

Chautauqua County Legislature
Live Streamed on YouTube
Wednesday, May 27, 2026 6:30 p.m.
Mayville, N.Y. 14757

Chairman Chagnon called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Chairman Chagnon: I will call to order the meeting of the Chautauqua County Legislature on May 27, 2026. Would the Clerk please call the roll?

Clerk Lee called the roll and announced a quorum present. (2 Absent; DeJoy, Merritt)

Legislator Nelson delivered the prayer and Pledge of Allegiance.

MOVED by Legislator Bankoski, SECONDED by Legislator Gustafson and duly carried the minutes were approved. (04/22/26)

1st Privilege of the Floor

Chairman Chagnon: That brings us to our first privilege of the floor. Members of the public may comment on any subject relating to any local law, resolution, or motion appearing on the agenda. Individual comments are limited to three minutes and comments representing a group shall be limited to five minutes. Is there anyone wishing to address the first privilege of the floor? Please introduce yourself.

My name is Carla Rodriguez, I'm one of the candidates for District 7 and I just want to let you guys know that I am against automatic raises for legislators so if I do get elected, that would be my stance on that.

Good Evening, I'm Nikki Pierce, I am also a candidate for District 15 for the next election. I would like to oppose local law 7-26 which would be amending the Chautauqua County Charter to eliminate annual cost of living adjustments for County legislators. So, I'm also opposed to that so thank you.

Anthony Toda, 144 Clifton Avenue. I hate to go against the flow here but I don't think Chautauqua County Legislators makes all that much and I believe they deserve a cost of living because it may be 2% of what 10 dollars is maybe \$10.50 or something. So, I think as far as a wage, a little bit under paid in the government especially in the County level so hopefully you'll be able to get yourself a cost of living. I support that, thank you.

Chairman Chagnon: Anyone else for the first privilege of the floor? Seeing no one, I will close the first privilege of the floor.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

Opened

6:35 P.M.

A Public Hearing for the Agreement Between Chautauqua County and Shultz Airshows, LLC for Air Boss Services for the 2027 Chautauqua County Airshow at Chautauqua County Jamestown Airport

Chairman Chagnon: Is there anyone to speak to the first public hearing? Anyone to speak to the first public hearing? Hearing none, we will close the first public hearing.

Closed

6:36 P.M

Opened

6:36 P.M.

A Public Hearing for Ground and Taxiway Lease with Baron North G58, LLC at Chautauqua County Dunkirk Airport

Chairman Chagnon: Is there anyone to address the second public hearing? Anyone for the second public hearing? Seeing no one, I will close that public hearing as well.

Closed

6:36 P.M

Clerk Lee: There are no veto messages from County Executive Wendel from the April 22, 2026 Legislature meeting.

**VETO MESSAGES FROM COUNTY EXECUTIVE WENDEL
NO VETOES FROM 04/22/26**

Clerk Lee: There are 6 communications on the agenda, if you would like a copy of any of these items, please let our office know.

Legislator Larson: In regard to communication 6, David Dawson is a constituent of mine in District 12 in Jamestown. I would request that Chairman Harmon, for the Economic Development committee in June, take up the letter, the request from David Dawson on behalf of Dawson Metal. Dawson Metal is a significant employer in Jamestown, has been for decades and decades. They have an unusual access problem involving a bridge over the Chadakoin River and it seems to me we've found money for Economic Development job protection efforts that have a much lower priority than what David Dawson on behalf of Dawson Metal is doing with so, I'd appreciate it if his letter was part of the agenda, discussion with Mark Geise and whoever at the June Economic Development meeting, thank you.

Legislator Harmon: Mr. Chairman, I will certainly address this at the PED meeting to let Mr. Larson know, thank you.

Legislator Larson: Thank you.

Chairman Chagnon: And just as a point of information, Mark Geise is very familiar with this situation. Has spent literally hours and hours and hours in my presence on the facility trying to come up with a solution which I think that they have now developed and now by the letter that was sent, they're looking for funding.

Legislator Larson: Correct.

Chairman Chagnon: Mark Geise is very familiar with the situation, has been working hard to come up with a solution. So, I think it'll be a very productive discussion.

Legislator Harmon: Okay great, thank you.

COMMUNICATIONS:

1. Letter - NYS Dept. of Ag & Markets – Re: Final Notice of Intent -SL Arkwright, LLC Solar in the Town of Dunkirk in Chautauqua County Agricultural District No. 10
2. Report (2) – NYS Small Business Development Center – Re: Chautauqua County Semi Annual Report – (January 1, 2025 - June 30, 2025) (July 1, 2025 – December 31, 2025)
3. Report – NYS Small Business Development Center – Re: Annual Report 2025 (& January 1, 2025 – December 31, 2025)
4. Letter – Chautauqua County Board of Elections, Re: Early Voting Poll Sites
5. Letter – Katelyn Walley-Stoll – Re: Resignation from Chautauqua County's Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board
6. Letter – David Dawson, President Dawson Metal – Re: Urgent Request for Funding and Action – Access Road Due to Failing Bridge at 825 Allen Street

LOCAL LAW INTRO. 4-26 – A LOCAL LAW AMENDING LOCAL LAWS 6-13 AND 3-19 OF THE COUNTY OF CHAUTAUQUA IMPOSING A TAX ON THE OCCUPANCY OF HOTEL AND SHORT- TERM RENTAL ROOMS AND ESTABLISHING A SHORT-TERM RENTAL REGISTRY

Legislator Scudder: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to make a motion to refer this local law back to committee for further considerations.

