

**General Services Committee**  
**March 10, 2020**  
**Minutes**

**Members Present:** Committee Chair Philip Reed, Legislators Robert Cantwell, Daniel McBride, Jeremiah Maxon, Robert Ferris, Corey Grant, Anthony Doldo, Chairman of the Board Scott Gray

**Others Present:** County Administrator Robert Hagemann, Deputy Administrator Sarah Baldwin, County Attorney David Paulsen, Legislators William Johnson, John Peck, Highway Superintendent James Lawrence, Planning Director Michael Bourcy, Probation Director Kristine Maloney, Weights and Measures Deputy Director Brian Mooney, Secretary Torri Richmire

Chairman Reed called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Chairman Reed offered privilege of the floor, however no one present wished to address the Committee. The Committee approved the minutes of the February Committee meeting as presented.

Planning Director Michael Bourcy stated that the Planning Department has been working since 2018 on preparation for the 2020 census which starts April 1<sup>st</sup>. He advised that they have been working with Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA), who provides them with the master address file from NYS Census and his department reviews and uses real property data and building permit data to update and include new addresses. They also work with Participant Statistical Areas Program (PSAP) to review census tracts and block groups to determine if there should be a split or to merge block groups according to population. There also is a Boundary Verification Program where they reevaluate boundaries of municipalities to ensure that there has been no changes. Most recently he advised that they have been working on the NYS Census Outreach Grant and are waiting to hear from the State whether they will be awarded funds to be used for outreach, marketing and advertising of the census. He stated that the data is required to be submitted to the President of the United States no later than December 31, 2020, State data will be released by the end of March 2021 and then County population will be released which will determine if there needs to be adjustments made to legislative district boundaries due to population shifts.

Mr. Bourcy introduced Stacey Albro, Partnership Specialist, U.S. Census Bureau, who made a presentation (copy attached for file reference) to the committee stating that the U.S. Census Bureau is the largest statistical agency in the United States and that last fall employees completed address canvassing checking every household to ensure that every residence was occupied, was it a seasonal home, or has the house been converted from a single home to a duplex. She advised that the purpose of the 2020 Census is to count each person once, that it is mandated by the U.S. Constitution and that it is conducted every 10 years. She stated that the census determines the number of seats each state has in the U.S. House of Representatives which defines congressional and state legislative districts, school districts and voting precincts. She advised that most important is that the results of the census determines federal funding received by many government funded programs.

Ms. Albro stressed that the census is safe and that any personal identifiable information is

isolated and separated from the statistical data and is never published or shared with law enforcement or courts. She stated invites will be mailed out on March 12<sup>th</sup> and that there are four ways to respond: online, phone, paper or a personal visit from a census employee. This year is the first time that the census can be completed online, when entering online your invitation includes a code to enter that is tied to your residence. She advised that when filling out the census, those who are snowbirds should enter where they spend the most amount of time, if they split it evenly (6 months here and 6 months elsewhere) they should be counted where they are on April 1<sup>st</sup>. She stated that Fort Drum is the hardest area in Jefferson County to count with a projected 30% low response rate. Those soldiers residing on the Fort Drum installation should be counted as Jefferson County residents. She has been working with leadership at Fort Drum to make soldiers aware of the necessity and importance of being counted.

Legislator John Peck, also Chairman of the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), stated that the MPO is working with community agencies to create a transit initiative to go beyond the current city boundaries. He advised that the 2010 census results had a bearing on the creation of the MPO and funding that is now available. He stated that the Metropolitan Corridor runs from Carthage/West Carthage through the center of the county to Dexter.

Chairman Reed introduced Jennifer Hodge, Development Director, Volunteer Transportation Center (VTC), who made a presentation (copy attached for file reference) regarding a Transit Study Report on the Expansion of the City Bus Transportation Program. Ms. Hodge stated that their goal is to assist Jefferson County residents by providing additional transit services to gain access to education and employment. She stated that currently the City of Watertown is the only provider of public transportation.

Ms. Hodge advised that the Jefferson County Transit Workforce was established consisting of the City of Watertown, the County of Jefferson, the MPO, New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) and any not for profits that serve constituents in the area. She stated that they meet monthly to discuss transportation and prepare a New York State mandated Jefferson County Coordinated Plan every 4 years, that plan will be used as a guide in creating a transit system in the rural area moving forward. She advised that the MPO sets the policy as a result of the last census and they oversee a certain amount of funding received. NYSDOT provides the guidance to bring it all together. She stated that the MPO commissioned a lengthy transit study which provided information from Jefferson County residents asking what they need, where they need people to go, where is the employment and education, and then suggested a footprint on how they can make that happen as a community.

Ms. Hodge stated that they have been awarded a grant to hire a Mobility Manager for the City of Watertown and greater MPO area, designating a point person who will focus on transit, and by utilizing the studies and coordinated plans the hope is to bring the extended transit system to fruition. She stated that there are many Federal grants available to fund the plan, which is how the City will fund their half of the mobility manager. She stated that there have been recent meetings with Jefferson County to allow the City to apply for rural grant funds on their behalf to determine if there is a need for an extended transit system in Jefferson County.

