

- 1. Meals, breaks, raffles, and opening remarks will be held in the exhibit room, Oneida/Mohawk.
- 2. The registration table is located outside Oneida/Mohawk.
- 3. **Tuscarora, Onondaga, Cayuga, and Seneca** around the corner from the registration table.
- 4. **Saranac, Canandaigua, and Chautauqua** are located opposite the registration table and above the casino floor. There is a staircase and an elevator available.
- 5. **Briar (Tower Room)** is located near the parking garage and rotunda. It is the furthest away from the registration table outside Oneida/Mohawk. An elevator and escalator are available.

The Day's Agenda

The complete schedule is located in the middle of this program.

7:30 a.m.	Registration		
7:30 a.m.	Breakfast		
8:30 a.m.	Opening Remarks		
9:00 a.m.	Concurrent Session 1		
10:15 a.m.	Break		
10:30 a.m.	Raffle Drawing		
10:45 a.m.	Concurrent Session 2		
Noon	Lunch		
1:15 p.m.	Concurrent Session 3		
2:30 p.m.	Coffee Break		
2:45 p.m.	Raffle Drawing		
3:00 p.m.	Concurrent Session 4		
4:15 p.m.	Conference Concludes Certificates Available		
Remember to complete your survey!			

Tell Us What You Thought of Today's Conference

(We really want to know!)

Your feedback is extremely valuable and important to us! While a paper survey is included, you can alternatively submit it online at www.surveymonkey.com/r/THCLGC2025 or scan the QR code below to fill out an electronic survey. Surveys will be accepted through Friday, April 18, 2025.



