



## *Office of the Broome County Legislature*

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### **COUNTY LEGISLATOR SCOTT BAKER AND COUNTY EXECUTIVE JASON GARNAR ANNOUNCE \$270,000 TO TOWN OF WINDSOR TO REPLACE CRITICAL EQUIPMENT LOST IN DEVASTATING HIGHWAY GARAGE FIRE**

County Executive Jason Garnar and 2nd District Legislator Scott Baker held a news conference on Thursday to announce \$270,000 in Small Community Grant funding for the Town of Windsor to replace a critical highway vehicle that was lost in a devastating fire at the Town Highway Garage in March.

"The Small Community Grant program was developed to help local governments and nonprofit organizations with projects that they would have trouble funding on their own. Windsor faced a major unexpected purchase when its Highway garage burned down and would have had to pass that cost on to the local taxpayers," said County Executive Jason Garnar. "With this Small Community Grant, we were able to help the Town purchase this needed equipment and keep taxes in check for its residents. Thank you to Chairman Reynolds and the entire County Legislature for their support of this program."

In March, an electrical short in one of the highway department trucks caused a fire that destroyed the Town Highway Garage, and three trucks were deemed a total loss.

"When I arrived on the scene of the fire and saw the damage firsthand, I knew we had to do something to help," said Legislator Scott Baker. "Working with Supervisor Odell, we were able to identify a critical piece of equipment that needed to be replaced as soon as possible. Thank you to County Executive Garnar, Legislature Chairman Dan J. Reynolds, and all of my colleagues in the Legislature for their support in helping the Town get back on their feet. I also want to recognize all of the Town officials and employees who worked tirelessly during this difficult time as well as all of the municipalities throughout Broome County who offered and provided assistance."

In June of this year, the Legislature unanimously adopted a Resolution to award a Small Community Fund grant to the Town of Windsor to purchase a new dump/plow truck. The Small Community Fund awards grants to non-profit organizations and municipalities for overall community benefit, investment and improvement.

"The Town of Windsor would like to thank the Broome County Legislature for their help and support while the Town has dealt with this crisis. The loss of a Town's highway facility along with a majority of their snowplow fleet is something no Supervisor plans to experience while in office. An event such as this brings forth many challenges, some of which you do not even think of until they arise as we have come to find out during all of this," said Town of Windsor Supervisor Mark Odell. "The biggest hurdle any Town Board faces is the annual budget, and the Town of Windsor Board knew that Windsor residents could not withstand large tax increases with the already rising costs of fuel and food that we have all already been experiencing. The assistance from Broome County to purchase a new plow truck

was a huge relief for the Town and made it a little easier to pass a budget that will not significantly impact our residents' wallets."

"The loss of your garage and your road fleet is the worst nightmare of any Highway Superintendent and one that I have been living in since March of this year. Despite all the challenges, I have been humbled by the outpouring of support from local officials, municipalities and Windsor residents. I would like to thank the Broome County Legislature for the Small Communities Grant which gave us the ability to purchase a new truck. Without the grant, this would not have been possible until sometime in the future," said Town of Windsor Highway Superintendent Michael Kithcart. "I would also like to give a formal thank you to the following towns for the use of their trucks and assistance; Town of Kirkwood, Town of Colesville, Town of Union, Town of Vestal, and Town of Unadilla. I would like to extend a special thank you to Chet Kupiec for all his help organizing the trucks for the late season storm that occurred days after the fire. I would like to thank the entire Windsor community for their understanding and support through all of this. Many residents dropped off food and drinks at the highway garage site in the days after the fire and it was appreciated. I want to thank the highway crew; they all came to the garage the night of the fire, not as employees, but more like a family that had just suffered a personal tragic loss themselves. They continue to keep their spirits high and positive attitudes through this situation, and everyone has been willing to do whatever has needed to be done since then. Finally, I want to give a special thank you to our office administrator Cheryl Peet for all her hard work in keeping everything organized and doing 'business as usual'."

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