Frank Doldo, St. Lawrence County Mobility Manager, stated that it was determined there was a need in St. Lawrence County for public transportation. He stated that the First Mile Last Mile Program transports residents from their house to the nearest bus stop, he advised that statistics show that the average trip was 27 miles one way. He stated that the program started in 2018 using human services agencies working with the clients that they serve to get the kinks worked out. He stated that in 2019 they provided 4,800 trips (a trip is defined as from Point A to Point B), 66% of those who used the program used it for employment, 15% used it for education; allowing barriers to be removed for rural residents. He stated that 3 out of the 4 colleges signed contracts with public transit to subsidize routes to get students to grocery stores, internships and employment. He stated that they are also working with Office for the Aging to get seniors to stores and social activities. He shared that St. Lawrence County was recently notified that they received a NYS grant for \$1.5M which will be used to purchase 10 buses with no local match, stating that part of the job of a Mobility Manager is to secure these funds. He stated that in 2019 they provided 75,000 rides and in 2017 that number was 50,000. He advised that in Jefferson County, residents in outlying areas want to work but transportation is a barrier for them.

Mr. Hagemann stated that the MPO has completed a major study and that there are a series of steps to be completed which a Mobility Manager would do once hired. He stated that the City of Watertown has operated the public transit system within city boundaries but now the MPO has redefined the Metropolitan Urban Center for Jefferson County which extends westerly to the Watertown International Airport and easterly towards Fort Drum, which will allow the City to expand their program. He stated that there will be a series of steps to be taken, to link up with Fort Drum, outer Arsenal Street to BOCES and possibly the Industrial Park. He stated that they have learned through Jefferson County Industrial Development Agency that there is a need to go to other surrounding areas but that will have to be proved, which is what a mobility manager would do. He stated that it doesn't make sense to have the county and city with separate programs, the city is the experts on the transit system and has the equipment. Grants would allow more equipment to be purchased to expand under a defined process. He stated that this is in the infancy stage and that the City of Watertown has submitted a grant application that won't be available for approximately one year so the City will jumpstart their initiative with VTC. He advised that there will be decisions to be made as to whether to join forces with the City or encourage them to expand their program countywide. He stated that a Mobility Manager will help with coming to those conclusions to make good business decisions. He stated that there is no money required of the County at this time but will allow the program to develop on a broader base.

Legislator Maxon has concerns whether the public transit system would be utilized enough in Jefferson County to support the amount of money that is required to operate the system, even with grant funds awarded. Sam Purington, VTC Director, stated that the job of a Mobility Manager would be to canvas the county to determine if the need is there. He stated that any decision made regarding the transit system would have to go before the Board of Legislators for approval.

In response to a question from Chairman Reed, Mr. Purington stated that the transit system would have interconnectivity with surrounding counties by designating a spot for pickup and dropoff of riders based on the need and convenience of those utilizing the system.

Chairman Reed introduced resolution Authorizing Agreement and Amending the 2020 County Budget and Capital Plan in Relation to the FY19 New York State Interoperable Communications Targeted Grant (SICG) and entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator Maxon and seconded by Legislator Doldo. There being no discussion, the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented.

Chairman Reed introduced a resolution Amending the 2020 County Budget and Capital Plan in Relation to Lake Ontario Flooding and entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator Cantwell and seconded by Legislator McBride. There being no discussion, the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented.

Chairman Reed introduced a resolution Authorizing Agreement with Ontario County Youth Care Facility for the Provision of Non-Secure Detention Services and entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator Doldo and seconded by Legislator Grant. In response to a question from Legislator McBride, Probation Director Kristine Maloney stated that the primary contract is with the Children's Home of Jefferson County but there are situations where they are not able to use them so this is a backup plan for those situations. There being no further discussion, the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented.

Chairman Reed introduced a resolution Amending the 2020 County Budget in Regards to Replacing Commercial Washers in the Sheriff's Department and entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator Ferris seconded by Legislator Cantwell. In response to Legislator Ferris' concern of using outboarding funds to cover the replacement of washers, Mr. Hagemann stated each budget season they have rached back as outboarding has decreased and explained that any funds not used during the year fall to fund balance. There being no further discussion, the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented.

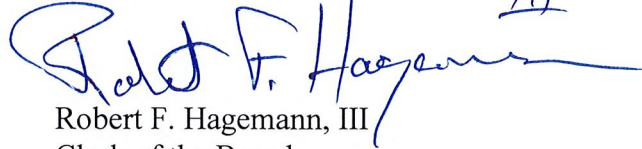
Chairman Reed introduced a resolution Amending the 2020 County Budget to Reappropriate State and Municipal Facilities Grant Funds Relative to the Sheriff's Department and entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator Doldo seconded by Legislator Ferris. There being no discussion, the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented.

Chairman Reed introduced a resolution Authorizing Inter-Municipal Agreement with the City of Watertown Regarding FY 2019 Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Program and Amending the 2020 County Budget in Relation Thereto and entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator Cantwell and seconded by Legislator Ferris. There being no discussion, the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented except Legislator Maxon who was opposed.

Chairman Reed wished Weights and Measures Director James Richmire well in his retirement stating that he really appreciated him spear heading the shared services merger with Lewis County. He introduced Brian Mooney the new Director of Weights and Measures as of March 22<sup>nd</sup>. Legislator Doldo congratulated Mr. Mooney and stated that Jefferson County will continue to be well represented.

There being no further business of the Committee, on a motion by Legislator McBride seconded by Legislator Grant and unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Robert F. Hagemann, III". The signature is written in a cursive style. Above the signature, the Roman numeral "III" is written and underlined.

Robert F. Hagemann, III  
Clerk of the Board