



2010 State of the Town Address

*Delivered by Supervisor Mary F. Holtz
January 21, 2010*

Good afternoon. I'm honored to present my 2010 State of the Town Address at the annual Cheektowaga Chamber of Commerce luncheon. To help out with the presentation of the great volume of information I plan to share with you today, I've put together a PowerPoint which will, hopefully, help to give a clearer picture of the state of our town.

Before starting, I would like to acknowledge Chairman of the Board Linda Panaro, of Northwest Savings Bank, and also thank the Officers and the Board of Directors of the Cheektowaga Chamber of Commerce for continuing to provide this forum for the businesspeople and residents of Cheektowaga to learn what is happening in our town.

My very special thanks go out to Chamber President and CEO Debbie Liegl and the Chamber staff for all their hard work and in promoting the Town of Cheektowaga.

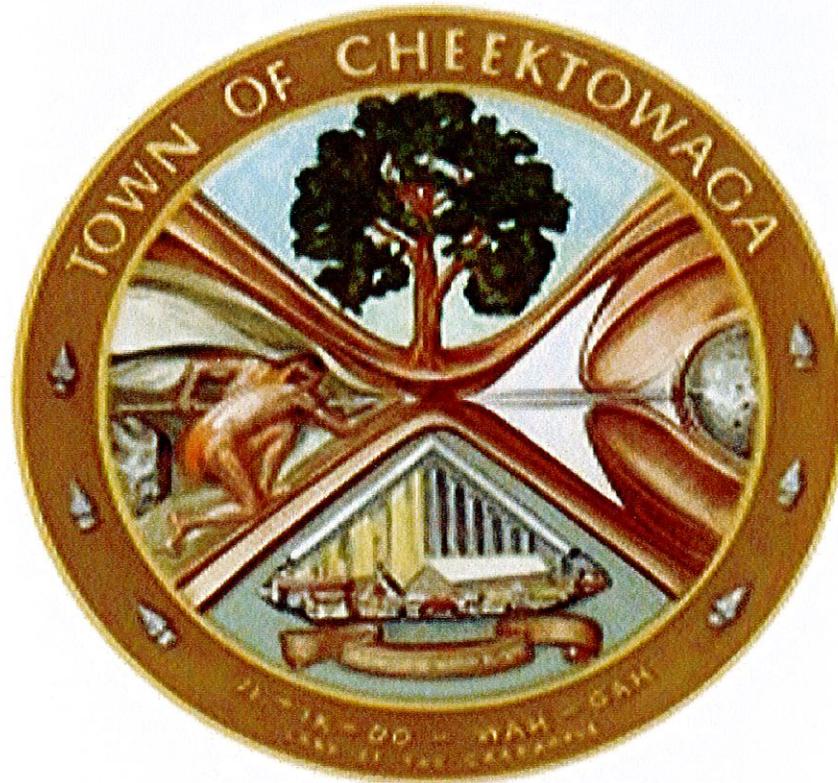
I also want to acknowledge today's lunch sponsor, Rural/Metro Medical Services. I'm sure Jay Smith will be a great asset to the Chamber as a new member of the Board of Directors. The Town just renewed its agreement with Rural/Metro...they provide wonderful emergency service for our town.

Also, in the audience, I would like to recognize:

- Councilmember Stan Kaznowski
- Councilmember Charlie Markel
- Deputy Town Clerk Vickie Dankowski, who is representing Town Clerk Alice Magierski, who can't be here with us due to the passing of her mother-in-law.

This year, I have prepared a PowerPoint presentation which I believe will be more effective in disseminating the large volume of information I would like to share with you today.

