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## Porter adopts \$7.776 million budget for 2025

Staff Reports

Following some last-minute adjustments, the Town of Porter Town Board adopted its \$7,776,301 budget plan for 2025 on Tuesday evening.

The plan reflects a spending increase over the \$7.4 million budget adopted by the town for 2024. But it also sees a decline in the town tax rate from last year.

For 2025, the tax rate will be \$1.977271 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation, down from \$2.099896 per \$1,000 in 2024.

Supervisor John "Duffy" Johnston said the plan includes inflation spending adjustments for the various town departments, with \$2,100 in additional funding for the Ransomville Free Library and the Youngstown Free Library. It also includes cost of living salary increases for town employees.

The town also increased its spending for the two Niagara County Sheriffs Office constables who

oversee various duties with Porter, including the town courts. At the board's Nov. 7 public hearing on the budget, the town's reimbursements were found to be slightly lower than other municipalities, prompting the change.

"We raised them a little more to make it average (with other towns)," bookkeeper Kimberli Boyer said.

Johnston said the reimbursements for their constable's service reflected a lower activity volume in the town's courts, an ongoing state trend.

"They (the constables) get paid when they're here for one or even a half hour; they get paid three," he said.

"We had to make some changes to the budget. We understand the economy; it's a tough thing, but we did raise it back up."

Under appropriations, the 2025 budget finds: general fund A, \$1,821,373; \$926,643 (less anti-

ipated revenues); \$0 (less expended balance); \$894,730 (amount to be raised by tax); and \$1.977271 (tax rate per \$1,000).

More appropriations: general fund B - \$2,286,332; \$1,644,515 (less anticipated revenues); \$621,817 (less expended balance), and \$0 to be raised by tax; highway DB-outside village, \$1,704,562; \$1,704,562 (less anticipated revenues), and \$0 to be raised by tax.

Spending in other departments: water - \$479,844; \$358,300 (less estimated revenues); \$121,544 (less expended balance), and \$0 to be raised by tax; and sewer department - \$548,923; \$239,500 (less estimated revenues); \$309,423 (less estimated revenues), and \$0 to be raised by tax.

Remaining accounts include: Ransomville light - \$9,000 with \$9,000 to be raised by tax and per \$1,000 tax rate of \$0.267898; garbage refuse - \$400,000; \$400,000 (to be

raised by tax), and a tax rate of \$200.904068/unit; Ransomville Fire - \$261,000; \$261,000 (to be raised by tax), and a tax rate of \$1.949674 per \$1,000; Youngstown Fire - \$200,567; \$200,567 (to be raised by tax) and a tax rate of \$1.058759 per \$1,000; lakeshore improvement area phases I, II and III - \$52,575; \$52,575 (to be raised by tax)), and \$250/\$50/\$5 per unit; and the Harrison Lane road project - \$12,125; \$12,125 (to be raised by tax) and \$575/\$50 per unit.

Spending totals are: \$7,776,301; \$4,893,520 (less estimated revenues); \$1,052,784 (less expended balance) and \$1,829,997 (to be raised by tax).

Salaries for the town's elected officials are supervisor, \$46,660; deputy supervisor, \$8,847; town justices (two) \$21,701 each; town council members, \$8,265 (each); town clerk, \$72,980; and town highway superintendent, \$86,096.

## Grand opening of Chapters Coffee Café at Lewiston Public Library



Submitted

The Family & Friends Down Syndrome Association of Niagara Inc., a 501(c)(3) (DSA Niagara), has recently ventured into a new initiative in collaboration with the Lewiston Public Library: The Chapter's Coffee Café and Snack Bar.

The Down Syndrome Association of Niagara is excited to announce the grand opening of Chapter's Coffee Café and Snack Bar on Tuesday, Dec. 3, in the main lobby of the Lewis-

ton Public Library, 305 S. Eighth St.

