

Mayor Rossi and Common Council Members,

I am unable to attend Tuesday's meeting, but I feel strongly about a topic before you tomorrow. However, I will attempt to have it recorded and posted with the help of my son, who expects to be in attendance. Please enter this statement into the record at the meeting on my behalf.

By way of review, the voters approved a dramatic reduction in the Mayor's salary when it approved the City Manager position. Recently, you unanimously awarded a stipend to the previous Acting City Manager (ACM), to handle that workload while we are without a full time City Manager. I understand he found the compensation inadequate to the task, but he did the job for the good of the city. When he retired, you then made Mayor Rossi the ACM at the previous meeting.

However, at the last meeting, you had the option to award Mayor Rossi the same stipend that you made to the previous ACM. The Common Council voted 3-3 not to do so, and Mayor Rossi abstained, to avoid any appearance of conflict of interest. In spite of running on a platform of "openness and transparency in last year's election, none of those voting explained why they would approve the stipend for the previous ACM, but not for Mr. Rossi.

In the absence of any explanation to the contrary, given the acrimony over the City Manager, Assistant City Manager and the seeming animosity by those who voted against the motion seem to have against Mr. Rossi, the public is left with the appearance that you are not acting in the best interest of the city, but in furtherance of your own petty squabbles with the mayor.

I'd like to specifically address whether it would be a conflict of interest for the Mayor to vote on whether he should receive a stipend. It seems to me that this is exactly like the common council voting to raise their own salaries with an intervening election to have it approved by the voters. It's my understanding that past Common Councils have raised their own salaries in this way. The instant case seems no different to me. Additionally, if the vote for a standardized ACM Stipend had come before the vote to make the Mayor (any mayor) the ACM, there would have been no issue whatsoever of a conflict of interest.

I'd also like to thank Mayor Rossi for two things. First, for taking on the role of ACM until a replacement is found. I understand that it's a substantial amount of work which needs to be done to have a budget ready on time as well as dealing with numerous other pressing city matters.

Second, I'd like to thank him for abstaining from the vote to provide himself a stipend. He could have voted for it - which to be clear would have been the right thing to do, after all the petty grievances are set aside -- but by not doing so, he took the high road, avoided the appearance of conflict and put the city's interests ahead of his own. (I and others I've spoken to judge that as a noble and selfless act.)

I'd also like to thank the three Common Council Members who voted "yes" on the stipend motion at the last meeting and in particular Councilor Simchik for bringing the matter back up this evening. I hope that one or more of the "no" Council Members has reconsidered. If so, I thank them as well for helping the city move beyond the "*City Manager Debacle*".

Finally, I would like to suggest a change to the wording of the resolution. Unless there is a legal reason of which I am unaware, I suggest that rather than making "Rick. Rossi" the subject of the stipend, that the city make "The Oneida City Mayor" the ACM when there isn't one otherwise, and that the ACM get the extra \$500 per week for being the ACM when the City Manager is absent. I would further suggest that this stipend only be paid when the City Manager position is out for a full week or more, prorated. This would give the city a permanent plan for both selecting and paying the ACM when there is no city manager, and will tamp down the opportunity/temptation for councilors (and here I'm not referring to any particular person) to play petty politics at the expense of the city.

Thank you for your time.

Ralph Kohler

Resident, Oneida, NY

Supervisors Report 9/17/2024 – Matt Roberts

We recently attended the Fall NYSAC seminar. I am on the Climate Action, Energy and Environment Committee. Five years ago, there were only a handful of people at the meetings. Now the room is full because the CLCPA (Climate and Community Leaders Protection Act) is in the implementation phase. There is a lot of concern about the effects of this legislation in Upstate NY. Our committee passed some resolutions urging the state to:

