County of Fulton

COUNTY BUILDING
JOHNSTOWN, NEW YORK 12095

Board of Supervisors

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13 September 2018

Mr. Robert F. Mujica Jr., Budget Director
New York State Division of Budget
Room 128, State Capitol
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Mr. Mujica:

Please find attached the *2018 Fulton County Shared Services Plan* approved by the Fulton County Shared Services Panel in accordance with FY 2018 New York State Budget legislation. The Plan includes CWSS Property Tax Savings Plan Summary Appendix A. A draft of the Plan was accepted by the Board of Supervisors on August 13, 2018 by Resolution 326 of 2018. Also included is a copy of Panel Minutes (September 12, 2018) showing the voting record relative to the Plan.

If you have any questions about the Plan or the Panel's process, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Jon R. Stead
Administrative Officer/Clerk of the Board

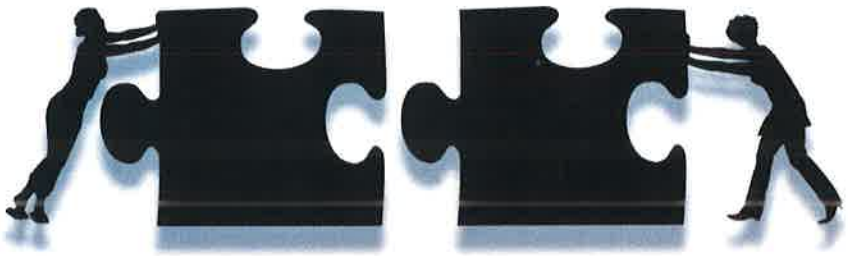
cc: James K. Groff, Chairman of the Board
Jack Wilson, Vice-Chairman of the Board

Fulton County NY
POSITIVE

September 12, 2018

Fulton County Shared Services Panel

2018



SHARED SERVICES PLAN

Introduction

The FY 2018 New York State Budget legislation included a new initiative designed to generate property tax savings by facilitating operational collaboration between local governments. The "County-wide Shared Services Initiative" established a Shared Services Panel in each county, chaired by the Chief Executive Officer of the County. According to the State mandate, the Panels will work to help develop, and ultimately approve a County-wide Shared Service Property Tax Savings Plan, through intergovernmental cooperation to find new opportunities to share and coordinate services. According to the authorizing legislation, plans that create actual and demonstrable property tax savings may be eligible for a one-time match of the net savings resulting from new actions implemented pursuant to the Plan.

During 2017, representatives of local governments within Fulton County convened as a Shared Services Panel (SSP) periodically throughout the summer. For the 2017 effort, the Panel decided to prepare a report that encompassed not only the State's mandated short-term exercise, but also Advisory Recommendations to the community regarding more comprehensive long-term restructuring and consolidation ideas that would produce substantial savings to taxpayers. After careful consideration, the 2017 SSP voted to issue a preliminary "Plan and Report" without an APPENDIX A project and to continue to deliberate to prepare and submit another Shared Services Plan to the Director, NYS Division of Budget in 2018 in accordance with state law governing the State-mandated "County-wide Shared Services Initiative".

The 2018 Fulton County Shared Services Panel (SSP) convened a total of four (4) times to deliberate regarding potential governmental functions that could be shared to achieve property tax savings and/or avoid future costs among local governments. In addition to an initial organizing meeting on May 3, 2018, the Panel met on July 10, August 9 and September 12. A sub-committee meeting of Panel members and staff regarding a potential Garbage Truck Sharing Plan for local municipalities was held on June 5. A total of three (3) public hearings were held, one on August 9 and two on August 13, to allow residents to voice their opinions and/or suggestions regarding draft versions of the Plan.

The Shared Services Plan that follows and the related "Appendix A" documentation resulted from Panel deliberations during both 2017 and 2018. Some initiatives and recommendations in the Plan build upon topics from the 2017 Shared Services Plan, others are new proposals and one came to fruition from extensive inter-municipal negotiations among local Fulton County governments that began prior to the State-mandated County-wide Shared Services Initiative.

The 2018 Shared Services Plan is organized in three (3) sections. PART I describes the Panel's goals for implementing specific shared services initiatives during 2019 and 2020. PART II describes other Advisory Recommendations to the community for inter-municipal cooperation and/or consolidation ideas that have merit for serious consideration in future years. PART III is the *APPENDIX A: County-wide Shared Services Property Tax Savings Plan Summary* that is required as a submittal to the NYS Division of Budget. *APPENDIX B* is a copy of the *Feasibility Study for the Consolidation of Police Services in Johnstown and Gloversville* conducted in 1993.

PART I: SHARED SERVICES PLAN (2019-2020)

A. Contract Assessing Valuation Unit (County)

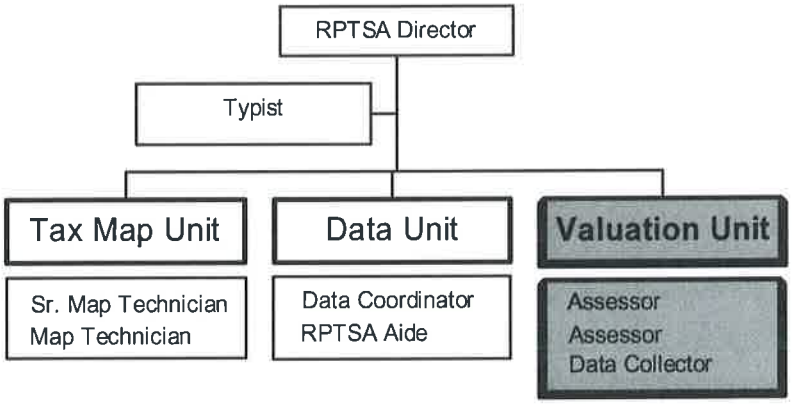
1. **Goal:** Create a real property "Valuation Unit" as a branch of the existing Fulton County Real Property Tax Services Agency. The Valuation Unit would consist of a full-time professional staff that would perform data collection and appraisals for property tax assessment purposes. This service would be available to local cities and towns, at their option, via multi-year contracting with the County.

2. **Description:** This approach is sometimes referred to as "contract assessing". The "Valuation Unit" would include the staffing and equipment to provide data collection and appraisal services to local municipalities on a fee-for-service basis. Contract Assessing provides many of the efficiencies and economies of scale associated with full consolidation of assessment; however, local governments would have the choice of whether or not to purchase assessing services from the County. This choice would be a decision of the local town or city council.

   Although contract assessing has many similarities to a fully-consolidated County Assessing system, local leaders may prefer this structure because it offers the flexibility to opt in and opt out. Pricing, terms and conditions of an inter-municipal agreement for county assessment services would be subject to negotiation and would be for a set contract period– say six (6) years. Under this scenario, a town or city that chose to contract with the County would not need to employ a department to carry out the assessing function. A county-employed assessor would be assigned responsibility for one or more municipalities, and support staff for data collection and data management would also be provided by the County.

   If all local municipalities chose to contract with the County for assessing services, the Valuation Unit would need to be staffed at the full Table of Operation and Equipment (TO&E) of one (1) Senior Assessor, four (4) Assessors, two (2) Data Collectors and one (1) RPTSA Aide. If fewer local municipalities elect to contract with the County, the Valuation Unit could be sized accordingly. In any case, a minimum or "base" staffing level of two (2) Assessors and one (1) Data Collector would probably be required to effectively operate. If a phase-in approach to contract assessing is desired, it could start with this base staffing structure shown in the following diagram.

VALUATION UNIT- CONTRACT ASSESSING
(BASE STAFFING MODEL)



Aspects of Contract Assessing

- All local governments must participate to achieve goal of "common standards" throughout county.
- Service costs would be billed to each participating assessing unit.
- Establishes consistency for assessing practices in participating assessing units.
- Eliminates the need for costly contracted revaluation projects in participating assessing units.
- Equalization rates and separate tax rates for each jurisdiction would still be required.
- The Valuation Unit can be "scaled" in size to service the number of customer municipalities.

TABLE 1: PROJECTED COSTS OF CONTRACT ASSESSING AT MINIMUM STAFFING (2017 DOLLARS)

RPTSA Budget: A-1355-1355.0000 Unit Total $ 371,582.00

New Valuation Unit at minimum staffing (w/fringes)	$ 192,750.00
New Equipment & Supplies (estimate)	10,000.00
New (1) Sedan Lease ($265 per month)	3180.00
Base "Valuation Unit":	**$ 205,930.00**

GRAND TOTAL: $ 577,112.00

Minimum Staffing of "Valuation Unit" Estimated Costs:

New Positions	Each (est.)	Total
(2) Assessors	$ 50,000.00	$ 100,000.00
(1) Data Collector (Grade A-1)	28,500.00	28,500.00
Total Salaries (new)		128,500.00
Fringe Benefits (est. @ 50%)		64,250.00
	Total	$ 192,750.00

Source: 2017 Fulton County Budget; RPTSA A-1355-1355.0000, et al.

3. **Implementation**: As shown in the Table above, creating a new "base" Valuation Unit at the county level to carry out data collection and assessing for a limited number of municipalities is projected to cost $205,930.00. This includes payroll and fringe benefits ($192,750.00) and new office equipment and supplies, plus one sedan lease. Based upon general staffing guidelines developed by the International Association of Assessing Officers (IAAO), this base Valuation Unit, with support of its parent RPTSA staff, could reasonably handle assessing functions for 9,000 ± parcels. Using this standard, the County RPTSA could provide assessing services to several local municipalities and would have to establish a chargeback methodology to cover its added costs. The simplest approach would probably be the most viable- a flat fee per parcel.

