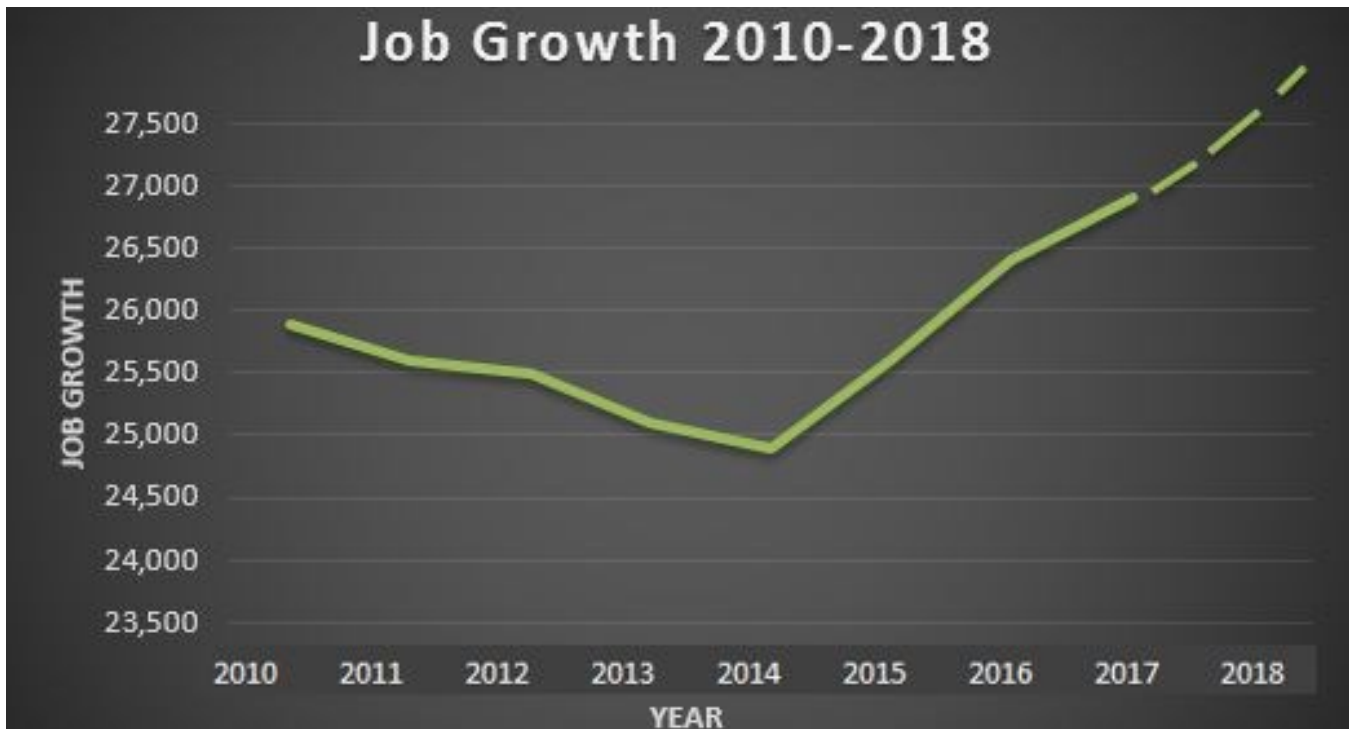


INSIDE INSIGHTS

The Monthly Newsletter of the Sullivan County Manager's Office

June/July 2018



Statistics courtesy John Nelson, NYS Dept. of Labor

We're growing stronger

With two massive hotels now open and more planned, Sullivan County is once again forging a reputation as a world-class destination. But as statistics clearly show, there's a lot more going on in this region of the Catskills — and we're the stronger for it.

"We are down to 3.9% unemployed, a figure we haven't seen since 2001," noted Sullivan County Partnership for Economic Development CEO Marc Baez. "Statistically, we're fully employed. That's incredible!"

"Everyone who wants to work can find a job," pointed out Center for Workforce Development Director Laura Quigley. "We haven't been in that position since we began keeping track of the labor market in 1990. We are in an enviable situation."

According to the NYS Department of Labor, "Year-over-year, Sullivan County posted the strongest gains, up 9.8 percent. ...This is the fourth straight May in which Sullivan County's over-the-year job growth has outpaced all other areas in the Hudson Valley Region, **the state and the nation.**" (emphasis added)

"A sustainable, diverse economy is a goal to which every economic development-focused agency in the County is aiming," County Manager Josh Potosek said. "We want to be a welcoming place for a wide range of businesses and their employees — in our downtowns, along our busiest corridors, & in our office and industrial parks."