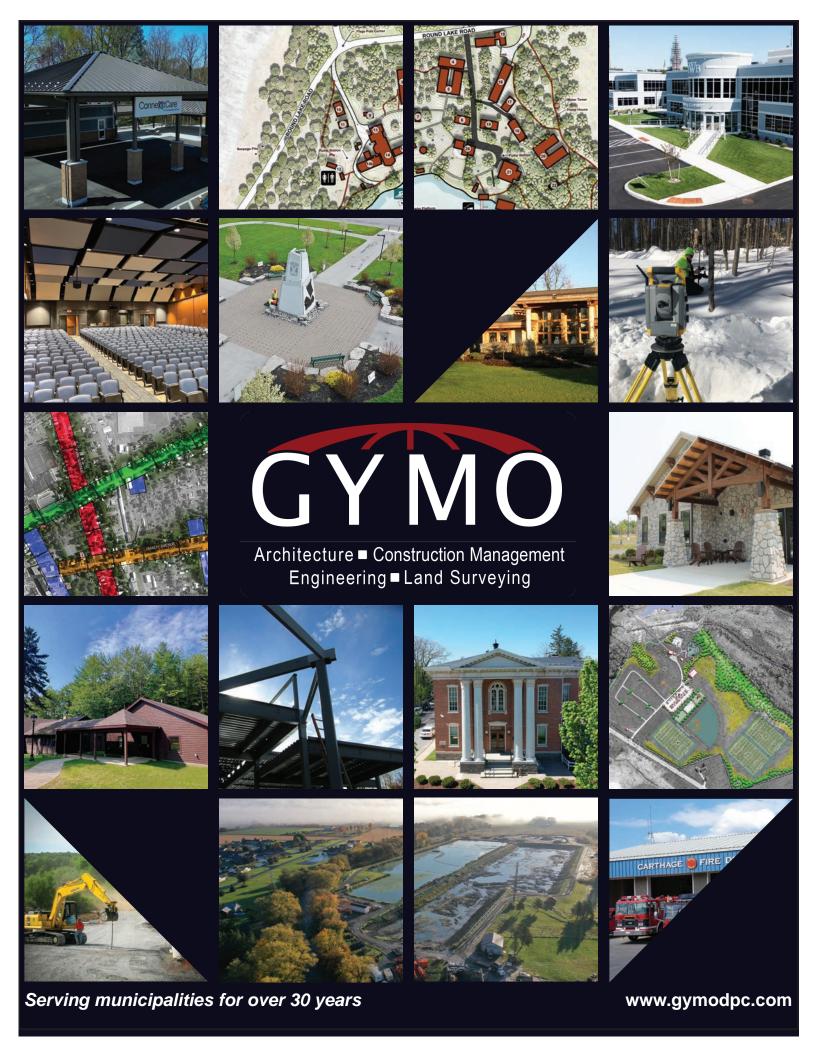




Tug Hill Commission 34th Annual Local Government Conference



March 31, 2025 - April 1, 2025





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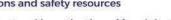
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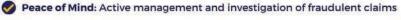
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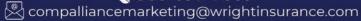
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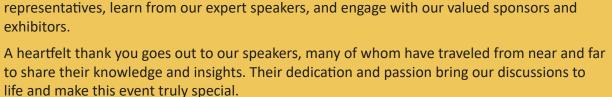
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Welcome to the Conference!

The Tug Hill Commission staff and board are delighted to have you here today! We hope you find the sessions engaging, the conversations enriching, and the entire experience both informative and enjoyable. This is a wonderful opportunity to connect with fellow local government representatives, learn from our expert speakers, and engage with our valued sponsors and exhibitors.





We also extend our sincere gratitude to our generous sponsors and exhibitors. Your support makes this conference possible! A special thank you to GYMO, our Diamond level supporter. At the Gold level, we appreciate BCA Architects and Engineers, Comp Alliance, C&S Companies, National Grid, Northern Oneida County Council of Governments, and Williamson Law Book. At the Silver level, we thank Adirondack Bank, C2AE, LaBella, MRB Group, NYCLASS, NATIONAL Business Technologies, and Statewide Aquastore. Finally, at the Bronze level, we are grateful for the Development Authority of the North Country, North Shore Council of Governments, Salmon Rivers Council of Governments, and River Area Council of Governments.

Our team is here to ensure you have a fantastic and productive day. If you have any questions or need assistance, please don't hesitate to reach out to me or any of our staff members.

Thank you for being here—we hope you have a wonderful conference! Katie Malinowski, Executive Director

Please note: Unauthorized audio or video streaming or recording of conference sessions is strictly prohibited and may result in removal from the venue and potential legal consequences.

Thank you for your understanding.

Assessor's Training

Architectural Features that Influence Property Values with Rob Bick - 9:00 am - 12:00 pm

Bria

As an Assessor, Appraiser or a Data Collector, one of our main responsibilities is reviewing building permits to determine if and when a property must be reviewed and appraised based on the addition or subtraction of a specific feature or features, otherwise defined as "improvements." This 3 hour course will provide insight into various types of improvements and if a value adjustment is necessary based on the addition or subtraction of the improvement. It will address all the standard improvements we see daily, which include decks, pools, sheds, pole barns, garages, sunrooms, solar panels, miscellaneous additions and renovations and other improvements that require value adjustments. The course will also touch on the controversial improvements that may or may not improve market value.

Rob Bick, AIA, CSI, SCA, Assessor, Town of Clay, rbick@townofclay.org, www.townofclay.org

History of the Property Tax with Rob Bick - 1:00 pm - 2:45 pm

Briar

Most schools, counties, cities, towns and villages rely on the property tax, also known as the "millage rate", to raise revenue to fund services. It is easily one of the most maligned taxes in the minds of most property owners, and for good reason. It is defined as a "regressive tax", a tax that does not take into account the ability to pay. A "progressive tax" on the other hand is a tax that is perceived to be based on the ability to pay. An example would be the sales tax. As an Assessor or office staff member, we are not responsible for actual budgets and tax rates, but it regularly falls on our offices to explain the taxation process. This course will explain the history of the property tax process, give Assessors and staff an understanding of the evolution of the process from ancient times to modern day practices, as well as providing a "progressive" tax option that does not penalize property ownership.

Equalization Rates (Session 4A) with Warren Wheeler - 3:00 pm - 4:15 pm

Onondaga

What are equalization rates and why do we need them? This session will provide a deeper look into the use and understanding of the equalization rate and its effects on local taxpayers. After the seminar, attendees will have a better understanding of the process and reasons equalization rates can change so dramatically year over year.

Warren Wheeler, Executive Director, NYS Assessors Association, wjwheeler@nyassessor.org, www.nyassessor.org

Concurrent Session 1

9:00 a.m. - 10:15 a.m.