Town of Cheektowaga State of the Town

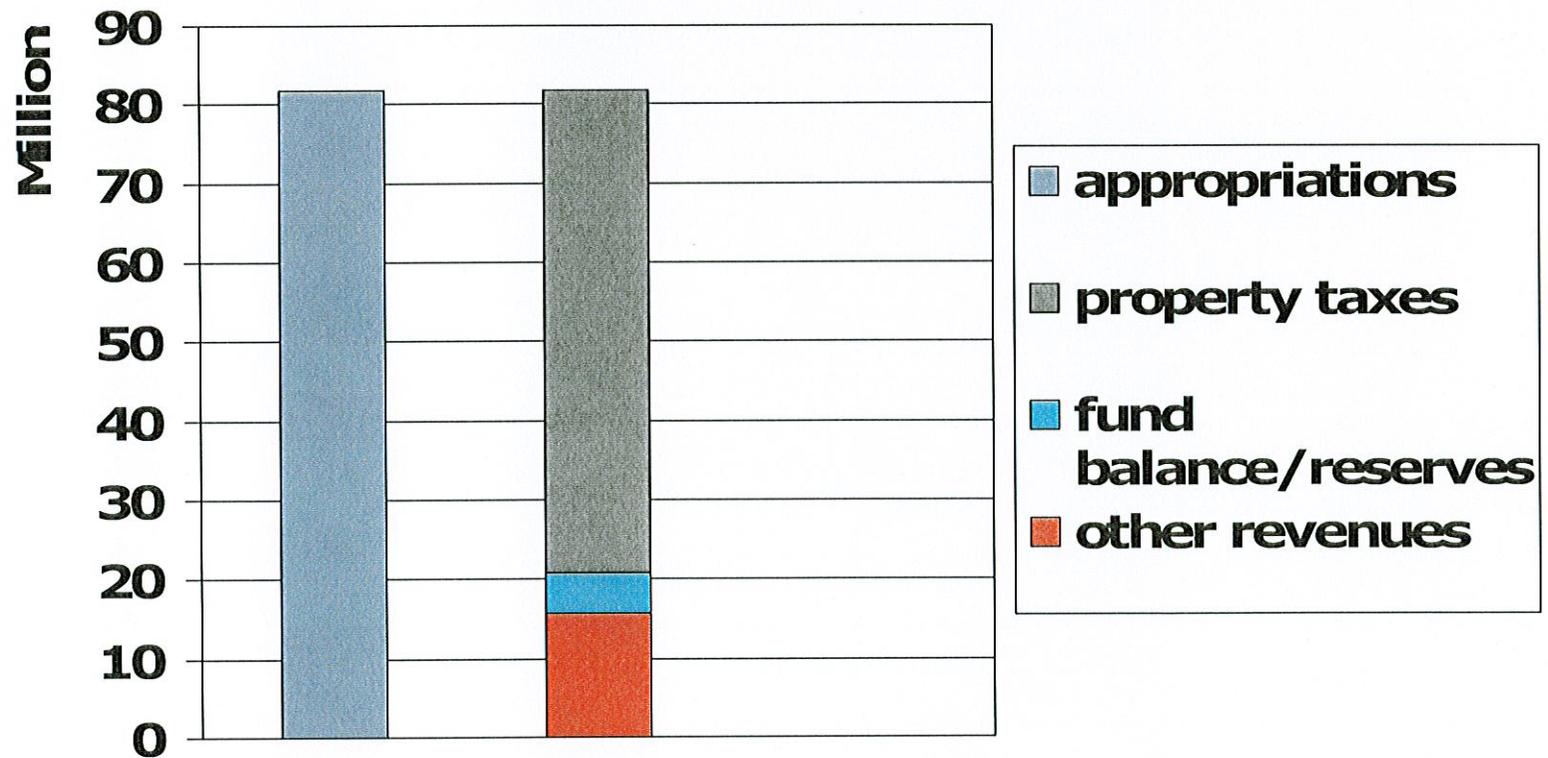


January 21, 2010

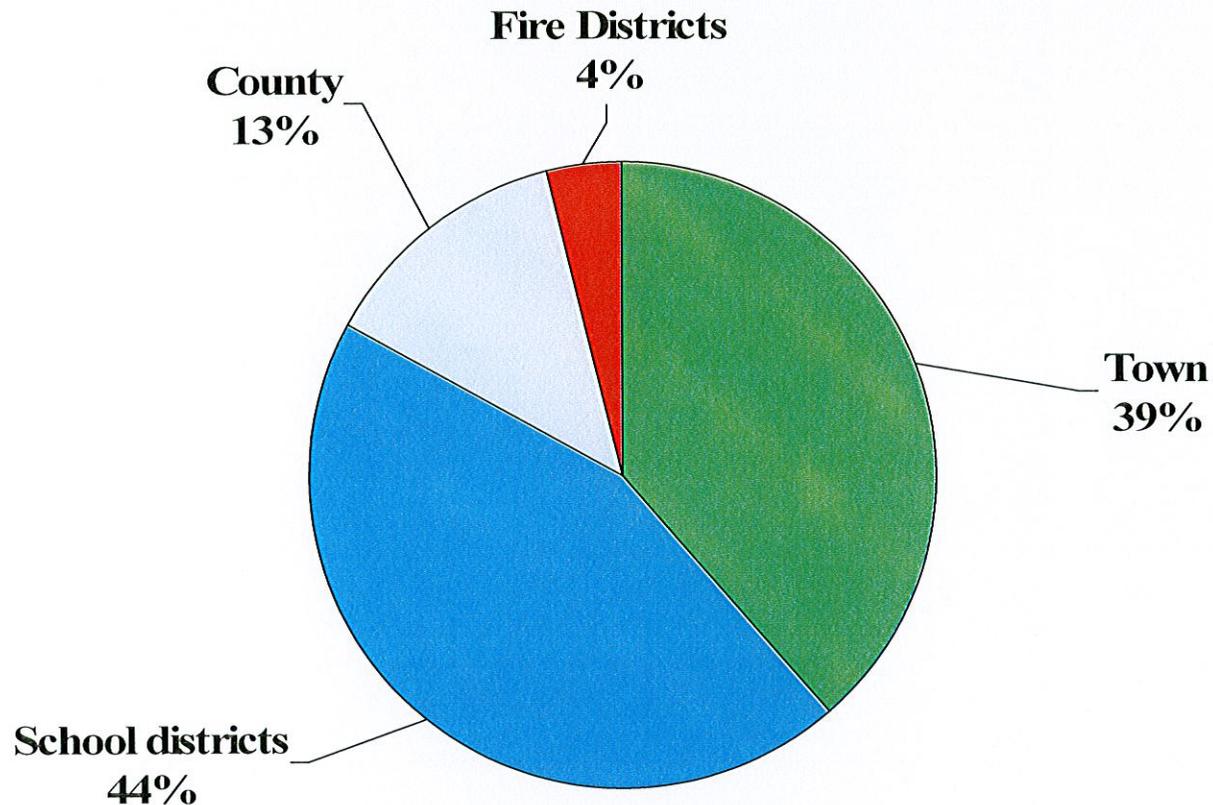
Accounting Department

- Brian Krause, Director of Administration & Finance

HOW OUR BUDGETS WORK



Average homeowner's tax bills (home assessed at \$61,000)



Appropriations by classification for 2010

Public Safety	33.7%
Highway & Street Lighting	16.7%
Sewers, Storm Drainage & Hydrants	15.8%
General Govt –courts, assessor, town clerk, & admin offices	12.6%
Garbage & recycling	12.1%
Culture & Recreation – parks, youth, recreation & seniors	9.1%

Town Wide Appropriations

	Amount	% of	from 2009	from 2009
	<u>Appropriated</u>	<u>total</u>	<u>budget</u>	<u>budget</u>
Personnel	\$ 33,033,712	40.4%	\$ (178,226)	-0.5%
Fringe benefit costs	21,316,331	26.1%	3,146,088	17.3%
Equipment	1,266,260	1.5%	(143,596)	-10.2%
3rd party/outside services	19,042,620	23.3%	(419,421)	-2.2%
