

# Inter-County Association of Western New York

% Steuben County Legislature, 105 Ninth Street – Unit 6, Watkins Glen, NY 14891

Phone (607) 664-2247

Email: [nsmith@schuylercountyny.gov](mailto:nsmith@schuylercountyny.gov) or [achapman@steubencountyny.gov](mailto:achapman@steubencountyny.gov)

Mark Rondinaro, President – Schuyler  
L. Thomas Sweet, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President – Chemung  
Elizabeth Partee, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President – Seneca  
Nicole Smith, Secretary – Schuyler  
Amanda L. Chapman, Treasurer – Steuben

RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE:  
Brenda Rigby Riehle, Allegany  
Chad Klotzbach, Genesee  
Sarah Purdy, Yates

NOMINATING COMMITTEE:  
John Fitzak, Orleans

*Representing the Counties of Allegany, Cattaraugus, Cayuga, Chautauqua, Chemung, Erie, Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Niagara, Ontario, Orleans, Schuyler, Seneca, Steuben, Tompkins, Wayne, Wyoming, and Yates*

## **\*\* AMENDED AGENDA \*\***

### **HOSTED BY: SCHUYLER COUNTY**

<b>DATE:</b>	<b>FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2026</b>
<b>TIME:</b>	<b>9:30 A.M. - Registration/Continental Breakfast</b>
<b>LOCATION:</b>	Diamond on Seneca 3800 Ball Diamond Road Hector, NY 14841 <a href="http://www.diamondonseneca.com">www.diamondonseneca.com</a> 607-288-2896
<b>DIRECTIONS: :</b>	<a href="https://maps.app.goo.gl/tdfukXof6Gd5nygy7">https://maps.app.goo.gl/tdfukXof6Gd5nygy7</a>
<b>RESERVATIONS:</b>	<b>NO LATER THAN NOON</b> , Friday, FEBRUARY 13, 2026 (\$25.00 covers registration, etc.) <b>PLEASE RSVP: Nicole Smith, Clerk</b> <b>Schuyler County Legislature</b> Contact: <a href="mailto:nsmith@schuylercountyny.gov">nsmith@schuylercountyny.gov</a> or call (607) 535-8100

- I. **CALL TO ORDER** – Mark Rondinaro, Association President
  - Invocation – Philip Barnes (Schuyler)
  - Pledge of Allegiance – Laurence Jaynes (Schuyler)
- II. **ROLL CALL OF COUNTIES**
- III. **WELCOME/INTRODUCTIONS**
  - Carl Blowers; Chair
  - Shawn Rosno; County Administrator
- IV. **COMMENTS BY MEMBERS & DISTINGUISHED GUESTS**
  - Representative Claudia Tenney – 24<sup>th</sup> Congressional District
- V. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – November 2025
- VI. **TREASURER’S REPORT** – January 2026

**VII. NYSAC UPDATE** – *Alexandra Regan*

**VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**IX. NEW BUSINESS**

➤ **2026 Meeting Calendar** – Open meeting dates; May & June.

**X. RESOLUTIONS**

**XI. NEXT MEETING** – April 17, 2026, Yates County

**XII. ADJOURNMENT**

**XIII. PRESENTATION**

➤ **Finger Lakes Gateway (SCOPED)** – Executive Director **Judy McKinney Cherry**

# Inter-County Association of Western New York

% Steuben County Legislature, 3 East Pulteney Square, Bath, New York 14810

Phone (607) 664-2247

Email: [achapman@steubencountyny.gov](mailto:achapman@steubencountyny.gov) or [bscotchmer@steubencountyny.gov](mailto:bscotchmer@steubencountyny.gov)

Carol Ferratella, President – Steuben  
Mark Rondinaro, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President – Schuyler  
L. Thomas Sweet, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President – Chemung  
Amanda L. Chapman, Secretary – Steuben  
Brenda K. Scotchmer, Treasurer – Steuben

RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE:  
Brenda Rigby Riehle, Allegany  
Chad Klotzbach, Genesee  
Sarah Purdy, Yates

NOMINATING COMMITTEE:  
Rochelle Stein, Genesee  
John Fitzak, Orleans  
James W. D. Howell, Schuyler

*Representing the Counties of Allegany, Cattaraugus, Cayuga, Chautauqua, Chemung, Erie, Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Niagara, Ontario, Orleans, Schuyler, Seneca, Steuben, Tompkins, Wayne, Wyoming, and Yates*

## **\*\*MINUTES\*\***

*Friday, November 21, 2025*

*HP Hood*

*25 Hurlbut Street*

*Arkport, NY 14807*

### **I. CALL TO ORDER**

Carol Ferratella, President (Steuben), called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and provided the Invocation. Hilda Lando (Steuben) led the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **II. ROLL CALL OF COUNTIES**

