



# TOWN OF OSSINING

*The Volunteer Spirited Town*

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**For Immediate Release**

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## **Town of Ossining and Westchester County Discuss Proposal on Possible Police Sharing Option**

(June 11, 2010) The Town of Ossining gave a presentation today to detail the proposal to contract county police services for the unincorporated portion of the Town. The proposal merges the existing Town Police force into Westchester County police, and proposes to have the same officers working out of the same police facility on North State Road, providing the same or greater levels of police services, and sharing administrative operations, dispatching, and supervisory duties. The potential savings to the taxpayers of the Town of Ossining if this proposal is adopted is estimated to be between \$832,000 and \$932,000.

Town Supervisor Catherine Borgia said, "When we look at the economic realities of small local police departments, it is obvious that the current operating mode is not sustainable in the long term for taxpayers. We feel that the time is right to look at all options to make sure we can provide high levels of public safety at a rate that taxpayers can afford. We are continuing to consider all possibilities, including merging or sharing with one or both of the village departments within the Town's borders. We feel that the county's proposal brings another possible opportunity into the mix that might also benefit the villages. This is the beginning of an evaluation process and the Town welcomes the input of our neighboring municipalities and members of the public."

County Executive Rob Astorino said, "I'm pleased that the Town of Ossining reached out to explore a possible consolidation of police services. Sharing services can increase efficiency while lowering costs – and that's a prescription for smart government. The next step is to examine all the details to be sure the proposal is in the best interest of the town and the county."

County Legislator Bill Burton agreed, saying, "We know this is a first step. We know there will be hiccups. Working together, Westchester and the Town can find a way out of an unnecessarily expensive problem. Regional solutions do work. I am committed to see that this process results in substantial savings for Ossining."

Town Police Chief Mark Busche, who has been working in close collaboration with the County to determine potential cost saving options commented, "The Town of Ossining Police department has always welcomed innovation. Our primary concern is with the safety of our residents, and this proposal will maintain or possibly increase the level of services our residents receive from police officers whom they already know. We owe it to our taxpayers to look at all options to provide high level services at the most efficient and economic way possible."

The Town of Cortlandt has been contracting police services from Westchester County for over a decade and estimates that they save over \$1 million per year by doing so.

Please contact Ossining Town Supervisor Catherine Borgia at 914-762-6001 or 914-262-8873 with any questions.

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