Debt service	<u>7,130,975</u>	8.7%	<u>733,643</u>	11.5%
	\$ 81,789,898	100.0%	\$ 3,138,488	

Understanding the budget changes - appropriations

- No raises for personnel budgeted – all contracts will be in negotiations
- No salary increases for any elected officials
- No Additional positions – part time or full time

Understanding the budget changes - appropriations

- Part time and seasonal budget totals are down \$164,000 from 2009 levels
- Overtime budget totals are down \$40,000 from 2009 budget
- Various other costs reduced by approximately \$800,000

Understanding the budget changes - appropriations

- Fringe benefits
 - Health insurance costs are budgeted at 20% increases (\$1,760,000 increase)
 - Retirement contribution costs mandated by the State are up \$1,340,000

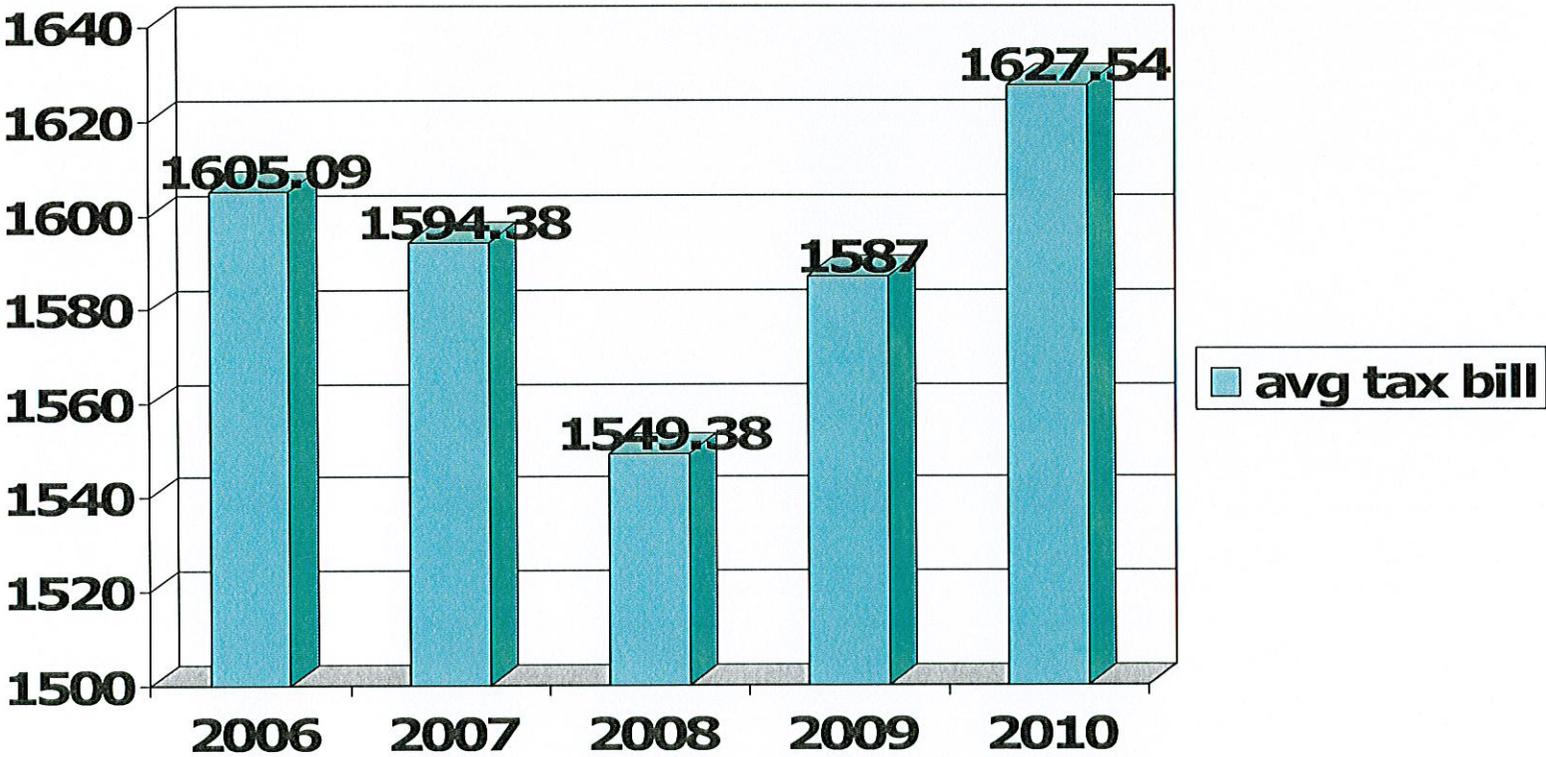
Understanding the budget changes - revenues

