

# PUBLIC WORKS Transcript 12/1/2021

## **SPEAKERS**

Jean Raymond, Chad Cooke, Steve Bulger, Darren O'Connor, John Lant, Phil Barrett, Several Supervisors

### **Phil Barrett**

All right, good. Well, we have a quorum. So let's get rolling. Here. We have an action packed agenda here for the Public Works Committee. December 1 2021. I'll first entertain a motion to approve the minutes of August 4.

### **John Lant**

I'll make that motion.

### **Darren O'Connor**

Second.

### **Phil Barrett**

Mr. Lant, second by Mr. O'Connor. Discussion. All in favor?

### **Several Supervisors**

Aye.

### **Phil Barrett**

Opposed? Motion carries. Alright, number three, we're gonna swing this over to Chad. Go ahead Chad.

### **Chad Cooke**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The first two items are related, but we'll take separate votes on them. The first is a relatively routine resolution to accept an implement funding part of the Marchiselli program aid program through the State. This project is the Lasher Road bridge over the Morning Kill in the Town of Ballston. So we are accepting some additional aid here in the amount of \$25,419, which is for work associated with right of way incidentals, and acquisition work for the replacement of that bridge. So it does require a budget amendment. We had included 114,000 in this year's budget for this project. And the State reached out to us with this additional aid for the right of way acquisition work. So that's what this resolution is essentially doing, accepting those additional funds and amending the budget.

### **Phil Barrett**

Okay, very good. We will consider three and four separately. So I'll first ask to entertain a motion to approve the acceptance of the funds.

### **Jean Raymond**

So moved. Mr. Chairman.

**Phil Barrett**

Thank you, Jean.

**John Lant**

I'll second it.

**Phil Barrett**

Second by Mr. Lant. Discussion. All in favor, aye.

**Several Supervisors**

Aye.

**Phil Barrett**

Opposed? Motion carries. All right next.

**Chad Cooke**

And the next item is related to the first. And this is a contract with Greenman Peterson to actually do the design work right of way incidentals and then right of way incidental services for the Lasher Road bridge replacement in the Town of Ballston. There's no budget amendment required because we handled that in the first item.

**Phil Barrett**

Okay, very good. I'll entertain a motion to approve.

**Darren O'Connor**

So moved.

**John Lant**

Second

**Phil Barrett**

By Mr. Connor, second by Mr. Lant. Discussion. Okay, all in favor?

**Several Supervisors**

Aye.

**Phil Barrett**

Opposed? Motion carries. Alright, so the next item school safety partnership projects, we had a couple of projects that have come forward, one in the Town of Ballston and the second in the Town of Clifton Park. So I'm going to ask Chad, just to give an overview of these individual projects that would require funding for them to occur. And why don't we start with the Ballston project?

**Chad Cooke**

Sure. So the Ballston project is located at the intersection of Kingsley Road and Lake Hill Road, which is just up the street from the Burnt Hills Ballston Lake High School. I think there's been somewhat of a groundswell of support for a crosswalk at this location. Both Lake Hill Road and Kingsley Road are County roads. For a bit of background in terms of pedestrian accommodations, the County typically does not fund or install pedestrian accommodations within the right of way. It's not uncommon for a municipality to say, hey, we'd like to install a crosswalk or a sidewalk in the County right away. And we certainly don't stand in the way of that, but it's typically fully funded and constructed and maintained by the municipality. I mentioned that because Kingsley Road intersection with Lake Hill Road is a little bit of an outlier. So Lake Hill Road was a State highway at one point in the past, that included sidewalks. So at some point, the State turned over Lake Hill Road to the County for ownership and maintenance jurisdiction. So we inherited a sidewalk. So I believe it's the only sidewalk in the County that is owned and maintained by Saratoga County, within the County right away. We do maintain sidewalks here at the complex but that's the only other outlier in terms of pedestrian accommodations. So I was approached, I was contacted by some folks in the Burnt Hills, Ballston Lake High School a few times indicating that students cross this intersection pretty regularly. And they are requesting our help to construct a crosswalk. And our typical response is, its municipalities is that they're, you know, if they would like to get involved and construct this, we wouldn't stand in the way however, as I mentioned, this one's a little bit different because we own and maintain the sidewalk. So I have received petitions that have been circulated in the Burnt Hills Ballston Lake community, several 100 signatures in support of the County installing a crosswalk at this location. I did in anticipation of having this discussion, I did reach out to a consultant and got an idea on cost in terms of professional services as well as construction to install crosswalk at this location along with pedestrian poles. \$85,000 or so was the budget number that we have established for that, nothing is in the budget for it, sort of came after the budget process. So but I have spoken to Supervisor Connolly, he also contacted me about this, and there's been some discussion at the Town level as well. So I indicated to him that I would speak with Chairman Barrett, and this is the conversation I guess this is where it's led at this point. So I have a budget number in mind. But that's as far as it's gone at this point.

