

**Herkimer County Legislature
County Properties, Human Resources and Ways & Means
Committee Meeting
Friday, March 26, 2021
Via Zoom
Follows Natural Resources**

Persons Attending:

Raymond Johnson (Chairman, County Properties, W&M committee member)
Mark Gaworecki (County Properties/Human Resources committee member)
William E. Keeler, Sr. (County Properties committee member)
William Weakley (County Properties committee member)
Robert J. Schrader (County Properties/Human Resources committee member)
Ray Donley (County Properties committee member)
Frederick J. Shaw, Jr. (Chairman, Human Resources/W&M committee member)
Raymond Smith (Human Resources/Ways & Means committee member)
Peter F. Manno (Human Resources committee member)
Gregory Malta, Sr. (Human Resources committee member)
Patrick E. Russell (Ways & Means Committee Chairman)
Kurt J. Ackerman (W&M committee member)
John P. Stephens (W&M committee member)
Vincent J. Bono, Chairman of the Legislature
James W. Wallace, Jr., County Administrator
Lorraine Lewandrowski, County Attorney
Sheri Ferdula, Budget Officer
Steve Billings, Personnel Officer
Christina Cain, Director of Public Health
Tim Seymour, Commissioner of Social Services
(Non Committee Members Signed In)
Legislator Bob D. Hollum
Legislator Peter Campione

Absent:

N/A

Mr. Johnson called the County Properties committee to order, Mr. Smith called the Human Resources committee to order and Mr. Russell called the Ways & Means committee to order at 9:34 a.m.

Items Discussed:

COUNTY PROPERTIES, HUMAN RESOURCES AND WAYS & MEANS:

1. Approve creating project and amending budget in connection with Daycare
2. Other

Committee Vote Record:

COUNTY PROPERTIES, HUMAN RESOURCES AND WAYS & MEANS:

Mr. Johnson: "All three committees are approving creating project and amending budget in connection with Daycare. I will open it up to the committees. Jim Wallace, do you want to say anything?"

Jim Wallace: "Yes, I will just give the opening and then listen to the discussion. We met about a month or so ago on this. One of the issues you guys wanted to do was take a walk through of the building. We had five or six Legislators who did take advantage of that. My impression was that everybody who left

thought it was a very good building and a very good site to work through. Christina and Tim and the Neighborhood Center, Sandy and Patrice have been working on this for two or three years. We have looked at countless numbers of properties to try to make it work. We have talked with other agencies other than the Neighborhood Center to try and make it work. We think we have come up with a budget that's the responsibility of the Neighborhood Center, that is solid. We think conservatively, if we had 85%, people in the building, which we think is very doable. You are looking at a surplus of about \$25,000 per year with the current budget. We think it is well needed. I have had discussions with both the Superintendent of Herkimer and the Mayor of Herkimer. They both acknowledge the need for the project and that is as far as we went with it. I did not ask for any type of commitment or any kind of support for the project. Again, I think Christina is on the phone, Tim is on the phone, we are happy to answer any questions you guys have. I know we have talked about this over the last couple of months an awful lot and a lot of emails have been going back and forth."

Mr. Ackerman: "Can you give a breakdown of the numbers really quick so everybody knows the cost we are looking at?"

Jim Wallace: "We are looking at \$195,000 for the building and again, it's something I think Ray has brought up too and Jimmy has brought up as well and maybe we need to have an architect, hire an architect, spend a few dollars to get a better number. In this budget we would have about \$105,000 for renovations. I know a few of the guys don't think that is enough so I think that is one of the discussions we need to have today."

Mr. Ackerman: "Thank you."