Allegany (3), Cattaraugus (1), Cayuga (0), Chautauqua (0), Chemung (1+1), Erie (0), Genesee (2), Livingston (1), Monroe (0), Niagara (0), Ontario (1), Orleans (0), Schuyler (1+2), Seneca (1), Steuben (3+9), Tompkins (0), Wayne (0), Wyoming (1) and Yates (0). **(14) members and (11) guests were in attendance.**

Others in attendance included the following individuals representing Steuben County: Kelly Fitzpatrick, Chair, Steuben County Legislature; Jack Wheeler, County Manager; Christopher Brewer, Deputy County Manager; Tim Rosell, County Attorney; Rochelle Casselbury, Deputy Clerk of Legislature; Joe Tobia, Legislator; William Thew, Legislator; and Fred Potter, Legislator. Additionally, Assemblyman Joe Sempolinski, Katelyn Ellison, Chief of Staff for Assemblywoman Bailey; Alexandra Regan, NYSAC; Danielle Kenny, Arbor Development; Elizabeth Hunt, Arbor Development; Doug Madison, Arbor Development; and Michael Crouch, Plant Manager, HP Hood; and James Johnson, Executive Director, Steuben County Industrial Development Agency.

### **III. INTRODUCTIONS**

Kelly Fitzpatrick, Chair, Steuben County Legislature, welcomed everyone to HP Hood and stated she is very excited to participate in this meeting. She introduced County Manager, Jack Wheeler. Mr. Wheeler stated what this group does is incredibly important, especially as we are facing difficult times. Thank you for coming.

James Johnson, Executive Director, Steuben County Industrial Development Agency welcomed everyone to Steuben County, and we appreciate everyone making the trip. He thanked Michael Crouch, Plant Manager, HP Hood, for allowing this to take place. This company and community is an example of the approach we take with economic development. We have assisted this company in many ways. They have increased the capacity of the plant line by 600,000 units of milk and that has had a positive impact on our dairy farms. We are thrilled to have you all here today.

Michael Crouch, Plant Manager, HP Hood stated welcome, and it is a pleasure to have you. Our claim to fame is Helluva Dip. We process 500,000 gallons of milk daily, and 90,000 pounds of cottage cheese daily with the capacity to increase production to 100,000 pounds. We have a workforce of 145 and we are open 24 hours, 7 days a week.

### **IV. COMMENTS BY MEMBERS & DISTINGUISHED GUESTS**

Assemblyman Sempolinski welcome everyone to Steuben County and Arkport, NY. He took a moment to recognize Carol Ferratella, who will be retiring from the Steuben County Legislature. He has known Mrs. Ferratella

his entire life and she has done a lot of great work for Steuben County, the Village of Riverside, the Town of Corning and for the Inter-County Association of Western New York.

Assemblyman Sempolinski stated he represents Cattaraugus and Allegany Counties along with the southwest portion of Steuben County along with Assemblywoman Bailey and Assemblyman Palmesano. We all work closely together. He stated they are preparing to go back to session in January, and it will be a very dynamic session. The budget was late this year, and we are expecting a significant budget gap, however, he thinks we should have a budget by April 1<sup>st</sup>.

Assemblyman Sempolinski stated politically, there may be fallout as a result of the NYS mayoral election. The Mayor will have a very aggressive agenda and is looking for an enormous sum of money and that will be particularly difficult in a year of budget gaps. He anticipates the first three months of the year will be very chaotic. The entire Legislature is up for re-election and that is important to organizations such as this to be unified in our voice and we need your help. We are one of the few states where both chambers have two-year terms and the House of Representatives is the same. We will also see the Governor, Lt. Governor and the State Comptroller on the ballot as well.

Assemblyman Sempolinski also answered questions regarding the potential of New Yorkers leaving the State along with implications from the President's One Big Beautiful Bill (OBBB). One of the components of the bill is providing proof of compliance with the work requirements, attending workforce training or volunteering in the community. The disabled are exempt from this requirement. The OBBB goal is not to hurt, but to help. The disabled are the people the Medicaid was originally designed to help. Similar requirements are in place to receive SNAP benefits. He stated if the compliance portion is handled fairly, he does not think the differences we will see will be as extreme as what we are currently seeing.

Chief of Staff for Assemblywoman Bailey, Katelyn Ellison stated she just started in her position in September and is grateful to be here to learn. It is important for us to know what is going on with all the counties. If you have any questions and/or concerns, please contact us.

## **V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

*The minutes of the October 17, 2025 meeting were approved upon the motion of Hilda Lando (Steuben), seconded by Gary Maha (Genesee) and duly carried.*

## **VI. TREASURER'S REPORT**

Mrs. Scotchmer provided the report for October. The Association took in \$800.00 and paid out \$874.86. The ending balance as of October 31, 2025, is \$6,467.22.