MOVED by Legislator Scudder, SECONDED by Legislator Bankoski to refer Local Law Intro 4-26 back to committees – Unanimously Carried

LOCAL LAW INTRO. 5-26 – A LOCAL LAW AMENDING LOCAL LAW 4-09 PROVIDING FOR WRITTEN NOTICE OF DEFECTS AND OBSTRUCTIONS ON COUNTY OF CHAUTAUQUA PROPERTY AS A CONDITION PRECEDENT TO MAINTENANCE OF A CIVIL ACTION

Local Law Intro 5-26 R/C Vote: 17 YES; 0 NO; 2 Absent (DeJoy, Merritt) – UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED

LOCAL LAW INTRO. 6-26 – A LOCAL LAW AMENDING LOCAL LAW 4-86 AS AMENDED REGARDING THE LIABILITY AND CASUALTY RESERVE FUND AND SMALL CLAIM SETTLEMENTS

Legislator Johnson: Mr. Chairman, I apologize, I'd like to move to refer this to committee and I should have caught this at Audit & Control so I apologize for that but reading through it again, at Audit & Control, we focused on the changes but in section 2, there is a sentence that is not germane to what we want to do because as written, it would allow the County Executive to create a reserve of up to or over 15 million dollars and I don't think that was what anybody ever intended.

MOVED by Legislator Johnson, SECONDED by Legislator Gustafson to refer Local Law Intro 6-26 back to committees – Unanimously Carried

LOCAL LAW INTRO. 7-26 – A LOCAL LAW AMENDING THE CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY CHARTER TO ELIMINATE ANNUAL COST OF LIVING ADJUSTMENTS FOR COUNTY LEGISLATORS

Legislator Nelson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Many of my, all of my democratic colleagues agree that we should eliminate the annual cost of living adjustment for legislators but I want to point out that we are not alone. The editor of the Post Journal recently wrote, the idea of automatic cost of living adjustments for Chautauqua County legislators is and frankly always was, a bad idea. We weren't in favor of legislators receiving a 64% increase in pay in 2024 while that was the first raise in County law makers pay in about 20 years, a \$5,700 raise doesn't look like much until you realize it equaled a nearly \$110,000 increase to the County budget. Now, next year, legislators are set to receive another pay increase tied to inflation. Can all the County residents that work 2 jobs raise their hands if their part time employer has increased their pay 64% over the past couple of years with another automatic raise coming next year? We don't see any hands either. They went on to say, County republicans are fond of saying that their acting fiscally responsible with their handling of the counties fund balance but in our opinion, the idea of automatic pay raises flies in the face of fiscal responsibility. I couldn't have said it better. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Legislator Johnson; Mr. Chairman, I will vote against this elimination. And to me, its just a simple matter of mathematics. You don't want to have an automatic increase or an automatic decrease and I mean that in terms of real money not nominal money. Some of us in this room are old enough to remember when inflation was running 15%, 18% in mortgages, or similar number. In that kind of environment, we were starting to see some of that now, you have to look at real money, not nominal money and whether its dealing with seniors property taxes because we went through that a couple months ago or anything else, we should always focus on especially on compensation on real money, not nominal money. Thank you.

Legislator Vanstrom: I agree with my esteemed colleague, Mr. Johnson. Nothing in my household has gone down, no matter how tight you can pull your belt in. Certainly not bread, certainly not milk, eggs have fluctuated for many, many market reasons out there whether it was the bird flu or other things. I'm an egg eater, I don't know about the rest of you, it might not be your cup of tea but coffee has gone up. I bought some coffee to make at home and I think I was a little shocked, I had to ask the clerk "is this right?" and she said "oh yes". So, I guess I'm going to have to drink less coffee but thank you.

Legislator Lewis: I would just like to say when inflation is at 15% or 18%, can't we change this to include a COLA for the legislators so I think because of the raise last year and other costs, that our constituents are bearing that we should also bury too.

Legislator Larson: Telling us Swedes apart has always been trouble. I really didn't want to speak on this and probably the majority of the legislature wish I wouldn't but, there are 2 Fred's on the legislature and we have mutual respect for each other. However, Legislator Johnson's point that even when you have 2% inflation, that means the value of the American purchasing power goes down 2% that year. Both Fred's understand that but the idea that County legislators, the 19 of us should use our power, and its an awesome power, to put in place automatic raises for ourself is different even than the automatic annual cost of living increases the prior republican legislature put into place I believe in 2018 for the County Clerk, the Sheriff and the County Executive. Intellectually, we don't have any self interest in how much the County Executive makes, the Sheriff makes or the County Clerk makes but we have a real self interest in giving ourselves very quietly, mechanically, in the HR department every year just figure out what the consumer price index was for the year before. If it's 4% just give the legislators a 4% pay raise that they never voted on and the public – except for the law that you all did finally pass that my suggestion that at some point in the following year, our Clerk will make public on our website and keep it there what the automatic pay raises were. The idea that all Americans have a right to be protected from their money being devalued by inflation is a very nice, kind, thoughtful idea since however, our legislature wisely has tried to avoid passing motion to our congress for example, I'm not going to propose one but the federal minimum wage which is the minimum wage in almost half of our 50 states. The federal minimum wage was last increased in 2009 to \$7.25. To this day, our neighbor Pennsylvania, it's legal to hire somebody for \$7.25. Congress has not seen the need to have a consumer price index on the minimum wage now for 17 years and yet after getting a 60- some percent increase last year and I would point out, the democrats last year on this issue were intellectually honest. Bob Bankoski's our leader did not say that our pay should stay at 9,000 bucks till the second coming. When the \$15,000

roughly came up, he proposed \$12,000 as a compromise. So, we didn't say that after 20 years legislators weren't entitled to some raise and we would've voted publicly for a raise to \$12,000, that went nowhere. So as the paper correctly points out, we got a 60-some percent raise this January and on top of that, if Legislator Nelson's local law does not pass, in the next year or two, the way inflations going now, it's almost hit 4 this year, we're going to get a raise without voting on it for ourselves. It's a bad idea. When and if 5 years from now, 6, 7 years from now, legislators have every reason to go to the public and say, "look, \$15,000 is no longer appropriate". Do it in public, have the courage to vote for it and explain it to your constituents and if its reasonable, you should survive. So, I didn't want to speak on it but the idea that we, the 19 of us have a right to inflation protect our salary on behalf of the millions of Americans still working for \$7.25, I don't buy that argument.

