

## RESOLUTIONS

Each unit of County Government is responsible for preparing Resolution Requests, which are filed with the Law Department and the Budget Office. The Law Department delivers the requests to the Clerk of the Legislature. Upon receipt of the Resolution Requests, a log is created to track each resolution from the time it is written until the final draft is prepared for distribution to the Legislators.

Research is done on each request to determine if the information provided is accurate and current. This research may include an electronic search of past resolutions and indexes of older journals and/or calls to the agency contact for clarification of information, dates, cost figures, etc.

The Clerk and his staff prepare most of the resolutions. The Budget Office prepares Budget Transfers, Personnel Change Requests and Capital Improvement Program resolutions. The Law Department prepares the more complex resolutions. Once the resolutions are prepared, a list of titles is then created to compile the committee meeting agendas, the session agendas and the vote tally sheets. The completed package of resolutions is then reproduced and distributed to Legislators and all appropriate department heads.

The Legislative staff processed a total of **643** resolutions in 2004. The resolutions were written by the following:

|                     |            |
|---------------------|------------|
| • Legislative Staff | 577        |
| • Law Department    | 31         |
| • Budget Office     | 35         |
| <b>Total</b>        | <b>643</b> |

## LEGISLATIVE/COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The above resolutions are prepared for review and action through the committee cycle before they are acted upon by the full Legislature. In 2004, there were:

|                                   |     |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| • Regular Committee Meetings      | 119 |
| • Special Committee Meetings      | 11  |
| • Committee of the Whole Meetings | 1   |
| • Regular Legislative Sessions    | 15  |
| • Special Legislative Sessions    | 4   |

Preparation for the committee cycle and legislative sessions require special attention:

- Resolutions are copied and distributed to all Legislators and other affected units of County Government prior to committee week
- Agendas for each committee are prepared for each committee and distributed with the resolutions
- A clerk is assigned to cover specific committee meetings, taking notes, recording votes, and preparing minutes of the committee meetings.

- Special meetings require special notices to be posted and sent to all the news media at least 48 hours prior to the meeting to comply with the Open Meetings Law
- Following the Legislative session, all adopted resolutions are signed by the Clerk of the Legislature and the County Executive and then distributed to all appropriate units of the County.

## **JOURNAL OF PROCEEDINGS**

The Clerk of the Legislature is required by State statute to prepare and publish an annual Journal of Proceedings. The Journal is published each year for the preceding calendar year. The Journal for the year 2003 has been prepared for publishing in 2004. It contains approximately 800 pages. The information in the Journal includes:

- Minutes of all Legislative sessions
- Excerpts of the County's Operating Budget
- Excerpts of the Operating Budget for Broome Community College
- Excerpts of the Operating Budgets for each Town in the County
- Current Financial Report of the County
- Current County Salary Schedule
- Schedule of County Real Property Taxes

## **LOCAL LAWS**

Local Laws are handled and presented to the Legislature in Resolution form. A public hearing is scheduled before the County Executive following approval by the Legislature. After the County Executive signs the Local Law, it is filed with the County Clerk and the Secretary of State. Upon verification by the Secretary of State, the Local Law becomes effective and it is distributed to the appropriate departments. In 2004:

- |  |    |
|--|----|
| • Local Laws drafted and presented to the Legislature                            | 18 |
| • Local Laws drafted but not processed   | 4  |
| • Local Laws adopted by the Legislature  | 14 |
| • Local Laws passed by the Legislature and scheduled for public hearings in 2004 | 8  |
| • Local Laws filed with the Secretary of State                                   | 9  |

## **FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUESTS**

The Freedom of Information Law (FOIL), effective January 1, 1978, reaffirms an individual's right to know how government operates. It provides the right of access to records reflective of government decisions and policies that affect the lives of every New Yorker. The law also preserves the Committee on Open Government, which was created by enactment of the original Freedom of Information Law in 1974.

(From the booklet **"Your right to know  
New York State's Open Government Laws"**)

The Clerk of the Legislature was designated by Resolution 201 of 1986 as the Records Access Officer for all County agencies with the exception of the County Clerk, the Board of Elections and the Department of Social Services. All FOIL requests are acknowledged by letter and the

request is processed to the appropriate County agency for response. The requester is notified of any charge (25 cents per page) when the agency responds. Once the fee is collected, the requested information is provided to the individual seeking the information. A log of all requests is maintained, including the requester's name, date, agency involved and action taken. During 2004:

- FOIL Requests Processed 428
- Revenue from FOIL Requests \$1,699.00

## CODE OF ETHICS

The Office of the Clerk of the Legislature serves as the support unit for the County's Board of Ethics. All correspondence and distribution of the Financial Disclosure Forms are done by the Clerk. In 2004, 163 forms were distributed to all elected personnel and others who are required to complete the forms as specified in the Broome County Charter and Code.

When the completed forms are returned to the Clerk, the envelopes remain sealed and are stored under lock and key. These forms are available **only** to the Board of Ethics.

## COUNTY GUIDE

The Clerk of the Legislature compiles and publishes annually a Guide to County, City, Town and Village Officials. Each municipality in the County is contacted and asked to review their information for changes and updates. The Real Property Tax Director provides the statistical information for each municipality and the Clerk's staff reviews and updates all other information. This information is then made available on **GOBROOMECOUNTY.COM** under Community.

The first copy of the Guide is free. Pursuant to Resolution 319 of 1996 (Local Law Intro. 10) a \$2 fee was instituted to cover the cost of printing and distribution to non-government requesters. In 2004:

- Copies Published 1,300
- Revenue from Sale of Guide \$94

## DESK DIRECTORIES

The Desk Directories are published annually by the Clerk of the Legislature. The directory contains the names of elected officials, from the County to the Federal Government, which are verified annually for correctness. Included are the names, addresses and telephone numbers for the following:

- All elected County officials
- All County Departments/Divisions
- All Judges and their Clerks
- Law Library Trustees
- Jury Board
- Board of Elections
- United States Senators
- Congressional Representatives

- New York State Senator
- Members of the Assembly

The Desk Directory is co-sponsored by the Electricians Local 325, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers and Plumbers and Pipe fitters, Local 112, of the United Association of Journeyman and Apprentices of the Pipefitting Industry of the United States and Canada.

About 500 copies of the Desk Directory are distributed free to all County and State agencies and to other interested parties.

### **Updating Agricultural Districts**

The Agriculture and Markets Law was amended by the 2003 New York State Legislature to provide farmers with viable farm land parcels within a certified agricultural district to add those parcels to an existing agricultural district annually instead of waiting until the agricultural district is up for its eight-year review.

Pursuant to Law, the Broome County Legislature, by Resolution 496 of 2004, established an annual 30-day period during which owners of farm land can submit proposals to include viable farm land within a certified agricultural district. The 30-day period runs annually from December 1 through December 31.

The first 30-day period was held from December 1, 2004 through December 31, 2004. At the end of this 30-day period, all requests for inclusion were referred to the County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board (AFPB). The Board determines if each request for inclusion in an agricultural district consists of predominately viable agricultural land and would serve the public interest by helping to maintain a viable agricultural industry within the district.

The recommendations of the Farmland Protection Board to include parcels in an agricultural district are made to the County Legislature, who schedules a public hearing. Following the public hearing, the County Legislature adopts or rejects a resolution to include the parcels in an existing agricultural district.

A public hearing by the County Legislature and adoption/rejection of a resolution including the parcels in an agricultural district is scheduled for 2005.