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## **Press Release**

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For Release: Immediately

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### **County Wide Shared Services Initiative**

Belmont NY. The Allegany Shared Services Committee met on June 6 and June 27, 2017, to discuss possible options for the combining of services that could potentially lead to property tax reductions in the 2018 fiscal year. The meetings were held to comply with legislation passed in the recent budget cycle compelling counties to convene a County Wide Shared Services Initiative (CWSSI) panel. The panel is mandated to submit a full plan to the Board of Legislators no later than September 15 outlining proposed cost saving initiatives. The same legislation requires counties to develop and submit a shared services plan with the certified tax savings amount(s) to the Department of Budget by October 1, 2017.

The CWSSI legislation promulgates the *potential* to receive dollar for dollar savings in the year following the proposed tax saving measures. Those savings would be redistributed, as appropriate, to participating towns, villages, and/or county based on the level and type of services being shared. This is a one-time opportunity and is limited to new initiatives. Any shared services arrangements currently in place will not meet the intent of this legislation. There is no recognition for past or current efforts that have resulted in reduced property taxes.

A total of 35 individuals have attended both meetings including elected town, village, and members of the Board of Legislators. Topics for potential shared services included: shared assessors, shared code enforcement, opportunities to participate in shared health care arrangements, combination of local courts, central booking, county-wide tax collection, and shared water services. Certain components discussed will require enabling legislation at the state level to achieve. Others will require a substantial amount of planning/coordination to implement.

In recognition of the very tight timelines and complexity of the task(s), the Allegany CWSSI panel has decided to use the balance of 2017 and available time in 2018 to fully develop a meaningful plan that will enable us to achieve both the maximum amount of tax savings and dollar for dollar matching funds. It is our belief that if we can devote the necessary time and effort to the process over the upcoming 18-month time period, our ability to adequately and appropriately develop measures in compliance with the legislation will be greatly enhanced. It may also provide a window of opportunity should any legislation be passed permitting counties/towns/villages the ability to consolidate certain governmental functions or participate in pooled health care offerings.

Questions or concerns should be directed the Allegany County Administrator's office at 585-268-9217 or via email at [Boydett@alleganyco.com](mailto:Boydett@alleganyco.com).

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