1A) Crime and Fidelity: Protecting Your Municipal Financial Assets

Chautaugu

Protecting your municipal financial assets is harder today than ever before. Fraud committed by officials and employees is on the rise. In addition, cyber criminals are expanding their use of social engineering and phishing to trick employees into making fraudulent transfers. The growth of fraud by criminals, both internal and external, has led the insurance industry to make changes to the crime and fidelity policies procured by local governments. We will review these changes including new and enhanced coverages that are available and discuss the various restrictions and sub limits to avoid. We will also discuss the red flags and warnings, along with internal policies that can prevent these types of losses.

Susan O'Rorke, President, NYMIR Division of Wright Public Entity, New York Municipal Insurance Reciprocol, sororke@wrightinsurance.com, www.nymir.org

1B) Providing Fire Protection in Your Community

Canandaigua/Saranac

New York's system for providing fire protection is complex, and many towns and villages are working hard to maintain fire protection for their citizens balanced with fiscal responsibility. Learn more about the challenges and solutions in this session.

Dan Acquilano, Manager of Local Official Training, Office of the NYS Comptroller, dacquilano@osc.ny.gov, www.osc.state.ny.us/local-government/academy, and **Katie Hodgdon,** Association Counsel, Association of Towns, khodgdon@nytowns.org, www.nytowns.org

1C) Planning Board Overview

Seneca

This basic course addresses the powers and duties of town, village, and city planning boards and commissions. The administrative and regulatory roles of the planning board, including its review of site plans, special use permits, and subdivision plats are discussed, along with the planning board's role in the municipal comprehensive plan. The importance of board procedures, referral to the county planning agency, and making findings are also covered.

Paula Gilbert, Local Government Training Manager, Paula.Gilbert@dos.ny.gov, and **Christopher Eastman**, Local Government Specialist, Christopher.Eastman@dos.ny.gov, NYS Department of State, www.dos.ny.gov/services-and-support

1D) Proper Use of Alternate Members of Planning Boards and Zoning Boards of Appeal

Cayuga

This session will discuss how all existing provisions of law relating to training, continuing education, attendance, conflict of interest, compensation, eligibility, vacancy in office, compatibility of office and service on other boards, also apply to alternate members in the same manner as they apply to regular board members.

Mark Schachner, Esq., Miller, Mannix, Schachner & Hafner, LLC, mschachner@mmshlaw.com, www.millermannix.com

1E) Freshwater Wetland Regulations Changes: An Overview of the Changes to Part 664: Freshwater Wetlands Mapping & Classification

Tuscarora

This presentation will outline the updates to NYS DEC's Freshwater Wetlands Program, why the updates were needed, what the updates are, and how they are being implemented.

Krista Spohr, Environmental Program Specialist, krista.spohr@dec.ny.gov, and **Steve Case**, Regional Ecologist, steve.case@dec.ny.gov, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, www.dec.ny.gov/nature/waterbodies/wetlands

1F) Basics of Electronic Records Management

Onondaga

This session will introduce the basic principles of electronic records management. One of the biggest challenges facing records managers is the complexity of issues surrounding the management of electronic records. The goal should be to determine the most efficient way to manage electronic records so that access for their entire retention period is ensured.

Michael Martin, Records Advisory Officer, New York State Archives, Michael.Martin@nysed.gov, www.archives.nysed.gov

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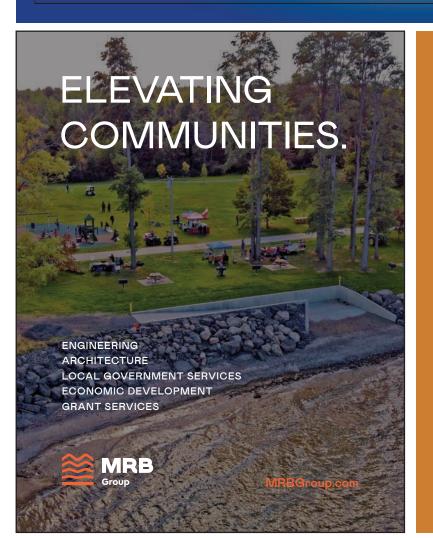
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Concurrent Session 2

10:45 a.m. - 12:00 p.m

2A) The Code: What Every Local Official Should Know About the Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code

Seneca

In 1984, the New York State Legislature enacted and initiated enforcement of a State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code for the health, safety, and welfare of its citizens. This course provides an overview of the law, its historical background, and how it has evolved to include modern-day ideals of safety and energy conservation.

