

FROM THE CHAIR...

A Monthly Roundup of News from the Chair of the Sullivan County Legislature

BY THE NUMBERS



**BY ROBERT A.
DOHERTY,
CHAIRMAN,
SULLIVAN COUNTY
LEGISLATURE**

As you're reading this, your County Legislature is busy reviewing and discussing the \$236 million 2021 Tentative Sullivan County Budget, as proposed to us by County Manager Josh Potosek.

While slightly increased from the 2020 Adopted Budget, the 2021 version looks to slow down spending and staffing increases as we continue to stare COVID-19 in the face.

But this is about more than coronavirus caution. The majority of your Legislature believes, as you do, that we've got to rein in expenditures, operate facilities and programs more efficiently, and find revenue that doesn't depend on taxpayers. If we don't take a serious, critical and deep focus on these things, you're going to be footing the bill.

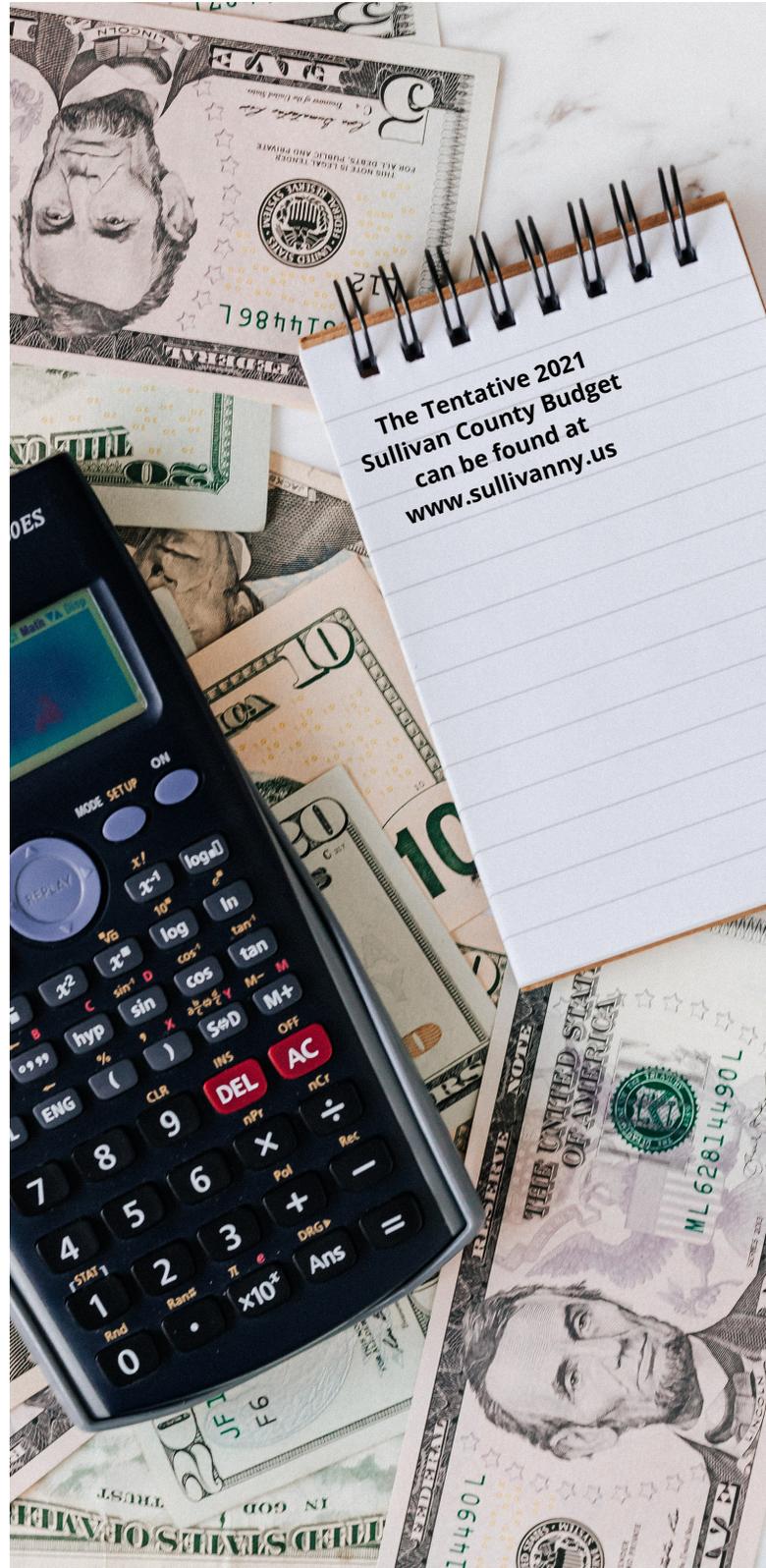
Let's be honest: how long has it been since you've seen your politicians follow through on those promises? Well, this time it isn't just words. I've got a team of colleagues who are as interested as I am in streamlining operations - which can be done, by the way, without harming those we serve: taxpayers. Join us on November 5th (1 p.m.), 12th (1 p.m.) and 19th (11:30 a.m.) as we dive deeply into the 2021 Budget in the Hearing Room of the Government Center in Monticello. This is your money, after all.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

TRASH TALK - 2

PAVEMENT PRIORITIES - 2

MOVING SULLIVAN - 3



TAKING OUT THE TRASH

Sullivan County's Materials Management program is pay-as-you-throw: the more waste dumped, the higher the cost (the "tipping fee" or coupon book payment).