- Total other revenues are down \$390,000 attributed mainly to the interest income dropping due to the lagging economy.

Debt Service

- Dingens Street drainage debt service of \$45,000
- Expansion of Police & Court Building – debt service increase of \$700,000 (tax impact reduced to \$200,000 through use of fund balances)

Average tax bill since 2006



History of Police & Court Building

- Built
 - 1960s
- Employee's
 - Approximately 80 Sworn Officers
 - All Male
 - Approximately 8 Civilian
- Prisoners /Arrests / Activity
 - Much less in 1960's South Cheektowaga was farm land

Present Conditions

- Sworn Staff
 - Authorized Strength 129
 - 9 Females
- Civilian Staff
 - Full Time
 - 37 - 12 Female
 - Part Time
 - 58 – 15 Female
- Prisoners
 - Male 2007 - 3,938
 - Female 2007 - 1,384

Current Issues

Cell Blocks



Male Cell Block

- Currently - 9 Cells, up to 33 males in a single day and
- as many as 4 males per cell

Female Cell Block

- Currently - 3 Cells, up to 14 prisoners in a single day
- Have had 5 females per cell

Current Issues

Locker Rooms



No female locker room facilities

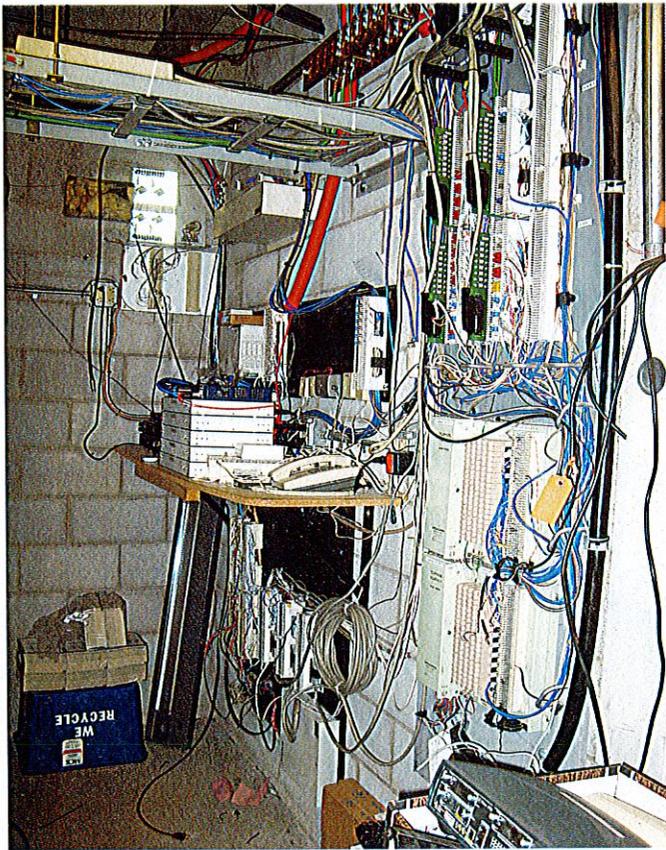
- 9 Female Sworn
- No shower facilities in Police End of Building
 - One male shower room in basement of Court Building
- Lockers are in need of replacing

Evidence Room



Current Issues

Infrastructure



- Old, inefficient and inadequate heating and ventilation
- No handicap access
- Electrical room and computer areas inadequate

