



Court Facilities Capital Review Board

Hon. Norman St. George
Chair of the Board

Kenan Kurt, Esq.

Hon. Charles D. Lavine
NYS Assembly Member

Hon. Willis Stephens Jr.
NYS Assembly Member (Ret.)

Panagiota K. Hyde, Esq.
Counsel to the Board

Court Facilities Capital Review Board Meeting Minutes

Call to Order: The September 15, 2026, Court Facilities Capital Review Board meeting was held at 25 Beaver Street, New York New York, 10th floor conference room.

The meeting was called to order by Board Chair First Deputy Chief Administrative Judge Norman St. George at 12:00 p.m.

Members in Attendance:

- First Deputy Chief Administrative Judge Norman St. George
- Assemblymember Charles Lavine
- Kenan Kurt, Esq.
- Willis Stephens Jr.

Others in Attendance: Panagiota Hyde, Justin Barry, Jeneen Wunder, Shawn Waterman, Mindy Jeng, Maureen McAlary, David Nocenti, Brielle Christian

Agenda Items:

Introduction

Judge St. George opened the meeting, and the Board members and other attendees introduced themselves. Judge St. George stated that the mission of the Board is to ensure suitable and sufficient facilities for the court system. Judge St. George noted that Tina Fernandez was the previous appointee of the Governor and thanked her for her many years of service and welcomed Kenan Kurt to the Board as the new appointee of the Governor.

1. Approval of April 21, 2026 Meeting Minutes (Vote)

Assemblymember Lavine moved to approve the April 21, 2026 meeting minutes. Mr. Kurt seconded. The Board unanimously voted to approve the April 21, 2026 minutes.

2. Public Hearing

Court Facilities Capital Review Board Counsel Panagiota Hyde shared that the Public Officers Law was amended in the years 2022, 2024, and 2026 to allow public bodies to authorize remote attendance by their members under extraordinary circumstances, as long as they adopt a resolution following a public hearing and establish written procedures. The resolution would allow board members to participate in a meeting by videoconferencing from a remote location that is not accessible to the public under extraordinary

circumstances. The remote members do not count towards the quorum, but they can participate and vote as long as there is a quorum in person.

Counsel Hyde opened the public hearing. The public had an opportunity to make comments about the proposed resolution on videoconferencing for the Court Facilities Capital Review Board. No one signed up to speak at the hearing. At 12:08 pm, the public hearing was closed.

3. Adoption of Resolution and Written Procedures Pursuant to Public Officers Law §103-a

Mr. Kurt moved to adopt the resolution and written procedures on videoconferencing, and Assemblymember Lavine seconded. The Board unanimously approved the resolution and written procedures.

4. Counsel's Report

a. Court Facilities Capital Review Board background and Overview

Counsel Hyde gave a presentation on the background and overview of the Court Facilities Capital Review Board.

- In 1976, the Uniform Budget Act was passed so that the State began to bear the costs of funding court staff, providing relief to municipal payrolls. The cities and counties retained the responsibility to pay for court facilities.
- In 1982, the Court Facilities Task Force reported that many municipalities allowed their court facilities to fall into disrepair.
- In 1985, the Joint Committee on Judicial Administration said that upgrading physical facilities should be the highest priority in the goal of improving justice.
- In 1987, the Legislature passed the Court Facilities Act and established the Court Facilities Capital Review Board. The legislation required the political subdivisions to submit capital plans and amendments to the Board. It stated that the state would provide interest aid on capital projects (25-33% of the total interest cost).
- Other legislative provisions provided that the UCS would pay for cleaning and also pay for appellate facilities. In later years, the Legislature increased reimbursement for cleaning and minor repairs.

The political subdivisions have the responsibility for providing suitable and sufficient court facilities. There are 119 political subdivisions (the 62 cities including New York City and the 57 counties outside of New York City).

Counsel Hyde gave an overview of the Board composition. She stated that there

are four voting members, who are appointed by the Governor upon recommendation of the Temporary President of the Senate, the Speaker of the Assembly, the Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals, and the Governor. There are two non-voting members – appointed by the Governor, upon recommendation of the Minority Leader of the Senate and the Minority Leader of the Assembly.

Meetings are covered by the Open Meetings Law. Counsel Hyde reviewed the roles and responsibilities of the Board, which include voting for the Board chairman, reviewing and approving capital plans, and approving alternate plans for cleaning. Only Nassau County has an alternative plan for cleaning.