   Because their parcel counts total roughly 9,000 parcels, the Towns of Mayfield, Northampton and Perth can be used for illustration purposes. Using these towns, a chargeback service fee of $ 24.00 per parcel would be required to approximate the revenue needed to cover the estimated $205,930.00 cost of a base Valuation Unit. Analysis reveals that it may be a more effective system to complete cyclical reappraisals of property, maintain full equalization rates and access periodic state aid; however, it would cost more to operate than current town expenses, even projected on a four-year reassessment cycle with state aid . See *Table 2* below.

TABLE 2: CHARGEBACK SERVICE FEES FOR "BASE"-STAFFED CONTRACT ASSESSING

Municipality	Parcel Count	Chargeback @ $24 per parcel	Current Local Costs for Assessing * (2017)	Savings or (Extra Cost)	Potential 4 Year Aid (roll sect. 1,3,6 @ $5 per parcel)	Potential 4 Yr Savings or (Extra Cost) after State Aid
Mayfield	4082	$ 97,968.00 4 YR: $391,872	$69,532.00 4 YR: $278,128	($28,436.00) 4 YR: ($113,744)	$19,925.00	($93,819)
Northampton	2920	$ 70,080.00 4 YR: $280,320	$34,620.00 4 YR: $138,480	($35,460.00) 4 YR: ($141,840)	$14,110.00	($127,730)
Perth	1760	$ 42,240.00 4 YR: $168,960	$45,331.00 4 YR: $181,324	$3,091.00 4 YR: $12,364	$8,450.00	$20,814
Total	8762	$210,288.00 4 YR: $841,152	$149,483.00 4 YR: $597,932	($60,805.00) 4 YR: ($243,220)	$42,485.00	($200,735)

State Aid Eligibility:
State Aid for Cyclical Reassessments (8497 parcels X $5.00): $ 42,485.00
Note: State Reassessment Aid would be remitted to each participating town or city.
County would be eligible for one-time "County Aid" (8762 parcels X $1.00): $ 8762.00
* Includes costs for employer Retirement System and FICA contributions estimated @ 23% of payroll.

Based upon staffing and cost projections, economies of scale would "kick-in" as more local municipalities join the contract system of assessing. For example, using the same Valuation Unit approach with two additional towns (Johnstown and Stratford) could lower the overall shared cost to operate to approximately $20.00 per parcel. This includes the cost of one (1) additional Assessor to handle those two town's parcels, which together total 5480. With five (5) example towns participating, county chargeback costs are substantially lower; however, they still exceed four (4) of the five (5) towns' current operating costs. The Town of Perth would actually reduce its costs with this model by approximately $2,435.00 per year, with the potential to save $18,190.00 over a four-year assessment cycle, if full state aid is achieved. See *Table 3* below.

TABLE 3: CHARGEBACK SERVICE FEES FOR "5 TOWN"-STAFFED CONTRACT ASSESSING

Municipality	Parcel Count	Chargeback @ $20 per parcel	Current Local Costs for Assessing * (2017)	Savings or (Extra Cost)	Potential 4 Year Aid (roll sect. 1,3,6 @ $5 per parcel)	Potential 4 Yr Savings or (Extra Cost) after State Aid
Mayfield	4082	$81,640.00 4 YR: $326,560	$69,532.00 4 YR: $278,128	$12,108.00 4 YR: ($48,432)	$19,925.00	($28,507)
Northampton	2920	$58,400.00 4 YR: $233,600	$34,620.00 4 YR: $138,480	$23,780.00 4 YR: ($95,120)	$14,110.00	($81,010)
Perth	1760	$35,200.00 4 YR: $140,800	$45,331.00 4 YR: $181,324	+ $10,131.00 4 YR: + $40,524	$8,450.00	+ $48,974
Johnstown (T)	4335	$86,700.00 4 YR: $346,800	$65,381.00 4 YR: $261,524	($21,319.00) 4 YR: ($85,276)	$20,900.00	($64,376)
Stratford	1145	$22,900.00 4 YR: $91,600	$21,823.00 4 YR: $87,292	($1,077.00) 4 YR: ($4,308)	$4,170.00	($138)
Total	14,242	$284,840.00 4 YR: $1,139,360	$236,687.00 4 YR: $946,748	($48,153.00) 4 YR: ($192,612)	$67,555.00	($125,057)

State Aid Eligibility:
State Aid for Cyclical Reassessments (13,511 parcels X $5.00): $ 67,555.00
Note: State Update Aid would be remitted to each participating town or city.
County would be eligible for one-time "County Aid" (13,511 parcels X $1.00): $13,511.00
* Includes costs for employer Retirement System and FICA contributions estimated @ 23% of payroll.

If all 12 municipalities (33,829 parcels) within the county joined the contract approach, the $483,160.00 needed to fund a fully-staffed Valuation Unit (see *Table 4 on the next page*) could be attained with a much lower chargeback service fee of $ 14.50 per parcel.

TABLE 4: PROJECTED COSTS OF CONTRACT ASSESSING AT FULL STAFFING (2017 DOLLARS)

RPTSA Budget: A-1355-1355.0000 Unit Total $ 371,582.00

New Valuation Unit at "full" staffing (w/fringes)		$ 466,800.00
New Equipment & Supplies (estimate)		10,000.00
New (2) Sedan Leases ($530 per month)		6360.00
	Full "Valuation Unit":	**$ 483,160.00**

GRAND TOTAL: $ 854,742.00

Full Staffing of "Valuation Unit" Estimated Costs:

New Positions	Each (est.)	Total
(1) Sr. Assessor	$ 54,200.00	$ 54,200.00
(4) Assessors	50,000.00	200,000.00
(2) Data Collector (Grade A-1)	28,500.00	57,000.00
Total Salaries (new)		311,200.00
Fringe Benefits (est. @ 50%)		155,600.00
	Total	$ 466,800.00

Source: 2017 Fulton County Budget; RPTSA A-1355-1355.0000, et al.

4. **Projected Cost Savings/Tax Levy Savings:** If implemented in accordance with Sections 1537 and 1573 of Real Property Tax Law, the contract assessing system will qualify for state aid revenue to reduce the local cost of assessing. The towns and/or cities participating would qualify for "Aid for Cyclical Reassessments" state aid of up to $5.00 per parcel (excluding wholly exempt and state-assessed parcels) when assessing units commit to conducting reappraisals of all property at least once every four (4) years. The County would qualify for a one-time state aid payment of $1.00 per parcel.

   In a simple side-by-side comparison, "Contract Assessing" would appear to be more expensive than the methods employed in towns and cities currently. However, most of the local assessing units are not conducting cyclical reappraisals or completing periodic revaluations to ensure equity within their municipality's assessment rolls. Thus, they must rely on State promulgated Equalization Rates to "equalize" their rolls. According to Fulton County Real Property Tax Services Agency Director, Peter Galarneau, a full contractor-prepared revaluation project would likely cost at least $75.00 per parcel. Based upon the parcel counts in the example towns in *Table 3*, the cost-estimate for a periodic "Reval" would range as follows: Stratford: $85,875.00; Perth: $132,000.00; Northampton: $219,800.00; Mayfield: $306,150.00; Johnstown: $325,125.00.

If an assessing unit is contemplating conducting a revaluation project to properly update its assessment rolls, it is likely that the "Reval" expense would result in the current method of assessing being substantially more expensive than the Contract Assessing option. *Table 5* below lists 2016 profile data for each of the Assessing Units within Fulton County, including, Equalization Rate, Parcel Count, Population and Assessor(s).

TABLE 5: ASSESSING UNIT PROFILE DATA (2016)

Municipality	Equalization Rate (2016)	Parcels	Population	Assessor(s) (as of July 23, 2018)
Gloversville	100.00	5,912	15,665	Joni Dennie, Sole Appointed
Johnstown (C)	100.00	3,670	8,743	Tina Dimitriadis, Sole Appointed
Bleecker	100.00	1,016	533	David Galarneau, Sole Appointed
Broadalbin	91.81	3,247	5,260	Laurie Bollock, Joseph McDonald, Miriam Young- All Elected
Caroga	63.50	2,862	1,205	Victoria Hayner, Sole Appointed
Ephratah	80.00	1,319	1,682	Lyn C. Yuenger, Sole Appointed
Johnstown (T)	75.00	4,335	7,098	Katherine Oare, Sole Appointed
Mayfield	71.00	4,082	6,495	Melissa Mazzarelli, Sole Appointed
Northampton	71.00	2,920	2,670	Melissa Mazzarelli, Sole Appointed
Oppenheim	55.20	1,561	1,924	Amanda Ortlieb, Arthur E. Madison, Jr., Billie Jo Getman– All Elected
Perth	61.00	1,760	3,646	David Walendziak, Sole Appointed
Stratford	100.00	1,145	610	Leigh Anne Loucks, Sole Appointed
Fulton County (Total)		33,829	55,531	

Source:
Census Data, US Census Bureau.
Fulton County RPTSA 2016 Annual Report.

