



Town of Salina
OFFICE OF THE TOWN SUPERVISOR

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Mark A. Nicotra
Town Supervisor
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Colleen Gunnip
Deputy Town Supervisor

October 5, 2011

Mrs. Jeannie Ventre
Salina Town Clerk
201 School Road
Liverpool, NY 13088

Dear Mrs. Ventre:

Attached please find the Preliminary Budget for the Town of Salina for the fiscal year 2012.

During these very difficult and challenging financial times, we need to take important steps to ensure that Town government continues to provide the vital services Town residents expect at a price that will not overburden their pocketbooks. The 2012 Preliminary Budget accomplishes these goals.

Despite the tough economic climate that surrounds us all, the proposed 2012 budget increases taxes by only a very nominal amount. The increase will require a homeowner in the Town with a home assessed at \$100,000 to pay an additional 38 cents in taxes per month next year and a homeowner in the Village with a \$100,000 valued home to pay an additional 39 cents per month next year. The Town expenses continue to be, by far, the smallest burden on the taxpayers when you compare them to the County, School District and State level of taxation.

The Budget clearly reflects the fact that the Town is faced with a significant increase in expenses (workers compensation, medical insurance, pension and salaries) and revenue losses that total nearly \$260,000, which we simply have no control over.

Fortunately, keeping a tight reign on spending over the past three years has resulted in the Town accumulating a healthy fund balance. Good planning and fiscal responsibility have once again allowed us to use a portion of the fund balance to offset the Town's contractual obligations and cost increases that are beyond our control. This will allow the Town to have a tax rate with a nominal increase and maintain the vital services our residents expect. Even with the use of a portion of the Town's fund balance to offset these problems, the Town will maintain a fund balance at a level the State Comptroller's Office sets as a goal for all municipalities, well over 10%.

To keep a continued check on spending, I am also continuing a hiring freeze on any new employees, recommending an evaluation of any open positions and I will continue to be the final approval of all purchases in Town Hall.

In June, Governor Cuomo signed into legislation the 2% property tax cap. The Tax Cap Law is effective for local fiscal years beginning in 2012 and affects all local governments. Under this law, the growth in the property tax levy, the total amount to be raised through property taxes charged on the municipality's taxable assessed value of property, will be capped at 2 percent or the rate of inflation, whichever is less. The 2011 tax levies for General Fund, Part Town, Highway, Sewer, Sanitary Refuse, Water Supply and Fire Protection Districts are used in determining the tax cap. The Town of Salina has worked to be considerably under this cap with the help of a favorable new garbage contract and some belt tightening from the Liverpool Fire Protection District.

Finally, I will continue to work with the Town Board and like-minded municipalities to undertake efforts to reinvent government so that efficiency and economy will be the rule and turf battles will be the exception.

Although many hours have been spent with our Comptroller and the Department Heads developing this budget, I look forward to the meetings with our Councilors. As a former Councilman I know that each of the members can bring a fresh view of the issues and potentially bring even more reductions to our spending.

This budget is a work in progress and I stand ready to work with the Town Board with an eye toward reducing the tax burden on the taxpayers of Salina.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark A. Nicotra". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Mark" being the most prominent.

Mark A. Nicotra
Supervisor
Town of Salina