000 to get process started
- EOC – still confident in the number for construction costs?
  - Still good, but will have better idea once engineer comes in, does study, and provides final cost estimates
  - Facilities currently using standards from book to use for numbers
  - Believe still can get done in budget and get things done on main floor
- When will EOC be done?
  - Estimated for next year; may be reflected in next year's numbers, depending on timing and how it plays out, if it is normal budget and timing to get work done
- Is EM tracking hospital wait times?
  - Looking at every day and doing monthly analysis when receive CNY EMS data dump
  - Putting in dashboard to see trends
- The grant funds budget for radios will not be created until passed in general fund, correct?
  - Yes

**DISTRICT ATTORNEY:** (3-48) Joseph Coolican, Deputy District Attorney; Barry Weis, Administrative Officer

## **2022 INITIATIVES & ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

*The aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic and five dozen homicide cases awaiting trial.*

*Increased reports of “shots fired,” As of July 1, 2022, there have been over 400 shots fired incidents in the City of Syracuse alone.*

*Increased fentanyl usage and overdose deaths in Onondaga County.*

*Domestic violence reported incidents which are another byproduct of COVID-19 and the number of orders of protection issued by our courts is approaching record numbers.*

*Gun violence and mental health issues in the community continue to add additional strain on the assistant district attorneys by adding ERPO orders to the list of required tasks that each case requires.*

*The incredible rise in violent juvenile offenses brought about by a constellation of social ills, poverty and changes in New York State laws.*

*Violent crime has surged in the past two and half years. Incidents of shootings with injury in the City of Syracuse have increased 41%. Other violent gun related categories of criminal offenses have seen similar increases.*

## **2022 BUDGET REVIEW**

*The Office of the Onondaga County District Attorney has been fiscally prudent for 30 years and we will meet our 2022 fiscal obligations.*

## **2023 BUDGET OVERVIEW**

*The \$291,711 increase for the 2023 budget from 2022 represents salary increases under the Management/Confidential structure. Additionally, we are seeking additional funding from the County Legislature to address the issues of retention. These issues are not isolated to Onondaga County, but are prevalent around New York State and the nation.*

*We are requesting monies (\$85,000) outside of the 2023 Executive budget to for a \$200.00 for assistant district attorneys to cover CAP court arraignments that take place from 5:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. 365 days a year. This rate is equal to what assigned counsel attorneys receive to cover these same proceedings.*

### **2023 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

*In addition to the \$200.00 mentioned above we are looking to establish a Pilot Program for assistant district attorney retention. The combination of discovery burdens, the increase in violent crime in our community has created an existential personnel crisis. A crushing caseload and a demoralizing outlook are the day-in day-out realities of a prosecutor in a larger county. Reading the writing on the wall, experienced prosecutors are leaving and entry-level attorneys are applying with remarkably less frequency. In 2022 alone this office has seen the departure of nine (9) assistant district attorneys – over 15% of our total attorney staff. Prosecutors have left this office to work in other district attorney's office (Broome, Westchester, Cayuga, Dutchess and Madison) and other governmental agencies with less arduous workloads and better pay (the New York Department of Environmental Conservation, the New York Attorney General's Office and the United States Attorney's Office).*

*This office is also asking for the Legislature's support to create and fund a DA Investigator to coordinate and investigate fentanyl related overdose deaths in Onondaga County in conjunction with the various agencies in this community. We have been successful in the past 25 years in conducting long term drug investigations on those selling narcotics and is preventive. This new position would be reactionary based on the increased numbers of overdose deaths due to fentanyl in the past year and would work with the county Medical Examiner and area hospitals to determine the sources of and individuals responsible for these acts.*

- District Attorneys (DA) office table of organization calls for 50 Assistant DAs, and 2 certified Legal Assistants (people who have taken the Bar exam, but have not been passed and cannot go to court)
- Currently have 39 ADA and 4 certified Legal Assistants (took bar and waiting for results)
- State of criminal justice
  - 2020 Legislature passed triad of criminal justice reform:
    - Raise the Age (RTA), Bail Reform, and Discovery Reform
  - Discovery Reform
    - Within 20 days of each and every misdemeanor or felony arrest in Onondaga County, the DA has to submit to defense attorney each and every piece of discovery they have
    - If fail to do this, risk the case being dismissed on speedy trial grounds
    - Each and every certificate of compliance has to be certified by an ADA; cannot be done by paralegal or staff member (they can only collect material)
    - An ADA has to certify every witness name, every rap sheet, and every police witness
    - Increased workload exponentially
- Stats released yesterday:
  - Shooting with injury year to date are 54% higher than 2021
    - Increased over 2020 in advent of Criminal Justice Reform
  - This year, there have been 555 shots fired incidents in Syracuse
    - 27% increase from last year; 39% increase over 5 year average
  - 5 year average of incidents with injury up 57% in 2021
- Backlog of cases collected during pandemic have now entered litigation
- 163% higher number of trials in 2022, than in 2021
- As crime increases and workload increases, number of ADA able to prosecute cases has fallen
- Have lost 13 ADAs this year
  - Due to retirement, folks moving home after COVID, or folks taking jobs paying more for less work
  - Herkimer County advertising ADA newly admitted at \$90,000/year with car
  - Attorney General's office doing position for extreme risk protection orders at \$130,000/year
    - That duty is asked of on call ADA every day on top of regular duties
  - Difficulty competing and workload unsustainable
  - Difficulty staffing courtrooms
    - Within last 2 weeks, Deputy DA personally handled city court calendar; not enough ADAs to cover
- Asking for 2 programs

- Combined Arraignment Part
  - Arrests throughout county that are not appearance tickets brought before court; happen every day of year
  - Starts at 3:30/4 pm until 8/9 pm
  - Defense Attorneys paid by Assigned Counsel to appear on behalf of defendants paid \$250/day to do this
  - County ADAs do this for no additional money; part of regular duties
  - Asking for \$75,000 to put together program to pay ADA at least close to defense attorneys - \$200/ADA/day
- Program to aid retention
  - Establish objective criteria
  - \$150,000 to distribute to discourage people from leaving jurisdiction for greener pastures
  - Including 8% increase last year, starting salary for ADA is \$64,800; cannot compete
  - (i.e.) ADA born, raised, and lives in Onondaga County, but works in adjoining county; wanted to work for Onondaga County, but cannot match salary; closest DA could come was \$10,000 lower than current salary
- Looking for assistance to entice people to stay, work, and prosecute in Onondaga County with passion for job
- People do this job for the passion of criminal justice
- People graduate law school with massive student debt, have families and kids; have to pay their bills