1. Educate the public about the actual implementation facts. In addition, we want to have a full analysis of the total investment necessary, in dollars, to complete total electrification of the state. This must include the total electrical demand statewide and where the electricity will come from and go to. All of the investment has been in solar and wind, while the infrastructure will be heavily weighted towards sending that power down state.
2. Incentives necessary to encourage solar installation on rooftops and parking lots, preserving agricultural lands.
3. Controlling the transition to electric vehicles. Infrastructure for charging is behind schedule versus the mileposts set by the CLCPA. Also, the transition is affecting medium and heavy-duty vehicles. Dealers must sell a certain percentage of electric school buses, plow trucks, etc. One local municipality was told by their dealer that delivery was delayed indefinitely until they sell another electric plow truck.
4. Urging the state to develop solar energy production along the right of way of 4 lane separated highways, both state and federal, further preserving our agricultural land.
5. Requiring extended producer responsibility from the solar panel manufacturers. In other words, in addition to decommissioning the solar farms, manufacturers must provide funds, up front, to recycle at least 85% of the panels. We want to know how and where these panels are recycled / landfilled. This is law in Niagara County. We are working to bring this law to Madison County.
6. Urging the state to address the solid waste crisis. New York landfills have a combined life of 16 years left. Sending waste to other states does not solve the problem.

I also moderated a discussion on tourism and IDA progress in New York. Most tourism in New York is focused on NYC, not the rest of the state. We, as upstate, need to sell the beauty and diverse opportunities for visitors to recreate here. Some innovative strategies were discussed, from Legoland to the Strong Museum of Play in Rochester. Most visitors to NYC don't even know about the outdoor activities available to them here.

Lastly, the latest Sales Tax report continues at 1.5% above last year.

STRATEGIC LEARNING

Be Prepared for
YOUR Next Move



NYSAC 2024 Fall Seminar
September 9-11, 2024

Resorts World Catskills
Monticello, NY Sullivan County



Monday, September 9th

7:30am-5:30pm	Registration
9:30am-11:00am	NYSAC Standing Cmt. Mtgs. (Track I) Children with Special Needs Medicaid & Human Services Transportation & Public Works Climate Action, Environment & Energy Native American Affairs
11:30am-1:00pm	NYSAC Standing Cmt. Mtgs. (Track II) Agriculture, Economic Development & Rural Affairs Taxation & Finance Public Health/Mental Health Public Safety Intergovernmental Relations, Personnel & General Government
11:30am-1:00pm	NYSAC IT Task Force Meeting
1:00pm-2:00pm	NYSAC Luncheon
1:00pm-5:00pm	Exhibits Open
2:00pm-3:15pm	Workshop Session I
3:15pm-5:00pm	Resolutions Committee Meeting
3:15pm-3:45 pm	Break in Exhibit Hall
3:45pm-5:00pm	Workshop Session II
6:00pm-8:30pm	NYSAC Dinner Event

Tuesday, September 10th

7:30am-5:00pm	Registration
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Agenda



Tuesday, September 10th *(continued)*

7:30am-5:00pm	Exhibits Open
7:30am-8:45am	General Breakfast
7:30am-8:45am	NYS Association of Chairs of County Legislative Boards Breakfast Meeting
9:00am-10:15am	AM Plenary Session
10:15am-10:45am	Break in Exhibit Hall
10:45am-Noon	Workshop Session III
Noon-1:30pm	NYSAC Business Meeting Part I: Inaugural Luncheon
1:30pm-2:00pm	Time to Visit Exhibit Hall
2:00pm-3:15pm	Workshop Session IV
3:15pm-3:45pm	Break in Exhibit Hall
3:45pm-5:00pm	PM Plenary Session
6:00pm - 8:30pm	Sullivan County Special Evening Event

Wednesday, September 11th

8:00am-9:00am	General Breakfast
8:00am-9:00am	Joint Intercounty Breakfast
9:00am-9:30am	NYSAC Business Meeting: Part II Resolutions

**Agenda Subject to Change*

Agenda

INFORMATION

NYSAC 2024 Fall Seminar September 9-11, 2024

Resorts World Catskills, Monticello Sullivan County

REGISTER ONLINE

Please visit the NYSAC website at www.nysac.org/fallseminar to utilize our link to online registration. The registration deadline is August 30th. You may also go directly to the online portal by using the following link **(for county officials only)**:

<https://1.eventevents.com/NYSACFS24>

Option A - Reg and all meals \$472

Option B - Reg and Monday meals \$356

Option C - Reg and Tuesday meals \$325

Option D - Reg without meals \$250

Cancellation Policy: All cancellations must be made via email to jmunguia@nysac.org. Cancellations before 8/30 may be partially refunded. Cancellations after 8/30 cannot be refunded and are due.

