



## **TOWN OF CAIRO DISTINCTIONS & ACCOMPLISHMENTS 2012-2015**

***“Developing, Revitalizing, & Improving Cairo”***

***“Cairo...A Small Town with a BIG HEART”***

### **DISTINCTIONS:**

- ✦ **Congressman Gibson has commended the Town of Cairo & its leadership for its progress & programs.**
- ✦ **Assemblymember Lopez has commended the Town of Cairo & its leadership for its progress.**
- ✦ **Greene County Legislators Bill Lawrence & Harry Lennon have commended the Town of Cairo & its leadership for Cairo’s progress, programs, & successful endeavors. The legislators have continually supported the Town, its leadership, its programs, & its events.**
- ✦ **The Greene County Legislature has commended the Town of Cairo’s progress & supported the Town’s endeavors.**
- ✦ **Greene County Clerk Michael Flynn has commended the Town of Cairo & its leadership for its progress.**
- ✦ **Former Senator Tkaczyk commended the Town of Cairo & its leadership for its progress.**
- ✦ **Supervisor Banta was appointed to the New York State Fire Prevention & Building Code Council to be the Town representative on the Council for the State of New York.**

### **Testimonial from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation:**

*Joe,*  
*It has been a pleasure working with you, Alan, and Ted on the Cairo WWTP. Suzanne and I are both happy to leave the project in your capable hands and congratulate the Town on their efforts to improve the WWTP.*  
Jamie Malcolm from DEC

### **ACCOMPLISHMENTS:**

#### **FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY:**

1. Completed the Budget processes with the entire Town Board from the inception of the Budget process: 2012, 2013, 2014, & will do the same in 2015.
2. Kept the Budget under the Tax cap\* without compromising services & resources, while we increased services & resources.
  - a. \*Tax increases remained under the 2% Tax Cap State Mandate with the addition of the new library and its unplanned expenses in 2013.
  - b. \*Remained under the 1.66% Tax Cap State Mandate for 2014.
    - i. As a result, the property owners in Cairo received the Property Tax Credit for 2014.
  - c. \*Remained under the 1.56% Tax Cap State Mandate for 2015.

- i. As a result, the property owners in Cairo will receive the Property Tax Credit for 2015.
  - d. In June 2015, Supervisor Banta & the Supervisor's staff submitted and filed a Budgetary Efficiency Plan with the State to secure the 2015 property tax relief credit for Cairo property owners under the State's property tax relief program.
  - e. Reduced the town tax rate for our Cairo taxpayers in 2015 from \$8.07 to \$8.049 per 1,000 in an effort to reduce taxes-see attached article title "Tax rate decrease credited to town's economic growth".
3. No Fiscal Stress: the Office of the State Comptroller issued a report in September 2015 stating that the Town of Cairo has "No Designation" for Fiscal Stress.
  4. General Fund Refunds in April 2013 from the Water & Sewer District for past loans:
    - a. The Sewer District refunded \$11,500 to the General Fund toward a past loan.
    - b. The Water District refunded \$10,000 to the General Fund toward a past loan.

**IMPROVING & ADVANCING INFRASTRUCTURE:**

5. Provided oversight & management for Sewer Capital Fund Project & completed the project.
6. Improved & maintained the Animal Control facility & operations.
  - a. Hired an Animal Control Officer thereby increasing Police resources.
  - b. Completed a new Animal Control Facility in a Town owned building-Sewer Plant.
    - i. Project encouraged and improved by the Department of Agriculture & Markets.
7. Implemented a sewer/septic Clean Out project to comply with DEC standards achieving the removal of the Sewer Moratorium imposed in 2007(approx.).
8. Processed & Completed DEC Consent Order in 2013 for past violations with the former administration in 2011.
9. Complied with DEC requirements to lift the Sewer Moratorium.
10. Received compliment & testimonial from DEC management-testimonial is on the town's website & above- see above testimonial from Jamie Malcolm from DEC.
11. Supported & facilitated Highway Department improvements & upgrades.
12. Renewed initiative for sidewalks along Main St.
  - a. Procured \$75,000 Grant from the Department of Environmental Conservation "Smart Growth" grants on June 2, 2015.
  - b. Will consider installing sidewalk from Town Hall to the Cairo Historical Society as well when the Cairo Historical Society completes its renovation project for their new building on Railroad Ave.
13. Developing another Well Water Supply for the Town's usage & future economic development.
14. Working with Assemblymember Lopez & Congressman Gibson on multiple projects such as our Water System repairs and improvements and our Sidewalk Initiative.

**ECONOMIC & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT:**

15. Improving Town infrastructure.
16. Ushered in & welcomed the new Hannaford Supermarket.
17. Worked with County to procure new ownership for the Cedar Terrace Property.
18. Updating the Town's website on October 5, 2015(originally launched in 2012).
19. Creating a Business Profile & informational package for business & visitor development in the Town of Cairo with Kathoderay Media. The information will be available in October 2015.
20. Town Supervisor Banta is a member of the Greene County Business Advisory Committee since 2014.
  - a. Participating in a development & implementation of a business development & investment campaign to revitalize Main Streets in Greene County.

