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November 8, 2019

Honorable David Manchester, Chairman  
Chemung County Legislature  
203 Lake Street  
Elmira, New York 14901

Dear Chairman Manchester and Members of the Legislature:

In accordance with the provisions of Section 503 of the County Charter, I am submitting herewith for your review and consideration the proposed financial plan for the County of Chemung for 2020. This document includes both the operating budget and the tentative capital plan.

## Introduction

I am pleased to present you with my first budget as Chemung County Executive. The 2020 spending plan is unique from County budgets that have been prepared over the past 14 years as it will contain a modest 1% property tax rate increase. The current property tax rate of \$6.86 per thousand of assessed evaluation will increase to \$6.93 per thousand. It is also important to note that the combined recommended levy increase for the general fund, sewer districts, and community college is 3% below the property tax cap. As counties across the Southern Tier and New York State continue to be plagued with unfunded mandates from Albany, it adversely affects our ability to balance a budget without utilizing fund balances or raising taxes. Multiple unfunded mandates, to include Medicaid, Public Assistance, Child Welfare, Pre-School Education, Indigent Defense, Probation and more, cost counties across New York State more than 7.5 billion dollars. New York State counties pay more than all other counties nationwide combined for core Medicaid program costs (*source: NYSAC*). Recent so-called criminal justice reforms have also added additional unfunded mandates upon counties throughout New York State. New rules involving the District Attorney's responsibility of supplying all evidence to defendants in an accelerated time period, also known as discovery, is going to place a burden on not only District Attorney Offices across the State, but will trickle down to law enforcement, 911 Communication Centers, as well as Probation. Although the exact amount of these costs is yet to be determined, in Chemung County alone we know that a minimum of 5 positions have already been or will be requested which will add well over \$250,000 to our payroll.

In 2020, employee insurance health costs will increase 14%, equating to a 2.1 million dollar increase over last year's cost. This increase is due to multiple high value claims which were reported between May 1, 2018 and April 30, 2019. Due to the majority of Collective Bargaining Agreements capping the amount of employee contributions that can be collected, this increase will fall directly upon the shoulders of the taxpayer. As we move forward, we will also be examining whether or not allowing other government municipalities to take part in the County's employee health insurance program is financially feasible, due to the fact that approximately half of the previously stated high value claims are attributed to non-Chemung County employees.

Collective Bargaining Agreements, one of which was settled prior to January 1, 2019, have also attributed for the need of a tax increase. The Chemung County Correction Officers' Association, which settled their contract in December of 2018, received a 14% pay increase for a 4-year period extending from January 2016 to December 2019. It should be noted that Local 3978 had gone without a pay increase for approximately 3 years until such time a new agreement was approved. This contract obviously had a major effect on our payroll budget. In 2019, we also settled the contract with our biggest Collective Bargaining Unit, CSEA. The settlement of this contract was definitely a win for both sides as we made moves in a positive direction to increase the new salary schedule to make us more competitive with the private sector and address a high percentage of attrition due to hourly wages that were being paid.

In 2018, the Chemung County Legislature passed a new sales tax distribution formula which basically gave a bigger portion of the sales tax revenue to the towns and villages. The City of Elmira was not given a bigger share but was allowed to defer payments to Chemung

County for a 2-year period that are owed from various shared services agreements. In 2020, we will be amending the current sales tax distribution formula as the previous allocations and agreement will expire December 31, 2020. We will be studying the best way to distribute future sales tax allocations based on a variety of circumstances, which include the County's financial position, employee health care costs, internet sales tax, among other unforeseen financial obligations not only to the County but to the municipalities that make up the County.

Chemung County currently has over 4 dozen shared services agreements with various municipalities, non-for-profits and private organizations. A review of some of these agreements indicate that the County is absorbing most of the financial burden involved in multiple agreements. Two of the more comprehensive shared services agreements in which the County is involved, are agreements with the City of Elmira Department of Public Works, and Buildings and Grounds. These two agreements both need to be re-examined to ensure both municipalities are benefiting. Although well intended, it appears that the County is shouldering the ongoing expense involving multiple City employees who are often referred to as County employees, but the actual composition of the shared service agreements would indicate otherwise. We will be meeting with City officials to discuss these two agreements at length in the beginning of 2020.

As we continue to perform an exhaustive analysis of County finances, policies and procedures, we will modify and amend outdated policies and procedures to coincide with the latest municipal practices. We will also continue to review suggestions set forth by a committee that was established by the Office of the County Executive to come up with recommendations on how and if the City of Elmira and County of Chemung could share additional services. The committee set forth several proposals of which both municipalities are currently examining.

In 2020, we will continue to enhance our summer job program for disadvantaged youth. In 2019 we set a goal that 50% of our summer hires consist of youth who would not otherwise experience the multiple facets of County government. Several of our County departments had positive experiences with last year's program. I think it's important that our work force reflect the community that we serve.

The following are some program highlights from various departments throughout the County.

### **Real Property Levy & Rate**

The proposed 2020 General Fund Tax Levy of \$30,916,478 is an increase of 3.2% over the 2019 tax levy of \$29,971,316. The proposed full value tax rate of \$6.93 is an increase of 7 cents or 1%. The full value tax rate is the average of the City of Elmira, and the eleven towns within the County. Individual county tax rates may vary within each municipality because of equalization rates, which attempt to measure the relationship of locally assessed values to an ever-changing real estate market.

The combined recommended levy increase for the General Fund, Sewer Districts, and Community College is 3.1% below the property tax cap.

### **General Fund – Fund Balance**

We project to incur a \$352,061 deficit in 2019, therefore, our 12/31/2019 fund balance will decrease to approximately \$24 million or 14% of expenditures. We are appropriating \$506,549 of this fund balance, as a revenue source within the 2020 budget. This will further reduce our fund balance to \$23,611,947 or 13.6% of our expenditures.

### **Total Appropriations**

The budget that I submit to you today recommends the Total Net Appropriations of \$201,995,058 which is an increase of \$5,313,119 or 2.7% from \$196,681,939 approved in 2019. The following funds contain spending increases: General 2.9%, Highway 1.3%, Road Machinery 1.4%, Sewer District 1.9%, Elmira Sewer District 12.7%, Medical Insurance 7.7%, and Airport 6%. The following funds have spending decreases: Solid Waste 11.7%, Workers Compensation 17.4%, and Nursing Facility 1.5%.

### **Social Services**

I am recommending appropriations to the Department of Social Services for 2020 of \$65,196,642. Last year total appropriations were \$66,184,261. Of the 2020 departmental total, \$19,930,312 represents our local share contribution toward the finances of the Medicaid program, accounting for 64.5% of our tax levy.

### **Personnel**

This tentative budget proposes to expend \$57,875,320 on payroll, which is \$1,898,242 or 3.4% more than 2019. The payroll provides for 1017 full-time equivalent (FTE), 11 more than last year's total of 1006 FTE's. Last year's reported total of 1001 FTE's was understated by 5 positions in DSS because FTE's were erroneously reduced because of estimated turnover and vacancies. It is important to note, that of these new FTE's, 6 Child Protective Service workers, 5 Special Patrol Officers, and 4 in the Public Defenders and Advocates Departments are fully or partially funded by federal, state, or school district funds. In addition, the 2 new FTE's in the Board of Elections are necessary because of the new Early Voting mandate legislation. Payroll contingency savings are projected to decrease from \$750,000 to \$250,000.

