

Chautauqua County Legislature
Live Streamed on YouTube
Wednesday, June 24, 2026 6:30 p.m.
Mayville, N.Y. 14757

Chairman Chagnon called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

Chairman Chagnon: I will call to order the meeting of the Chautauqua County Legislature on June 24, 2026. Would the Clerk please call the roll?

Clerk Lee called the roll and announced a quorum present. *(All 19 legislators present)*

Legislator Pavlock delivered the prayer and Pledge of Allegiance.

MOVED by Legislator Bankoski, SECONDED by Legislator Gustafson and duly carried the minutes were approved. (05/27/26)

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. Seeing no one, I will close the first privilege of the floor.

COMMENDATIONS:

CERTIFICATE AWARDS
To High School
VALEDICTORIANS & SALUTATORIANS
By
Chairman Pierre E. Chagnon
and
County Executive Paul M. Wendel, Jr.

FREWSBURG GIRLS
BASKETBALL STATE CHAMPIONS
By
Dalton Anthony, District 16
and
County Executive Paul M. Wendel, Jr.

PRESENTATION:

**Planning Board's Review of
2027 Capital Projects
By
Doug Bowen**

Clerk Lee: There are no veto messages from County Executive Wendel from the May 27, 2026 Legislature meeting.

**VETO MESSAGES FROM COUNTY EXECUTIVE WENDEL
NO VETOES FROM 05/27/26**

Clerk Lee: There are 8 communications on the agenda, if you would like a copy of any of these items, please let our office know.

COMMUNICATIONS:

1. Letter – NYS Department of State – Acknowledgement of Local Law 2-26
 2. Affidavit of Publication (2) – Legal Notice – Public Hearing re: Agreement between Chautauqua County and Shultz Airshows, LLC for Air Boss Services for the 2027 Chautauqua County Airshow at Chautauqua County Jamestown Airport (Post Journal and Observer)
 3. Affidavit of Publication (2) – Legal Notice – Public Hearing re: Ground and Taxiway Lease with Baron North G58, LLC at Chautauqua County Dunkirk Airport (Post Journal and Observer)
 4. Letter – NYS Department of State – Acknowledgement of Local Law 3-26
 5. Minutes – Conewango Watershed Commission – May 13, 2026 Meeting
 6. Report – NYS Department of Taxation and Finance Office of Real Property Tax Services – Statement of County Equalization 2026
 7. Report – Kitty Lyons, Director of Finance – March 2026 Investment Report
 8. Letter – NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets – Acknowledgement of Resolution 131-26
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LOCAL LAW INTRO. 4-26 (Print 2) – 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

Local Law Intro 4-26 (Print 2) R/C Vote: 19 YES; 0 NO– 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

Local Law Intro 6-26 R/C Vote: 19 YES; 0 NO– UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED

RES. NO. 160-26 R/C Vote: 17 YES; 0 NO; 2 Absent (DeJoy, Merritt) – UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED)(example)

RESOLUTIONS:

160-26 Confirm Appointment – South & Center Chautauqua Lake Sewer District Board, by Public Facilities Committee – UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED

161-26 Appointment to the Chautauqua County Agricultural & Farmland Protection Board, by Planning & Economic Development Committee – UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED

162-26 Confirm Appointment - Chautauqua County Planning Board, by Planning & Economic Development Committee – UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED

163-26 Amend 2026 Budget for Portland-Pomfret-Dunkirk Sewer District, by Public Facilities and Audit & Control Committees – UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED

164-26 Amend 2026 Budget for North Chautauqua County Water District and South & Center Chautauqua Lake Sewer Districts, by Public Facilities and Audit & Control Committees – UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED

165-26 Amend 2026 Budget for County Law Department, by Administrative Services and Audit & Control Committees –ADOPTED with Legislator Johnson voting, “NO”

166-26 Amend Chautauqua County Department of Mental Hygiene and Social Services 2026 Budget for Increased Safety Net Costs, by Human Services and Audit & Control Committees –

MOVED by Legislator Johnson, SECONDED by Legislator Anthony to Refer Resolution 166-26 Back to Committee

Legislator Johnson: Mr. Chairman, in committee I also voted against this, but I would like to propose that we refer it to committee. I have no objection to what is proposed in this resolution. My objection is to what is not here and also on the prior resolution. We are proposing to access a significant amount of money from the General Fund, the taxpayer's General Fund. And what's missing is, before we vote on this and look at it, an all-courts-press effort by all the departments and the whole team up here, and that includes us, to make sure we have uncovered every stone in our countywide budget to offset these things before we dance off and go taking the taxpayers' money from that rainy day fund. So that's why I'd like to refer to committee if I could, please.

Chairman Chagnon: Okay, we have a motion to refer the resolution back to committee. Is there a second to the motion? Legislator Anthony makes a second. Now, for discussion on the motion to refer Resolution 166-26 back to committee. Is there any discussion on the motion? Legislator Penhollow.

Legislator Penhollow: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think you can clarify this for me. This overrun on the emergency funds, Safety Net costs state-mandated. Is that correct?

Chairman Chagnon: Yes

Legislator Penhollow: Thank you.