Insufficient Workspace



Ceiling leak from Prisoner Plumbing

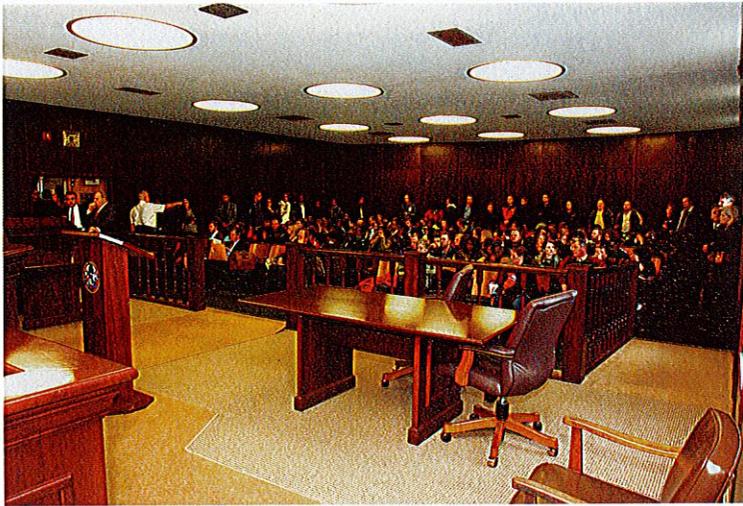


Current Issues Court



- The public and prisoners often commingled in same common area

Current Issues Court



- Courtrooms overcrowded
- No rooms for juries to deliberate
- No rooms available for prosecutors or attorneys to meet with clients

Grants

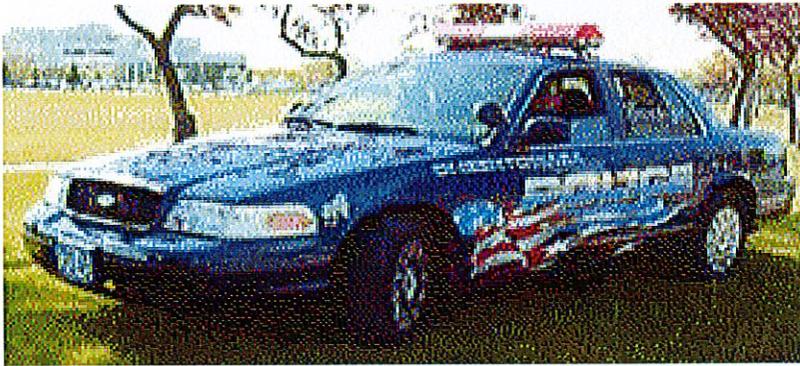
- The Town of Cheektowaga has been awarded **\$2,755,739** in grants this year through the efforts of Sue Ann Barnes of Grantmakers Advantage, Inc.,
- Town Department Heads,
- Congressman Brian Higgins,
- Assemblyman Dennis Gabryszak,
- State Senator William Stachowski
- President Obama's Stimulus

Grant Allocations



- remodel part of the former Maryvale Library for use as an Archival Research Center
- install solar panels on five town owned buildings

Grant Allocations



- continue special patrols to reduce crime
- install surveillance cameras in local schools.
- support the Drug Court
- Anna Reinstein Library Renovation

Grant Allocations



- purchase of 2 senior vans,
- finger print machine,
- crime scene unit mobile command center,
- resurfacing Stiglmeier tennis court,
- roller hockey rink,
- playground equipment, and fountain

Grant Allocations



- Neighborhood Stabilization Program Grant of \$848,000
- Additional Community Development funds for the installation of drainage and reconstruct two roads in Cedargrove
- Several grants are still pending
 - for the Police and Court Building,
 - infrastructure improvements for Wayne Terrace,
 - additional improvements to the Anna Reinstein Library.

Community Development and Neighborhood Stabilization



Jerome Gabryszak, Director of Community Development

- 81 housing units were rehabilitated and brought up to code standards with total investment of \$1.64 million.
- Rehabilitation work totaling \$561,000 on another 40 homes is in progress.
- There are 470 homeowners on its waiting list for assistance to make needed housing repairs.

Community Development and Neighborhood Stabilization



- In 2009 a grant of \$2.6 million was awarded to the Town and the City of Buffalo, of which Cheektowaga's share is \$848,000.
- 9 vacant, foreclosed houses in the Walden Avenue area will be acquired for rehabilitation or demolition
- This grant will further the Town's efforts at improving the Walden Avenue neighborhood

Community Development and Neighborhood Stabilization



- The Town's First-Time Homebuyer Program helped 7 families purchase a home in Cheektowaga by providing a deferred, 0% loan for closing costs and down-payment assistance.
- In conjunction with New Opportunities, a non-for-profit agency, property in the East Delavan area of Town is being rehabilitated

Building Department and Neighborhood Stabilization

- Thomas Adamczak, Supervising Code Enforcement Officer
- In the year 2009, \$126,758 was expended on 276 properties for the cleanup and securing of structures and properties
- As of December 2009 the department is tracking over 500 vacant properties, both residential and commercial.

Building Department and Neighborhood Stabilization

- The town received 5,569 complaints of which 3,329 are now in compliance
- There were 8 houses demolished in 2009. Seven by the Town and one by the owner after notification of violations.
- An additional 10 houses are slated for demolition in 2010.