### **State Pension Costs**

The mandated State Pension expense will increase from \$7,095,344 to \$7,417,228 in 2020.

### **Sales Tax**

We project 2019 gross sales tax collections to finish 2.38% above 2018. In 2020, we expect collections to continue to grow at 2.0%. The second year of the new sales tax formula change will shift another \$500,000 of net sales tax proceeds from the County to the Towns and Villages. Also beginning in the 2020 Budget, gross sales tax proceeds have been decreased by the \$256,374 AIM payment.

### **Room Tax**

Based upon declining Occupancy Tax collections, I recommend we decrease our projection from \$696,000 to \$663,819.

### **Capital Projects**

I recommend spending \$28,585,000 spending on capital projects in 2020. The local share on this spending is \$5,050,794 and will be bonded along with an additional \$781,000 that relates to the local share for relocation of the fuel farm at the airport, which was already authorized in 2016. The bondable portions of these projects total \$5,831,794 as compared to \$6,028,013 in 2019. Furthermore, we will pay down more bond principal \$6,273,595 in 2020 than what we borrow \$5,831,794.

### **Debt Service**

For 2020, I am recommending debt services payments for all funds totaling \$8,517,120 versus the 2019 figure of \$7,990,000.

### **Funded Private Non-Profit Agencies**

For the 2020 calendar year, I am recommending to you that we appropriate \$985,228 as aid to the various private non-profit community development and cultural organizations that the County has historically funded. This level of funding is \$19,223.00 lower than last year.

### **Community Development Fund**

Included in the 2020 budget is a total \$150,000 of Casella Community Development/Small Project funding. The Small Project funds of \$50,000 have been budgeted to replace the road leading into the Lake Street Material Recycling Facility. Also included is the annual Community Development Payment of \$100,000, which this year is earmarked for the Wellsburg Fire Department. This project was pledged financial assistance by the prior administration and I think it's important to honor that pledge. It's also important to note that in the past both these items were not specifically itemized within the budget process. These items are both sources of revenue and as of 2020 will become part of the operating budget until such time the OML with Casella has expired. The utilization of the funding in this manner provides insight to the Legislature and the public to know exactly how the funding is being allocated.

### **Solid Waste**

The proposed budget for the Chemung County Solid Waste District is \$1,277,770 as compared to the 2019 budget of \$1,430,641. With the privatization of our Solid Waste facilities, all associated costs with the landfill will be paid for by our private partner, New England Waste Systems of New York (NEWSNY).

### **Sewer Districts**

The Sewer District No. 1 submitted a proposed 2020 budget of \$2,827,165, as compared to \$2,772,714 for 2019. The total property tax levy for Sewer District No. 1 will remain the same. However, user rates will increase 19.8%. The combined impact of the above rates is \$215 per year, as compared to \$194 for 2019, for the average household assessed at \$100,000 that uses 60,000 gallons of water annually.

The Elmira Sewer District submitted a proposed 2020 budget of \$3,535,755 as compared to \$3,136,074 for 2019. The total property tax levy for the Elmira Sewer District will remain the same. However, user rates will increase 29%. The combined impact of the above rates is \$209 per year, as compared to \$172 for 2019, for the average household assessed at \$100,000 that uses 60,000 gallons of water annually.

### **Nursing Facility**

As we approach 2020 one of the more important financial issues that will be forwarded to the Chemung County Legislature is the current financial operating status of the Nursing Facility and how viable keeping the Nursing Facility under County ownership is.

### **Department Highlights**

In this portion of the 2020 operating budget various department heads and elected officials were requested to offer a brief synopsis of their operations in both 2019 and 2020. The following represents a combination of both their thoughts as well as those of the Executive branch.

## **Chemung County Department of Social Services**

### **Brian C. Hart, Commissioner of Human Services**

The total requested 2020 Department of Social Services budget has been reduced by \$1.5M as compared to 2019. The local share percentage will remain stable at 46%. Confirmation will be made when revenues are populated. The Department of Social Services strives to deliver a realistic budget based on the current trend of expenditures and current caseload count.

In 2019, the Commissioner of Human Services has a renewed focus on the quality of the work life environment for our employees. The Commissioner of Human Services has concentrated efforts on Breath-Body-Mind classes, employee access to the Quiet Room for a safe place to de-stress and rejuvenate, and personal acknowledgment of employees' anniversary and longevity milestones.

In 2018-2019, the Department experienced a large amount of turnover due to retirement incentives and neighboring counties' competitive rate of pay. Two areas in which additional training efforts have been made are in Temporary Assistance and Children & Family Services. The NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance has been supportive in providing on-site trainings to our Temporary Assistance Division in various subsidy areas. Further, the Department has a concentrated training effort on the Children and Family Services Division in which our Various Provider Consultation and Training contract is assisting with training supervisors to provide consistent, developmental feedback to staff in order to enhance their ability to perform their job duties and encourage their professional growth. We will continue with periodic supervisory trainings to ensure a supportive environment for all of our employees across all divisions.

### **Children and Family Services:**

To date in 2019, overall spending for foster care and Juvenile Defenders and Persons In Need of Supervision (JD/PINS) placements are trending slightly higher than in 2018. Children and Family Services continue their diligent efforts in placing youth in appropriate levels of care, as well as timeliness in shifting to lower levels of care when applicable.

In 2019, the Department is seeing an increase in the number of JD youth in care, while PINS youth in care continues to decrease. With that being said, however, the number of overall care days are declining by approximately 8%. The Children and Family Services division and Children's Integrated Services continue to utilize innovative solutions in working together to keep children in our community.

With the collaboration of Accounting, Children and Family Services, and Legal personnel, our goal is to streamline processes across divisions for accuracy of documentation, timeliness of payments, and maximization of federal and state reimbursement. We are specifically focused on and have identified an opportunity for efficiencies related to IVE funding after seeking guidance from the State.

In 2020, there are three areas in which we do not yet fully know the fiscal and/or programmatic impact;

- In October 2019, New York State Raise the Age Legislation will expand to 17 year old youth. At that time, Raise the Age Legislation will be in full effect, authorizing both 16 and 17 year old youth to be prosecuted as a youthful offender. Based on the severity of the charge, the youth will no longer be automatically prosecuted as an adult. Although the State has provided the estimated number of youth, the true impact on the placement expenditures of this change is unknown at this time. Counties will have no local share of the cost for the related expenses.
- Effective January 1, 2020, the Governor's Legislation eliminates state funding for PINS placement and PINS detention. Although Chemung County currently only has two PINS youth placements, PINS placement is very costly. The Department is looking into utilizing Supervision and Treatment Services for Juveniles Program (STSJP) as an alternative funding source.
- In 2020, the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) will be implemented. While the law is expansive and the changes that will need to be made to child welfare practice are significant, the Families First Prevention Services Act reforms federal financing to prioritize family based foster care over residential care by limiting federal reimbursement for certain residential placements. While residential placement care will still be necessary and needed for some children and youth, children in foster care have better well-being and permanency outcomes when placed with family, especially kin relatives. Analysis and assessments are being done to look at our current foster care population as well as child welfare practice and develop and implement changes in an effort to meet this historic shift in the child welfare approach.