#### **Additional Requests over and above budget:**

- First additional request
  - \$75,000 - Combined Arraignment Part for \$200/day/ADA for doing task within range of defense attorneys
- Second additional request
  - \$150,000 - Retention Program - will develop more concrete criteria
  - Reward people for staying 5 or 10 years, which is the mark when people can become a defense attorney
  - Can make more money in Assigned Counsel program
  - Idea to commit to staying another 3 years if receive the money
- These requests were not developed in time for this budget submission, which is why it is not baked into budget
- Finance discussed with DA the potential of identifying surplus funds to pilot the projects this year
- These have been discussed and developed post budget

#### **Questions:**

- \$64,800 starting salary – Is this what everyone pays? What is comparable?
  - Differs from county to county; definitely at low end
  - Albany county starts around \$90,000, but do not have steps that Onondaga County has
  - Focused on what a brand new lawyer, looking at law school debt, is facing and what county can pay
- Number of trials up 163%; is this due to crime, COVID, or court shutdown?
  - COVID – perfect storm; had cases backed up the last 2 years
  - Court is now open and backlogged, trials being scheduled 1 year out
  - Workload for ADA – discovery obligation, court calendars, hearings, and trials
  - Have backlog of trials and people being scheduled back to back
  - Usually 55-60 trials/year, but vastly surpassed that pre-2020 number
- Last year used 8% (for ADA salary increase), what percent this year?
  - Finance split off Management Confidential Attorneys and created a new salary schedule for 2022
  - Raise for all MCs next year is slated at 3.5%
- What was the budgeted percentage increase for insurance premiums?
  - 2023 for health active employees, believe it is 5%
- 39 ADAs, 4 legal assistants, and 4 additional positions; is that enough in comparing to other comparable counties?
  - Like to say it is never enough; struggling to get to current staffing level
  - Issue that the county cannot pay comparable to get an attorney
  - People want to be prosecutors and understand what they are undertaking, but vast majority of recruiting is law school graduates
    - They work hard, want to be prosecutors, but join office in August and not admitted until January

- Certified Legal Assistant can go to court to speak on the record, but an attorney has to be there
- Increase in Extreme Risk Protection Orders
  - Statewide, Onondaga County leads state in numbers of Extreme Risk Protection Orders
  - DA has pushed since statute passed in 2019; something to be asked of on call ADA
  - Trying to recruit and pulling out all stops
- Pre-Criminal Justice Reform – workload has increased; would love 4 more people
- Lost 13 ADAs, so what is the feeling on replacing those?
  - Just hired licensed Attorney, who was a staff person before going to law school
  - Speaking to other licensed attorneys; had someone shadow an ADA last week
  - Cannot speak to future, but doing everything to attract people and get numbers back up
  - Once Certified Legal Assistants are admitted, will be tremendous help
  - As it stands, Chief is manning city courtrooms from time to time
- Violent crime out of control and Criminal Justice Reform (CJR) not helping fix the problem; any comments?
  - It is statewide problem; DA offices around NYS are hemorrhaging ADAs
  - Violent crime has skyrocketed; not sure what the county and budget can do to battle that
  - Legislative issue on state side
  - Wake of CJR in 2020; crime gone up exponentially
  - Mood of country has affected recruitment to both prosecutors and police/law enforcement
  - City of Syracuse has 4 candidates in their latest police academy class; used to be 35
  - Atmosphere on street is anti-law enforcement; people approach officers doing job and get verbally assaulted
  - Not sure how, as a county, they can change that
  - Maybe as public sees what is going on, the pendulum will swing the other way

#### **Request:**

- **What do neighboring counties pay their ADAs?**
  - Very different; (i.e.) Oswego County has hired people from Onondaga County, because they are paying more
  - ADA from Oswego County that wanted to come to Onondaga County, but could not get within \$10,000 of pay
  - Cannot speak to specifics for Madison, Cayuga, etc., but can look into it and get the information
- Do other counties have less DA's relative to population? Is Onondaga County paying more, higher criminal activity?
  - Have to look at crime in Cayuga, Madison, and Oswego counties; they are entirely different
  - Those counties do not have the shots fired calls and gun crime
  - ADA job in Onondaga County very different than Oswego; dealing with record high homicide rates last 2 years
  - Spoken with DA in Madison County and Sheriff in Oswego County - do not have the same gun crime
  - Trying to compare apples to oranges; workload in Onondaga County is more
- Better to compare apples to apples with and Monroe and Erie Counties based on population

#### **Request:**

- **How many ADA's does Onondaga County have per population?**

#### **Comments:**

- DA has policy in regard to illegal loaded handguns - given priority and put in front of grand jury immediately
- Felony Trial Bureau handles majority of crimes that do not fit in special category (economic or special victims)
- Average ADA carrying caseload of over 150 felonies; 1 ADA indicted 70 cases last year
  - Numbers very bureau to bureau – possibly less economic crime, cases that require more time and work
  - Felony ADA carrying 150-200 active cases on daily basis
- Record homicides the last 2 years; went from 2 to 3, and spreading to non-homicide prosecutors
- Have about 40-45 pending homicide cases spread between 3 ADAs
  - Homicide very intensive work load, intense trials, discovery demands incredibly demanding
- Some bureaus have less or more; some bureaus handle felonies and misdemeanors
- ADA doing bulk of grand jury work and indicting gun related crimes (gun possession or use of firearm)

**Request:**

- **Breakdown into hourly rate**

Mr. May called for a recess at 10:06 a.m., and the meeting reconvened at 10:27 a.m.

