

**Ways & Means Committee  
Regular Meeting Minutes**

**DATE & TIME:** February 15, 2022 – 5:00 PM  
**LOCATION:** Powered by Zoom Meetings, Meeting ID: 818 1196 7142  
By Phone (646) 558-8656  
**PRESIDING OFFICER:** Chairman Gavaris  
**LEGISLATIVE STAFF:** Natalie Kelder, Legislative Financial Analyst  
**PRESENT:** Legislators Cahill, Fabiano, Ronk, & Walter  
**ABSENT:** None  
**QUORUM PRESENT:** Yes

**OTHER ATTENDEES:** Legislators Erner, Heppner, Greene, Petit, Sperry, & Uchitelle, Clerk of the Legislature Fabella, Legislative Counsel Ragucci, Minority Counsel Pascale, Deputy County Executives Contreras, Kelly, & Rider, District Attorney Clegg – UC District Attorney, Comptroller Gallagher & Samuel Sonenberg – UC Comptroller’s Office, Commissioner Smith – UC Health Department, Director Doyle – UC Planning, Director Schmidt – UC Probation, Director Litwin, Molly Scott, & Ashlee Long, – UC Recovery & Resilience S. Deacon Bill Mennenga – Redeemer Lutheran New Paltz, RUPCO, Cheryl Schneider – UC Resident

Chairman Gavaris called the meeting to order at 5:01 PM

---

Resolutions for the February 15, 2022 Session of the Legislature

**Resolution No. 28:** Dedicating Funding To Implement The Ulster County Respite House Policy

**Resolution Summary:** This Resolution designates \$1,500,000.00 of American Rescue Plan Act funds to implement the Ulster County Respite House policy, allocating the funds for the purpose of addressing the need for enhanced Mental Health and Addiction Recovery services throughout Ulster County.

**Motion No. 1:** MOTION TO APPROVE Resolution No. 28  
**Motion By:** Legislator Walter  
**Motion Seconded By:** Legislator Fabiano

**Discussion:** See attached transcript

**Voting In Favor:** Legislators Cahill, Fabiano, Gavaris, Ronk, & Walter  
**Voting Against:** None  
**Votes in Favor:** 5  
**Votes Against:** 0  
**Disposition:** Resolution ADOPTED

---

**Resolution No. 30:** Funding ~~Capital Project No. 599~~ – ARP Non-Profit, Youth and Community Programs – Department Of Finance, Division Of Recovery And Resilience

**Resolution Summary:** This Resolution amends the 2022 Capital Fund budget in the amount of \$1,500,000.00 to fund a grant program created by the Department of Finance for non-profit organizations who have faced economic impacts as a result of the COVID-19 public health emergency.

**Motion No. 2:** MOTION TO POSTPONE Resolution No. 30  
**Motion By:** Legislator Ronk  
**Motion Seconded By:** Legislator Fabiano

**Discussion:** See attached transcript

**Voting In Favor:** Legislators Fabiano & Ronk  
**Voting Against:** Legislators Cahill, Gavaris, & Walter  
**Votes in Favor:** 2  
**Votes Against:** 3  
**Disposition:** MOTION DEFEATED

**Motion No. 3:** MOTION TO APPROVE Resolution No. 30, as presented  
**Motion By:** Legislator Ronk  
**Motion Seconded By:** Legislator Walter

**Discussion:** See attached transcript

**Voting In Favor:** Legislators Cahill, Gavaris, & Walter  
**Voting Against:** Legislators Fabiano & Ronk  
**Votes in Favor:** 3  
**Votes Against:** 2  
**Disposition:** RESOLUTION ADOPTED AS AMENDED

---

**Resolution No. 31:** Funding Capital Project No. 602 – ARP Infrastructure and Trails – Department of Finance, Division of Recovery and Resilience

**Resolution Summary:** This Resolution amends the 2022 Capital Fund in the amount of \$2,000,000.00 to fund an extension of sewer and water infrastructure under the New York State Thruway in the Town of Ulster to benefit a planned redevelopment of the vacant Quality Inn & Suites hotel site into supportive homeless housing.

**Motion No. 4:** MOTION TO APPROVE Resolution No. 31  
**Motion By:** Legislator Ronk  
**Motion Seconded By:** Legislator Walter

**Discussion:** See attached transcript

**Voting In Favor:** Legislators Cahill, Fabiano, Gavaris, Ronk, & Walter  
**Voting Against:** None  
**Votes in Favor:** 5  
**Votes Against:** 0  
**Disposition:** RESOLUTION ADOPTED

---

**Resolution No. 34:** Authorizing The Issuance Of An Additional \$2,883,835.00 Bonds Of The County Of Ulster, New York, To Pay Part Of The Cost Of The Replacement Of The McKinstry Bridge, In And For Said County

**Resolution Summary:** This Resolution authorizes the issuance of \$2,883,835 Bonds to amend Capital Project No. 577 for construction and professional services to pay part of the cost of the McKinstry Bridge replacement.

**Resolution No. 38:** Authorizing The Replacement Of The Olive Road And Marlborough Road Culverts, In And For The County Of Ulster, New York, At A Maximum Estimated Cost Of \$142,000.00, And Authorizing The Issuance Of \$142,000.00 Bonds Of Said County To Pay The Cost Thereof

**Resolution Summary:** This Resolution authorizes the issuance of \$142,000 Bonds to Establish Capital Project Nos. 619, Olive Road Culvert #2, and 620, Marlborough Road Culvert #4, to purchase construction materials.

**Resolution No. 41:** Authorizing The Purchase Of County Fleet Vehicles, For The County Of Ulster, New York, At A Maximum Estimated Cost Of \$1,600,000.00 And Authorizing The Issuance Of An Aggregate \$1,600,000.00 Bonds Of Said County To Pay The Cost Thereof

**Resolution Summary:** This Resolution authorizes the issuance of \$1,600,000 Bonds to Establish Capital Project No. 617 for the replacement of County Fleet Vehicles.

**Resolution No. 43:** Authorizing The Purchase Of Highway Equipment, For The Department Of Public Works (Central Garage) Of The County Of Ulster, New York, At A Maximum Estimated Cost Of \$3,240,000.00, And Authorizing The Issuance Of \$3,240,000.00 Serial Bonds Of Said County To Pay The Cost Thereof

**Resolution Summary:** This Resolution authorizes the issuance of \$3,240,000 Bonds to Establish Capital Project No. 618 for the purchase of Highway Equipment.

**Resolution No. 54:** Authorizing The Replacement And Upgrade Of Technology At The Sheriff's Office, In And For The County Of Ulster, New York, At A Maximum Estimated Cost Of \$588,535.00, And Authorizing The Issuance Of \$588,535.00 Bonds Of Said County To Pay The Cost Thereof

**Resolution Summary:** This Resolution authorizes the issuance of \$588,535 Bonds to purchase Axon Body Cameras and Establish Capital Project No. 616.