21. Applied for a \$300,000 Community Development Block Grant from the State for home repairs for income qualified residents working with Catskill Mountain Housing.
22. Working with the Greene County IDA, the Greene County Economic Development Department, local property owners, & our elected representatives to develop a shovel ready business complex on Route 23 West.
23. Procured new owners & businesses such as the Dollar General.
24. Developing another Well Water Supply for the Town's usage & future economic development.
25. Seeking grants & funding to repair, improve, & expand the water system.
26. Coordinated & finalized special legislation for our long-term EFC financing for sewer infrastructure improvements.

**GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY & COMMUNICATIONS:**

27. Offered Power Point Presentations in 2012, 2013, & 2015 to provide a prospectus for Town Governance.
28. We offer a comprehensive reporting process with agendas & information posted online for the Town's departments, administrations, & operations.
29. We post minutes, agendas, general information, financial reports, & budgets more than any other Town in Greene County and more than the Greene County Government in an effort for great transparency and great communication.
30. Offered unprecedented communication, transparency, & public comment developing the Zoning Law.
  - a. Communicated meetings & information to the public via website, outdoor bulletin board, public notices, radio ads, cable ads, psa announcements, emails, flyers, etc.

**PARKS, BUILDINGS, & GROUNDS, & CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT:**

31. Established & Appointed a Director for the Parks, Buildings, & Grounds Department.
32. Improved condition of Parks, Old Reservoir Park, Town Buildings, & Parking Lots.
33. Reopened the Cairo Nature Center-Old Reservoir.
34. Renewed volunteer interests at the Nature Center, Town Park, Town Hall, Main St. Fountain, and other town properties.
35. Monitored and assisted the Park Task Force to improve Angelo Canna Park.
  - a. Launched community events at the park such as the Annual Picnics with free bike raffles for children.
    - i. Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for the Three Bears Picnic Area July 4, 2012.
    - ii. 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Town Picnic May 4, 2013
      - a. 31 bikes were donated
    - iii. 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Town Picnic May 3, 2014
      - a. 45 bikes were donated
    - iv. 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Town Picnic May 2, 2015
      - a. 47 bikes were donated
      - b. Fishing poles were donated
      - c. An Adirondack chair was donated
    - v. Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for the Playground Fitness Center October 11, 2014.
    - vi. Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for the new basketball court in 2013.
36. Hosted Cairo's 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, & 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Picnic with multiple Ribbon Cutting Ceremonies, events, and community group involvement.
37. Accepted donations for the Town Park because of the Park Task Force Volunteers fundraising efforts & campaigns.

38. Facilitated Historical Study at our Fossil Site at the Highway Department with the Research Team comprised of the Universities of Scheffied, Cardiff, & Southampton in the UK, SUNY-Binghamton University, & the NY State Museum.
39. Provided oversight for the Library Capital Fund Project & facilitated its project completion.
40. Improved Recycling Center at the Park's Department building.
41. Supported Youth Building Improvements with the Greene County Youth Fair.
42. Renewed interest, fundraising, & coordination for new Soccer Fields.
  - a. Sought & obtained the ownership for the Soccer Field land from the County of Greene.
  - b. Assisting the Rip Van Winkle Soccer League with field development.
43. Approved & completed FEMA transaction in 2014 for Town acquisition of a flood damaged property from Hurricane Irene. Property will be turned into a pocket-park for public use.
44. Developing a large gazebo at the Town Park.
45. Facilitated, informed, & welcomed new businesses and owners into the Town such as:
  - a. Ken Lutz-new owner of the Old Miller property
  - b. Robert Bradley-new owner of the Family Dollar property
  - c. Hannaford
  - d. Julie & Steve Freemann-The Terrace(formerly The Cedar Terrace)
  - e. The Dollar General on Rt 23B across from the Bank of Greene County
  - f. Catching Rays on Main St.
  - g. Dr. Robert Schneider Medical Office

#### **TECHNOLOGY IMPROVEMENTS & ADVANCEMENTS:**

46. Launched Town Logo in 2012.
47. Created, Launched, & Maintaining a Town Website: [www.townofcairo.com](http://www.townofcairo.com)
  - a. We post minutes, agendas, general information, financial reports, & budgets.
48. Implemented an IT Plan, a Centralized System, & Server Backup. Fully upgraded technology, IT, phone, & alarm systems in Town Hall to current standards, systems, & models.
49. Planning to update the Town's website in 2015(it launched in 2012).