BOOK HOTEL NEEDS

PLEASE NOTE THAT OUR ROOM BLOCK AT RESORTS WORLD CATSKILLS IS CURRENTLY SOLD OUT. PLEASE REFER TO OUR WEBSITE FALL SEMINAR PAGE UNDER "HOTEL" FOR COMPLETE DETAILS ON HOW TO BOOK A ROOM AT OUR OVERFLOW HOTEL, THE HAMPTON INN MONTICELLO, WHICH IS JUST 1 MILE FROM RESORTS WORLD. PLEASE NOTE THAT YOU CAN PARK FOR FREE AT BOTH RESORTS WORLD AND THE HAMPTON INN.

Room cut off for the Hampton Inn is Aug 8 or until sell out.

PURCHASE MEALS

Please note the meal tickets are not included in the price of registration for the Fall Seminar. If you would like meals, please remember to purchase needed tickets during your online registration process by choosing the option that represents your meal needs. You must purchase meals in advance of the Seminar to obtain tickets for your desired meals. More detailed information can be found during your online registration process.

<https://1.eventevents.com/NYSACFS24>

****Non-County Officials please contact jmunguia@nysac.org ****

Welcome to the Sullivan Catskills!

Reception & Dinner

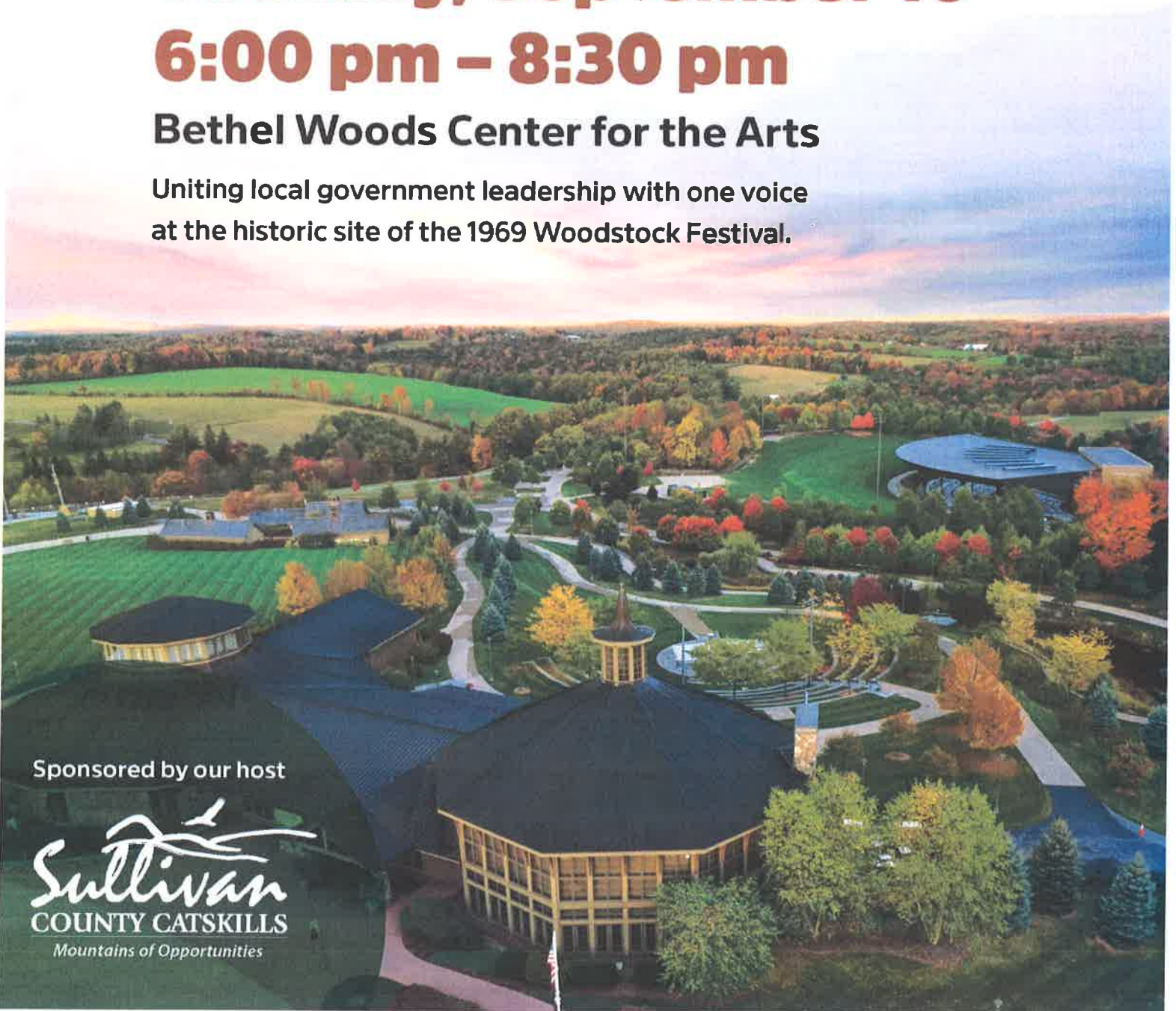
**Tuesday, September 10
6:00 pm – 8:30 pm**