Paula Gilbert, Local Government Training Manager, Paula.Gilbert@dos.ny.gov, and Christopher Eastman, Local Government Specialist, Christopher.Eastman@dos.ny.gov, NYS Department of State, www.dos.ny.gov/services-and-support

2B) Large Scale Renewable Energy Permitting and Local Governments

Onondaga

This presentation will be an introduction to the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act, the Office of Renewable Energy Siting and Electric Transmission, and the Article VIII Wind, Solar, and Transmission Regulatory Review Process.

Charles Voss, AICP, Project Manager, Siting Specialist 4, Department of Public Service, charles.voss@dps.ny.gov, www.dps.ny.gov, www.ores.ny.gov

2C) Land Use and SEQR Case Law Update

Tuscarora

This session will provide attendees with an overview of changes in the laws relating to land use and zoning in New York State. The latest cases from New York courts have been reviewed and the speaker will discuss new trends in municipal land use and zoning issues. The session will also include discussion about the latest decisions relating to the State Environmental Quality Review Act.

Matthew Fitzgerald, Associate, Phillips Lytle LLP, MFitzgerald@phillipslytle.com, www.phillipslytle.com

2D) Public Participation – The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly

Cayuga

Public participation is a cornerstone of the planning and zoning process and a vital component of sound decision-making, but unstructured participation can actually impede the process. This session will discuss participation issues that arise in public hearing management, Open Meetings Law and Freedom of Information Law compliance with an eye (and ear) toward best planning and zoning decision-making practices.

Mark Schachner, Esq., Miller, Mannix, Schachner & Hafner, LLC, mschachner@mmshlaw.com, www.millermannix.com

2E) Powering the Fleet – Alternatives to Gas and Diesel

Chautauqua

Change is coming to how we power our fleets. In this session, the speakers will discuss the alternatives to gas and diesel and provide ideas to help you manage your fleet into the future. They will also give an update on the ACT regulation with regards to public fleets.

David Orr, NYS LTAP Center, Director/Senior Engineer, Cornell Local Roads Program, david.orr@cornell.edu, www.nysltap.org, and Scott Wajda-Griffin, Chief, Heavy-Duty Vehicle Programs Section, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, scott.griffin@dec.ny.gov,

www.dec.ny.gov/environmental-protection/air-quality/controlling-motor-vehicle-pollution/heavy-duty-vehicles

2F) Hot Topics for Clerks

Canandaigua/Saranac

This interactive session will discuss some of the more pressing questions that have arisen in clerk offices throughout the state over the past year, including, but not limited to, how to address the new credit card surcharge posting requirements, videoconferencing board meetings, the new early voting requirements for special town elections, deputies, and any legislation impacting clerks coming out of the state budget.

Katie Hodgdon, Association Counsel, khodgdon@nytowns.org, and Lori Mithen-Demasi, Chief Counsel, Imithen-demasi@nytowns.org, Association of Towns, www.nytowns.org

This program was printed by Coughlin Printing Group.





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Concurrent Session 4

3:00 p.m. - 4:15 p.m.

4A) Equalization Rates: What Are They and Why Do We Need Them Anyway?

Onondaga

This session will provide a deeper look into the use and understanding of the equalization rate and its effects on local taxpayers. After the seminar, attendees will have a better understanding of the process and reasons equalization rates can change so dramatically year over year.

Warren Wheeler, Executive Director, NYS Assessors Association, wjwheeler@nyassessor.org, www.nyassessor.org

4B) Preparing for Grant Opportunities

Canandaigua/Saranac

During this insightful session on navigating municipal grants, you will learn about state and federal funding opportunities, how to create a strategic grant plan, effectively administer awarded grants, and strategies for moving forward if your application isn't successful. Gain practical tools and expert advice to enhance your grant-seeking efforts and secure funding for your community including the use of median household and low/moderate income surveys.

Jay Grasso, President, G&G Consulting and Municipal Grant Writing, Contact@ggprocess.com, www.ggprocess.com

4C) Regulating Short-Term Rentals

Seneca

Short-term rentals continue to present challenges to communities with the powers to regulate them. And there is wide disagreement of how best to regulate them or whether to permit them at all. This presentation will discuss recent developments in the law, issues communities continue to face, examples of effective regulation, and a review of recent case law.