Legislator Nelson: One last comment. I think it comes down to transparency and as Legislator Larson said, I think this is something that should be debated openly and approved publicly rather than built into the law permanently, thank you.

Legislator Johnson: Just briefly, it sounds like we are debating it in public and openly right now.

Chairman Chagnon: This is your third.

Legislator Nelson: I know, alright it wouldn't have come up without this – without my bringing this to the people's attention and it would have just gotten past in 2027 quietly and that the part that (*inaudible*). Now I'm done, thank you.

Chairman Chagnon: Any other comments, questions or discussion on local law 7-26? Hearing none, would the clerk please call the roll?

Local Law Intro 7-26 R/C Vote: 7 YES; 10 NO (Anthony, Gustafson, Harmon, Heiser, Johnson, Pavlock, Penhollow, Proctor, Vanstrom, Chagnon); 2 Absent (DeJoy, Merritt) – FAILS

Public Speaker: Mr. Chairman? Could we request that you turn up the volume. With this fan blowing back here, we can hardly hear you.

Chairman Chagnon: I think we've accomplished it.

Public Speaker: Thank you.

LOCAL LAW INTRO. 8-26 – A LOCAL LAW REDUCING THE SALARY FOR THE COUNTY CLERK

Legislator Pavlock: I was a little slow. Would you allow a comment?

Chairman Chagnon: Okay, I will allow Legislator Pavlock to make a comment.

Legislator Pavlock: Thank you for allowing – I was a little distracted by the fan noise. I just wanted to make a comment regarding this simply in the fact that I didn't want this to be a deterrent for other County officials or elected individuals to ever choose to make a comment at an open meeting or any sort of discussionary avenue. A County clerk had recently gotten up to make a few comments regarding a general fund and then only a few months later to have something come across the boards in sense of a reduction in salary. I just see that it's a little ironic and it just saddens me that could be a potential and not certain one way or another but, I wouldn't want it to be someone else's mind as a deterrent to say you better not publicly say something because the potential of a salary decrease could be on the agenda.

Chairman Chagnon: Thank you. Since I've allowed that comment, are there any other questions or comments?

Legislator Larson: Mr. Chairman, that dog won't hunt. Tonight, we just voted on - all the democrats came forward and said "we're willing to cut our own pay" and we all voted to cut our own pay. Our intellectual honesty is intact this evening and I believe there is a communication from the current Clerk, I hope I read it right that said "hey even if this passes, he's running again". So, we've been intellectually honest on this matter. I think every democrat voted against the \$17,000 or \$18,000 pay increase for this position in the first place. Our position is that in perhaps the poorest County of the 57 in New York, there's nothing wrong with salaries being near the bottom. There's no justification for County elected officials' salaries being near the top or even the middle of the 57 counties in New York. We've been intellectually honest, we've been consistent and we voted to cut our own pay this evening, thank you.

Legislator Vanstrom: Not to nitpick or you know, try to compare ourselves to other counties. I think we're one of the greatest counties in this entire State. We sure have the most affordable housing yet left here. Although, the prices are rising and if you're looking for a house, my colleagues will agree with me, good luck trying to find a decent house at a decent price. Your husband better be Jesus himself, the carpenter because it's going to be hard. The prices have gone astronomical for real. Any young couple looking for one could tell you that but our County Clerk's salary just finally made it up to be the third lowest in the State. Now, I'm impressed with that. Third lowest in the whole State. I wouldn't call that gluttony by any means, thank you.

Legislator Penhollow: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. So, this opens up a great question. Are we going to evaluate all the salaries for all the County employees and make suggestions such as this? Is it possibly a bipartisan group that we get together and say, this is our County budget, it's x amount and we should try to identify jointly together that we want to reduce labor, reduce salaries. Is that what we're going to get to? I'm not sure. But, that's just a point I wanted to make was it's really the only way you save money is to cut labor and we know when we cut labor, that cuts services and when you cut services, what does the public think of that? So, I understand my colleagues, I respect their opinions. I just know as an example with the increase in the salary for the County legislators, there seems to be more interest in running for an elected position in Chautauqua County. Again, it represents all of us and I think we've seen that in the election last year from 26, or excuse me, from 2025 to 2026. I know in my own district, I'm glad to see that there's competition. I think competition is important and so I'll just leave it with this, if we want

to reevaluate all the salaries for all the employees, all cost-of-living increases, then lets put that on the table. I look at what the County Clerk position does, what that individual is responsible for and for that salary? They're crazy. The responsibilities, the number of employees, the DMV, recording of deeds, so on and so forth. We all know that. I just hope this isn't a bipartisan game. I'm open to a discussion in committees about reducing government spending and it think we all can sit here and talk like this but at the end of the day, what are we going to cut? Either we pick up on efficiency or we cut labor, thank you.

Legislator Johnson: And I would just like to emphasize please what Mr. Penhollow said and if there's a bipartisan group, I'd like to be party of it and if we'd like to cut everybody's salaries, legislators and everybody up and down the line, we'll save some real money and I'm all for it.