### **Early Intervention and Pre-K Services:**

The Department of Social Services oversees the Early Intervention Program (birth - 3 years) and Preschool Program (3-5 years) in which we are responsible for providing multi-disciplinary evaluations and special education services to eligible children suspected of having or diagnosed with a developmental delay. We continue to be concerned with the lack of special education providers, including approved evaluators, speech pathologists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, special education teachers, teachers of the deaf and visually impaired, as well as self-contained special education classrooms for our preschool population. This is a serious problem throughout NYS and nationally.



Chemung County, in conjunction with the Regional Early Intervention Coordinating Council (comprised of 9 counties) is working with both NYSDOH and NYSED to discuss specific issues that rural counties are facing. We are exploring the use of teletherapy in Early Intervention and Pre-K. Additionally, with the assistance of our contracted agencies, we are encouraging ongoing recruitment activities. Lastly, three of our local School Districts are working with NYSDOH to conduct their own Pre-K evaluations and to provide Special Education services to eligible Pre-K students.

### **Medicaid/SNAP and HEAP**

The number of people applying for and found eligible for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) has continued to decrease over the last two years. There is a reduction of approximately 122 cases when comparing July 31, 2019 to July 31, 2018. Likewise, the local Medicaid caseload has continued to decline by 12.8% in 2019. The decrease in the Medicaid caseload is associated with the opening of cases on the New York State Health Exchange and the transfer of the non-MAGI population to the Health Exchange. Unlike the Medicaid and SNAP population, the Department's Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) caseload has increased by approximately 722 cases. Much of this increase can be attributed to our improved relationship with the Department of Aging and Long Term Care as well as our Community Services Workers, "Navigators," assisting those in the community.

### **Community First Choice Option**

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services approved the State's Medicaid Plan Amendment to add the Community First Choice Option (CFCO) set of services. CFCO, as authorized under the Affordable Care Act, allows expanded access and availability of long term services and supports to individuals on Medicaid, without the requirement of a waiver. Examples of services include:

- Assistive Technology
- Community Transitional Services
- Community Habilitation/SAME
- Congregate and Home-Delivered Meals
- Environmental Modification
- Moving Assistance

As services are utilized, the LDSS and Department of Office of Long Term Care will be better prepared to evaluate the programmatic impact. Due to the scope of services and number of estimated eligible individuals, an increase in staffing is an area of review.

### **Family Assistance/Safety Net**

As compared to 2018, the 2019 average monthly Temporary Assistance caseload increased slightly by 3%. Currently, there are 635 cases in our community. Of these cases, 56% are Family Assistance cases, while 44% are in the Safety Net category. Safety Net is the category with the highest local share of 79%. The Department continues our emphasis on requiring all employable adults to engage in work activities and seek employment. The co-location and partnership with the Academic and Work Force Development Center continues to be essential in assisting clients to enter and remain in the work force.

In an effort to protect the integrity of our Social Services subsidy programs, we would like to focus our efforts on the Special Investigations Unit in 2020. In 2019, we have experienced a decline in cost avoidance due to a reduction in municipal staff. Cost Avoidance indicates the amount of benefits that were either discontinued or decreased due to the actions of the Special Investigations Unit. By focusing efforts on the Special Investigations Unit, our taxpayer funds (Federal, State and Local) will be distributed to Chemung County residents truly in need.

### **Quality Assurance**

The Department continues to strengthen outcome performance reporting that is required from contract providers. During 2019, the Department continued our focus on ensuring our providers are meeting performance measures by conducting audits of the reported information to confirm it is consistent with contractors' records. The Department is working closely with providers to ensure their data collection systems are up to the level required to report on their performance. Outcomes are provided to the Legislature on an annual basis.

### **Mental Health:**

While the total Mental Health Budget remains relatively stable, the Mental Health Department continues to have fiscal oversight and administration of mental health, mental retardation/ developmental disabilities and substance abuse services. Chemung County contracts with multiple agency partners for provision of these services. As such, it guides the community in program development, and strives to assure access to services in these three disability areas whose common goals are efficacy and quality driven individualized services.

Whenever possible, the department encourages the provider community to work in an integrated fashion allowing some single points of entry into services while blending both programs and funding to best match the needs of the individual. Services available within our community include long term and acute hospitalization services, a 24-hour crisis service, intensive and traditional outpatient programs including Assertive Community Treatment (ACT), forensic services, medication grants, case management, day treatment programs, home based services, alternative housing that include group residents, a half-way home, supportive and supported housing, as well as various forms of respite services.

### **Children's Integrated Services**

While the budget for Children's Integrated Services (CIS) has little variance year to year, the work to keep youth in the county has been successful, as indicated by the JD/PINS population previously discussed and reflected in the Children and Family Services budget. A Juvenile Justice team comprised of Probation, CIS, Youth Bureau, Mental Health, and Children and Family Services personnel continues to meet regularly to discuss our toughest cases to ensure the youth have access to all the community has to offer before pursuing placement out of county.

In 2019, Children's Integrated Services and the Elmira City School District expanded their collaborative efforts in working together to keep children in our community. Four CIS Facilitators are now co-located throughout the District to assist in connecting the youth and their families to needed supports.

Children and Family Services adolescent placement staff, CPS, and Raise the Age staff are co-located in the CIS offices to allow for improved communication when a youth and family's case spans the two divisions. This has proved to be very successful. The Department has renewed focus on preventing the migration of children and their families through the continuum of our combined services. The budget impact of this work is reflected in the Children and Family Services placement budget.

### **Economic Development Strategy**

Chemung County has moved in a positive direction with its economic development goals making sure that existing business retention and expansion are a top priority. Concerted efforts to understand the needs and potential opportunities for the local business community and to provide appropriate resources to assist with projects and initiatives has been and will continue to be a main focus.

At the same time, modern economic development practice accommodates the interests and needs of communities and takes a holistic approach to growing the economic base. Towns, Villages, and the City have been involved in development projects and considered as valuable resources and allies to support this important work.

In addition, to support our progress, there are numerous critical partners in the field of economic and community development. Expertise and services in areas of labor force and training, community planning, small business development, business attraction, housing, and Local, State, and Federal funding programs provide many of the resources to assist us with accomplishing our goals. Solid partnerships with these organizations combined with strong relationships with people who are part of these organizations has greatly assisted and will continue to benefit the County's development efforts.

Also, of significant importance is the attraction of new business to our area. Many cost-effective resources have been used and leads are followed up on in an aggressive manner and monitored over time. No lead is too small or too large. We must make sure that we are prepared as much as possible now to attract and gain interest of potential companies before we are even on the radar screen. This is a game of preparation, numbers, and time... eventually our area will see some hits.

There is a tremendous amount of activity going on right now. The City of Elmira continues to see an unprecedented amount of investment and projects happening in its downtown core. A substantial number of Consolidated Funding Applications have been submitted, one of the County's highest years for the number of applications. These run across many sectors including business, not for profits, and municipalities. Despite some closings, our retail sector has remained strong and has had some significant major retail commitments and openings. There has also been a healthy amount of small-scale retail development. In addition, noteworthy interest on behalf of potential businesses has been at the forefront of some of our preeminent development sites in the County and numerous planning efforts are underway to better prepare our sites and communities for these projects.