Chairman Chagnon: Okay. Any others comments on the motion? Legislator Johnson.

Legislator Johnson: And, I'd just like to emphasize that the department in question, social services, Carmelo, did within their department work hard to offset some of these costs. So, it is the total rest of the government that is my reason for the motion.

Chairman Chagnon: Thank you. Any other comments, discussion on the motion to refer back to committee?

Unanimously Carried to Refer Proposed Resolution 166-26 Back to Human Services and Audit & Control Committees

- 167-26 Amend Budget for North Chautauqua County Water District (NCCWD) – Year End 2025**, by Public Facilities and Audit & Control Committees – UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED

- 168-26 Authorize Public Hearing for Execution of Master Hangar License Agreement for General Aviation Aircraft Storage at Chautauqua County Jamestown Airport**, by Public Facilities Committee – UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED

- 169-26 Authorizing Public Hearing Regarding a Potential Application for 2026 Community Development Block Grant Funding through the New York State Office of Community Renewal and the Uses of Said Funding**, by Planning & Economic Development Committee – UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED

- 170-26 Accept FAA and NYSDOT Funds for Security Gate Upgrades – Construction (IIJA Funding/AIG Funding) at Chautauqua County Dunkirk Airport**, by Public Facilities and Audit & Control Committees – ADOPTED with Legislator Scudder voting, “NO”

- 171-26 Amend Capital Project Accounts—Jamestown Community College**, by Administrative Services and Audit & Control Committees – UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED

- 172-26 Amend Petty Cash Fund Amounts in DMV Offices**, by Administrative Services and Audit & Control Committees – UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED

- 173-26 Standard Workday and Reporting Resolution**, by Administrative Services Committee –UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED

- 174-26 Cancellation of Taxes**, by Administrative Services and Audit & Control Committees – –UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED

- 175-26 Cancellation of Taxes – Gas Wells**, by Administrative Services and Audit & Control Committees –UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED

- 176-26 Authorizing 2027 Levy of Participant's Share of Chautauqua County Self Insurance Plan (Workers' Compensation) Costs**, by Administrative Services and Audit & Control Committees –UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED

- 177-26 Changing Place of the Chautauqua County Legislature July 2026 Meeting**, by Administrative Services Committee – UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED

Legislator Nelson: Just personally, I look forward to meeting in Jamestown for a change. And the Jackson Center is a great place to meet.

Chairman Chagnon: Thank you. Any other comments? Legislator Vanstrom.

Legislator Vanstrom: I look forward to taking great pleasure in celebrating the 25th anniversary of the beautiful Jackson Center and all the brains and talent that have gone into building it into such an epic place to hold a variety of public presentations and so on and so forth on different topics that are interesting to all ages. And also it's the 80th anniversary of the Nuremburg Trials. So, I'm proud that that happened in beautiful Chautauqua County. Thank you.

Chairman Chagnon: Thank you. Any other comments, discussion on the resolution? Hearing none, will the clerk please call the role?

RES. NO. 177-26 R/C Vote: 19 YES; 0 NO – UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED

178-26 Authorize Acceptance of 2026 Crimes Against Revenue Program (“CARP”) Funds, by Public Safety and Audit & Control Committees – UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED

179-26 Authorizing Execution of County Infrastructure Grant Program Agreement for the Welch’s Building, by Planning & Economic Development and Audit & Control Committees – UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED

Legislator Larson: Mr. Chairman, just to point out, this is a fairly routine event in New York State. \$800,000 of public money going into a purely private venture. Thank you.

Chairman Chagnon: Thank you.

180-26 Accept Grant Funding from the New York State Education Department for the America 250 CHQ History Expo, by Planning & Economic Development and Audit & Control Committees – UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED

181-26 Reconfirm Chautauqua County Purchasing Policy, by Administrative Services and Audit & Control Committees – UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED

182-26 Investment Policy for the County of Chautauqua, by Audit & Control Committee – UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED

183-26 Financial Management Policy for the County of Chautauqua, by Audit & Control Committee – UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED

184-26 Declaring Job Creation the Number One Economic Development Goal

Legislator Harmon: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to make a motion to move this resolution to committee.

Chairman Chagnon: Okay, we have a motion to refer resolution 184-26 to committee by Legislator Harmon, is there a second to the motion? Legislator Johnson is offering a second to the motion.

MOVED by Legislator Harmon, SECONDED by Legislator Johnson to refer resolution 184-26 to committee

Chairman Chagnon: Now, discussion on the motion to refer the resolution to committee?

Legislator Larson: Mr. Chairman, overlooking that as the sponsor I didn't get recognized first, I at least get a chance to say what's going on there. This resolution is so short and clear that I'm going to read it.