**SHERIFF:** (4-41) Sheriff Eugene Conway; Captain Paula Pellizzari; Undersheriff Jason Cassalia; Chief Joseph Ciciarelli

***Automotive Equipment***

*We are requesting an additional \$616,201 to purchase vehicles to replace those that are unserviceable. This request results in additional funds needed in our Supplies line and our Maintenance, Utilities and Rents line as outlined below.*

*The \$325,000 in our Executive Budget will allow us to purchase 8 patrol vehicles. For 2023, we need to purchase 19 additional replacement vehicles for Patrol, Transport, Civil, Criminal Investigations, Administration and the Correction Department. These necessary vehicles result in the request for an additional \$616,201 for a total Automotive Equipment budget of \$941,210.*

***Supplies***

*We are requesting an additional \$74,885 in our Supplies line for equipment to outfit the additional vehicles requested.*

***Maintenance, Utilities and Rents***

*We are requesting an additional \$290,371 in our Maintenance, Utilities and Rents line for United Radio to remove equipment from the vehicles being replaced and to install equipment in the new vehicles requested.*

***Travel and Training***

*We are requesting an additional \$50,000 in our Travel and Training line to ensure all members of the Sheriff's Office are able to attend training and obtain necessary certifications.*

*The \$64,000 in our Executive Budget is insufficient to provide the essential training for the Sheriff's Office. This line was reduced during the pandemic in the austerity budget from \$126,550 to \$64,000. We have remained at that level since 2020. We are requesting an additional \$50,000 for a total of \$114,000 in our Travel and Training budget which is less than our pre-pandemic budget.*

- Everything has connection with Public Safety and people being and feeling safe
- Incident
  - Last night, 2 custody deputies were leaving work at 11 p.m., walking to personal vehicles in open lot across from OnCenter in uniform
  - They were assaulted; 1 deputy was injured, but did not have serious injuries
  - Suspect produced small hand saw (to i.e. prune branches) and did incur injuries
  - Person in uniform coming from work in community
- Sheriff's Office interacts with Syracuse PD all the time
  - Crimes occurring in city are crimes in county
  - Have gangs in county and towns; have many issues with people not feeling safe
  - Dick's Sporting Goods and At Home in DestiNY have off duty deputies working
  - Constant request for someone to be present at functions or place of employment
- Cannot keep pace last 2 years with people that want pistol permits; out a year for people getting pistol permits
- Sheriff's purpose to be within budget and did that
- Other than E911, Sheriff's office is the only county operation that is 24/7
- Trying to hire and retain employees - same situation as many other departments are facing
- Last year, asked Legislature to put funding back in budget for 9 Police Deputies that were unfunded



- Legislature acknowledged the ask and funded the deputies
- 2023 budget - made request for 10 additional Police deputies; came from unfunding other Corrections positions have not been able to fill; consider this moving money from 10 Correction Officers to 10 Police Deputies
- Do everything possible to get as many Police Officers on the streets
  - Academy graduation on Dec. 21<sup>st</sup>
  - Gave direction to staff to canvas list and swear in class as present class graduates

## **2 Requests**

- Vehicles
  - Patrol vehicles, custody vehicles (transporting people to court, doctor, sentenced to state facility), detectives responding to calls after hours
  - There are also accidents
    - 2 weeks ago, female deputy on Old Liverpool Road in marked patrol vehicle with lights off doing the speed limit was t-boned; her injuries are minor, but car is totaled; one less marked patrol car
    - 1.5 months ago, detective in marked car was put into a guardrail; she is okay, but car totaled
  - Speaks to purpose and work needing vehicles; cannot go to Ford dealer to buy off lot
  - Past requests for vehicles
    - 2018 Executive Budget \$0                      Legislature added \$325,000
    - 2019 Executive Budget \$325,000            Legislature did not add any
    - 2020 Executive Budget \$325,000            Legislature did not add any
    - 2021 Executive Budget \$0                     Legislature added \$150,000
    - 2022 Executive Budget \$325,000            Did not ask for additional
    - 2023 Executive Budget \$325,000
  - Asking to get back to fleet plan and looking for additional \$616,201
  - All patrol vehicles; cost of vehicles has gone up significantly
  - Vehicles need equipment, but only have money for vehicles; probably will cover 7 vehicles
  - Asking for additional supply money to outfit vehicles
  - Asking for increase to be able to get equipment taken out and put in vehicles - under Maintenance/Utilities/Rents
- Travel/Training
  - Covers any and all training for 600+ members of the Sheriff's Office, 4 departments
  - Also includes extradition
    - Someone in community is arrested, told to appear in court, takes off (i.e.) to Buffalo, they are then located, and court ordered through DA's office to bring them back
    - No control over, but Sheriff's office the law enforcement agency tasked with bringing the fugitives back
    - Each year do not know how many fugitives there will be, but have obligation to do that
    - Years ago, contracted agency would do this, but they are not always available; send deputy
  - Many obligations for training; not discretionary, but mandated
  - Air One helicopter
    - Pilots for Air One - specifically trained position; takes years to become a pilot
    - Insurance carrier - recently they wanted pilots to go to specific training out of state to continue to be insurance carrier for pilots; always said yes to pilot training
    - In 8 years as Sheriff, never came to ask for any additional funding for Air One
    - County only pays for utilities and equipment (within the budget) – now up to 2022 standards
  - Past requests for Travel/Training
    - 2017 - \$104,200
    - 2018 - \$95,802
    - 2019 - \$117,468
    - 2020 - \$126,550, then austerity budgeting reduced it to \$64,000
    - 2021 - \$64,000
    - 2022 - \$64,000
    - 2023 - \$64,000; asked for \$114,000
  - Request is to restore the account to \$114,000, no increase

## **Questions:**

- How many graduated in the spring class at OCC?
  - 25
- Is there another class graduating before end of year?
  - Dec 21<sup>st</sup> is graduation with 18 in the class
- After those are filled, how many vacant funded in Police?
  - Executive budget - asked for creation of 10 Police Deputy positions, offset by abolishing Correction positions
  - Going into 2023, will have 10 new Deputy positions and 3 current vacancies for Police; because of academy
  - Will have a couple more vacancies upcoming from retirements
- Asking for 10 creates, but not new dollars, because of abolishing from Corrections (Jamesville) to offset Police; is there only 1 class and advertise for one?
  - For upcoming academy, Sheriff would like to swear them in on graduation of the other class on December 21<sup>st</sup>
  - Would have new positions for 2023, plus 3 current vacancies and any upcoming
  - Sent out canvas letters Friday for Police
  - Police 7 years ago had 175 authorized positions; with this, it would put them at 185
- Still have many vacant funded in Custody and Corrections; how many total?
  - Custody – 9 vacancies, 3 upcoming
  - Corrections – 62 vacancies, ranging from Assistant Chief to Correction Officers (58)
    - Those are current numbers not including abolishes that would take place next year
  - Overall there are 79 funded vacancies
- Is there a greater need for Police over Custody?
  - Crime in community increased
  - Cannot fill all vacancies in Custody and Corrections
  - Lower population number across the 2 facilities
- Is the difference with Custody and Corrections because of Corrections going to Custody?
  - Cannot fill either position
- 9 vacant funded Custody versus 62 Corrections is a big difference; there is a need in both, but greater need in Corrections; Are they having a harder time filling positions at Jamesville versus the Justice Center?
  - Custody and Corrections doing same work, which is why it was proposed to put both facilities under one roof
  - Same work and exam with different titles represented by 2 different bargaining agents
  - Hope to bring under one roof; unfortunately not able to accomplish this
  - Able to move inmates between the 2 facilities, but cannot move staff between the 2
  - Situation with number of people incarcerated versus the number of employees
  - Struggle to get people to sign up for exams
- Additional vehicle request is \$616,000?
  - Executive budget is \$325,000; asking for an additional \$616,201 on top of the request; total is \$941,210
  - \$325,000 covers about 8 vehicles on estimated cost
  - Executive budget supply line has supplies for those 8 vehicles
  - Maintenance/Utilities/Rents - contract with United Radio for removing and installing equipment in vehicles
  - For ask, would need ~\$74,000 for supplies, and ~\$290,000 for maintenance for the additional ask