**Resolution No. 56:** Authorizing The Issuance Of An Additional \$540,609.00 Bonds Of The County Of Ulster, New York, To Pay Part Of The Cost Of The Upgrade To The Countywide Radio System, For Said County

**Resolution Summary:** This Resolution authorizes the issuance of \$540,609 Bonds to Amend Capital Project No. 482, County-wide Radio System, to include additional equipment such as Base Stations, Comparators, Gateways, Antenna Systems Equipment, Cabling, Racking, and Installation.

**Resolution No. 58:** Authorizing The Purchase Of A Replacement Voting System, In And For The County Of Ulster, New York, At A Maximum Estimated Cost Of \$1,400,000.00, And Authorizing The Issuance Of \$1,400,000.00 Bonds Of Said County To Pay The Cost Thereof

**Resolution Summary:** This Resolution authorizes the issuance of \$1,400,000 Bonds for the Establishment of Capital Project No. 57, the purchase of 140 voting systems and 2 workstations.

**Motion No. 5:** MOTION TO BLOCK Resolution Nos. 34, 38, 41, 43, 54, 56, 58  
**Motion By:** Legislator Ronk  
**Motion Seconded By:** Legislator Walter

**Discussion:** See attached transcript

**Voting In Favor:** Legislators Cahill, Fabiano, Gavaris, Ronk, & Walter  
**Voting Against:** None  
**Votes in Favor:** 5  
**Votes Against:** 0  
**Disposition:** Resolutions BLOCKED

**Motion No. 6:** MOTION TO APPROVE Resolution Nos. 34, 38, 41, 43, 54, 56, 58  
**Motion By:** Legislator Ronk  
**Motion Seconded By:** Legislator Walter

**Discussion:** See attached transcript

**Voting In Favor:** Legislators Cahill, Fabiano, Gavaris, Ronk, & Walter  
**Voting Against:** None  
**Votes in Favor:** 5  
**Votes Against:** 0  
**Disposition:** Resolutions ADOPTED

---

**Resolution No. 36:** Approving The Execution Of A Contract For \$2,434,400.00 Entered Into By The County – ING Civil, Inc. – Department Of Public Works

**Resolution Summary:** This Resolution approves the execution of a contract for \$2,434,400 with ING Civil, Inc for construction services for the replacement of the McKinstry Bridge.

**Motion No. 7:** MOTION TO POSTPONE Resolution No. 36  
**Motion By:** Legislator Ronk  
**Motion Seconded By:** Legislator Fabiano

**Discussion:** See attached transcript

**Voting In Favor:** Legislators Cahill, Fabiano, Gavaris, Ronk, & Walter  
**Voting Against:** None  
**Votes in Favor:** 5  
**Votes Against:** 0  
**Disposition:** Resolution POSTPONED

---

**Resolution No. 62:** Authorizing The Ulster County Executive To Execute A Contract With The New York State Housing Trust Fund Corporation Represented By The Office Of Community Renewal, For Federal

Funding For The Implementation Of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program – Amending The 2022 Ulster County Budget - Department Of Planning

**Resolution Summary:** This resolution authorizes the Ulster County Executive to execute a contract with the New York State Housing Trust Fund Corporation represented by the Office of Community Renewal to implement a Community Development Block Grant Program.

**Motion No. 8:** MOTION TO APPROVE Resolution No. 62  
**Motion By:** Legislator Ronk  
**Motion Seconded By:** Legislator Walter

**Discussion:** See attached transcript

**Voting In Favor:** Legislators Cahill, Fabiano, Gavaris, Ronk, & Walter  
**Voting Against:** None  
**Votes in Favor:** 5  
**Votes Against:** 0  
**Disposition:** Resolution ADOPTED

---

**Resolution No. 63:** Approving The Execution Of A Contract For \$800,000.00 Entered Into By The County – RUPCO – Department Of Planning

**Resolution Summary:** This Resolution approves the execution of a contract for \$800,000 with RUPCO to administer the 2021 Community Development Block Grant Housing Rehabilitation Program.

**Motion No. 9:** MOTION TO APPROVE Resolution No. 63  
**Motion By:** Legislator Cahill  
**Motion Seconded By:** Legislator Walter

**Discussion:** See attached transcript

**Voting In Favor:** Legislators Cahill, Fabiano, Gavaris, Ronk, & Walter  
**Voting Against:** None  
**Votes in Favor:** 5  
**Votes Against:** 0  
**Disposition:** Resolution ADOPTED

---

**Resolution No. 69:** Approving The Execution Of A Contract Amendment For \$150,000.00 Entered Into By The County – Family Of Woodstock Inc. – Department Of Social Services

**Resolution Summary:** This Resolution approves the execution of a contract amendment for \$150,000 with Family of Woodstock, Inc to increase the not-to-exceed value for Emergency Assistance Walk-In Centers and Hotline.

**Motion No. 10:** MOTION TO DISCUSS Resolution No. 69  
**Motion By:** Legislator Walter  
**Motion Seconded By:** Legislator Ronk

**Discussion:** See attached transcript

**Motion No. 11:** **MOTION TO POSTPONE Resolution No. 69**

**Motion By:** Legislator Walter

**Motion Seconded By:** Legislator Fabiano

**Discussion:** See attached transcript

**Voting In Favor:** Legislators Cahill, Fabiano, Gavaris, Ronk, & Walter

**Voting Against:** None

**Votes in Favor:** 5

**Votes Against:** 0

**Disposition:** **Resolution POSTPONED**

---

**Resolution No. 75:** Amending The 2022 Ulster County Budget To Reflect Public Health Emergency Preparedness Funding From New York State Department Of Health For The Epidemiology And Laboratory Capacity School Reopening Grant – Department Of Health

**Resolution Summary:** This Resolution amends the 2022 Ulster County Budget to reflect the \$3,555,246 Public Health Emergency Preparedness Funding from New York State Department of Health for the Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity School Reopening Grant.

**Motion No. 12:** **MOTION TO APPROVE Resolution No. 75**

**Motion By:** Legislator Cahill

**Motion Seconded By:** Legislator Ronk

**Discussion:** See attached transcript

**Voting In Favor:** Legislators Cahill, Fabiano, Gavaris, Ronk, & Walter

**Voting Against:** None

**Votes in Favor:** 5

**Votes Against:** 0

**Disposition:** **Resolution ADOPTED**

---

**Resolution No. 91:** Approving The Execution Of A Contract Amendment For \$230,000.00 Entered Into By The County – Family Of Woodstock Inc. – Department Of Probation

**Resolution Summary:** This Resolution approves the execution of a contract amendment with Family of Woodstock, Inc to extend the term of the agreement by one year and increase the not-to-exceed value to add additional staff for the Alternative to Juvenile Detention Project.

**Motion No. 13:** **MOTION TO APPROVE Resolution No. 91**

**Motion By:** Legislator Cahill

**Motion Seconded By:** Legislator Ronk

**Discussion:** See attached transcript

**Voting In Favor:** Legislators Cahill, Fabiano, Gavaris, Ronk, & Walter

**Voting Against:** None  
**Votes in Favor:** 5  
**Votes Against:** 0  
**Disposition:** **Resolution ADOPTED**

---

**Late Resolution No. 95:** Amending The 2022 Ulster County Budget To Create One Full-Time Deputy Medical Examiner (Medicolegal Investigation) Position – Department Of Health

**Resolution Summary:** This Resolution Amends the 2022 Ulster County Budget to Create One Full-Time Deputy Medical Examiner Position with an annual salary of \$71,053.