Legislator Larson: Actions speak louder than words, usually. It's about 3 County legislature meetings ago, legislator Nelson was promised that the management salary plan with huge ranges – I believe one went from like \$130,000 to \$210,000 or it was about a \$90,000 spread. I recall on the floor of this legislature being said it wasn't necessary for Nelson or anybody else to pass a resolution asking a committee to thoroughly go over the management salary plan looking forward, what's the justification for such broad ranges? Our organized labor, our collective bargaining agreements don't have steps like that and there was a promise that didn't need a resolution but the Administrative Services committee, Audit & Control, whoever, they take a serious look at legislator Nelson's request and what are the – are there written criteria where a department head puts these management people – is there a criteria for putting them at \$130,000 or at \$200,000? And maybe I'm missing something but which committee since then has spent an hour or two or three honoring the pledge to legislator Nelson that there would be a serious look at the management salary plan. Why the spread was so huge from top to bottom? What written criteria could we see for deciding who gets what and so has that happened in any committee, Mr. Chairman?

Chairman Chagnon: Legislator Larson, I believe you're referring to the commitment that I made from this chair and the commitment was that it would be reviewed with the Director of HR and committees. I can tell you that the Chairman of the Audit and Control committee and myself have had an extensive discussion with the HR Director and staff on the question and I believe the Chairman of Audit and Control has it on the agenda planned for next month. So, it is proceeding. It is a very complicated subject. It's not proceedings as quickly as we may have hoped but, I can assure you it is proceeding. Thank you for the opportunity.

Legislator Larson: Well, I hope legislator Nelson's been in this loop as to what's been going on.

Legislator Nelson: At the last Audit and Control it was –

Chairman Chagnon: It was discussed.

Legislator Nelson: They brought up the fact that it wasn't going to be this month but probably next month.

Chairman Chagnon: Yes, thank you.

Legislator Larson: Thank you.

Chairman Chagnon: Any other questions, comments or discussion on local law introductory 8-26? Hearing none, would the clerk please call the roll?

Local Law Intro 8-26 R/C Vote: 6 YES; 11 NO (Anthony, Gustafson, Harmon, Heiser, Johnson, Pavlock, Penhollow, Proctor, Scudder, Vanstrom, Chagnon); 2 Absent (DeJoy, Merritt) – FAILS

RENEW & AMEND RES. NO. 60-26 – Amend Capital Project Accounts – Jamestown Community College

MOVED by Legislator Bankoski, SECONDED by Legislator Gustafson to Renew Resolution 60-26 – Unanimously Carried to Renew

MOVED by Legislator Nelson, SECONDED by Legislator Vanstrom to Amend Resolution 60-26 to the version laid on the desks – Unanimously Carried to Amend (Amendments shown below)

RENEW & AMEND		
CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY		
RESOLUTION NO. 60-26		
TITLE:	Amend Capital Project Accounts—Jamestown Community College	
BY:	Administrative Services and Audit & Control Committees:	
AT THE REQUEST OF:	County Executive Paul M. Wendel, Jr.:	
	WHEREAS, in previous budgets, Chautauqua County approved a number of capital projects for Jamestown Community College; and	
	WHEREAS, the funding needs for an approved project exceed original estimates and an increase of funding is needed before a bid can be awarded; and	
	WHEREAS, the funding needs for another approved project are less than original estimates; now, therefore, be it	
	RESOLVED, that the Director of Finance is authorized and directed to make the following amendments to the 2026 Capital Budget:	
<u>INCREASE CAPITAL APPROPRIATION ACCOUNT:</u>		
HH.992490.00011.4	Contractual-Community College Tuition-Infrastructure Repairs (2021)	-\$115,000 \$28,750
<u>INCREASE CAPITAL REVENUE ACCOUNT:</u>		
HH.992490.00011.R503.1000	Interfund Transfer-Interfund Transfer	\$115,000 \$28,750
<u>DECREASE CAPITAL APPROPRIATION ACCOUNT:</u>		
HH.992490.00002.4	Contractual-Community College Tuition-Roofs (2020)	\$115,000 \$28,750
<u>DECREASE CAPITAL REVENUE ACCOUNT:</u>		
HH.992490.00002.R503.1000	Interfund Transfer-Interfund Transfer	\$115,000 \$28,750

Unanimously Carried as Amended

RESOLUTIONS:

137-26 Confirm Appointment – Chautauqua County Landfill Commission, by Facilities Committee – UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED

138-26 Appointment to the Chautauqua County Agricultural & Farmland Protection Board, by Planning and Economic Development Committee – UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED

MOVED by Legislator Bankoski, SECONDED by Legislator Gustafson to block resolutions 139-26 through 143-26 – Unanimously Carried to block

139-26 Amend 2026 Capital Budget South & Center Chautauqua Lake Sewer Districts, by Public Facilities and Audit & Control Committees – UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED

140-26 Amend 2026 Capital Budget for the Replacement of Fire-Destroyed Equipment DPF – Road Machinery, by Public Facilities and Audit & Control Committees – UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED

141-26 Amend 2026 Budget for ARPA Capital Projects, by Administrative Services and Audit & Control Committees – UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED

142-26 Amend 2026 Budget for the Navigation/Snowmobile Department – Office of the Sheriff, by Public Safety and Audit & Control Committees – UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED

143-26 Amend 2025 Budget for Year End Reconciliation – Department of Mental Hygiene and Social Services, by Human Services and Audit & Control Committees – UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED

144-26 Authorizing Extension of Lease Agreement for Department of Planning & Development at the BWB Center in Jamestown, by Public Facilities, Planning and Economic Development and Audit & Control Committees – UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED

145-26 Authorize Ground and Taxiway Lease with Baron North G58 LLC, a Subsidiary of Accent Stripe at Chautauqua County Dunkirk Airport, by Public Facilities and Audit & Control Committees – UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED

146-26 Authorizing a Utility Work Agreement with NYS DOT, by Public Facilities Committee – UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED

147-26 Authorize Supplemental Agreement with the Federal Aviation Administration to Construct, Operate, and Maintain Navigational Aids at the Chautauqua County Jamestown Airport, by Public Facilities Committee – UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED

Legislator Larson: Mr. Chairman, thank you. I believe it was 1 year ago that this legislature took the initiative to pass a resolution specifically asking Congressman Langworthy to support our effort to get passenger air service back to Jamestown. I believe last December we got a copy of a letter from the Congressman to our United States Secretary of transportation asking for the return of passenger air service to Jamestown. Since that initiative asking for the service to come back came out of this legislature, perhaps for next month's meeting if not before, if the office, you, could give us all a status of where the effort to restore passenger air service to Jamestown stands and specifically on how these things tend to work. Who is it on Congressman Langworthy's staff who's been assigned to follow up with the United States Secretary of Transportation to try to get air service back, thank you.

Chairman Chagnon: I'll work on that. Any other questions or comments on the resolution?

RES. NO. 147-26 – UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED

148-26 Authorize Agreement Between Chautauqua County and Schultz Airshows, LLC for Air Boss Services for the 2027 Chautauqua County Airshow at Chautauqua County Jamestown Airport, by Public Facilities and Audit & Control Committees – UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED

149-26 Authorize Agreement with the Village of Mayville to Provide Election Training Facilities, by Administrative Services Committee – UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED

150-26 Authorize Agreement with BOCES CHAUT-CATT ERIE II Fredonia to Provide Election Training Facilities, by Administrative Services Committee – UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED

151-26 Authorize Agreement with Jamestown Community College to Provide Election Training Facilities, by Administrative Services Committee – UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED

152-26 Authorize Acceptance of Criminal Justice Discovery and Bail Reform Funding FY 2025-2026, by Public Safety and Audit & Control Committees

Legislator Larson: Mr. Chairman, we had a very good thorough presentation at the Public Safety committee on all of the next I think 6 maybe resolutions. All of them are accepting State money with no local share, no matching share and we were informed, especially on this criminal justice discovery funding for most of the DA's office but, for the different parts of County government involved that this has been a multiyear success in getting State money to make it possible to properly comply with New York's criminal procedure law so, I commend the

department, the Sheriff, the DA, I commend them for the job their doing here and again, when you look through the shorthand here, it's not always clear that it's 100% State money with no local match required, thank you.

RES. NO. 152-26 – UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED

153-26 Authorize Acceptance of the Statewide Targeted Reductions to Intimate Partner Violence (“STRIVE”) Grant funds for 2026-2027, by Public Safety and Audit & Control Committees

154-26 Authorize Execution of New York State Office of Homeland Security Funding Grant Explosive Detection Canine Team FY 2023, by Public Safety and Audit & Control Committees – UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED

155-26 Authorize Execution of New York State Office of Homeland Security Funding Grant Bomb Squad Initiative Grant Program FY2023, by Public Safety and Audit & Control Committees

156-26 Authorize Execution of New York State Office of Homeland Security Funding Grant Bomb Squad Initiative Grant Program FY2024, by Public Safety and Audit & Control Committees

157-26 Standardization of Cummins Standby, Natural Gas/Propane Genset Generators for the Portland-Pomfret-Dunkirk Sewer District, by Public Facilities Committee

RES. NO. 157-26 R/C Vote: 17 YES; 0 NO; 2 Absent (DeJoy, Merritt) – UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED

158-26 Distribution of Mortgage Taxes, by Administrative Services and Audit & Control Committees – UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED

159-26 Reallocating Salary Grade for Motor Vehicles Administrator, by Administrative Services and Audit & Control Committees

Legislator Bankoski: Is this changing salary grades or anything?

Chairman Chagnon: Is this changing the salary grade? That's what the intent of it is.

Nathan Harp, Legislature Parliamentarian: The resolved clause states currently allocated to salary grade 14 shall be reallocated to salary grade 17.

Chairman Chagnon: Does that answer your question legislator?

Legislator Bankoski: Yes.

Chairman Chagnon: Okay, any other questions or comments on the resolution? Would the clerk please call the roll?

RES. NO. 159-26 R/C Vote: 12 YES; 5 NO (Bankoski, Buchanan, Larson, Lewis, Whitney); 2 Absent (DeJoy, Merritt) – ADOPTED

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairman Chagnon: And that brings us to announcements. Are there any announcements from any legislators for the good of the order?

Legislator Johnson: Yes sir, thank you, Mr. Chairman. So, by way of my membership on the board of Cornell Cooperative Extension, I would like perhaps to invite you to join me in making June a commemorative month for the Chautauqua County dairy industry. And let me read what we've drafted here "So whereas Chautauqua County has 1,291 farms and 229,000 acres in farms representing 35% of the counties land area with a 2022 market value of agricultural products in excess of \$242 million dollars. And whereas this production reflects diverse agricultural economy that includes dairy, grapes, cattle, fruit vegetables, hay, maple products, and many other farm enterprise that support local business and value added food production. And furthermore, whereas farms provide jobs, open space, scenic landscapes that strengthen tourism, value habitat for wildlife and strong tradition of hard work and stewardship across Chautauqua County. And whereas dairy operations are in major part of Chautauqua County agricultural, and the County is the 94th percentile in the nation for dairy products. Therefore, could we resolve that Chautauqua County legislature proclaims June as dairy month in Chautauqua County and encourages residents of Chautauqua County to celebrate our counties agriculture with a tall glass of milk, which is good for you, cheese and charcuterie, a yogurt parfait, an ice cream cone or any other of your favorite dairy products. And if as a farmer, and I think I'm one of a couple here, I can vouch for you having farmed a lot of different crops, the dairy farmers are the hardest working people I have ever met, especially in these northern latitudes.

