



**Cortland County
Government Operations
Committee
Committee Meeting
~ Agenda ~**

60 Central Ave.
Cortland, NY 13045
www.cortlandcountyny.gov

Tuesday, March 10, 2026

10:30 AM

Room 302

View Meeting Virtually:

WebEx Meeting Information

<https://cortlandny.webex.com/cortlandny/j.php?MTID=m6ca43f2883fe3ef8b245e29622dbc7bd>

Tuesday, March 10, 2026 10:30 AM | 1 hour | (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)

Meeting number: 2336 116 4496

Password: kmNKUJa2P35

Join by phone

+1-415-655-0001 US Toll

Access code: 233 611 64496

Call to Order

Attendee Name	Present	Absent	Late	Arrived
Committee Member Douglas Bentley				
Committee Member Cathy Bischoff				
Committee Member Paul Heider				
Committee Member Linda Jones				
Committee Member Dominick Mantella				
Committee Vice-Chair Mitchel Eccleston				
Committee Chair Joseph Nauseef				

Approval of Minutes

- 1. Government Operations Committee Minutes - February 10, 2026**

Resolutions

ON MOTION OF JOSEPH NAUSEEF

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1.

Establishing a Standardized Policy Development Framework for County Operations

WHEREAS, the Cortland County Legislature is the policy-making body of the County and is responsible for establishing overall legislative direction; AND

WHEREAS, the County Administrator is responsible for the day-to-day administration of County operations and utilizes policies and procedures as administrative tools to implement legislative direction and ensure consistent, effective, and transparent County operations; AND

WHEREAS, Cortland County currently lacks a uniform, countywide framework for the development, review, and implementation of operational policies and procedures, resulting in inconsistent practices across departments; AND

WHEREAS, Departments have historically relied on legacy practices or informal guidance without a standardized process for review, coordination, documentation, or revision; AND

WHEREAS, establishing a standardized policy development framework will promote consistency, accountability, transparency, and continuity across county government while preserving legislative authority; AND

WHEREAS, it is the intent of the Legislature to organize the process by which policies and procedures are developed and administered, without limiting its authority to adopt, amend, or rescind policy by resolution; NOW THEREFORE BE IT

RESOLVED, that the Cortland County Legislature hereby adopts the following policy development framework for countywide operational policies and procedures:

Section 1. Establishment of Framework

The Cortland County Legislature hereby establishes a standardized framework for the development, review, and administration of policies and procedures.

Section 2. Legislative Authority

The Legislature retains full authority to:

- Adopt policy direction by resolution;
- Direct the County Administrator to develop policies and procedures; and
- Review, amend, or rescind any administrative or operational policy or procedure developed pursuant to this framework.

Nothing in this resolution shall be construed to limit or diminish the authority of the Legislature.

Section 3. Role of the County Administrator

The County Administrator is hereby authorized and directed to:

- Develop and draft policies and procedures consistent with legislative intent;
- Consult with Department Heads, or other resources, as appropriate;
- Submit proposed policies and procedures to the relevant statutory committee for review and approval;
- Implement approved policies and procedures following committee review and approval; and
- Maintain a centralized repository of all adopted policies and procedures and revisions thereto.

Section 4. Role of Legislative Committees

Statutory committees shall provide subject-matter oversight and review of policies and procedures within their respective jurisdictions.

Each policy or procedure shall identify a responsible department for implementation. The statutory committee with jurisdiction over that department shall review the policy or procedure. Any question regarding committee jurisdiction shall be resolved by the Chair of the Legislature.

Committee review shall include consideration of:

- Alignment with legislative intent;
- Clarity, effectiveness, and potential impacts; and
- Readiness for implementation.

Section 5. Role of Department Heads

Department Heads may establish department-level procedures tailored to their operational needs, provided such procedures do not conflict with adopted countywide policies.

Department-level procedures:

- Shall be submitted to the County Administrator for review to ensure consistency, unless otherwise exempt;
- Must comply with applicable countywide policies;
- Must be maintained in writing; and
- Must be periodically reviewed and updated.

Section 6. Policy Structure and Content Principles

Policies and procedures developed under this framework shall follow a generally uniform structure sufficient to promote consistency, clarity, and effective implementation.

As appropriate to their subject matter, such policies and procedures shall address:

- Purpose and intent;
- Scope of applicability;
- Relevant legal or regulatory authority;
- Roles and responsibilities for implementation; and
- Any procedures or guidance necessary to support consistent administration.

