



Inclusion Through Diversity

Marcia E. Lynch, Public Information Officer
607-274-5555, Office
607-227-2152, Cell
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TWO PAGES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Highlights of the **February 5, 2019** meeting of the Tompkins County Legislature

Legislature Urges Passage of Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act

The Legislature, by unanimous vote, approved a resolution once again urging the United States Congress to approve the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act, bill currently pending in the U.S. House of Representatives. The Legislature endorses a carbon fee and dividend and urges Congress to enact it into law. The Legislature passed a similar resolution two years ago.

The Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act would establish a steadily increasing fee on fossil fuels at the point of their entry into the economy. The act would return all revenues (minus 3% for administration) to each American as a monthly dividend to offset expected higher prices for goods and services. "Such a fee would be straightforward and make effective use of free-market mechanisms to promote the transition to greater conservation and renewable sources of energy," the resolution states.

Contact: Deborah Dawson, Chair, Planning, Energy, and Environmental Quality Committee, 351-8689.

February Proclaimed African American History Month in Tompkins County

The Legislature, by unanimous vote, approved a resolution proclaiming February 2019 as African American History Month in Tompkins County. Advanced by Legislator Henry Granison, the measure notes that "Tompkins County is home to an active, growing, and civically engaged African American community," with "virtually every aspect of our community's life...influenced by African Americans, whether in arts, medicine, government, labor, business, or volunteerism." The resolution states: "[T]ogether with our entire community, we join in celebration and recognition of the African American community," declaring that the Pan-African Flag be flown on the County's flagpoles during African American History Month.

Contact: Legislator Henry Granison, 342-8643.

Finance Director Presents Year-End Sales Tax Report

Finance Director Rick Snyder presented a positive year-end Sales Tax Report. While, receipts for the month of December were down by 7.8% (since they compared to an abnormally high increase for a year earlier), the County's portion of sales tax distributions for the fourth quarter of 2018 was up 1.33% from the prior year—the highest fourth quarter on record. As of year's end, distributions for the County's portion of sales tax revenue totaled nearly \$37.2 million, an increase of more than \$1.9 million year-over-year, or 5.47%. For the year, Director Snyder reported that the County came in at more than \$2.9 million over budget projections (or 108.% of budget)—the highest year for the County.

Director Snyder also provided the Casino Revenue Report for 2018's fourth quarter, showing the County's year-end Casino Gaming receipts at more than \$1.9 million, up 13.2%, and more than \$750,000 above the \$1.2 million budget for 2018.

Contact: Finance Director Rick Snyder, 274-5544.

Among other actions,

The Legislature scheduled a public hearing February 19, 5:30 p.m. on a proposed charter change needed regarding appointment of a Director of Veterans Services. The new Local Law would amend the County

Charter to designate the County Administrator (instead of the Legislature) as appointing authority for the position to make provisions consistent with New York State Executive Law. The hearing will be held at County Legislature Chambers, 121 E. Court Street, Ithaca.

The Legislature approved appointments to the Tompkins County Human Rights Commission. Seated on the Commission were Kathleen Bergin, Gloria Sanchez, Kathy Jett, Ruth Yarrow, Njoku Awa, Kirby Edmonds, Marc Vesce, Larry Roberts, Jessie Mancilla, Amos Malone, Gladys Brangman, Peyi Soyinka-Airewele, Jason Hungerford, Susan Bower, and Josephine Carcich.

Also approved were appointments to the Tompkins County Industrial Development Agency and Tompkins County Development Corporation for 2019: To serve at the pleasure of the Legislature, Rich John (Chair), Martha Robertson (Vice Chair), Leslyn McBean-Clairborne, and Mike Sigler; Laura Lewis to continue as an at-large member in her term expiring at the end of 2019; and Jennifer Tavares (TCAD representative) and John Guttridge (at-large) for new two-year terms expiring at the end of 2020.

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