Building Department

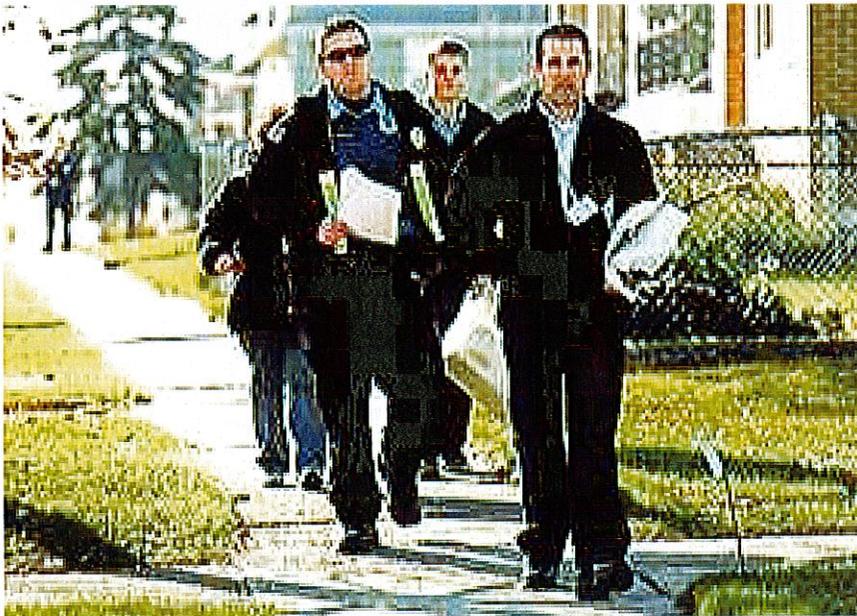
- The overall number of permits again increased to 2,436
- The value of construction, \$34,012,934 was half of 2008 (\$66,071,696).

Building Department

Commercial development although slower is continuing

- The Fairfield Hotel on Genesee will be opening in June
- Courtyard by Marriott may begin in March 2010.
- Walgreen's drugstore is being pursued this year.
- Major construction at the Walden Galleria finished with a P F Changs opening as well as other retailers.
- API, at 2777 Walden, doubled their manufacturing space with a \$4.1m expansion.
- FedEx expanded their facility at 1289 Walden with a \$1.4m addition.
- Costanzo's bakery began a \$2.4m expansion.
- Two small hotels are planned for Genesee Street near Transit Road. They would have a total of 140 rooms if both are constructed.

Police Department



- **Christine Ziemba,
Chief of Police**
- **Patrol**
- **Neighborhood
Impact program was
instituted covering
the Northwest part of
town**

Police Department

- **Administration**
- Police Department received its Re-Accreditation from New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services. Required every five years
- The evaluators stated that this was one of the easiest reviews they've ever done, which speaks highly of the professionalism of the men and women of the department.

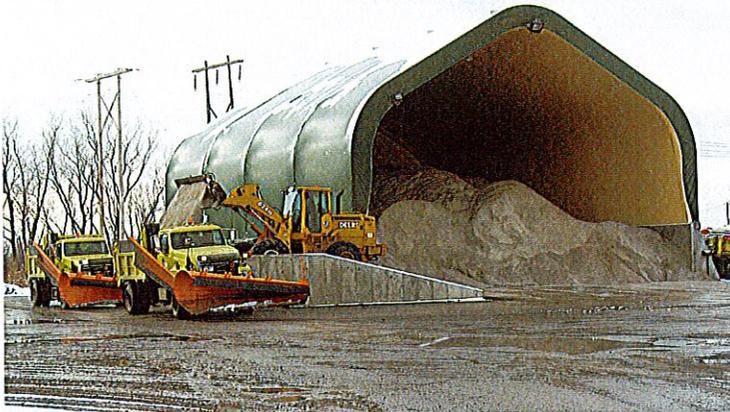
Police Department

- **Detective Bureau**
- The Bureau reopened the investigation of a 7year old cold case homicide.
- Painstaking review of the case and evidence was conducted, along with new technology used on previously gathered evidence. Witnesses were re-interviewed.
- Ultimately, the primary suspect was re-interviewed and confronted with newly gathered information, and confessed to the crime. He is facing sentencing of between 15 – 25 years.
- The investigation remains open pursuing additional suspects

Police Department

- **Finance and Technology**
- the completion of Phase 1 and 2 of the 4.9 GHz communication system.
- Phase 1 was getting the Town Park surveillance cameras hooked up to PD Dispatch.
- Phase 2 was begun to change over seven Public Safety Radio Satellite Receivers for police and fire dispatch from landline to microwave transmission. This was accomplished, with an annual recurring cost savings of approximately \$30,000 for telephone lines.
- Plans are in progress to update the town wide VOIP telephone system.

Engineering



- **William Pugh, Town Engineer**
- Robert Latshaw, General Crew Chief, Sewer Maintenance
- Jon Nichy, Superintendent, Main Pump Station
- Completed the construction of a new 2000 ton Salt Storage structure at the Town Highway Department.
- Rehabilitated the Central Garage and Sanitation Department building

Engineering



- Completed preparation of plans and specifications for the new 14,000 S.F. Facilities Garage slated for completion this spring
- Demolition of Incinerator Building

Engineering

- Administered construction tasks for the replacement of a 900 KW emergency generator and diesel fuel storage tank
- Completed the installation of approximately 2300 L.F. of 60" storm sewer trunk line on Dingens Street
- The Town has been working with Erie County officials in the formulation of an intermunicipal agreement to share in the cost of a second phase trunk line extension being designed by the Engineering Department slated for bidding in 2010.