#### **ADMINISTRATION & OPERATIONS IMPROVEMENTS & ADVANCEMENTS:**

50. Centralized Administration & Operations of Town Governance.
51. Effectively, intelligently, & prudently managing the administration & operations of the Town.
52. Increased/Improved Transparency of Governmental Administration & Operations.
  - a. We post comprehensive reports, agendas, & information to the public.
  - b. Created, Maintained Positive, Effective Communications with the Public via Website, Bulletin Boards, Notices, Radio Ads, Cable Ads, PSA Announcements, Emails, Flyers, etc.
53. Increased Employee Morale:
  - a. applied & maintained a fair and balanced standard of practice
  - b. established & maintained periodic employee meetings & events
  - c. established monthly employee awards as applicable
    - i. employee of the month lunches provided to the employee by the Town Supervisor-Ted Banta
  - d. improved employee communications with meetings, online staff/personnel page, & reporting-both monthly and annual reporting
  - e. greater accountability
54. Hosted a visit from the Governor's office in 2012 & 2013.
55. Updated Employee Handbook in 2012 & 2014.

56. Negotiated & approved 5 Labor Contracts with the Police, Ambulance, & Highway Departments.
57. Improved, codified, & updated Code Enforcement Policies & Procedures.
58. Continued free Summer Recreation program in 2012, 2013, 2014, & 2015.
  - a. We are 1 of 2 towns in Greene County offering such a program to our residents for free, and to non-residents for a nominal fee.
59. Completed a Comprehensive Audit required for Federal Funding in 2013(USDA offered financing for the Cairo Public Library Project).
60. Facilitated & completed State Comptroller's Follow-up Review of 2008 Audit in 2012.
61. Improved services for 2013, 2014, & 2015 such as Code Enforcement, Highway, Court, Police, & General operations.
62. Consensus Government:
  - a. In 2012 & 2013, out of 240 resolutions the Town Board voted unanimously for all of them, except for 3.
  - b. In 2014, thus far, out of 256 resolutions the Town Board voted unanimously for all of them, except for 3.
  - c. In 2015, thus far, out of 160+ resolutions the Town Board voted unanimously for all of them except 3.
  - d. Town Supervisor informs and engages the Town Board to collectively run the Town.
63. Established a functioning Board of Ethics Review.
64. Interviewed and appointed officials & employees as appropriate & needed.
65. Utilized Greene County's Probation Department for Town Work.
66. Participated in the Columbia-Greene Community College Workforce program.
67. Evaluated, revised, & updated the Town's Fee Schedule.
68. Provided oversight for committee & task force work & assignments.
69. Completed Town Hall's renovation project converting the former Library into Town offices.
70. Coordinating & facilitating the conversion of the Annex Building into the new Police Building & additional Town offices.
  - a. Planning to dedicate the Police Building to Floyd Hempstead in the Fall of 2015.
71. Improved the Police Department's leadership, administration, operations, & resources.
  - a. Improving criminal law enforcement in the community and providing resources to the Cairo Police Department to conduct additional patrols and investigations.
72. Implemented Performance Evaluations for employees.
73. Updated FEMA Flood Maps.

**POSITIVE LEGISLATION:**

74. Established & renewed a Resort Moratorium.
75. Established a Clothing/Storage Bin Law.
76. Reviewed, modified, and updated the Dog Control Law in 2014.
  - a. Working on another update to the Dog Control Law in 2015 & additional Dog Control legislation.
77. Renewed the Junk Yard Moratorium.
78. Worked cooperatively with Junk Yard owners to improve standards & clarify fee discrepancy in 2012.
79. Established a Right to Farm Law.
80. Working on adopting a Zoning Law. Exhibited unprecedented open government when working on the draft with over 109 Zoning work sessions, multiple Public Hearings, a feedback process to prepare & revise the Zoning Law.

- a. Effectively, intelligently, & transparently forming the new Zoning Law

81. Developing a Public Nuisance Law.

**POSITIVE PUBLIC PROFILE, EVENTS, & LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS:**

82. Generated Positive Press & Public Profile-see articles from the Daily Mail posted on the Town's website on the Supervisor's webpage.

- a. In 2012, 55+ articles\* of positive press/publications for the Town of Cairo
- b. In 2013, 80+ articles\* of positive press/publications for the Town of Cairo
- c. In 2014, so far 50+ articles\* of positive press/publications for the Town of Cairo
- d. In 2015, so far 20+ articles of positive press/publications for the Town of Cairo

\*Articles are posted on the Town of Cairo website on the Supervisor's webpage

83. Hosted Town Events & Parades such as:

- a. Memorial Day Parades
- b. Temperance & Tommy Guns' Festivals
- c. July 4<sup>th</sup> Celebrations
- d. Annual Picnics at Angelo Canna Park
  - i. Includes park equipment ribbon cutting ceremonies
- e. Greene County Youth Fairs
  - i. Hosting & securing the Greene County Youth Fair in Cairo at Angelo Canna Park
- f. Apple Harvest Festivals
- g. Veteran's Day Ceremonies
- h. Christmas/Holiday Events & Parades
- i. Music Under the Stars 2015
- j. Boy Scout Spring Camporee May 2015

84. Hosted a variety of public events at Town properties, such as the Town Park, Acra Community Center, Town Hall, etc.

85. The Town Supervisor & the Town Board supported, attended, & donated to public & private events.

86. Supported & facilitated the Hometown Heroes Banners Program with the Cairo Historical Society.

87. Assumed Maintenance for Cairo Cemeteries.

88. Coordinated & supported the Cairo Historical Society's acquisition of Town land for a Historic Railroad project.

- a. The Cairo Fire Department graciously worked with the CHS to support the project in conjunction with the Town.
- b. Offered assistance and working cooperatively with the Cairo Historical Society on multiple projects.