"WHEREAS, Chautauqua County has recently lost 230 jobs at Bush Industries, 100 jobs at Serta Mattress, 350 jobs at Truck Lite, and 79 jobs at Monofrax, all in the Town of Ellicott; and

WHEREAS, the County earlier lost 500 jobs at Carriage House in Fredonia and 200 jobs at Petri Baking in Silver Creek; and

WHEREAS, the County has seen Employment drop by 14,000 (from 64,000 to 50,000) over the past 15 years or so; and

WHEREAS, the loss of employment has resulted in Chautauqua County losing population since the 2010 Census at the highest rate of any of the 8 counties of Western New York, declining from about 135,000 residents to just 124,000 (a loss of 11,000 residents); now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Chautauqua County Legislature declares private sector and not-for-profit sector Job Creation the Number One Economic Goal of County Government and its Chautauqua County Industrial Development Agency; and be it further

RESOLVED, that government grants, Payment in lieu of tax agreements (PILOTS), exemptions from sales taxes and mortgage taxes, low interest loans and taxpayer-funded infrastructure improvements be directed at private investment that will create jobs for our residents." Signed Larson. Either this body will get around to having the clarity of vision to declare that job creation in the private sector and not for a profit sectors our number one economic goal or it won't. I was tipped off that some on the other side are asking well gee, this almost two-page, single space monstrosity that was passed last year, lets just pass that again or ask Larson why we need something new. It had the, the monstrosity last year had nine WHEREAS' either blaming New York for our problems or praising Chautauqua Counties past efforts followed up by one RESOLVED. That RESOLVED was that the CCIDA and the County will continue to make job creation and retention by businesses a top priority, not the top priority, a top priority. With the understanding that the CCIDA, not the County's Department of Planning and Development has the tools and resources and is uniquely qualified to fulfill this objective. Obviously, the resolution passed last year was a zero, was a nothing, a nothing burger some people call these things. This Legislature did not go on record establishing job creation as the top priority. Do I believe that job retentions important? Of course. But, I am an American who believes the American economy is wonderfully flexible and changeable. I'm not blaming anybody in County government. County government could not have retained Cliffstar's headquarters jobs in Dunkirk. Cliffstar sold to a National, International Corporation. You can't

retain the 50,000 employment or so we have in this County. The economy doesn't work that way. We couldn't retain the – its not the Counties fault we couldn't retain nursing home jobs at the Lutheran Home in Jamestown or retain nursing home jobs at Heritages nursing home in Gerry, it's not the Counties fault. The economy comes – well most places, companies come, jobs come, companies go, jobs go. The problem with Chautauqua County at least the last 15 years, we can give a whole list of what's gone, very few of what's come and I don't know how many years, the government – the County Government's going to claim well, Well's has put nearly a half billion in here and Cummins has put nearly a half billion in here, thank God. But, they've been very clear. Cummins made clear that they anticipate 200 jobs from their massive investment and Wells anticipates 270. You add those together, ladies and gentleman, it's less than Fredonia lost with Carriage House. So, I just don't understand what the republican economic development committee is going to do other than take my simple declarative resolution containing only facts and turn it into another 2026 monstrosity that's filled with excuses and misleading information and refusing to have this government go on record as making addition, new employment, new jobs, new companies, our number one economic development priority. Lastly, among the monstrosities of that resolution last year, was very misleading allegations that it's our – it's our basically only our County Industrial Development Agency that has power to do anything to bring about Industrial Development Business Development. Its just not true. A County of Chautauqua always has had, still has today, we have the power to buy land, the County does, for industrial parks, business parks, we have power to buy land for new roads. We have emanant domain which I think don't think we've hardly ever had to use but the County has that power. This County has the power to fund job training for any new business that might come in here or an existing business that says we can expand but we need help with job training. The portrayal of Chautauqua County being such a limited part of economic development and it's on our County IDA is misleading and sets a ridiculous tone for the serious problem we face of 14,000 fewer employed in this County than 15 years ago. A labor force that's 14,000 fewer than 15 years ago. These are not my opinions. These are from the either the Federal Reserve Board or the U.S. Census Bureau. So, I should be happy to have you send it to committee because the newspaper and the radio can talk about this issue in July as well as June. That suits my purposes but, I'd rather this body acknowledge that our people are young people, are young families. The 230 people who lost their job at Bush a month or so ago, a certain percentage of them are going to leave this community and I'll leave you with this, as a Lawyer and a Judge, I don't like reasoning by stories or anecdotes but I'll give you one real one. A very valuable member of our community and someone very active in an organization I've been devoted to for 49 years. Her son in law was given the option by truck lite to either no longer work for truck lite or move to Michigan. He and his wife, a daughter of my friend, they moved to Michigan with their two little children. Guess what, soon after my friend and her husband, they moved to Michigan to be with the grandchildren. The loss of one job at truck lite would cause the Census Bureau to find 6 people left Chautauqua County. And those two little kids are not in a public school in Chautauqua County. Without new jobs, it can't be an effort to retain what we have, that will never hold the numbers up. we have to bring in new to replace the ones that go. We've funded 100,000 of tax payer money to 3 school districts that are running out of kids. While I don't think their running out of kids, because people don't want to have kids anymore in Chautauqua County, I think they're running out of kids because their parents have unfortunately felt they had to leave this place to seek a better future and that all comes down to jobs. Lastly, the