Initially, the café will be open from 10 a.m. to noon Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. It will be operated by individuals with Down syndrome and their direct support professional. The café will serve the community by selling a variety of hot and cold beverages, coffee, teas, hot chocolate and pre-packaged snacks for both adults and children.

The program aims to provide purposeful and meaningful inclusion in a community-based environment

for individuals participating in a self-directed plan who are interested in learning preliminary job skills of a service-type industry.

Those interested in participating in this new endeavor, or looking for more information, can contact DSA Niagara President Deborah Fleck at 716-799-5024 or downriverdebs@gmail.com, or Vice President Christine Sirianni at 716-870-4904 or dsaniagara@gmail.com

Please come out and show your support.

## Piper: Update on expanded Lewiston historical collection, comments on cemetery courtesy

Guest Editorial by Russ Piper  
Village of Lewiston Historian

Recently, I was granted a second room to expand the museum collection (at the Red Brick Municipal Building). The current room was filled to the brim, and I found myself spilling into the hallway, prompting the need for more space. I have expanded to the second floor to room 5. It is now ready for viewing, as I have been working on getting it set up and incorporate the new pieces I acquired. Artwork that had been buried in stacks against the walls and furniture are now on display for the first time ever, as well as other pieces. The natural sunlight helps to accentuate the gallery walls. I am still searching for even more items to showcase local history.

Been a few months since the dedication of the flagpole and memorial bench monument to all our veterans (at the village cemetery). I have

been working, once again, on the cleaning and restoration of the village cemetery. Having suffered two serious injuries last year and losing six months to healing enough to get back at it, I have managed to trim some bushes and start to clean up the east side once more. Having fallen over brush injuring myself once again, the mayor "retired" me from any heavy cleaning. I still continue to do what I can possibly manage to accomplish with my limited ability nowadays.

The Lions Club of Lewiston has donated two flowering trees in memory of those who repose there in potter's field and the Oakwood sections. I am forever grateful to the Lions for helping me to beautify the historic grounds.

Lastly, there seems to be a problem of discarded dog waste on the grounds. As a dog lover myself, I have met some wonderful people

and their dogs who stop to chat and to thank and compliment the work I do there. There have been numerous bags left behind not only on the ground, but on the grave markers themselves. I find this disrespectful to me and the residents who repose there. Although I was told no more, I started clearing brush from the eastern side. Not only did I find bags left inside the bushes I was trimming over the past couple of months, but I started again for a little bit, as I could manage to do, only to find at least a dozen waste bags tossed in the same area I was clearing. I was so disgusted at the lack of respect shown for the grounds. I found two manmade pathways leading into the cemetery to walk their dogs.

These are hallowed grounds, not a dog park. Being public property, and accessible to anyone, I only ask that you have the decency to take

your refuse home or put it in a trash can on your walk. There are plenty on Center Street and the parks. I must say thank you to those who stop to chat and have the courtesy to dispose of their bags properly. I have worked long and hard creating a history museum and volunteering my time to maintain the cemetery grounds, and my various historical projects for the benefit of the village residents and visitors alike.

Again, a heartfelt thank you to those who helped to make my projects a reality: Pastor Serianni; Deacon Martha, who presided over the ceremonies; the VFW honor guard; Mayor Welch; Tim and Eva of the LCA (retired); Justin and Claudia as their respective portrayals; Tom Collister, curator of HAL; the staff of the village clerk's office; and the DPW crew, who clean up after me.

Until my next project.

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©2024 Niagara Frontier Publications  
1859 Whitehaven Road  
Grand Island, N.Y. 14072

Phone 716-773-7676  
Fax 716-773-7190

**Editorial:**  
Dispatch@wnypapers.com  
Sentinel@wnypapers.com

**Advertising:**  
NFPDesign@wnypapers.com

**Classifieds:**  
NFPClassifieds@wnypapers.com

**Circulation:**  
NFPcirculation@wnypapers.com

**Legals:**  
legalnotice@wnypapers.com

**Website:**  
wnypapers.com

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