**Motion No. 14:** **MOTION TO AMEND Resolution No. 95 to Defund the Part-Time Position to offset the cost of the new full-time deputy medical examiner.**

**Motion By:** Legislator Gavaris

**Motion Seconded By:** Legislator Walter

**Discussion:** See attached transcript

**Voting In Favor:** Legislators Cahill, Gavaris, & Walter

**Voting Against:** Legislators Fabiano & Ronk

**Votes in Favor:** 3

**Votes Against:** 2

**Disposition:** **Amendment ADOPTED**

**Motion No. 15:** **MOTION TO APPROVE Resolution No. 95, as Amended**

**Motion By:** Legislator Gavaris

**Motion Seconded By:** Legislator Walter

**Discussion:** See attached transcript

**Voting In Favor:** Legislators Cahill, Gavaris, & Walter

**Voting Against:** Legislators Fabiano & Ronk

**Votes in Favor:** 3

**Votes Against:** 2

**Disposition:** **Resolution ADOPTED AS AMENDED**

---

Comptroller Gallagher provided a brief 2021 sales tax update. See attached transcript.

---

Chairman Gavaris moved on to the Forthcoming Local Laws portion of the agenda. See attached transcript.

---

Chairman Gavaris asked if there was any old or new business. See attached transcript.

**Adjournment**

**Motion Made By:** Legislator Walter

**Motion Seconded By:** Legislator Ronk

**No. of Votes in Favor:** 5

**No. of Votes Against:** 0

**TIME:** 5:54 PM

**Respectfully submitted: Natalie Kelder**

**Minutes Approved: March 8, 2022**



**Ways & Means Committee  
Regular Meeting Transcript**

**DATE & TIME:** February 15, 2022 – 5:00 PM  
**LOCATION:** Powered by Zoom Meetings, Meeting ID: 818 1196 7142  
By Phone (646) 558-8656  
**PRESIDING OFFICER:** Chairman Gavaris  
**LEGISLATIVE STAFF:** Natalie Kelder, Legislative Financial Analyst  
**PRESENT:** Legislators Cahill, Fabiano, Ronk, & Walter  
**ABSENT:** None  
**QUORUM PRESENT:** Yes

**OTHER ATTENDEES:** Legislators Erner, Heppner, Greene, Petit, Sperry, & Uchitelle, Clerk of the Legislature Fabella, Legislative Counsel Ragucci, Minority Counsel Pascale, Deputy County Executives Contreras, Kelly, & Rider, District Attorney Clegg – UC District Attorney, Comptroller Gallagher & Samuel Sonenberg – UC Comptroller’s Office, Commissioner Smith – UC Health Department, Director Doyle – UC Planning, Director Schmidt – UC Probation, Director Litwin, Molly Scott, & Ashlee Long, – UC Recovery & Resilience S. Deacon Bill Mennenga – Redeemer Lutheran New Paltz, RUPCO, Cheryl Schneider – UC Resident

---

**Chairman Gavaris:** All right I'd like the call the February 15th Ways and Means meeting to order.

Resolution 28: Dedicating Funding to Implement the Ulster County Respite House Policy. Can I have a motion?

**Legislator Walter:** I'll move it.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Legislator Walter. Second? Fabiano.

**Legislator Fabiano:** I'll second it.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Discussion? Legislator Walter.

**Legislator Walter:** I just want to say that this was approved unanimously in the ARP Committee, and that's it, thanks.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Any other questions, comments? All right? All those in favor?

**Group:** Aye.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Opposed? So carried.

Resolution 30: Funding Capital Project 599, ARP nonprofit as presented before you. You should have received an email later this afternoon with an amendment.

**Legislator Ronk:** I'll move it for discussion.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Second? Legislator Walter. Discussion? Legislator Ronk.

**Legislator Ronk:** Thanks. To me the amendment as, as well spirited as, as it is, is actually worse than just letting the Executive's Office pick the awardees themselves. I understand that the way it's written first off, I just want to say that I don't, I don't really care how tacitly the Executive approved, Executives approval by not vetoing the resolution is to having people on this committee, there is absolutely nothing in the charter, that gives us the authority to appoint people to an RFP committee controlled by the Executive. This is a, a way for the Executive to try to seem like he's giving us some say in, in where these grants are going to go. Um, you know, one way that we could do it, that would be I think more effective than this, would be to require that the grants come back to the Legislature for approval, even if they're under \$50,000. To require even, even if it were to be an abstract of the grant awardees. But once we give this money, if, if every grant is \$49,999, we're never going to see this again. In addition to that, the language artfully written Legislative Counsel, just to, to your credit, you know, it sounds awesome, in that it says that we are going to have at least two members on the committee appointed by the Chair of the Legislature. I know that some people believe that that means that we could have more than two people. If the Executive decides to put 10 People from, you know, the different departments on there. But in the end, everyone just buckle up because it is going to be two legislators versus way more than two members of the executive committee. So while, while we may have a seat at the table, it's a very quiet seat. Um, you know, and, and again, you know, when we do last minute changes to things, this is what you get, you get things that are not necessarily enforceable, you get things that are not necessarily going to improve the product. And in the end, we're just going to have, you know, something that would have been entirely under the Executive's Office, and then not only, you know, under his office for the purposes of, you know, pats on the back and credit, but also responsibility. And by putting legislators on this committee, which we don't have the authority to do, you know, what we're doing is we're lending credibility to something that I don't think deserves credibility, I don't think this is ready yet. And if the legislature really wanted to have a backbone and stand up for ourselves and our constituents, we would administer the program ourselves, rather than giving the Executive \$1.5 million to hand out at a bunch of photo ops. That's all I've got to say.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Legislator Walter.

**Legislator Walter:** Not quite sure where to start. But um, I, I appreciate the idea of engaging the Legislature in this process. I also appreciate the points made by Legislator Ronk about the idea that we would really, the only way to be engaged would be to have some place in the process where once these were going to be awarded. It does make me think, you know, in many ways, I think of this as what we're doing instead of Legislative Programs right now. It's, it's, it's and no, no disrespect to Legislative Programs, a slightly better approach than what we were doing. Because there is some level of matrix and some level of input to allow it and in that case, with Legislative Programs, it actually always would come to Ways and Means after they made their decision about the allocation. It wouldn't stop with Legislative Programs. So it's an interesting concept to me of how we can involve the Legislature once the distribution is considered. I don't think it's just this one. But it might be relevant to think about when it comes to the small businesses. Do we ever get a part in looking at those? And I guess I'd be interested in just hearing from the Executive's Office, their thoughts on that concept of, of whether it would make, what would be the feasibility? Or, or would there be pushback against us being able to review those

allocations, which aren't minimal. I mean, you know, it could be, I don't remember the range? Was it like five to 50,000? So, you know, they're, they're considerable amounts. And you know, we wouldn't want to be looking at hundreds and hundreds of \$1,000 gifts, but you know, those are big ones. So, yeah, I would like to hear from the Executive's Office, their thoughts on that.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Deputy Executive Kelly.