89. Sponsored the Town of Durham's Supervisor-Bill Carr for Peace Officer-at his request.

90. Offered assistance to the Town of Durham providing them with the Employee Handbook Policy.

91. Offered assistance and working cooperatively with the Cairo Chamber of Commerce.

92. The Town employees have annually contributed to Hospice Families for the Holidays.

93. Honored a Volunteer of the Year for 2012, 2013, & 2014

94. Assisted the Round Top Mountain Bike Association obtain a non-profit status for its organization.

95. Accepting a property donated by Wells Fargo, plus \$6,000, for a single family dwelling next to the Cairo Elementary School on Main Street to facilitate public youth safety and smart planning opportunities with the Cairo-Durham School District.

- a. Working with the Cairo-Durham School District to evaluate the highest & best use for the donated property.

96. Working cooperatively with the Cairo Hose Company & the Round Top Fire Dept.
97. Town Supervisor-Ted Banta consistently attends Boy Scout Board of Reviews & Eagle Scout Ceremonies.
98. Offering, with the Cairo Chamber of Commerce, Music Under the Stars at the Town Park, Summer of 2015

**SOLAR ENERGY INITIATIVES:**

99. Initiated & Approved Solar Energy initiatives & Strategy.
100. Participating in the Climate Smart Communities Program.

**TOWN OF CAIRO 2015 & 2016 GOALS:**

1. Establish, Improve, & Maintain *Priorities*
2. Maintain a *Moral, Transparent, & Ethical Government*
3. *Increase Business Opportunities*: procure & usher in New Businesses & Assist Current Businesses
  - a. Creating a business profile to provide information to interested businesses & parties
4. *Finish Zoning* Draft Review & Usher in a Zoning Plan for the Town
5. Repair, Maintain, & *Improve Town Properties*
6. Improve & *Promote the Town's Natural Resources*
7. Develop a *Senior Recreation Area* at the Town Park-The Great Bear Play Area
8. Establish *Solar Energy* Usage for the Town
9. Consider *Shared Services* with other municipalities & our school district to Improve Resources & Minimize Costs
10. *Update* outdated policies, manuals, laws, etc
11. Continue to *Centralize & hold Accountable* Town Administration & Operations
12. Improve Town Systems: Wifi, Cable, etc.
13. Improve *Employee Performance & Service*
14. *Completing Sewer Project* Clean outs & repairs to system
15. Establish an improved *Well Water source*
16. Assertively maintain Town standards & codes via *Code Enforcement*
17. Finish Office Renovations
18. *Move Police Department* to Annex Building on Railroad Ave & dedicate the Police Building to Floyd Hemstead-Retired Police Chief
19. Plan for a *new Ambulance Building* while considering County Wide Ambulance Service
20. *Assist* Community Organizations, such as the Cairo Chamber of Commerce, the Cairo Historical Society, Amercian Legion, the various Youth Groups, the Park Task Force, the Senior Organizations, etc.
21. Improve Workplace Programs & Employee Educational Programs
22. Encourage the Mandatory 911 Sign Display & Insure Compliance
23. Complete our *Sidewalk Initiative* by building at least one sidewalk along Main St.
24. Seek *grants* for our various projects
25. Improve Town Signage, Communications, & Website
26. Consider moving the Community Center to Main St. establishing a *Community/Cultural Center* for Seniors, Youth, the Public, & Community Organizations
27. *Improve security* at Town buildings & properties
28. Assist with the development of the *new Soccer Fields*
29. Seek funding to profile and publicly present our *Geological Site*-Oldest known in the World

- 30. Develop a *Senior Community*: 55 and “better” in or contiguous with the business district of Cairo
- 31. Develop a *Rails to Trails trail* along William Dinger Rd

