ALLEGANY COUNTY BOARD OF LEGISLATORS
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

September 23, 2026

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman W. Brooke Harris called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

LEGISLATORS PRESENT: G. Barnes, J. Burdick, K. Demick, G. Hanchett, W.B. Harris, S. Havey, D.M. Healy, K. LaForge, W. Meunier, J. Ricci, J. Ricketts-Swales, P. Stockin, R. Whitney (Absent: C. Bessette and P. Curran)

OTHERS PRESENT: A. Carrow, S. Decker, J. Kelley, C. Knapp, M. Padlo, and T. Windus.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairman W. Brooke Harris.

Approval of Agenda

The Committee of the Whole meeting agenda was approved on a motion made by Legislator Hanchett, seconded by Legislator Havey, and carried.

NYS Office of Indigent Legal Services Grant:

J.R. Carter, Public Defender and Michael Regan, Conflict Defender request authorization to apply to ILS for an increase in funding under the County's existing ILS grant, in an amount within the range announced by ILS. If awarded, the increase will be included in the new three-year contract beginning January 1, 2027.

ILS has announced that the counties may apply to increase their annual Family Defense or Quality Improvement for Family Court Representation grant funding by $200,000.00 to $500,000.00. Funding will be awarded on a first-come, first-served basis.

Additional funding for awarded counties will be added to their current contracts beginning January 1, 2027. Potential uses of the funding include, but are not limited to, caseload relief, timely access to counsel, interdisciplinary representation, training, and infrastructure costs.

Chairman Harris requested that the matter be brought before the Board of Legislators at its regularly scheduled meeting later that day at 2:00 p.m., due to the time-sensitive nature of the grant application. A motion was made by Legislator Havey, seconded by Legislator Hanchett, and carried by voice vote. ***Prepare Resolution***

2027 County Budget

Chairman Harris stated that the primary purpose of the meeting was to discuss the 2027 County Budget. Prior to discussion on the budget, the Board would need to enter executive session to discuss matters of ongoing negotiations and collective bargaining.

Executive Session

A motion was made by Legislator Hanchett, seconded by Legislator Ricketts-Swales, and carried to enter executive session at 10:03 a.m., for the purpose of collective bargaining negotiations pursuant to article fourteen of the civil service law at 10:03 a.m. Immediately following discussion at 10:33 a.m., a motion was made by Legislator Ricketts-Swales, seconded by Ricci, and carried to end the executive session and return to the regular meeting.

2027 County Budget (Continued)

Following executive session, County Treasurer Jenna Kelley addressed the Board of Legislators and reviewed the County's budget performance report through August 31, 2026, representing approximately two-thirds of the fiscal year. The report reflects the adopted budget, subsequent budget amendments, current-month activity, and year-to-date revenues and expenditures.

Year-to-date revenues totaled approximately $160,021,661.66, while expenditures totaled approximately $132,183,964.67. Revenues therefore exceeded expenditures by approximately $27,837,696.99 at that point in the year. Approximately 71 percent of budgeted expenditures had been incurred, while approximately 88 percent of anticipated revenues had been received.

Ms. Kelley explained that the timing of revenue collections varies throughout the year. Most property tax revenues are collected early in the year, primarily between January and April, while certain other revenues are recognized later as claims are submitted or other transactions occur.

The Board discussed how future monthly reports could be made more useful and concise. Rather than providing the approximately 50-page detailed report each month, a summarized report showing totals by fund and an overall County total was suggested. Chairman Harris also requested a year-to-date comparison with the same period from the prior year, which would allow the Board to compare the percentage of anticipated revenues and expenditures realized at a given point in each fiscal year.

Discussion also turned to the County's available cash and investment earnings. It was reported that most liquid County cash is invested rather than remaining idle. Legislator Ricci asked the County Treasurer what the current investment rate of return was, Ms. Kelley stated that they had just gotten quotes this week and the rate was 4.25 percent. Ms. Kelley stated the County utilizes permitted investment vehicles including NY MuniTrust, U.S. Treasury bond and bills, and certificates of deposit (CDs), while operating within statutory restrictions governing municipal investments.

The Board also discussed figures appearing near the bottom of the report related to the IDA and an outstanding liability. It was clarified that the approximately $10 million figure represented a remaining liability rather than the original bond amount. Discussion referenced an approximately $13.5 million amount and the subtraction of amounts

associated with the obligation, as well as a $3.5 million bond on which principal payments began within approximately the last ten years.