Charles Malcomb, Partner, CMalcomb@hodgsonruss.com, and **Henry Zomerfeld**, Partner, HZomerfe@hodgsonruss.com, Hodgson Russ LLP, www.hodgsonruss.com

4D) Questions and Answers for Planning Boards and Zoning Boards of Appeals

Tuscarora

This is your chance to ask the expert your burning legal questions. This session is an open-floor format for questions on planning and zoning issues.

Matthew Fitzgerald, Associate, Phillips Lytle LLP, MFitzgerald@phillipslytle.com, www.phillipslytle.com

4E) Abandoned Cemeteries and Municipal Responsibilities

Chautauqua

This session will explore options available to towns in preventing cemetery abandonment, the issues towns face regarding abandoned cemeteries, and information on other burial and zoning considerations.

David Fleming, Jr., Chief Operating Officer, Featherstonhaugh, Clyne & McCardle, LLP, dff@fcmlaw.org, www.fcmlaw.org/site/

4F) Write This Down: The Basics of Conducting Meetings and Taking Minutes

Cayug

Meetings are an integral part of local government. Well-run meetings can save time, minimize conflict, maximize efficiency, and instill confidence in the public that the local government officials are competently representing the community. Poorly run meetings, on the other hand, can create unending problems for local officials and erode the resident's faith in their government institutions. This interactive session will highlight the dos and don'ts of conducting meetings and taking minutes. The basics of the Open Meetings Law will be covered, and the importance of having written meeting procedures and what should be in them will be highlighted. In addition, the session will include a discussion of the many ways of drafting minutes, and the pros and cons of each.

Wade Beltramo, General Counsel, New York Conference of Mayors, wade@nycom.org, www.nycom.org, and Kristy O'Shaughnessy, President, NYS Society of Municipal Finance Officers, koshaughnessy@jeffersoncountyny.gov, www.nysmfo.com

The Tug Hill Commission extends a special "thank you" to the conference's diamond sponsor: GYMO Architecture Engineering & Land Surveying.



Concurrent Session 3

1:15 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.

3A) Fiscal Responsibilities of Governing Boards

A governing board's oversight role is required in almost every aspect of a local government's operations. This presentation will provide guidance for performing key fiscal oversight responsibilities such as developing policies, including those mandated by law as well as those necessary to strengthen controls over specific activities, monitoring fiscal operations such as budgeting and financial reporting, and conducting audits, including guidelines for claims auditing and annual auditing requirements.

Laird Petrie, Municipal Consultant, Ipetrieconsulting@gmail.com, and Kristy O'Shaughnessy, koshaughnessy@jeffersoncountyny.gov, and Taylor Scheer, EvansMillsClerk@outlook.com, NYS Society of Municipal Finance Officers, www.nysmfo.com

3B) Lessons Learned From Solar Battery Storage Fire and Considerations for Development

Seneca

This session will cover incident response, recovery, and lessons learned from the solar battery storage fire in Chaumont, New York during the summer of 2023. There will also be discussion about and considerations for communities exploring "battery storage solar fields" in their neighborhoods.

Niel Rivenburgh, Deputy Director, Jefferson County Fire and Emergency Management, nrivenburgh@jeffersoncountyny.gov, www.jeffersoncountyny.gov/departments/EmergencyManagement, and Will Lipczynski, Chief, Chaumont Volunteer Fire Department, williamlipczynski@yahoo.com

3C) Navigating the Haze: Regulating Cannabis in Your Town

Onondaga

This session will provide attendees with an overview of regulatory options local governments have (and don't have) related to marijuana, including adopting time, place and manner restrictions, and an update on current status of regulations.

Katie Hodgdon, Association Counsel, khodgdon@nytowns.org, and Lori Mithen-Demasi, Chief Counsel, Imithen-demasi@nytowns.org, Association of Towns, www.nytowns.org

3D) General Municipal Law 239 and County Referrals

Tuscarora

This session will cover the referral of land use actions for county review under NYS General Municipal Law 239. The speaker will review qualifying actions, evaluation criteria, possible outcomes, the benefits of referral to the county, and helpful tips.