*The Treasurer's Report from October 31, 2025, was approved upon the motion of Mark Rondinaro (Schuyler), seconded by Brooke Harris (Allegany) and duly carried.*

Mrs. Lando stated this is Mrs. Scotchmer's last meeting as she will be retiring at the end of the year. She has served the Inter-County Association of Western New York for the last 20 – 22 years and she will be missed. Thank you for your many years of service.

## **VII. NYSAC UPDATE**

Alex Regan (NYSAC) provided updates on activities at the State and Federal level.

- **Federal Government Shutdown**
  - The shutdown has ended after 43 days
  - Fully funded three of twelve federal appropriation bills
    - Agriculture
      - SNAP/WIC
        - Fully funds through September 2026 (\$107 billion)
        - SNAP is functional again
          - Work requirement now in effective since November 1, 2025

- Social Services offices are working hard to try to comply, although there are administrative challenges
      - Similar process happening in Medicaid Program
      - Represents a significant portion of your county budgets
    - Veterans
    - Military
  - Most of these programs will be funded through January 30, 2026
- **Enhanced Affordable Care Act (ACA) Tax Credits**
  - Negotiations are ongoing, but not clear path forward
  - Will affect hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers
- **HEAP Program**
  - Federal delay in the release of funds
  - New York State cannot open applications at this point
  - Emergency option for households facing emergency; have to contact DSS for assistance
  - NYSAC has asked for a statewide moratorium on utility shutoffs
    - School boards and other groups support this
    - 1.5 million households rely on HEAP
    - 1.2 million households are 60 days or more behind on utility bills
    - \$2 billion in arrears to utilities
    - 50,000 utility terminations in the month of September
    - 2,000 people are losing their utilities every single day
- **NYSAC Budget Priorities**
  - NYSAC is asking the State for reimbursement for emergency food assistance that the counties provided during the time that there were no SNAP benefits available
    - Asking for one-time appropriation of \$40 million to be made whole
    - Some counties did provide additional allocations to the food banks
    - The non-profit organizations suffered most of those losses.
  - The Legislative Budget Program has been finalized and NYSAC will send that out to the counties in mid-December
  - The State is dealing with budget gaps, and the increasing costs in Medicaid, education and public assistance
    - NYSAC's message is that the costs of those programs cannot shift to county government
  - We are asking for State support for Departments of Social Services
  - Broader sales tax base
    - Approval of sales tax to streaming services such as Hulu, Netflix and Spotify
      - Consumers are not paying sales tax for those services
    - NYSAC is asking for parity
      - 31 other states have taxes on streaming services
  - Sales Tax Update
    - January – November 2025 counties outside of New York City saw an increase of \$245 million compared to last year, with New York City seeing an increase of 5 percent
    - 36 counties are collecting more revenue from sales tax than they are from the real property levy and this shows how important sales tax is to the counties
  - HELPS Program
    - Provides flexibility outside of Civil Services rules
    - The State received pushback from unions are not extending for the State, however, local governments have not had that pushback and the program is working
    - Civil Service has tentatively agreed to extend, but we do not know for how long
    - We are optimistic that there will be a grace period before they end the program
    - Any changes to Civil Service Law would require an amendment to the State Constitution
  - All Electric Buildings Act
    - Originally passed in 2023 and required all electric heating and cooling systems in new construction

- Does not affect existing homes/buildings if they are under 7 stories
- This act has been delayed due to a legal challenge to the statute
- Procurement
  - Opportunity to talk about potential reforms to make it easier and less expensive to purchase
  - Would allow for piggyback authority for public works projects
    - Asking State to clarify in statute if this is intended for public works projects
    - NYSAC would like to make this authority permanent
  - Increase to outdated bidding thresholds
    - Have not been updated in 16 years
  - Design build authority
    - New York City has this authority
      - NYSAC wants counties outside of New York City to have ability to do
- **NYSAC Advocacy**
  - Will be doing more in-person advocacy this year
  - This will be a big year for the budget and State Legislature
  - Lobbying date for State Association staff is January 26, 2026
  - Lobbying date for NYSAC is February 3, 2026
    - We will discuss NYSAC priorities, etc.
    - Invite you all to come to the Capital to meet with lawmakers
    - It is really important and we want to establish baseline knowledge of where you are, what you do and why you cannot absorb increased costs
    - We would love to have a strong showing from Western New York
- **Legislative Conference**
  - March 16<sup>th</sup> – March 18<sup>th</sup>
  - Close to State Budget deadline

Don Wester (Livingston) asked was during the federal government shutdown, was FEMA ever closed or were they open? Alex Regan (NYSAC) stated there was a time when FEMA was affected. Assemblyman Sempolinski stated during the shutdown they would have been short-staffed.