In the event that a political subdivision fails to provide suitable and sufficient goods, services, and court facilities, the Chief Administrative Judge has the authority to notify the state comptroller to withhold state funds from the political subdivision. This power has only been exercised three times since 1987.

Mr. Kurt asked about the importance and significance of approving capital plan amendments when some of the work was already completed. Counsel Hyde shared that the political subdivisions need to have the capital plan amendments approved in order to obtain interest aid on bonded projects. The approval of the capital plans also allows the political subdivisions to get increased cleaning reimbursement if the capital plan amendment increases the square footage of court occupancy.

b. Update on Capital Plan Solicitations

Counsel Hyde gave an update on capital plan solicitations. There are 119 political subdivisions with court facilities. Fourteen political subdivisions were sent letters in November 2024 and considered priority locations. They had either chronic facility problems or had ongoing work that needed approval by the Board. Since then, seven of the 14 political subdivisions submitted capital plans and had the plans approved by the Board. There are seven remaining priority political subdivisions, and Counsel Hyde gave an update on each one.

City of Albany – Counsel Hyde stated that the City Court in the City of Albany operates in two separate facilities, which creates operational difficulties. There is also insufficient space and other chronic issues. These inadequacies were first identified 30 years ago. OCA met with the new mayor on April 16 and May 20. The City said they are pursuing a partnership with Albany County. They are pursuing a new facility at 206 South Pearl Street. The City and County are both in favor of pursuing the location and making progress toward that goal.

City of Schenectady – Schenectady City Court also operates in two separate locations, which creates operational issues. The criminal part is at the Police Department, and the civil and traffic parts are in the City Hall. The Board noted this deficiency in 1996, and in 2013, the Chief Administrative Judge noted serious deficiencies, including the lack of an appropriately sized courtroom for

criminal cases, lack of dedicated courtroom for traffic matters, lack of appropriate screening space in both facilities, lack of sufficient space for court clerks, and insufficient space for records.

In 2013, a fourth City Court judge was added, and there have been four judges and only three courtrooms ever since. The City of Schenectady received a letter from OCA regarding facility inadequacies in November 2024. OCA engaged in mediation with the City in July 2025, which was unsuccessful. The Chief Administrative Judge sent a letter in October 2025 to the Comptroller to withhold funds in the amount of \$13.3 million from the City. The Comptroller withheld \$10.37 million in state funding, which was the amount that was to be dispersed in December 2025. In January 2026, the City and OCA executed a memorandum of understanding with regard to the City Court project. On January 30th, the Chief Administrative Judge sent a letter to the Comptroller to release the withheld funds.

Counsel Hyde reported that OCA met with the City on June 29th and August 21st. They plan to acquire a county-owned building to move the City Court to. The County will not vacate the building until April 2027. The City is continuing to negotiate with the County to take title. The City submitted a letter to OCA advising that the City continues to discuss and negotiate with the County for site control of 620 State Street. The City said they would not be able to finance the building and are seeking to advocate for support in the 2027 legislative session.

Mr. Kurt asked how much the City was seeking from the state budget for the facility. Counsel Hyde shared that based on the cost estimates provided by the City, the renovation and demolition/rebuilding cost for the location was between \$45 -55 million. This is due in part because the building requires asbestos remediation.

City of Auburn – Counsel Hyde stated that the current City Court in Auburn is in leased space from Cayuga County and suffers from inadequate windows and doors, HVAC issues, a leaking roof, insufficient space, and inadequate layout. The City of Auburn and Cayuga County have agreed to work together to prioritize improvements. The County is getting updated architectural plans, a code review, and a cost analysis. The updated analysis should be completed by October 2026. The City has a draft capital plan amendment prepared for the Board and they are waiting for the County legislature to approve the updated plans before submitting it to the Board.

City of Buffalo – Dating back to 2006, OCA has expressed general concerns with the lack of adequate maintenance, failure to address elevator safety, and other habitability and structural concerns. A 2023 study by an architectural / engineering firm commissioned by the City of Buffalo identified \$45 million in priority items needed to be addressed, and an additional \$88.5 million in upgrades that could be made. OCA met with the City of Buffalo in April, May, July, and September to discuss both the short-term and longer-term plans for the City Court.