In This Issue

- ITS: Keeping our government running
- It's a busy time in Sullivan County
- How we're building business capacity
- Training our workers to be a step above
- More roads, more bridges seeing work



The crew of Information Technology Services includes, from the left, Willie Martinez, Andrew McCabe, Ted Jucha, Lou Aller, Jim Adamo, Mary Ledoux, Tom Smith, Mike Angley, Tami Browne, Toby Terranova, Lorne Green, April Slegona, Dan Wilcox and Dan Smith. Missing from the photo is Bob Speer.

Departmental Spotlight: Information Technology Services

Inside the backbone of County government

“Think Outside the Box.” The phrase is prominently scrawled above the conference room of Sullivan County Information Technology Services (ITS). And here, it’s no cliché. It means formulating solutions in new, innovative ways; conceptualizing challenges differently; and understanding ITS’ position in relation to any particular situation in a way never thought of before.

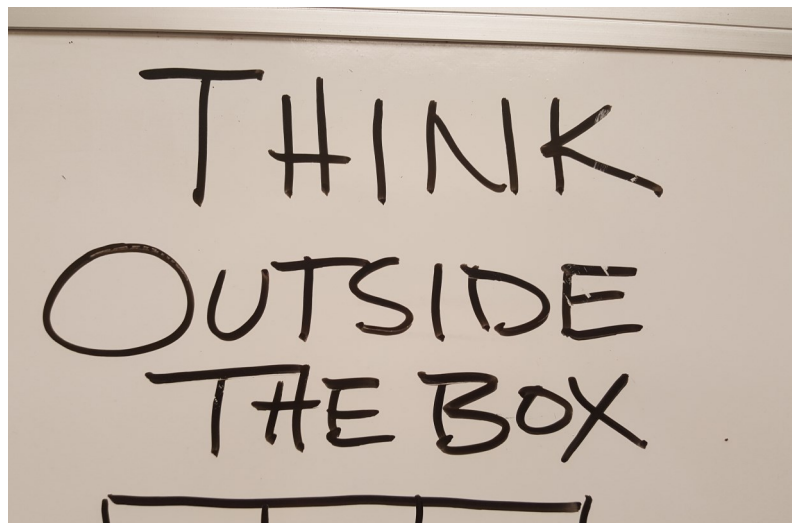
“We are about a lot more than that computer on your desk,” explains Chief Information Officer Lorne Green, head of ITS.

When Lorne says “a lot,” well, that may be an understatement (see sidebar on page 5). There isn’t a single division, department, unit or office where ITS doesn’t have some sort of role to play.

“Since 2001, we’ve journeyed from back office functionality to business partner — and ultimately, we are responsible for keeping the organization [County government] running,” Lorne says. “It does not function effectively without us.”

Yet ITS is one of the smaller divisions within the County in terms of staffing. Just 15 people fall under its umbrella – and that’s including Lorne and an employee solely dedicated to the heavily-used software and hardware links between the Department of Family Services and New York State.

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Projects in the pipeline

“The key to a healthy economy is a diversified one, and both private developers and the County of Sullivan, with the critical support of the Legislature, have been working on projects beyond our biggest resorts,” explains County Manager Josh Potosek.

- Studying the Old Route 17 corridor south of Liberty (see article to the right)
- Safely mounting a community solar array, up to 5 megawatts, atop the closed landfill
- Seeking funding for the Grow the Gateways/ Downtown Revitalization in Monticello
- Moving toward extending adjacent sewer/ water lines into the 80-acre parcel that was once to be the expanded landfill behind the former Apollo Mall — the idea being to attract light industry, along with possibly relocating our One-Stop Career Center to that site
- From a new distillery in Livingston Manor to the rebirth of the Eldred Preserve, millions of dollars are being privately invested locally



YO1 Luxury Nature Cure is a world-class health and wellness lodging center that just opened last month along the shore of scenic Bailey's Lake north of Monticello.

Sullivan: Attractive to growth

Hundreds of new rooms have opened in the Resorts World Catskills Casino and YO1 Luxury Nature Cure, and more are coming via the casino's Entertainment Village and the nearby Kartrite Indoor Waterpark. Between the local employment and the room taxes, the County stands to greatly benefit economically.

But we're not resting on our laurels (see sidebar). In collaboration with the Partnership for Economic Development, the County has been working on identifying developable parcels along Route 17 in the Town of Liberty, with a goal of bringing water and sewer services to those properties to make them attractively shovel-ready.