#### **Request:**

- **Provide list of vehicles being replaced**
- Had to submit page for each vehicle to replace, which were all prioritized – total of 19 vehicles, first 8 can be purchased within the Executive budget
- Each vehicle has sheet with photos and replacement; some totaled, some high mileage
- Vehicles cover Patrol, Transport, Civil, Criminal Investigation, Administration, and Corrections

- Does the county still receive reimbursement from other counties for Air One?
  - Yes, Air One only goes to other counties that reimburse; includes Oswego, Madison, and Cayuga counties
- Are the vehicles available, when will they be received and ready for service, and how will it work?
  - Received 7 of the 17 marked patrol vehicles had for 2022
  - Only produce those vehicles 1 period of time in a year; facing same issues with supplies, chips, etc.
  - Hope to get remaining patrol vehicles in next 2-3 months
  - Other vehicles projected to not be delivered until February or March 2023
  - Use vans for Custody, Explorers for Patrol, Chevy Malibus for Detectives - all coming from different places and manufacturers; all across the board of when and if they can give estimated delivery
- Is there a hostile climate in the Justice Center?
  - Challenging, plain and simple; understanding they are bringing people in to setting of which they do not know each other, do not want to be there, coming from all walks of life
  - Try to understand what can be done to help their situation and background, but still have people in closed setting
  - People argue, fight; most concerned that some behavior is truly dangerous to staff working there
  - Do absolute best job and have utmost respect for the employees
  - People going there are coming from all walks of life with all kinds of issues; they are all together in one area; some do not get along or provoke others
  - Deputies are responsible to maintain order 24/7
- How is the Sheriff's relying on mandatory overtime to staff shifts? Or are they staffed to be able to allow staff to have quality of life?
  - Biggest challenge now is with transports; had number of experienced people leave and retire
  - Transport deputies bring people to and from facility for court, medical appointments, funeral, state prison
  - Specialized training unit that suffered retirements and vacancies, not able to fill
  - Managed through COVID, because courts were closed, or did virtual court appearances – not leaving facility
  - Courts have opened up, and there are 2 additional courts; all Judges want to see these people
  - How does the office service all the requests with limited transport staff
  - Overtime - limited on ordering overtime based on contractual issues
  - Everyday looking at numbers, what is needed, and how to do it with current staff
  - Trying to add more Custody Deputies, but it is hard to get people who want to do the work
- Last year's budget there was a reconciliation for money the state was no longer refunding; is this still happening?
  - 2020 and 2021 Mental Health Proactive care was resolved; agreement for 2022
  - Just about caught up on invoices; dollar amount Proactive pays, and any amount over that, the county splits 50/50 with the vendor
  - Budget based on decisions and negotiations for 2023
  - Hopefully will not have to transfer money; depends on number of inmates and services for inmates
  - As year progresses, it should tie out
- Is there a capital/vehicle plan for the Sheriff vehicles for budgeting purposes?
  - Have Fleet Replacement Plan - usually goes out 3-5 years
  - Adamant each year to have sufficient funds for vehicles
  - Best to try for a plan with reasonable amount of vehicles each year, versus one big ask of (i.e.) 75 to replace
  - There was discussion of leasing, but did not go anywhere; been adhering to what Captain says and requirements to Vehicle Use Review Board (VURB) about mileage, crashes, etc.
- How is the office doing with diversifying staff with recruiting and new trainees?
  - Struggling to recruit overall; whether Custody, Police or Corrections
  - Spoken with colleagues, state Police and Sheriffs across state - interest in law enforcement is at a low
  - Always looking for representation, but few people interested
  - Cannot find people to fill positions and take exam, let alone bring in to explain benefits and positives for career in law enforcement
  - Attending events and presenting the office, but struggling to get people's attention

- Is the class graduating diverse?
  - Would say yes, but do not have breakdown; happy to have representation
  - Will have graduation on Dec 21<sup>st</sup>; Legislature is welcome to come – at Storer Auditorium
  - Welcome newest recruits, as well as those the department is trying to bring on and swear in
  - Sent out canvas letters for Police and Custody for upcoming swearing in for December; Custody has new civil service list with 33 names available; difficult in filling positions
- Inmate populations and trends? How is that affecting responsibilities and staffing?
  - Used to be 2 facilities under 2 different managements, now under one management
    - Justice Center - people being held, but not convicted
    - Jamesville – people sentenced to term not more than 1 year
  - As pandemic happened, courts not operating, so people at Jamesville were serving sentence, then released
  - Had people going out the door, and no one coming in; saw biggest drop in Jamesville as a result
  - Has come back somewhat, but many of the buildings in Jamesville are closed; no inmates, no staff
    - Still have to maintain operations as if full including medical and food services, heat and cool buildings
  - Justice Center different dynamic, as people were still getting arrested and held by courts, had to maintain that
  - Now that courts are back open, seeing 1/3 of inmates used to see at Jamesville; Justice Center probably 2/3
  - Consideration to move everyone into Justice Center, but have 2 separate bargaining units with employees doing same work; would be bringing under one roof, but not solving staffing problem
  - Corrections Officers would still watch people incarcerated; still separation within Justice Center
  - Never got to level to feel comfortable with being overcrowded or boarding out
- Have had conversations about property evidence storage; ship sailed on shared facility; understanding expectation of need to do something else; lot of moving parts, money, and different departments; almost everyone can agree that they need to leave the current facility; next time maybe at different place
  - Could not make any more sense to have a combined facility and make things more efficient
  - Best person to speak about it is DA
  - Sheriff's Office are keepers of evidence primarily for DA; also keep property that has been lost and found
  - Obligations to that evidence and property
  - Been in basement of UPS building
  - 2 largest agencies with exact same issue; talk to each other and plan out everything; also look at buildings
- *Suggestion:* have it come to Legislature in CIP
- Conversation begins with Sheriff's Department and where it needs to be; evidence storage should be downtown