**Deputy Executive Kelly:** Thank you. So, I mean, having just received this ourselves, we're certainly open to legislative participation and involvement in the scoring process of the applications. So for this, for this program for, for what we're doing here, we have no objection to this. So.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Legislator Walter.

**Legislator Walter:** Yeah, to clarify, my question was, um, the, the not official proposal put out by Legislator Ronk of once the decision of allocations are made, allowing Ways and Means to have a final review of those. Your thoughts on that?

**Deputy Executive Kelly:** Um, I mean, it's already gonna, you know, I don't know, I guess I have to think about that part of it. It's not included in this resolution, as amended, in terms of now going to an additional committee for approval. I know that I would have I envisioned us going back to the ARP committee as kind of that review, but I didn't think in terms of other additional committees, I feel like but this process has defined, we are going to a lot of committees just to get the appropriation. Will be involving, if this passes, we'll certainly be working with the legislators to review each application for the nonprofit bucket. So I don't know. I'd have to consider that.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Legislator Ronk.

**Legislator Ronk:** Thanks. I don't know where Deputy Executive Kelly reads in this resolution that they've got to come back to us for diddily. I don't think that once we approve this, once we approve this expenditure, if the if the expenditures are below \$50,000, the County Executive could walk around the county all by himself with, with oversized checks, like they do at golf tournaments. So I again, I mean, it sounds really great to say Oh, of course, we're going to come back and review them with the ARP Committee. But you know, again, this is the Ways and Means Committee, our chance, our one chance to review expenditures, is when we approve the expenditures. And that's what we're doing here is we're approving \$1.5 million for the Executive to handout big checks to not for profits. And if they are under \$50,000, he doesn't have to come back to us for anything. He has, he doesn't even I mean, quite frankly, I mean, unless I'm reading this resolution wrong, and somebody can correct me I'm not even sure he has to give us a report of who got the grants. Um, you know, we can FOIL it. But I mean, this is our one shot that's why I, I don't support moving forward on this. Because, you know, without without reporting without, you know, uh, you know, again, you know, I was under the, it's actually worse than I thought it was because I was under the impression the Executive's Office had already signed off on you know, the amendment and the first thing that Deputy Executive Kelly says is, he hasn't really seen it so he hasn't really thought through the whole thing yet. And here we are tonight we're gonna vote on it. So I don't know. I just, I think that there's a, a real rush here. I know the Executive is in a, is in a super-duper rush to spend this money but I'm you know, I've, I've always been taught you know, ever since I was a, a young man, or younger man, I guess depending on who I'm talking to. Um, you know, I've been taught

to you know, measure, measure twice and cut once and I feel like we're, we're cutting here before we measure, a little bit.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Deputy Executive Kelly, then Legislator Fabiano then Petit.

**Deputy Executive Kelly:** Thank you. So just in terms of, if we award contracts, we'll have to set up vendors in the system. So that would all be transparent and available to be audited either by the Comptroller or Fiscal Staff. So it's not going to go out the door without checks and balances or view into it. And I would presume that if we're sitting on a scoring committee, with other legislators that they would also be having that input and seeing each application as they came forward. That, to me, is what the intent is of the resolution as amended.

**Legislator Ronk:** Just point of order. Mr. Chairman, if I could, just to follow up on what, you know, Deputy Executive Kelly just said, so you're saying that the legislature could stop these expenditures, once they're, once the vendors are set up. And, and there's, and there's, you know, of course, afterwards we can, we can audit things and we can, and we can see about it, but again, there's no, there's no legislative action or, or comptroller's action, quite frankly, without, without criminality or something like that, that could stop the expenditures from happening in the first place. So my point is, once we, once we appropriate this money, the Executive's Office can spend it as it pleases, as long as it's under \$50,000.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Sounds like the County Executive is, sounds like he's agreeing with that.

**Legislator Ronk:** Okay.

**Deputy Executive Kelly:** I didn't.

**Chairman Gavaris:** You, you're shaking your head. I assumed you're agreeing with what Legislator Ronk was saying?

**Deputy Executive Kelly:** No, I mean, certainly not the tone or the rhetoric of it. What I'm agreeing to is the fact that we're asking for an appropriation of \$1.5 million to fund this program, as designed and as presented in the amended resolution. So I, I, I don't think getting into the back and forth on that is helpful. So no, I don't agree.

**Legislator Ronk:** So, so I just want to be clear, you do not agree with the facts that I'm saying that once, once this money is once this resolution is passed, it does not have to come back to the legislature unless the contracts individually are over \$50,000. So you don't agree with that?

**Deputy Executive Kelly:** No, I didn't agree with how it was presented. I do agree with the rules and the procurement rules that are within the charter. Of course, I do.

**Legislator Ronk:** I don't understand what you're meaning by it. Could you expand upon, you know, your comments about what you don't agree with?

**Chairman Gavaris:** [Inaudible] I get it, let's move along with because it's the tone is what he's objecting to.

**Legislator Ronk:** I mean, he can object to whatever he wants. It doesn't, it doesn't make what I'm saying any less true.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Okay, Legislator Fabiano.

**Legislator Fabiano:** Yes. What I'm gathering here is that I think a lot of this has to do with policy, which I think the legislature has total control over. And why would we allow him to get this \$1.7 million, and divvy it up? And let them earmark it, and then come back to us? Why can't this committee have a say, in the earmarking of this money from the beginning, and before it, before it gets, before it gets sent out? That's what I don't like about it.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Legislator Petit.

**Legislator Petit:** I turned off my video, I was appointed to this committee along with Legislator Roberts, when we put together the bucket of ARPA money and had broken it down into specific, you know, communities, capital projects, whatever to start distributing. We discussed how to do it quite a bit and we reviewed in Public Works, the application. I, I have mixed feelings, I think moving forward, I would like to, to pull back and have more, more involvement as far as distribution of the money, but we, we did receive this in July. We had workgroups that were meeting through December. And our last meeting of the not-for-profit workgroup, we had opted to put these applications out in January. We're already a month behind now. And I had hopes that some of the not for profits, and of course, they were ones where we had pulled funding back during COVID. So we had gone again through half a year where some of these organizations thought they were going to get funding only to find out that they did not. And I would like to start the distribution process. I think it's disingenuous to hold on to it. Unless, you know we're, we're ready to move forward immediately on our own, take that application and put it into subcommittee of the ARPA group and start the application and distribution process that way, but I think continuing to hold back on it is, is just, we're not going to get the money out to where it needs to be.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Legislator Walter.