silly argument that anyone wants to make including last years resolution that my goodness, somebody said there were 1,700 openings, was that the right number? I apologize. Over 1,00 vacant positions in this County at any given time. What a silly, silly argument. When 230 people lose their job at Bush Industries and at the same time UPMC is looking for a radiologist, tell me what that vacancy and the radiology department has to do with any of the 230 people that lost their jobs at Bush or 100 at Serta or 79 at Monofrax. There are always open positions, even in the great depression employers had open positions. They might have had 200 people applying for one but there's always open positions. It's a silliest argument and I don't know why this body is a body nonpartisan, you notice in my resolution I cast no blame on anybody. Why this Legislature won't wake up smell the coffee and say hey, I got my hands on the 29-page Economic Development Strategy for the next 5 years. I urge some of you, if not all – and the Clerk will give it to you in hard copy, she's very nice. You won't believe how difficult it is in the 29 pages to even find the word job. I'm not making this stuff up. So, you can – because of whatever – you can send this to committee and the other side, whoever they are, they'll spend a month rewriting this thing into two single spaced pages that say nothing or we only need 3 or 4 tonight to say you know what, gee, what's wrong with saying job creation, private and not for profit, not (*inaudible*) is our #1 economic development priority. If its not the #1, I challenge you to tell me, what is?

Legislator Vanstrom: Just to touch on one important point, as we have an aging society occurring in Chautauqua County, based on the boomer era, I know they were overloading schools years ago and then they were over loading nursing facilities and thank God the trend is going towards taking care of our elders in our own homes with some home health care but, the reimbursement rates from the State are vastly under cost and under rated. That's why these facilities can't afford to find the right staffing and the right professionals to keep them staffed at a reasonably nice level and the Department of Health has been burdened listening to these complaints which are valid for a long time, these aren't invalid complaints. The reimbursements rates are not even close to where they need to be, thank you.

Legislator Johnson: I'll take the challenge. I'm all for sending this back to committee. We all would love to see more good paying jobs in this County. I think that – that sentiment is unanimous but, at least what I'm interested in is well balanced, sustainable, development of which yes, more good paying jobs is an important metric, very important metric, but that's as far as I'll go. I want to see comprehensive, well balanced economic development. Job growth is certainly an important metric, a metric but just that and no more.

Legislator Larson: My colleague, Legislator Fred, prompts me to ask in terms of he wants to see a well-balanced development in the future. That sounds good. Again, if any of you get your hands on this economic development strategy 2026 to 2031, this document claims to be our County strategy for the next 5 years. It was prepared by an outfit I've never heard of, Camoin Associates. I would like to know, Mr. Chairman, at some point before the next month's meetings, how much did our government whatever part of our government pay whoever Camoin Associates is, to do this document, why did our own planning department not do a 5-year plan for our own county? And lastly, the thing that grabbed me before noticing the word jobs is hard to find in here is in their infrastructure for the next 5 years, to show you how useless our County

Legislature often is, a year ago in May, we passed a resolution calling upon the federal government to restore passenger air service to the County Airport in the Town of Ellicott. Would you believe in this 29-page document for our economic plan for the coming 5 years, there's no mention of returning passenger air service to this County? Thank you.

Legislator DeJoy: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to go on record saying that I work on a daily basis hand in hand with County's Industrial Development Agency, Planning and Economic Development Departments and it's a very difficult job to retain and bring in new jobs to Chautauqua County. I actually just had a conversation with Mark Geise yesterday about a facility that we have some concerns of what's going to happen in the future. I think there's nothing wrong with saying that jobs is #1. Every one of those people that have lost jobs, they want our County to focus on bringing in more jobs and the development that we have been working – and I've worked with them and I think their doing a fantastic job personally. I think jobs is paramountly important and yes, we are looking at sustainability and the type of companies and the type of work that is being brought here. I think that personally, I don't think that there's anything wrong with identifying jobs as a top priority for sustainability in Chautauqua County. That is the only metric for sustainability that will help grow our population. So, I'm in favor of this and I don't see any political issues around it and yeah, we're going - if you choose to send it back to committee, I'll be part of that committee that'll look at it and I will be very vocal that jobs are extremely important. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Legislator Harmon: I just want to thank my esteemed colleague over there, Mr. DeJoy, he did mention that this was a top priority. Back on 8/27/25 leg meeting, there was a resolution that was amended and passed that stated that what we do with the IDA is a top priority job - to find jobs. I don't exactly know why this was brought back up again; this was contentious for me. I thought we got through this already but here it is again. This resolution never went through committee and I'm honored to be on the IDA. I know how much work goes into it. What we do and how we do it so I take a little offense by my other colleague saying what we should be doing and what we really should be doing and I know what we're doing so that's all I have to say.

Chairman Chagnon: Legislator Larson, this is your third.