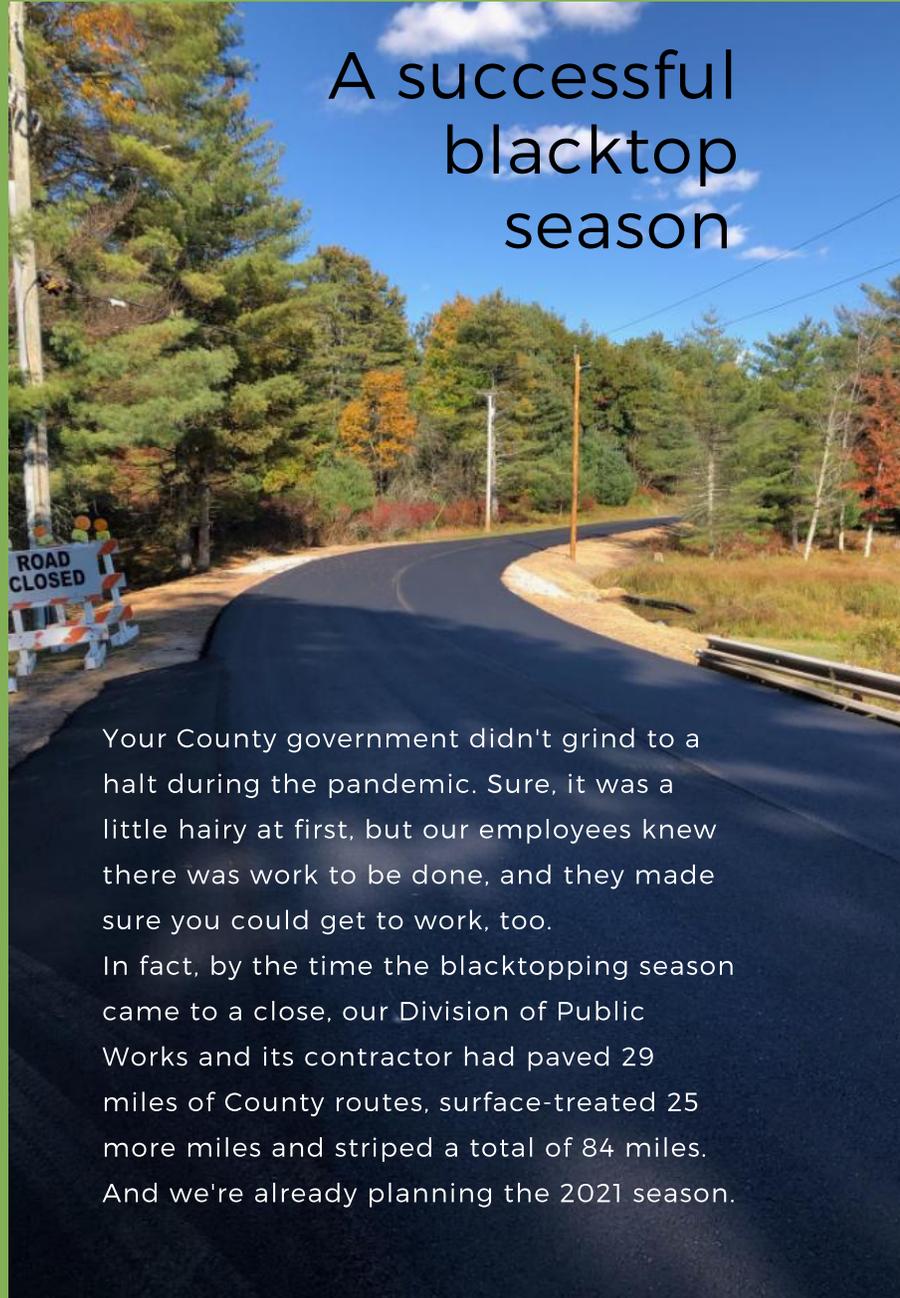
But by recycling, reusing, repairing, and composting, you can drastically cut the amount of money spent to throw away garbage.

Our transfer stations serve as the hubs of our collection. You probably have been to one in Monticello, Ferndale, Eldred, Wurtsboro, Cohecton, or Livingston Manor. What you (or your private hauler) dump there is then trucked over 200 miles away for disposal in a landfill, and the cost paid via the tipping fee reflects these collective services.