**Legislator Walter:** Thank you. So just to clarify what I'm understanding, and I don't know if it's right. But what I understand is, the intent of the amendment is to allow at least a couple of legislators to be a part of the conversation and have input into these different programs that are getting funded, which I support. But what I am hearing from Legislator Ronk and elsewhere is that we actually legally can't add that section, that, that my concern is not that section, per se, personally, but the legality of whether we're we can't. So I guess my point is, if we can't be there at the table, during the process of deciding, you know, contributing to the conversation, to how this gets allocated, where can we be? And does it make sense then if this is truly not allowed, that we request an amendment that actually says, and we've done this, like with Tech City, where even if it was under 50,000, that the cumulative was over, and that we would review those. But that's my question was to the Executive's Offices, if we can't come in here at the beginning, where can we come in?

**Legislator Fabiano:** Right.

**Legislator Walter:** In a way that would then satisfy those of us who want this to happen? Because I do, but also want to have at least a representative at the table when these decisions are made.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Legislator Ronk, then Deputy Executive Rider then Kelly.

**Legislator Ronk:** Thanks, um, you know, to Legislator Walters point, I'm not against having legislators at the table. And, and I don't, I don't disagree that the Executive can let legislators at the table. My issue is we cannot dictate to the Legislature to the Executive, that there are members at his table, how many members are at his table, that's just not within our power under the charter. Now, he could as Counsel Ragucci, I believe, has said to several Legislators and relayed back to me. You know, he can tacitly agree by letting them at the table. But the resolution says at least two, right. So that means that, you know, if, if, if, we, if he were to agree to the language and not veto it, and then tacitly allow folks from the legislature at the table, then he has to appoint at least two, but it doesn't say anything about having to appoint more than two. So the Executive could put nine people from the Executive's Office on this committee, from the Executives' Departments, and two Legislators. And to me, what, what point is that, you know, that the Executive staff are going to absolutely steamroll or steamroll over the Legislators on that committee and do whatever they please anyway. You know, if, if, if the Executive were to put an equal number of Legislators on there, or even close to an equal number of Legislators on the committee that's going to review these things, maybe I could support it. But, you know, again, it's, it's just, at some point, it's pretending that we're actually accomplishing something. And pretending that we're actually accomplishing something is, is worse than not doing it in the first place. Because it gives our constituents the illusion that we're actually doing something, you know, a seat at the table is great. But if you've got one seat at the table, and the Executive's Office has 10, that seat at the table is really not going to accomplish anything for the Legislature.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Thank you. Deputy Executive Rider, before you go, let me just ask a question because you'll maybe address it when you speak as well. So I heard Legislator Petit's comment about, you know, people have been waiting for this money, but is there any actual like, dire need that we're that this money is going to go towards that if we waited a month, that it would really cause a significant impact? Are we aware of any?

**Deputy Executive Rider:** Is this, this is a question towards me?

**Chairman Gavaris:** You or, or Deputy Executive Kelly, either one.

**Deputy Executive Rider:** I mean, you know, we there are whether there's nonprofits out there, there's businesses out there, there are organizations out there that are hurting right now that, you know, there's statistics nationwide, not just county wide that organizations and businesses are, are going out of business every month due to, you know, expenses for Covid and other things. I'm not, am I aware of one particular organization that's going to cease if we don't get this passed this month? No, I'm not. Maybe Deputy Exec. Kelly can speak more to that. But I do think that there's a little bit of urgency in this.

My point that I want to just speak to as Legislators Ronk point, Ronk's point, and that's, you know, this is the beginning of the overall ARP process for us. If we were to establish a committee, that was two legislators and nine members, and I know you just threw that out there. But I, I think that we would

probably lose much trust of this body going forward and there's \$34 million to spend over the next couple of years. Right? So this is the beginning of the process. I don't think we're going to do anything to, to, sow that mistrust intentionally moving forward. And I think that there's a fair point, I think we're taking notes now. I think we're not gonna try to overly stack the committee and we're, we're receptive to this amendment. And, you know, we're not just trying to have it be two voices that aren't going to be heard. So other than, you know, defining something else on the committee, this, to me sounds like a good idea. But I'll defer to Chris.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Deputy Executive Kelly.

**Deputy Executive Kelly:** [inaudible] deferral. Thank you, Marc. So I, I do want to reiterate Marc's point, just that, you know, if you want parity on the committee, I'm not going to assign nine people. I mean, the ARP team is here to help us administer the process. If you guys have four, we'll have four. Like, it's, it's not about that it's about really addressing the need, we're not, there's no stacking of the deck, this was just pushed across to us as well. So like Marc said, we're certainly receptive to it. There's no, you know, it's the beginning of this whole process for a lot of us. And I think that having legislators and members of our team from our departments as well, reviewing these is a good first step to building towards other bigger projects, too. So that's our perspective.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Legislator Cahill then Ronk.

**Legislator Cahill:** Thank you, Chairman. Um, so a couple things. One, one is, you know, look, this is the first round, there'll be a second round of this, there'll be a second year. And if we get uncomfortable with how things are going, we can change things down the road, right? This is one allocation in the whole, a ARPA, ARPA allocation to the county. Right, this is just one, they're going to be a lot more, right. And to start off on the wrong foot in the Executive Branch of government would be a huge mistake for not only them, but for every, for the county as a whole and jeopardize our future. Right? As far as getting additional ARPA money. That's the first thing. The second thing is, I am hard pressed to find major differences in our shared goals between the Executive Branch and the Legislative Branch, we are continually discussing things that we really agree on, we agree that the issues that are have to be addressed are being addressed in some of the initiatives that the Executive's Office presented, are they exactly how the legislature would have presented them? Probably not. And if we presented them, they probably wouldn't be what the Executive wished. But however, on the grand scheme of things, I think we're all about going to the same, to the same goal, right, trying to help the same groups of people, and trying to do it in an efficient way. And by the way, if we keep discussing these things over and over and over, we'll make sure that a lot of these people do go out of business, alright, and do suffer. And some of these not for profits do close up because there's a timeframe here. This is to, to help people who are struggling as a result of the Covid pandemic. And if we keep going, you know, will will stall it long enough where nobody gets anything, and we'll be a, a lesser County for that. That's my opinion. Thank you.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Legislator Ronk.

**Legislator Ronk:** Yeah, thanks. I mean, you know, I, I heard I'm not I don't remember if it was Marc, or Chris, who, who mentioned not wanting to sow the seeds of distrust. I mean, you know, I guess my biggest problem and I may be the only one I'll just be the squeaky wheel for my last two years in the

legislature and and say that, you know, the seeds of mistrust have already been sown with me. Um, you know, and my issue that, that's my issue is that I have a large amount of distrust in the Ryan administration, because of things that they've done, not because of things that I perceive, not because of things that I think might happen but things that have happened and here we are getting ready to write another \$1.5 million check with a bunch of promises that have been in the past shown to be empty. Um, you know, so the rest of the legislature may, you know, may be willing you know, in, in, in worry about places closing and worry about not spending the money fast enough like Legislator Petit said, you know, there you know, there, there may be enough legislators in, in this body to, to, to sign a bunch of blank checks in, in hopes that it's going to be different this time than it was the last 17 times. You know, but until I see some real effort by this executive to work with the legislature, not, not to, you know, again, I, you know, not to have working together being the legislature doing what he wants, but to actually work with the legislature, because the, the first seed of distrust in the ARP funding that I remember was that the executive appointed all these different committees, and put legislators on them to discuss how to spend the money. And then before the committees had met, and before the committees had come up with with their, with their ideas, the executive came to us with a plan to spend almost \$30 million of the money. You know, and, and that apparently wasn't enough, enough of a seed of distrust for a majority of members on this committee. So again, you know, I'll just, you know, I'll spend the year being the squeaky wheel, and we can continue to write blank checks for the executive to write if that's what we want to do.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Legislator Walter.

