

COUNTY OF ERIE  
LOCAL LAW NO. 2 - 2005  
LOCAL LAW INTRO NO. 1- 2005  
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ERIE COUNTY LEGISLATURE

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A LOCAL LAW amending Erie County Local Law No. 1-1959, as amended, constituting the Erie County Charter, establishing and convening a commission, to be known as the Citizens' Budget Review Commission of Erie County.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE ERIE COUNTY LEGISLATURE AS FOLLOWS:**

Section 1. AMENDING SECTION 305 OF THE ERIE COUNTY CHARTER.

Section 305. Division of budget and management. There shall be in the office of the county executive a division of budget and management headed by a director of budget and management who shall be appointed by and will serve at the pleasure of the county executive. The director of budget and management shall assist the county executive in the preparation and administration of the operating and capital budgets, in the study of administrative efficiency, in monitoring the productivity of the various administrative units of county government and in the review of the management and performance audits issued by the comptroller. The director of budget and management shall report to the county executive on the implementation of such audit recommendations and his actions pertaining to efficiency and productivity monitoring.

All reference contained in this charter to the budget director shall be deemed to refer to the director of budget and management.

Section 2. CREATING NEW SECTION 1814 OF THE ERIE COUNTY CHARTER.

Section 1814 (a). The Citizens' Budget Review Commission.

The Citizens' Budget Review Commission shall be established to assist and advise the Erie County Legislature in the oversight of the County's Budget and to monitor County finances, ensure the long-term fiscal stability of Erie County, prevent the concealment of County deficits, and to help provide the Legislature with enough time and information to respond to budgetary problems.

Upon the adoption of this Local Law the Erie County Legislature hereby creates a Citizens' Budget Review Commission of Erie County to be established on or before March 15, 2005.

Section 1814 (b). Commission Purview and Reporting.

The Citizens' Budget Review Commission shall study the fiscal operations of the County of Erie in their full scope. The Commission shall provide regular reports to the

Legislature at the conclusion of each fiscal quarter, and shall submit an annual report, which shall include its findings, conclusions, and recommendations for appropriate budgetary action to the County Legislature. The Commission shall file its annual report with the Erie County Legislature annually on or before October 15.

Section 1814 (c). Membership; Terms; Vacancies.

The Citizens' Budget Review Commission shall be composed of eleven (11) voting members, who shall be residents of Erie County. Such members shall be appointed by the Erie County Legislature upon recommendation from the following entities:

- A. One (1) member shall be recommended and appointed by the Erie County Executive.
- B. One (1) member shall be recommended annually by the Chair of the Erie County Legislature and confirmed by the Legislature.
- C. One (1) member shall be recommended annually by the Majority Leader on behalf of the majority members of the Erie County Legislature and confirmed by the Legislature.
- D. One (1) member shall be recommended annually by the Minority Leader on behalf of the minority members of the Erie County Legislature and confirmed by the Legislature.
- E. One (1) member shall be appointed who has professional experience as a certified public accountant. After receiving a list of at least three qualified candidates who have been recommended by the Western New York chapter of the New York State Association of Certified Public Accountants, the Legislature shall then appoint one individual from this list to the Commission.
- F. One (1) member shall be appointed who has professional experience in the banking and finance industry. After receiving a list of at least three qualified candidates who have been recommended by banking institutions and credit unions located within Erie County, the Legislature shall then appoint one individual from this list to the Commission.
- G. One (1) member shall be appointed who is an attorney-at-law, particularly with experience in local government law and/or finance. After receiving a list of at least three qualified candidates who have been recommended by the Bar Association of Erie County, the Legislature shall then appoint one individual from this list to the Commission.
- H. One (1) member shall be appointed who has professional experience with organized labor. After receiving a list of at least three qualified candidates who have been recommended by Buffalo AFL-CIO Central Labor Council, the Legislature shall then appoint one individual from this list to the Commission.
- I. One (1) member shall be appointed from the Erie County business community. After receiving a list of at least three qualified candidates who have been recommended by the Buffalo Niagara Partnership, the Legislature shall then appoint one individual from this list to the Commission.
- J. Two (2) members shall be appointed by the Erie County Legislature based upon recommendations from the public and shall be construed to represent a

cross-section of the County's diverse population and a depth of appropriate experience and expertise.

- K. The Comptroller of the County of Erie shall be an ex-officio, non-voting member of the Commission. Only the Comptroller, not a designee, shall be seated on the Commission.
- L. The Director of Budget and Management shall be an ex-officio, non-voting member of the Commission. Only the Director of Budget and Management, not a designee, shall be seated on the Commission.
- M. The Erie County Attorney shall be an ex-officio, non-voting member of the Commission. Only the Erie County Attorney, not a designee, shall be seated on the Commission.