Legislator Lewis: Hello, I'd like to also announce that June is a month of many Juneteenth celebrations and I wanted to announce that Dunkirk and Fredonia are celebrating 30 years of having Juneteenth festivities and in Jamestown – those dates are the 13th and 14th and in Jamestown, they also celebrate it on the 20th and the 21st and all are welcome and I hope you will come and attend, thank you.

Legislator Bankoski: Yes, Mr. Chairman, and I didn't want to say this on the resolutions, 148-26, because I didn't want to taint anyone's vote on this but, legislator Scudder is going to be a wing walker at the 2027 Airshow at the Jamestown Airport.

Chairman Chagnon: Where do you get tickets?

Legislator Scudder: I just need to comment on that. I was going to be a wing walker but the federal government is going to participate in my salary and I've decided to not do it because of that, thank you.

**COMMENTS ON THE
STATE OF THE COUNTY ADDRESS
BY THE
DEMOCRATIC COMMITTEE**

Legislator Bankoski: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As our previous conversation we had on the phone, I guess neither one of us knew how to proceed on this and I want to thank you for your understanding on our discussion on how to proceed with this because neither one of us knew on how to proceed so I'll try to make this quick and painless. Our democratic response to the Executive State of the County message is based upon facts and presents our vision of where Chautauqua should be heading. We believe in 3 fundamental principles. First, we need to make Chautauqua County a more affordable place to live and do business, that is why we supported the affordability act of 2026. Second, we believe that wise choices by County government combined with hard work can make Chautauqua County a wealthier and happier County. No amount of empty rhetoric public relations spending, spin or marketing campaigns will be a substitute for hard work. Third, we believe that new job creation should be the number 1 goal of the economic development efforts of Chautauqua County and it's Chautauqua County IDA. The recent loss of 700 jobs at Truck-Lite, Serta Mattress and Bush Industries and the action of Refresco formally Cliffstar in canceling grape contracts here in Chautauqua County, proves the need for new job creation. To be clear, we believe that the County has a marvelous dedicated work force, doing valuable public service every day. This response to the County Executive's State of the County highlights our disagreements with the action or inaction of the leadership of this County. The State of our County is not what we want it to be. The County salary review commission report in 2024, that was the basis of pay raises for elected officials that went into effect this year lead us to look deeper 9 New York counties, the salary review commission said we're comparable to Chautauqua County. Sadly, those counties we felt were not comparable to us at all. Chautauqua County's population loss, poverty rate and low medium household income found us at the bottom of the barrel. While the average medium household income for those 9 counties was \$76,000, ours was only \$55,000. 28% below the average with inflation, our medium household income is up from \$55,00 but still less than even Cattaraugus County. Our population loss in 2020 census was greater than any of the other 9 counties both in the absolute loss of 7,200 residents and the percentage loss of 5.5%. The census bureau estimate of our 2025 population sadly has us continuing to be the number 1 in Western New York in population loss. No County economy including Chautauqua Counties economy, can be described as healthy when the County continues to lose population. Population loss is never a sign of a healthy economy. Our poverty rate was 17.6% compared to the average of the 9 comparable counties of 12.9%. We are not giving our opinion about the state of our County, we are giving you facts straight from the US census bureau and the federal reserve board. This Chautauqua County government is far from conservative. Wasting \$514,000 buying and then attempting to renovate an ancient gas station in downtown Jamestown to be a carts hub only to wind up demolishing up the ancient

building resulting in a small vacant \$514,000 lot is not fiscally conservative. 11 years ago, the sale of the County home to a private operator cut over 200 employees from the County payroll. Reducing the payroll from about 1,200 employees to about 1,000. This County government has somehow in those 11 years added more than 200 employees so that the counties payroll today is larger when it still owned the County home. That is not conservative government. Some of the added positions are no doubt justified. We however, find it naive to think every one of those 200 added jobs were absolutely critical to the function of the County government. This County government is not conservative given the bloated size of the undesignated fund balance. We support the counties written financial policy calling for an undesignated fund balance, some say “rainy day” fund, of at least 5% of the County budget, or about \$15,000,000 now. We democrats view that amount as being fiscally conservative. This County government, however, has overtaxed the people of Chautauqua County to have about 35 million dollars in the fund balance. This is no long just a “rainy day” fund, it is a bloated hurricane, tornado or brush fire fund all rolled into one. With about \$35 million dollars always easily available to Chautauqua County government, there is no urgency to exercise conservative fiscal responsibility, just the opposite. There is always cash available for any and every purpose regardless of their merits. We take seriously the awesome power County government has to tax our residents. The 2015 County property tax was \$62,800,000. The 2026 County property tax levy has risen to \$75,000,000, up 20%. The County property tax rate has gone down, not because of conservative government, but because market values of Chautauqua County real property as determined by the State every year, has gone up with inflation. As market values goes up, the tax rate automatically goes down. Last year, democrats tried to give 2 million dollars of the fund balance back to our tax payers. That was conservative government. This year we included that 2 million dollars of the property tax cut in our Affordability Act of 2026. In addition, some millions of this fund balance should be used to develop shovel ready economic development sites in the Dunkirk/Fredonia/Silver Creek/ Hanover area and the Jamestown/Busti/Ellicott area where most Chautauqua County residents live. New businesses will only come if we have shovel ready for them. While we supported the use of the \$5 million dollars of President Biden’s American Rescue Plan Act, the ARPA dollars, to Chautauqua County government, to build a County industrial park in Ripley, it is obvious that however many hundreds of jobs that may wind up in the industrial park in Ripley, a majority of those employees will be next door, Pennsylvania and not from Chautauqua County. We democrats believe that the number 1 objective of the county’s economic development efforts including at our Chautauqua County Industrial Development Agency should once again be job creation. Employment in Chautauqua County has plunged from 64,000 people in 2010 to about 50,000 now. This is not a success story. This decline in employment must be reversed. We believe it is short sighted that our counties \$300 million plus budgets in 2025 and 2026, not a dollar is dedicated to job training to help our business already here or new ones that might come here as well as helping those workers who have lost their jobs as businesses have left Chautauqua County. Where is the County governments compassion of the thousands of workers who lost their jobs through no fault of their own. Our current elected leadership of Chautauqua County has been a bystander as Carriage House and 500 jobs have left Fredonia, Petri Baking, 200 jobs left Silver Creek, Truck-Lite, 350 jobs left Falconer, Serta Mattress, 100 jobs left Ellicott and now the latest blow to our community, Bush Industries and over 200 jobs are leaving Ellicott. The current elected leadership of Chautauqua County never takes any responsibility for our setbacks and losses but they’re always taking credit for our occasional wins. We need