Engineering

- Engineering Department staff has been working closely with Police and Court administration, Town Board Members and representatives of the firm of Trautman Associates in the development of the schematic design for renovations and additions to the Police and Courts facility
- The Town completed over 75 sanitary sewer repairs during 2009 including manhole replacements to help to reduce sewer backups and eliminate infiltration into the sanitary sewer system.

Engineering

- The Meadowlawn Project Phase II trunk sewer was completed connecting the Patrick Lane sanitary sewer to the Homeworth trunk replacing a portable pump that has been stationed at the intersection of Patrick and Meadowlawn for over 40 years.

Highway Department and Engineering Department



Mark Wegner, Highway Superintendent

- Total reconstruction of Benbro Drive including design and construction of a proper storm sewer system and outlet to Scajaquada Creek.
- Paving and street rehabilitation program included a total of 69 streets.
- Development of specifications and implementation of a sidewalk replacement/repair program which included sidewalk replacement work on 15 streets and handicap ramp improvements at numerous intersections.

Highway Department



- Instituted a Highway Rehabilitation Recycling Program that yielded a savings of approximately \$220,000.

Sanitation Department



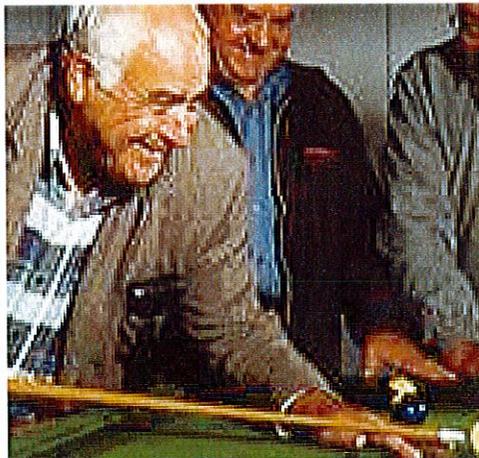
- Frank Max, General Crew Chief
- Town has purchased new garbage trucks to continue our service

Senior Services



- **Kerry Switalski, Director**
- In addition to the many programs already provided Kerry has added an inexpensive Special Events line up
- A new Outreach Services Coordinator, Jamie Acoff was hired and she jumped in with both feet
 - resurrecting the Sunshine Program for homebound seniors
 - working hand in hand with our Building Inspectors and Police Department to advocate for seniors who need assistance with code violations

Senior Services



- Will be working with Murak & Associates, LLC on a strategic plan that will involve all the Departmental staff as well as input from our members to help us plan for the next five years.

Youth & Recreation



- Ellen Fischer, Executive Director
- Experienced a 19% increase in program revenue
- Expanded the Friday Night T.G.I.F. youth and homework helpers tutoring program.
- Created a game room for teen programs, school break camps and senior groups meeting at the Alexander Center.
- With the Police Department and the Family 25 Inc. from the City of Buffalo, operated a summer student athlete basketball clinic and league for over 100 students ranging in age from 5 to 13.

Youth & Recreation



- Conservation Corps continued to maintain the 5.2 miles of nature trail system in Stiglmeier Park.
- Implemented 3 new adult morning exercise programs at the Alexander Center.
- Dedicated the Town Park Pool Guardhouse in memory of Brian Hansen and created an employee scholarship in his name.

Parks Department



- **John Jaroszewski**, General Crew Chief
- Maintenance and upkeep of seventeen Parks,
- Three pools
- Five Community Centers,
- Ice rink
- Cemetery
- Library
- Records inventory building
- Five additional buildings

Facilities Department



- **John Jaroszewski**, General Crew Chief
- Responsible for maintenance of all town buildings
- Renovations to the front of Town Hall.
- Landscaping in front of Town Hall and Senior Center.
- Sprinkler system for landscaping at Town Hall.