Mr. Schrader: "First of all I want to thank everybody for your commitment to this program but we preach about economic development. Since I have been on this Legislature for ten years everybody has made it a big joke about how high the taxes are in the Village of Herkimer. We can't get anybody to come in because of the taxes. We as a governing body of this County should not be taking any more property off of the tax roll to do a service. This company already owns a property up in my district, the old Country Manor that we fought for eight years I was on the board right off the bat. We closed it down because we didn't want to maintain it. It wasn't a profit maker so now we are going to jump into another building which is a very good structure. If we had to build it, it would cost us a fortune for that building. With that said, it's nothing about the building, it's kind of small for my...if we are going to get into this, why aren't we finding a location, building a building ourselves because at this point I think it would be a lot more money just walking through, when I was walking near the girl who is going to be heading this whole thing I asked her who gave her a price for the construction and she said the County construction crew. I think Mr. Ackerman was standing right there with me when she said this. We don't have a construction crew. I've done enough construction myself with eight or ten houses that I bought and redid, there is no way you are going to get done what I was told we are going to do to that building for that price. With that said, the construction prices are out of this world right now, second of all we can't even get people to work, the contractors are so inundated right now with other work that it would probably be a process to even get people to come in and work for us. Also, I don't see as a County Representative how you can continue to take more taxes off one certain area of the County and make those people pay for service buildings for the County, the constituents. Yes, we all represent the whole County, that's true but why should one district be burdened with the supplying of buildings for services to all of the community. We are the County seat. I want to look at economic development for the Town of Herkimer myself. With the taxes continuing to rise as high as they are taking another property off. And I know some of you guys may say just like they said with the jail, oh it's only \$15,000. Listen, every time you take that off, my School taxes go up, my Town taxes go up and my County taxes go up so I just feel that if everybody thinks this is a great idea, which I'm not saying we don't need the service, I'm not disagreeing with that. I'm saying that the Community Foundation already has one building in this County that is not for profit

and have done nothing with it. Nothing except went up there and stripped it and demoed it without even the proper protocols in place that they were supposed to get so my recommendation is to be able to dig in their budget and supply all of the taxes. Not just the Village, not just the school, they should be able to pay for all of the taxes to keep this building going and if they decide to bail out in five years then maybe we put the building up for sale. Hopefully each and every one of you guys understand where I am coming from here and hopefully we can work through this.”

Mr. Johnson: “What is the taxes that Mr. Schrader is talking about? Do we have a total on that?”

Jim Wallace: “Yes. \$5,075 for the School, \$4,200 for the Village and \$1,600 for the Town and County. Ray, is it okay for Christina to address the old Country Manor?”

Mr. Johnson: “Yes. Go ahead.”

Christina Cain: “I took the opportunity because I kind of heard from some of the last meetings that this might be a little bit of a concern and I wanted to make sure that I had the information to appropriately address it. At least take something off of the table or at least give it some closure. I spoke directly with Sandy, the Executive Director of the Neighborhood Center about the property, the old Country Manor and she basically gave me the most detailed timeline and journey through exactly what they have been dealing with in order to get that project up and running and I could drive through the entire thing but I don’t think you guys are necessarily that interested in the details. What I will summarize by saying is that it has never stopped moving and has never stopped being worked on and in the interim because there has been such a long hiatus, which I will say was not due to any lack of effort or commitment on the side of the Neighborhood Center, at the end of the day the Neighborhood Center really is very dedicated to being a good community partner to us and that is why Sandy made it a point to tell me too at the end of the conversation, kind of unsolicited, that while this property is kind of hanging, she purposely has not filed her not for profit status to take it off of the tax roll. She said I am not going to take this property off the tax rolls until it can bring something back into the community with jobs or people buying lunches, things like that so she is really trying to do the best she can with it and maintain it to the best ability but still be a contributing factor to the community even though she has been really kind of stymied by the state structure.”

Mr. Schrader: “I want to ask you this Christina, I don’t feel like they had all of their ducks in a row because if you don’t have money to be invested yourself that would be like me asking you to invest in a company or something if I didn’t have any money myself. I feel that they didn’t have everything in order they made that step, that big leap in buying that building. That is just my personal opinion. I would never ask somebody or take an adventure unless I knew, and I know where you are going with this Christina, you are saying the State is the one that held it up or they didn’t get the grant or the person they worked with retired or she is not working there anymore. Listen, as far as I am concerned you shouldn’t count on State money. State money is never a guarantee and that is what I am trying to get across with the whole thing because what is this, a five year guarantee from the State that they are going to supplement us a little bit of money. I don’t ever count on any State money and anybody that has been in politics, well, I have never been in politics until now but I wouldn’t count on State money for anything and any endeavor I decide and that’s what they did. They banked on a lot of State money.”