## **Health Department**

### **Peter Buzzetti, III, Public Health Director**

Change continues was a major theme for the Health Department in 2019. Due to retirements, promotions and turnover, staff members demonstrated their abilities and are succeeding in their new roles. Staff turnover increased in the billing department and the registered nurses of the home health agency. A new supervisor is in place in the billing department which added stability.

2019 successes for the Health Department included: breastfeeding peer counselors working with mothers at Arnot; the Lead Coalition submitting an application for the HUD Lead grant; a good turnout for the Gold Shoe and Park Prize Pursuit wellness events; conducting a public showing of a movie to highlight the low rates of breastfeeding among African American women; vital records continued success with the new electronic death certificate system; increased rates of the home health agency to maintain viability and compete with for-profit providers; and passage of Tobacco-21 at the state level.

2019's challenges included the elimination of non-medical vaccine exemptions for children. This is a public health victory but the short timeline for implementation has caused concern for medical professionals, schools and parents. The lowering of the action level for elevated blood lead, similar to the vaccine exemption elimination, is a public health victory but implementation will be challenging due to a short timeline and lack of funding from New York State. An emergency preparedness drill conducted in April demonstrated some areas of our response in need of improvement, and investigation of a Legionella outbreak.

2020 will be a year of challenges. The lowering of the action level for blood lead impact staffing, requiring an increase in personnel. The Chemung County Health Department, must increase our ability to respond to an emergency event is vital. Attracting and retaining qualified staff is a constant challenge and will be a major area in need of improvement for 2020 and beyond. Opioid abuse and deaths remain a concern in our community and we continue to work with our community partners to address these problems. In terms of emerging issues, tick borne disease is a concern especially with warmer winters. The funding from New York State to conduct core public health activities has been flat or reduced, at the same time new mandates from the state, are NOT FUNDED. This exhausts the Health Department's infrastructure, funding and risks lack of appropriate response to public health needs while increasing the local share burden on community residents.

### **District Attorney**

#### **The Honorable Weeden A. Wetmore, Chemung County District Attorney**

The new discovery laws, which go into effect on January 1, 2020, require all District Attorneys' Offices to turn over to defense counsel more information on more cases and within a shorter time period than ever before. Defense attorneys will no longer have to demand discovery material on behalf of their clients. Prosecutors, within 15 days of arraignment, will be required to turn over, inter alia, the following: all police reports; witness identities and statements; all video and electronic evidence; scientific test results; calibration records of scientific equipment, such as radar guns and breathalyzers; names of expert witnesses and their opinions; police and lay witness photographs and drawings; photographs of property released/returned to victims; mental examination reports and notes; search warrant applications and returns; a list of all exhibits that will be introduced at a trial or hearing; criminal histories of defendants, accomplices and witnesses; bills of particulars concerning the date and time of crime and arrest, and the nature of any plea offers to cooperating witnesses. These demands will apply not only to all crimes prosecuted in our county, but also to simple violations including Vehicle & Traffic charges which clearly outnumber all other cases in Chemung County. An inability to timely provide such materials will be met with sanctions, including the preclusion of necessary evidence at trial, and the dismissal of cases.

Gathering all of these materials from police agencies and other witnesses within 15 days will require extraordinary efforts on the part of prosecutors, as well as law enforcement agencies throughout the state. To meet these demands the Chemung County District Attorney's Office will require more staff, more equipment such as phone lines and computers, and more space. All will come at an increased cost to the County. Although the local Public Defender's Office, in the near future, is in line for a quarter of a million dollars provided by New York State's Office of Indigent Legal Services, no such assistance is coming from the state for the Chemung County District Attorney's Office. Instead the new discovery laws will impose another unfunded mandate upon the taxpayers of Chemung County.

## **Department of Public Works**

### **Andrew P. Avery, Commissioner of Public Works**

#### Highway, Bridge, and Culvert Projects

The Department of Public Works (DPW) will end the 2019 construction season with 24.6 miles of county roads rehabilitated through preventive maintenance treatments. County contractors crack-sealed 10 miles of County roads. We completed a full depth reclamation (FDR) of 5 miles of roadway in 2019, and completed Cold In-Place Recycling (CIPR) on 2.1 miles of roads. Our county bridge crew washed the decks and substructure of over 200 bridges, prolonging the life of the structures. Additionally, the Bridge Crew completed replacement of 1 large culvert on CR-04 (Marsh Rd.) and a full bridge replacement on CR-59 (Smith Rd). County contractors completed pavement striping on 240 miles of county roadway centerlines and 480 miles of edge lines. Our crews have completed 33.8 miles of ditch cleaning and completed approximately 8 miles of shoulder backup this year. The Soil and Water District hydro-seeded all ditches that were cleaned. Our county crews also swept or broomed 240 miles of roads two times in 2019 and mowed 240 miles of county roads 3 times. In addition, we helped NYSDOT with roadside mowing as part of our tradeoff for their completion of our guiderail spraying, and assisted the Towns of Veteran and Big Flats with some of their mowing.

County crews continued to provide assistance on many projects county-wide in conjunction with Town, Village, and City staff. The County DPW operates and maintains the table-grinder for all municipalities in the county, moving from site to site. Additionally, the county operated our compost facility from April into November, serving over 7,664 customers. 831 customers took compost from the facility as of 9/10/19. County forces responded to several major storm events across the county, making repairs on county and town routes alike. It should be noted the 2018 storms caused millions in damages to the County Highway System; we worked on repairs last year and this year. County crews also assisted by providing trucking on many Town oil and stone (chip seal) projects. Equipment was shared with many municipalities, including several towns and the City of Elmira. Our County Pot Hole Spray-Patching Machine completed 40 miles of county roads and 60 miles of city roads. It was also used in the Town of Big Flats.

Other projects completed in 2019 include cutting of trees and vegetation on 33.8 miles of county routes, flushing of 18 driveway pipes, and replacement of 16 lateral pipes on county routes. Topographic surveys were also completed this summer by engineering students employed as interns for future bridge and culvert projects, and provided drainage surveys for our road projects. The interns also delivered “spray notifications” for our herbicide program, and completed curb layout. In addition, we’re continuing to use Mobile 311, our on-line work order system.

## **2019 Chemung County DPW Annual Report (Amended)**

### **2019 Highway Rehabilitation Projects included:**

- CR13 – Langford Creek Road – (Briggs to SR 224) – FDR+HMA
- CR23 – Drybrook Road (Weaver to end) – FDR+DST+STONE
- CR40 – Berwick Turnpike – (end to end) – FDR+DST+STONE
- CR35 – Chambers Road – (Colonial to Sing Sing) – CIP+HMA
- CR57 – Hickory Grove Road (Colonial to Sing Sing) – CIP+HMA
- CR67 – Watkins Road (Mill & Fill - 2”HMA)
- CR64 – Big Flats hamlet area – (Mill & Fill - 2” HMA)
- CR17 – Sing Sing Road widening and paving (Colonial Dr to Hickory Grove) – School Project

### **2019 Highway Preventive Maintenance Projects included:**

- CR47 – Veteran Hill Road – 5.1 miles – chip seal
- CR26 – Christian Hollow Road – 3.8 miles – chip seal
- CR51 – Watercure Hill Road – 4.5 miles – chip seal
- CR50 – North Street and Washington Street – 0.9 miles – chip seal
- CR71 – Rotary Road – 2.0 miles – chip seal
- CR23 – Drybrook Road – 2.5 miles – chip seal
- CR41 – Federal Road – 5.4 miles – chip seal
- CR40 – Berwick Turnpike – 0.8 miles – chip seal (NYSDOT will pave in 2020.)

