



2023 Annual Report Legislative Clerk/County Auditor

A NOTABLE YEAR FOR ELECTED & APPOINTED OFFICIALS

At the First Special & Organizational Meeting of 2023, the Legislature acknowledged and congratulated Republican Election Commissioner Layman and Democratic Election Commissioner Wahls on their newly appointed two-year term of office and Coroner Bennett on his newly elected four-year term of office. All three positions were sworn-in by County Clerk Klett.

Legislator/Chair Sauerbrey was appointed by the Legislature and sworn-in by County Clerk Klett to serve as the Legislative Chair for 2023 serving her tenth one-year Chair term.

Legislator Monell was appointed by the Legislature and sworn-in by County Clerk Klett to serve as Deputy Legislative Chair for 2023.

Chair Sauerbrey was appointed as the County's Public Information Officer and Legislator Standinger was appointed as the Republican Majority Leader for 2023.

Former Legislator Eddie J. Hollenbeck, who passed away on November 23, 2022, was posthumously recognized for his twelve years of dedicated service as District 7 Legislator at the First Regular Legislature Meeting of 2023.

Honorable Gerald A. Keene, who retired on December 31, 2022, was recognized for his forty-one years of dedicated service to Tioga County at the First Regular Legislature Meeting of 2023. Judge Keene presided over County, Family and Surrogate Court matters in the Sixth Judicial District of New York. Honorable Adam Schumacher was elected in the November 7, 2023 general election to take the bench as of January 1, 2024.

Keith Flesher was unanimously appointed by the Legislature at the Second Regular Legislature Meeting on February 14, 2023 and sworn-in by County Clerk Klett to discharge the duties of District 7 Legislator until December 31, 2023. Legislator Flesher was elected in the November 7, 2023 general election and is currently serving a one-year term for 2024.

Republican Election Commissioner Layman retired on December 2, 2023 with fourteen years of service. The Legislature appointed Kelly Johnson to fill the unexpired term through December 31, 2024.

Public Defender George C. Awad, Jr. retired on December 30, 2023 with thirty-eight years of service. The Legislature appointed Thomas Cline for the remainder of the four-year term through December 31, 2025.

Office of the Legislative Clerk

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Cathy Haskell Legislative Clerk **Amy Eiklor** Deputy Legislative Clerk

At the close of 2023, Governor Hochul signed legislation to move certain local elections to even-numbered years. This new legislation is slated to take effect in 2025 and impacts County Local Law No. 1 of 2021 allowing for the establishment of staggered terms for Legislators. Tioga County established this practice with Local Law No. 2 of 1994 and has continued to renew the local law ever since.

LEGISLATIVE CHAIR APPOINTMENTS

Chair Sauerbrey announced the 2023 Legislative Standing Committees.

Chair Sauerbrey made the following Legislative Chair appointments in 2023:

Committee	Legislators/Staff
Legislator Vacancy Committee <i>(appointed 1/10/2023)</i>	Legislators Monell, Roberts, Sauerbrey, and Standing
County Strategic Plan Committee <i>(appointed 2/14/2023)</i>	Legislator Roberts, ED&P Director Tinney, Planning Director Jardine, Commissioner of Social Services Yetter, Public Health Director Vroman
Negotiations Mediation Committee <i>(appointed 2/14/2023)</i>	Legislator Ciotoli, Legislator Sauerbrey, Personnel Officer Parke, Sheriff Howard
County Administrator Committee <i>(appointed 4/11/2023)</i>	Legislators Brown, Roberts, Sauerbrey, and Standing
Personnel Legislative Standing Committee <i>(temporary appointment 7/11 – 12/31/2023)</i>	Legislator Standing

It is important to note that the Negotiations Mediation Committee and the Tioga County Law Enforcement Association (TCLEA) were successful in negotiating an agreement for the contract period of 2021-2025 and a resolution to ratify the collective bargaining agreement was adopted at the Second Special Legislature Meeting on June 22, 2023.