### **Phil Barrett**

Yeah, I would like to accommodate that, if at all possible. Now there are a lot of grant programs out there. I know we received the grant and in the Town of Clifton Park for 440,000. We're doing several crosswalks, ADA compliant, the whole nine yards. And there's also Safe Routes to School programs. Similar, I think, to the one we're gonna talk about next. But there's also I'm not even sure what they label them. I think they changed the labeling, I think they were formally labeled under some kind of pedestrian access. Now everything's geared towards climate change. So it's like, you know, if you put in a park, put in a sidewalk, you're saving the planet or something. So there's some kind of different designation now. But I would like to accommodate this project, if I don't know about funding, because it's not something we've been involved with yet. It was after the budget, but or after the budget was submitted, the budget process isn't over yet. But we're past the public hearing and everything else. So but I at least wanted to get it on the table for the Committee to understand that this project has been discussed internally with Public Works. We have an estimate on what the cost would be. I'm sure there isn't anybody in the Board of Supervisors, that would be against it. It's just a matter of working something out with the municipality and the school if necessary and coming up with the funding source. So now as far as the school goes, they don't own any of the property, right? They're just they just would

like to see it to foster a better option for kids crossing the road, right? They don't have any property ownership here.

**Chad Cooke**

They don't and I think to a large extent, this is being driven by I think they're seeing more kids that are walking to school, bus driver shortages, that sort of thing. I think they have a lot of pedestrian activity. And I think that particular corner, Kingsley Road and Lake Hill, I think there's been you know, some new commercial establishments, coffee shops, that sort of thing. So I think it's generating more pedestrian traffic.

**Phil Barrett**

Yeah, we've definitely seen an increase and kids walking to school, biking, but mainly kids being driven to school. Some of the schools are encouraging parents to drive their kids due to shortages on bus drivers. Alright, the second one?

**Chad Cooke**

So the second one is, I believe it was something that started in the Town of Glenville. So it's a very short section on Riverview road in the Town of Clifton Park, but the bulk of this sidewalk project is in the Town of Glenville. So they applied for a grant for one of these Safe Routes to Schools programs to connect sidewalk to the school. There's a school on Riverview Road, which I believe is part of the Niskayuna School District.

**Phil Barrett**

Yep, Glenclyff Elementary.

**Chad Cooke**

Glenclyff, and it connects into sidewalks into the Town of Glenville. So there is a very short portion of the sidewalk that would be located within the County's right of way. So this is one of those instances where if someone said to me, we want to put a sidewalk in the county right of way, I would say, go for it, right? We are not going to stand in the way, but we won't, we're not going to maintain it. We're not going to own it, we're not going to construct it. So this is sort of one of those situations. However, I think the Town of Clifton Park is involved with possibly being earmarked to provide some funding. So I don't know funding source wise, what's going to happen with that project, and I think there are some hurdles with that project. You know, needing some easements from some adjacent homeowners to install this sidewalk in addition to what's going to go on the County's right of way. So I think they're still working out those details. But you know, it's another pedestrian project on the horizon, something that I'm sure we're going to be contacted about in the very near future.

