



## Should CRT rescue the arts from budget cuts?

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SYRACUSE -- As Onondaga County legislators consider changes to County Executive Joanie Mahoney's proposed budget Tuesday, should a newly formed agency come to the rescue of arts and cultural organizations?

One of the areas lawmakers intend to cut are taxpayer subsidies to 16 arts and cultural organizations including Syracuse Stage, the Museum of Science and Technology and the Onondaga Historical Association. Legislators are counting on the newly created [Cultural Resources Trust](#) to come up with the nearly \$400,000 they are taking away from the 16 organizations. Mahoney herself [sent a letter to the trust Monday](#) asking for their help in funding the arts in [Onondaga County](#).

Tuesday morning, the CRT's trustees met at the Onondaga County Civic Center. The trustees feel they may be able to help the organizations, but they expressed concern over whether the agency would become a long term funding mechanism for the arts. Trustee Ryan McMahon, who is also a Syracuse Common Councilor, said "Just to be a crutch for a budget process is not sustainable."

According to CRT Director Tom Dadey, who is also the County Republican Party chairman, "Long term our intent was never to fund the day-to-day operations and expenses of an individual cultural organization. We really want our impact to be on programming and capital projects."

The CRT was formed to issue tax exempt bonds for not-for-profits like hospitals. The fees it collects from issuing the bonds forms a fund that would be directed toward the arts. Dadey and other trustees are also concerned that the amount of money the CRT has on hand would fluctuate from year to year because it would depend on when not for profit entities would need to issue bonds.

The Cultural Resources Trust currently has about a half million dollars on hand, but has imposed a moratorium on issuing grants until it comes up with guidelines on how the money should be spent.



The Cultural Resources Trust meets Tuesday morning / photo by [unreadable]