With the exception of ex-officio members of the Commission, no member of the Commission shall hold public office, political office, be an employee of the County, nor be a member of another County Board or Commission during the term of his/her appointment to the Citizens' Budget Review Commission of Erie County.

The term of office for all members of the Commission, with the exception of ex-officio members, shall be one (1) year. Such appointments may be renewed annually for up to five (5) years. Any vacancy resulting from a cause other than the expiration of a term shall be filled only for the unexpired portion of the term.

Members shall serve without compensation. Staff support shall be provided by the staff of the Erie County Legislature under the direction of the Clerk of the Erie County Legislature. Additional technical or professional services support and assistance may be provided without compensation by volunteers and/or firms or organizations with appropriate expertise and knowledge. Only through and after a majority vote of the Commission's voting membership may such volunteers or organizations assist the Commission.

#### Section 1814 (d). Officers.

The Commission shall elect, from its membership (excluding ex-officio members), its own chairperson for a term of one year. The Commission shall also elect from its membership (excluding ex-officio members), a vice-chairperson, who shall serve as chairperson in the chairperson's absence. Finally, the Commission shall elect from its membership (excluding ex-officio members), a secretary, who shall serve to record the minutes of the Commission's proceedings.

#### Section 1814 (e). Meetings.

The Commission shall hold monthly public meetings to review the County's finances, including year-to-date and year-end projections for the County Budget. In addition to these monthly public meetings, the Citizens' Budget Review Commission shall meet as needed to carry out its mission as established in this local law, as well as to carry out guidelines and work assignments subsequently requested by the Erie County

Legislature. All meetings of the Commission shall be subject to the Open Meetings Law. However, nothing herein shall be construed to limit the ability of the Commission from meeting in executive session. Meetings shall be held on such days and at such hours so as to encourage the maximum amount of public awareness and shall be announced to the public through the media. Minutes of the proceedings and records of the Commission shall be clocked-in to the Erie County Legislature and are to be made available to the public for inspection during regular business hours.

Section 1814 (f). Powers of the Commission and Information Available to Commission.

The Commission shall have the power to make such studies and investigations into the County's budget and finances as it deems to be in the best interest of the county. In connection therewith, the Commission shall have the power to obtain technical information, including monthly budget reports, relating to the County's budget and finances from the Comptroller of the County, the County Executive, and his appointed Director of Budget and Management, as well as to request witnesses and the production of books, papers and other evidence, deemed necessary or material to the study or inquiry of the County's finances.

In addition to any other information requested by the Commission, the Director of Budget and Management shall submit to the Commission monthly budget reports. Such reports shall be due on or before the last calendar day of the subsequent calendar month, and shall include a detailed report of budgeted or projected revenues and expenditures with actual and accrued revenues and expenditures, a comprehensive narrative commentary to explain and justify variances in budgeted and actual revenues and expenditures, and a year-end forecast showing projected gains and losses for the year, including the use of fund balance.

Section 1814 (g). Failure to Provide Timely Information.

Should the County Executive, his appointed Director of Budget and Management, or anyone fail to provide information including but not limited to the budget reports requested in sub-section (f) above, the Chair of the Commission shall notify the Clerk of the Erie County Legislature and the Chair of the Erie County Legislature, in writing, and the Chair of the Legislature shall compel that such information be provided to the Commission by exercising the powers available to the Legislature, in particular those powers to subpoena and require the production of evidence as outlined in article 2, section 202, paragraph h of Local Law No. 1-1959, as amended, constituting the Erie County Charter.

Section 3. SEVERABILITY.

If any clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision, section, or part this law or the application thereof to any person, individual, corporation, firm, partnership, entity, or circumstance shall be adjudged by any court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid or

unconstitutional, such order or judgment shall not affect, impair, or invalidate the remainder thereof, but shall be confined in its operation to the clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision, section, or part this law or in its application thereof to any person, individual, corporation, firm, partnership, entity, or circumstance directly involved in the controversy in which such order or judgment shall be rendered.

Section 4. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This local law shall take effect immediately upon filing with the Secretary of State pursuant to Section 27 of the New York State Municipal Home Rule Law, provided, however that the provisions of this local law shall expire and be deemed repealed on and after January 1, the year two thousand and seven.

TIMOTHY M. KENNEDY

GEORGE A. HOLT, JR.

LYNN M. MARINELLI

MICHAEL H. RANZENHOFER

EDWARD J. KUWIK

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JEANNE Z. CHASE

STEVEN P. MCCARVILLE

ELISE M. CUSACK

**FISCAL IMPACT:** Positive for the taxpayers of Erie County and necessary for maintaining a balanced budget.