**BOARD OF ELECTIONS:** (pg 3-54) Dustin Czarny, Commissioner; Candice Clemens, Deputy Commissioner

RE: Written testimony regarding the County Executive proposed budget for the Onondaga County Board of Elections for 2023

Dear Members of the Onondaga County Legislature,

The 2023 calendar year will present enormous challenges for the Onondaga County Board of Elections. Our office will see substantial change due to new voting laws that will take effect next year. This will create even more work on our already undersized office. In addition, we intend to undertake a Capital Project that will replace our aging fleet of voting machines, convert to on-demand ballot printing at every polling place, and possibly change our registration system. These challenges along with expiring Grants and the need for more staff will mean additional local dollars for our office to meet the needs of the voters and fulfill the mandates of New York State Election Law.

The County Executive Budget has significant cuts to our requested allotment. Specifically, the County Executive eliminated the funding to hire four additional full time staff from the 101 line, a reduction of \$138,945.00. The County Executive Budget also reduces our 103 line allotment by \$269,422.50. This line pays for Inspectors and temporary employees as well as training of our inspectors. This is a significant cut as the expiring shoebox grant that paid for our training will be eliminated in 2022 as we are using those funds to pay for the imposed second primary. We ask the legislature to restore these requests and will detail the need for that in our testimony.

#### **Need for Additional Full Time Staff**

We intend to expand our office staff to accommodate changing registration laws in New York, specifically the reduction of the registration cut-off to the constitutional minimum of ten days and the implementation of Automatic and Online Voter Registration. Our Board of Elections has seen a massive increase in annual registration forms needed to be processed since 2015. From 2009 to 2015 our Board processed an average of 19.5k registration forms. With the implementation of online voter registration

with the MY DMV program we have seen a growing increase each year to now nearly 100k voter registration forms. That is an increase of nearly 500%. In 2022, we finally added two Election Clerk 1 positions to deal with this massive shift. However Onondaga County Board of Elections remains the least staffed board of elections in terms of full time employees to voter enrollment in the state. The Onondaga County Board of Elections currently has one full time employee for every 15169.35 voters. Statewide, the Boards of Elections average one full time employee for every 7262.20 voters.

The addition of online and automatic voter registration is estimated to add an additional 30% of estimated registered voters to the rolls in New York State according to results from other states. Each voter will generate not only their initial forms but subsequent forms when they move or change parties, etc. This could conceivably add tens of thousands more registration forms annually to our already overburdened staff.

The reduction of the current registration cut off from twenty-five days to ten days adds an additional burden. Boards of Elections would use that 14 day window from the cutoff to the start of Early Voting to catch up on registrations. We are required by New York State Law to process all timely received applications before the upload of poll books, which is the day before Early Voting. In 2023, registration forms will be timely if received on the first day of Early Voting. While we will wait for specific guidance from State Board of Elections, it is likely there will be little to no window to clear backlogs of registrations. More than ever we will need to be up to date on registrations on a daily basis.

It takes six months to properly train registration clerks in the various forms and procedures. Furthermore registration must be done in a bipartisan fashion per the NYS constitution. In order to properly keep up with the new regulations and not risk a registration lapse as we saw in neighboring counties during 2020 we will need two Election Clerk 1 and two election Clerk 2 positions. This will allow us to have two sets of registration clerks and verifiers. This will allow us to maintain our voter rolls at the level needed to comply with the added burdens of the new state laws as well as the increases in registration we have already seen since 2015.

In # 2020 our neighboring counties in #NY22 experienced significant issues in regards to voter registration and it became a national scandal. While we have been able to meet our demands at the Board of Elections, it came at the expense of hundreds of overtime hours and temporary staff. With the 2024 Presidential election on the horizon hiring staff during 2023 to not only accommodate the burden for 2023 and prepare for the added burden of a Presidential year will bring our staffing more in line with Boards of Elections throughout New York State. We hope experienced, more efficient staff will eliminate some need for temporary staff in 2024 as well.

Other Boards of Elections have increased staff over the last few years while Onondaga County Board of Elections has remained virtually stagnant. We also know many boards are planning to increase their staff again in 2023. We suspect even with this increase Onondaga County Board of Elections will still be trailing our colleagues in terms of staffing ratios. Adding four employees will bring our ratio to one for every 12.5k voters which would still be third worst in the state. We believe though adding these four employees will give us the best chance at continuing a high level of service for our voters while avoiding the embarrassing high profile scandals of other Boards of Elections.

#### **Expiration of Shoebox Grant means a shift of burden to local dollars.**

In addition we are facing a funding increase in several areas. The additional unplanned for August primary in 2022 will be paid for out of federal shoebox money. This grant rewarded originally in 2006 has been used to pay for mandated costs in the following areas:

- Supplies & Materials (Computer Equip & Mater, Printers)
- Maintenance, Utilities, Rents (Telephone Communication Services)
- Professional Services (Fees for Service)
- Travel and Training (Program Travel Expense)
- Furnishings & Equipment



By using these grants to pay expenses over the last 16 years we have been able to keep our local costs artificially low. With the expiration of the Shoebox Grant and the previous expiration of the HAVA training grant we will see significant cost increases to the local budget in various areas. All of these expenses are mandated and existing in previous years. However these costs will now will be borne by the local budget as opposed to grant expenses. We do not see a replacement federal grant coming in the next calendar year.

The increase in the 103 line is most directly affected by the expiration of the Shoebox and HAVA training grants. The annual cost to train inspectors for both the June and November elections is estimated at \$130,000. In addition, inspector costs have increased as the state minimum wage has increased. The rising minimum wage also affects the training costs since the IRS has classified Inspectors as employees. We no longer can pay inspectors a stipend for training but must pay hourly rates. This increased inspector pay for training by as much as 75%. It is important to note that even at these higher rates, it is often difficult to find inspectors willing to work for minimum wage. We have a mandate to train and pay inspectors through New York State Election Law. The use of technology such as on-demand printers and electronic poll books allows us to deploy fewer inspectors then. Our 3.35 inspectors per 1000 registered voters are seventh lowest out of fifty-seven counties in New York State.

