

Economic action items lead 2008 County Legislature agenda

As I return for my third year serving as chair of the Erie County Legislature in 2008, there are major action items facing county government. While they may cause some concerns, I believe the prudent approach to them will actually present us with opportunities to deliver essential services to county residents while creating and continuing efficiencies of operation.

- These major items include:
- Status and future of the Erie County Medical Center Corporation and impacts on county costs
 - Home rule of sales tax by February
 - State budget impacts and further requirements or relief from mandates.
 - 2008 capital budget
 - Budget Accountability Act implementation
 - Four-year plan revision and Erie County Fiscal Stability Authority efficiency grant proposals
 - Inner Harbor development and economic development areas
 - Six Sigma standards and performance-based budgeting
 - Union contracts and resolution of American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees,

fact finder report

- Sheriff's Department's transportation and housing of prisoners and overtime costs
- Human Services Department reconfigurations
- Framework for Regional Growth and planning board local law
- Parks and benches maintenance and operations
- Help America Vote Act and election systems changes
- Buffalo Bills lease plans
- Erie Community College operational and capital budget
- Library services
- Policy with administration on bed tax, road funds, cultural and tourism
- Fund balance levels and market up-grading for county and tax lien resolution

It should be apparent that many of the vital action items are directly related to financial matters, from economic development to taxes and relief from state mandates. We also have the opportunity to remake the composition of some county departments and

entities and to change, where possible and advantageous, the way Erie County conducts its business.

Several of these items are continued efforts by the County Legislature, including our support of performance-based budgeting, seeking efficiency grants from the control board and working with state leaders to remove the economic shackles of state mandates from Erie County. We recognize that we must never stop working to improve the economic situation of Erie County.



LYNN MARINELLI
Legislature Chairperson

I am proud that the County Legislature approved urgently needed equipment for the Erie County Medical Examiner's Office in the 2008 budget. The cooler and X-Ray equipment the County Legislature approved will improve the office's ability to assist law enforcement in its investigations

and to treat families with relatives who have died with dignity and respect and to allow the families to be able to conduct services for their relatives. Residents are urged to contact their county legislators on these and other issues, and my constituents in the 11th District can contact me at Marinelli@erie.gov.



Heard

call: 632-0390

(Editor's note: Call The Bee at 632-0390 and record a one-minute comment on our Bee Heard line. It gives readers an opportunity to comment quickly and candidly on items of local or regional interest. Callers do not have to identify themselves and no callers' names will be used. In the interest of fairness and good taste, The Bee will not publish derogatory or insulting comments. All comments are by our readers and are subject to editing.)

✓The idea to redesign the atrium at Audubon Library, with volunteer help, is crazy. It's already a very spectacular spot for those who like to sample the collection and enjoy the view. It's my favorite spot. Please don't ruin it.

✓I understand the library trying to give the feel of Barnes and Noble (big chairs and the smell of coffee). Well, I for one hate the smell of coffee; it makes me sick to my stomach. This will not make me feel comfortable sitting next to

someone with a cup of joe, and worse, you are getting my kids hooked on caffeine. I won't go to the large drive-thru to get fat-laden donuts and caffeine. I'm trying to keep the teens off pop, and you offer them coffee instead. That's addictive and that's just wrong. Keep the coffee at a coffee shop, not the library. I want them to study; I don't want them to get wired.

✓I cheer and shout with joy when I see the town snowplow on my street after a snowstorm. I then go out and shovel the sidewalk, driveway and apron. As I am shoveling, I see the same truck number come by again within 20 minutes on the already-plowed street, this

time taking some of the snow mounds between sidewalk and street and putting it on the sidewalk and apron I had just shoveled. Is it necessary to come back a second and third time? Are all the streets in the town plowed? Is a large plow needed on some smaller, residential streets?

✓Hopkins and Klein is not a good place for a Walgreens. Have they considered using the old Vix at Maple and North Forest? That would be a better location.

✓I just drove back from Toledo, Ohio where gasoline was selling for \$2.85 a gallon. It was \$2.95 in Pennsylvania and \$3.25 in New York State. Also, on the return to Buffalo, there were 18-wheeler trucks in front of me, passing me, and behind me all the way, until I hit the New York State Thruway, where 90 percent of them disappeared, having exited. Was this to avoid tolls?

✓Hurray for Barry Weinstein and his laws of order. There is no need for members of the town board or the public to yammer on endlessly. You're on the right track, Barry; keep it up.

✓In reference to Benderson building on the gun club site, I see no need since they have an old Vix plaza sitting empty for years just down the road at Maple and For-

est. I don't think we need any more empty buildings in the Town of Amherst.

✓In last week's paper, Supervisor Mohan was asked if the four Republicans had met prior to determine who should fill the vacant position on the planning board. Dr. Mohan's response was no, they did not meet. Republican Guy Marlette was asked the same question, and his response was yes, they did meet. Who was telling the truth? I think if something illegal was done, it should be looked into. Stay tuned to what seems like a very sad but interesting year.

✓Dr. Mohan should recuse himself from voting on any issues regarding UB.

✓Barry Weinstein is correct on the split public comment. People should be allowed to address items on the agenda before the meeting and those not on the agenda at the end of the board meeting, as other towns do. Valuable time is wasted before the meeting, sometimes by the same people again and again. Do they hunger to be on TV? Other people who want to comment on items on the agenda are forced to wait. Everyone is tired of it, and the overly long meetings should be stopped.

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letters

to the Editor

Supervisor
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which involve the University. The Maple Road project is clearly a conflict of interest. Su-

pervisor Mohan should recuse himself and abstain from voting on this project.

Bill Fleming
The Fairways Group



WBA WINNERS — The Williamsville Business Association recently announced its winners from the Holiday Walk. Amy Alexander, left, won the Holiday Hunt, with prizes from Pizza Plant and an overnight stay at the Hampton Inn. Joan Ess, center, was presented with the \$500 Shopping Spree Villa Bucks. The grand prize winner, Susan Prosser of Snyder, was the recipient of the Village \$500 Shopping Spree.