

*Public Hearing*  
*2011 Budget*  
November 23, 2010

The Public Hearing on the 2011 Budget was called to order by the Chair at 6:00 P.M. Six Legislative members were present, Legislators Monell, Quinlan, and Roberts being absent.

There were 8 people in attendance.

The Clerk read the legal notice as published in the official newspapers.

The Chair turned the meeting over to the Budget Officer, James McFadden.

Budget Officer James McFadden spoke. "To the residents of the Tioga County Legislature and the Honorable County Legislature, I would like to present to you tonight the proposed County Budget for 2011. As the difficult economic climate approaches a third year, many state and local governments nationwide have seen an erosion of their finances. As New York State remains in a recession, the demand for government services such as unemployment benefits, social services, and Medicaid have increased. Although federal stimulus funding has benefited Tioga County this past year, during this same period municipal revenue has decreased from less economic activity, job losses, and lower consumer spending. Tioga County has not been insulated from the effects of this recession. With this in mind, local officials have made prudent decisions formulating the 2011 County budget while still providing both valuable and mandated services to the citizens of Tioga County.

"General Fund expenses have increased from \$65,795,756 in 2010 to \$68,776,115 in the proposed spending plan. This represents an increase of 4.53% or \$2,980,359. Major increases include fringe benefits, education costs, and debt service. A few equipment purchases and a hiring freeze will help offset these expenses.

"The budget will see an increase in General Fund revenues of \$1,452,838 or 3.45% from \$42,162,439 in 2010 to \$43,615,277 in the 2011 proposal. We are anticipating flat sales tax collections and reduced state aid next year. However, PILOT payments, jail revenue, and accounting for bond proceeds will support the General Fund.

"There have been significant increases in other areas of the budget, namely the Capital Fund. The County plans to meet our infrastructure schedule by replacing four bridges and 16 miles of roads next year. The cost of \$6,000,000 will receive reimbursement of \$2,300,000 in Federal and State aid and the remaining \$3,700,000 will be financed by Build America bond proceeds.

"Subsequently, the total proposed spending plan of \$92,000,000 is an increase of \$7,000,000 or 8% over the current year. It is proposed that an increase of appropriate fund balance in the amount of \$1,100,000 be used to help offset the General Fund increase. This will bring the appropriate fund balance in the 2011 plan up to \$4,900,000.

"The County tax levy will increase \$427,521 or 2.16% to \$20,260,838, although tax rates vary from town to town due to state established equalization rates. The composite tax rate for all taxing districts has decreased \$0.15 to \$13.63 per \$1,000 due to a slight increase in net assessments.

"The other tax that appears on your bill is the recycling or solid waste tax. The tax levy for recycling in the solid waste budget has increased from \$828,403 to \$847,850, an increase of \$19,447 or 2.35% for 2011. Appropriations have increased \$70,816 or 5.62% from 2010. However, revenues have also increased \$51,379 or 11.87%. The proposed composite rate will drop from \$0.58 to \$0.57 per \$1,000 of assessed value.

"I would like to thank the County Legislature, Department Heads, and all County employees for working very diligently the past four months on this 2011 budget.

"I would like to point out that the projected tax levy may not increase after tonight's hearing without an additional public hearing."

The Budget Officer presented slides on the proposed 2011 budget.

George Penney spoke. "I am pleased that the proposed budget has only a slight increase in taxes, but I am concerned with the increased appropriations, particularly an increase of appropriation of the cash on hand does not bode well for the future. I hope that you will find ways to reduce the size of County Government. Thank you."

There being no further speakers, the hearing was adjourned at 6:23 P.M.