

Press



Release

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For Immediate Release

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County Legislature Approves 2015 Bi-Partisan Amended Budget

*Approved Budget Restores Sheriff's Patrol Officers, 100% Of Funding To Contract Agencies,
And Keeps Property Taxes Below The Tax Cap*

New City, NY (December 5, 2014) - Late Thursday evening, the Rockland County Legislature passed a revised budget for 2015. The Legislature's budget, which passed by a bipartisan vote of 15 to 2, restored many of the cuts proposed by the County Executive and reduced the proposed property tax increase to 1.90%.

Additional budget highlights include:

- Partial restoration of the Sheriff's Patrol Division
- Restoration of funding to not-for-profit organizations that provide much needed services to county residents
- Elimination of salary increases and new positions proposed in the County Executive's budget
- Reduction of property tax increase to 1.90%, ensuring compliance with the tax cap legislation and eligibility for tax rebates
- Reversing certain proposed layoffs, resulting in an actual savings in 2015
- Committing \$5 million to reduction of Rockland County's remaining deficit

The County Executive will have five (5) business days to approve or veto the amended budget proposal. In the case of a veto, the Legislature will have the opportunity at its next meeting on December 15th, to override by a supermajority vote of two-thirds.

Below are statements from many of the legislators who voted for the amended budget:

Legislator Alden H. Wolfe (D - District 6) Chairman

"On Thursday evening, 11 Democrats and 4 Republicans came together as Rocklanders, making a strong statement about our values as a community. I am so happy that this bi-partisan budget passed and look forward to a successful 2015."

Legislator Michael M. Grant (D - District 2) Chair, Budget & Finance Committee

"The 2015 budget adopted by the Legislature last night is better than the one we were presented with in October. It's better not just for what it does but for what it represents- thoughtful consideration, bi-partisan collaboration and genuine compromise."

Legislator Aron B. Wieder (D - District 13) Majority Leader

"I would like to thank all of my colleagues for voting for the bi-partisan budget last night. This is a budget that is balanced, prudent, fiscally sound and uncompromising in public safety and the general welfare of the good people in Rockland County."

Legislator Toney L. Earl (D - District 8)
Deputy Majority Leader

"I was proud to vote yes on the revised county budget so that we could completely restore the funding to our non-profit organizations and the officers of our Sheriff's Patrol. As a member of the Transport Worker's Union Local 100 for over 35 years, I'm particularly glad to have restored the jobs that were slated to be cut."

Legislator Douglas J. Jobson (R - District 1)
Deputy Minority Leader

"My vote to support a new budget for Rockland is in keeping with the promise I made: A promise to preserve our services, and pass a budget that protects our residents and employees. Our county government has been shrinking for years so that we could reach a point of efficiency and responsibility, and we have reached it. Budgets cannot be about politics; they are about people - the people who work here, and the people who live here. It is easy to hand out a pink slip; incredibly difficult to accept one. Our job as elected officials is to make the decisions that are difficult for us to make, not difficult for others to live with. That's what this budget does, and that is why I proudly support it."

Legislator Harriet D. Cornell (D - District 10)

"This budget fulfills our pledge to stay under the 2% cap while still upholding the values we believe in: The safety of the public, the health of the public, the welfare of the public, and a Rockland that truly cares about easing the challenges facing the young, the old and the infirm in this complicated world."

Legislator Barry S. Kantrowitz (D - District 5)

"Cutting all funding to non-profits and eliminating 37 Sheriff's Deputies was a 'lose-lose' proposition. The proposed budget was more about tax shifting than tax cutting. A good budget is a reflection of what is important. Just as families must decide how best to spend their money, government must allocate its resources intelligently and purposefully to accomplish necessary goals. Paying down debt is certainly important and fiscally sound, but no family would pre-pay its mortgage with money needed to operate the family business and thereby lose the business income needed to survive. No business would pay down more debt than required if it meant that the business would be so short of cash it couldn't pay its employees who did the work to generate the business income. The amendments passed tonight reflect a sensible balanced approach to spending cuts and deficit reduction. I am pleased that it passed with overwhelming bi-partisan support."

Legislator Nancy Low-Hogan (D - District 17)

"The proposed changes to the County Executive's Budget, made by the Legislature's Budget and Finance Committee and passed by the Legislature last night, represent our values and priorities: Fiscal soundness, a balance of fiscal prudence with support for staff and programs, equity, and concern for the weakest among us."

Legislator Patrick J. Moroney (R - District 15)

"This budget reflects a commitment to what's best for our government - not what's best for our political party. Protecting the law enforcement officers who protect us, and providing for the non-profits in our community that provide for us - these must be the values we prioritize and not politicize. Destroying the pillars of our government and community to score political points is not governing or leading, and that is why I supported a bipartisan overhaul of an ill-conceived budget proposal. As a result of this vote, our residents will keep the services they rely on, the security they need, and the financially sound government they deserve."

Legislator Aney Paul (D- District 14)

"Cutting non-profit contract agencies and our Sheriff's Department is not only fiscally irresponsible, but it does not reflect our common values as a community. We have heard from the people of Rockland County and the values they hold dear. We have listened and I am proud that we presented a budget that represents our shared values."

Legislator Ilan S. Schoenberger (D- District 4)

"The Legislature's vote on the budget will be remembered in the history of Rockland County as a commitment to public safety and to the social programs which support the fabric of life that make Rockland County a wonderful place to live. In addition, it will be remembered as a budget that rejected over one million dollars in new patronage positions and raises for favored employees while remaining under the tax cap."

Legislator Philip Soskin (D - District 7)

"I was proud to vote for the amended budget, as it truly reflects the will of so many residents who provided us with meaningful input. This budget preserves our security by keeping the Sheriff's Patrol Division, and demonstrates compassion by restoring total funding to our contract agencies. Best of all, every resident in our county will benefit from a budget that does all that while staying under the two-percent tax cap."

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