### **Capital Project to Replace Aging Voting Machines**

The Image Cast voting machines were originally certified in 2007. New York State was mandated to replace our lever voting machines to comply with new federal standards. We have not updated our voting system since that time period. We are now looking to upgrade our fleet of machines to the newest most up to date machines being certified at the NYS Board of Elections. This upgrade will last for an additional ten years as we are skipping the Dominion ICE machines that were certified five years ago and moving to newer technology.

In addition, there will be multiple vendors to choose from. In 2008, only Dominion and ES&S were certified and they, along with new vendors Hart and Clear Ballot, are currently undergoing certification for new machines at the NYS Board of Elections. This wider selection should result in a more competitive bidding market and save Onondaga County money rather than going with a single source.

Our upgrade to Electronic Poll Books in 2019, as well as continued upgrades to on-demand printing, has proven to be a valuable resource for our county. We currently service 1/3 of our polling places with on-demand printers on Election Day. This saves us on nearly one hundred thousand ballots printed each year. Investing in full on-demand printing will increase that savings, allow us to service larger polling sites, reduce our election personnel and save Onondaga County printing costs.

### **Long term cost reduction plan**

If our request to purchase new voting machines through the Capital Project is approved we could reduce some of these expenses over the next few years. New precinct level scanners will allow for fewer inspectors to work Early Voting and Election Day polling sites, combine election districts, reduce shipping costs, and eventually reduce the number of Election Day polling sites. This will happen over a three year period as 2023 we will purchase and train on the new equipment, 2024 we plan to reduce election districts, and in 2025 reduce the polling sites needed. Election Inspector reductions as well as lower training costs could be realized as early as 2023 if we have equipment procured in time for the June 2023 primary.

We also hope the on-demand printing project will save significant money as well. On-Demand printing will save on one hundred thousand ballots that are wasted annually, especially in low turnout elections such as primary. We hope that use of these machines paired with the new precinct scanners will allow us to start to pare down some polling places in 2024 and more in 2025. Better equipment and more efficient ballot delivery methods along with the planned reduction in Election Districts can allow us to combine smaller polling places together. We will still have to observe the needs of urban and village communities that may not have adequate vehicle access, but we could see a decent reduction in polling places where parking and adequate staffing allows.

- Expiration of Shoebox Grant, since 2007
  - Been able to use extensively to offset local dollars; grant will expire this year
  - Reason expiring is because of additional primary announced in May 2022, not budgeted for in 2022
  - Federal year, can use Shoebox money to offset costs for primary in 2022, but will zero out grant
  - Shoebox covered annual training costs of \$140,000 for Election Inspectors
    - Training required by Election Law
  - Also included communications for electronic Poll Books of \$50-\$75,000; will go to local dollars
  - Training paid for in 103 line (Inspector and Election Worker)
  - Communication will cover electronic Poll Books
- 103 line request of \$985,607, Executive budget is \$715,265 (same as 2022)
  - Does not cover all issues
  - \$140,000 of extra training expenses
  - Inspector pay raises up with minimum wage going up
    - Scheduled to go to \$15, and will not know until December; every year gone up a little
  - IRS classified Inspectors as employees, which means they are paid hourly
    - Used to give \$25 stipend for training classes
    - Now hourly – stipend goes from \$25 to \$40 for each Inspector
    - Was offset by Shoebox money, but will now be local dollars
  - Adding hour of sexual harassment training for every employee is an added expense not there in past
  - If there is not a countywide primary, \$715,000 allotted might cover a compact city-only primary and general election, but cannot guarantee
- Asked for 4 employees on 101 line, rejected in Executive budget; cost of \$138,945
  - Want 2 Election Clerk 1s, and 2 Election Clerk 2s
  - Last year got 2 employees in addition to Executive budget
  - Facing more Election Law changes that will drastically alter workload even in non-federal year
- Election Law Changes - Registration
  - Automatic and online voter registration to come online in 2023
  - State Legislature moved voter registration deadline from 25 days to 10 days
  - Will drastically alter number of registration forms and timeline of when receive registration forms
  - Currently keeping up by using the 15 days after 25 day threshold to catch up; always 1000s of forms behind
  - Right now behind by 3,000 voter registration forms
  - New 10 day window is also start of early voting – rolls have to be up to date as much as possible to program electronic Poll Books on the day before early voting
  - Will continually update them to keep voters from not being in the book at the polls
  - Voter registration not done by outside workers; specialized work and takes 6 months to train registration clerk
  - 2015 - processed 20,368 registration forms
  - 2021 - processed 94,215 registration forms, without new law changes in place
  - Other states with new law in place had initial surge; will see in 2023
  - Increase in 20-30% of voters in county; certain percentage of voters not registered properly
  - Benefit - voter rolls more accurate than ever before
  - Have to keep up; (i.e.) Mess in Oneida County in 2020 when they did not process registrations before elections
- Hope if get permanent fulltime clerks, then will not need temporary clerks in upcoming 2024 elections
- Temporary help not as efficient, not as trained; harder and harder to approve people at temporary wage level without county benefits
- Hard to find 2 clerks at salary rate even with benefits - salary lower than private sector for this work
- Registration form processing has to be done by each election cycle; cannot put off work to next year or cycle
- Hope capital budget proposed will bring more efficiency
- Have less Inspectors than rest of NY - 3.35 Inspectors for every 1,000 registered voters; Upstate NY averages 5
- BOE embracing technology with electronic poll books and ballot on demand – allows for less Inspectors
- If they get the new fleet of voting machines, it will allow for less Inspectors for election day and early voting
  - New machines are easier to program/staff; will not have as many people for powering up and shutting down

### Questions:

- Shoebox grant – please explain; see loss of funds in grants, then 3 lines in main budget have substantial increases



