



Inclusion Through Diversity

Marcia E. Lynch, Public Information Officer
607-274-5555, Office
607-227-2152, Cell
October 4, 2012
TWO PAGES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Legislators Continue to Examine 2013 Recommended Budget

Legislators focused on seven more department and agency budgets tonight, as the County's Expanded Budget Committee continued to review County Administrator Joe Mareane's recommended 2013 budget.

Presenting tonight were the History Center, the County Historian, Tompkins County Area Development (TCAD), the Youth Services Department, Probation and Community Justice, the Department of Social Services, and County Administration.

Highlights from tonight's review:

For TCAD, the administrator's budget allocates \$170,000 in one-time funding to support the economic development agency in 2013, which is coordinated with an initiative by the Legislature's Planning, Development, and Environmental Quality Committee to review potential approaches for sustainable long-term funding. With the current over-reliance on fee-based income, with fewer not-for-profit deals and fewer medium and large-scale manufacturing project, Director Michael Stamm said the long-term aim is to return the agency to a balanced, sustainable model of employer investment, County support, and fee-based income. Current-year County support stands at only \$7,700. Legislator Mike Lane maintained that it's time for the County to increase its "tepid" support and provide meaningful financial support for TCAD, recognizing the tremendous contribution to the County that comes from the partnership.

Youth Services Director Amie Hendrix said challenges for her programs include the loss of State funding, with municipalities continuing to struggle following the County cuts in 2011. In his recommended budget, Administrator Mareane did not approve over-target requests that would have provided funding to reinstate intensive youth services programs affected by State and County budget cuts, as well as another \$6,600 to restore State funding for the Municipal Youth Services System cut in 2012. The administrator said his decision stems from the principle of not responding to a shift of burden from State to county government, to replenish withdrawn State funding with local dollars. He said the issue is properly a policy decision that the Legislature needs to address.

The Department of Probation and Community Justice requested over \$87,000 to continue a probation officer position, currently shared by two half-time officers, that was one-time-funded for 2012. The Department tonight proposed a revised version of the request, a Probation Assistant position, which Probation Director Pat Buechel said could manage a low-risk caseload and other administrative duties, at a cost saving of nearly \$20,000 compared to the initial request.

Social Services Commissioner Patricia Carey told Legislators mandated spending in her department has increased, including a \$449,000 increase for Medicaid; the need to make a 53rd weekly Medicaid payment because of how this year's calendar falls, represents added expense of \$235,000. With less

State reimbursement, net local cost has increased—with Medicaid administration capped, child support administration eliminated, and reimbursements for day care and juvenile treatment services reduced (all told, reductions of more than \$280,000). She noted dramatic increases in caseloads for Medicaid, food stamps, and child welfare, which the department is handling with no increase in staff. “This Legislature understands when times get hard people turn to government for more social services,” Legislator Lane noted, “and we appreciate all the effort by your staff to deal with that.”

The committee has adjourned until October 10, 5:30 p.m. Expanded Budget Committee meetings are held at Legislature Chambers of the County Courthouse, 320 N. Tioga Street, Ithaca.

Before then, on Tuesday, October 9, Legislators will hold their annual Community Budget Forum, to give citizens the opportunity to learn about the 2013 recommended budget and to offer informal comments before legislators advance any recommended changes. The forum will be held next Tuesday, beginning at 7:00 p.m., at the Supreme Courtroom, second floor of the Old County Courthouse, located at 121 E. Court Street, Ithaca. The forum will take place in the space that will become the home of the County Legislature early next year.

An electronic version of the 2013 Tentative Budget, the Expanded Budget Committee schedule, and other information regarding the Tentative Budget are posted on the budget page of the County web site at [http:// www.tompkins-co.org/ctyadmin/Budget/index.htm](http://www.tompkins-co.org/ctyadmin/Budget/index.htm),

Contact: James Dennis, Chair, Budget, Capital and Personnel Committee, 387-4058; County Administrator Joe Mareane, 274-5551.

- END -