Legislator Larson: I apologize for having something to bring it to the body and discuss. I thought that's what the 6,000 people in Jamestown elected me to do. I respectfully ask if this goes back to committee, would that committee have the nerve to tell the people of Chautauqua County and all these people that've lost their jobs in the last year or two, if job creations not our #1 priority of economic development, will they finally answer the question, what is the #1 priority? A successful organization like the Buffalo Bills lately, thank God. They don't have 25 priorities. I guarantee you; the General Manager and the Coach could tell you what their priority is. They're not going to say oh you know, winning a few games is a priority of ours and so I really look forward if this doesn't pass tonight, I want to know what the other Legislators say is the top priority for economic development. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Legislator Scudder: Yeah, I'm going to vote to send this back to committee tonight. Looking forward to what Mr. Larson has to bring to the committee, that's our general way of

proceeding. We've sent other resolutions back to committee that or not back to committee, to committee that haven't come through here so history tells us on this one that its going to go to committee because that's how we proceed for the most part, unless its an emergency. This is not an emergency but I will definitely look forward to Mr. Larson's presentation at committee and him asking the question "what is the #1 goal?" So, I will be voting this to go back – go to committee with a keen interest on hearing the discussion at committee, thank you.

Legislator Larson: Mr. Chairman, point of personal privilege. I will not be at that committee meeting. There's nothing for me to add that isn't in these 4 or 5 paragraphs and that I didn't lay out thoroughly tonight. I won't be attending a committee that I served on about 6 or 7 times under a Republican Chairman's going back to 86 that I no longer serve on, thank you.

Legislator Lewis: I just wanted to point out the fact that there's a difference between the top priority and a top priority so I would hate to have us go back and be diluted. I think the people that I talk to, are very concerned about jobs for not only themselves but their families and that is one of the top reasons they leave. In fact, I talked to someone just recently to try to have them look elsewhere in the County to keep them here and I think jobs, at least in my area is one of the top priorities. So, I hope it does not go back to committee to be diluted and I don't understand why jobs cannot be the top priority?

Legislator Penhollow: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I've heard a lot of dialogue the last couple years and with respect for Mr. Larson, his pontification is truly amazing but we have not asked anyone of these employers, Bush Industries, Monofrax, Carriage House, why? I would like to know those reasons. I think I have a good idea. I would like to have a list of reasons why these employers have left Chautauqua County. Have they left Chautauqua County and New York State? Or have they left Chautauqua County to go to Cattaraugus County or left Chautauqua County to go to Erie County? In this problem-solving thing that we're at, why we are losing jobs, I would like to hear from those employers 3 reasons, 5 reasons why and start there. Start at the root cause. What is that root cause and their opinions? I'm sure there are various reasons why? I would just like to know those things and I will reach out to Mr. Geise at planning and development, he is the CEO of the IDA and ask if we have responses and I'm sure we do and I would like to know what those responses are from those employers that have left in the last 3 years and most specifically, just recently, Bush Industries, and I feel terrible for these families because affordability is the #1 reason these people are leaving New York State. Jobs and affordability to be able to live here and we look at how our tax structure is broke down. I can only go by where I live in the Town of Stockton and we look how our tax structures the Town of Stockton, 4-6 dollars per thousand, school taxes 12-15 per thousand, Chautauqua County 6-8 per thousand. What are your houses assessed in the Town of Stockton? That's what I'm paying. I look at what my energy rates – where they've gone from 2019, 2020 into COVID. How things have been exasperated from that time to today. But, at the end of the day, I don't mind saying that job creation is the #1 thing, but we're going to beat this thing and beat this thing and beat this thing – I want these employers to come in front of us and just ask the reasons why? They can write it down, the CEO's, the CFO's. What are the challenges facing every employer in Chautauqua County? I think we need to know those things. I think our IDA knows those things and if the IDA has that information, they should provide it to us. I went and visited the person at

Jamestown Advanced, this is what they said, I went to Cummins Engine and this is what they said there's a lot of ramifications globally if it ended these companies. And I would like to know some of those reasons. So, regardless of where this goes, I think we need to know that information. Thank you for your time.

Legislator Anthony: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to point out that you know, unfortunately to echo the remarks of talking about New York State, we've had a Governor in the news that is begging New Yorkers who fled to Florida to come back to New York because her tax base is so low. We have a resolution that we are sending back to committee to possibly ask for 2.8 million dollars of our fund balance to fund a State mandated program that's only 27% or 28% matched by the State of New York. The Federal Government, people in New York State can sit on the welfare program for up to 5 years. After that, the Federal Government pulls out and only funds 1% of it. Which then falls back to New York State being one of the States in the United States that allows people to then live off of the system for the rest of their life which then falls back on Chautauqua County tax payers or any other county tax payer within New York State to pick up that 71-ish percent – we're operating on a 16-million-dollar budget for the safety net. I understand that lives are a very important thing. I discussed this at Audit & Control in depth with Commissioner Hernandez that it leaves us in a tough spot. Unfortunately, when New York State wants to give us the absolute minimum, I struggle to expect the rest of our tax payers to pick up the minimum and I do think that obviously job creation is an important thing, but you can't call it our #1 important thing when we have an entire society of people we are taking care of by the people who are struggling to find a job. Its an issue that goes beyond our control unfortunately, and its an issue we are seeking to try to find resolutions everyday and every year. We've gained savings in that program just in the last year but obviously unfortunately it's still not enough. We're still seeking more out of our fund balance every year and I think it's – it unfortunately does reflect on the poor conditions and expectations that we get from our State leadership from the Governor's office, thank you.