Kristin Campbell, Chief Planner, Herkimer Oneida Counties Comprehensive Planning Program, kcampbell@ocgov.net, www.ocgov.net/departments/planning/

3E) Speed Limit Reduction – How to Establish Safe Speeds in Your Community Canandaigua/Saranac

This course will review federal, state, and local guidance and best practices as they relate to establishing a 25-mph area wide speed limit. We will cover the requirements set forth in the Vehicle and Traffic Law and Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) and NYS Supplement for conducting a speed limit study, including identifying data needs and methods of analysis. In addition to the speed limit study, we will review steps to implementation including signing requirements. Lastly, we will touch on additional engineering methods to calm traffic that may be implemented in conjunction with a speed limit reduction to achieve safe speeds and promote local roadways that are safe for all users.

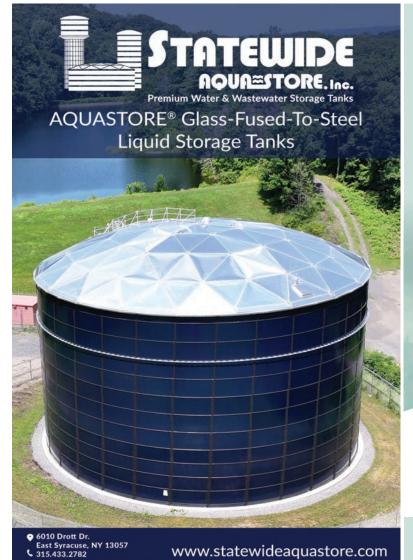
Jesse Vogl, AICP, Principal Transportation Planner, LaBella Associates, jvogl@LaBellaPC.com, www.labellapc.com

3F) Employee Well-Being in the Public Sector

Chautauqua

Mental health and well-being have become an increasingly important area of focus for public employers. Your work culture matters, and at every opportunity, positive work environments should be created where employees feel safe to seek help. Our training will include identifying and mitigating mental health hazards and PTSD in the workplace to improve workplace safety and employee morale.

Michael Kenneally, Executive Director, Comp Alliance, mkenneally@nycompalliance.org, www.compalliance.com, and Robert Blaisdell, Director of Loss Control, Comp Alliance, rblaisdell@wrightinsurance.com, www.compalliance.com



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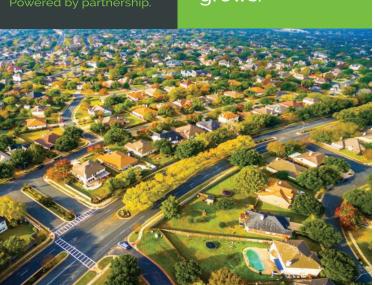




