

## **2013 Budget Guidelines Adopted for County Departments and Agencies**

The Legislature on June 5, by unanimous vote of those present, established fiscal targets for departments and agencies as part of the 2013 budget process. (Legislators Peter Stein and Nathan Shinagawa were excused.) The Legislature last month directed County Administrator Joe Mareane to establish fiscal targets to achieve a maintenance of effort budget that could be supported by a 2.2% increase in the property tax levy, while also allowing him the latitude to consider over-target requests from departments and agencies and present a recommended budget to the Legislature that could be supported by a levy increase of 3.5%.

The action sets the fiscal targets for not-for-profit agencies, for county municipalities applying for reimbursement for county-wide services, and agencies receiving reimbursements under the Sales Tax Agreement with the City of Ithaca at the amount approved in the adopted 2012 budget. For county departments, the target equals the 2012 budget target plus negotiated salary increases and associated fringe expense, and a 10% adjustment in amounts allocated in 2012 for vehicle fuel. None of the fiscal targets includes any prior one-time funding nor any funds re-appropriated from previous years. The Legislature authorizes the County Administrator to reduce department targets as needed to achieve the tax levy goal set by the Legislature.

Also related to the 2013 budget process, the Legislature held a public hearing, seeking citizen comment on a proposed Local Law that would leave open the option of the County's overriding the State's property tax cap for 2013, should that become necessary. No one commented at the hearing.