B. SMART Waters Regional Water and Wastewater System

1. **Goal:** Create a regional system within Fulton County to coordinate water service and wastewater treatment services to promote land development and economic growth in the community.

2. **Description:** In 2013, the Fulton County Board of Supervisors engaged engineering firm Environmental Design Partnership (EDP) to evaluate the feasibility of developing a regional water and wastewater system and to propose a model for implementing such a system. EDP gathered engineering and economic data for existing water and wastewater service providers in Fulton County. It also researched existing regional water and wastewater service providers in New York State and identified water supply and wastewater treatment alternatives in Fulton County based upon the data collected. EDP concluded that a regional water and wastewater system could be successfully implemented by Fulton County.

   In April 2014, EDP issued a comprehensive report concluding that creation of a regional system could provide economic benefits for the region by promoting land development. EDP recommended Fulton County develop a regional system under the existing structure of the Board of Supervisors because it would afford the County flexibility in working with existing municipal water and wastewater systems to promote operation and maintenance efficiencies. Operational structure of the new regional system could vary depending on whether the County would develop, operate and maintain distribution/collection system infrastructure or rely on inter-municipal cooperation agreements with other local governments to provide these services. The Fulton County Board Supervisors determined that the proposed system would be called the "SMART Waters System" and the project to make it happen, the "SMART Waters Initiative", was born.

3. **Implementation:** Immediately after adopting and endorsing EDP's "SMART Waters" Report, the Fulton County Board of Supervisors began work on implementing the Report's key recommendations. Fulton County has now executed three (3) long-term Inter-municipal Agreements with local governments to acquire a portion of their existing excess water and wastewater treatment capacities. These shared services initiatives generate capital cost savings and the avoidance of operation and maintenance costs for Fulton County government, and in turn, taxpayers.

Inter-municipal Agreement with the City of Gloversville

The City of Gloversville has an outstanding water system with significant excess capacities. Fulton County executed a 40-year inter-municipal agreement with the City to purchase up to 2 million gallons per day of treated water to sell anywhere in Fulton County. In return, Fulton County would make an annual payment to the City based upon a sharing formula related to tax revenues and gallons sold.

The Inter-municipal Agreement also stipulates that the City of Gloversville will take over operation and maintenance of all new SMART Waters infrastructure served by water from Gloversville. The City of Gloversville, already being in the business of operating and maintaining a municipal water system, was prepared and structured to operate and maintain the new water infrastructure efficiently. County government saved significant sums by not having to hire staff and purchase the equipment needed to operate and maintain the system. In return, the city benefits from increased revenue.

This Agreement facilitates the provision of water service to developable vacant land in the county, including the County's new Hales Mills Primary Development Area. By acquiring existing water capacity and the operating expertise of the city of Gloversville, the County avoided the capital cost of developing a new water supply, constructing new waterlines and constructing a water treatment facility. Preliminary estimates by EDP showed the cost of constructing a new municipal water supply, distribution system and water treatment plant to be approximately $25 million. By sharing services and utilizing existing excess capacity, Fulton County government saved an estimated $25 million in capital construction costs.

Inter-municipal Agreement with the City of Johnstown

The City of Johnstown has an excellent water system with some excess capacity. Fulton County executed a 40-year inter-municipal agreement with the City to purchase up to 200,000 gallons/day of treated water to sell anywhere in Fulton County. In return, Fulton County would make an annual payment to the City based upon a sharing formula related to tax revenues and gallons sold.

The Inter-municipal Agreement also stipulates that the City of Johnstown will take over operation and maintenance of all existing and

new SMART Waters infrastructure served by water from Johnstown. The City of Johnstown, already being in the business of operating and maintaining a municipal water system, was prepared and structured to operate and maintain the new water infrastructure efficiently. County government saved significant sums by not having to hire staff and purchase the equipment needed to operate and maintain the system. In return, the City benefits from increased revenue.

This Agreement facilitates the provision of water service to developable vacant land in the southern portion of the county and also substantially reduced the cost of water to Fulton-Montgomery Community College and H-F-M BOCES regional vocational training center. By acquiring existing water capacity, Fulton County avoided the capital cost of developing a new municipal water source and constructing a new water transmission system as well as the potential cost to build a new water treatment plant. Preliminary estimates showed the estimated cost of constructing a new municipal water supply, distribution system and water treatment plant to be $25 million. By sharing services and using existing excess capacity, Fulton County will save considerable sums in capital construction costs and operation and maintenance costs in future years.

Inter-municipal Agreement with the Village of Broadalbin

Fulton County executed a 40-year Inter-municipal Agreement with the Village of Broadalbin to share capacity of its Wastewater Treatment Facility. In return, Fulton County will share in the cost of future capital upgrades to the Village's plant. The County will be able to use some of the Village plant's excess treatment capacity to service a sewer district for the County's new Vail Mills Primary Development Area. This growth region in the southeast quadrant of the county, is one of three (3) Primary Development Areas identified in Fulton County's *Vision 2026 Development Strategy*.

The Inter-municipal Agreement also stipulates that the Village of Broadalbin will take over operation and maintenance of all new SMART Waters sewer infrastructure installed by Fulton County to provide service from the Village of Broadalbin. The Village of Broadalbin, already in the business of operating and maintaining a municipal sewer system, was prepared and structured to operate and maintain sewer infrastructure efficiently. By sharing the Village of Broadalbin's existing services, Fulton County saved significant

dollars by avoiding having to build its own plant and by not having to hire staff and acquire equipment to operate and maintain the sewer system. During the *Engineer's Findings Report* for SMART Waters, EDP identified (3) options to treat wastewater that would be collected from homes and businesses within the District:

1. Pump the wastewater 7+/- miles to the Gloversville-Johnstown Wastewater Treatment Plant.
2. Construct and operate a new Wastewater Treatment Plant.
3. Utilize the Village of Broadalbin's Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Options 1 and 2 above both involved over $6 million in capital construction costs along with annual operating and maintenance expenses. Fulton County elected to execute an inter-municipal agreement with the Village of Broadalbin to utilize some of the excess treatment capacity in its existing wastewater treatment plant. By sharing services with the Village of Broadalbin, Fulton County was able to save an estimated $6 million in capital construction costs.

4. **Projected Cost Savings/Tax Levy Savings**: Based upon the professional engineering estimates developed during the Fulton County SMART Waters Initiative, County government and its taxpayers saved substantial sums of money by utilizing inter-municipal sharing of existing water and sewer treatment facilities. For purposes of this report, savings estimates will be limited to the readily-quantifiable capital infrastructure costs that were avoided. Over time, efficiencies will accumulate from utilizing the professional operation and maintenance provided by local government departments rather than launching redundant county-level agencies to administer regional water services and regional wastewater treatment services. Estimated savings from SMART Waters to date are outlined below:

Inter-municipal Agreement- City of Gloversville:	$25,000,000.00
Inter-municipal Agreement- City of Johnstown:	TBD
Inter-municipal Agreement- Vil. of Broadalbin:	6,000,000.00
Savings Sub Total:	$31,000,000.00

SMART Waters Implementation Costs:	
Engineer's Findings Report	- $60,000.00
SMART Growth Infrastructure Plan	- 30,000.00
Vail Mills Sewer Construction Project	- 1,300,000.00
Broadalbin WWTP Prelim Design	- 25,000.00
Costs Sub-total:	$1,415,000.00

FINAL SAVINGS/COST AVOIDANCE: $29,585,000.00

C. Tax Collection- Software Sharing

1. **Goal:** Establish collaboration between County government and local tax collecting jurisdictions to utilize the same property tax accounting and collection computer software application to promote efficiency and reduce staff time at all levels.

2. **Description:** In 2018, the Fulton County Board of Supervisors approved implementation of new computerized tax accounting and collection software. The proprietary software, Systems East Total Collection Solution (TCS), is a detailed real-time software application to manage the property tax collection process for taxing jurisdictions in New York State.

3. **Implementation:** The *Total Collection Solution* (TCS) was purchased from Systems East Corporation and installed in the Fulton County Treasurer's Office in early 2018 at a cost of $91,000.00 for a User License. The Annual Maintenance Contract is $9,825.00 for 2018 and as part of the purchase agreement, additional User Licenses can be made available to local municipalities

   If all ten (10) Towns participate, the total cost of their additional licenses will be at a discounted price from the vendor of $24,950.00, rather than the regular price of $39,950.00 ($3,995.00 each) - a 30 percent savings. The Annual Maintenance Fee would also be discounted 25 percent from $399.50 each to $299.50 each. Collaborating together to utilize the same computerized system will also create staff efficiencies and promote cooperation between tax collecting officials.

4. **Projected Cost Savings/Tax Levy Savings**: Based upon the original proposal to the County, pricing of associated add-on User Licenses can be extended as follows:

Total User Licenses (10 Towns):	$ 39,950.00	
Group Discounted Price:	24,950.00	
Total Group Savings (one-time):		$15,000.00
Total Maintenance Agreement Fee:	$ 3995.00	
Group Discounted Price:	2995.00	
Total Maintenance Savings (annual recurring):		$ 1000.00

D. LED Lighting Replacement

1. **Goal:** Establish collaboration between governments within Fulton County to facilitate a joint LED Street Lighting Replacement Project.