Mr. Ackerman: “A couple of things. I’m not saying there is not a need in the County for this. I did reach out to the Six to Six program, the lady that runs three or four different districts of the Six to Six program. She is running at half capacity right now. They are dealing with ages three and up. They tried to run a daycare through the YMCA in Mohawk for the summer and they only had two or three people sign up for it. She has extra staff to be able to staff. Would always expand her program if needed. She services I believe Frankfort, Mohawk and Little Falls. I had no idea about this program so that is one thing I would

like to point out. I personally think we should bring every not for profit in and see if they are willing to expand so we can service every community. My concern here isn't that there is a need but there are two things. One, that building is going to cost us a lot more money to rehab. We are going to have to put a sprinkler system in, that's two. There is no way that cellar is going to pass because both egresses are at the same location so it's considered one. You are going to have to put another egress on that basement to be able to use it. I worked in that field for a long time. Family Services are very strict. We were in business since 1876, there is no grandfathering in, it doesn't matter if you are staffing full time, you are going to have to put all of this stuff into the building. That is my other concern. We are going to be into this building for \$500,000 \$600,000 anyways. We are going to have to pay if they don't hit their numbers because if COVID continues to go down the path it's going down we are not out of this, you are going to have a reduction of kids in that program. You are going to be pulling kids out of other programs and possibly put smaller programs throughout the County out of business. I know there is a waiting list and I called other agencies, some have a waiting list and some don't. It doesn't mean those kids on the waiting list aren't in another daycare now. Most people are working and found daycare. They might not be in the one that they would choose or the one they would like to be in but they are in one. I have yet to have a person tell me on the Legislature they know a person that is not going to work because they don't have daycare. I'm not against expanding but if you brought all of the not for profits in and asked them if they could expand their program by five or eight kids then we divide that grant up and we could service every community in the County. Not just the one in Herkimer or not one in Little Falls or Dolgeville or Old Forge. We could maybe service all with some of this money and we wouldn't have to own a building. We got out of that County Manor because the private sector does it better. That's what we were told. Now we are going right back in to it to do daycare which is the same thing at the other end of the spectrum basically and we are going to do the same thing and it's going to take a building out, I think Bob is right. We should not be taking another building off of the tax roll. We should do our due diligence, look at every other avenue before we buy that building. I think we are going to be spending a lot more money than everyone thinks on this project. And again, back to the Six to Six Program, they are running at half capacity and they couldn't get any to sign up for the daycare in the summer. And they have staffing and are willing to expand if need be."

Mr. Manno: "What fund are we going to get this money out of to pay for the renovations and to buy it?"

Jim Wallace: "Pete, we have a grant from New York State that is committed and I talked with them again yesterday and the money is there and the other money would be from the Community Foundation."

Mr. Manno: "So it wouldn't be any County money?"

Jim Wallace: "Correct. The issue that some of these guys have they think there is a lot more renovations that need to be done. I think if we did hire an architect and take a look, and again it's up to you guys whatever the majority says. And the other issue, I did have a very brief conversation with a few of our department heads, you guys that have been here for a while remember years ago we took money away from Cooperative Extension, we reached out to Ed Scudder at the time and we came up with a grant program that is still in place today, to supplement that money so I didn't know if that's something we could look at. They say the Village says 'don't hire any additional officers' but I have a juvenile officer we have a contract with for \$4,200, you are now made whole. We do the same thing with the school. And again, that is something we are just starting to kick around because we have heard the discussions on how...we all agree it's tough to take things off of the tax rolls but that would make the School and the Village whole using State money for programs going forward. And I think that I mentioned that was twenty years ago and we are still doing that."

Mr. Johnson: “Jim, I have a question. Doing some quick math I come up with about \$12,000 in taxes, can the Neighborhood Center pay a \$1,000 month user fee to whoever that gives the entities their \$12,000 back? Is that legal or no?”

Jim Wallace: “Christina and I have been working with Beth over the last several days and that’s something that they are not obligated to do. That puts them in that same predicament Ray that we are talking about. That’s why we were thinking, could we go the program route to make the School and the Village whole.”

Mr. Ackerman: “Jim, at the 85% that you mentioned, that’s counting the basement. If that basement is not allowed to be utilized, which I don’t believe it’s going to be, what does that do to our numbers now? Does that program become not being able to sustain itself?”

Jim Wallace: “Kurt, it would definitely cause an issue no question but the majority are infants, toddlers and preschool. The basement is for the older kids as you mentioned during the summer vacation and three to six for when kids get out of school. It would definitely be a cramp. There is no question about it.”