- Originally awarded in 2007 - each year using it for training, equipment upgrades, toners, election equipment
- Have managed grant well and spend \$10/voter; other boards in NY spend \$17/voter
- Expect grant to run out in 2023; had money to cover expenses for 2023
- Addition of August primary - expending Shoebox money to not go over budget in 2022
- Used to fund increasing structural expenses
- Heard early voting was very expensive in last 2 primaries to tune of \$1,000/vote, is that accurate?
  - Might be accurate; Inspector costs of little less than \$50,000 for early voting; 4,000 early voters at primaries
  - Spend less with primaries, but more expensive per vote (better turnout for regular elections); 15-17% turnout
  - 10 allotted early voting spots, but put up 8 for polls; less voters scheduled
  - Reduced number of Inspectors at every early voting spot
  - With new machines can have less Inspectors
    - Right now 5 machines in each, because of audio capability; new machines will only be 2
- Hope NYS has retrospective look at local impacts; not bearing burden unnecessarily
  - Previously had funding grants; did not happen in 2022
  - Usage of early voting is going up
    - 2020 had 1,000 primary voters
    - 2021 primary only in the city
    - 2022 primaries had 2,800 in June, over 4,000 in August
- 103 line partly funded with grant funding?
  - Yes, training portion on 103 for Inspectors currently covered by Shoebox, but not after this year
  - Need to train and field; NYS will require them to do so
  - Full countywide primary will go above budget; hopeful to do less, but already do less than law calls for, because have technology that allows for less Inspectors
- NY 22 race, was that a result of people needing enrollment and not being processed?
  - Oneida County overwhelmed by number of voter registration forms; did not staff up for presidential year
    - 1000s of registration forms from DMV were left unentered until January 2021 after court found out
    - Commissioners resigned, as it was a bad decision
  - If county BOE does not get additional staff, only hope to catch up is mandatory overtime for current staff
  - Had 5 of 18 employees resign due to being overworked and overwhelmed – tough with 30 straight 12 hour days
- No increase on overtime?
  - No; hope by adding people can continue to use proper amount of overtime when staffing for extended hours
- Where would overtime come from if they do not get staff?
  - Have to pay for it and authorize it under NYS Law
  - If someone works, they get paid; it is the law
  - If cannot pay out of BOE and fix on administration side, will bring to Legislature to fix it
- Maintenance/Utilities/Rents – 3x higher than this year?
  - Main increase is parking rent increase - rent parking field across from BOE at old car lot
  - Increased rent 3 times; do not have a choice, because need parking for Inspectors
  - They want county to buy field; has been sent up to be investigated; would like to buy
  - Always worried that lot would be sold to someone else and would not have parking
  - There is no other increase in that line except for that

**INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY:** (3-42) Kevin Sexton, Chief Information Officer; Michelle Clark, Deputy CIO

### ***2022 INITIATIVES & ACCOMPLISHMENTS***

*Transitioned to CrowdStrike Endpoint Protection and 24x7 monitoring services to improve the overall security of the County's network, data, and computing assets.*

*We are implementing a new Vendor Security Access Management solution to better secure and monitor vendors who need to access our network. This gives us increased security and protection against a critical cyber threat vector.*

*Worked with the CNYRPDB to submit an RFP to bring broadband internet services to all the unserved residents and businesses in Onondaga County. We are looking to award the project in September 2022.*

## **2022 BUDGET REVIEW**

*County IT is projected to be on budget for 2022.*

## **2023 BUDGET OVERVIEW**

*The 2023 budget includes standard salary and wage increases consistent with the baseline budgeting approach, as well as 3 IT positions transferred from WEP. Also included in the base are increased cost in maintenance, utilities & rent due to inflation and contract escalators. These increases are partially offset by decreases in other accounts.*

*The 2023 budget does include the addition of 1 new funded position a System Administrator to improve support to WEP's complex VM/Server environment for SCADA, Maximo and other critical systems.*

*The 2023 Transfer to Grant Expenditure line includes \$500,000 for technology upgrades. Additional information is available in the one-time initiatives handout attached below.*

## **2023 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

*Funding for Technology upgrades will be used to replace equipment that is end of life such as compute nodes for our VM Host Farm, uninterruptible Power Supplies (UPS), a Tape Storage System for Video, a VM Storage Array, a VOIP Cube replacement for our phone system and PC replacements.*

*We are replacing an aged/unsupported Police Reporting App with a new interface within our CHAIRS2 (C2) RMS. Manlius and Syracuse Police are live w Police Reporting on C2; we are planning the transition for the rest of the county agencies which continues into 2023.*

*Onondaga County IT has recently transitioned the oversight of WEP's IT services to improve support and improve system availability and the overall network security posture at WEP.*

*Continual proactive initiatives for improved cybersecurity measures including pen testing, risk assessments, training, etc.*

## **INITIATIVE – TECHNOLOGY UPGRADES - BUDGET: \$500,000**

*County IT is planning on a number of IT Improvements for 2023 starting with replacements for equipment that is at (or nearing) end of life in terms of support. Such items include compute nodes for our VM Host Farm, uninterruptible Power Supplies (UPS), a Tape Storage System for Video, a VM Storage Array, a VOIP Cube replacement for our phone system and PC replacements. We are also looking to replace some old equipment for our Print Shop with a new high-speed envelope printer and electronic hole punch/crimper. Additionally, we plan to purchase online Kronos licenses to help automate time off requests and update employees' accruals.*

- Thanked staff – Deputy CIO Michelle Clark; Jessica Allen, Budget Analyst; Management team of Steve Windhausen, Mike Degan and Paul Baker
- WEP IT going to IT
  - Highly targeted industry and utility; do not want things to happen
  - Started doing months ago; staff absorbing as much as possible
  - Asking for 1 position now to help support, but possibly more later
- Cybersecurity - active Security Advisory Board in IT to meet monthly and prioritize initiatives and features for security; county very strongly protected environment with lot of things in place

## **Questions:**

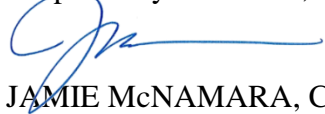
- Is this the \$1M for technology initiatives with \$500,000 budgeted someplace else?
  - Yes, other \$500,000 is in Finance budget for improvements to PeopleSoft Financials

