



Inclusion Through Diversity

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March 22, 2011
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Highlights of the March 22, 2011 Special Meeting of the Tompkins County Legislature

Legislature Endorses State Legislation to Extend Sales Tax Authority

The Legislature, by unanimous vote, approved State legislation pending in the Senate and Assembly that would extend the County's authority to enact an additional one percent sales and use tax for another two years, authority that has existed since December 1992. The current authority, which permits the total local sales and use tax to stand at 8%, expires as of November 30, 2011. Late last year, the Legislature requested members of the county's Legislative delegation to sponsor such enabling legislation. Tonight's action endorsed the legislation that has been proposed. Once approved by the State, the County Legislature would have to vote again to enact the extended 1% tax.

Before the vote, County Administrator Joe Mareane noted that nearly all other counties in the state have requested the added sales tax authority, and that the 1% tax generates more than \$13 million in sales tax revenue for the County and its municipalities. Budget Committee Chair Jim Dennis said there would be serious effects if the 1% tax is not extended. Legislator Frank Proto, who has voted against the tax in the past, since it was first enacted as a temporary measure, voted in favor this time, in light of the County's current fiscal challenges—including for departments and agencies that report to the Health and Human Services Committee, which he chairs.

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

FAA Grant Approved for Airport Equipment

By unanimous vote, the Legislature accepted a \$28,500 grant from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to acquire and refurbish used friction measuring equipment for Ithaca Tompkins Regional Airport, such equipment used to determine safe operating conditions for aircraft during the winter months. The equipment will replace a friction measuring device that no longer works.

The FAA grant will be matched by \$750 State and local shares, the local dollars allocated from the airport's budget.

Contact: Airport Manager Bob Nicholas, 257-0456; Carol Chock, Chair, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee, 273-9007.

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