**Phil Barrett**

Yeah, it was something that was initiated by the Niskayuna school district and the Town of Glenville. The idea is to have a sidewalk that connects the Alplaus area in Glenville, folks that know that area, to the school property. So similar to, not exactly the same because we're talking sidewalk versus crosswalks only, but somewhat similar idea to the first project where we're trying to, you know, provide better access, safer access for kids to get the school. In this case, they're elementary and some folks

may not know that part of Clifton Park is in the Niskayuna school district. And this elementary school is a Niskayuna School District school, but it is in the Town of Clifton Park. So there is as Chad said, there's a short section in the County right away on a county road. As far as the funding that would be needed, as far as a match would be in the area I believe \$40,000. They're still working that out. But again, it would be a nice way to provide safer pedestrian access for kids within our County. So again, just want to get those projects on the radar. So this committee and the Board of Supervisors as a whole is aware of these requests and opportunities that the one that Glenville Niskayuna and that are involved with is funded through a grant. There has been no grant that has been, no grant has been pursued for the Ballston one yet. So that's where those are. Are there any questions on those two projects at all?

**Jean Raymond**

Chairman, I have a comment, if I may.

**Phil Barrett**

Yes, Jean.

**Jean Raymond**

I have not spent a huge amount of time with the budget. But I did spend some time looking over some of our plans with the ARPA funding. And I would suggest that one possibility may be that we can do some rearranging before we adopt the budget to fund some things that are in our budget with the ARPA money and take that equivalent amount of money and perhaps make it available for category called maybe trails and sidewalks or passageways that we might make available throughout the county for specific not just I want a sidewalk here, but a particular area where maybe to get a connection and that kind of thing. So it would be a net cost to the County of probably nothing more than the ARPA money. And I think there's quite a substantial amount of the ARPA money that's not allocated as yet that could be allocated into our budget. So that what's in the budget now could maybe go into a fund for trails that would include sidewalks as well. Sidewalks would be very, very helpful.

**Phil Barrett**

Yeah. And I guess, based on what you're saying that would be separate from the trails grant program we already have,

**Jean Raymond**

It would be a category within trails because the sidewalk could be a trail too.

**Phil Barrett**

Yep. That is correct.

**John Lant**

Chairman?

**Phil Barrett**

Yes. Mr. Lant.

**John Lant**

You know, being a safety issue, we should be doing anything, everything we can to make it happen, whether it's a grant or as Supervisor Raymond said, we should try and get it done.

**Phil Barrett**

Thank you. Not to put you on the spot there, Mr. Administrator. But I know we just that topic of our ARPA funding, which all the municipalities obviously received as well. How was that working in the budget as far as ARPA funds and what is being covered by APRA funds?

**Steve Bulger**

Yeah, we've got I believe it's \$12 million in ARPA funds designated. Some of those are direct ARPA allocations. Others are through the lost revenue component of ARPA that we've been able to take advantage of. One of the things that's interesting is there's currently a legislation being considered in Washington that will change and really loosen up the restrictions for both the county and municipalities on how they can use that ARPA funding that they have, especially regarding highway projects large, and that could encompass things like the crosswalks that were mentioned. It's something like that could fit, potentially sidewalks, we're waiting to see. The Senate has passed that. And we do expect passage in the House from what we're hearing. But we'll see what the final details on that look like. But that would really open up for both municipalities and the County, a whole new range of uses of direct ARPA allocations, which I think we're all looking for, because there's been a lot of restrictions on those. So to Supervisor Raymond's point, there is still a large amount of the ARPA money that is available. And we are going to be getting another \$22 million next summer, hopefully, from the Federal government as the second half of our ARPA money, and a lot of that money will, there won't be much lost revenue in that component, it will have to be direct ARPA expenditures. So I understand the desire to put some in the budget for this year. As an alternative, until we know exactly how those uses will change, what the amounts will be and what the request will be. That is something once we have that money, and have accepted that money, that is something that the Board can authorize at any point during the coming year. So that's another option instead of moving it into the budget now, we will have that money available to be authorized by the Board, which I'm just suggesting may be a better way to go. Because we'll have a better idea of what the total requests are, instead of trying to guess what they might be between now and when we have to authorize the budget on Tuesday.

