

September 12, 2022

Finance Committee: 8-29-2022

RESOLUTION NO. 299-2022

AUTHORIZING THE CHAIR TO SIGN A CONTRACT APPROPRIATING AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT (ARPA) FUNDS FOR THE PURPOSE OF THE REMOVAL OF ASH TREES WITH THE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT AND MODIFYING THE 2022 BUDGET FOR THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S OFFICE

By Mr. Acres, Chair, Finance Committee

WHEREAS, on May 2, 2022, Resolution No. 181-2022 adopted the recommendations made by the ARPA Committee regarding the uses of the \$20.9M in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funds provided to St. Lawrence County, and

WHEREAS, recognizing the importance of public safety and preemptively mitigating impacts of the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) for accessibility along County roads for the citizens of St. Lawrence County, funds were appropriated to provide for removal of ash trees within the highway bounds of County routes as identified by the County Highway Department, and

WHEREAS, of the funds appropriated, \$900,000 has been allocated for the removal of dead and dying ash trees within highway bounds as identified by the Highway Department to the St. Lawrence County Soil & Water Conservation District (SLC SWCD), with confirmation by the Conservation District Forester, and

WHEREAS, the list of towns, priority based, where EAB has been located and how it has spread throughout the County include: Hammond, Morristown, Oswegatchie, Lisbon, Waddington, Louisville, Massena, Rossie, Macomb, DePeyster, Madrid, Norfolk, Brasher, Gouverneur, Dekalb, Canton, Potsdam, Stockholm, Lawrence, Fowler, Hermon, Russell, Pierrepont, Parishville, Hopkinton, Pitcairn, Edwards, Fine, Clare, Colton, Clifton, and Piercefield, and

WHEREAS, recognizing that homeowners utilize wood as a heat source, ash trees of a minimum Diameter at Breast Height (DBH) of 10" and determined to be of firewood quality by the Conservation District Forester, or hired contractors, may be left for landowners use provided they complete a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with SLC SWCD, and

WHEREAS, a planting of native trees will be included with the budget for this project to offset the loss of ash trees cut, and will be facilitated by the SLC SWCD which will include site preparation and plug plantings on County Forestland parcels, and

WHEREAS, the plantings will be mutually beneficial to replacing removed trees and improving forest stand health of County parcels in need of improvements, and

WHEREAS, the SLC SWCD Board of Directors is supportive of the removal recommendations for trees impacted by the EAB and mitigated plantings for St. Lawrence County, and