RETIREMENT RECOGNITIONS

The Legislature recognized and congratulated sixteen employees on their retirements in 2023 and thanked them for their fourteen to forty-one years of dedicated service to Tioga County. Through recruitment and promotion, the Legislators welcomed their successors.



LEGISLATIVE MEETINGS - CONDUCTING THE BUSINESS OF THE COUNTY

The Legislature convened twelve regular meetings, four special meetings, and seven public hearings. Minutes recorded, typed, indexed, and copied for the official Journal of Proceedings.

The Legislature adopted 538 resolutions, including twelve Recognition Resolutions.

The Legislature adopted five new policies for inclusion in the County's Employee Handbook: **Section 3 Plan for Tioga County, Fair Housing Plan, Respirable Crystalline Silica Exposure Control Plan, Tioga County Respiratory Protection Program for the Voluntary Use of Respirators, Sun Safety Plan, and Whistleblower Policy (Ethics Policy).**

Additionally, the Legislature adopted several policy revisions of the County's Employee Handbook, including **Tioga County Remote Work Policy – Pilot Program, Comprehensive Information Security Policy, Travel Policy and Procedures, Rules of the Legislature, Financial Rules, Personnel Rules, Workplace Violence Prevention Program and Discriminatory Harassment Policy, Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy, Purchasing and Payment Policy, Safety Rules, and Ethics Rules.**

The Legislature agreed to a one-year extension of the Tioga County Remote Work Policy-Pilot Program for 2024 based on the newly revised policy.

The Legislature acknowledged fifteen proclamations in 2023. Most notably were **Employee Recognition, American Stroke Month, Human Trafficking Awareness Month, Fair Housing Month, and Save A Life-Free Narcan Day.**

The Chair of the Legislature presented the State of the County Address at the Third Regular Legislature Meeting on March 14, 2023.

A Moment of Silence was conducted at the Eighth Regular Legislature Meeting of 2023 for former Commissioner of Public Works Robert Korba who passed away on August 8, 2023. Mr. Korba served as the Commissioner of Public Works from 1974 -2000.

A Moment of Silence was conducted at the Ninth Regular Legislature Meeting of 2023 for retired Road Patrol Lieutenant William White who passed away on August 20, 2023. Lieutenant White retired from Tioga County on February 28, 2022 with twenty-one years of dedicated service.

The Budget Officer presented the 2024 Tentative Budget at the November 14, 2023 Public Hearing.

The Legislature adopted the 2024 County Budget at the Twelfth Regular Legislature Meeting on December 12, 2023.

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COUNTY AUDITOR

In April 2023, the County Auditor incorporated the presentation of monthly AP updates to the Legislature as part of the Legislative Support Committee report.

The County Auditor and Deputy Auditor reviewed and processed 1955 purchase card transactions totaling \$530,081.54, which is an increase of \$79,201.86 from the previous year.

The County Auditor and Deputy Auditor reviewed and processed 9,020 accounts payable invoices totaling \$26,350,151.19, which is an increase of 406 invoices and \$3,580,325.74 from the previous year.

STATE MANDATED PLANS

The **Countywide Shared Services Initiative** started in 2017 and Tioga County has participated and complied every year since with the Chair of the Legislature, Clerk of the Legislature, and County Attorney's involvement. The Shared Services Panel met twice during 2023. The first meeting was held on April 26, 2023 and two school superintendents and two BOCES superintendents were in attendance. The second meeting was held on November 15, 2023 in conjunction with the Council of Governments. The Shared Services Panel unanimously voted to not submit a new 2023 Countywide Shared Services Plan or modify our existing Plan. Letter from Chair Sauerbrey and votes cast were submitted to the Secretary of State on November 17, 2023.