2. **Description:** Although Fulton County government owns virtually no street lights, most of the Villages, Towns and Cities do own such fixtures or contract for such fixtures with electric utility National Grid. New York Power Authority regional representatives met with the 2018 SSP on July 10, 2018 to describe NYPA services available under its *Smart Street Lighting NY* program. Several municipalities expressed an interest to contract with the NYPA to manage a joint LED Street Lighting procurement project in 2019-20. City of Johnstown, City of Gloversville and Village of Northville have already been investigating potential projects, while the Towns in Fulton County would be initiating inventory gathering and fixture selection for the first time as part of this project.

3. **Implementation:** Data packets to initiate a joint LED Street lighting project between local municipalities have been sent to municipal leaders to solicit necessary inventory data for use by NYPA in preparing a pricing proposal. The County Board of Supervisors is assisting in coordinating collection of the required information from participants. It is anticipated that NYPA will reply in late 2018/early 2019 with a proposal to manage the project on behalf of participating jurisdictions. Implementation would likely commence in 2019 or 2020 after a NYPA conducted procurement solicitation. At the time of this report, this initiative was not far enough underway to have inventory data and responsive pricing available from NYPA.

4. **Projected Cost Savings/Tax Levy Savings**: Based upon the timeline for this joint Street Light Replacement Project, no detailed savings estimate is yet available; however, projections using current energy billing can be done. Estimates of savings to participants are expected to exceed 50 percent of current street lighting costs on an annual recurring basis. Nine (9) Towns and one (1) Village have indicated their intent to participate in a joint project coordinated by New York Power Authority to replace street lighting with more efficient LED fixtures. The annual cost of operation across all participants can be expected to decrease by $ 65,278.92 as listed below.

Annual Aggregate Cost (10 municipalities):	$ 130,557.84
Annual Aggregate Savings at 50%:	$ 65,278.92

PART II-A: ADVISORY RECOMMENDATIONS (1 TO 5 YEARS)

Over the years, local governments within Fulton County have been leaders in accomplishing consolidations and shared services efforts to save taxpayers money and promote efficiency. Local leaders have also evaluated others ideas, but after review, found them to be unfeasible or not desired by the citizens they represent. Successful initiatives include: creation of a state of the art county-wide system for solid waste management, consolidated landfill, Consolidated Fulton County Public Safety 911 Dispatch Center, key involvement in formation of the New York Municipal Insurance Reciprocal for liability and property insurance, the Gloversville-Johnstown Joint Wastewater Treatment Facility, shared municipal planning services, one of the longest running Workers Compensation Self Insurance Plans in the state, SMART Waters Plan for water and sewer service distribution, consolidated fuel depot for local municipal fleets, consolidated elections administration, Fulton County Demolition Team, tax collection and enforcement inter-municipal agreement between Gloversville and Fulton County, Operation Green Scene, several emergency services mutual aid agreements and inter-municipal sharing of heavy equipment, to name a few. Fulton County Government has also partnered in several inter-county sharing initiatives such as Fulton-Montgomery Community College, regional business park development with Montgomery County, Solid Waste Disposal Agreement with Montgomery County, Public Safety Answering Point Redundancy Plan with Montgomery County and Probation Department web hosting and Veterans Agency sharing with Hamilton County.

Residents of New York State have one of the highest property tax burdens in the country. Due to the heavy government regulatory environment in New York and the propensity for state leaders to enact expensive mandates upon its lower level governments, property taxes are an extreme burden on residents and businesses. Local level governments are responsible for a very small percentage of these property taxes. Notwithstanding that point, it is incumbent upon government leaders at all levels to continuously seek out ideas to improve efficiencies and/or limit expenses on behalf of their constituents. In that spirit, the Fulton County Shared Services Panel recommends that municipal leaders throughout the county investigate and pursue the following shared services initiatives within the next one (1) to five (5) years.

A. Garbage Collection

1. **Goal:** Establish a system for shared service garbage collection to benefit local cities and towns that provide, or wish to provide, curbside collection to their residents.

2. **Description:** At its second session, the SSP discussed a variety of concepts that had the potential to improve garbage collection services at the local city and town level. It heard a presentation from the County's Interim Director of Solid Waste and the County's Solid Waste Operations Consultant. Panel members had the opportunity to ask questions and discussed several methods that would be worthwhile to explore. Operations Consultant Jeffrey Bouchard explained the details of pick-up and transportation of waste related to economy of scale. The

county's demographics and population distribution favor use of transfer stations in the most rural areas. The consensus of the group was that large-scale consolidation of garbage collection border-to-border in the county was not practical and would not produce overall taxpayer savings. Due to the sparse population in much of the county, the current system that combines some local curbside garbage collection with a series of strategically placed transfer stations works well.

After substantial dialogue between members of the Panel whose municipalities provide curbside garbage collection, the following concepts appeared to hold promise for reducing costs and improving service for residents and businesses. The SSP recommends that the cities and towns providing curbside collection immediately form a working group to meet regularly to explore formation of a consortium to implement one or more of the following methods.

a. Group Bidding for Contracted Garbage Collection

If the several municipalities band together and commit to joint bidding their garbage collection service to private contractors in a "winner-take-all" format, substantial savings may result. Currently, most local municipalities use Highway Department or DPW employees on a part-time basis to accomplish garbage pick-up. These employees perform a multitude of other important public works duties which are a majority of their job responsibilities.

Any mathematical cost-savings obtained from joint bidding will have to be weighed against the ability to reduce staffing, which may be impractical because of their shared duties. Even if staffing cannot be reduced, it is possible that this method could still produce substantial savings over the current municipality-by-municipality approach because it would eliminate the large periodic capital costs incurred when garbage trucks are purchased/replaced ($150,000 to $200,000 each). Annual maintenance and repair costs related to garbage truck ownership would also be avoided.

b. Garbage Truck Pool (Purchase Option)

This concept would entail all or some of the towns and cities forming a consortium through inter-municipal agreement to operate a "shared truck pool". Depending on the number of participating municipalities, one or more garbage trucks would be purchased and maintained in a pool of trucks that would be scheduled for each jurisdiction's weekly curbside pick-up routes. While compactor-style garbage trucks are huge monetary commitments, they sit idle much of the time in small municipalities. Moving to this approach would distribute the large capital cost of periodically purchasing a garbage truck over several

municipal budgets and allow for a newer fleet with less ongoing operation and maintenance (O&M) costs.

In this approach, it may be necessary for one city or town to take the lead to operate the Pool, including maintenance of vehicles, scheduling rosters, apportioning and billing shared costs and conducting periodic purchases of replacement trucks.

A Garbage Truck Pool could probably be started relatively easily if a municipality would step forward to assume coordination responsibility. An inter-municipal agreement would commit to pool an existing truck or trucks and rotate them in schedule as needed to accomplish weekly routes. When a truck in the fleet reaches the end of its useful life, it would be retired. If necessary, it would be replaced at shared cost.

c. Garbage Truck Pool (Lease Option)

This concept would basically be the same method as outlined above, but utilizing a lease approach for procurement of the Pool fleet. While most of the practices would be the same, leasing garbage trucks for the shared program would spread out the large capital cost of purchasing trucks and ensure that the fleet is kept modern with low O & M costs.

Truck leasing is very popular and available. There are several dealers/distributors that can provide garbage truck lease packages at competitive terms. If two or more local municipalities need to replace their trucks in the same general time frame, the leasing model may be a very attractive way to obtain and perpetuate new vehicles as well as avoid future lump-sum capital purchases.

E. Cities' Police Departments Integration

1. **Goal:** Integrate the City of Gloversville Police Department and the City of Johnstown Police Department into one administrative and organizational structure to advance public safety within both cities. Through economy of scale, provide enhanced services, increased flexibility, the most modern equipment, and more revenue and resources to police officers.

2. **Description:** In 1993, the City of Gloversville and the City of Johnstown agreed to participate in a formal study by the New York State Division of Criminal Justice, Bureau for Municipal Police Technical Support Unit (BMP). After extensive analysis of all operations of both Cities' police departments, the BMP issued a final report titled *Feasibility Study for the Consolidation of Police Services in Johnstown and Gloversville, Fulton County, New York* in September of that year.

The exhaustive study evaluated a broad range of issues, including legal aspects of combining the two departments, the structure of the Cities' police forces at the time, staffing requirements of an integrated joint-cities police force and the cost of operating an integrated department. In the Executive Summary of the Report (attached as Appendix B), the BMP offered a summary opinion on its findings:

> *The Johnstown and Gloversville police departments have decided to functionally consolidate their dispatch functions with the Fulton County E-911 communications. The Bureau for Municipal Police is of the opinion that full consolidation of other police services would not only be advantageous financially but would provide better coordination of police services to the two cities.*

A companion slide presentation to the Feasibility Study (also at Appendix B) summarized the financial benefits of a combined police force in 1993 dollars:

Annual Cost of Existing system:	$ 2,243,125
Annual Cost of Combined Force:	$ 1,875,937
Annual Estimated Savings:	$ 367,188
Apportioned Savings for Johnstown:	$ 258,682 per year
Apportioned Savings for Gloversville:	$ 108,507 per year

Given that a detailed independent feasibility study was conducted on this subject, and the fact that operational costs for salaries, fringe benefits and technology expansion have increased substantially since 1993, it appears that another thorough evaluation of police department integration should be considered. The Shared Services Panel recommends that, by the end of 2017, officials in both cities vote to form a joint commission made up of public officials and residents from both jurisdictions to create a plan for integration of the cities' police agencies.