### **2019 Bridge and Culvert Projects included:**

- CR04 – Marsh Road culvert replacements (1 large, 1 small) with 2 more pending weather
- CR59 – Smith Road bridge replacement
- CR01 – Jerusalem Hill Road @ Hugg Rd culvert replacement – contractor job

### **2019 Special Projects:**

- Coleman Ave Drainage Project – Whirt’s Creek to Chemung River (Federal Aid Project) o Total Construction Project Cost: \$2,814,400
  - o Federal Aid Share: \$1,801,216
  - o State Share: \$343,034
  - o County DPW Share: \$623,248
  - o County Sewer Districts Share: \$31,594
  - o Elmira Water Board Share: \$15,308
- Chambers Road Bridge Projects (2 bridges near Tompkins Corners) – Federal Aid
- Daniel Zenker Bridge Rehabilitation – Managed by DPW for Town of Big Flats (Federal Aid)
- N. Main St. Cultural Connector Project – Managed by DPW for City of Elmira (Federal Aid)
- Madison Ave. & Walnut St. Bridge Projects – Managed by DPW for City of Elmira (Federal Aid)

### **2019 Chemung County DPW Annual Report (Amended)**

In the City of Elmira, county crews and contractors additionally completed approximately 2.4 miles of “Mill & Fill” paving projects and approximately 1 mile of slurry seal on W. Water Street. 140 streets & numerous alleys were patched using the “pothole killer” spray-patching process. Contractors installed 6796-ft of new concrete curbing, and 35 ADA handicap ramps. Also, 15,000-ft of blacktop curbing was installed on new road program streets. 135 miles of City streets were swept 2 times, 45 special events were covered, 30



sinkholes were repaired, numerous signs were repaired or installed, bridge inspection flags were repaired, new parking meters were installed, 118 self-leveling manholes and 211 catch basins were installed or repaired, 480 catch basins were cleaned, 49 trees were removed, 6 pump stations were serviced 32 times each, 16 underpasses were cleaned two times each, and 41 tree stumps were ground. County crews also completed leaf and Christmas tree pickup programs, ground and hauled mulch, and completed welding for various agencies. This work is in addition to patching and general maintenance performed city-wide by County DPW crews. 18 city streets were scratch paved for smooth driving surfaces in addition to spot patching. Also, mulch at the city facility was ground by a contractor twice this year.

We were pleased to improve the overall condition of our county fleet equipment with purchases of a 6-wheel plow truck, a used CAT D6 bulldozer. To date this year, the Equipment Services Division completed many hours of work for other agencies, including Soil and Water, Buildings and Grounds, various municipalities, including the Towns of Ashland/Chemung, Baldwin, Veteran, Catlin, Big Flats, Van Etten, Horseheads, Southport, Elmira, Erin, and the City of Elmira. We continued to complete NYS Motor Vehicle Inspections for Chemung County municipalities.

In 2020, County and contracted forces will continue our program of rehabilitation and replacement of bridges and culverts, bridge maintenance and safety improvements through updating or replacement of bridge and approach railing. We plan to replace 1 bridge and 2 culverts – see the list below. We will also complete bridge maintenance repairs, and install new guiderails on 3 bridges, 3 culverts, and their approaches. Also planned is rehabilitation of 0.8 miles of roadway including new drainage, completion of 3.95 miles of Full Depth Reclamation (FDR) and asphalt overlay, an additional 2.2 miles of asphalt overlay, and 20 miles of maintenance and surface treatments. Planned routine maintenance includes pavement marking on 248 miles of roadway, ditch cleaning, shoulder cutting, and clearing roadside vegetation in advance of our road program and in our annual maintenance cycle.

#### **2020 Bridge and Culvert Projects:**

- Replace Culvert on CR23M – Mallory Road (Deferred from 2019)
- Replace Culvert on CR23 – Drybrook Road
- Replace Bridge on Brookline Avenue
- Replace joints on Bird Creek bridge

Our 2020 Highway and Drainage Projects slated for construction, pending requested budget approval are listed below. Please note these projects can be delayed or deferred for a variety of reasons, including but not limited to, weather, funding, unexpected or emergency work taking priority, and contractor schedules. Projects slated for completion by county crews may require assistance from contractors.

**2019 Chemung County DPW Annual Report (Amended):**

**2020 Highway Rehabilitation Projects:**

- CR23 Dry Brook Road (Weaver to CR60) – FDR (1.9 miles)
- CR23 Dry Brook Road northern end to CR60 – Asphalt overlay (2.2 miles)
- CR59 Smith Road – FDR (2.05 miles)

**2020 Highway Preventive Maintenance Projects**

- 20 miles of roads to be determined – Chip Seal and Cape Seal

**Other Anticipated 2020 Projects**

- City of Elmira: Rehabilitate Walnut Bridge, continue design of Main Street Bridge rehabilitation, bid and construct DRI Projects, and construct Lake Street Bridge Project (Federal and State Aid, BridgeNY)
- Town of Big Flats: Olcott Road Bridge (BridgeNY/Federal Aid)
- Construct 2 Bridges on Chambers Road (BridgeNY/Federal Aid)
- Continue design and Advertise for Bids: Horseheads Connector Road Project (Federal Aid)
- Construct CR08 Lowman Crossover Bridge Rehabilitation (Federal Aid)
- Continue design of Traffic Signal Upgrade Project – Phase I (Federal Aid)
- Continue Design of Pedestrian Safety Action Plan Projects (Federal Aid)
- Begin design of North-South Bicycle Connector Project (Federal Aid)
- Continue design of Pennsylvania Avenue Bridge Projects (Federal Aid)
- Construct CR-03 Culvert (Wyncoop Creek Road over Wyncoop Creek) – State Project

## **Building & Grounds**

### **Donald Bishop, Acting Superintendent of Building & Grounds**

The Buildings & Grounds Department is responsible for the maintenance of all Chemung County owned buildings. Most of our accounts are for the ongoing daily maintenance for these buildings that are required and minimize long issues. The bulk of our expenses are projected to be proactive in mainlining and upgrading facilities (maintenance contracts, utilities, payroll) but oftentimes our maintenance/building account is reactive to emergency issues that arise. This account is also used for other departments' general maintenance requests (painting, building walls, electrical needs etc.) throughout the year. Our 2019 budget was developed based on required annual requirements, historical data and consideration for contingencies that was sufficient with our projections.

As a department, we are proactive and plan projects that will save the county money in the future. Incorporated into our 2019 budget was an energy upgrade for the lighting in the Hazlett building. Floors 3 through 6 are completed and the rest of the building with completion by year end.

Every year we try to budget for "Green" improvements to reduce utility costs, improve performance and ensure long term use of facilities. In 2020 we are planning to upgrade the Justice Building, the Fairgrounds and some of the HRC building with LED lighting. We are installing state of the art, high efficiency air-conditioning in the Justice Building basement which will reduce the utility bills due to the fact that currently in order to cool the basement we have to cool the whole building on days that only the basement is being used. This caused a humidity problem in the whole building.