Legislator Nelson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Job creation is foundational to everything we do. To our tax based, providing all of the social services we need – it's got to be our #1 economic development goal. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Legislator DeJoy: Yes, I think you could just go to the Post Journal and find out exactly why Bush Industries left and it wasn't sited that high taxes here in New York, it was basically a market decision that there wasn't a market for their products that they could sell and I think blaming it on the State about welfare or something – I think that's just one of those diversion tactics. What is wrong with saying job creation should our top priority? As Legislator Nelson said, its foundational to economic viability. Without it, everything else is superfluous. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Chagnon: Thank you. Are there any other comments on the motion to refer resolution 184-26 to committee? Hearing none, would the clerk please call the roll on the motion to refer resolution 184-26 to committee?

RES. NO. 184-26 R/C Vote: 12 YES; 7 NO (Bankoski, Buchanan, DeJoy, Larson, Lewis, Nelson, Whitney) – Carried to Refer to Committee

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

Legislator Gustafson: Yes, I'd like to invite everyone down to the Village of Lakewood for the 4th of July festivities. There's the firecracker run given by the YMCA of Lakewood in Jamestown and then from noon until dusk, there's vendors and music for everyone to enjoy and at 10 P.M. there's fireworks. So, come on down to the Village of Lakewood on the 4th of July.

Legislator Lewis: I would also like to announce from the YWCA of Jamestown, they have a summer leadership camp for ages 10-15 called "Empower You" and its 2, 3-week camps and it is free. The parents just have to bring their children to the camp. So, I hope you take advantage of that.

Legislator Bankoski: If you can't make it to Legislator Gustafson's little fireworks display, you can come to Dunkirk to see the largest fireworks display in Chautauqua County. Myself, Mr. Buchanan and Mrs. Lewis will be down at Memorial Park and come on down, we'll have live music in Memorial Park all day. I think we have 3 bands lined up besides vendors in the park and then as soon as dusk – we'll have the fireworks going off at the end of the Pier. So, come on down.

Legislator Scudder: I guess I'm not invited but I'm okay.

Legislator Bankoski: You can come on down, Bob.

Legislator Proctor: I'll just hop on the 4th of July train and say come on down to Mayville for the parade at 10 o'clock on the 4th of July and all of their festivities and anywhere there's festivities around, Findley Lake has festivities and fireworks and just everyone have a happy 4th of July. Celebrate America's 250th.

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: That will bring 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. So, thank you for your patience. Please introduce yourself.

Shelly O'Boyle: I'm Shelly O'Boyle, Project Coordinator for the Clymer Sherman Panama Merger Study. I'm here this evening with Clymer Board President, Ed Mulkearn and also represent Sherman Board President, Teresa Guzman, and Panama Board President, Carrie Muncie. I'm here tonight to say thank you. We would like to thank all of you for providing the three districts with GRI money. We would especially like to thank County Executive PJ Wendel and members of the Planning and Economic Development and the Audit Control Committees for taking the time to hear our request and asking the right questions. The GRI money has been pivotal in providing the funding for the specialized consultant and communication plan for the Clymer, Sherman, and Panama school districts, ensuring fair representation for all three communities and frequent and transparent communications. Consistent and frequent updates have gone out to the residents of all three districts. This has included informational mailings, posters, digital outreach, and community forums. The districts have also been able to conduct a building repurpose study, which will provide important analysis of the portions of the three buildings that would not be used for education, should the merger be successful. Without GRI funding, these districts simply could not have sustained this level of equal representation or comprehensive outreach. The GRI initiative is providing the necessary financial bridge to communicate these complex possibilities to our public. We would also like you to know the merger feasibility study has been completed and has shown that a merger of the three districts is highly feasible. A merger of these three districts has significant potential benefits to student programming and would enhance the financial outlook and stability of the districts while offsetting the school district tax levy and stabilizing and/or lowering the full value tax rates of each district. The full report has been provided to Senior Planner Lauren Sharp. We also would ask that you do to csphub.org to see all of the information. Because this merger is highly feasible, it offers a rare opportunity to expand student programming while protecting our taxpayers. That is why your GRI investment is so critical right now. It provides the exact transparency we promised in our proposal, ensuring our residents can make a truly informed decision going forward. On behalf of the Clymer, Sherman, and Panama districts, thank you for partnering with us to secure a brighter, more sustainable future for our schools. Thank you.

Chairman Chagnon: Thank you. Anyone else wishing to address the second privilege of the floor?

Bonnie Peters: Mr. Chairman, my name is Bonnie Peters. May I please request that we move this microphone

Chairman Chagnon: I'm checking with our IT expert. You can come down front, if you'd like.

Bonnie Peters: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. We will be down front.

Chairman Chagnon: Okay. Just for you, Bonnie.

Bonnie Peters: Please wait until everyone's here. Please wait.