- With what they are doing with WEP, are there any opportunities for other departments?
  - Could be further opportunities; County IT prior to bringing WEP on, provided service for every department
  - WEP has their own IT team, same as E911
  - Heavily involved with WEP daily; support all departments
  - May have opportunity with Social Services, who has their own IT
    - Work on state system, which makes things complicated
- Why is WEP highly targeted?
  - Seen in other utilities across country where water protective systems are hit, or water supply being hit
  - When those shut down, people cannot get water or remove waste
  - Targeting things that are vulnerable - some systems are aged and not patched as much
  - IT provide protections, further expand theirs, building safeguards and more redundancy
  - WEP team working to get improvements in place; overlooked for a while
- Is IT having a hard time filling staff?
  - Challenge for all county departments; do not have people on certain lists
  - Shifting priorities on annual basis that may cause them to bring in a person
  - Always an issue getting the right people; light in support areas, but make due
  - Provide backup and cross training where possible to cover things
- Does the \$1M get IT where they want to be with infrastructure and technology?
  - Does not get everything needed; ideally want to replace everything beyond certain age
  - Extended lot of environments back when there were tighter budgets, but always opportunities
  - Lot of it is how fast they can get things replaced
  - With hundreds of networks and 50-60 sites across county, would the county have the money to buy them all at once and leverage to get them all deployed without outside help; possibility
  - Funding would help out a lot
- Onondaga County Payroll processing – is the county leveraging technology to fullest extent to make the process as accurate and efficient as possible?
  - Not to fullest extent – work from big list of priority items
  - Comes down to staff - small team to support PeopleSoft environment for payroll; opportunities for improvement
  - Have a highly accurate payroll system, but so many moving parts during pay cycles with pay changes, contract settlements, Legislature approving pay increases, etc.
  - Most important that payroll is completed on time and accurate
  - Promoting efficiencies and automation – lot of opportunities out there; have them on a list
  - Personnel perspective
    - PeopleSoft went live in July 2020 - in order to get live, had long list of things wanted to do
    - Did the things needed to do to get buy - wants were over the fence for efficiency
    - Been knocking off efficiencies over last 2 years
    - HCM Work Group meets every 2-3 weeks to review items, prioritize them appropriately, and find resources to get it done – next meeting is next Thursday
    - Some things have to be put on hold to (i.e.) settle a contract
    - From accuracy standpoint, definitely producing accurate payroll
    - From efficiency standpoint, continue to increase efficiencies with the system
    - Working with resources available; have a list of over 100 things broken up into priorities
- How has division of responsibility changed since 2019? At one point everything done at Comptroller's office, but logically migrated to Personnel
  - Personnel has division of payroll operations – Director and staff; processing done in Personnel with exception of 3 items for Comptroller: garnishments, retirement system, and one other
  - Personnel was auditing work Comptroller's Office did on processing side
  - Met with Comptroller's Office to begin transition to Personnel of last 3 items; continuing to work on it
  - All payroll will then be processed in Personnel; all auditing will be handled by Comptroller's Office
  - Current Comptroller supportive of having delineation with processing and auditing on other end

- Has PeopleSoft been fully implemented?
  - Implemented all modules planned to implement at the moment; might be couple more down the road
  - Implementing accounts receivable in next few weeks
  - Finance prioritized accounts receivable last year - will provide efficiencies
  - Looking for \$500,000 for additional PeopleSoft improvements
  - Lot of costs is configuring and building environments according to the business
  - Staff working day to day, do not have time to do all alone; need outside help
  - Purchased PeopleSoft - good deal because it was packaged with a lot of items
    - Retired quite a few items as they will not be used
    - Oracle saying the county is only paying X for annual maintenance, because bought package deal
    - Comfortable with modules have implemented; couple more down the road
  - Finance perspective
    - Proposal this year with \$500,000 in IT, \$500,000 in Finance
    - Biggest initiative is project costing - managing finances of capital or grant projects
    - Still have manual process to do that; takes more time and energy
    - Working for years since original go live to make system as efficient as possible
    - Finance overall has ability to reduce resources naturally through attrition through last 5-6 years
    - Absorbed close to 80 positions in finance operations in departments since 2014
    - Saved 15 plus positions through attrition over time – big part is ability to harness power of PeopleSoft
    - Bumpy start and did not leverage power it has, but have been doing that
    - Functional approach coupled with technology investment – able to provide high level service for departments, so they can concentrate on their core mission
    - Investments pay dividends
      - Providing high level of service and reduce resources through attrition as needed
      - Financials – have opportunities and training wheels on; not relying on power of system
      - Built workflow and controls, but still have manual processes executing at the end
      - Why not take final leap to say the county has invested all this time and energy to build an ERP system that has inherent controls in place from moment of having idea to payment going out
      - Budget checks in place, workflow in place, and signoffs, but at the end of the day, county still involved with manual processes
      - Opportunity and ability to schedule a job to pick up all vouchers approved, then send them out the door
      - Need to get there; technology is there; need to build it right
- Is cost projections and purchasing where they can purchase out a job?
  - Project costing module gives ability to manage grant projects and capital projects from financial perspective
  - Currently, base system limited on what it allows Finance to do
  - Ms. Smiley and her team have to rely on manual processes to produce reports to understand where the county is from expenditure and revenue standpoint (for grants and capital)
  - Standing module up (Comptroller and IT will be partners) will pay dividends from management perspective
- Great topic to revisit occasionally; wheels turning with project management (i.e. water chestnuts); revisit at Ways and Means at later date to stay abreast of advancements
- Comptroller responsible for issuing financial statements for county; as the county continues to gain efficiencies, have the county's external auditors been on board? Are they satisfied with the checks and balances?
  - External auditors certainly on board
  - It is a process to run pay cycle – Comptroller's Office manually clicks and checks boxes to run pay cycle
  - Know that can be automated – by the time a voucher is approved and in process, all that work leading up to it being in process has checked all boxes that need checking
  - Can get there; system built with appropriate controls and guiderails to get there
  - Can consult with external auditors; they know how system works and making changes should not be an issue

The meeting was adjourned at 12:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


JAMIE McNAMARA, Clerk  
Onondaga County Legislature

## ATTENDANCE

COMMITTEE: **WAYS & MEANS BUDGET REVIEW ~ DAY 4**DATE: **SEPTEMBER 21, 2022**

NAME (Please Print)	DEPARTMENT/AGENCY
Kristi Smiley	Finance
Carl Hummel	Personnel
Ann Sebeyan	Personnel
Sandra O'Connor	Personnel
Dan Wears	EM
Dan Mulvihill	Financial Operations
Teneshia Murphy	CE office
Cardice Clemens	BOE
Allison Nanno	BOE
Mary Luber	BOE
Jason Dean	Finance
Dustin Gorman	BOE
Sheriff Conway AND ALL	Sheriff
Beth Mortas	Personnel
Kevin Sexton	OCIT
Benny Weiss	District Attorney's Office
Joe Podlcan	District Attorney Office
Michele Robbins	District Attorney Office
Lucy Loke	District Attorney Office
Marty Mastropale	Comptroller