

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

**August 17, 2022**

**CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 3:22 p.m. by Chairman Philip G. Stockin.

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

**OTHERS PRESENT:** T. Boyde, A. Carrow, S. Decker, K. Hooker, C. Jones, C. Knapp, B. Riehle

**ARPA Funding**

Chairman Stockin stated that the last time the group had met there was discussion on possibly putting money into the church, next to the Board of Elections building, that is owned by the County. Legislator Harris stated that he was not at the last meeting and wondered if a use for the church had been determined. County Administrator Carissa Knapp stated that the Board has not given a formal request to move forward with this but simply asked her to look into the possibilities for using that building. Legislator Harris said that there should be an intended use before we go any further. There had been discussion about the Child Advocacy Center using it. County Administrator Knapp stated that DSS Commissioner Edna Kayes has expressed interest in the buildings for the Child Advocacy Center. Legislator Harris stated that he doesn't believe that's a good building for that purpose; he would like to see it used for economic development. County Administrator Knapp stated renovations to both the church and the house would be a good use of ARPA monies but we need to have an intended purpose before we can go further with engineering. Legislator Healy remarked on other counties that have separate facilities for their Social Services programs and how nice it is for the children. Many of them have outdoor play spaces.

County Administrator Knapp stated that the County will have significant space needs in the next five to ten years, if not sooner. We're creating a new department of Economic Development; we will probably be creating a Conflict Defender Office and County Code Enforcement; we don't currently have space for those offices. Ms. Knapp mentioned a number of buildings both in Belmont and Wellsville that are currently being leased for County office space. She mentioned repairs that need to be made to some of the older County-owned buildings. Legislator Healy remarked that the County has paid over \$2 million to lease the Crossroads buildings and he brought up the topic of the old Belmont Central School building and the potential use of that for additional office space. County Administrator Knapp stated that she's visited that building recently and while it's not usable space as it currently sits, the location is promising. Some of our offices need to be housed here in the County seat. It's also good to be able to consolidate our services

and have offices in close proximity to each other. It's much easier for Public Works and Information Technology to service the buildings if they are close by. It allows for more efficiency. Legislator Hanchett asked about a space study and if a consultant would need to be hired. County Administrator Knapp stated that we've had a couple of different ad-hoc committees in the past that have dealt with space needs. She feels a standing committee is needed to work on this. She noted that in the past, the Board has often gone against what the studies suggested. She said that Steuben County is using ARPA funding for improvements to their 911 building. Legislator Healy stated that the Belmont school building is not on the tax roll. There's parking available and the utilities are already there. Ms. Knapp stated that she loves the location, but it is a very large project for this Board to undertake. It's not something that can be done with APRA money.

Chairman Stockin asked the group if they wanted to move forward with improvements to the church and adjacent house. Legislator Cyr said, "It's a Band-Aid." Legislator Hanchett stated she thinks there are some things the Board needs to do before we approach that. County Administrator Knapp agreed there are things to do before we can use the ARPA funds.

County Attorney Allison Carrow stated that she and County Administrator Knapp have been working on putting things together for a potential pictometry project. Ms. Knapp stated they've received several different quotes depending on how high of a resolution we need. The higher the resolution, the greater the cost; we don't need to pay extra if it's not something that's needed. She stated that the pictometry needs to be scheduled for this fall if it's something the Board wants to do.

County Administrator Knapp stated that she's spoken with Emergency Services Assistant Director Bonnie VanHousen and Undersheriff Scott Cicirello to see if they have any specific projects in their offices that this money could be used on. She's also spoken with Dr. Robert Anderson (Community Services), and Kier Dirlam about economic development, as the Board has been most interested in spending the funds on public safety, mental health, and economic development.

Legislator Havey said, we have a lot of opportunity here. Infrastructure is never a bad investment. He feels using the house for the CAC is a marvelous idea, but the church is a little more difficult. He noted that the Board of Elections is also running out of space. He suggested the church could be made into a multi-use building for the BOE, CAC or meeting space. He stated the Board needs to make a decision and move forward instead of spinning our wheels. County Administrator Knapp suggested this is the reason a committee is needed. Several Legislators offered their support of establishing a committee to deal with space needs. Legislator Harris stated that the things the committee will be addressing aren't going to be able to be turned around quickly enough to use the ARPA funds.

Legislator Barnes stated he thinks some major improvements to the Allegany County Fairgrounds should be considered. He recently attended the Cattaraugus County Fair and was impressed by their facilities. They had over 100,000 people attend their fair. Their covered grandstand seats 3,800 people with additional seating on bleachers. He mentioned events they were able to hold and the amount of revenue that was generated

with ticket prices at \$45 per person. He noted that Allegany County cannot do that. He suggested major improvements need to be made especially to the stage/grandstand area. He feels it would be an opportunity to bring more people into the County for events and it could also be utilized more by our residents. Legislator Demick stated that he had an opportunity to speak with Fair Board members at the Office for the Aging Picnic. They are working on a plan to use County equipment and town trucks to get paving done soon. Legislator Healy asked who owns the Cattaraugus County Fairgrounds. Legislator Barnes stated he assumes the Cattaraugus County Fair Board owns it. Legislator Healy stated our Fairgrounds are a separate entity. He'd like to see what they have planned up there. They should have a business plan that they can present to our economic development people.

### **Upcoming COW Meetings**

- August 24, 3:00 p.m.
- September 7, 10:30 a.m.

### **ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 3:52 p.m. on a motion by Legislator Hanchett, seconded by Legislator Havey, and carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah M. Decker, Journal Clerk  
Allegany County Board of Legislators