The Board reviewed the remaining American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds. Kelley reported that five projects continued to have funds available for expenditure. Discussion included the Pictometry project and the anticipated final cost of the aerial flyover, as well as the law enforcement management system project.

Chairman Harris asked whether the County continued to utilize an outside firm to assist with the administration of ARPA funds. Ms. Kelley confirmed that the County did. Legislator Burdick asked whether any unspent ARPA funds would be required to be returned. Ms. Kelley confirmed that the funds must be spent and received in accordance with the applicable requirements and stated that the departments involved were aware of those requirements.

The Board discussed anticipated County property values and the potential impact of assessed values on the 2027 Budget. Ms. Kelley stated that she would follow up with Joe Budinger, Director of Real Property regarding when updated property valuation information would be available.

Ms. Kelley noted that the Risk Retention Medical Insurance budget requires approximately $2 million. She further noted that the figures presented did not include anticipated losses related to Employment and Training expenses.

Legislator Burdick questioned the approximately $601,000 increase in the Solid Waste budget. DPW Superintendent Tom Windus explained that the increase included funding requested to upgrade one of the County's transfer stations. He noted that if the County intends to continue providing these services, additional costs associated with upgrades to the remaining transfer stations would also need to be considered. Bolivar was identified as the first transfer station scheduled for an upgrade.

The Board discussed an increase of more than $1 million in the Jail budget. It was noted that approximately $1 million was budgeted for improvements to the jail generators. Legislator Whitney asked whether the amount covered all three generators. Ms. Kelley confirmed that it did.

Legislator Burdick expressed concerns regarding overtime in the Sheriff's budget. Ms. Kelley noted that the overtime budget request was reduced from the previous year, and while Sheriff Cicirello has hired additional Deputies, it was noted that overtime costs did not appear to have decreased drastically. There was also concern regarding overtime associated with the Dispatch employees.

Legislator Hanchett asked whether overtime requirements were addressed in the applicable contracts. County Administrator Carissa Knapp explained that Dispatch employees work 12-hour shifts, which can result in overtime when employees exceed 40 hours in a week. She further explained that the applicable contractual provisions address overtime eligibility, including a preference for part-time employees where applicable.

The Board also discussed holiday overtime, including overtime incurred by departments such as the Department of Public Works for snow removal. Ms. Kelley advised the Board that staff could provide additional detail or individual line-item information upon request.

Chairman Harris noted that the County had forgone budget hearings the previous year and stated that budget hearings would be held for the 2027 budget. Ms. Knapp advised that discussions had already taken place with the departments regarding the budget hearings.

The Board discussed holding the budget hearings during the second half of October. Chairman Harris requested that the hearings be scheduled as soon as possible.

The Board also discussed identifying areas in which budget reductions could be made. Ms. Kelley requested guidance from the Board regarding potential areas for budget reductions.

Legislator Burdick noted that certain expenditures are mandated and suggested that those line items be identified accordingly, including expenditures associated with the Department of Social Services.

Chairman Harris noted that a significant portion of the Department of Health budget is funded through state and federal sources, with approximately less than 20 percent representing the local share.

Ms. Kelley informed the Board that additional further detailed reports could be prepared for Legislators as needed.

The Board discussed whether to override the property tax levy limit for the 2027 budget. Legislator Meunier as well as several others expressed opposition to overriding the tax cap. The Board discussed the increasing difficulty of making budget reductions while maintaining County services. Ms. Knapp noted that making reductions can be difficult when the Board establishes various funding categories or priorities.

The Board discussed the County vehicle fleet and related costs. Legislator Ricci expressed a desire to eliminate the maintenance component of the current fleet management program through Enterprise. Ms. Knapp said that we, referring to the County don’t have the capacity to take on the work of providing maintenance to all those vehicles. Legislator Ricci, noted that the maintenance fee per vehicle is $40 to $120 per month per vehicle.

Ms. Knapp also noted that the Solid Waste Work Group should meet soon due to anticipated costs associated with transfer station upgrades and ongoing solid waste operations.

The Board thanked County Treasurer Jenna Kelley for her work and commended her budget reports as very helpful to the Board.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no additional business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 11:13 a.m., on a motion made by Legislator Havey, seconded by Legislator Ricci, and carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Michael J. Padlo, Deputy Clerk of the Board
Allegany County Board of Legislators