The specific format, level of detail, and supporting documentation for policies and procedures shall be determined by the County Administrator, in consultation with affected Departments, and may evolve over time to reflect operational needs and best practices. All approved policies must be indexed and titled according to said format determined by the County Administrator.

All approved policies must reference the date approved and legislative committee that approved said Policy.

ON MOTION OF JOSEPH NAUSEEF

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2.

Authorize Grant Application for Records Management - County Clerk

WHEREAS, in 2017 Cortland County participated in a grant with Tompkins County that provided Laserfiche Software to Cortland County for Records Management; AND

WHEREAS, the use of Laserfiche within Cortland County has continued to expand, allowing for increased efficiencies, preservation and access of records; AND

WHEREAS, the Records Management Officer (County Clerk) has identified an ongoing need to scan records, to support departments who are moving towards a paperless process, to decrease the storage demand at the Records Center, and to preserve permanent records; AND

WHEREAS, the Records Management Officer (County Clerk) recommends applying for a grant through New York State Archives Local Government Records Management Improvement Fund to provide scanning services to Cortland County up to \$75,000; AND

WHEREAS, this annual funding opportunity does not require a financial match from Cortland County; NOW THEREFORE BE IT

RESOLVED, that the Cortland County Legislature hereby supports the Records Management Officer (County Clerk) to apply for the grant through New York State Archives; AND BE IT FURTHER

RESOLVED, that the Cortland County Legislature hereby authorizes the County Administrator to sign the required Institutional Authorization form; AND BE IT FURTHER

RESOLVED, if Cortland County is awarded, the Cortland County Legislature authorizes the County Administrator, upon review by the County Attorney or designee, to sign applicable contracts; AND BE IT FURTHER

RESOLVED, that the Director of Finance hereby is authorized to accept the funds if awarded and create an account for said funds upon notice of the grant award.

ON MOTION OF JOSEPH NAUSEEF

AGENDA ITEM NO. 3.

Proposed Local Law "B" of 2026 - A Local Law Creating an Exception to the Residency Requirement for Appointed Public Officers for the County of Cortland

WHEREAS, there are many public officer positions within Cortland County which require a combination of specialized education and experience; AND

WHEREAS, it is becoming increasingly difficult to find qualified candidates who also reside in Cortland County; AND

WHEREAS, the Cortland County Legislature has previously passed local laws changing the residency requirement for the positions of County Administrator, Public Defender, Chief Assistant Public Defender, Assistant Public Defender, Assistant District Attorney, Deputy Sheriff Titles, Correction Officer Titles, Chief Assistant County Attorney, Assistant County Attorney, Planning Director, and Assigned Counsel Administrator; AND

WHEREAS, it is the desire of the Legislature to have the ability to consider all qualified applicants

regardless of residency; AND

WHEREAS, the Government Operations Committee of the Cortland County Legislature has recommended changes to the residency requirement for all appointed public officers; AND

WHEREAS, a public hearing was held on March 26, 2026 before the Cortland County Legislature; AND

WHEREAS, said Local Law has been in its final form upon the desks of the Cortland County Legislature at least seven (7) calendar days exclusive of Sunday, prior to this date; NOW THEREFORE

Be it enacted by the Cortland County Legislature of the County of Cortland as follows:

SECTION 1.

Preface: It is a strong desire of the Cortland County community to install Cortland County residents in the positions of appointed public officers for the County of Cortland (hereafter, “appointed public officers”). It is a strong belief of Cortland County that Cortland County residents are knowledgeable about and concerned with the affairs of Cortland County. As has been recognized by the Courts, we believe that a resident of our County has a stake in the life of this community that is not necessarily shared by a non-resident. A resident is more likely to be familiar with local problems, conditions and needs, and is better qualified to perform the duties of the relevant office in question. *DeHond v. Nyquist*; (65 Misc. 2d 526, 529-530, 318 NYS2d (1971)). At the same time, however, the complexity and breadth of Cortland County Government present a challenge with respect to staffing and recruitment. We recognize that the pool of candidates from which we draw in our County is responsible and caring; however, it is sometimes difficult to staff an office from the pool in Cortland County. This law is being passed based upon the existence of the residency requirement in New York State Public Officer's Law §3.

SECTION 2.

Purpose: It is the purpose of this Local Law to confirm the commitment of Cortland County to hire residents who have the necessary qualifications and skills to meet the requirements of appointed public officer positions. This Law will permit Cortland County to alleviate the problem of staffing and recruitment by permitting Cortland County to solicit candidates for the appointed public officers from the Counties contiguous to Cortland County in the event of an inability to recruit a sufficient number of qualified candidates from within Cortland County for the positions.