**Phil Barrett**

Yeah, it's a little tight timeframe. Plus, we can't amend the budget here anyway. So what if we did this Jean? What if we as a Committee approved the idea of working toward creating a program that would involve, and I guess we'd have to put some language around it. And we can put our heads together on that, but at least make the commitment to work towards creating a program that would involve these types of situations where we're trying to create safer access for kids in school areas. Jean, Supervisor Raymond. Is she's still there?

**Jean Raymond**

No, I had it muted. I messed up. Sorry. I think it would be a good start. But I think safer passages, particularly on County property, whether it's children, and obviously children are important, but so are adults, and so are seniors, is we're adding more housing around our county and people are, you know,

maybe walking two or three blocks to a store and I totally agree. I think it's a great way to go. And not everybody who needs you know, we've done bike things, we've done trail things. You know, we certainly facilitate snowmobile trails, and handle that money. And I think that this is a particularly important avenue that we should begin to explore a little more and come up with again, maybe it's matching grants, maybe it's a grant, you know, with a limit on it, as we've done with economic development. But yes, I absolutely agree.

**Phil Barrett**

Yeah, cuz I think you can. I think you'd be able to use APRA funds for this type of initiative anyway. I think.

**Jean Raymond**

If we can, that's fine. If not my only thought was to swap out some money. There's some ARPA money that could be added to some water and sewer investments that we're making, in the budget that we could perhaps swap out money, just a shell game with money until the rules are made more common sense for the whole country. But yes, I'm very much in favor of that. And I agree with Supervisor Lant, safety is important. I would much rather spend money to make a safer area for children to cross the road than read about something happening to children crossing the road.

**John Lant**

Plus us senior citizens too.

**Phil Barrett**

Yes, people of all ages, how's that?

**Jean Raymond**

Well, there's also a lot of people who are disabled. Who can't move quickly? Maybe somebody who's wheelchair bound? You know, I think it's an area that if we're in a position where we can do it, we should begin to look at it.

**Phil Barrett**

Well, I can tell you we've added about 20 miles of trails in Clifton Park in the last couple of decades. And we have a few more projects on the in the queue, all grant funded. And I can't tell you how many people say I moved here because of the trail system. And I'm sure other Supervisors have heard that in their Towns. So it's something that's not only incredibly popular but becoming more and more expected. And then you have the Zim Smith Trail, which is just incredible. I mean, how many people use that? I mean, you go on that trail.

**Jean Raymond**

Which only goes to make another point, which is not subject of this committee, which is that we should have a grant writing department within our County, that we could subcontract with the county Towns that are not in a position to have their own grant writers could use and they'd be chargebacks. And there's a lot of money out there if you know how to go after it.

**Phil Barrett**

Oh, yeah. And that's another part of you know, we were talking about the economic development fund at our last meeting, Economic Development meeting that was just prior to this and that money, was one of the intentions, was to be used for that type of activity as well, whether it be matching funds, seed funding, or just using that funds to attain a grant. But, Steve, did you?

**Steve Bulger**

Yeah, Chairman to Supervisor Raymond's point, in the budget leadership has asked us as the Administration to include money in the 2022 budget for an aggressive grant acquisition grant writing program. There's gonna be two components to that it's actually hiring a firm that will help us go identify and go out and get the grants help write the grants and go after it. And then also a Grants administrator to make sure that all the grants we have, the 10s of millions of dollars in grants, the County already gets are being used appropriately. But to Jean's point. Yes, the County will, there's so much grant money coming out, especially from the Federal government, that we want to aggressively go after that in the new year. And if leadership and Supervisors decide that this type of thing for sidewalks, trails, etc, is a priority, we can absolutely focus our grant writing grant acquisition efforts on that.

**Jean Raymond**

I certainly think that's really great news. And I suspect when we have time to dissect those into this latest five year infrastructure plan that was passed, I'm sure there's money in there.