**Legislator Walter:** Um, you know, I, in, in my two years or so, on this legislature, I think I've proven myself to be pretty critical. And I have my own reasons to feel concerns about trust with the Executive's Office. And that said, I feel comfortable with this. And I'll tell you like, the adding the two members I really appreciate. But also I don't, I'm not worried about there being more people from the Executive's Office than the Legislature, because I'm hoping that the Executive's Office is smart enough that it needs representation from Mental Health, from DSS, from housing from different aspects of the administration, that know about the different kinds of programs that need the support. And so by default, there'll be more people. But I think we have, you know, if I, who I need to trust is that our legislators who are sitting on this group, are smart enough and outspoken enough to let us know if they feel they're being railroaded and to speak to Legislator Cahill's point, especially this early, if they start railroading those two legislators at this, you know, at this early stage, it's going to come back to them. And I don't you know, it's not a wise thing to do. So I'll just say, with this amendment, whether it's allowed or not, if the Executive's Office is okay with it, I feel comfortable enough to move forward with this resolution.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Legislator Uchitelle and then Ronk.

**Legislator Uchitelle:** Thank you, Chair Gavaris. I just want to just state for the record, my understanding of the sequence of events is a little bit different than one of the previous speakers mentioned in terms of how the ARP process has unfolded. As I recall, the County Executive, when it was first set in motion reached out and, and came to an agreement with the prior Chairman, the Minority Leader, the Majority Leader, they formed a group that was involved in, in, in, I don't know what types of conversations were were happening there. Because when we got that plan, I think people felt it was a little bit, including those that were on the group, felt it got a little bit, you know, far out ahead. And then the process changed. And we had, by our request, we asked for the process to change. And we asked for,



you know, negotiated and we figured out these ARP Committees and we had a couple of meetings about them. And then the new term who took over and another process. Again, just like the last one, also from the Legislature, another process was put in place where we have an ARP Standing Committee, or rather an ARP Special Committee, and that's the process that we're in now. But now it sounds like that process isn't, you know, some folks don't seem to be very happy with that process either. So I don't really understand what we expect the Executive to do when we keep coming up with ideas for how we want this process to work. And then once the, you know, metal meets the floor or whatever, that then we're not happy with the process. We're holding things up. So I just, you know, this is there are there are people out there that need help and the point of this is to help the people. So if we're worried that by, by supporting this amendment, it's going to look like we're you know, doing nothing. Well, I can assure you that by not supporting the spending of this money and getting it in the hands of people I don't think anyone can point to the Executive's Office. Not you know, putting money in the hands of the wrong people were supporting the wrong project. We might not like the process. Don't think anyone doubts their intentions, and, and I think, you know, many agree that this is, this is consistent with that. So if, if the goal is to do nothing, you know, perhaps that's just direction that folks want to go in, I don't know.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Legislator Ronk.

**Legislator Ronk:** Yeah, thanks. Um, you know, just to, you know, for Legislator Uchitelle's you know, benefit of the, for the last month and a half or so of, of, of this term of the legislature. These three resolutions were put in, I believe, just before the A, the new ARP Committee met. I also will tell you that last year, the agreement with the Executive, the Minority Leader, the Majority Leader, and, and the Chairman was to create those ARP subcommittees which had in which which had individual first meetings, I believe, and then did not meet, most of them did not meet again, until after the Executive came with his grand plan on, you know, what looked like, you know, you know, like unicorn, you know, unicorn skin paper, with all kinds of really fancy graphs and charts and charts on how to spend all of the money, you know, absent what the committees that had been agreed to, by the Executive had, had talked about. You know, there was stuff in there that we had never talked about. And, and that was one of the 17 or 18 times where the Executive said to me, yes, sorry, that probably wasn't the best idea, it probably wasn't the best way to work together, I'll do better next time. And if, if I had, if I had \$1, for my constituents, for every time the Executive has said to me during, during this term, you know, I'm sorry, I shouldn't have done that that way, it'll happen better next time. You know, my constituents would be pretty happy with me. Um, you know, and again, I'm, I'm at the point now where I, I just can't support things and then wait to hear I'm sorry, we'll do better next time again. I think that we as a legislature need to do it right the first time. There's a bunch of people in, in this meeting right now that obviously haste is more important than right, and that's fine. If that's what you if that's the way you want to govern, that's the way you want to govern. It's just not the way it's not, it's not what my constituents sent me here to do.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Any other comments? All right, I'll just say, you know, sort of in a mixed feeling here, on one hand, I agree a lot with Legislator Ronk that, you know, over the last two years, I've been burned a lot with hoping and wishing and praying that something was going to happen, and it doesn't. But on the other side, I think Legislator Cahill makes a good point, there is a new team in place, this is a new group, and this would be a foolish move to mess the first thing up, because definitely will set my position for the next two years, if this doesn't go according to the way Deputy Exec Kelly just laid out. So.

Legislator Ronk.

**Legislator Ronk:** I mean it's probably futile, but I, I feel on behalf of my constituents I have to do it. I'll make a motion we postpone this until next month.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Can I have a second?

**Legislator Fabiano:** I'll second it.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Fabiano. All those in favor?

**Group:** Aye.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Opposed? 3. To 2. Postponement defeated. All right. On the resolution itself. Motion?

**Legislator Ronk:** It's already been moved and seconded.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Yeah. All those in favor?

**Group:** Aye.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Opposed?

**Legislator Fabiano:** Opposed.

**Chairman Gavaris:** 2 Opposed. All right. Thank you.

31: Funding Capital Project 602, the ARPA Infrastructure Trails. Can I have a motion?

**Legislator Ronk:** I'll move it.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Second, Walter. Discussion? All those in favor?

**Group:** Aye. Aye.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Opposed? So carried.

Resolution 34: Authorizing the issuance of additional 2.83 million.

**Legislator Ronk:** I move that we block together 34, 36, 38, 41, unless anybody's got any objections.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Deputy

**Deputy Executive Rider:** I would just ask that you not, that you take no action on 36 so that you do not include

**Legislator Ronk:** All right.

**Deputy Executive Rider:** that.

**Legislator Ronk:** So 34, 38, 41, 43, 54, 56, 58,

**Chairman Gavaris:** Yeah that's it.

**Legislator Ronk:** I'll stop there.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Okay. Motion. Second? Block. All right. All those in favor?

**Group:** Aye. Aye.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Okay. On the block?

**Group:** Aye.

**Chairman Gavaris:** in favor? Opposed? So carried. All right.

Can I have a motion to postpone 36 then?

**Legislator Ronk:** I'll move we postpone.

**Legislator Fabiano:** I'll move it.

**Legislator Ronk:** Second.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Second, Fabiano. Discussion? All those in favor?