Mr. Ackerman: “And if that is the case and again back to the Six to Six young lady that runs that program, if they were going to run that through the YMCA, the daycare in the summer for those type of things we are talking about and they couldn’t get any takers what makes you think we are going to be able to fill those slots with those kids that they can’t?”

Jim Wallace: “They feel comfortable Kurt that they can do that.”

Mr. Ackerman: “But I’m going back to when we said we reached out to all of these bodies and we never reached out to the lady that runs the Six to Six program in four districts. She is telling me one number and I’m not saying she’s telling me the truth, I’m just saying...”

Jim Wallace: “I’m not questioning her at all. I’m sure she is doing a great job.”

Mr. Ackerman: “She couldn’t get any takers to come into that program but three and if we are counting on that we wouldn’t be doing our due diligence if we didn’t look into that. Because if we are counting on that revenue, that’s another dollar that the tax payers are going to cover because we all know we are not shutting that program down two years into it when they don’t have their numbers to pay the rate.”

Christina Cain: “I just wanted to ask Mr. Ackerman, you know, I think part of the process of identifying these providers and seeing if they were interested...we worked with Cornell Childcare Council to kind of give us some of the entities that were providing these services and I think as far as trying to get those after school kids or the vacations kids is part of working directly with the schools which is something that the Neighborhood Center has done in Oneida County already. They have very strong relationships with their schools so they have coordinated and really made themselves partner there so I think that is a big part of making sure...”

Mr. Ackerman: “I agree with you but this program is already in the school districts. How can you have a better relationship with the schools when you are working in the school every day?”

Christina Cain: “Well what I was going to ask is the Six to Six program, who is the person you spoke to if you don’t mind me asking, is it their Director?”

Mr. Ackerman: “I will give it to you offline.”

Christina Cain: "That is fine."

Mr. Ackerman: "I would think that that you guys would know the name because she is the one that heads it up."

Christina Cain: "Some of the school programs go by different names depending on how you are describing them and what you are talking about and what kind of mixture of kids there are. Like our Pre-K programs so I would like to be clear and make sure I understand, because I don't want to give wrong information."

Mr. Ackerman: "It's not run through the school. It is run through the YMCA from Mohawk. They run the Six to Six program for three or four school districts and they also try to provide a daycare in the summer as well but they run ages three and up is what their program runs."

Christina Cain: "So my understanding of that program is number one is it income based?"

Mr. Ackerman: "I have no idea."

Christina Cain: "Okay because that is a huge issue."

Mr. Ackerman: "I don't believe it is. If there are open slots it may start as income based and then anyone can fill in after just like the pre-K program but being that they are running at half capacity, and she has also said that they would always expand it if there were more kids."

Christina Cain: "So one of the best money making even though none of child care is really money making, but where you are actually able to stabilize your budget and make money is on those older kids so I could have no issues arguing that she would be happy to expand that. What we are trying to do is supplement the younger kids which is where you are really pinching pennies and trying to make ends meet which is a real challenge in the fact that we came up with any kind of budget is huge. Second, I think my understanding from the program you are describing, some of the difficulty, and I would love to clarify this with her again, but some of the difficulty came from the fact that they had one location and were trying to serve all of the municipalities so getting kids there was a little bit of a logistical challenge."

Mr. Ackerman: "Aren't we doing that? I thought that is what we are doing. One location?"

Christina Cain: "Yes. Absolutely."

Mr. Ackerman: "We are going to have the same problems then is what I am saying. Mohawk and Herkimer are right over the bridge. She could only bring in two to three kids that signed up and they have a lot more activities to provide than we are going to have because of where they have it at the YMCA. You are going to have a lot more activities accessible to those kids and they couldn't get anyone to sign up. I'm worried that from a financial point that we are going to have the same problem. It's one location so I think it's the same issue and the fact that I still don't know if it's going to qualify to be able to put them in the basement which I still think you are going to have a problem."

Christina Cain: "And that may be true but OCFS seemed to think that it was going to be okay but as you know because you dove into these very, very deeply so I'm not going to contradict you by any means."

Mr. Ackerman: "Who toured that building from OCFS to tell that they didn't need a sprinkler system or you could go into the basement. I would like that name."

Christina Cain: "Yes, and I will give you the licenser that came and looked at it."