**What is Good, Effective, Successful Town Governance?**

- Developing & Possessing an Effective Strategy: evaluating & advancing strategies & goals
- Exercising Fiscal Responsibility
- Effective & Transparent Communications & Governance:
  - Website, notifications, dissemination of information, offering an informational package/profile
  - Complying with the NY State Tax Cap & Obtaining the State’s Tax Relief Rebate/Credit
- Infrastructure Improvement & Development:
  - Improving the water & sewer systems, repairing, improving & maintaining the roads, sidewalks, & natural resources, such as parks & cultural destinations, and offering apparent, informative, & signature signage for the Town, businesses, hamlets, & districts
- Positive & Useful Legislation:
  - Establishing, maintaining, & improving standards, policies, & laws
- Effective Code Enforcement & Zoning
- Effective Criminal Law Enforcement
- Positive Local Partnerships:
  - Engaging and partnering with cultural, community, and service organizations such as: Cairo Historical Society, Cairo Chamber of Commerce, Greene County Chamber of Commerce, Cairo-Durham Little League, American Legion, Park Volunteers, Greene County Pop Warner, Department of the Aging, Boy Scouts, the Rip Van Winkle Soccer Club/Northern Catskill Youth Association, Columbia Greene Community College, Cairo-Durham School District, etc.
- Business Development:
  - Offering a Business Profile & Procuring Business & Commercial Investment
- Consensus Government
  - Working agreeably with the Town Board
- Maintaining a viable Community Center

\*\*\*The Town of Cairo is making great progress on all of these items\*\*\*

**Another Testimonial:**

*Supervisor Ted Banta*

*I wanted to express my appreciation for the efforts made by you and members of the town board and others involved in the process to achieve a reasonable zoning ordinance for the Town of Cairo. As an original member of the town planning board it became evident to me that the town needed planned development in order to provide for the well-being of its citizens.*

*No one wants to unduly restrict the use of private property. However, actions taken on one person's property have the potential to adversely affect the enjoyment of another person's property. We have seen a number of glaring examples in the town where property values and the quality of life of homeowners have been adversely affected by uncontrolled use of a neighboring property.*

*I hope that the town board is successful in its efforts to achieve zoning regulations that protect property owners while taking into account the needs of business to operate without excessive restrictions.*

*I believe that most people will generally favor orderly development and the avoidance of situations where homeowners are confronted with nearby development that detracts from their quality of life and the overall impression of the town as a good place to live.*

*Thank you for your efforts.*

Richard U.



## TOWN OF CAIRO'S GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY COMPARED TO OTHER LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Towns	Website	Minutes	Agendas	Budgets	Financials	Online Tax Bills	Water Reports	Laws	Permits/Applications
<b>Cairo</b>	<b>yes</b>	<b>yes</b>	<b>yes</b>	<b>yes</b>	<b>yes</b>	<b>yes</b>	<b>yes</b>	<b>yes</b>	<b>yes</b>
Catskill	yes	yes	no	yes	no	yes	no	no	yes
Village of Catskill	yes	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no	yes
Athens	yes	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no	yes
Village of Athens	yes	yes	no	yes	no	no	yes	yes	yes
Coxsackie	yes	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no	yes
Village of Coxsackie	yes	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no	yes
New Baltimore	yes	yes	yes*	yes	no	no	no	no	yes
Greenville	yes	yes	no	no	no	no	no	yes	yes
Durham	yes	yes	no	no	no	no	n/a	yes	yes
Windham	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no
Prattsville	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	yes**
Lexington	yes	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no	yes
Ashland	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	yes
Hunter	yes	no	no	no	no	yes	no	yes	yes
Jewett	yes	yes	no***	yes	no	no	no	yes	yes
County of Greene	yes	no	yes	yes	no	no	n/a	yes	n/a

\*only 1 agenda & resolution

\*\*only 1 application

\*\*\*states "to be posted"

### Comments:

No agendas & info are archived like Cairo

No other town posts as much as Cairo

No other town posts monthly financial reports

No town offers power points

No town offers departmental reports

Cairo posts more info than the County



## Tax rate decrease credited to town's economic growth

By Audrey Matott Columbia-Greene Media | Posted: Tuesday, November 4, 2014 3:15 am

CAIRO — The Town Board of Cairo held a public hearing on Monday evening to receive comments regarding the 2015 preliminary budget. Upon completion of the public hearing and moving into their regular business meeting, the board voted to adopt the preliminary budget. The 2015 adopted budget consists of an overall bottom line of just under \$4.4 million, which encompasses the general and highway funds. The approximate tax levy for the budget is \$3,067,916.89.

The good news for Cairo taxpayers is that the budget does meet the 2015 tax cap of 1.56 percent and thus taxpayers will be eligible for the 2015 Property Tax Freeze Credit.

Town Supervisor Ted Banta said that aside from not exceeding the tax cap, the tax rate in Cairo has reduced approximately two cents per thousand dollars of assessed value. Banta explained that last year's tax rate was \$8.07 and in 2015 it will be \$8.046.

Although a seemingly small decrease, in an economy where every penny counts, Banta said that the rate decline is due to economic growth in Cairo.

Banta said, "We got the tax credit freeze and the tax value went down and we should continue to see that because we have more economic development like Dollar General. We will have more assessed value for the town, so it will be less that tax payers have to pay."

The 2015 budget is estimated to bring in \$751,445.00 in revenue and an unexpended balance of \$580,000 from 2014 has also helped to offset the overall tax levy.