F. Cities' Fire Departments Integration

1. **Goal:** Integrate the City of Gloversville Fire Department and the City of Johnstown Fire Department into one administrative and organizational structure to advance fire protection for residents of both cities. Through economy of scale, provide enhanced services, increased flexibility, the most modern equipment, and more revenue and resources to firefighters.

2. **Description:** A detailed analysis of integration of the two Cities' Fire Departments may result in findings similar to those in the BMP Feasibility Study mentioned above. The BMP Study outlined several advantages and disadvantages to consolidation of city police agencies and opined that the advantages outweighed the disadvantages. The following advantages were listed in the Report's companion slide presentation:

    a. Geographically suitable in terms of size and common border.
    b. Cost savings of about $370,000 (annual)
    c. Declining population in both Johnstown and Gloversville.
    d. A combined population of 26,000 makes it manageable in terms of providing law enforcement services.
    e. Better allocation of personnel and resources.
    f. Less redundancy.
    g. Functional consolidation is already taking place with participation in the County E-911 system.
    h. Improved criminal investigation.

The aspects listed above related to demographic characteristics of the two Cities are applicable to fire protection services as well. The city fire departments have implemented a number of successful mutual aid agreements over the years which demonstrates cooperation at the agency level. Given that operational costs for salaries, fringe benefits and technology expansion have increased substantially since 1993, integration of city fire departments would likely save money and expand resources. The Shared Services Panel recommends that by the end of 2017, officials in both cities vote to form a joint commission made up of public officials and residents from both jurisdictions to create a plan for integration of the cities' fire departments.

G. Contract Tax Collection (County)

1. **Goal:** Through inter-municipal contract, provide that the County Treasurer be the collection agent for any local town or city that wishes to transition away from maintaining the post of local Tax Collector. The collection service would be provided on a chargeback basis from the County to the local taxing jurisdiction.

2. **Description:** An analysis of local official survey data from the cities, villages and towns in Fulton County reveals that a variety of personnel structures are used to administer property tax collection. In the Cities of Gloversville and Johnstown, the duties fall under the jurisdiction of the Commissioner of Finance and City Treasurer, respectively. In the Villages, tax collection is administered by the Village Clerk as part of his/her duties. Some Towns have separate Tax Collector positions and some have the duties integrated into the elected post of Town Clerk.

The Fulton County Treasurer has proposed to purchase and implement a new computer software application for property tax collection intended to enhance efficiency at the county level. If approved by the Board of Supervisors, this upgrade may facilitate easier processing of mailed and in-person payments, as well as online payments. If implemented during 2018, a joint effort between the Treasurer's Office and local villages, cities and towns may make sense. In some other counties, the County Treasurer is a joint "collector" designated by the local municipality to accept tax payments. Such an initial effort should be considered, commencing in 2019. If the joint collector procedure proves workable and is accepted by local residents, local taxing jurisdictions may examine transitioning the tax collection process to the county level.

H. County Managed Water and Sewer Districts

1. **Goal:** Establish a structured administrative organization at the county level to manage water and/or sewer distribution systems in the smaller outlying municipalities within the county. The overall goal would be to improve operation and maintenance of such districts if the local town/village desire assistance.

2. **Description:** This step would entail County government taking a pre-eminent role in operating small outlying water and/or sewer districts at the request of local jurisdictions. Under this scenario, a local town or village that was experiencing difficulty operating or expanding its own utility could pursue an inter-municipal agreement with the County to employ its planning and coordination resources to assist. Currently, the County does not have staffed operating water or sewer departments.

   Such inter-municipal contracts would be evaluated on a case-by-case basis with the primary goal of promoting economic growth and business investment. When bona fide private sector plans exist for business investment, this "micro" approach may supplement the County's efforts to spur growth through larger-scale Primary Development Areas. Entering negotiations for such a partnership would be a decision of the local town or village council.

PART II-B: ADVISORY RECOMMENDATIONS (5 TO 10 YEARS)

The Fulton County Shared Services Panel recommends that municipal leaders throughout the county investigate and pursue the following shared services initiatives within the next five (5) to ten (10) years.

A. County Central Highway Department

1. **Goal:** Create a county-wide central Highway Department at the county level to maintain all highways in Fulton County below state level. This new system would involve removing the responsibility of highway maintenance from each of the ten (10) towns and two (2) cities consolidating it at the county level.

2. **Description:** This new system would involve disbanding the town Highway Departments and city Departments of Public Works consolidate all highway and street maintenance services at the county level. A potential structure that could give rise to substantial economies of scale may be to establish a "hub" facility as it exists now at the County Highway Complex, 2712 State Highway 29, Johnstown, along with two smaller (2) satellite county highway facilities. One satellite facility would be located in the eastern end of the county and the other in the western region to support administration of day-to-day operations, as well as vehicle maintenance and storage needs of the fleet.

Any consolidation of this magnitude would require extensive research; however, the large costs of highway and street construction, maintenance equipment and employee salaries and fringe benefits, may warrant its consideration. Complicating factors will be the inherent differences between highway maintenance requirements and urban street maintenance as well as city and village obligations for water and sewer infrastructure that is not as prevalent on rural roads. It is likely that a successful analysis of such a large undertaking would require a detailed feasibility study by an independent consulting firm and financial assistance from New York State.

B. County-wide Police Force

1. **Goal:** Create a county-wide Police Department at the county level to provide all police services below state level. This new system would involve disbanding the police departments in the Cities of Gloversville and Johnstown, as well as the Villages of Broadalbin and Northville to consolidate all police protection services at the county level.

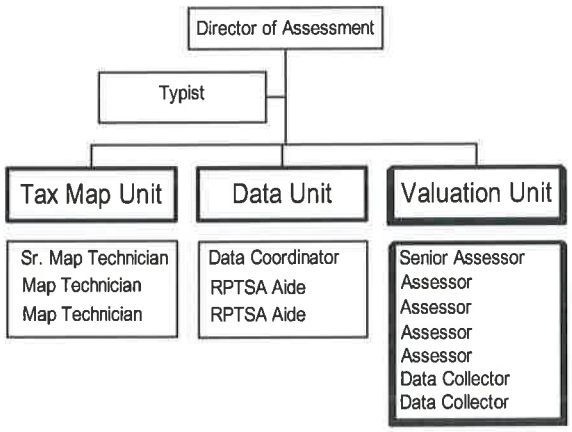
2. **Description**: A staged approach to full county-wide consolidation of police protection services may make sense. Once administrative and financial

integration of the Johnstown and Gloversville police departments is accomplished and stable, full consolidation at the county level may be a logical next step. Given the statutory nature of the elected post of County Sheriff in New York State and its statutory responsibility for the correctional facilities function, creating a county-wide police department would require extensive logistical and legal planning. It is likely that a successful analysis of such a large undertaking would require a detailed feasibility study by an independent consulting firm and financial assistance from New York State.

C. County Assessing Department Formation

1. **Goal:** Create a county-level Department of Assessment, often referred to as consolidated assessing, by disbanding the existing assessing departments in all municipalities and replacing them with one central department. This approach benefits from economy of scale and standardization of appraisal techniques, database management, office hours and other aspects of the assessing function.

2. **Description:** The initiative would create a centralized county assessing department system. In Fulton County, the 12 existing assessing departments would be replaced with one full-time county department. This department would then handle all real property tax administration and assessment functions for all parcels throughout the county. Basically, the new department would be formed by adding a "Valuation Unit" to the existing Real Property Tax Services Agency located at the County Office Building in Johnstown. The County Department of Assessment would be headed by a Director of Assessment appointed by the Board of Supervisors. All other positions would be filled through the competitive Civil Service system. The cost to operate the Department of Assessment would be contained in the annual county budget and apportioned to taxpayers through county taxation in the same manner as other county services.



Aspects of a County Department of Assessment

- Establishes consistency and "common standards" for all assessing practices throughout the county.
- Eliminates the need for costly contracted revaluation projects.
- Establishes standard full-time office hours.
- Provides public access to assessment, mapping, taxation & deeds information at one location.
- Transfers administration and budget responsibilities from towns and cities to the county.
- Identical equalization rates and a uniform tax rate for county tax purposes.

In accordance with New York State law, replacing local assessing units with a centralized Department of Assessment requires a public voter referendum. The Fulton County Board of Supervisors provided county residents the opportunity to consider creation of a County Department of Assessment via public referendum in 1996 and 2005. Both referenda resulted in resounding defeats for the proposal, which does not bode well for the likelihood of its passage in the foreseeable future.