## **Planning Department**

### **Nicolette A. Wagner, Commissioner of Planning**

This following is a summary of the initiatives and tasks that the Chemung County Planning Department and the Elmira-Chemung Transportation Council (ECTC) completed in 2019. It describes our plans for 2020 and the need for continuity in our budget and staffing to continue this work.

The Planning Department covers a wide range of topics in its work, from general administration to climate issues, agricultural districts and farmland protection, economic development, mapping and municipal support. The majority of time goes toward municipal support for planning initiatives and coordination of 239-m and 239-n reviews through the Chemung County Planning Board. We provide

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) services and support to other county departments and municipalities as needed. In 2019, the department has been integral to several projects with the City of Elmira Code Enforcement Department and Community Development Department; namely, Cities RISE Phase II, in which the Elmira team is developing creative and effective strategies for code enforcement, and the Downtown Revitalization Initiative. The Planning Commissioner is overseeing the update of the DRI Zoning update, which will include a hybrid code for infill development. We have worked closely with several municipalities including the City, the Village of Elmira Heights and the Town of Big Flats on Complete Streets policies.

Other noteworthy planning accomplishments in 2019 include the consolidation of the Chemung County Agricultural Districts, active participation on the Chemung County Property Development Corporation (Land Bank) board, which continues to improve the quality of housing throughout the county and oversight of the County's 2020 Census tasks such as GIS and address verification. In October, the Planning Department provided its annual training session for local planning and zoning officials at the Town of Big Flats Community Center. We also work with municipalities to implement and fund Clean Energy Communities and Climate Smart Communities initiatives such as the new electric vehicle charging stations at the Elmira Town Hall.

ECTC continues its partnership with the Chemung County Planning Department, through both shared space and the assistance of the Chemung County Associate Planner for assistance with bicycle and pedestrian efforts. The merging of the County Planning Commissioner and ECTC Director positions in 2017 resulted in an increased partnership between the two departments. (ECTC is now a sub-department of the Planning Department).

Other notable transportation and mobility projects that ECTC undertook in 2019 were road scoring for all Non-State Federal-Aid eligible roads in Chemung County and the City of Elmira, continued collaboration on the Chemung County GIS consortium, a comprehensive crash data report, and development of the Hanover Square Circulation Study with the Village of Horseheads. ECTC's Transit Specialist and Director are involved with oversight of the private operator of the County's transit system, C TRAN, as well as daily interaction with the County's mobility manager. We also updated our Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP), initiated the ECTC Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) for December 2019 adoption (federal law requires an LRTP update every five years) and selected a consultant to commence the Chemung County Transportation Center rehabilitation project.

Currently, the Planning Department has 3.5 employees and ECTC has another 3.5 employees, as the Planning Commissioner/ECTC Director divides time between the two departments. Our major initiatives for 2020 include a Countywide Strategic Development Plan (funded primarily by a grant from Empire State Development), engineering and construction of trail segments throughout the county. We continue to review and educate the community on Complete Streets and Climate Smart policies. We are collaborating with partner agencies on brownfields development, and a continued partnership with the City of Elmira on Cities RISE Phase III and a sidewalk

inventory. Both departments continue to work with and expand services to municipalities; we believe that our budget requests align with our mission and responsibilities.

### **Central Services**

#### **David McCormick, Director of Central Services**

The Central Services Department is adequately funded for FY2019 operations and continues to provide responsive and cost-effective logistical support to our County Departments and selected municipal partners. During early 2019, there was a gap in courier staffing but the position was filled with two new half-time employees, thus saving significant fringe benefits while maintaining high levels of service. The Mail Room postage machine and Records Imaging Center (RIC) scanners undergo heavy daily usage but receive periodic preventative maintenance, which ensures high in-service rates. The 2017 mail courier van was leased, and other than several flat tires during the year, problem free. In 2019, the Elmira School District contracted with RIC to scan 200 cubic feet of documents which stressed existing equipment. Based on this increased workload above normal levels, a single replacement document scanner was already budgeted for based on 2021 reimbursement from NYS for Shared Services.

Budget submissions for 2020 are based on the level of work/expenditure we experienced in 2019 and adjusted for any known changes in 2020. However, depending on the extent to which new Shared Service agreements are adopted for 2020, it may be necessary to increase RIC staffing and procure one or more new document scanners. To meet the needs of the County and municipalities, it may be necessary to obtain a large format color scanner for maps and charts for the county and municipal partners.

### **Probation**

#### **Stephanie M. Fiorini, Director of Probation**

Project for Bail is the primary Pre-Trial agency for the County. Project for Bail is a non-for-profit agency funded with county funds (except for \$75,000 in TANF funds, and \$12,051.20 from DCJS). We do not know how our current ATI funding through DCJS will be affected; our last contract was through June 30, 2019. As of this date, there is no additional information if a new contract will be forthcoming. In addition, The Director of Probation will be exploring if TANF funding will be affected by any of the changes. Although some of the legislation is not clear, below is a summary of the projected impact as it relates primarily to Project for Bail.

**Workload and Staffing:** Recently, DCJS supplied data regarding 2018 Arraignments and the potential numbers in four categories based on the Bail Reform legislation. In comparing the number of defendants who would have “required” pre-trial release (1,489), and the actual number of defendants released under Project for Bail Supervision for 2018 (236), there is the potential for a substantial increase in the number of cases. What we don’t know is how many of these defendants will be under the actual supervision of Project for Bail, as the law requires the least restrictive means which would include release under their own recognizance (ROR). However, Project for Bail may be utilized by the Courts to perform other tasks as outlined below.

Historically, Project for Bail screens and recommends individuals for release under their program. It appears the new legislation directs a vast majority of defendants will be issued Appearance Tickets. Therefore, it would seem that the screenings that Project for Bail would have to complete would dramatically decrease (if an “assessment instrument” is used at all). Historically the number of conditions imposed by the courts for defendants under Project for Bail are aimed towards rehabilitation of the defendant. As the shift is simply to ensure the defendant’s return to Court, the conditions that Project for Bail staff have to monitor (curfew, compliance with treatment, counseling, etc.), may decrease. Conversely, the courts may look at utilizing Project for Bail to monitor non-monetary conditions, even if they are not under the “supervision” of Project for Bail for such things as travel restrictions, weapons restrictions or contact with the pre-trial agency.

Although the legislation states that courts will be responsible to remind defendants of court dates, as this is an unfunded mandate, and the courts are the most knowledgeable about their own schedules, it is and will be beneficial for all courts to take on this task.

If the workload and tasks for Project for Bail increase dramatically, they will need to increase their current staff of three employees to provide the required services, along with specific software. Additional staffing costs are not current in the 2020 budget.

#### Other Issues:

**Electronic Monitoring (EM):** It appears the courts will no longer have the ability to charge for Electronic Monitoring. Therefore, the County will incur the cost. Please note that it is rare that defendants are ordered by the courts to pay for EM costs, therefore, we do not anticipate a large increase in expenditures. Last year, 25 defendants were on EM through Project for Bail; as of the end of August, 2019, 26 defendants were placed on EM. It is anticipated the number of EM cases will decrease, as well as the length of time someone is on EM due to the criteria of the new legislation. A marked difference is that defendants placed on EM as part of their release conditions are in the “custody of the Sheriff.” What is unclear is what that means, i.e. should the Sheriff be monitoring the EM, is an agreement needed with Project for Bail and the Sheriff’s Department in regards to how any EM reporting should occur. We currently use a State

Contract for our EM provider. Monitoring is performed by Project for Bail. Probation currently monitors a Drug Court sanction of EM; it is unclear if this will have to be shifted over to Project for Bail if the defendant is not under probation supervision.