As usual, for taxpayers within the town's special districts such as the Cairo Fire District, sewer district, or various lighting districts there will be additional line items to account for each applicable district.

During the budget hearing there were limited concerns raised regarding the tax impact on taxpayers. Patrice Jenkins, President of the Catskill Community Center board of directors came forward and requested that the town include \$5,000 in the budget to assist the after-school program provided for students at the Cairo-Durham Elementary School.

Jenkins explained that the program at the C-D Elementary school has been running for about five years but they ran a deficit of over \$4,000 last year.

Jenkins said, "So what we are coming before the town of Cairo for is to possibly fund \$5,000 toward the community center so that we can run this program, not at a deficit, but that we can also be able to reduce the amount that people pay for the program. We had more involved last year but because we realized we were losing money, we had to raise the fee which has made it more difficult for people to participate."

Town Board member Dan Joyce asked Jenkins how many students are currently participating in the program to which Jenkins explained they had 17 families but due to the increase in rates this year there are only approximately 8-10 families that are utilizing the program.

Banta asked Jenkins if the community center had sought funding from the school when they realized they were running on a deficit.

Jenkins said, "No. I personally feel it would be inappropriate for the school to contribute more than they already are, just in terms of a facility standpoint. I don't really see that being in their budget because they are not running an after-school program. They reached out just because of a need and just made the facility available."

Banta said in return, "It would almost seem to me that it would be best under the privy of the school system in their budget as opposed to a town budget ... right now we are funding a summer recreation program, we are one of two towns in the county that does do that and that is a major commitment here in order to do that and to keep that sustained."

Ultimately, the board did not include an additional \$5,000 in the town's budget for the after-school program but did encourage Jenkins to prompt them to meet again next August when the town begins working on their budget for the following year.

All present members of the board voted in favor of the budget. Board member Tony Puorro was absent.

The 2015 budget will remain on file with the Town Clerk and is available for any interested parties to review during regular office hours. It is also available on the town's website at [www.townofcairo.com](http://www.townofcairo.com).

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To reach reporter Audrey Matott, call 518-943-2100, ext. 3325, or e-mail [amatott@thedailymail.net](mailto:amatott@thedailymail.net).

## Cairo receives \$75K smart growth grant

By Kate Seckinger

Columbia-Greene Media | Posted: Tuesday, June 2, 2015 12:00 am

CAIRO — Before long, the residents of the Town of Cairo will be able to walk with a spring in their step along one side of Main Street.

At the town's board meeting Monday, Town Supervisor Ted Banta announced that the state Department of Environmental Conservation awarded Cairo a Catskill smart growth implementation award for \$75,000.

The grants were awarded to Catskill communities for projects that will grow and improve economic development and community life.

Banta said the funds will be used to install a new sidewalk on the north side of Main Street beginning at the Cairo-Durham Elementary School and ending around half a mile down the street at Cumberland Farms.

"We are so excited to be one of the recipients of a grant like this," Banta said. "It's a project that has needed to be done for a long time."

A small uneven sidewalk is currently in front of the elementary school, but ends there. The old section of concrete is one of the last paths for residents to walk on throughout that 1/2-mile stretch.

"This is the first time I feel like it's going to happen," said Harry Lennon, the Greene County legislator who represents the Town of Cairo. "We've been working on this project for the past year and a half and this grant will be a great start."

In addition to the new sidewalk, Lennon said the plan will incorporate bicycle paths along the road, or make it intermodal.



### Cairo

The Town of Cairo received a \$75,000 grant to redo its sidewalks on the north side of town. Much of the 1/2-mile stretch will have a sidewalk and bike path added to it, as a walking path does not exist by popular town locations like Family Dollar. The sidewalk project is planned to start with the sidewalk in front of the Cairo-Durham Elementary School and continue down Main Street to Cumberland Farms.

“It’s exciting to get an award like this,” Lennon said. “The sidewalk and bike paths are just another way we’re trying to improve things.”

The town supervisor said he will accept the award Tuesday morning at the Catskill Watershed Corporation.

Banta said the project will cost around \$400,000.

“Now we’re faced with a decision,” Banta said. “We have only a fraction of the funds, so we could do the project in phases with the money we do have, or, we could wait until we have all the funding in place first.”

Banta said he was uncertain about a time frame for the project at this point because the possibilities need to be discussed first.

“We decided to make installing new sidewalks a priority,” Banta said. “However, we decided to do just the one side instead of both so we had an attainable goal to focus on. After receiving this grant, I have the confidence the installation will happen – just one step at a time.”

To reach reporter Kate Seckinger, call The Daily Mail at 518-943-2100, ext. 3323, or email [kseckinger@thedailyail.net](mailto:kseckinger@thedailyail.net). ☎

## Opportunity knocks for Cairo homeowners

By Audrey Matott Columbia-Greene Media | Posted: Saturday, January 31, 2015 2:15 am

CAIRO — For residents in Cairo who missed out on the Reach Program last summer, another opportunity has come knocking for those who are in need of home repairs.