Jim Wallace: "We shared that at one point. Absolutely."

Mr. Ackerman: "I just find it very hard to believe that with all the restrictions that we had, and it's the same governing body, that we were never allowed to use our basements even with two egresses we weren't. The same with the sprinkler systems. There was no grandfathered in. We had twenty-four hour nursing, twenty-four hour security, twenty-four hour staffing. It didn't matter, you had to put in a sprinkler system in that building so that on top is going to be an add on. I'm just telling you, that's coming. There is no way around it."

Christina Cain: "Was that a Daycare facility or was that different service. Would that make a difference maybe?"

Mr. Ackerman: "It was governed by OCFS so it doesn't matter."

Jim Wallace: "But it is a twenty-four hour operation Kurt?"

Christina Cain: "Right."

Mr. Ackerman: "Yes."

Jim Wallace: "There are different rules for twenty-four hours versus a regular day. But we agree with you, there is no guarantee."

Mr. Ackerman: "My point still being is if other places in the County tried to do this with that age group and they are not getting any takers, what makes us think we are going to be able to subsidize our income to put us over the top if people who have been doing it, they are in three or four schools, they have connections with those schools, they've worked there every day, they have connection with all of those kids and they are still not coming."

Mr. Bono: "Can I ask one quick question on that? Kurt, is this because, the depletion in numbers, is it because of COVID or is this a long term number that you got?"

Mr. Ackerman: "I asked that question pre COVID and during COVID and even before COVID she still didn't get a big taker there. She also said that she would expand her program anytime there was a need for kids and she would always be willing to expand if we reached out to her. She would talk to her Board of Directors as well if we wanted to go that avenue but she has never even heard of us entertaining this, what we are talking about. I did talk to a couple private ones as well and there are some, you are right, that have a waiting list but I know some of the people that are on that waiting list but are in a different daycare and would like to go to this one because it's an exceptional one. I will give them that. They are the best one in the County and there is a waiting list there because it is such a good facility. It's a brand new structure. They are paying taxes on it. They did put a lot of money into building it and it is a great place so I give them all the credit in the world for doing that. My thing is I don't want to hurt those type of people that invested thousands and thousands of their own dollars and some of these other smaller private places or some of the ones that are not for profit are just struggling to keep their numbers. Some of the people have admitted to it. They are going to take their kid out of daycare that they are in today and put it into this one. So they are going to make an impact on the other daycares within this County and that's what I am concerned about. Believe me, if we could expand the program and if every one of these programs we could give them \$50,000 each to expand it and pay for the staffing for a year or two until they get their numbers up and we could spread this across the County I would be extremely happy. I just

don't want to have a negative impact across the County with anybody that's been trying so hard to do what they are doing whether it be profit or not for profit than we close down three or four smaller facilities, then we didn't do any good. All we did was limit the number of peoples travel time and now they have to travel to Herkimer because they have no other option."

Mr. Johnson: "Jim Wallace, I have a question for you and Christina. My concern is with the building. I don't know if it's been looked at is lead, radon and asbestos all big ticket items? We don't know, especially with kids, lead is a big item, radon we will have to look at. The second part of the question Christina, and I apologize, I don't know the age group you are putting in the basement but what if I have a handicapped child, how do I get them in the basement?"

Christina Cain: "Do we want to start with radon?"

Mr. Johnson: "Well, all three of the first issues are...lead, radon, and asbestos have to be cleared up in the building. All have big price tags to them. We don't know if there is asbestos, radon is probably a given, lead I know is a given. The building is older than 1978. Those two are a definite. Asbestos is the big question mark. If it goes over budget where does the money come from if we have to spend \$100,000 or \$200,000 on asbestos remediation?"

Christina Cain: "Jim, do you remember, I feel like we talked about asbestos at one point?"

Jim Wallace: "That would all have to be checked, absolutely but the point with Bruce is that should not be an issue but again, you have to check it. That's why I think when you and Jimmy said hire somebody to take a look is not the craziest thing in the world because there is a lot of good questions there."

Mr. Johnson: "I was just curious with the handicapped Christina, how would I get a handicapped child into the basement?"

