

**CONSENSUS REVIEW ADVISORY COMMITTEE
FINAL REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS
JUNE 22, 2017**

In February of 2017, the Consensus Commission released their final report recommending various actions to modernize governance in Onondaga County. The Onondaga County Legislature immediately established a Review Committee to study the Commission's recommendations and advise the Legislature on the development and implementation of specific proposals stemming from the Commission's recommendations. The Consensus Review Advisory Committee was established by Res. 34-17 and members consisted of elected officials and members of the community.

Members:

10th District Legislator Kevin Holmquist – Chairman
Supervisor Damian Ulatowski – Town of Clay
Mayor Paul Whorrall – Village of Manlius
Greg Sgromo – Owner, Dunn and Sgromo Engineers
3rd District Councilor Susan Boyle – City of Syracuse
At Large Councilor Helen Hudson – City of Syracuse
William Kinne – Minority Floor Leader Appointee

Advisory Members:

12th District Legislator & Chairman of Ways and Means Committee - David Knapp
14th District Legislator & Vice Chairman of Ways and Means Committee - Casey Jordan
1st District Councilor & Chairman of Inter-Governmental Service Consolidation Committee
- Joseph Carni

The Consensus Review Advisory Committee (C.R.A.C.) began meeting on a bi-weekly basis and agreed to make a recommendation to the County Legislature, no later than July 1, 2017. It was agreed by members that the Advisory Committee would only make recommendations for further exploration, and they would not be involved in the implementation. It would be up to the governing bodies directly affected as to the "how". In order to comply with the aggressive timeframe, members reviewed the report, prioritized topics and submitted recommendations to the Chair that they felt were the most appropriate to delve into further. Once a short list was established, those parties involved were invited to attend meetings to address concerns and answer questions as to how recommendations could affect them.

Based upon dialogue with meeting attendees, as well as the elected entities that would need to adopt any of the changes, following are specific recommendations for further review.

1. Solid Waste – Expand the Southern Onondaga Trash System (SOTS) into towns within the Onondaga County Resource Recovery Agency (OCRRA) service area that already have contracts with private haulers

In discussions with elected officials, it was discovered that other municipalities are currently in the process of exploring this option. The Committee members agreed that this is an area that could prove as a cost-savings measure and they recommend others to explore the possibility of intermunicipal coordination including bulk bidding of hauler services.

2. Emergency Medical Services – Group specifications and purchasing of equipment

Bulk purchasing and intermunicipal coordination is already in place in several municipalities and Committee members recommend discussions to continue and expand.

3. Purchasing

Throughout the Consensus final report there was a general theme to explore and expand bulk purchasing. The City, several school districts, some fire districts, 15 of the 19 towns and 3 of the 15 villages are already participating in a consolidated purchasing program and members encourage other entities to join. It was agreed by members that there should be continued exploration into other areas, including health care.

4. Water – Combine OCWA and City Water Departments

Committee members agreed that this is not feasible at this time. Members do encourage discussions to continue with the effected towns and various districts as their infrastructure continues to age. Members endorse the idea of a community-wide comprehensive water plan done by a third party (not OCWA or the City) with input community-wide.

5. Economic Development – Combine the City and County Industrial Development Agency and Economic Development Offices

The Commission's final report included several areas of economic development, including the above listed. Committee members recommend continued discussions on one IDA and agreed that the structure of the combined Authority must include voting representatives of the City and the County. Members agreed that combination of the County and the City Economic Development Office should also be discussed.

6. Libraries – Create a statewide library card system

Committee members recommend continued discussion into implementing a statewide library card system.

7. Libraries – Waive library fines for children

Committee members recommend that all libraries within Onondaga County waive library fines up to a maximum of \$50 for children below an age determined by each library.

8. Corrections – Single organizational structure, placed under the Sheriff’s Office

Sheriff Conway is aware of the recommendation and is willing to discuss it. Committee members agreed that it is an issue worth pursuing and recommend exploration.

9. Combine County and City Governments

The Consensus Commission’s final report included a recommendation calling for the combination of County and City Governments, commonly referred to as “Recommendation #50”. The Consensus Review Advisory Committee does not endorse this recommendation.

In closing, the Consensus Review Advisory Committee recognizes the hard work of the Consensus Commission and appreciates their efforts. Although not every area results in cost-savings, our Committee encourages open dialogue among municipalities and districts to continue.

The Consensus Review Advisory Committee Final Report and Recommendations was adopted on June 22, 2017 by a vote of 5-1.

Voting Yes: Chairman Holmquist, Councilor Hudson, Mr. Sgromo, Supervisor Ulatowski, Mayor Whorrall

Voting No: Mr. Kinne

Absent: Councilor Boyle