

THE TOWN OF COLUMBUS

Quarterly Newsletter



MARCH 2018

The Unadilla Valley Central School District has joined the Town of Columbus in defending the assessment of Chobani's yogurt plant and warehouse on County Route 25 in the Town.

Chobani Global Holdings, LLC, owner of the Columbus yogurt plant, is seeking to lower its assessment by about 36 percent — from \$27.24 million to \$17.5 million.

Working with the School will help the Town defray its legal expenses as **together they face a company with immense resources.**

Losing \$9.74 million in assessment would be a blow to Columbus, currently assessed at \$79.8 million, and the tax burden would fall more heavily on other Town taxpayers.

However in terms of tax dollars, **Chenango County and the UV School District will lose** far more if the nation's premier yogurt maker wins its case in NYS Supreme Court.

Chobani's state-of-the-art refrigerated warehouse and most of its manufacturing facility on county Route 25 are already enrolled in a tax-reduction plan. Guided by the Chenango County Industrial Development Agency, Chobani is allowed to make payments in lieu of taxes rather than pay the taxes due on each property.

Over a 10-year period, the PILOT program reduces Chobani's taxes by 50 percent.

An assessment reduction would further lower Chobani's taxes. According to an estimate by the county's Real Property Tax Office, if Chobani prevails in court, the **Town could lose as much as \$230,000** over the life of the two PILOT agreements.

The **school** could potentially lose about **\$581,000**; the **county, \$433,000**; the **New Berlin Fire District, \$39,972**; and the **New Berlin Library, \$14,390**.

These are estimates, with variables at play. Numbers could change, depending on conditions, such as the Town continuing to reduce taxes. But the stakes are high...

In other business, the Town Planning Board has a new chairman, **Ralph Scalzo**, and a new member **Maureen Brown**. Ralph Scalzo succeeds **Wells Horton**, who stepped down in December. The Planning Board, which meets at 7 p.m. on the third Thursday of the month, is currently seeking an alternate member.

New to Town employ also is Deputy Clerk **Domenica Dockray**, assisting Town Clerk Brenda Weidman Wednesdays and Thursdays each week.

For more information or to contact Town officials, please come to our Town Board and Planning Board meetings and our visit our website, columbusny.us.

Town Board meetings are held in the courtroom at 7 p.m. on the second Thursday of the month; Planning Board meetings are at the same place, at 7 p.m. on the third Thursday. If you have questions, please contact a Board member or call the Town Clerk at 607-847-8891.