Christina Cain: "There was a discussion about that actually and the idea was that there is that side entrance downstairs that they were talking about extending that and maybe making that a ramp and maybe possibly extending the overage too to have some sort of coverage because obviously if there is snow falling and stuff and you try and open that door you don't want it blocked. That would be disastrous so there were definitely conversations around that."

Mr. Johnson: "Thank you."

Mr. Bono: "I'm just going to make this suggestion. Before we get a full blown out set of plans from an architect wouldn't it just behoove us to get a consultant in there that knows the ADA Compliance, the sprinkler system, an architect, it's probably going to have to be and just give us a basic idea of what is needed instead of a full floor plan and sketches and drawings and renderings and things like that before we move forward. If it can't be done in that building then we are wasting our time here. It is just to cost prohibited, we move on but if it has merit and has some chance of being built then we will decide to go on from there. Furthermore, I'm going to put my two cents in here. I agree with Bob Schrader in the fact that Herkimer is the County seat and we do take a lot of property off of the tax roll and I agree with Jim Wallace on something like a program like that where we can do it through programming or host community benefit or a lump sum, one time deal and I know some of you guys have said well, you know, you are setting a precedent. I think it's unique in this situation. The Village of Herkimer is unique because it is the County Seat and if we were to go to any other community and put a building up for whatever reason I think we could make the argument that Herkimer is unique and pays the price more than any other community so if you want to consider a lump sum. If you realize the COVID relief money is out there and there are more pots coming out we could probably use some of that money towards a project

like this and after this call, matter of fact, Jim and I and Ray and Pat and John and Sheri are going to be on a call where we are going to discuss potential projects that the County could use...that we could use that money for in the County so this may be one of those projects where we could use that money whether it's a rebuild, a consultant or whatever. Or to pay the Village and the School district. Let's be creative."

Mr. Ackerman: "That's going to be in perpetuity then."

Mr. Bono: "The program whether if it's through a police agency or whatever the Social Services come up with, so it's in perpetuity if it's paid for by the State."

Mr. Schrader: "Mr. Ackerman, as I stated before, I thank Jim for mentioning paying the taxes to keep the municipality whole here. I don't care what municipality we are dealing with, the government should not be costing the tax payers of a certain municipality any more money than what it is already. I feel it doesn't matter where we go what we put in there is a County building from now on and yes Kurt it's going to set a precedent but from 2021, from now on, we don't go in and hurt a municipality being it a governmental thing. We complain about Governor Cuomo raising our taxes and people moving out, we are doing the same thing to our community by taking property off of the tax roll. We need to make sure it is a service for our community, it's a service for our whole County. We should make sure whatever municipality it is that it is made whole from 2021. We are the legislative bond. We can make rules and we can make laws however we have to do it to make sure we take care of each and every one of the municipalities. I don't feel it's right regardless what municipality it is to take any more property off of the rolls for our County for a County run facility."

Mr. Johnson: "I'm going to speak for Properties. I'm going to throw it at the committee. What do you want to do? I will let the other Chairmen do the same."

Mr. Schrader: "I make a motion to hold off on this and as Jim Bono was saying, check in on a couple things. I want Christina to check with Kurt's people because I am hearing there is another building being purchased in the County and that is what they were going to be opening. I just got a text because someone is obviously on the phone. They are purchasing a building they are going to be paying taxes on this property and that is what they are opening up is a daycare. I think we need to do a little bit more investigation. Christina, if you can talk with Kurt's people and what the status is there too and then maybe I will have a little bit more information on the person that is purchasing this building. Thank you."

Mr. Bono: "What is your motion?"

Mr. Schrader: "To table it."

Mr. Bono: "I would rather go ahead with a consultant."

Mr. Smith: "I agree with Jim on that. I think we do need a consultant. We need someone to come in a review this building."

Mr. Johnson: "I will change my motion to put it on hold and get a consultant to see if that building is even functional for the facility we are looking at. That's my motion Ray Johnson."

Mr. Bono: "My concern is that Bruce Ward will just move on if we delay this. At least we can tell him we are looking at it with a consultant and then we can give him an answer in short form. Thanks"

Mr. Ackerman: "Let me ask a question. If we pay a consultant, is he going to hold this building for 90 days for us to get back to him or 60 days or if we pay someone to go through it he is going to sell it because I heard he already has another offer?"

Mr. Johnson: "Mr. Wallace, can we make a motion to hold the building for 30 days."

