

**General Services Committee**  
**February 17, 2026**  
**Minutes**

**Members Present:** Committee Chair James Nabywaniec, Legislators Daniel McBride, Christopher Boulio, Robert Ferris, Steel Potter, Corey Grant, Board Chair Johnson

**Others Present:** Legislator Patrick Jareo, Deputy Administrator Dylan Soper, County Attorney John Sabik, Fire & Emergency Management Deputy Director Niel Rivenburgh, Highway Superintendent Joseph Wasilewski, Planning and Community Development Director Hartley Bonisteel Schweitzer, Confidential Secretary Jill Jones, Confidential Secretary Jaimie Lee

Chairman Nabywaniec called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and offered Privilege of the Floor, however no one present wished to speak. The Committee approved the minutes of the January meeting.

Chairman Nabywaniec invited Planning and Community Development Director Hartley Bonisteel Schweitzer to the podium to share on the topic of brownfield, blight strategies, and the path forward. Director Bonisteel Schweitzer began the presentation with the definitions of blight and brownfield sites, outlining that the presence or perceived presence of environmental contamination complicates a straight-forward blighted property, turning it into one that warrants the brownfield classification. She then outlined the County's approach to this issue, using the following three principles: data first, leverage before subsidy, and partnership before duplication. Regarding the first of the principles, the County has submitted a brownfield assessment grant application to the United States Environmental Protection Agency in the amount of \$500,000 focused on the Black River Corridor to research and understand the data behind these sites. Leverage before subsidy will come into play by planning to unlock future private, state, or federal funds when deploying county dollars to reduce early risk for the sites. Lastly, partnership before duplication means that we are not intending on duplicating the City of Watertown's work on blight within city limits but rather collaborating and aligning strategy. This last foundational principle of the brownfield strategy is closely aligned with the Health & Human Services Committee's Comprehensive Housing Needs Assessment, which is currently underway and will help to better serve the community, once identification and remediation of these sites have taken place. By combining federal Environmental Protection Agency funds with state level clean-up incentives, and our partnership with the City of Watertown, we can convert legacy liabilities into long-term assets using market-informed prioritization. At this time, the floor was opened up for questions. Legislator Ferris inquired about whether there were any sites within the city that had been identified, to which Director Bonisteel Schweitzer clarified that these were primarily along the Black River Corridor, at least initially, some of which do fall within city limits, however the exact sites are still in flux and have not been finalized. There were no further questions, however Chairman Nabywaniec thanked Director Bonisteel Schweitzer for her presentation and highlighted a few of the projects that the Board has invested in recently including the Deferiet Paper Mill, the Abbass Food Warehouse, and Mannsville building demolition.

Chairman Nabywaniec introduced a resolution Amending an Agreement with New York State Department of Transportation in Relation to Airport Runway 10-28 Rehabilitation and

entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator Potter, seconded by Legislator Grant, and there being no discussion, the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented.

Chairman Nabywaniec introduced a resolution Amending the 2026 County Budget and Capital Plan to Recognize 2025 Revenue from the Passenger Facility Charges for the Watertown International Airport and entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator McBride, seconded by Legislator Ferris. Chairman Nabywaniec highlighted that this represented a 4% increase from the previous year. There being no further discussion, the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented.

Chairman Nabywaniec introduced a resolution Authorizing an Agreement with the United States Army, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, 10th Mountain Division, Fort Drum, New York in Relation to the Watertown International Airport Rapid Refueling Operations and entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator Boulio, seconded by Legislator Ferris. Legislator Ferris inquired of the certainty of the agreement, or whether it was still questionable, however Chairman Nabywaniec emphasized that Director of Aviation, Grant Sussey, has fostered a relationship with Fort Drum and that our increased fuel capacity at the airport allows us to accommodate their needs. Vice Chairman Jareo inquired about the potential revenue of this endeavor, to which Chairman Nabywaniec emphasized that there would certainly be an opportunity for revenue, but deferring to Director Sussey for additional information to follow. There being no further discussion, the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented.

Chairman Nabywaniec introduced a resolution Authorizing an Agreement with Bronze Contracting LLC for the Demolition of Abbass Foods Phase 2 and entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator Potter, seconded by Legislator Ferris, and there being no discussion, the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented.

Chairman Nabywaniec introduced a resolution Authorizing an Agreement and Amending the 2026 County Budget in Relation to the New York State Emergency Services IP Network Readiness Grant Program and entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator Ferris, seconded by Legislator McBride, and there being no discussion, the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented.

Chairman Nabywaniec introduced a resolution Reappropriating Unspent Grant Funds for the Fire and Emergency Management Department and Amending the 2026 County Budget in Relation Thereto and entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator Ferris, seconded by Legislator Potter, and there being no discussion, the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented.

Chairman Nabywaniec introduced a resolution Amending the 2026 County Budget in Relation to 911 Phone System Support and entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator Potter, seconded by Legislator Grant, and there being no discussion, the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented.

Chairman Nabywaniec introduced a resolution Authorizing an Agreement with Stantec Consulting Services Inc. in Relation to the Oxbow-Rossie Road (CR 25) Over Vrooman Creek Project and Amending the 2026 County Budget and Capital Plan in Relation Thereto and

entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator Ferris, seconded by Legislator Potter, and there being no discussion, the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented.

Chairman Nabywaniec introduced a resolution Authorizing an Agreement with Indian River Central School District for Two School Resource Officers and entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator Ferris, seconded by Legislator Potter, and there being no discussion, the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented.

There being no further business of the Committee, on a motion by Legislator Potter, seconded by Legislator Grant, and unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned at 6:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ryan Piche". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "R".

Ryan Piche  
Clerk of the Board