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Albany County Legislature adopts 2019 County Budget
Adjustments bring tax rate down by 4.3 percent

ALBANY – The Albany County Legislature adopted the 2019 County Budget on Monday with several amendments that provide funding for delivery of vital services, make investments in the infrastructure and reflect an overall fiscally responsible outlook for the upcoming year.

The amended budget includes a tax levy of \$92,692,544, a 1.5 percent decrease from the \$94,101,784 levy proposed by County Executive Daniel McCoy in October. The new levy represents a .21 percent increase from 2018. As a result, the new tax rate will total \$3.5581 per \$1,000 of equalized assessed value, a 4.3 percent decrease from 2018.

“This budget is the result of a thoughtful and deliberate process that involved members of the Legislature and other elected officials, staff, and advocates to ensure that we provide a spending plan that is fiscally responsible for the residents of Albany County,” said Chair Andrew Joyce. “I want to thank County Executive Dan McCoy and his talented staff for working collaboratively with the Legislature to reach an agreement that has resulted in a cost savings for taxpayers.”

“This budget is a victory for our residents and I am proud that we continue to make Albany County a more affordable place to live, work and raise a family and practice fiscal responsibility, all while ensuring no one is left behind. With strategic investments in critical services and programs that improve the lives of our children, our seniors, our veterans, the sick and those struggling with poverty and addiction, we are creating opportunities for those who need it most,” said Albany County Executive Daniel P. McCoy.

The 2019 budget funds several initiatives including the County Executive's Equity Agenda, as well as implementing Raise the Age and Indigent Legal Services Reform. Raise the Age has resulted in a total of 21 additional positions and a total increase of \$8 million in the budget; Indigent Legal Services Reform resulted in a \$1.75 million expense. Both of these initiatives will be fully reimbursed by the state.

The spending plan also appropriates approximately \$114 million during 2019-23 for critical infrastructure, including an additional \$22 million for the Nursing Home (bringing the total to \$83 million).

The County has seen an unprecedented increase in its revenues. Sales Tax is projected to be approximately \$6 million above what was budgeted in 2018 and near \$15 million above what was received in 2017.

Another major impact is a projected revenue increase of \$1.6 million in the Albany County Sheriff's Department due to a program to board immigrant detainees. This additional revenue helps to lower the tax levy, and provide immigrants with legal and other services. This is the largest investment by a county to date in New York State.

Sheriff Craig Apple stated, "This is proof that when elected officials work together good things can happen. I am glad the Sheriff's Office could help make a difference."

Since the release of McCoy's proposal on October 10, the Legislature's Audit and Finance Committee has held seven public hearings, meeting with department heads to discuss individual budgets and determine the driving forces that impact services. This process gave Legislators an opportunity to actively participate in the budget-making process.

Majority Leader Dennis Feeney stated, "I commend the Legislature and the County Executive for all the hard work that has been done in order to finalize the budget. This is a budget that is fair to the taxpayers and also provides the resources required to provide the services that are needed by County residents."