**Phil Barrett**

Very good. Any other discussion on that item? All right, well we will take that, and I'll follow up with Mr. Bulger and we'll start putting something together. If anybody has any ideas to include in that type of program that we're considering. Please send them over.

**John Lant**

Thank you Chad for bringing that up.

**Chad Cooke**

You're Welcome.

**Phil Barrett**

So again, if we get that information out so everybody knows what's out there, what's been proposed. And when Chad and I met with the Town of Glenville recently you know, we did make it clear to them that we would not be responsible for the maintenance of the of the trail or sidewalk. That's something that would not fall on the County. So in other words County's not going to go down there and snow plow it, that type of thing. Alright, project updates. I know we have a four way stop down at Vischer Ferry and Grooms Road that those poles, very beautiful. The poles to nowhere just sitting there waiting for something. More poles I guess.

**Chad Cooke**

Yeah. So I can't get a straight answer from the contractor because I don't think they they're getting a straight answer from their supplier when all the poles are gonna be delivered for installation. So all of



the underground work is complete. And all the pedestals are in, all the conduits run. So they have to pull wire and they have to install poles and signals right. So that's what's left I just don't.

**Phil Barrett**

So they don't have to get in the ground anymore?

**Chad Cooke**

They don't have to get in the ground anymore. Nope. So theoretically, they could install this at any time, right? Over the winter.

**Phil Barrett**

I hope so.

**Chad Cooke**

And once I, we've been reaching out to them, and once I get a straight answer, I'll let you know. But I don't have, that's obviously the only project on this list that's incomplete. Everything else is in good shape. And the only change on the list that I provided with the backup, since I submitted this was County Route 24 Spire Falls Road. culvert replacement. We have installed guide rail so we're doing a final inspection on that project next week. So everything is complete. We did 17.6 miles of roadway rehabilitation, although that's a little light, because I know in Edinburg, we did a little bit more on Route 4. But it really wasn't categorized as a rehabilitation, I would have done a, we did a very thin overlay on a section of Route 4.

**Jean Raymond**

Only because I desperately needed.

**Chad Cooke**

I'm sorry.

**Jean Raymond**

I said only because it was desperately needed.

**Chad Cooke**

Yes, it was. But it's not, you know, we'll do a proper fix, it's in the schedule for a proper fix, I think. Don't know if it's next year or 2023. But it's on the schedule anyway.

**Jean Raymond**

Thank you.

**Chad Cooke**

You're welcome. So we're in good shape. And I think our plan for next year looks similar in terms of mileage that we intend on rehabilitating. And you know, it's an iterative process, as we set up the plan for next year, but as we get into spring, I'm sure we'll make adjustments. And that's what happens with our road rehabilitation program, and nothing is really set in stone. Depending on the treatments we

identify for roadways now may be different in the spring. So but we try to hit that mileage, at least 18 miles a year? Because that way, we're on a 20 year rehabilitation cycle for 366 miles of road.

**Phil Barrett**

And you're still working on the intersection down at Riverview and Crescent?

**Chad Cooke**

I am. I reached out to our consultant again today to ask for an update on a timeframe. I don't know if this will be a springtime project or not. I mean we're not really paving anything, we're essentially, it's a T intersection with one of the legs is a stop controlled intersection, or stop controlled leg, which is the county route leg and the town's roadway is a through. So we're looking at doing a three way stop. So engineering that where the stop bars need to be to accommodate truck traffic and advanced warning signs. So we'll lay all that out and then find a good time to do that work.

**Phil Barrett**

Good. Any other questions about any projects that might be going on in your Towns or any questions in general for Chad? You're ready for the snow?

**Chad Cooke**

We're ready.

**Phil Barrett**

All right, if you say so. If you have any complaints about snow plowing, please forward those to Chad, not me. I appreciate that. Thank you. All right. Very good. Any other business to come before us today? All right, I'll entertain a motion to adjourn.

**Jean Raymond**

So moved.

**John Lant**

Second.

**Phil Barrett**

Mrs. Raymond, Mr. Lant. All in favor?

**Several Supervisors**

Aye.

**Phil Barrett**

Opposed? Motion carries. Thank you all for a successful year.