Jim Wallace: "I will get a hold of him. He has been great listening to us and holding it for us."

Mr. Johnson: "I don't know if Mr. Schrader or Mr. Donley want to change that to add 30 days where if the architect says its good move forward and if not he can sell it to whoever."

Mr. Schrader: "Yes, if Mr. Donley is okay with that we will put a 30 day extension on it."

Mr. Donley: "I'm okay with it."

Mr. Gaworecki: "I actually just have a quick question. I just couldn't get it in. I talked with Christina yesterday because I was asking about...I asked several times but didn't get an answer until I talked to her yesterday, St. Francis School. They already have a daycare and I suppose this would go to Mr. Ackerman's point about is there a way to take this money and help or expand services that are already there and already have the facilities to alleviate the option of taking this property off of the tax roll and if they already have the staff and property to do that I think that would be a better option as well but that is just my opinion and I just wanted to get that out there. Thank you."

Mr. Ackerman: "I have a question. While this is going on can we look into what Mr. Gaworecki said and myself and look at some of the existing programs to expand it versus just jumping in 100% into this project?"

Christina Cain: "I'm not going to say no to anything obviously because it is a need. I'm not sure how to weigh the data from multiple needs assessments against conversations being had but I am sure I can try and quantify that somehow. As far as the existing programs go, the existing programs you are sitting are all three years old and older and as I said before, those are the more cost effective age groups so the primary reason why a lot of those other agencies, including Kevin Crosley and some of those other groups were so hesitant is because our focus was really on identifying and addressing the need that is required for the toddlers and the infants. So because those age groups are really money hemorrhaging ages, it was extremely hard to balance a budget and figure out how to make this work so I think I you are kind of looking at addressing that with these other groups who are very eager to expand, that may be the case but I think some of that conflicting information might be due to that age group because the finances are very different. Hopefully that lends some clarity."

Mr. Ackerman: "When this first started I asked the question regarding how many not for profits and private sector daycares were out there and I never really got that number. I got a number of seven and then I found out there were seven in Little Falls alone. That's one thing I think we should look at but I still think until we bring those not for profit or private sector and talk to them, how do we know they wouldn't want to expand?"

Christina Cain: "Did you all not receive the Needs Assessment?"

Mr. Ackerman: "I read it and it was very good but I still think talking to the individual people that run these programs, bringing them in and seeing if we give them \$50,000 and pay for two staff would you try expanding and take in a certain age group. That's what we are talking about. We can break this grant up is what I am trying to do."

Jim Wallace: "Kurt, just remember none of this money is for operations. It's all for capital. It can't be used for operations."

Mr. Ackerman: "So in other words, I originally thought some of this would go towards that. So we are going to pay the freight on that eventually, right? In addition to everything else?"

Christina Cain: "In what regard?"

Mr. Ackerman: "If we pay \$200,000 for the building, the x hundreds of thousands of dollars to rehab it, the maintenance yearly and any other costs that goes with that. The liability insurance on it for our end and then we are going to pay for until they get up to the number that break even we are going to have to make them whole to keep them open."

Jim Wallace: "The liability insurance Kurt is just a couple hundred dollars just so you know."

Mr. Ackerman: "I just want to make sure everyone understands what we are talking about. It's not \$295,000. It's a lot more money than that and that's what I'm trying to get to. I want everyone to know what we are talking about. They aren't going to sit there and stay open if they are hemorrhaging money like you said so we are going to have to make them whole."

Jim Wallace: "Then we have a building and we sell the building. What's wrong with that?"

Mr. Ackerman: "I'm good with that. So we are going to make a commitment at the...say we open January 1st of next year. At the end of the year if they aren't whole, this body, we are not going to bail them out. Am I correct in what I am saying?"

Jim Wallace: "There has been no commitment made for that Kurt."

Mr. Ackerman: "Okay. I've been around long enough to know that we are not going to shut the doors on it in a year."

Jim Wallace: "I don't disagree with you."

Mr. Ackerman: "So again, we are going to make them whole. So I want everyone to understand that is more money that we have to come up with. I'm not saying it's not a good thing. I'm not saying it's not a positive to offer the service but again, back to what we said earlier, Christina said it's one location so it might be hard to get some kids in. You are not talking across the County where you can draw kids from every school districts and every area. People up in Old Forge are not going to come to Herkimer."

