

*Public Hearing  
2022 Budget  
November 9, 2021*

The Public Hearing on the 2022 Budget was called to order by the Chair at 9:30 A.M. Five Legislative members were present with Legislators Hollenbeck, Mullen, Standinger, and Weston being absent.

There were 10 people in attendance along with Budget Officer Jackson Bailey and zero attendance via Zoom.

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

Chair Sauerbrey announced this meeting is also being conducted via Zoom so the public can be present.

Jackson Bailey, Budget Officer gave the 2022 budget presentation.

“Honorable Members of the Tioga County Legislature and residents of Tioga County, I present to you the proposed tentative County budget for 2022 on Tuesday, November 9, 2021, at 9:30 A.M. in the Hubbard Auditorium of the Ronald E. Dougherty County Office Building, 56 Main Street, Owego, NY.

“In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, Tioga County leaders and employees have continued to show exemplary strength in their day-to-day duties to provide services to Tioga County residents. County leaders continue to work together to find new and innovative ways to keep costs down, incentivize employees, and provide quality county services during these uncertain times. The road to recovery is just beginning. County Legislators, leaders, and employees are steadfast in their commitment to the betterment of Tioga County and have worked tirelessly to provide a fiscally responsible 2022 budget focused on meeting the County's needs.

“On March 10, 2021, the US Department of Treasury announced the launch of the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds, established by the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 referred to henceforth as “ARPA”. ARPA funds have been made available to municipalities to support urgent COVID-19 response efforts to decrease spread of the virus and bring the pandemic under control; to replace lost public sector revenue to strengthen support for vital public services and help retain jobs; to support immediate economic stabilization for households and businesses; and to address systematic public health and economic challenges that have contributed to the unequal impact of the pandemic on certain populations. Tioga County received an award of \$9.7 million

dollars to provide relief in the wake of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. As stewards of the ARPA funds, the Tioga County Legislature's economic response plan will provide the greatest benefits to Tioga County and its citizens.

"The 2022 budget process met challenges such as unfunded and underfunded mandated services, which continue to further shift costs to all New York counties. Additionally, sales tax, one of the largest revenue sources for Tioga County, saw a reduction in 2020 due to COVID-19 and is also impacted by the reduction to support AIM funding, which was previously funded by the State. As well as another State mandate requiring up to \$150,000 to be withheld per year for Distressed Hospitals and Nursing Homes.

"Tioga County Legislators, Directors, Department Heads, and Employees continue to be good stewards of taxpayer dollars; diligently looking for cost-saving measures, advocating for additional revenue sources, and seeking new sources for economic growth. The 2022 budget maintains all programs and services currently provided to Tioga County residents.

"The total tentative budgeted appropriations for 2022 are \$95,750,277. In 2021, the total budgeted appropriations were \$82,886,597; this is an increase of \$12,863,680 or approximately 16%. Total tentative estimated revenues for 2022 are \$58,449,325. In 2021, the total anticipated revenues were \$52,877,882; this is an increase of \$5,571,443 or 11%.

"The increase in expenditures of \$12.8 million dollars is a combination of salary and benefit increases through contract negotiations and Non-Union recommendations. There are increases in expenditures for State Mandated services, as more costs are shifting directly to the counties and Capital Expenditures utilizing ARPA funds granted to Tioga County. The Tioga County Capital Budget for 2022 includes \$5.8 million dollars allocated for improvements to infrastructure and radio tower upgrades to expand emergency response communication for the overall public safety of Tioga County citizens.

"The increase in estimated revenues of approximately \$5.5 million dollars from prior year comes from the stabilizing revenue streams after the COVID-19 pandemic. Sales Tax revenue and Casino revenue have returned to their original trends. State and Federal Aid funding has also returned to normal due to the lack of threats of massive cuts or holdbacks from the State.

"The total Tax Levy for 2022 shall be \$25,358,754. Compared to the 2021 Tax Levy of \$24,948,721, this is an increase of \$410,000 or 1.64%.

"2022 will mark the 11<sup>th</sup> consecutive budget year that Tioga County has stayed under the State imposed property tax cap. The 11 year average increase in the Tax Levy has been approximately 1.65% each year.

"The combined Composite Tax Rate is \$8.76 per \$1,000 of taxable value. The average assessed \$100,000 home will pay approximately \$876.00 in County Tax. Tax rates will vary from town-to-town due to the State established equalization rates and each town's apportionment percentage. The combined Composite Tax Rate includes Veterans and Clergy exemptions, which may also further impact those rates.

"The total budget deficit gap is estimated at \$37,300,952. After applying the 2022 Tax Levy of \$25,358,754, I propose using \$4,457,198 of Appropriated Fund Balance, \$1,635,000 in Capital Reserves, and ARPA Fund utilization of \$5,850,000 to balance the 2022 Tentative Budget.

"In preparation of the 2022 Budget, I would like to thank all Department Heads and County Employees for their participation in the budget process. I thank the following Tioga County employees for their time and efforts: Terie Huseby, Real Property Director, Bethany O'Rourke, Personnel Officer, Amy Poff, Benefits Manager, Katie Chandler, Deputy Treasurer, Stephanie Jerzak, Chief Accountant, James McFadden, County Treasurer, and Charles Root, Software Support Liaison. I especially thank the Tioga County Legislature for their continued strength and leadership, as we push forward in these difficult times, Cathy Haskell, Legislative Clerk, and Legislative Chair Martha Sauerbrey for their unrelenting support and assistance throughout the 2022 budget process.

"The proposed Tax Levy cannot be increased after today's hearing without an additional public hearing. Following the presentation of the 2022 Budget Brief, the floor will be open for comments to the Legislature."

The Budget Officer presented a PowerPoint slide presentation on budget brief specifics.

There being no public comments, the hearing was adjourned at 9:57 A.M.