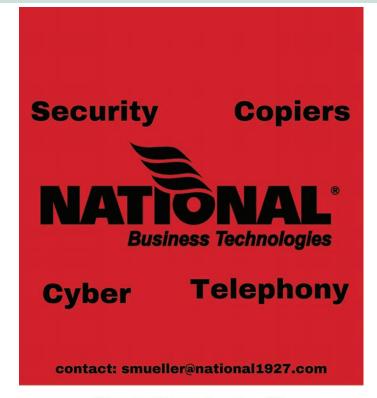




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	Conference Schedule At-A-Glance						
7:30 a.m 9:00 a.m.	BREAKFAST WITH EXHIBITORS in Oneida/Mohawk						
8:30 a.m 8:45 a.m.	OPENING REMARKS in Oneida/Mohawk						
9:00 a.m 10:15 a.m.	CONCURRENT SESSION 1 9:00 a.m 10:15 a.m						
(1A) Crime and Fidelity: Protecting Your Municipal Financial Assets	(1B) Providing Fire Protection in Your Community	(1C) Planning Board Overview	(1D) Proper Use of Alternate Members of Planning Boards and Zoning Boards of Appeals	(1E) Freshwater Wetlands Regulations Changes: An Overview	(1F) Basics of Electronic Records Management		
Susan O'Rorke, New York Municipal Insurance Reciprocal	Dan Acquilano, Office of the NYS Comptroller, and Katie Hodgdon, Association of Towns	Christopher Eastman and Paula Gilbert, NYS Department of State	Mark Schachner, Miller, Mannix, Schachner & Hafner, LLC	Krista Spohr and Steve Case, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation	Michael Martin, NYS Archives		
Chautauqua	Canandaigua/Saranac	Seneca	Cayuga	Tuscarora	Onondaga		
10:15 a.m 10:45 a.m.	BREAK in Oneida/Mohawk	C Comments	10:30 a.m. RAFFLE l	DRAWING in Oneida/Mohav	vk (must be present to win)		
10:45 a.m 12:00 p.m. CONCURRENT SESSION 2 10:45 a.m 12:00 p.m.							
(2A) The Code: What Every Local Official Should Know About the Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code	(2B) Large Scale Renewable Energy Permitting and Local Governments	(2C) Land Use and SEQR Case Law Update	(2D) Public Participation: The Good the Bad and the Ugly	(2E) Powering the Fleet Forward - Alternatives to Gas and Diesel	(2F) Hot Topics for Clerks		
Christopher Eastman and Paula Gilbert, NYS Department of State	Charles A. Voss, NYS Office of Renewable Energy Siting	Matthew Fitzgerald, Phillips Lytle LLP	Mark Schachner, Miller, Mannix, Schachner & Hafner, LLC	David Orr, NYS LTAP Center - Cornell Local Roads Program and Scott Wajda- Griffin, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation	Katie Hodgdon, and Lori Mithen-Demasi, Association of Towns		
Seneca	Onondaga	Tuscarora	Cayuga	Chautauqua	Canandaigua/Saranac		
12:00 p.m 1:15 p.m.	LUNCH in Oneida/Mohawk				12:00 p.m 1:15 p.m.		
1:15 p.m 2:30 p.m. CONCURRENT SESSION 3 1:15 p.m 2:30 p.m.							
(3A) Fiscal Responsibilities of Governing Boards	(3B) Lessons Learned from Solar Battery Storage Fire and Considerations for Development	(3C) Navigating the Haze: Regulating Cannabis in Your Town	(3D) General Municipal Law 239 and County Referrals	(3E) Speed Limit Reduction – How to Establish Safe Speeds in Your Community	(3F) Employee Well-Being in the Public Sector		
Kristy O'Shaughnessy and Taylor Scheer, NYS Society of Municipal Finance Officers, and Laird Petrie, Municipal Consultant	Niel Rivenburgh, Jefferson County Emergency Services and Will Lipczynski, Chaumont Fire Department	Katie Hodgdon, and Lori Mithen-Demasi, Association of Towns	Kristin Campbell, Herkimer Oneida Counties Comprehensive Planning Program	Jesse Vogl, LaBella Associates	Michael Kenneally, Comp Alliance and Bob Blaisdell, Wright Insurance		
Cayuga	Seneca	Onondaga	Tuscarora	Canandaigua/Saranac	Chautauqua		
2:30 p.m 3:00 p.m.							
3:00 p.m 4:15 p.m. CONCURRENT SESSION 4 3:00 p.m 4:15 p.m.							
(4A) Equalization Rates: What Are They and Why Do We Need Them Anyway?	(4B) Preparing for Grant Opportunities	(4C) Regulating Short-Term Rentals	(4D) Questions and Answers for Planning Boards and Zoning Boards of Appeals	(4E) Abandoned Cemeteries and Municipal Responsibilities	(4F) Write This Down: The Basics of Conducting Meetings and Taking Minutes		
Warren Wheeler, NYS Assessors Association	Jay Grasso, G&G Municipal Consulting and Grant Writing	Charles Malcomb and Henry Zomerfeld, Hodgson Russ LLP	Matthew Fitzgerald, Phillips Lytle LLP	David Fleming, Jr. Featherstonhaugh, Clyne & McCardle	Wade Beltramo, New York Conference of Mayors, and Kristy O'Shaughnessy, NYS Society of Municipal Finance Officers		
Onondaga	Canandaigua/Saranac	Seneca	Tuscarora	Chautauqua	Cayuga		
Morning Assessor's Session	9:00 a.m 12:00 p.m. in Briar (Tower Meeting Room)	Certificates of Attendance Will Be Available at the		Afternoon Assessor's Session 1:00 p.m 2:45 p.m. in Briar (Tower Meeting Room)			
Architectural Features That Influence Property Values with Rob Bick, AIA, CSI, SCA, NYS Assessors Association		End of the Last Session of the Day		History of the Property Tax with Rob Bick, AIA, CSI, SCA, NYS Assessors Association Followed by Session (4A) Equalization Rates at 3:00 p.m. in Onondaga			