2018

Fulton County Shared Services Panel

- James Groff, Chairman of the Board of Supervisors
  - Chairman, Shared Services Panel

- David Howard, Supervisor, Town of Bleecker
- Sheila Perry, Supervisor, Town of Broadalbin
- James Selmser, Supervisor, Town of Caroga
- Todd Bradt, Supervisor, Town of Ephratah
- Jack Wilson, Supervisor, Town of Johnstown
- Richard Argotsinger, Supervisor, Town of Mayfield
- James Groff, Supervisor, Town of Northampton
- Cynthia Breh, Supervisor, Town of Oppenheim
- Gregory Fagan, Supervisor, Town of Perth
- Allicia Rice, Supervisor, Town of Stratford
- Dayton King, Mayor, City of Gloversville
- Vernon Jackson, Mayor, City of Johnstown
- Larry Cornell, Mayor, Village of Broadalbin
- John Spaeth, Mayor, Village of Northville

- ***This Report was authored by Jon R. Stead, Fulton County Administrative Officer, on behalf of the 2018 Fulton County Shared Services Panel.***

- ***Special administrative research provided by Elizabeth Lathers, Legislative Aide.***

- *Research by Planning Consultant James Mraz, Solid Waste Consultant Jeffrey Bouchard, Solid Waste Director David Rhodes, Planning Director Scott Henze, RPTSA Director Peter Galarneau and County Treasurer Edgar Blodgett contributed to this report.*

NEW YORK STATE OF OPPORTUNITY

County-Wide Shared Services Property Tax Savings Plan Summary

Appendix A

County of FULTON	
County Contact: Jon R. Stead	
Contact Telephone: (518) 736-5540	
Contact Email: fultbos@co.fulton.ny.us	

Partners

Row 1 – (2) Cities in Fulton County

	Participating Cities	Panel Representative	Vote Cast (Yes or No)*
1.	City of Gloversville	Honorable Dayton King, Mayor	Not Present
2.	City of Johnstown	Honorable Vernon Jackson, Mayor	Yes
3.			

Row 2 – (10) Towns in Fulton County

	Participating Towns	Panel Representative	Vote Cast (Yes or No)*
1.	Bleecker	Honorable David Howard, Supervisor	Not Present
2.	Broadalbin	Honorable Sheila Perry, Supervisor	Yes
3.	Caroga	Honorable James K. Selmser, Supervisor	Yes
4.	Ephratah	Honorable Todd Bradt, Supervisor	Yes
5.	Johnstown	Honorable Jack Wilson, Supervisor	Yes
6.	Mayfield	Honorable Richard Argotsinger, Supervisor	Yes
7.	Northampton	Honorable James K. Groff, Supervisor	Yes
8.	Oppenheim	Honorable Cynthia M. Breh, Supervisor	Yes
9.	Perth	Honorable Gregory Fagan, Supervisor	Yes
10.	Stratford	Honorable Allicia Rice, Supervisor	Yes
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12.			
13.			
14.			
15.			
16.			

Appendix A

17.			
18.			
19.			
20.			

Use Additional Sheets if necessary
*The written justification provided by each Panel Representative in support of his or her vote on the Plan is attached hereto, as Exhibit 1.

Row 3 – (3) Villages in Fulton County

	Participating Villages	Panel Representative	Vote Cast (Yes or No)*
1.	Village of Broadalbin	Honorable Lawrence Cornell, Mayor	Not Present
2.	Village of Northville	Honorable John Spaeth, Mayor	Not Present
3.			
4.			
5.			
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8.			
9.			
10.			

Use Additional Sheets if necessary
*The written justification provided by each Panel Representative in support of his or her vote on the Plan is attached hereto, as Exhibit 1.

Row 4 – (total # of) School Districts, BOCES, and Special Improvement Districts in County

	Participating School Districts, BOCES, and Special Improvement Districts	Panel Representative	Vote Cast (Yes or No)*
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			

NEW YORK STATE OF OPPORTUNITY

County-Wide Shared Services Property Tax Savings Plan Summary

Appendix A

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Use Additional Sheets if necessary
*The written justification provided by each Panel Representative in support of his or her vote on the Plan is attached hereto, as Exhibit 1.

Row 5	
2018 Local Government Property Taxes	**The sum total of property taxes levied in the year 2018 by the county, cities, towns, villages, school districts, BOCES, and special improvement districts within such county.**
$48,647,543.00	
Row 6	
2018 Participating Entities Property Taxes	**The sum total of property taxes levied in the year 2018 by the county, any cities, towns, villages, school districts, BOCES, and special improvements districts identified as participating in the panel in the rows above.**
$48,520,441.00	
Row 7	
Total Anticipated Savings	**The sum total of net savings in such plan certified as being anticipated in calendar year 2019, calendar year 2020, and annually thereafter.**
2019: $81,278.92 2020: $66,278.92 Thereafter: $66,278.92	

NEW YORK STATE OF OPPORTUNITY

County-Wide Shared Services Property Tax Savings Plan Summary

Appendix A

Row 8	
Anticipated Savings as a Percentage of Participating Entities property taxes	**The sum total of net savings in such plan certified as being anticipated in calendar year 2019 as a percentage of the sum total in Row 6, calendar year 2020 as a percentage of the sum total in Row 6, and annually thereafter as a percentage of the sum total in Row 6.**
2019: 0.17% 2020: 0.14% Thereafter: 0.14%	(Savings in Row 7 divided by Row 6)
Row 9	
Anticipated Savings to the Average Taxpayer	**The amount of the savings that the average taxpayer in the county will realize in calendar year 2019, calendar year 2020, and annually thereafter if the net savings certified in the plan are realized.**
2019: $3.31 2020: $2.70 Thereafter: $2.70	(Savings in Row 7 divided by 24,545 taxpayers in Fulton County)
Row 10	
Anticipated Costs/Savings to the Average Homeowner	**The percentage amount a homeowner can expect his or her property taxes to increase or decrease in calendar year 2019, calendar year 2020, and annually thereafter if the net savings certified in the plan are realized.**
2019: 1.83% 2020: 1.86% Thereafter: 1.86%	(Estimated 2% average tax rate increase per year less % from Row 8)
Row 11	
Anticipated Costs/Savings to the Average Business	**The percentage amount a business can expect its property taxes to increase or decrease in calendar year 2019, calendar year 2020, and annually thereafter if the net savings certified in the plan are realized.**
2019: 1.83% 2020: 1.86% Thereafter: 1.86%	(Estimated 2% average tax rate increase per year less % from Row 8)

NEW YORK
STATE OF
OPPORTUNITY

County-Wide Shared Services Property Tax Savings Plan Summary

Appendix A

CERTIFICATION

I hereby affirm under penalty of perjury that information provided is true to the best of my knowledge and belief. This is the finalized county-wide shared services property tax savings plan. The county-wide shared services property tax savings plan was approved on August 13, 2018, and it was disseminated to residents of the county in accordance with the County-wide Shared Services Property Tax Savings Law.

James K. Groff — County Chief Executive Officer

(Print Name)

James K Groff — 9/12/18

(Signature) (Date)

Appendix B.

JOHNSTOWN AND GLOVERSVILLE

POLICE CONSOLIDATION BETWEEN THE TWO CITIES

GLOVERSVILLE

COST SAVINGS = 41 CENTS PER THOUSAND

$50,000 ASSESSED = $20.50

JOHNSTOWN

COST SAVINGS = $1.25 PER THOUSAND

$50,000 ASSESSED = $62.50

JOHNSTOWN AND GLOVERSVILLE

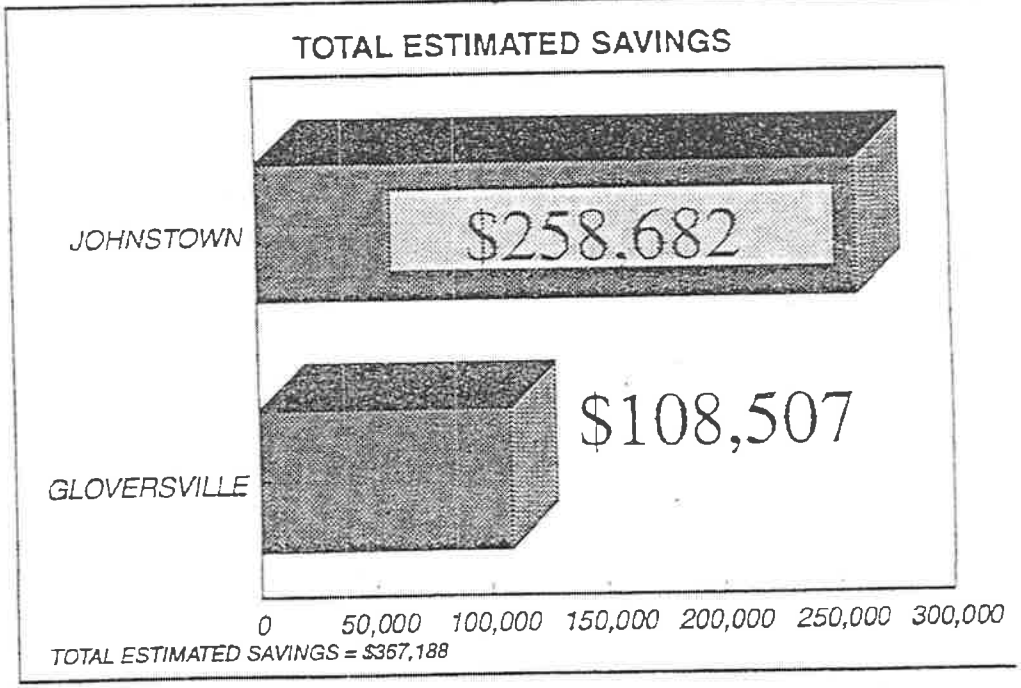
POLICE CONSOLIDATION BETWEEN THE TWO CITIES