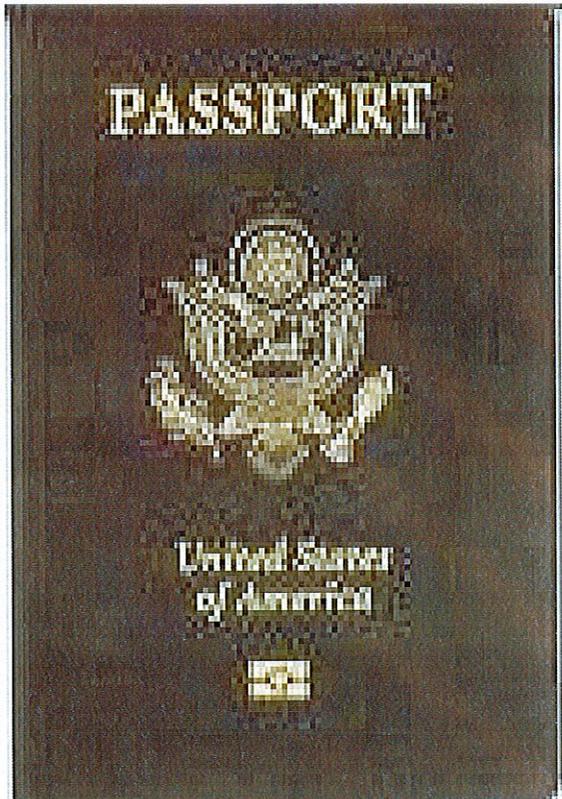
Employee Relations

- Anthony Romano, Coordinator of Employee Relations
- With the cooperation and assistance of our third party administrator, First Niagara Risk Management, the Town has reduced its dollars lost per claim by better than 50%.
- Via a grant from the State of New York, developed new or revised safety policies and implemented related safety training seminars for department employees and their respective employees.

Computers and Technology

- Budget has been reduced by \$250,000 over the past two years
- Creation of a New Website with Community Videos
- Introduction of a Complaint Tracking System
- Introducing new program for the Recreation Department
- Replacement of a town wide Telephone System with VOIP System that will greatly reduce costs in 2010
- Introduced a new system to track all town equipment

Town Clerk/Tax Receiver

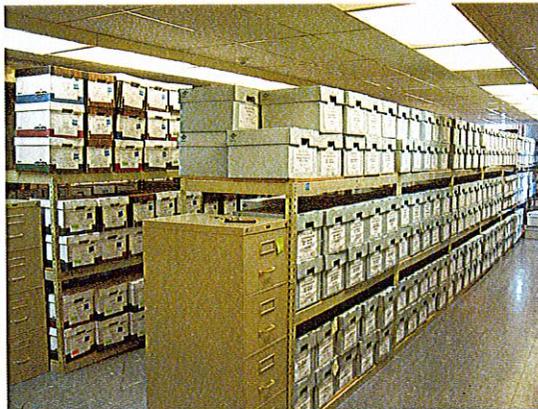


- Alice Magierski, Town Clerk
- Passport Acceptance Agency
More than 1,000 Passport Applications were processed in 2009
 - Office is full service, pictures are take, help with completion of your application, and mailing it for processing
- Extended hours the first and third Wednesday of each month 9-6:00
- Acceptance of credit card for most fee's collected in the Town Clerk's office.

Town Clerk/Tax Receiver

- Tax information for properties within the Town will be available online.
- Acceptance of credit card payments at the Tax Office

Town Clerk Record Management



- **Lisa-Marie Bolognese**
Municipal Records Manager
- In 2006, the Town officially opened the Town's Records Center located at 735 Maryvale.
- The program ensures that records, information, and historical documents will be available, as needed, by government officials and members of the public.
- The program also provides guidelines for local government departments to follow that eliminate redundant records and promptly dispose of records no longer needed.

Emergency Services

- Earl Loder, Emergency Disaster Coordinator
- On February 12 at 10:29 PM, Earl assisted the Town of Clarence with crash of flight 3407. The Town Senior Center was opened for the friends and relatives of the victims on the plane.
- In June as a member of the Erie County Local Emergency Planning Committee Earl was put in charge of a committee to bring TRANSCARE Whistle-Stop Tour to Cheektowaga. The Tour is designed to increase community understanding of the importance of emergency planning, and to provide local emergency response groups an opportunity to receive some hands-on training. Individuals participating were from various states and Canada. The tour was held at the Norfolk Southern Bison Yard in Cheektowaga.

Emergency Services

- In November Vigilant Guard preformed an exercise program sponsored by Northern Command National guard, simulating the results of a 5.9 earthquake with second and third order effects involving hazmat incidents and numerous collapsed buildings in Erie County.
- The department responded to over 70 incidents, including fires, chemical spills, weather emergencies, and airport alerts.

Other Departments

- Town Justices, Thomas Kolbert and James Vallone
- Kevin Schenk, Town Attorney
- Robert Ciesleski, General Crew Chief, Central Garage

Comprehensive Plan

- Over the past year the town has been moving towards the finalization of its comprehensive plan.
- This has been a cooperative effort with businesses, community groups, schools and every aspect of our community
- 2010 should see the adoption of this plan which we greatly aid the development of our community.

Federal and State Interaction



- Cheektowaga continues to be on the radar screen of our State and Federal Elective Officials
- Congressman Brian Higgins, State Senator Bill Stachowski, Assemblyman Dennis Gabryszak have been instrumental in securing funding for us

Federal and State Interaction



- Senator Chuck Schumer has had several visits to our town to share information on legislation
- Senator Kirsten Gillibrand met informally with our residents
- NYS Attorney General Andrew Cuomo conducted an informational meeting at Town Hall

Federal and State Interaction

- Due to the Town's involvement with Distressed Properties and Rehabilitation, I was invited by Senator Schumer and Congressman Higgins to participate in a roundtable on local issues attended by HUD Secretary Shaun Donovan