**Group:** Aye.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Opposed? So carried. I'm sorry Ken, you left 4-50, you went to

**Legislator Ronk:** 62 is the next one.

**Chairman Gavaris:** 62, there we go, all right. Thank you.

Authorizing the Ulster County Executive to execute a contract with New York State Housing Trust Fund Corp. Can I have a motion?

**Legislator Ronk:** I'll move it.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Second? Legislator Walter? Discussion? All those in favor?

**Group:** Aye. Aye.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Opposed? So carried.

63: Approving the execution of a contract for \$800,000 for RUPCO. Can I have a motion?

**Legislator Ronk:** I'll move it.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Second? Walter. Discussion? Legislator Walter.

**Legislator Walter:** Thanks. So, um, there was a request at our last meeting that language is added that into the resolution to address the fact that the 500,000 from ARPA really was yet to be determined. And I appreciate the effort by Deputy Executive Rider to add that language, but since that request, seeing the actual email from the funder, my personal feeling is including that email as backup, because it was really not the resolution, that was the problem, it was the backup. So for me, including that reso, using, including that email with the backup is sufficient and that I would not need the amendment because I just, it just needed to clarify that the funder was understanding of this. So my suggestion is we don't have the amendment. And we just include that email, which I don't know if everyone saw but I will say, says quite pointedly, that none of this funding is impacted by the 500,000. That and that all the expectation is is that going forward, if it is not obtained and provided by the county or through federal funds, that they explained what the loss to the program would have been. So that would be my preference is that we do not add an amendment at this time.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Deputy Executive Rider, you had your hand up before?

**Deputy Executive Rider:** No.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Deputy Executive. Okay. All right. Any other comments, questions? So as it stands right now, is that included in this or not, I don't have that in front of me. It's not, so just as the way it is now then. All right, so all those in favor?

**Group:** Aye.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Opposed? So carried.

69: Approving the execution of a contract amendment for 150,000, Family of Woodstock. Can I have a motion?

**Legislator Ronk:** I'll move it.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Legislator Walter. Second, Ronk. Discussion? Legislator Walter.

**Legislator Walter:** Thank you know, I've had several conversations with Deputy Executive Contreras, and also a long conversation with Michael Berg today, trying to really understand for the sake of the full

legislative, legislative body exactly what the impact is of the \$15 an hour increase. How many people are impacted and what that breakdown is, so that we can compare those amounts to both the budget amendment and to just also understanding how many people are we impacting with these increases? Um, so I, unfortunately, the closest I got to understanding the real breakdown was a phone conversation with Michael Berg, just about an hour ago, that was comforting, however, does not disaggregate for this particular resolution. It just says overall, how many people would be impacted. And so I think we're close. I think we're like 85%, to where we need to be with this resolution with the sort of backup information, but not 100%. I think it won't take long to get there. So I'm going to just make a motion that we postpone this, especially because it's the first one we have at hand dealing with the \$15 an hour increase. We have a potential other resolution that's looking to go to 20. So we need to understand how this all lays out. But again, I don't think we're far from having that breakdown. So I'm putting in a motion to postpone this till next month.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Second? I'll second.

**Legislator Fabiano:** I'll second it.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Thank you. Any further discussion? All right. All those in favor?

**Group:** Aye. Aye.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Opposed? So carried.

75: Amending the 2022 Ulster County Budget to reflect Public Health Emergency Preparedness funding. Could I have a motion?

**Legislator Ronk:** I'll move it.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Legislator Cahill. Second, Ronk. Discussion? All those in favor?

**Group:** Aye.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Opposed? So carried.

Resolution 91: Approving the Execution of a Contract Amendment for 230,000, Family of Woodstock.

**Legislator Ronk:** I'll move it.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Second, Legislator Cahill. Discussion? Legislator Walter.

**Legislator Walter:** Legislator Cahill can go first, I'll go second.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Legislator Cahill.

**Legislator Cahill:** Thank you. So I just wanted to take a moment and say thank you for getting me the information I needed to Probation Director Schmidt, I was a little confused on how this was broken out.

And we got a pretty good backup on how this actually played out. And I'm much more comfortable with how this was constructed this year. And it looks like you know, it was just a increase in services and an increasing cost to Family of Woodstock based on that, if I understand it correctly now. So I just wanted to take a moment say thank you for getting us that information.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Any other discussion?

**Director Schmidt:** You're welcome.

**Chairman Gavaris:** All those in favor?

**Group:** Aye. Aye.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Opposed? So carried.

Resolution 95: Amending the 2022 Ulster County Budget to create a full-time Deputy Medical Examiner.

I'll make a motion with an amendment to create the full-time position but eliminate a part time position, which will be a net increase of \$27,018 to the budget.

**Legislator Ronk:** Is that including benefits?

**Chairman Gavaris:** Amber? Yes. Yes. Ken.

**Legislator Ronk:** Okay.

**Chairman Gavaris:** I'll make that motion. Second, Legislator Walter. Discussion? All right. Legislator Walter and then Ronk.

**Legislator Walter:** Yeah. Um, so I appreciate the Executive's Office, making, having this flexibility, it is challenging adding a job in, outside of the budget, period. Although recognize, as we were told several times from Dr. Smith, that this there was an unexpected loss to this, this office, at the end of the year, I definitely felt the pressure this office is on to do the work that they're trying to do. And I no doubt would expect that we may hear for the 2023 budget, the need for more staff. But at this point, I, you know, I got reassurance from that this would definitely help this current situation they're in. And, but again, I, I don't, it, it won't be surprising to me if we're going to need to further support this office once it comes to the next budget.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Legislator Ronk.

**Legislator Ronk:** Thanks. You know, to me, I mean, you know, I feel like, this is a continual process. But the same thing happened with the new Director of Budget and Innovation. You know, all of a sudden, at the last minute, you know, you know, the Executive's Office comes back with, well, we need this position, which is way more and a management position, and, you know, another, you know, you know, Deputy Director of, you know, Assistant, that is the general manager, all these positions that they

come up with, um, you know, but we can take out this lesser position, you know, and, and it's just, you know, it's almost like they put them there, in order for us to be able to, you know, get a little something at the end and eliminate them. With all due respect, I just, you know, we need in a, in an administration where the, where the Chief Executive talks all the time about innovation, there seems to be very little innovation going on. And, and here we are, again, raising the budget, increasing the, the number of, of high paid staff in management positions, and not having a plan for the future in the department and Legislator Walter, I think said it perfectly. They're definitely going to come back to us for more money for this department in the fall. Um, you know, after coming to us for with, for more money, you know, in the spring, and it's the same thing that the DA's Office did to us last year, it's the same reason why this budget was so exponentially higher than, than the previous budget. Um, you know, we added more money and more staff to this budget, then I've added, yeah, that I've seen added since I've been a Legislator in, you know, for this is my 15th year in the legislature. And everyone was okay with it. I mean, I voted no on the budget, but and, and, and it's, it's things like this. And, again, with all due respect, there needs to be a plan. And, and this legislature needs to stand up and stop voting yes, on these piecemeal items, until there's an actual plan. I will continue to vote no on, on, on piecemeal items like this until there's an actual plan for success for this department and any other department.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Thank you. Legislator Walter, I'll go to you in a second, I just want to take a second and I want to thank Deputy Executive Contreras because she's worked very, very hard on this, we've gone back and forth for the last week on this. And I think we've come to a place that we're both mostly comfortable with and it doesn't end here. I just want everybody to know that the next step, which is already apparently in process, is Finance is doing an evaluation of the entire department, and looking at the positions and potential need, I don't know that it's a foregone conclusion that they will be back to ask for more money. After some of the, you know, things that we've talked about, this may wind up saving us in the end. Of course, we don't know that until the study is done. But one of my reasons why even I supported one of the previous resolutions is it's been a pleasure working with Deputy Executive Contreras, there was a there was a lot of, you know, thought put into the conversation, and I appreciated it. So, thank you.

