

**ALLEGANY COUNTY BOARD OF LEGISLATORS  
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

**April 13, 2022**

**CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 10:03 a.m. by Chairman Philip G. Stockin.

**LEGISLATORS PRESENT:** P. Stockin, G. Barnes, J. Burdick (arr. 11:07 a.m.), P. Curran, A. Cyr, K. Demick, D. Fanton, G. Hanchett, S. Havey, D. Healy, J. Ricci, J. Ricketts-Swales, D. Root, J. Rumfelt, (Absent: B. Harris)

**OTHERS PRESENT:** B. Budinger, A. Carrow, J. Henry, K. Hooker, C. Knapp, T. Linn, B. Riehle, T. Ross, D. Scholes, O. Sortore, T. Windus

**Executive Session**

A motion was made by Legislator Cyr, seconded by Legislator Curran, and carried to enter into executive session at 10:04 a.m. to discuss the medical, financial, credit, or employment history of a particular person. Immediately following discussion at 10:23 a.m., a motion was made by Legislator Barnes, seconded by Legislator Curran, and carried to end the executive session and return to the regular meeting.

**Department of Public Works Friendship Shop Project**

Public Works Superintendent Justin Henry started the discussion by explaining that the purpose for today's special session was to continue the previous week's discussions, and to address any other questions from the Legislators. Mr. Henry stated that he had not received any new questions since the last Committee of the Whole meeting.

**Radiant Floor Heat**

Mr. Henry stated that he looked into adding radiant floor heat to the office area and estimated an additional cost of approximately \$90,000 but noted that would not include the wash bay. Legislator Demick asked if the wash bay should be included in the cost estimate. Mr. Henry deferred the question to Tom Windus who explained he would estimate at least another couple thousand dollars for the additional square footage for the wash bay. Legislator Demick stated, "let's add it." Legislator Healy agreed that the wash bay should be included in the cost estimate if it is going to be needed. Mr. Henry stated that based off the square footage, he would estimate additional costs of approximately \$180,000 to \$200,000, to include the shop with a parts bay, wash bay, and office area. Legislator Barnes asked if the estimate included elimination of the previous heating system. Mr. Henry replied, "no." Mr. Henry explained that they would still require on-demand heat that utilizes the same boilers as the radiant floors.

**Waterline**

Mr. Henry stated that during his recent discussion with HUNT, the estimated cost of the material required to upgrade the line off of the main trunk is approximately \$65,000. Mr. Henry stated that they will need to consult with one additional individual to verify that this will meet all of their requirements and then moving forward with upgrading the waterline. Legislator Ricci asked who the individual is that would be able to verify the requirements. Mr. Henry stated that the Town of Friendship Engineer Jimmy Joe Karl has information from an existing system. Legislator Ricci stated that he was not comfortable with the estimated cost of the pipe materials without knowing how much material they will actually require. Mr. Henry stated that everyone involved is certain that the requirement will be for 8-inch pipe, but that these are their estimates to be able to go out for bid. Legislator Ricci stated that they should speak with Oakley Sortore because he would know the requirements. Mr. Henry stated that he had