Samantha Stokes: Ready? Good evening. My name is Samantha Stokes. I am a resident of Dunkirk. Oh, my heart is beating really fast. Sorry, guys. I am a paramedic for Chautauqua County, also known as CCMS. I would like to start by thanking our legislators and those who support the changing culture and future of EMS in Chautauqua County. The establishment of a county-run EMS agency sent a message to emergency medical personnel that it's not just a job, it is a profession. Having a union job with a pension was a significant step forward for us. However, even with that step in the right direction, we continue to face serious recruitment and retention challenges. Qualified EMTs and paramedics are already in short supply throughout our region and CCMS is losing providers to other agencies or careers that offer better compensation and work-life balance. Surrounding EMS agencies are offering starting paramedic hourly wage of \$32 or more. Many of those- many of us who work for CCMS have to work two or even three jobs in order to support our families, meaning we are away from them even longer. Each time one of us leaves CCMS for other employment, it creates another gap in an already strained workplace, making it more difficult to provide consistent emergency medical coverage to our fellow residents. EMS is a 24-hour a day, 7-day a week service. Emergency-emergencies do not stop at nights, on weekends, or on holidays, or during our severe Chautauqua weather. As EMS providers, we respond whenever our community calls for help. We are there on people's worst days, providing critical care when minutes matter. We provide advanced life support through the county, performing life-saving procedures, administering critical medications, and transporting seriously ill and injured patients to the specialty care centers they need. To do this work, we complete extensive training and continuous education throughout our careers. While I am speaking today as a paramedic, these concerns extend beyond EMS. Every county department relies on skilled employees who provide service to Chautauqua County residents in some way. Retaining qualified employees requires competitive compensation and a commitment to valuing the people who serve our fellow residents every day. I respectfully ask you to continue supporting the county workforce and reject efforts that would move employee compensation backwards. Investing in county employees is an investment in the service that Chautauqua County residents rely on every single day. Thank you.

Travis Wiese: Good evening. My name is Travis Wiese and I live in Sherman. I have worked for the Chautauqua County Department of Public Facilities. The highway division is responsible for maintaining more than 550 miles of county roads and over 7,000 road signs. In 2002, that work was performed by approximately 261 employees. Today, that number has shrunk to just 112. That means fewer employees are being asked to do more work than ever before. Whether it's paving roads in the summer, responding to storms, maintaining county facilities, operating CARTS, keeping our airport running, or working around the clock during winter weather events. We seem to get a lot of those. County employees continue to show up and get the job done. The challenge we face is not a lack of dedication. The challenge is attracting and retaining qualified employees. When workers leave for higher paying opportunities elsewhere, those positions become harder to fill and the workload falls on the employees who remain behind. At a time when we are already struggling to recruit and retain employees, discussions about reducing compensation sends the wrong message. County employees are already being asked to do more with less. Reducing compensation will not help us attract the skilled workforce

needed to maintain our roads, operate our services, and keep our communities safe. The last negotiated contract was an important step forward, and I appreciate this legislature's support in approving it. But if we want to continue providing the services our residents depend on, we must remain competitive and continue investing in the county workforce. And as a proud Chautauqua County resident, county employee, and CSEA member, I ask that you support the people who maintain our roads, operate our services, and keep this county moving forward every day. The workforce that serves this county should not be the first place to look for cost-saving measures. Thank you.

Bonnie Peters: Yes, Mr. Chairman?

Chairman Chagnon: You're at five minutes now.

Bonnie Peters: So, they have all spoken on their own. I respectfully ask that you allow us five more minutes.

Chairman Chagnon: Okay, five more minutes.

Bonnie Peters: Thank you, sir.

Corey Maxon: Good evening. My name is Corie Maxson and I reside in the Jamestown area. I work at the Department of Mental Hygiene and Social Services and I am currently a child protective B supervisor. As a county employee, I am a proud member of the CSEA and I have worked for this county for 19 years next month. I am one of more than 800 county employees where we all provide critical services to the residents here every day. I am here today because I am concerned about the discussion regarding employee salaries and the idea that they are simply a budget line rather than the people who deliver the services to our residents- that our residents rely on. Across our county government, we are already facing staffing shortages, high turnover, and positions that remain vacant for long periods of time. When employees leave work, the work does not disappear. The remaining employees are expected to take on more responsibilities, larger workloads, and additional-additional stress. In my department, caseworkers regularly carry caseloads above state recommendations while new employees spend months completing required trainings before they can fully take on cases. It is already difficult to recruit and retain qualified employees. Discussions about reducing compensation moves us in the wrong direction. My co-workers and I are the ones who provide services to children, families, seniors, and residents across this county every day. I respectfully ask this legislature to support the workforce that keeps Chautauqua County Running. We are real people. We are your neighbors and fellow residents. We show up every day and deliver essential services. County employees should not be the first place to look for cost-saving measures, nor should we be treated as a budget line to be cut. Thank you.