Legislator Walter.

**Legislator Walter:** Yeah, thank you. So to be clear, this is not about innovation, the, it might be the end of a person's life but these are first responders, as far as I'm concerned. And the the idea of not respecting that a department that handles, who is a first responder department, that expresses how overwhelmed they are to meet the needs, I'm going to hear that and I'm going to respect it just like I did for the District Attorney's Office that this is, this is not fluff jobs, these are not, and I, I've been with Legislator Ronk and others and questioning communications positions and innovations positions. But this is by no means in my mind, anything like that. This is serious. And this is impacting people, this is impacting public health. This is impacting, you know, our overall delivery of services to our constituents, as well as doing the best we can in a public health perspective. And so I just want to disaggregate this kind of position request with something like, you know, something in innovations or, or otherwise.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Deputy Executive Contreras and then Legislator Ronk.

**Deputy Executive Contreras:** Sorry about that. Trying to unmute myself, I just wanted to say thank you, to Legislator Gavaris for your kind words, it really means a lot. And I just also wanted to say thank you to everybody, for being willing to engage in this conversation, I know, it's really very much out of the process to add a position outside of the budget. And so we did not put that forward lightly. And I, I just appreciate your willingness to give us the benefit of the doubt that we are trying to look at this in a complete way. We're trying to be very thoughtful. And that's why we're gonna come back we're, we're, we want to know what the ideal state is for this budget for this office, because it has gone through so many iterations of sort of piecing it together. And once we have a better idea of what the ideal state is, we can all decide what next step we want to take and how we want it to look, but at least we'll have a sense of what the best practice is. That's all.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Legislator Ronk.

**Legislator Ronk:** Yeah, thanks. You know, just to Legislator Walters point, I, I think that you misunderstood my point. My point is that they've got an entire division about innovation and we just hired a new Deputy Director of Budget, or, Director, Director of Budget and Innovation for what \$115,000. My point is, there should be some innovation going on into the plan for the Medical Examiner's Office, not that this is like an innovation position, believe me, you don't need to tell me about what first responders go to. And I understand that these people have to see a lot of terrible things. Believe me, I understand that Legislator Gavaris understands that, other people understand that. So you do not need to preach to me about what, what it's like to be a first responder, I'll tell you that. What I will say is that there, you know, like, Deputy Executive Contreras just, just said it. I mean, she couldn't have said it more perfectly for me, you know, we, we need to find out what's right for this department. And to me, the time to do that is before we spend another \$70,000 in benefits, not after we spent another 70 \$70,000 worth of it, you know, plus benefits. I was personally willing to fund this position for half a year until the Executive's Office comes up with a plan for us because, again, this is something I've seen and, and Deputy Executive Contreras I'm, I'm sorry, this is you know, part part of my frustration is because I'm, I'm two years beyond my, my, my patience and, and my benefit of the doubt. My benefit of the doubt was exhausted a year and a half ago, two years ago. And, and you and, and Mr. Kelly are, are the two newest you know, contestants in the benefit of the doubt game and I just can't, you know, there's just too many, there's been too many times, when I've, I've been told, just give us the benefit of the doubt, we're going to do it right. And then we spend a bunch of money and in the end have no plan. Um, you know, the last time was over the summer, when the Executive's Office came to us with 400 and something thousand dollars, to give to the EDA in order to mark it, enterprise, Enterprise West. And, you know, I fought and fought and fought, and we knocked the number down to what the, you know, it was the, you know, it was the money for the appraisal and for and for some of the, you know, architectural fees and whatnot. And, and then I said, come back to us with a plan we'll give you the rest of the money well low behold, they must not need that money because it never came back again. And it's eight months later, um, you know, so again, this is, this is an area where if everyone's comfortable, saying, Okay, we'll give you the benefit of the doubt for the 17th time, you know, but don't do us wrong this time. I mean, eventually, you got to say to yourself, maybe it's me, maybe we maybe should just disband the legislature and the executive can run the government however you want. I mean, that's, that's what's happening anyway. I don't know. I'm just I'm, I know, I know, it sounds in my voice. But I'm getting increasingly frustrated with, with this legislatures inability to stand up for what our responsibility is under the charter.



**Chairman Gavaris:** Any other comments? All right, all those in favor with the amendment?

**Group:** Aye.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Opposed?

**Legislator Fabiano:** Opposed.

**Legislator Ronk:** Opposed.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Opposed? Two opposed. All right, motion is carried. Thank you.

Just there's some resolutions that will be coming next month to just look at those and

**Legislator Ronk:** We need to vote on the resolution.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Oh, you're right. I apologize.

**Legislator Ronk:** Also, we're gonna need to make that amendment on the floor because it's the night of session, we can't amend in committee on the night of session.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Yep. All right. All those in favor? Opposed?

**Legislator Ronk:** Opposed.

**Legislator Fabiano:** Opposed.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Two opposed. Okay. Thank you. Motion's, carried. Thank you.

Deputy Executive Rider. No? All right. Comptroller Gallagher, anything?

**Comptroller March Gallagher:** Thank you. I'll be brief. We released a sales tax report for 2021, yesterday. We after receiving the last payment from the state on Friday, totaled out 154.9 million for 2021 in sales tax receipts. That is 34.3 million above budget and a 22% increase over 2020. Granted, the budgeted number you guys set for 2021 was low because of the pandemic. And I, I don't want to take a lot of time here, now, but I want to just say that I think especially this committee, Ways & Means, should be thinking in the future about other ways to steward these funds, both on the investment side but also considering other reserve funds like a retirement contribution reserve fund, a snow and ice removal reserve fund, road repair reserve fund, in addition to the reserve funds that we already have, like the tax stabilization reserve fund, and capital reserve fund. So I'll be back to you more on that later. But I just wanted to put it out there. Thank you.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Thank you. All right if nobody has anything else, a motion to adjourn?

**Legislator Fabiano:** So moved.

**Legislator Ronk:** Moved.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Motion, Walter. Second, Ronk. All those in favor?

**Group:** Aye.

**Chairman Gavaris:** Opposed? All right everyone. Thank you.

**Legislator Fabiano:** Thank you.

**Deputy Executive Rider:** Have a good night.