met with Mr. Sortore the Monday before the last COW meeting of April 6. Legislator Demick asked if Mr. Sortore is okay as far as Friendship goes. Mr. Sortore stated that he prefers upsizing the water main, and strongly opposes a fire pump for safety concerns. Mr. Sortore explained that in his opinion, upsizing is the only option. Mr. Henry stated that the County agrees with upsizing, but we need to verify the cost. Legislator Healy asked what Mr. Sortore's position is with the Town of Friendship. Mr. Sortore stated that his current title is Superintendent of the Department of Public works, but for this purpose he is the certified operator in charge of the water system for the Town of Friendship. Legislator Healy asked Mr. Sortore if he is satisfied with the communication he has received regarding the upsizing of the water main. Mr. Sortore stated that he has been satisfied with employees of Allegany County, but expected more from the representing Engineer to provide a better cost estimate at this stage. Legislator Healy stated that he speaks for all of the Legislators in that they recognize the need for a new shop and want to see that it gets accomplished the right way. Legislator Root asked what Engineer Mr. Sortore was referring to. Mr. Sortore stated that he was referring to the HUNT Engineer, noting that they have had a good working relationship with them and he hopes to continue with that, and he also wishes to maintain a good relationship with the County Engineer. Legislator Root asked if HUNT is the lead for the project. County Administrator Knapp explained that question would need to be referred to Mr. Henry because Administration has not worked with them. Mr. Henry stated that HUNT is the lead consultant and that following a meeting he had with them Monday, April 4. HUNT understands that we want to pursue the option of upgrading the waterline. Mr. Henry stated that their cost of having a contractor for the waterline was quite high, and that is why HUNT justified the fire pump. Mr. Henry stated that with the County and Town working together, that is where the materials cost comes in at \$65,000. Mr. Sortore explained that someone will have to engineer this upgrade and then present it to the Health Department for approval. Mr. Henry stated that he could incorporate that plan into the current contract, but right now we just need to make sure the plan is moving forward. Legislator Cyr expressed his concerns of moving forward without looking at the practicality of the proposal from HUNT. Mr. Henry asked if Legislator Cyr was concerned with HUNT overlooking the possibility of the County and Town working together. Legislator Cyr stated that the proposal to use a fire pump that will never work has raised some concerns with what else they may have overlooked. Mr. Henry explained that they had told HUNT up front everything that the County has the ability to do, but up until last Monday the proposals were just for building the drainage structures. Legislator Ricci referred to the radiant floor heat and asked why we would not go with the radiant heat in the whole floor. Legislator Ricci explained that he does not understand why we would "cheap out" on the project, especially with today realizing that the wash bay was left out as that is going to be the first thing to freeze in the winter. Legislator Ricci stated, "give us the Cadillac and we'll pare it back down to the Chevy." Mr. Henry stated that the wash bay was an oversight on his part. Legislator Ricci stated that this is where our concern is right now, that we only build something like this shop once every hundred years. Mr. Henry stated that it is his fault for not catching it. Chairman Stockin stated that now we will have radiant floor heating everywhere. Legislator Root asked if the elevations for the waterlines had been addressed. Mr. Henry stated that it was addressed with HUNT, but the elevation changes were not incorporated into the plan. Mr. Henry explained that their main concern was water entering the shop bay, but they are pretty sure that raising it up 6 inches is what is needed and any run-off will go into the storm drain. Ms. Knapp asked why that was not discussed the previous week and how it will affect the price of the quotes. Mr. Henry stated that there are two sets of plans that we would have for site work and then plans going out to bid. Legislator Cyr stated that after a conversation with Mr. Henry the previous week, he was under the impression the elevation concerns had been handled, but believes 6 inches is not going to work. Legislator Cyr stated that he does not know why we would even want to be that close, and he felt it should be at least two feet. Legislator Cyr asked Mr. Windus what percent grade was from the road to the new shop. Mr. Windus stated that the existing building is at approximately 37.5 percent, and the plan set is at 36 percent. Mr. Windus explained that the existing plans will be at a 5 percent negative slope toward the building. Legislator Cyr stated that is approximately 2 feet below the road which is essentially like building a house in the middle of a pond, and that is an issue. Legislator Cyr stated that he does not agree that this is the best way to start a project. Legislator Cyr stated that there is an issue

with the road elevation and we also want to make sure we are not overwhelming a drain system with unnecessary water. Legislator Cyr stated that during a storm, there could be a lot of water coming down and you need to know how much storm water can be absorbed. Legislator Barnes asked how the elevation compares to the existing building. Mr. Windus stated that the new building will be 1 foot lower than the existing building, but it will include a storm drain system. Legislator Barnes asked if there are water issues in the current building. Mr. Windus stated that storm water comes through the shop doors, but it does not have a storm drain system. Legislator Barnes stated that he can understand the concerns with the lower elevation. Mr. Henry stated that they are still verifying that 6 inches will do it. Legislator Demick asked if the storm drain system is the only fail safe protection. Mr. Henry stated that they have to look at the elevation everywhere. Legislator Demick stated that the storm drain system is what you are relying on, but when a storm drain system fails, which they often do, the freezing and thawing creates a situation where the water has nowhere to go except toward your building. Legislator Demick stated that it is easier to make elevation changes now to alleviate that versus hoping that everything works. Mr. Henry stated that he brought this issue up months ago, and it became a matter of tonnage of material to obtain a two-foot rise to get us to 6 inches. Legislator Demick stated that you are going to have offices there, not just a bay. Ms. Knapp stated that Mr. Henry mentioned two sets of plans, and stated that the Board needs to know the total scope of the project to make an informed decision. Mr. Henry stated that all of the plans are incorporated into one plan set. Ms. Knapp stated that she thought someone did not receive an answer to an earlier question about the storm drain system. Legislator Cyr stated that he wanted to know if Mr. Sortore believed the water system could handle the extra water. Mr. Sortore stated that the pipe that is currently there is 15 inches, and that HUNT is aware of the elevations with that. Mr. Sortore stated that he is trusting that HUNT has done the calculations, and he had asked if there was ample volume to connect to the State drain that runs down the side of the road, but that is conceptual at this point. Legislator Cyr asked if the State would have to approve an upgrade to their pipe. Mr. Sortore stated that he believes they are planning to use it for their storm water system. Legislator Ricketts-Swales asked if there is any cost savings to not raising the elevation. Mr. Henry stated that there are storm water modules and buildings are built based on those models. Mr. Henry stated that they would have to evaluate it more because there is a cutoff point where the elevation will not help us but hinder us. Legislator Ricketts-Swales asked if HUNT has landscape technicians that could assist, and asked when they would be able to see some of these plans with the add-ons. Mr. Henry stated that it was his intent to get direction from this meeting, and he will need to meet with HUNT again. Legislator Ricketts-Swales stated that she feels it is important to look into long term savings from Geo Thermal and Solar energy because a 100 year building will set an example for our County, and it is important to think about where we may be in a 100 years. Mr. Henry asked if they wanted to pursue adding all of the options discussed today, or pursue having the ability to incorporate new technologies in the future. Legislator Ricci stated that he would like a price to raise it up to grade, because he does not believe we can depend on a storm drain system to save it.