In the short term, the City of Buffalo is focusing on the elevator modernization project. They are planning to replace the judicial elevator. They plan on upgrading the incarcerated persons elevator next. The City is also planning on proceeding with other emergent repairs (\$12 million). This emergent scope of work will include HVAC, bathroom, and electrical work. In the long term, the City of Buffalo issued an RFP for a consultant to develop three conceptual design alternatives for the proposed renovation and scope for the building. The three designs are: a basic renovation to meet OCA standards, a full renovation to modernize the building and improve the envelope, and a full building renovation including the exterior renovation.

City of Lackawanna – Counsel Hyde stated that the Lackawanna City Court shares space with the police department. The facility lacks sufficient court rooms proportionate to the number of judges. The facility also suffers from deficiencies such as roof leaks, stained ceiling tiles, inoperable elevators, and insufficient heating and cooling. OCA met with the City in May and August. The City presented a public information session on July 27th to the City Council and the public on the proposed City Court project. They are pursuing an addition to the newly constructed Lackawanna City Hall to accommodate relocation of the City Court and the Police Department. The total project cost for the building is \$24 million, but it includes both the City Court and the police. Renovating the existing building would cost \$16 million and would only cover court space. The City's architect is currently working with the OCA architectural team, and there will be a follow-up meeting.

City of Rye – Counsel Hyde shared that the Rye City Court has long standing deficiencies including the lack of an elevator, an inadequate chair lift, inadequate restrooms, lack of holding cells, insufficient space, and a lack of sufficient judicial chambers. There is only one courtroom and chambers for two City Court judges. OCA met with the City and conducted a site walkthrough on June 16th and had a follow up meeting on August 10th. The City Council has been briefed about the City Court project, and Stantec Engineering has been retained to come up with two different options. Option A is to build a new facility where police parking is currently located, and Option B is to build an elevated building with a parking garage beneath the courthouse. The City has not yet received the two options and cost estimates.

City of Poughkeepsie – Counsel Hyde said that the City Court in Poughkeepsie has insufficient space, inadequate restrooms, HVAC issues, ventilation issues, and lack of ingress/egress for judges in the second courtroom, which poses a security risk. The City believes the best option is to find a new location. For its short-term plan, the City is going to move forward with establishing a wall that will separate the City Court from the lobby space.

Counsel Hyde explained that OCA is continuing to work with 29 political subdivisions on the secondary list that are still not suitable and sufficient. She explained that the list of 14 priority political subdivisions were ones that had pressing issues or had ongoing capital work. That list has been reduced to seven.

There were 61 additional political subdivisions that did not have suitable and sufficient facilities, but had issues that were not as urgent. There were also 43 political subdivisions that were suitable and sufficient and did not receive solicitation letters.

Assemblymember Lavine asked for a further description of the solicitation letter. Counsel Hyde said that letters identifying facility concerns were sent to the cities and counties after discussing with the judicial district office, local courts, and other court staff. After identifying specific deficiencies, OCA was soliciting the municipalities for capital plan amendments. OCA was asking the political subdivisions to come up with a plan to address facility deficiencies. Judge St. George said that the political subdivisions are asked to address facility concerns and to provide a short-term, mid-term, and long-term plan.

Mr. Stephens asked how many of the political subdivisions did not respond. Counsel Hyde said that all of the political subdivisions eventually did respond. Executive Director Barry said that the District Executives, Chief Clerks, and Administrative Judges regularly communicate with the counties and cities to encourage cooperation.

5. Board Action Item (Vote)

a. City of Long Beach – Approval of Capital Plan Amendment

The City of Long Beach provided an additional 453 square feet of space previously occupied by the Fire Department to the Unified Court System.

Assemblymember Lavine moved to approve, Mr. Kurt seconded the motion. The Board unanimously voted to approve the capital plan amendment.

b. Chautauqua County – Approval of Capital Plan Amendment

Counsel Hyde stated that Chautauqua County provided an additional 764 square feet of office space to the Unified Court System. This will enhance court operations by providing office space for court reporter staff. The County will also assume some court space on the first floor.

Assemblymember Lavine made a motion to approve the capital plan amendment, and Mr. Kurt seconded. The Board unanimously voted to approve the capital plan amendment.

c. Chemung County – Approval of Capital Plan Amendment

Counsel Hyde shared that Chemung County provided an additional 1597 square feet of space on the fourth floor of the Hazlett building to the Unified Court System. It provides office space for the problem-solving court staff.

Mr. Stephens asked, what is a problem-solving court? Executive Director Barry said a problem-solving court is a court designed to address a societal issue. Drug treatment courts are a common example. If the defendant participates in a drug

treatment program, they may receive a reduced sentence. There are also veterans' courts, domestic violence courts, and other specialized courts.