County government that will hold itself accountable for our county decline over the past 15 years. In the movie, “A Few Good Men”, which starred Tom Cruz, these are the facts and they are undisputed. Thank you.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Members of the public may comment on any subject.

A member of the legislature may speak on any subject.

Individual comments are limited to 3 minutes and comments representing a group shall be limited to 5 minutes.

Chairman Chagnon: Okay, that brings us to the second privilege of the floor. Members of the public may comment on any subject. A member of the legislature may speak on any subject. Individual comments are limited to three minutes and comments representing a group shall be limited to five minutes.

Legislator Penhollow: So, just a comment on that rebuttal or comments on the State of the County Address, I mean ironically, collectively, this group never mentioned the burdens put on us by New York State government and how that is controlled for a certain number of years by a certain party. So, I offer this up to everybody in this room, if we're going to talk like this and be serious about this, I don't know if its political rhetoric, not sure what it is, we should challenge ourselves to work together on identifying cost reduction initiative. Common sense approach to this, is it's just a discussion and we will talk about the facts. What labor costs us, what State mandates costs us, what fuel costs us, all these things that I think are individual department managers bring to the budget committee administrative services committee. And so, I want to reach across the aisle to my friends from Jamestown and so forth along with Mr. Johnson who probably is an expert at this. I remember years ago or not too long ago we were arguing about who was the expert but at the end of the day I think they're just common-sense initiatives and I think we owe it to our people but if we're going to be honest and open, lets talk about some of the mandates and how it is to operate a business in New York State and so I offer that up. I would be more than willing to participate so thank you.

Can you hear me? Good. I've never been accused of being quiet. Good evening, my name is Kathy O'Brian, a resident of the Town of Ellery and a Director of the Chautauqua Lake Property Owners Association, the CLPOA. I appreciate the opportunity to speak with you about the Lake once again. The CLPOA held its 18th and 19th public meetings on May 23rd and 24th, 2026 at the Lawson Center in Bemus Point. With those meetings, public participation has exceeded 1,400 year around and seasonal residents, all tax payers in this County and your constituents. With one exception at one meeting, many months ago, we do not believe we have ever seen a County Legislator or the County Executive at any of these meetings. We guarantee you can learn a lot from these meetings if you attend from the CLPOA and your constituents in attendance. Well, we have lots to report on since we were here a few months ago. First, the County's Chautauqua Lake Symposium. We encouraged our supporters to attend and many did and as expected, we learned a lot but not what may have been expected. We would be happy to share observations, you can learn a lot from them. Most importantly, in response to an audience

question, everyone of the 7 speakers at the symposium, who responded, confirmed in their own words that no one manages Chautauqua Lake as the CLPOA has claimed. It is as the County Watershed Coordinator described in 2025, I quote “decentralized organization in which everyone does their own thing”. Surprise, that is not management, there’s a recipe for failure as you have proven over the decades. We heard that the 2024 North Carolina State University Chautauqua Lake management plan was being updated and upgraded. Great, although at the same time, we heard of no plan to adopt or implement it confirming that there is no Chautauqua management plan, as CLPOA has claimed. Like the DEC with its now annulled wetlands regulations, it is clear that the County and its alliance are “building the plane as they’re flying it when it comes to our Lake”. And there remains no Chautauqua Lake manager. Although the GEI consultant’s representative hired by the alliance in 2024, has been titled with that and many other more appropriate titles. Most recently, we’ve heard Chautauqua Lake management consultant – okay I’m sorry, the individual has described himself as an independent third-party advisor to the alliance board which is exactly what he is. He is not the lake manager. There is no Chautauqua Lake manager. And finally, we hope you read the CLPOA’s May 9th, 2026 op-ed in the Jamestown Post Journal titled “County Not Leading on Chautauqua Lake”. If not, we have attached a copy for the record although actually I forgot to attach the copy so I will send that by email. We are disappointed, actually appalled that our County legislators and Executive did not have the courage to represent its constituents against the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation ill-conceived and rushed new wetlands regulations. They took no action as those terribly (*inaudible*) regulations were imposed on all of us. Fortunately, through no effort of the County, those regulations have now been annulled by a State Supreme Court decision. It was left to 2 local nonprofits, us, the CLPOA and the Chautauqua Lake partnership to do the job for them. Together, an estimated \$100,000 in local donated funds were required to do the Counties job and successful lawsuit against the New York State. Hopefully, as our County legislator and Executive have watched from the sidelines, we have gained the self-confidence to use their 300-million-dollar budget including a 35-million-dollar slush fund and large inhouse legal staff to take on the next wetlands regulation challenge which is sure to come and to take formal responsibility for lake management with a district and a plan. If you need help figuring out how to proceed, we’re happy to help. As previously offered to the County Executive, we will provide our consulting on behalf of your constituents for free. Thank you.