Hilda Lando (Steuben) asked regarding even year elections, it says that it is a four-year term, but it is really a three-year term. How do we get around that? Alex Regan (NYSAC) stated we have not gotten a clear answer, and she will run it by their team again. In any case the term is three years. Assemblyman Sempolinski stated his understanding is if you are elected, then it is a three-year term. Everyone will be up in 2027 and that will be for a three-year term and after that, everyone will go back on the normal schedule.

Ellen Grant (Wyoming) asked has the Legislature looked at raising the salary cap for hiring State retirees? Assemblyman Sempolinski stated the bipartisan feeling is that we need to do more with that. Alex Regan (NYSAC) stated the State did have an increase from \$35,000 to \$60,000 and then reduced it back to \$50,000. There was union pushback regarding the starting salary. All the municipal associations have put that as one of their top five priorities for 2026. This was also a topic that came up during a recent Civil Service roundtable discussion and everyone said we need this.

## **VIII. NEW BUSINESS**

### **A. Nominating Committee Report – 2026 Slate of Officers**

- **President** – Mark Rondinaro (Schuyler)
- **1<sup>st</sup> Vice President** – Tom Sweet (Chemung)
- **2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President** – Elizabeth Partee (Seneca)

***Motion adopting the 2026 Slate of Officers as presented made by Brenda Scotchmer (Steuben), seconded by Brenda Rigby Riehle (Allegany) and duly carried.***

B. **2026 Calendar** – Please contact the Inter-County Association Secretary to sign up to host in 2026.

**IX. RESOLUTIONS**

<b>RESOLUTION #</b>	<b>PRESENTING COUNTY</b>	<b>RESOLUTION TITLE</b>	<b>ACTION TAKEN</b>
IC-016-25	Cattaraugus	Urging New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) to Develop and Implement a Centralized Data Collection System for Recycling and Solid Waste for Use by Municipalities.	Motion to <b>ADOPT</b> made by Richard Helmich (Cattaraugus) seconded by Tom Sweet (Chemung) and <b>duly carried.</b>

**X. NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on Friday, February 20, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. in Schuyler County.

Carol Ferratella (Steuben), President, stated she would like to thank Brenda Scotchmer for her years serving Inter-County as both Secretary and Treasurer.

***Motion to adjourn made Mark Rondinaro (Schuyler), seconded by Hilda Lando (Steuben) and duly carried.***

***Secretary's Note:*** Following adjournment, Christopher Brewer, Deputy County Manager/Executive Director of the Steuben County Land Bank, along with Danielle Kenny, Doug Madison, and Elizabeth Hunt from Arbor Development provided a presentation on the Steuben County Land Bank. Following the presentation, Michael Crouch, Plant Manager, HP Hood provided a tour of the facility.

Respectfully Submitted by



Amanda L. Chapman, Secretary  
Inter-County Association of Western New York

# Inter-County Association of Western New York

% Steuben County Legislature, 105 Ninth Street – Unit 6, Watkins Glen, New York 14891

Phone (607) 664-2247

Email: [nsmith@schuylercountyny.gov](mailto:nsmith@schuylercountyny.gov) or [achapman@steubencountyny.gov](mailto:achapman@steubencountyny.gov)

Mark Rondinaro, President – Schuyler  
 L. Thomas Sweet, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President – Chemung  
 Elizabeth Partee, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President – Seneca  
 Nicole Smith, Secretary – Schuyler  
 Amanda L. Chapman, Treasurer – Steuben

RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE:  
 Brenda Rigby Riehle, Allegany  
 Chad Klotzbach, Genesee  
 Sarah Purdy, Yates

NOMINATING COMMITTEE:  
 John Fitzak, Orleans

*Representing the Counties of Allegany, Cattaraugus, Cayuga, Chautauqua, Chemung, Erie, Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Niagara, Ontario, Orleans, Schuyler, Seneca, Steuben, Tompkins, Wayne, Wyoming, and Yates*

## TREASURER’S REPORT AS OF JANUARY 30, 2026

	-	+	Net
Treasury Balance ending December 31, 2025 (Includes “Cash Box” Amount of \$35.50)			<b>\$6,225.07</b>
<b>Receipts:</b>			
January 15, 2026 – Opened New Acct from Funds Received from Previous Treasurer, Brenda Scotchmer (Deducted \$35.50 for “Cash Box”)		\$6,189.57	
January 30, 2026 – Dues Received from Monroe, Livingston, Schuyler and Steuben		\$200.00	
<b>Disbursements:</b>			
January 27, 2026 – Ordered Checks for New Acct	\$15.25		
“Cash Box” as of January 30, 2026			\$35.50
Check Book Balance as of January 30, 2026			\$6,374.32
<b>Treasury Balance ending February 30, 2026</b>			<b>\$6,409.82</b>