Assemblymember Lavine made a motion to approve, and Mr. Kurt seconded the motion. The Board unanimously voted to approve the capital plan amendment.

d. Genesee County – Approval of Capital Plan Amendment

Genesee County conducted work on the roof and façade rehabilitation project. The work is funded by the County and anticipated to commence in the fall of 2026.

Mr. Kurt moved to approve the plan amendment, and Assemblymember Lavine seconded. The Board unanimously voted to approve the capital plan amendment.

e. Livingston County – Approval of Capital Plan Amendment

Livingston County completed a roof replacement project at 6 Court Street and a drainage remediation project at 2 Court Street. Both projects were funded by the County. The roof replacement for \$1.3 million was completed in August 2026. The drainage project cost \$50,100 and was completed in August 2026.

Assemblymember Lavine moved to approve, and Mr. Kurt seconded. The Board unanimously voted to approve the capital plan amendment.

f. Suffolk County – Approval of Capital Plan Amendment

Suffolk County submitted a capital plan amendment regarding its roof replacement project (anticipated) and security booth project (already completed) at the Cohalan Court Complex in Central Islip. The roof replacement is anticipated to commence in October 2026. The security booth replacement was completed in June 2026.

Mr. Kurt moved to approve, and Assemblymember Lavine seconded. The Board unanimously voted to approve the capital plan amendment.

g. Ulster County – Approval of Capital Plan Amendment

Ulster County's capital plan amendment provided an additional 4,900 square feet in the Ulster County Courthouse at 283 Wall Street in Kingston to the Unified Court System. The additional space will enhance court operations and give the court opportunity to reconfigure court space and streamline security operations.

Assemblymember Lavine moved to approve, and Mr. Kurt seconded. The Board unanimously voted to approve the capital plan amendment.

6. Board Discussion Items

a. Update on New York City Capital Work

Executive Director Barry gave an update on capital work in New York City. He shared that OCA continues to have productive conversations with the Mayor's office, DCAS, Corporation Counsel, and the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice under the leadership of Justine Olderman.

Director Barry stated that OCA expects construction on the façade and roofing at the Harlem Community Justice Center to begin in 2027. The Chief Judge's Working Group on the Future of the Harlem Community Justice Center is going to submit recommendations to the Chief Judge on use of the first floor space for programming for youth and seniors. The second floor and third floor will have functioning courtrooms.

Mr. Kurt asked whether the State continues to pay for cleaning costs when other service providers and community organizations occupy the space. Director Barry said that if the space is occupied by judicial or non-judicial personnel, it is considered our space. If it is occupied by city or city staff or an agency that is contracted by the city to be in that space, that would be a city responsibility.

Director Barry said that another priority building in New York City is the Bronx Family/Criminal Court at 900 Sheridan Aven. There is inadequate space in the building, and the space is sub-standard. OCA had a conversation with MOCJ about possibly purchasing 878 Brook Avenue as a new location for the Family Court. It would address an issue for the Bronx, which is that there is no swing space. If they purchased this particular location, it would create swing space opportunities in the Bronx. New York City said they are moving forward with OMB to create a master plan of the Bronx area.

Director Barry shared that the City is beginning construction of swing space at 18 Richmond Terrace. It would allow for construction of a new Family Court building at 100 Richmond Terrace. The new Brooklyn Civil Court at 210 Joralemon is expected to be completed in April 2027. It will be a 300,000 square foot facility, and it will replace the leased space at 141 Livingston.

Director Barry covered other ongoing projects in the Bronx, Brooklyn, New York, and Queens. These include fire alarm projects, cooling tower, façade, roof and façade rehabilitation, building envelope restoration project, and roof and façade rehabilitation projects. The current 60 Centre Street building envelope restoration project is part of a much larger project (\$600 million) to waterproof the building and improve ADA accessibility.

7. **Old Business** – None

8. **New Business** – None

9. **Next Meeting Date**

Judge St. George stated that the Board was looking for the next meeting to be at the end of January in Albany.

10. Miscellaneous

Assemblymember Lavine congratulated OCA and Counsel Hyde on the work that was completed. He said the public does not know the amount of work that goes into making the courthouse presentable.

Mr. Kurt moved to adjourn the meeting, and Assemblymember Lavine seconded. The Board voted to adjourn the meeting at 1:08 pm.