



A PERIODIC UPDATE ON POLICY ISSUES OF
INTEREST TO CITY AND VILLAGE OFFICIALS

New York State Conference of Mayors and Municipal Officials
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July 9, 2010

Additional Details on State Budget

Pension Amortization – The Budget would provide local governments with the ability to permanently opt into a pension contribution stabilization program whereby a portion of their annual pension bill is amortized over a ten-year period at a rate of interest determined by the State Comptroller. It is important to note that if a municipality decides to take advantage of this program, they will also be required to make additional contributions to reserve accounts when pension contribution rates are declining, which could then be drawn from when rates begin to increase again. **NOTE: This is part of the revenue budget bill (A. 9710-D / S. 6610-C) that has been passed by the Assembly but upon which the Senate has not yet acted.**

Consolidation Incentive Aid – The Enacted Budget includes a total of \$1 million for all municipalities that merge, consolidate or dissolve. Each such municipality is eligible to receive additional AIM funding equal to 15% percent of the municipalities' combined property tax levy from the previous year, capped at \$1 million.

Dog Licensing – The Enacted Budget eliminates the State's role in dog licensing and responsibility for such service will be vested in municipalities currently authorized to issue dog licenses. The existing fee schedule will be repealed effective January 1, 2011, at which time license-issuing municipalities will be granted the authority to establish appropriate fees, subject to state statutory restrictions. All licensing revenue will be distributed in the same manner as under current law. In addition, the State will contract with third-party not-for-profits to administer the State's animal population control program. A detailed description of the new dog licensing process will be included in the July-August issue of NYCOM's *Municipal Bulletin*.

Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) – The Enacted Budget decreases the EPF by \$78 million, from \$212 million to \$134 million.

State Agency Mergers:

- **Office of Real Property Services Merged Into Department of Taxation and Finance** – The Budget merges the Office of Real Property Services (ORPS) into the Department of Taxation and Finance. A newly created Office of Real Property Tax Services (ORPTS) has been created within the Department and an independent State Board of Real Property Tax Services will be composed of the same members as the former State Board. The programs and policies of ORPTS will now be administered by the Department of Taxation and Finance. The new State Board will review complaints against equalization rates and special franchise values established by ORPTS.

- **SERB/PERB Merger** – The State Employment Relations Board (SERB) will be abolished and its remaining responsibilities will be assumed by the Public Employment Relations Board (PERB).

- **Single Leadership for NYHOMES and the Division of Housing and Community Renewal** – The two entities will remain separate but are now consolidated under a single management structure that is expected to achieve synergies in areas such as administration, asset management and grant-making, producing annual state savings of \$3.5 million.