### **Geo Thermal**

Mr. Henry stated that if it was decided to go with Geo Thermal, HUNT is recommending a 60-ton system with 20 to 23 wells at a depth of 450 feet. Mr. Henry stated that in order to use this system, the electrical service would have to be sized up by a multiple of 3 which adds approximately \$50,000 to \$100,000 to the estimated cost, with a total projected cost of approximately \$450,000 to \$560,000. Legislator Demick asked if they had explored possible grant funding, because he knows that HUNT has individuals in-house that look for those things. Mr. Henry stated that they would have to look into potential grant funds and would not be surprised to have to add that to the agreement with HUNT. Legislator Barnes asked what the lifetime of a half a million-dollar system would be. Mr. Henry stated that he needs time to run those calculations. Legislator Barnes stated that the wells should be good forever. Mr. Henry stated that he has been looking at the data online trying to educate himself with geo thermal systems and will try to obtain more information. Legislator Root stated that these wells are not like typical water wells, they are bore holes drilled with mud. Legislator Root explained that these wells

are in the ground without any pipe in the ground to rust, and you never have to do anything with them again for at least 150 years. Mr. Henry stated the price estimates are preliminary as they need to be designed to a particular site. Legislator Barnes stated that the electric bill will be higher with this system and asked if they had looked into any type of payback over time by going from natural gas to electric. Mr. Henry stated that they still need to run efficiency calculations. Legislator Root stated that the Federal Government has a 26 percent cost incentive off the top for putting in a Geo Thermal system, and 22 percent if you go through NYSAC, and NYS Heat Clean Initiative has \$454 million into clean energy that you could also apply for. Ms. Knapp stated that Clean Energy initiatives are some of the most aggressive, and we do not know if natural gas will even be an option in 10 or 20 years. Ms. Knapp stated that even if you did not want to go Geo Thermal now, is there anything that we should be looking at now to make sure we are making the right choices for the future. Mr. Henry stated that if we want to have the option in the future, we can definitely go that route. Legislator Fanton asked if we set it up for natural gas now, what would the conversion cost to upgrade to electric in 8 years. Mr. Henry stated that from an appliance aspect it would be a wash and you would pay for that twice. Legislator Root explained that the principal of Geo Thermal is to put liquid in the ground to warm it with the ground temperature depending on the soil properties, heat loads, and the efficiencies of the building. Legislator Root explained that this estimate is very good but lacks the detailed variables to produce a solid estimate. Legislator Healy asked if any additional environmental studies could be done for the potential use of solar energy. Mr. Henry replied that they have not looked at any solar options. Legislator Rumpfelt asked how long they have been in the process of gathering all of these ideas. Mr. Henry stated that it began last June with an initial walk through April or May of last year. Legislator Rumpfelt asked if the Friendship Town Board was on board and approved the water and increased pipes. Mr. Sortore stated that this project had been discussed with the Town Board, but they were not sure it was ready for the general public. Mr. Henry stated that they need to know the game plan for the waterline before they take it to the Town Board. Legislator Demick asked Legislator Root if Geo Thermal was also capable of providing cooling in the summertime. Legislator Root stated that he was absolutely right, that the major use for Geo Thermal was for cooling in the southern states, but that it depends on the heating. If you use radiant heat, it would require an add on to be a coolant, but if you used forced air heat it would just require a flip of a switch. Legislator Demick stated that this building is going to need air conditioning. Mr. Henry stated that forced air was already included in the plans. Legislator Ricci asked what footprint would be required to install 20 or 30 wells. Legislator Root stated that she can't answer that question but Alfred State College does have a Geo Thermal system with about 15 bore holes they could look at for an idea. Mr. Henry stated that it requires approximately 20 foot of space per well, but he is unsure of the actual diameter of each well. Legislator Root stated that maybe HUNT should look into the cost effectiveness of putting in two units instead of one as it may be more efficient. Legislator Healy asked how many parking spaces will be available, and if they knew the total number of employees that would be in the building. Mr. Henry stated that there will be approximately 48 employees, but the parking area will be what currently exists, but the middle drive through area will open up. Legislator Rumpfelt asked if environmental impact studies would be required for the bore holes. Mr. Henry stated that if the total footprint opens up the total affected area, then he believes that would require a State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) permit. County Attorney Allison Carrow stated that they would require a SEQR Assessment with or without the bore holes. Ms. Knapp asked if that needs to be done by this Board. Ms. Carrow stated that she would research it more, but she believes it would.