ADVANTAGES

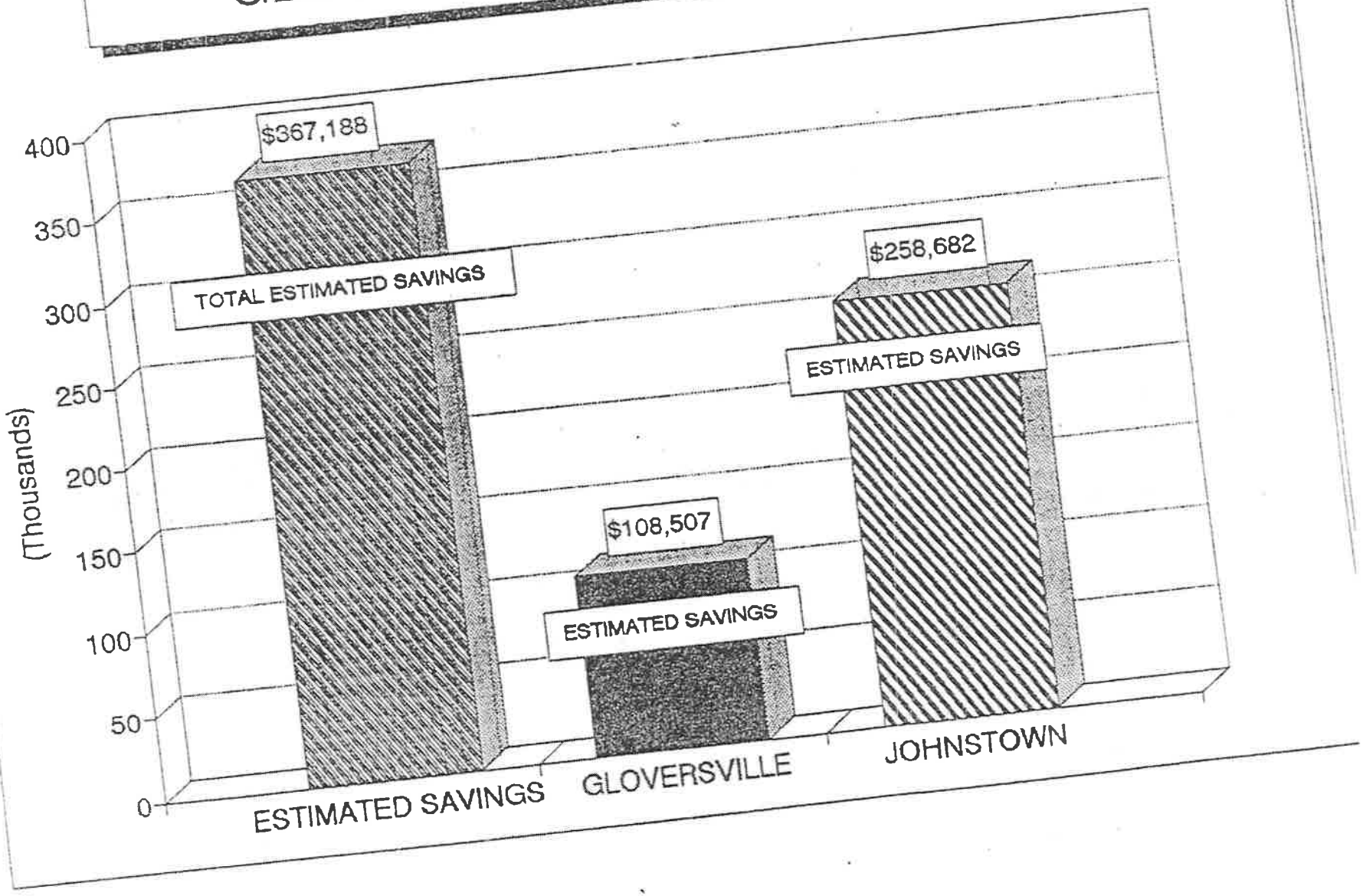
- Geographically suitable in terms of size and common border.
- Cost savings of about $370,000.
- Declining population in both Johnstown and Gloversville.
- A combined population of 26,000 makes it manageable in terms of providing law enforcement services.
- Better allocation of personnel and resources.
- Less redundancy.
- Functional consolidation is already taking place with participation in the County E-911 system.
- Improved criminal investigation.

DISADVANTAGES

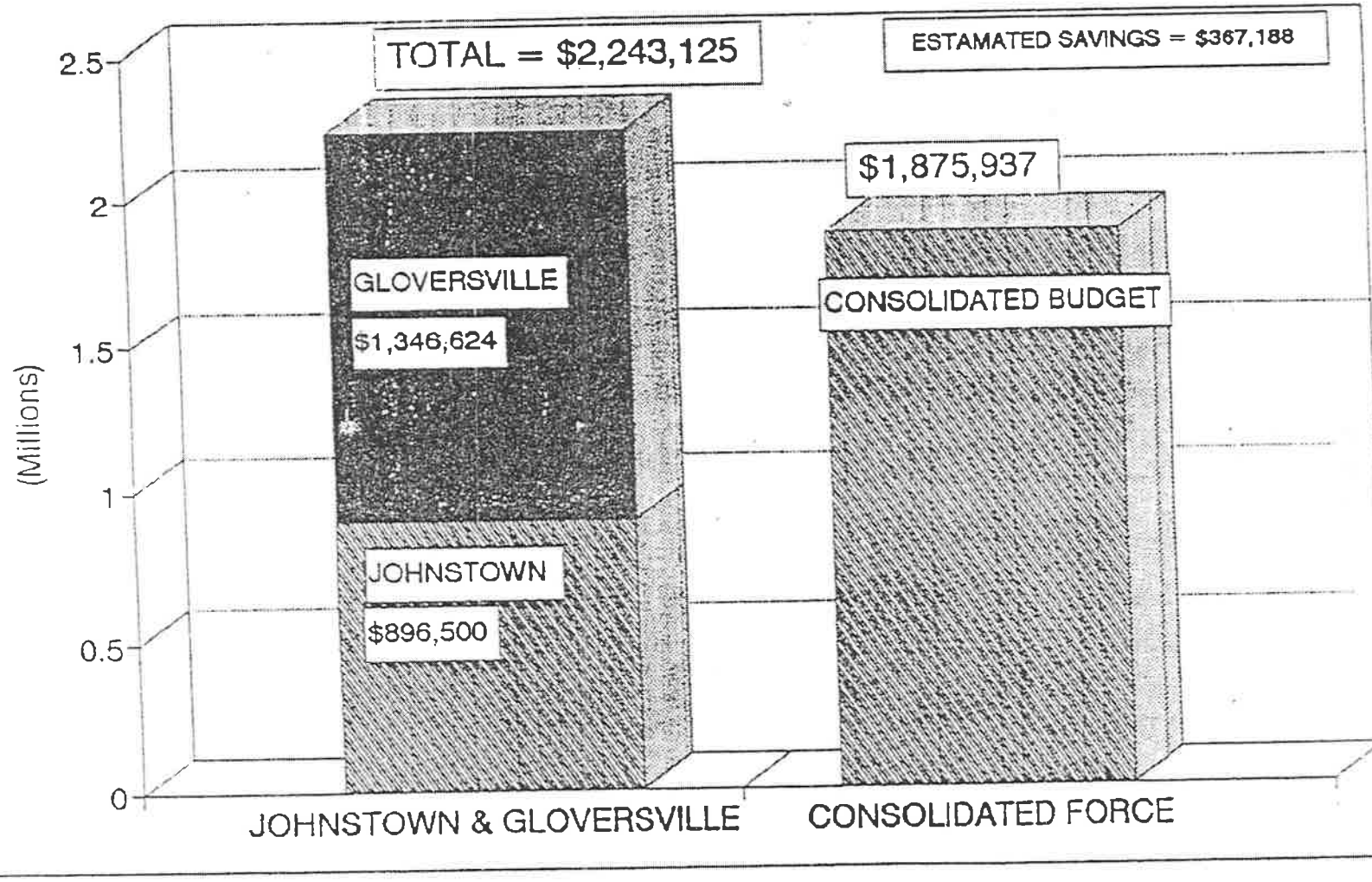
- Difficulties integrating labor contracts.
- Loss in both municipalities of a sense of "control" over "their" police department.
- Perception in each municipality of less "personalized" service.



CONSOLIDATION OF POLICE
GLOVERSVILLE & JOHNSTOWN



CONSOLIDATION OF POLICE
GLOVERSVILLE & JOHNSTOWN



FEASIBILITY STUDY

FOR THE CONSOLIDATION OF POLICE SERVICES

IN JOHNSTOWN AND GLOVERSVILLE

FULTON COUNTY, NEW YORK

DIVISION OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE SERVICES

BUREAU FOR MUNICIPAL POLICE

TECHNICAL SUPPORT UNIT

EXECUTIVE PARK TOWER/STUYVESANT PLAZA

ALBANY, NEW YORK 12203-3764

SEPTEMBER 1993

JOHN W. HERRITAGE

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER

PREPARED BY:

FRANCIS W. KERVAN

ASSOCIATE TRAINING TECHNICIAN

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APPENDIX

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B - NYS CIVIL SERVICE LAW SEC. 83
C - THE TAYLOR LAW IMPLICATIONS OF GOVERNMENT CONSOLIDATION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Approaches to Police Consolidation

The consolidation of police departments can take varied forms, or occur in varying degrees. These range from simple mutual aid agreements through functional consolidation, contract law enforcement and finally full consolidation.