The Town of Cairo is beginning the application process for \$400,000 in Community Development Block Grant Funding. The funds are used for grants to assist low and moderate income homeowners in Cairo for non-cosmetic repairs for their homes.

“It’s a great opportunity for income eligible residents to get necessary repairs done on their home,” town supervisor Ted Banta said.

Some examples of acceptable repairs may include roof replacement, foundation and structural improvements, heating and hot water replacement, upgrades for windows and insulation and other repairs.

The Catskill Mountain Housing Development Corporation is assisting with the application process. CMHDC executive director Larry Krajeski explained that the grant program has been around for some time and has already been used previously by local towns.

“It is a very well established, older federal program that dates back to the 1970s probably,” Krajeski said. “It has gone through some permutations and it has changed a bit from time to time but it has been developed to reach a wide range of needs in the community.”

Krajeski said that the towns of Cairo, as well as Catskill and Prattsville have received funding from the programming before. Namely, Prattsville received funding in response to Hurricane Irene not only for home rehabilitation but also for some small businesses.

Any municipality or county in New York is eligible to apply for funding from the grant. The funding is made possible through federal funds.

“The grant is made possible by federal housing funds that are allocated to the State of New York which in turn allocates them to communities,” Krajeski said.

It can take several months for the application process to be completed and for a contract to be established before funds become available.

The funding also supports the local economy as bids are put out for the repairs to local contractors.

“For the most part, what we do is ask for bids from local contractors. The work is usually from \$5,000 to \$25,000, so it is usually something local contractors will bid on,” Krajewski said.

Krajewski stressed that in order for the application process to be successful, a certain number of applications from residents are required in order for the town as a whole to apply for the funding through the state.

The town of Cairo is encouraging residents to submit applications as soon as possible in order to ensure the town’s application will be considered. The application deadline is February 27, 2015.

Applications are available from the CMHDC by calling 518-943-6700 or by stopping by their office at 448 Main Street in Catskill.

Applications are also available at Cairo Town Hall, the Cairo Public Library and the Cairo Branch of the Bank of Greene County.

The town will also be holding a public hearing regarding the application to the program on Monday, February 2 at 6:30 p.m. at Cairo Town Hall.

For those who wish to offer written comments for the program, they may do so by submitting them to: Ted Banta, Town Supervisor, Town of Cairo Post Office Box 728 Cairo, NY 12413.

Comments should be submitted prior to the application deadline of February 27, 2015.

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## Town picnic and Little League kick off with sunshine

By Ryan Anglim Columbia-Greene Media | Posted: Sunday, May 3, 2015 12:30 am

CAIRO — The third annual Cairo Town Picnic, a lively event filled with bagpipes, a bike parade and Little League baseball, brought the area together to kick off spring and portend what summer will bring.

The picnic was held Saturday, in conjunction with Little League Opening Day, at the Angelo Canina Town Park. The first baseball game kicked off at 9 a.m. and the players were greeted by what was arguably a picture-perfect spring day.

The idea for the picnic initially came to fruition through the Cairo Park Task Force, which is chaired by Elizabeth Brinckerhoff. The picnic is coupled with the statewide event, “I Love My Park Day”, created to show parks and historic sites some love each year at the beginning of May.

“The Town Board welcomed the idea,” Cairo Town Supervisor Ted Banta said. “Each year we’ve had the picnic, some of the major themes are just giving things away, presenting things to the children and having a family-fun day.”

The main attraction, Banta said, was the free bike raffle, which consisted of nearly 50 bikes of all sizes. Each bike was donated to the picnic by local community members and businesses.

Banta read off names as children gathered around in anticipation to claim a prize from a field of new bikes. Five fishing rods were also donated to the raffle by River Basin Sport Shop in Catskill.

“Cairo is a small town with a big heart,” Banta said. “There are so many people who donate so much,” adding that the bike raffle is indicative of the area’s charity.

This year’s picnic had an addition, unprecedented in previous years — the Boy Scouts occupied the park for their annual Boy Scout Spring Camporee, which will be held through Sunday.

“We just love to have these types of events. It brings so much good energy,” Banta said.



Town picnic

Michael Ivery, 10, chose a green BMX bike, donated by the Cairo Republican Committee. Photo by Ryan Anglim

Cairo's energy is way up in other ways outside of its events. Banta said that expansions to the park are on the horizon. The Cairo Town Board has been working closely with the Rip Van Winkle Soccer Club and the Greene County Legislature to gain new soccer fields, utilizing a property leased to the soccer league from the town.

The league has been seeking grant money for the past year, and has received multiple grants thus far, Banta said. On behalf of Greene County, Legislators Harry Lennon and William Lawrence, both of Cairo, made a donation to the town and league for \$5,000 on Saturday.

"They're going to begin work on the soccer fields this year," Banta said.

The county recently donated \$3,800 to the town for the purchase of new playground equipment in the park, specifically for a "honeycomb climber" and an adaptive swing for those who have special needs, Banta said.