“We're finishing the study now,” says Partnership CEO Marc Baez. “We've distilled nine potential business park sites to three priorities for the corridor. We aim to have the SEQRA [the required state environmental review] all complete for these sites and then seek funding for water/sewer infrastructure, followed by full-scale marketing to get tax rateables in there.”



The Kartrite Indoor Waterpark, under construction with a spring opening anticipated, is within walking distance of the Resorts World Catskills Casino in Monticello.

Expanding work on roads, bridges

The hardworking men and women of the Sullivan County Division of Public Works have been out and about across the County, clearing ditches and culverts, restriping and repaving roads, inspecting and repairing bridges, and erecting and replacing signage. Nearly 70 miles of road, in fact, will be sealed or paved this year!

So please, show your appreciation by being patient and cautious around these work sites. Honest — they don't want to hold you up any longer than necessary.



Got a question?

Try your legislator first, by calling the Sullivan County Legislature's office at 845-807-0435. They can direct you to the representative who is elected to serve you.

Or look up who you're seeking directly, via the County's website:

SullivanNY.us

**Sullivan County
Manager's Office**
Joshua A. Potosek, MBA

100 North Street
Monticello, NY 12701
(845) 807-0450

dan.hust@co.sullivan.ny.us

Leadership training ... for every County employee

Deputy County Manager Dan Depew has been conducting weekly leadership training seminars for all County workers, from clerical to senior management. The goal? Not only to foster leadership skills and interest, but to deeply reinforce the fact that every County employee makes a difference in the lives of the people we serve. "Our intent in giving this program is to offer employees and management a better understanding of themselves and one another so that we can serve the public better as a team," explained Depew. "I am appreciative of all of the positive feedback I have received so far and believe greatly in our staff at all levels."



ITS: Thinking way, way outside that box...

Continued from page 2

That's as big as the division has ever been.

"And that is a testament to this staff and their efficiency," Lorne proudly notes – though he adds he's hoping to hire a few more folks to handle security, applications, network administration, and training. "We have a 24/7/365 responsibility with a 9-5 Monday-Friday staff."

For this is an exponentially growing field, and ITS must meet the demands of that growth. It has no choice. As much as technology has simplified tasks, it's also made them more complex – and more vulnerable to both innocent and fraudulent misuse.

To combat internal and external threats, the County continues to invest. For example, ITS just landed a grant for intrusion detection cybersecurity, whose chosen solution will utilize self-learning artificial intelligence to identify and respond to in-progress cyber-threats.

"Because of the level of responsibility we have to protect the data of everyone in the County, and we take that VERY seriously, we are taking a more proactive approach," affirms Lorne – though he adds that it's not just about stopping those with nefarious intent.

ITS is focused on efficiency, preparing to introduce Windows 10 to nearly 1,000 new workstations this summer. Too, ITS

exists to make public interaction with the County easier and more effective, from livestreaming Legislature meetings to debuting a much-praised new County website this past month that took just 4 months to complete.

Lorne's particularly proud of his and his team's successful efforts to preserve taxpayers' money, saving \$354,000 a year by switching to a new digital phone system and \$250,000 a year by consolidating faxes, scanners, copiers and printers into single multi-function machines.

The work is important, but also rewarding.

"That's because what we do here in ITS has an effect on not only the user community but also the residents," explains Director of Application Development & Support Mary Ledoux. "We provide the equipment and software needed so that each department is able to work in a more efficient manner and allows them to provide assistance to the County residents in a timelier manner. HEAP (Home Energy Assistance Program) is a good example, as we provide extra desktops and phones, plus the software to process the applications for assistance. I find that rewarding because I feel like we are making a difference in the County."

That all springs from a can-do attitude and approach.

"There are no problems," notes Dan Smith, ITS' Director of Operations and Network Administration, "only solutions."

ITS carries a massive responsibility

As Chief Information Officer Lorne Green ironically puts it, "What aren't we responsible for?" ITS counts the following as part of its role in Sullivan County government:

- 1,846 computer accounts, physical and virtual
- 900 phones
- 967 email accounts
- 426 applications
- 120 servers
- Security for all the above
- Wireless and mobile phones
- Facility access control and surveillance
- Multi-function machines (printing, scanning, faxing, copying)
- The infrastructure behind Geographic Information Sys-

tems (mapping)

- Electronic records management
- The County website, SullivanNY.us
- Interfaces with State and Federal systems

And on the horizon:

- Migration away from on-premises Microsoft Office suite to Office 365®
- IT security challenge and awareness training/campaign
- Public Internet access for underserved/unserved areas of the County
- Shared administration of local municipalities' computer systems
- Integrated wireless data network communications for business continuity and survivability
- Single sign-on (needing only one password to access everything)