The Johnstown and Gloversville police departments have decided to functionally consolidate their dispatch functions with the Fulton County E-911 communications. The Bureau for Municipal Police is of the opinion that full consolidation of other police services would not only be advantageous financially but would provide better coordination of police services to the two cities.

Legal Aspects of Consolidation

There is nothing in New York State law which prohibits consolidation. However, municipal attorneys should be aware of provisions outlined in Articles 5G and 121A of the General Municipal Law, 83A of the Civil Service Law and especially certain aspects of the Taylor Law, prior to moving ahead with actual consolidation.

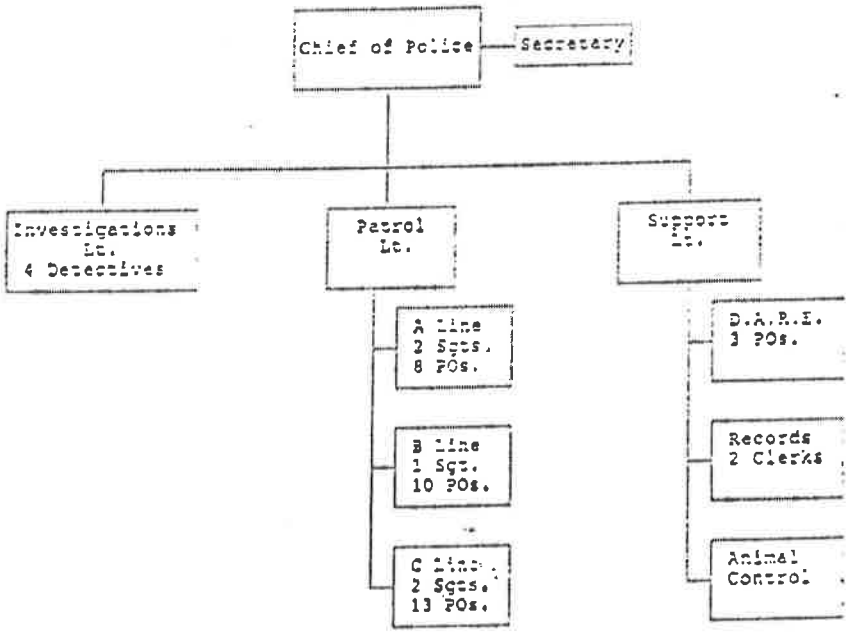
Present Police Services

Both Johnstown and Gloversville provide a full range of law enforcement services to their citizens. Presently the two agencies combined spend about $2,243,125 and are staffed by 56 sworn officers, 3 full-time civilians and 9 part-time civilians.

Staffing a Consolidated Department

Personnel services account for a high percentage of the expenses for any police department.

Based on calls for service crime statistics and personnel records the Bureau for Municipal Police did an analysis to ascertain the optimum staffing levels of a consolidated Johnstown/Gloversville Police Department. The following chart summarizes how a consolidated department should be organized and staffed.



Cost of a Consolidated Police Department

The cost estimate for a consolidated department in Johnstown/Gloversville is $1,875,937. This is $367,188 less than the $2,243,125 that is the combined budget of both agencies.

Neither the present total or estimated budget include personnel fringe benefits, which should also be less with fewer employees.

While the Bureau for Municipal Police does not purport to be an expert in the apportionment of expenses, we are of the opinion that one fair way may be to base cost share on workload. Calls for service figures show that Gloversville had 66% of the total calls while Johnstown had 34%. Based on these figures the cost to each municipality would be as follows.

Johnstown = $637,818 (.34 x $1,875,937)

Gloversville = $1,238,118 (.66 x $1,875,937)

Rationale For and Against Consolidation

Advantages

1. Geographically suitable in terms of size and common border.
2. Cost savings of about $370,000.
3. Declining population in both Johnstown and Gloversville.
4. A combined population of 26,000 makes it manageable in terms of providing law enforcement services.
5. Better allocation of personnel and resources.
6. Less redundancy.
7. Functional consolidation is already taking place with participation in the County E-911 system.
8. Improved criminal investigations.

Disadvantages

1. Difficulties integrating labor contracts.
2. Loss in both municipalities of a sense of "control" over "their" police department.
3. Perception in each municipality of less "personalized" service.

MINUTES

FULTON COUNTY
SHARED SERVICES PANEL
WEDNESDAY
3:00 P.M., SEPTEMBER 12, 2018
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS' CHAMBERS

PANEL MEMBERS:

X JAMES K. GROFF, CHAIRMAN
_ DAVID HOWARD, TOWN OF BLEECKER, SUPERVISOR
X SHEILA PERRY, TOWN OF BROADALBIN, SUPERVISOR
X JAMES SELMSER, TOWN OF CAROGA, SUPERVISOR
X TODD BRADT, TOWN OF EPHRATAH, SUPERVISOR
X JACK WILSON, TOWN OF JOHNSTOWN, SUPERVISOR
X RICHARD ARGOTSINGER, TOWN OF MAYFIELD, SUPERVISOR
X CYNTHIA BREH, TOWN OF OPPENHEIM, SUPERVISOR
X GREGORY FAGAN, TOWN OF PERTH, SUPERVISOR
X ALLICIA RICE, TOWN OF STRATFORD, SUPERVISOR
_ MAYOR DAYTON KING, CITY OF GLOVERSVILLE
X MAYOR VERNON JACKSON, CITY OF JOHNSTOWN
_ MAYOR LARRY CORNELL, VILLAGE OF BROADALBIN
_ MAYOR JAMIE WARD, VILLAGE OF MAYFIELD
_ MAYOR JOHN SPAETH, VILLAGE OF NORTHVILLE
X JON STEAD, ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

OTHER ATTENDEES:

AGENDA

1) Welcome - James Groff, Chairman
2) Process Overview - Jon Stead
3) Shared Services Plan – Final Review - Jon Stead

    - Appendix A Financial Data:
        1. SMART Waters Regional Water and Wastewater System
        2. Tax Collection-Software Sharing
        3. LED Lighting Replacement

4) Vote on Final Shared Services Plan with Appendices A - Panel

- Adjournment –

Chairman Groff welcomed all panel members to the final Shared Services meeting for 2018.

Mr. Stead stated that there were minor changes to the draft *Shared Services Plan* that was previously sent out to all panel members. The changes were mostly correcting typographical errors. He provided copies of the "Appendix A" form that must be submitted as an attachment to the *2018 Shared Services Plan*. He advised that the shared services projects that need to be included in the "Appendix A" form are what is considered the "tax savings plan". Mr. Stead stated that the Tax Collection-Software Sharing and LED Street Lighting initiatives are the two (2) that are included in the "Appendix A" form as a tax savings plan. He advised that the Board Office plans to have another meeting before the year ends and invite the New York Power Authority (NYPA) representative back to answer any questions about LED Street Lighting.

Mr. Stead presented the *2018 Draft Shared Services Plan*, "Appendix A" form as well as a 2018 "SSP Worksheet for Appendix A" that explains the calculation in Appendix A. Mr. Stead advised that the Department of State guidelines require all Panel members to state why they chose to vote "yes" or "no" when the Plan vote is taken.

Mr. Selmser asked if School Districts were included in any Tax Collection Software discussions. Mr. Stead stated "no". He said the he was unsure if the Systems East software supports school tax collection. He advised that he will speak with the County Treasurer to see if the districts' tax collection could work with the Systems East software.

Chairman Groff called for a roll call vote with commentary on the *2018 Shared Services Plan*.

Mayor King: (not present)

Mayor Jackson: Yes. The Plan will end up creating savings for everyone in the Towns, Villages and the Cities which makes this process worthwhile.

Supervisor Howard: (not present)

Supervisor Perry: Yes. I am excited that the Town of Broadalbin was able to help collaborate on this Plan.

Supervisor Selmser: Yes. I looked at this opportunity and was able to see tremendous savings and I'm anxious to see what the savings will help do for the Town of Caroga.

Supervisor Bradt: Yes. Even though it looks like there are only little savings, it is better than no savings.

Supervisor Wilson: Yes. I recognize that consolidation is a good thing and is great for the future. I am in favor of consolidation.

Supervisor Argotsinger: Yes. Good plan.

Supervisor Groff: Yes. Savings.

Supervisor Breh: Yes. The Town of Oppenheim had street lights turned off 12 years ago and this is an excellent opportunity to get them back on.

Supervisor Fagan: Yes. Seeing savings on LED lighting is fantastic; however, there are other mandates coming that will lead to more costs to municipalities in the future.

Supervisor Rice: Yes. It is not always easy for small towns to find savings and this is very helpful in a number of categories.

Mayor Cornell: (not present)

Mayor Ward: (not present)

Mayor Spaeth: (not present)

Mr. Stead advised that the Village of Broadalbin may participate in the LED Lighting initiative and hopes to have a Trustee from the Village attend future meetings with NYPA regarding the LED Lighting initiative.

Mr. Stead stated that a Department of State representative called yesterday and asked if the Panel would have a quorum. Mr. Stead stated that he had no doubt that there would be a quorum and lauded the Panel members for their dedicated participation.

Mr. Stead stated that the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors must certify the *2018 Shared Services Plan* before it can be submitted to the New York State Division of Budget.

Upon a motion by Supervisor Fagan, seconded by Supervisor Argotsinger and unanimously carried, the Panel adjourned at 3:40 p.m.

Certified by:

09/13/18

Jon R. Stead, Administrative Officer/DATE
Clerk of the Board