In 2023, the County received State Matching Funds for net savings achieved in the amount of \$803,000 for the submission a cost-savings Shared Services Plan in 2022 through a shared service effort with Broome County Purchasing Alliance for Medicare Advantage/Medicare Part D Prescription Coverage for the County's Medicare eligible retirees and their spouses. This proposal was presented by former Benefits Manager, Amy Poff, and proved to be successful, as this was a win-win for the County and the retirees.

2023 LOCAL LAWS

The Legislature introduced and adopted the following five (5) new Local Laws:

- Local Law No. 1 of the Year 2023 – A Local Law establishing the salary for the Offices of County Clerk and County Sheriff for the four-year term of office commencing January 1, 2024 and continuing through and including December 31, 2027. This local law was adopted on February 14, 2023 with an effective date of January 1, 2024.
- Local Law No. 2 of the Year 2023 – A Local Law providing Real Property Tax Exemptions for Volunteer Firefighters and Ambulance Workers pursuant to Section 466-a of the Real Property Tax Law. This local law was adopted on August 15, 2023 with an effective date of January 1, 2024.

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- Local Law No. 3 of the Year 2023 – A Local Law providing for the collection of a hotel and motel tax in Tioga County. This local law was adopted on September 12, 2023 with an effective date of December 1, 2023 through November 30, 2026.
- Local Law No. 4 of the Year 2023 – A Local Law Establishing the Position of County Administrator for the County of Tioga. This local law was adopted on September 12, 2023 with an effective date of January 1, 2024.
- Local Law No. 5 of the Year 2023 – A Local Law Establishing the Tioga County Mandatory Source Separation Law and Repealing Local Law No. 1 of the Year 2020 entitled Tioga County Mandatory Source Separation Law. This local law was adopted on November 14, 2023 with an effective date of January 1, 2024.

PERSONNEL

Legislative Clerk Haskell attended the New York State Association of Clerks of County Legislative Boards conference in Cortland, NY from May 17-19, 2023 and achieved her certification as a Certified Legislative Board Clerk (CLBC). This is a two-year training/continuing education program focusing on professional development aimed at the topics associated with the role of Legislative Clerk and is endorsed by the New York State Association of Counties (NYSAC).

Deputy Legislative Clerk Eiklor went out on Family Medical Leave effective November 24, 2023 with an anticipated return to work date of February 20, 2024.

STATE OF EMERGENCY

Chair Sauerbrey, in agreement with the Tioga County Legislature, issued two (2) State of Emergency Declarations; one of which continues to remain in effect:

On May 11, 2023, Chair Sauerbrey declared a State of Emergency, along with several other Upstate NY counties regarding the possible arrival of migrants or asylum-seekers due to the national immigration crisis and plans involving the relocation of migrants from NYC to other counties outside of NYC. Tioga County continued to issue five (5) extensions on the original State of Emergency, in accordance with the Local Emergency Orders issued every five (5) days until the Legislature decided to let the State of Emergency expire on November 7, 2023.

On November 8, 2023, Chair Sauerbrey, along with the entire Legislature, agreed to declare a new State of Emergency due to the announcement of NYC Mayor to provide housing vouchers for the homeless and the possibility of the downstate homeless population making their way to Upstate NY. To date, the County has issued three extensions to this new State

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of Emergency, in accordance with the Local Emergency Orders issued every five (5) days. This State of Emergency is the only one that remains in effect.

The Legislative Office continues to keep the public informed through media releases and posting the State of Emergency Declaration and Emergency Orders on the County website.

2024 GOALS

As we begin the New Year, I look forward to accomplishing the following:

- ❖ Attending the Legislative Clerk's annual NYS Association of Clerks of County Legislative Boards conference May 15 – 17, 2024 in Albany, NY.
- ❖ Continuing to work with the Executive Team, including the County Administrator.
- ❖ Continued training for the Deputy Legislative Clerk.
- ❖ Continued training for the Legislative Clerk and Deputy Legislative Clerk offered through the County's Institute for Advancement.

Dated: January 31, 2024

Respectfully submitted,

Cathy Haskell

Legislative Clerk/County Auditor