Pre-Trial Services: The Pre-Trial agency has to be certified through OCA. No one knows what this means or what it entails. All indications are that the courts still plan to utilize Project for Bail. Project for Bail does not have software to meet what we know are the requirements of the Annual Report to OCA. Any tracking at this stage, would be manual or require additional funding to Project for Bail.

Court Appearance Reminders: Currently, there is no system in place to notify defendants of court dates via their preferred method. Under Project for Bail supervision, they remind them at office visits. There is no system for text messaging. Based on the latest information, the courts will be responsible for notifications.

Assessment Instrument: Although not mandatory, if a release assessment tool is used, it has to be empirically validated and regularly revalidated. Project for Bail does not use anything that is validated. They utilize what they refer to as an Interview Sheet to gather information. Therefore, if "required" locally, there will be a cost associated with developing (or purchasing), utilizing, training, and revalidating of such a tool that meets the NYS legislative requirements. All of these functions will be an added cost to the county in the form of an unfunded mandate.

Weapons Restrictions: No one knows what will be OCA's expectation of monitoring this. Current staff is not equipped or trained.

Several years ago, Probation was tasked to offer pre-trial supervision if the court did not want them under Project for Bail supervision and in an effort to get more un-sentenced inmates out of jail. The number of defendants released to us was always minimal (less than 10). We only had 2 last year and 1 so far this year. It is anticipated that Probation will no longer be providing this service, which will not impact our Department.

In an effort for key stakeholders to come together, the Director of Probation organized our first Bail Reform meeting that took place on September 16th, to identify and resolve issues that affect our Law Enforcement departments in meeting NYS requirements and identify budget requirements. We will continue to meet on a regular basis.

## **Sheriff**

### **William A. Schrom, Acting Chemung County Sheriff**

The Chemung County Sheriff's Office has specific goals and objectives for the 2019 calendar year, which we have been able to meet and/or exceed. It is important to note that the goals and objectives set forth by your Sheriff's Office are monitored by the New York State Department of Criminal Justice Services in order for the Sheriff's Office to remain an accredited agency. Some of the goals and objectives I hope to achieve for the agency and community are as follows:

- To enhance and strengthen our already very good working relationship with the Elmira City School District by continued interaction with the superintendent and other key officials of the district. It is ours and the schools' hope to be able to add four (4) additional SPOs to the program, allowing for a School Resource Officer in each of the ECSD schools to ensure the safety and security of the students and faculty.  
To increase our NYS pistol permit safety classes in an effort to accommodate more applicants in a shorter time, as well as to expedite the overall application process for them. We are also hoping to extend our reciprocity agreement with Tioga County, PA to ensure that our friends to the south have an opportunity to obtain a NYS pistol permit given their close proximity to Chemung County and the New York State border. We had successfully accomplished this same type of agreement with Bradford County, PA in 2016, which has proven beneficial for both Bradford County, PA and Chemung County residents wishing to obtain valid permits for both states.
- We will continue to work collaboratively with our local law enforcement partners on a multitude of levels. This will include assembling personnel from various agencies to conduct joint major case investigations, to conduct joint training, consider joint Special Services teams, to name a few. It is also our goal to conduct a joint Law Enforcement Training Academy with the Elmira Police Department.
- We will add a member of the agency to the county's Drug Enforcement Unit (DEU) which currently consists of members of the Elmira Police Department and New York State Police.
- We will continue to maintain agency professionalism through our commitment to the accreditation program, as well as through increased training for all members of the agency.



## **Elmira Corning Regional Airport**

### **Thomas J. Freeman, Director of Aviation**

2019 marked the first full year of operations in the new terminal. The new terminal presents many opportunities for future growth as well as the aviation gateway to our community for residents and visitors. The new terminal has added many financial challenges including Operation and Maintenance of additional mechanical features including jet bridges, baggage handling, security systems and mechanical doors. The contracted cleaning costs alone increased the budget by \$250,000.

The Airport operates as an Enterprise Fund by FAA definition. The Airport has a goal of operating as a business without the need for local direct taxpayer support. The FY 2019 budget had an operating deficit of \$693,781. Throughout 2019 the Airport has worked to streamline operations including:

- Streamline staffing between Maintenance, Operations and Management staff. This effort has substantially reduced overtime, reduced staff and added to the efficiency of overall operations. The restructuring resulted in over \$200,000 in reduced payroll expense.
- The Airport has restructured contracted services, delivering increased efficiencies resulting in over \$150,000 in savings.
- The Airport has increased revenues with the Airlines in 2019 resulting in an increase of \$395,000.

The Airport has experienced a 10% growth in enplanements throughout 2019. We anticipate the trend will continue in 2020 with the addition of new service by Allegiant Airlines to Southwest Florida and United Airlines move to the Washington DC Dulles hub.

The Airport will continue year three of the Small Community Air Service Development Program (SCASDP) and the Statewide Opportunity for Airport Revitalization (SOARS) marketing programs. These programs provide advertising and marketing financial assistance to the Airport. The Airlines on a consolidated basis are experiencing 75% or greater load factors. These levels indicate a healthy balance of utilization for the Airlines.

The budget for 2020 builds upon what we were able to achieve throughout 2019 and increases operating revenues:

- Expanding the fuel flowage fee to commercial operations will increase revenue \$90,000
- Increase in Airline fees will increase revenue by \$40,000
- Expanded parking lot will increase revenue by \$150,000

- Expanded concessions and advertising revenues increase by \$40,000

The 2020 budget has a decrease in local share from \$693,781 in FY 2019 to \$117,401 in FY 2020. This reduction of \$576,380 represents an 83% decrease.

The Airport staff are continually working on increasing efficiencies, identifying new revenues towards achieving a local share neutral budget.

### **Nursing Facility**

#### **Michael C. Youmans, Administrator Chemung County Nursing Facility**

The Nursing Facility experienced significant success and growth in 2019 as it continued to deal with the challenge of an ever-changing environment. The Nursing Facility continued to adapt to significant new CMS (Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services) regulations, the most extensive changes in regulation since 1989. The facility continued to upgrade infrastructure in 2019 by replacing the roof on the sixth floor and is currently in the process of receiving bids for a new dish machine. The facility is currently awaiting the annual Department of Health Inspection at the time of this report.

In 2019, the Nursing Facility has felt the effects of several employees retiring after many years of service. Specifically, the facility will lose approximately ten employees to retirement by the end of 2019. As always, recruitment and retention continue to be a point of emphasis and continued partnerships with BOCES, local school districts, Elmira College, and Corning Community College remain vital. The facility has benefited from the tuition reimbursement program and currently has 12 individuals enrolled in continuing education! The facility saw dividends from this program in 2019, as the facility graduated five LPN's and one RN. A renewed focus in 2019 has been an initiative by the Human Resource Department and Administration to identify areas that are key to employee retention, specifically Certified Nurse Aides, Licensed Practical Nurses, and Registered Nurses. The facility entered into an agreement in 2019 with a staffing agency to support existing staffing and to ensure patient care needs are met. The facility has held multiple, successful job fairs in 2019 with a focus to target individuals who wish to enroll in the Certified Nurse Training program.

