



News from Livingston County, NY

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Livingston County Continues to Push for Fiscal Relief for Local Governments

Geneseo, NY, August 26, 2020 — With the Livingston County budget process currently underway, County Administrator Ian M. Coyle notes that the development of the 2021 budget presents significant challenges amid the COVID-19 pandemic. “County budgets across the state are under stress. We are spending more in response to COVID-19 while, at the same time, collecting less in sales tax revenue due to the sluggish economy. In addition, New York counties are now seeing significant cuts and withholdings in state reimbursement for state-mandated programs.”

In March 2020, President Trump signed into law the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES) Act, which provided \$150 billion to states, tribal governments and local governments with populations above 500,000. These CARES Act funds can be used only for pandemic-related costs.

Livingston County – with a population of approximately 65,000 – was not eligible to receive funds directly from the federal government. While the County did receive a smaller CARES allocation, Coyle states, “We are still urging President Trump and congressional leaders to compromise on another relief package that provides direct and fully flexible aid to state and local governments – of all sizes – in order to survive the mounting costs and lost revenue resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.”

“Amid declining revenues, counties continue to fight on the frontlines of this unprecedented crisis – providing many services and programs that are more important than ever to the health and safety of residents and local communities,” says Coyle. Some of these programs and services include emergency operations centers, public safety protection, public health and

mental health services, nursing home service, child protective services, infrastructure maintenance, small business assistance and more. Sadly, and inexplicably, these are also some of the programs the State government is gutting by 20%.

“Without federal investments, counties must brace themselves for lean 2021 budgets. In Livingston County, we are currently looking for ways to close spending gaps and save money with an early retirement incentive, hiring and spending freezes, capital project cuts, and tapping into fund balances and reserves,” continues Coyle.

Each year, Livingston County’s budget process starts with the County Administrator seeking requests, inputs, and recommendations from Department Heads on spending and revenues for the upcoming year. The County Administrator then spends the month of August working with each Department Head to review and refine these numbers before presentation in draft form to the County’s financial oversight committee, the Ways and Means Committee, in September. Upon further refinement via a budget workshop in October, a tentative budget is officially filed and a public hearing is held in November.

For more information on Livingston County’s request for flexible Federal dollars and/or the 2021 budget process, please contact the County Administrator’s office at 585-243-7040.

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