SECTION 3.

Authority: Under the Municipal Home Rule Law, Section 10, the County of Cortland has the authority to authorize a non-resident to hold the position of an appointed public officer.

SECTION 4.

Authority of Cortland County to Hire Applicants for Appointed Public Officer Positions: Upon a finding by the Legislature that all recruitment efforts have been adequately pursued, the Legislature shall be authorized to consider and hire applicants who are residents from any county contiguous to Cortland County for appointed public officer positions.

This law does not apply to elective offices or positions with state-mandated residency requirements that cannot be superseded.

SECTION 5.

Severability: If any section of this Local Law shall be adjudged by any court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, such judgment shall not affect, impair or invalidate the remainder thereof that can be given effect without the invalid provision, but shall be confined in its operation to the section thereof directly involved in the controversy in which such judgment shall have been rendered.

SECTION 6.

Effect: This local law shall take effect upon filing in the Office of the Secretary of State as provided by Section 27 of the Municipal Home Rule Law.

Establishing the Organizational Hierarchy and Definitions for Cortland County Departments and Administrative Units

WHEREAS, the Cortland County Legislature is authorized under New York State County Law to establish and regulate the organization and administration of county government; AND

WHEREAS, the Legislature seeks to provide clear, consistent definitions for the internal organizational structure of county departments to promote effective administration, accountability, and operational clarity; AND

WHEREAS, establishing standardized definitions for departments and subordinate organizational units will assist in governance, budgeting, personnel administration, and transparency, while preserving legislative oversight and compliance with applicable law; AND

WHEREAS, the Legislature desires to formally identify county departments while permitting appropriate administrative flexibility within those departments; NOW THEREFORE BE IT

RESOLVED, that the Cortland County Legislature hereby adopts the following internal organizational structure for departments and subordinate organizational units.

SECTION 1. DEFINITIONS OF ORGANIZATIONAL HIERARCHY

For purposes of county administration, organizational planning, and internal management, the following definitions are hereby adopted:

A. Department

The top-level organizational entity established by state law, local law, or resolution, responsible for a major governmental function. Each Department or Office shall be managed by a Department Head, who may carry a title such as Director or Commissioner.

Department Heads are responsible for the organization and administration of their department and may structure their department in accordance with this resolution, unless otherwise specified in the department's establishing instrument. Department Heads are responsible for the performance of their department's budget and the management of personnel, consistent with applicable law and policy.

B. Division

A primary subdivision within an administrative unit that manages major functional areas and includes multiple program or operational lines. Each division shall be managed by a Division Head and may carry a title such as Deputy Commissioner or Deputy Director.

Formal divisions may be established by a Department Head with approval of the applicable statutory committee of the Legislature, unless otherwise established by local Law or resolution.

SECTION 2. ORGANIZATIONAL GUIDANCE

No formal sub-unit is required below a department if the mission of the department can be managed effectively without further subdivision. Departments should be structured at the smallest organizational level necessary to achieve their mission. For example, it is generally not necessary to create a division consisting of a single employee. Organization below the division level is at the discretion of the Department Head with administrative review by the County Administrator.

SECTION 3. ROLE OF THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

The County Administrator is hereby directed to implement this resolution, including coordinating and overseeing its application across county departments, ensuring consistency with the adopted organizational framework, and supporting compliance with the Legislature's intent, applicable law, and policy.

SECTION 4. ORGANIZATIONAL CHARTS

Department Heads shall be responsible for providing the County Administrator with an organizational chart for their department, which shall be updated annually. The County Administrator shall make such organizational charts available to the public.

SECTION 5. DEPARTMENTAL LISTING

The departments of Cortland County shall be those listed in Appendix A, attached hereto and made a part of this resolution. Appendix A shall also include divisions created by local law or resolutions and the title of the Department Head for each department. Appendix A may be amended from time to time by resolution of the Legislature.

; AND BE IT FURTHER

RESOLVED; that nothing in this resolution shall be construed to alter statutory duties, create new departments, authorize the creation or reclassification of positions, or modify appointing authority except as otherwise provided by law, collective bargaining agreements, or separate legislative action.

Monthly Reports

1. **Board of Elections Monthly Report**
2. **County Attorney Monthly Report**
3. **Safety Director's Monthly Report**
4. **County Clerk/DMV Monthly Report**
5. **Clerk of the Legislature Monthly Reports**
6. **Personnel Monthly Report**

Discussion Items

Adjournment