Jim Wallace: "Kurt, remember our motto, there are other services in the building that are paying rent which mitigates some of the problem and helps with the issue."

Mr. Schrader: "What difference is it for like I see on Facebook yesterday, the Copper Moose gentleman, he's got to bail out? He is selling out now because he can't afford to stay in business due to COVID and everything else. What difference is it if we gave him a \$200,000 building and let him run it because he is a service in the community too? That's what I think you are running into here..."

Jim Wallace: "That makes no sense to me Bob."

Mr. Schrader: "I think it does. If you are a business owner, Mr. Campione has as appliance building, he sells appliances. We give somebody \$300,000 to open a building and they pay us a dollar a year. He is

getting through that cheap, lower prices than Mr. Campione can do that and that goes back to what Kurt is saying that people have invested money and they are paying taxes doing a daycare in Little Falls.”

Jim Wallace: “Guys, this takes nine votes so Mr. Chairmen’s, if there is no interest lets drop it now and move on. I’m hearing three individuals say that there is just no interest and Ray, I don’t think we could do it in thirty days. Remember we are government and Sheri has to put out an RFP at minimum and then you have to get those back and then you have to do the work. I mean to expect that to be done in thirty days, I just can’t see that happening but that’s me.”

Mr. Malta: “Is it discussion for Human Resources yet?”

Mr. Johnson: “It’s cleared Properties so it’s up to Fred and Pat to pass the buck so here you go guys.”

Mr. Malta: “I would like to say a few things on the issue of the Daycare Center proposal. By all means I am all for a Daycare Center. I think everybody knows I had the same concerns as Mr. Schrader as far as coming off of the tax roll in Herkimer. I appreciate that Chairman Bono ran with part of that. Very great points by Mr. Ackerman. I’ve learned a lot from him just being on the Zoom here today. I would have liked to seen in front of me in black and white but I don’t have that and it appears to me that’s what it has been since day one when it came out a couple of months ago for committees and it’s been quite interesting, not too much information about it. I guess is there a necessity for the County? Apparently Christina believes so. I know there is an outcry throughout the country for it. Here, I don’t know. As far as me, I don’t know about the sixteen other Legislators, I haven’t had a phone call, an email, anything in the mail about where is the child care problem here in Herkimer County. That’s one thing I have. Cost effective. Buying this building and leasing it, I guess to make this short, I don’t believe it’s the right building. It’s going to take money off of the tax roll. If we are going to do it, by all means, why don’t we just build a brand new Daycare Center because there are so many new regulations and as we speak today there is even regulations about COVID happening. So that is how I feel. An Architect, we probably should have already had that done before we even brought this to the table. Thank you for your time.”

Mr. Shaw: “Jim, what was the motion that was put forward by Mr. Bono?”

Jim Wallace: “Hold off until we hire a consultant and report back in thirty days which I think is crazy. Can we go to sixty days guys?”

Mr. Bono: “I am willing to amend it to whatever time we need.”

Jim Wallace: “And we will do it as fast as we can Mr. Chairman.”

Mr. Donley: “I think the thirty days was for the Realtor. I mean, I don’t care if it takes sixty or ninety but I think the thirty was to get the Realtor to hold the building.”

Jim Wallace: “Ray, he has been so good to us. I don’t want to tell him we will get back to you in thirty days and then I am going to call him for the forty-seventh time and say how about give me another thirty days? I would just rather say sixty days right off the bat.”

Mr. Donley: “I don’t have a problem with that. For me it doesn’t matter if it is sixty or ninety days. I just thought the thirty was for the Realtor.”

Jim Wallace: “And if you were a business you could probably do that but being government, we can’t do that. We have rules and regulations we have to go by.”

Mr. Donley: “I’m good with whatever it takes.”

Jim Wallace: “Thank you.”

Item #1 – On motion of Mr. Schrader, seconded by Mr. Donley for County Properties, on motion of Mr. Bono, seconded by Mr. Schrader for Human Resources and on motion of Mr. Bono, seconded by Mr. Shaw for Ways & Means, Item #1 was voted on and approved. Unanimous.

Item #2 – N/A

At 10:28 a.m., on motion of Mr. Weakley, seconded by Mr. Schrader, the County Properties Committee adjourned.

The Human Resources and Ways & Means Committees continued.