Don Williams: Hi, my name is Don Williams. I live in Legislator Bankoski's district in the City of Dunkirk and I am an MEO for the county highway. I have the privilege to serve as the president of CSEA unit 6300, representing roughly 900 county employees across county government. I listen closely to discussions regarding county employee salaries at last month's leg

meeting and I am concerned that we are being used as a political football in debates that we did not create. The employees I represent did not create county budget challenges. They did not vote on management salary increases. They did not make the decisions that brought us to this point. Yet, we're being discussed as though they are a problem. Uh, the facts tell a different story. A recent salary comparison conducted by CSA found that many county positions are in our neighboring counties in- are, sorry, are not in line with neighboring counties in pay. Case managers in Chautauqua County start at approximately \$24 per hour compared to more than \$30 per hour in neighboring counties. Health department case managers and CPS case workers also fall short in comparison with surrounding counties. And those are just a few of the titles to use as an example. When we, the actual county employees hear discussions about a possible bipartisan committee to reduce compensation or targeting employee salaries for savings, we are left wondering why the workforce is being brought to your discussions. County employees should not be a political talking point. We are the people delivering services to residents every day. We deserve respect, fair treatment, and a seat at the table when conversations about our futures are taking place. I urge the legislature to focus on solutions rather than scapegoats and to remember that the county workforce is not the problem. We are the ones- we are one of the county's greatest assets. In short, county works because CSEA Unit 6300 works. Thank you.

Chairman Chagnon: Thank you all. Thank you. Thank you everyone. Okay, we still have time available for the second privilege of the floor?

Cindy Hart: Please. I thought I would tell Mr. Larson a little story since he spent so much time talking about his stories tonight. I have lived here now-

Chairman Chagnon: Please introduce yourself.

Cindy Hart: My name is Cindy Hart and I am in Ripley.

Chairman Chagnon: Thank you.

Cindy Hart: And, um, I've been here now for about 10 months. I have a newly minted master's degree. I'm pretty educated and I've had two interviews. So, I think I've spent more time in these chambers listening to you guys talk about whether job creation is *the* most important or it's important. And I don't have a job. So, I've worked, you know, tried to get an interview, interviews with the county, but some of those jobs- four to six weeks before you'll even get a call back if they liked you. So, I just wanted to tell them that. Thanks.

Chairman Chagnon: Thank you. Anyone else wishing to address the second privilege of the floor?

Anthony Toda: I'll stand back a little bit. Anthony Toda and thank you for allowing me to speak. My name is Anthony Toda. My address is 144 Clifton Avenue, Jamestown, NY. I'm making my comments and opinions based on media reports and my own experiences. I am continuing to contact Sonya Zoghlin, the federal public defender in my attempt to present mitigating and evidence of shared responsibility by the FBI and other governmental agencies in

the case of the United States versus Payton Gendron involving the Tops shooting in Buffalo where the accused, Payton Gendron, faces the death penalty. One day after- after the shooting, a former FBI agent stated that the FBI cannot possibly monitor the intentional, repeated, and threatening posts that Mr. Gendron allegedly made prior to the shooting. When asked by a reporter about why those posts weren't found, Governor Hochul stated, "Law enforcement monitors literally millions of posts in search of information like this." This is her quote and this is all part of the inquiry. Shortly after an Attorney James investigation, Mr. Gendron pleaded guilty in state court, waiving any defense of being radicalized by the extremist white supremacist platform or any deliberate intent by FBI agents to allow Mr. Gendron to commit this slaughter after possibly being aware of Mr. Gendron's previous threats. Further, Mr. Gendron, one year prior to the crime made threatening posts in his high school and was hospitalized and released after a mental evaluation. The New York State Red Flag Law was never used and may have prevented a tragedy by removing weapons from Mr. Gendron. The FBI and the State of New York had created- has created a pathway for Mr. Gendron to kill as the FBI had done in the Parkland, Pulse Nightclub, and Fort Lauderdale shootings. Although Attorney James' investigation blamed extremist platforms, I am not aware of any blame for deliberate failure by the FBI to prevent this crime which should be assessed by the FBI. I also tried calling the U.S. Attorney's Buffalo office to hand over any favorable evidence that I possess to the defense under Brady versus Maryland. But the US Attorney stopped taking my calls over 2 years ago after I recorded an assistant US attorney, telling me that FBI agents cannot be prosecuted for committing crimes, giving the FBI carte blanche to criminally destroy my rights under the (*inaudible*). On May 25th, I recorded 3 calls I made to FBI Buffalo. One response from them was whistling. That's what I heard. The second call I made, I hear a rap song saying get out of the way repeatedly. And the last call I made that day, there was a response from the FBI Buffalo that sounded like a noise of someone sawing wood. This is a premier investigatory agency with that kind of response to a citizen of the United States. Thank you for allowing me to speak.

Chairman Chagnon: Thank you. Anyone else for the second privilege of the floor?
Legislator Pavlock.

Legislator Pavlock: Yes, thank you Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to bring it to the attention of the body this month that question was raised last month regarding this topic. During the Audit & Control Committee this last month, as I'm a member of—we discussed some topics that during our discussion area and if members would look back at that—those minutes to review those discussion items, it had to do with employment. Some previous resolutions that we wanted to take a further look into- we do have some suspected resolutions coming forward in the months to come out of those discussions, as well. So, you know, we had a very lengthy meeting, you know the discussion items are at near the end of that. Take a look, a lot of good discussion items and a lot of good talk. So, just a committee report.

Chairman Chagnon: Okay, we have a motion to adjourn. Do we have a second?

MOVED by Legislator Nelson, SECONDED by Legislator Bankoski to adjourn.

Unanimously Carried (8:04 p.m.)

Respectfully submitted and transcribed,
Olivia Lee, Clerk of the Legislature, Amanda Guillory, Senior Stenographer