But in the case of recyclables, we sell what we collect, meaning that if you come to our transfer stations, you typically don't have to pay to dispose of those recyclables. Thus far in 2020, we've

collected 3,125 tons of recyclables, over 600 tons higher than this time last year. Look to the right to see what else we've collected this year, and for more info, visit sullivanny.us/departments/solidwasterecycling.

A successful blacktop season



Your County government didn't grind to a halt during the pandemic. Sure, it was a little hairy at first, but our employees knew there was work to be done, and they made sure you could get to work, too.

In fact, by the time the blacktopping season came to a close, our Division of Public Works and its contractor had paved 29 miles of County routes, surface-treated 25 more miles and striped a total of 84 miles. And we're already planning the 2021 season.



Cardboard
378 tons



Mixed Paper
125 tons



Scrap Metal
820 tons



Newsprint
42 tons



Used Oil
8,640 gallons



Tires
170 tons



Regular Trash
63,072 tons

On the road again? We never left

This past August, our public bus service Move Sullivan celebrated its first anniversary. No, not with lights and sirens and a parade - we just kept rolling. All through COVID, in fact.



I was born and raised in the Bronx, where my world would have only been about 10 blocks without public transportation. So I know how important it is, especially in a rural area where distances are huge.

My family has had a place here my whole life. I know that opportunities to build a better life in our County are few and far between, so having a service like Move Sullivan is critical.

Think of the young person in one of our local low-income apartments - no car, no rich relatives, no job within walking distance. He/she is only going to make it with gainful employment, and that absolutely requires reliable transportation. Sure, s/he could take a taxi (and there's nothing wrong with that), but can they afford a taxi ride day after day?

At two bucks a trip (five bucks for three trips), there's no cheaper transportation in Sullivan County than Move Sullivan. And that five-day-a-week bus ride could make all the difference in that young apartment-dweller's life. It also can make a difference in the lives of our elderly shoppers, our employee-strapped businesses, and our tourist-hungry destinations. That's why this Legislature has continued a rock-solid commitment to Move Sullivan. It's the path to a better future ... for all of us.

Connecting more of us

As of November 2, we've expanded Move Sullivan to more locations in Monticello and Liberty, plus new stops in Woodridge, Rock Hill and Woodbourne.

And I plan on expanding it further in the years to come, especially on the western side of the County.

But that takes funding, and while we've devoted a lot of our own funds, plus grants, to this worthwhile service, we also recognized it couldn't remain free. So at the same time as the expansion, we've introduced a \$2/trip fare (\$5 for a three-trip booklet). Fare revenue is deposited into our Transportation Department's account, where it's used to sustain and improve services. So while riders have to dig into their pockets, it's money that will come back to them.

Looking for details on the new routes and fares? Visit www.movesullivan.com or call our operator, Rolling V, at 845-434-4102.

Hey, you ... talk to me!

You love or hate something I'm doing - or think I'm doing. You're sure I'm not aware of something important. You want me to focus on a project, a piece of legislation or a particular political stance. Or you just want to say, "Thanks" or "Good job!" I'm open to hearing it all (well, let's skip abusive language), so it's disappointing when I hear or read what someone who's never talked to me thinks I'm saying or doing or contemplating. Ask those who've picked up the phone or penned me an email or caught me in between Legislature meetings. They've replaced fiction with fact, rumor with truth. And it's not always been what they thought they'd hear.

Sorry - I just can't take seriously someone who's never spoken to me and then says I can't be trusted. I'd say the reverse is actually the truth. So next time you're mad, confused, worried, excited, or happy with something County government-related, let me know. I welcome a two-way conversation, no matter what anyone who's never communicated with me tells you.

HOW TO GET IN TOUCH

- **Looking for the Chairman?**
845-807-0435 or
Robert.Doherty@co.sullivan.ny.us
- **General question?** 845-794-3000
- **Need a specific name or number?**
www.sullivanny.us/countydirectory



WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO

While Legislature meetings are viewable online, not everyone has the time or ability. So let me fill you in on our activities in the month of October...

- **We welcomed** seasoned professional Burt Kohn as our licensed nursing home administrator at the Care Center at Sunset Lake.
- **We extended** furloughed employees' health benefits and vacation accruals to December 31, with most of them coming back by 2021.
- **We accepted** the gift of a fire truck from the Rock Hill Fire District to be used at our Emergency Training Facility near White Lake. Thank you!
- **We authorized** the transfer of the long-unused St. Mary's Church in Hurleyville (next door to the County Museum) to the Center for Discovery, which has plans to improve the property along the lines of what they've been doing in the rest of the downtown.
- **We committed** \$20,000 of room tax revenue to the Callicoon Train Depot Project to turn the old station into a destination.