

# Erie County Taxpayer Newsletter



Volume 1, Issue 1

February, 2008

## From County Executive Chris Collins



Thank you for taking the time to read the first issue of the Erie County Taxpayer Newsletter. My administration will publish an e-newsletter each month to better inform you, the taxpayer, about what is happening in your county government. Each month's edition will focus on the previous month to give you an overview of what we have accomplished and what we are currently working toward.

In addition to this e-newsletter, my administration is using the County website to publish information to allow taxpayers an open, transparent view of county business.

You will also find a taxpayer feedback link to send an email to my office. I hope you find this e-newsletter useful and informative

## Six Sigma

Six Sigma is the cornerstone of the Collins' administration as the County Executive looks to increase efficiency and decrease waste throughout Erie County government.

Both the Legislature and Erie County Fiscal Stability Authority approved the first phase of Six Sigma implementation. As a result, Al Hammonds is now on board as our Director of Six Sigma. Before joining the Collins' Administration, Hammonds was a Senior Project Manager at UB's Center for Industrial Effectiveness where he helped numerous local companies successfully implement Six Sigma.

Hammonds has started introducing Six Sigma principles into county government and will be working with select departments to begin an initial rollout. Collins and Hammonds are confident Erie County will realize sizeable savings by the end of 2008.

## Pinching Pennies

- The very first piece of legislation the County Executive submitted to the Legislature reorganized the Executive Office. This reorganization generated an immediate savings of over \$95,000.
- In January the County Executive also cancelled a county auction of surplus furniture and electronic equipment. The majority of this equipment was in excellent condition and will be put to use before county departments make new purchases.
- In the past, the County printed letterhead specific to each department or agency. We are now only printing generic county letterhead that can be personalized for each department using computer templates. This move reduces waste and cuts printing costs dramatically.

Pinching Pennies continued on pg. 2....

### Contact the County Executive

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Buffalo, NY 14202

Phone: (716) 858-8500

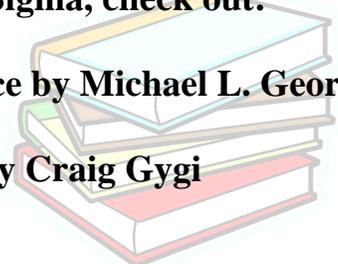
E-mail: [public\\_feedback@erie.gov](mailto:public_feedback@erie.gov)

### To learn more about Six Sigma, check out:

**Lean Six Sigma for Service by Michael L. George**

**Six Sigma for Dummies by Craig Gygi**

[www.isixsigma.com](http://www.isixsigma.com)



## Best & Brightest

Chris Collins promised to hire only the best and the brightest, and he has done just that with his first round of appointments.

Many come to county government from the private sector, while others are outstanding public officials who were retained or promoted from within.

- **Mark Davis—Deputy County Executive** (former Chief Operating Officer of The Talking Phone Book)
- **Beth Kornbrekke – Budget Director** (former Controller at Volland Electric)
- **Holly Sinnott – Commissioner of Economic Development, Environment & Planning** (former President & Chief Executive Office of the World Trade Center Buffalo Niagara)
- **Dr. Anthony Billittier – Commissioner of Health** (Retained)
- **Gerard Sentz – Commissioner of Public Works** (Promoted)
- **James Hornung – Commissioner of Parks, Recreation & Forestry** (Promoted)
- **Gregory Skibitsky – Commissioner of Emergency Services** (Promoted)
- **Vallie Ferraraccio – Director of Purchasing** (Retained)
- **Al Hammonds – Director of Six Sigma** (former Senior Project Manager at UB Center for Industrial Effectiveness & Six Sigma Black Belt)
- **Brenda Ward -Commissioner of Senior Services** (formerly of the NYS Health Department)
- **Patrick Welch - Director of Veterans Services** (former Executive VP of Adaco Services & President of WNY Vietnam Veterans of America)
- **William Lobbins – Director, Division of Equal Employment Opportunity** (former Financial Advisor at S.C. Parker & Co.)
- **Michelle Mazzone – Director of Space Utilization** (former President of American Capital Real Estate Corporation)
- **Susan Volk Sizemore – Executive Director, Commission on the Status of Women** (Instructor & Youth Coach)
- **Emily Kaznica – Executive Director, Office for the Disabled** (Retained)
- **Philip Endress – Commissioner of Mental Health** (Retained)

### Elected Officials Meeting

Successful communication is the key to most everything. In an effort to increase communication across the County, the County Executive has established a monthly standing meeting with all of the elected county-wide branches of government to insure that each segment is coordinating and discussing issues that affect all county taxpayers. This is the first time that such a meeting has ever been established in county government.

### Coming Next Month...

- *County Vaccinates Thousands After Hepatitis A Scare*
- *Collins & Davis establish Brighter Future Fund*
- *Changes to Erie County's Office of Veterans Services*
- *Collins Recruits Taxpayers for Board Appointments*
- *Space Utilization Initiative*

Pinching Pennies continued...

- Collins also implemented a new hiring program designed to maximize the use of Regular Part Time (RPT) employees. RPT employees work between 20 and 39 hours per week and receive half of the regular em-

ployee time off benefit package. By filling county vacancies with RPT employees, Erie County could save nearly \$800,000 per year.

- The County Executive recently reduced the mileage reimbursement rate for Managerial Confi-

dential (MC) employees from 50.5 cents to 30 cents per mile. In addition to the initial savings, this action will also encourage MC employees to use pool vehicles rather than their own cars when traveling on county business.