



PRESS RELEASE

Tioga County Legislature
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ADOPTION OF THE 2025 TIOGA COUNTY BUDGET

OWEGO, NY – On Tuesday December 10th, 2024, the Tioga County Legislature adopted the County budget for 2025.

The County Administrator reported that the total adopted expenditures for 2025 are \$103,270,291, an increase from the 2024 adopted budget of \$686,688, or .7%. The total adopted estimated revenues are \$70,109,223, a \$1,697,797 increase from the 2024 adopted budget, or 2.4%. The total deficit before the tax levy is applied is \$33,161,068. After the application of the Tax Levy of \$26,887,599, the County has proposed using \$6,273,469 of Unrestricted General Fund Balance to close the budgetary gap for 2025. The adopted 2025 budget will maintain all programs and services currently provided to Tioga County residents in 2024.

The New York State Tax Cap calculation for 2025 allows a 2.25% increase in the County Tax Levy. This will mark the 13th consecutive year that Tioga County has been able to stay under the New York State imposed property Tax Cap. The 12-year average increase in the Tax Levy is approximately 1.58%.

Some major costs that will impact the Tioga County budget in 2025 include approximately \$3 million annually in Community College chargebacks, \$1 million increase in the pension costs to the County from NYSLRS, the New York State and Local Retirement System, \$2 million in contractual salary and benefit costs, and increases to state mandated Child Welfare Programs through the Department of Social Services.

In 2025 it's anticipated that approximately 107% of the County's proposed tax levy will make up expenditures considered State Mandated Services. These are services and programs that the County must provide as directed by New York State, and usually begin with an amount of funding that ends up being reduced by the State and ultimately left to the County to pay for. Some

mandated services include Medicaid Management Information Systems "MMIS", Jail/Correctional Facilities, NYS Retirement, Criminal Justice Reform, Community College Chargebacks & Safety Net/Child Welfare Services.

The largest anticipated funding streams for the County are Real Property Taxes, Sales Tax, and State Aid. Sales Tax amounts received in 2023 and 2024 have been well over what had been anticipated, but the amounts forecasted by the New York State Comptroller's Office are expected to decrease in the near future. Casino revenue received by the County are determined to be "State Aid" by the State of New York and can be re-formulated by the state and ultimately reduced at any time, unfortunately making it an unstable source of revenue for the County.

In 2021 Tioga County was awarded \$9,362,868 in American Recovery Plan Act "ARPA" funds by the US Treasury in response to the global COVID pandemic to aid municipalities in the continuation and betterment of governmental services. The Tioga County Legislature has obligated 100% of these funds for several initiatives including outside agency funding which includes an allocation towards the recently completed Neighborhood Depot Project in Owego, capital upgrades for County owned facilities & equipment, cyber security upgrades and maintenance, broadband expansion, the acquisition a new truck wash facility to maintain and extend the life of County owned equipment, and also an allocation of \$4 million towards a major Radio Tower Communications upgrade that will expand the radio connectivity for emergency responders in serving Tioga County residents.

Per the Final Rule issued by the US Department of Treasury, funding must be obligated by December 31, 2024, and jurisdictions have until December 31, 2026, to fully expend their funds.

The only major debt remaining for the County is a 2010 Bridge Rehabilitation/Build America Bond, which is expected to mature in 2030.

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