## **Treasurer**

### **The Honorable Jennifer Furman, Chemung County Treasurer**

In 2013, the Chemung County Treasurer's Office established a Municipal Services Division to provide accounting and bookkeeping services to other municipalities within Chemung County. In 2019, the Treasurer's Office continued to provide services to several participating municipalities, including the Town of Elmira, Town of Big Flats, Town of Baldwin, and the Village of Horseheads. For Big Flats and Elmira, the Treasurer's Office provides a host of accounting and booking services, whereas the Town of Baldwin and the Village of Horseheads services are focused on tax collection and payroll, respectively. Each agreement also requires access to the County's information technology systems and staff.

Related to the services above, in mid 2019, a financial services menu and time tracking system was developed to not only better define and quantify the services being provided by the Treasurer's Office, but also to measure the costs and savings to each participating municipality. The services menu and time tracking systems were put into place in April/May 2019, therefore, full annualized measurements will not be available until 2020, however, several quarters of information will be available by the end of 2019.

In 2019 the County Treasurer's Office also continued a Tax Foreclosure Agreement with the City of Elmira, whereby the county buys the city's unpaid property tax after March 31 of the year after the taxes were issued, makes the city whole on its delinquent taxes and takes on the foreclosure responsibility for the city. The scope of this agreement was also expanded in 2019, as has been done in the past, such that the county agreed to guarantee payment of the city's fully tax levy by December 31st, 2019, and all subsequent years that the agreement remains in effect. This portion of the agreement provides guaranteed cash flow to the City of Elmira and allows them to record 100% of their tax levy in the current tax and fiscal year.

## **Youth Bureau**

### **Robert Harris, Executive Director of Chemung County Youth Bureau & Recreational Services**

To better engage and provide meaningful summer employment opportunities to the disadvantaged and low income youth of our community, the Chemung County Youth Bureau and all the County Departments, at the direction of County Executive Chris Moss, focused our efforts on filling at least one half of our planned seasonal summer hires with youth from disadvantaged and low income households. County Executive Moss said "Chemung County government has an obligation to introduce the many and various employment opportunities that are possible for some of our most vulnerable youth and provide them with a positive summer work experience."

County Departments partnered with such community based organizations as Workforce New York, Catholic Charities, GST BOCES, Corning Community College, Elmira, Elmira Heights and Horseheads School Districts, EOP, area community centers, public housing complexes and some members of the faith based community to identify and recruit a portion of its seasonal summer staff. As a result approximately 135 disadvantaged and low income youth 14-21 years of age were provided with a meaningful and positive summer employment experience.

The feedback provided by many county departments and their respective seasonal youth employees regarding this NEW county initiative was very positive. Newly elected Chemung County Treasurer Jennifer Furman said “Everyone at the Treasurer’s Office was thrilled to have these students assisting us with our work this summer. They were very professional and extremely capable in their work assignments.” Deja M., a seasonal youth employee, said “I never had a job before this experience, so this was my first experience with employment. Thank you to everyone for making it a great first experience.” Peter Buzzetti, Chemung County Public Health Director said; “Our intern has been fantastic. Our intern and her supervisors want her to return to work for us again next summer.”

Chemung County departments will be meeting jointly with County Administration this fall to begin employment recruitment planning efforts for the 2020 summer season and examine opportunities to improve upon its recruitment and hiring of disadvantaged and low income youth to ultimately cultivate a future county workforce.

#### Chemung County Youth Bureau TANF Summer Youth Employment Program:

The TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) Summer Youth Employment Program provides an opportunity for income eligible (200% of poverty) Chemung County youth 14 – 20 years of age an opportunity to gain hands-on job experience over the summer months while learning important soft employment and financial literacy skills. The 2019 program operated from Monday, July 8th through Friday, August 16th at over 57 host work sites throughout Chemung County.

For the summer of 2019 a total of 110 youth from all across Chemung County were hired. 36% of these youth resided in the 14901 zip code, 32% from the 14904 zip code and 8% from the 14845 zip code. The program was able to maintain an 80% retention rate of youth workers over the course of the program. Youth were compensated at a rate of \$11.10 per hour (NYS minimum wage) and youth worked an average of 25 hours per week for six weeks having the ability to earn over \$1,600 over the course of the summer.

In partnership with Corning Credit Union and GST BOCES, youth participated in 13 hours of soft employment and financial literacy skills education over the course of the six weeks. Workshops were conducted, that included what you need to know about checking & savings accounts, budgeting, how to write a resume, how to fill out an application, handwriting skills, financial preparation for college, communication skills, interviewing techniques, and career exploration. The youth participated in a simulated “Life” scenario. They

were assigned a life and job role with an assigned budget and have to tackle the many trials and tribulations of life in the real world, make life decisions and have money left over to win the game.

2019 SYEP Host Worksite Agencies:

- Able 2
- Broadway Animal Hospital
- Chamberlain Acres Garden Center
- Chemung County Nursing Facility
- Christmas House
- City Zoo
- Copy Express
- Chemung County Department of Social Services
- Chemung County Treasurer's Department
- Elmira City School District
- Elmira Heights School District
- Eldridge Park
- Elmira Downtown Development
- Village of Elmira Heights
- EOP
- Frontline Community Center
- Hair Hut
- Harris Hill Amusement Park

- Lovely Shop 2
- McClure's Deli
- Pawtners Program
- Pudgie's Pizza
- Rainbow International
- Town of Southport Recreation
- Southside Community Center
- Steele Memorial Library
- Subway – Center St. Horseheads
- Summer Cohesion Program
- T-Shirt Studio
- The SPOT Program
- Turtle Leaf Café
- Woodlawn Cemetery
- YWCA

The total number of low-income youth hired by the Youth Bureau for this summer.

- TANF Summer Youth Employment Program 110 youth.
- 15 low income youth who previously worked under the TANF Summer Youth Employment Program were transferred over to the Summer Cohesion Program payroll as recreation leaders.
- Approximately 62.5 % of Youth Bureau Summer Hires were comprised of low income youth.

The Youth Bureau was able to assist the following County Departments identify and recruit low income youth as part of their 2019 seasonal summer hires:

- Health Dept. (1)
- IT (1)
- Treasurer (2)
- DPW (2)
- Buildings & grounds (2)
- Nursing Facility (1)

### **Conclusion**

As you can see, we have been able to instill a sense of frugality, creativity and discipline to accomplish goals and serve our constituents with minimal impact to our fund balance. The future holds the challenges that we are forced to meet head-on to ensure our fiscal viability.

In closing, I want to express my appreciation to our Director of Budget and Research, Steve Hoover, Human Resource Administrator, Taylor Lance, and Director of Public Information, Vincent Azzarelli for all their hard work during the budget process. I also want to give a special thank you to Deputy County Executive David J. Sheen for all of his assistance in putting together the 2020 spending plan. I look forward to your review of the 2020 Chemung County Budget and welcome any questions, concerns or otherwise that you may have in regards to the spending plan.

Respectfully submitted,



Christopher J. Moss  
Chemung County Executive