Chairman Chagnon: Anyone else wishing to address the second privilege of the floor? You could have done it from your chair, Bob.

Legislator Whitney: I know, I like being back here though. Bob Whitney, 41 Hallock Street, Jamestown, New York. Back in 2011, I sat in this room and I offered a resolution that required 90% local labor on any IDA back job. And in the room at the time was Legislator Borrello, Legislator Wendel, and Legislator Scudder and myself. Everybody else is on their way out or gone but what it said was 90% of any IDA supported job had to come local labor and local labor was included to be Chautauqua County and all the neighboring counties and it went party lines believe it or not, it got voted down. Well, fast forward 15 years and I’m at Wells in Dunkirk, the old Dunkirk Ice Cream and I’m back on an IDA job and every day I pull into the contractor parking lot and I see trucks from Texas, Alabama, Iowa, what’s the other one I wrote down here? Virginia, and I go into the building and believe it or not, even though President

Trump said English is our language, half the people working in that building are speaking Spanish, even though it's breaking the Federal Law. But I'd just like to say that the IDA and the Republican parties understand that job creation starts at the ground breaking ceremony, not at the ribbon cutting. It's something to think about, thank you.

Legislator Larson: I would like to congratulate the Chautauqua Lake Property Owners Association for succeeding and challenging New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Wetlands Regulations that the Chautauqua Lake Property Owners Association concluded we're not validly adopted. As your County Attorney for 8 years, there were times when I had to take issue with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation that what they were proposing the county government had to do on one thing or another was not really wise or within their authority. It's not easy to go up against the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation for practical and legal reasons. But, regardless of how any of the 17 legislators here tonight have felt about the various presentations by the Chautauqua Lake Property Owners Association, and their proposed vision of how the Lake could be better maintained, Lord knows, somethings got to be done better than what we experienced last year which must have been a disastrous year for the lake. Regardless of what answers you like or don't like from the Chautauqua Lake Property Owners Association, it's appropriate to commend them as concerned citizens that they organized and they demonstrated at least at the trial level that their objectives to these regulations were not just based on feelings, but were based on law and procedure, thank you.

PJ Wendel, Lakewood, New York. In the 3 times I've taken my oath of office, it has always been with the intent to represent each and every resident of Chautauqua County. What we heard tonight was disappointing. Disappointing in a fact that we have elected members of this body who like to see Chautauqua County at the bottom of the barrel. They don't want to see success unless it comes from their side of the aisle. Maybe they need to be reminded they represent everyone in their district, not those who voted for them and those on their party line, thank you.

Good evening, my name is Anthony Toda and I got something a little different to talk about than what's been talked about. My names Anthony Toda, I live at 144 Clifton avenue in Jamestown. I am making my comments and opinions based on media reports. On May 14, 2022 10 people were murdered at the Tops Markets store in Buffalo, New York. The alleged shooter, Payton Gendron, is now in US district court, Judge Lawrence J Vilaro presiding, facing possible death penalty execution for these crimes. I'm making it clear that in a murder case, if multiple people commit murder, all must be held accountable. On October 18, 2022, *(inaudible)* the support of Governor Hochul, New York State Attorney General Latisha James concluded in a report that the alleged shooter, Payton Gendron had been radicalized into committing the crime by various internet platforms and media. On November 28, 2022, with the assistance of counsel, Payton Gendron plead guilty to 10 murders in State Court. Thereby leading mitigating circumstances and shared responsibility by the platforms that New York State Attorney General James concluded radicalized Mr. Gendron. Also, the fact that Gendron was hospitalized in June of 2021 for advocating murder and his own suicide was also waived. Who's behind these racist murderous platforms spreading the hatred that Attorney James spoke of? So far, they have not

been held accountable in this case. The FBI has failed to act upon warnings that resulted in previous mass shootings. Working with the NSA, the FBI presently can gather information on any American. Yet, with this capacity, the FBI negligently allowed Mr. Gendron to allegedly make threatening statements and murderous plans for months prior to the shootings. Then immediately after the shootings, the FBI stated they could not track such activity. I am attempting to produce a sculptitory cooperative and substantial evidence to a federal public defender in this case named Sonia Zoglin showing that the FBI and possibly other federal agencies, had intercepted the media that I own and use with their racist intent to generate and project upon myself racial hatred that they possess as they could have done with Mr. Gendron. So far, attorney Zoglin has not interviewed me as a potential witness in this case. And my last question is, Attorneys James conclusions going to be used as a mitigating factor in this serious federal case, thank you.

Chairman Chagnon: Thank you. Anyone else for the second privilege of the floor? Anyone else for the second privilege of the floor? Seeing no one, I will close the second privilege of the floor and I am now looking for a motion from Legislator Pavlock.

MOVED by Legislator Pavlock, SECONDED by Legislator Heiser to adjourn.

Unanimously Carried (7:47 p.m.)

Respectfully submitted and transcribed,
Olivia Lee, Clerk of the Legislature, Kristi Zink, Deputy Clerk of the Legislature