### **Internet**

Ms. Knapp asked Mr. Hooker if he had received quotes to address the IT issues. Mr. Hooker stated that he has asked for several quotes but has not received any at this time. Mr. Hooker stated that the direction they go with the internet will dictate other costs as well. Mr. Hooker stated the County financial program is a major concern, because the DPW accountant may experience slower internet connection issues at times. Mr. Hooker explained that dark fiber would take care of that and the phone system, but if dark fiber is not available then we have to come up with another phone system and test

the program for the accountant. Ms. Knapp explained that the options are either to run dark fiber connections or they would be dependent on internet service equivalent to working from home. Ms. Knapp explained that they would need to remote in and they would essentially not be part of the County network. Legislator Barnes asked what dark fiber is. Mr. Hooker stated that dark fiber is essentially a fiber connection that is not lit by the provider and the County would provide the speed. Chairman Stockin stated that it would be like running an extension cord. Legislator Ricketts-Swales asked if that was secure. Mr. Hooker stated that they would have better internet service, but security is an issue. Ms. Knapp stated that this is a challenge for the IT department and that departments like Mental Health Services do not rely on the County financial software. County Treasurer Terri Ross stated that the Department of Public Works is a \$10 million to \$12 million department. Ms. Ross explained that they have approximately 100 employees who are paid every two weeks and that would hinder payroll. Ms. Knapp agreed stating that DPW is one of our largest departments in both personnel and budget. Legislator Fanton asked how far Armstrong runs that way. Mr. Hooker stated that he was not sure, but he is still waiting for them to respond to his request for a quote. Mr. Hooker stated that there are multiple providers such as: Spectrum, ION, and Armstrong. Mr. Hooker stated that Armstrong already has a connection here with one connection in close proximity in Friendship.

Legislator Demick asked if any of the wash bays, under wash areas, or water oil separators have any water recycling planned. Mr. Windus stated that the consultants have talked to one manufacturer about that, but it is in the infant stages. Legislator Demick asked if any plans included snow and ice control or outside hydro to protect sidewalks from freezing up. Mr. Henry stated that they have entertained those ideas. Legislator Ricketts-Swales stated that the Fillmore bus garage has a water recycling system for rinsing the buses clean of salt and sand that you might be able to talk with them about. Legislator Demick asked if the ceiling height in the shop would allow them to swing boxes higher in the air. Mr. Henry stated that they are limited by the overhead crane. Legislator Demick stated that as long as the track is above the crane so you are not knocking it down. Mr. Henry stated that it is definitely something that they can look at. Legislator Demick asked if there had been any ideas for a new lift system that is portable where you can put a truck in the air to paint outside. Mr. Henry stated that undercoating is typically done by DPW yearly on all of the equipment.

Ms. Knapp stated that they need the Radiant Floor and Geo Thermal numbers and updated sheet reflecting the total funding required with and without the add-ons. Mr. Henry stated that it is his intent to bring that information to the DPW committee next month. Legislator Fanton stated that the Geo Thermal numbers are not good numbers, and HUNT or someone else in that business needs to take a more detailed look into the plans and present a more realistic number. Legislator Fanton stated that he is in favor of the project but would like to see a cost analysis with potential savings for Geo Thermal. Legislator Fanton stated that he does not have a problem with the time frame being extended to allow for more thorough numbers with the changes and the processes we are going to go through to make this happen. Mr. Fanton stated that he is not locked into the schedule at this time. Ms. Carrow stated that they will have to go through the normal processes of getting quotes with resolutions approved by the Board. Legislator Demick stated that he would like to see existing building lifespan if it was rehabbed which might help justify what is going on with that. Mr. Henry stated that lifespan calculations can be looked into. Legislator Cyr stated that he wanted the Friendship Water Department to keep the conversation going with HUNT to get a tighter number. Legislator Fanton stated that the information discussed today is needed before we move forward.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 11:42 a.m. on a motion by Legislator Havey, seconded by Legislator Hanchett, and carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Tiffany Linn, Confidential Secretary  
Allegany County Board of Legislators