The town has also been making strides toward building a senior recreation area at the park.

"We've been trying to honor our seniors and try to have an area for them where they can have activities and a place to really call their own," Banta said.

The senior recreation area is expected to be multigenerational, and include many features the park doesn't currently have.

Town of Cairo Deputy Supervisor Doug Ostrander said the park is evolving in an organized fashion. "A big part of the drive is the Park Task Force, and the volunteers who have an interest in the place," Ostrander said.

"One of the things we've designed to do in 2012 was to try making our park a destination park," Banta added. "Cairo is the crossroads of the county, and each year we successfully move forward with the park.

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*To reach reporter Ryan Anglim, call 518-943-2100, ext. 3329, or e-mail [ranglim@thedailymail.net](mailto:ranglim@thedailymail.net).*

## Designs on attracting business

By Kate Seckinger Columbia-Greene Media | Posted: Wednesday, October 14, 2015 12:45 am

CAIRO — A few years ago, James Schneider wanted to make the land his family owned in Cairo ready if new businesses came to town.

“I had some concerns and worries that any business owner would have, such as, what’s the capacity for water or sewer,” Schneider, a resident of Purling in the town of Cairo, recalled. “I wanted to know the infrastructure that was available in town and I called Ted to try to get the answers.”

“Ted” is Cairo Town Supervisor Ted Banta, who said that when Schneider came to him asking what the town had to offer a business, it made him realize what Cairo was missing.

“We didn’t have a professional package or even a packet of information to readily offer anyone like a potential business owner,” Banta said. “It dawned on me then that we needed a handout or business profile so we could be more informative, and the best way to do that was to update the town’s website.”

In April, the town hired Kathode Ray Media Inc., a marketing and web design company, to create a more professional and elegant site for residents and visitors to use.

Kathode Ray designed the county’s Buy and Invest in Greene campaign over the past year, as well as projects with the Bank of Greene County and Hull-O Farms in Durham.

Banta said the board sets aside a budget for economic development in the town each year, and the website’s redesign was part of the spending plan since the end of 2014.

“We’ve worked with the county, but the town of Cairo is really the only one to do this recently,” said Kathleen McQuaid, president and creative director of Kathode Ray Media. “Each town has its own objectives or unique flavor and might be looking to attract certain business, promote events or help residents. Looking at a website says a lot about the personality of your town and determines how it’s perceived by residents or visitors.”



That was then ...

The former homepage of Cairo's website, which was recently updated this week. The old version was more cluttered with information while the new website has a design that makes it easier to search through so residents can easily find what they need.

McQuaid said the town's new website was designed by a team over the course of three weeks and went live late last week and over the weekend, depending on how frequently a user's server updates.

"Previously, there was a lot of information on the homepage," McQuaid said. "We just took it all and reorganized it. There are new drop-down menus on the homepage, including one that asks, 'How Do I?,' which organized information visitors might search for most frequently. Now if you're looking for a phone number, how to get a marriage license or pay a bill, it's all in one easy-to-find location."

The town's new website also adapts to different screen sizes and didn't before, McQuaid said, or readjusts if being viewed from a mobile device, tablet or regular desktop computer.

Banta said one of the biggest improvements is that the website's new section is strictly dedicated to the town's businesses.

Browsers can access information about Cairo's workforce, economic breakdown, a downloadable PDF about starting a business in the area and more with the click of a mouse.

"With this new design, we've made business development a main focus," Banta said. "Now, anyone can easily access information about what we have to offer and see our vision for the town."

The town board plans to work with the Cairo Chamber of Commerce, Banta said, and continue to develop the site's new section with a comprehensive list about each business in town and a map about properties available to entrepreneurs.

The board also plans to meet with business and property owners in the near future to discuss ideas for the website and improve its information, Banta said.

"If this website and infrastructure facts had been available when I was looking into making my property business-ready, it definitely would have helped," Schneider said. "It will be a great resource and is very forward-thinking for current and future business owners in Cairo."

"Just like in any organization, we value our current businesses, or members, and want to promote them on a platform that will be successful, grow and develop," Banta said. "However, we also want to draw in new members who may be interested in developing or investing in our town."

Schneider said as someone who grew up in the town of Cairo, progress like the new website and business profile is an exciting step forward.

"My family has owned the roller skating rink in Purling for 70 years and my sister is an attorney in town, so we've owned businesses here my entire life," Schneider said. "The new website sends

the message that Cairo is business-friendly. It says, ‘Come to Cairo, we will help you,’ and that’s the kind of attitude residents want to see.”

Cairo’s new website can be viewed at [www.townofcairo.com](http://www.townofcairo.com), and the business profile is available at [www.townofcairo.com/business](http://www.townofcairo.com/business).

To reach reporter Kate Seckinger, call the Daily Mail at 518-943-2100 ext. 3323 or email [kseckinger@thedailymail.net](mailto:kseckinger@thedailymail.net).