Bethel Woods Center for the Arts

Uniting local government leadership with one voice
at the historic site of the 1969 Woodstock Festival.

Sponsored by our host


**Sullivan
COUNTY CATSKILLS**
Mountains of Opportunities



WORKSHOP TOPICS



HELP! Civil Service Changes and Hiring Practices

Municipal government services and challenges keep expanding and our pool of potential public servants continues to shrink. Recently across New York our county governments are struggling to hire and retain quality employees to provide essential services. The good news is that the State has heard our call for needed changes in Civil Service practices that were slowing down or even blocking your ability to hire needed employees in a timely fashion. With the newly installed HELP program, your county can find and put to work employees faster to meet your service challenges. Join this workshop to learn more about the HELP program, how it works and what titles can become eligible for this expedited process. Additionally, this workshop will discuss the latest trends in collective bargaining that will help you better understand recent benefit structures. [\(Monday, September 9, 2024, 2:00pm-3:15pm\)](#)

Who Wins, Who Loses? Mental Health Competency Restoration v. Treatment

The SFY 21 Enacted Budget included an assumption requiring the state to charge counties 100 percent of the costs of restoring mentally ill defendants to competency. This policy action resulted in tens of millions of dollars in new expenses for counties, without any changes to treatment plans or input from local county mental health experts. Join us for a discussion on mental health competency restoration, and how counties are advocating to improve this system. [\(Monday, September 9, 2024, 2:00pm-3:15pm\)](#)

Lessons Learned and County Response to the CrowdStrike Incident

When CrowdStrike, a global endpoint detection and response vendor, put out an update that triggered crashes on millions of Microsoft windows-based systems, New York state and local governments were affected in unprecedented ways, including disabling interconnections between the state and some of our county departments. With CrowdStrike as one of NYS's statewide cyber shared services, remediating the impact of this incident was a tremendous undertaking for county and state IT teams. This session will feature three counties who will share their lessons learned and best practices in responding to this global outage and how it will affect their future resiliency planning efforts.

[\(Monday, September 9, 2024, 2:00pm-3:15pm\)](#)

Rural Housing Development: Obstacles, Resources, and Solutions

Much of New York State is comprised of sparsely populated rural areas with an aging housing stock. In fact, 28% of homes in rural portions of the state were built prior to 1940 and face an 18% vacancy rate compared to just 9% in more urban settings. Join us for a conversation to learn more about how your county may benefit from a housing needs assessment, what tools and resources are available to you, and most importantly, how local policy makers can improve their community's housing profile. [\(Monday, September 9, 2024, 2:00pm-3:15pm\)](#)



WORKSHOP TOPICS

Rising Together: WLC Mentorship Program Kick-Off

Join us for the launch of the Women's Leadership Council (WLC)'s mentorship program, designed to foster connections between experienced and emerging county leaders. Share advice, ask questions, and learn what it takes to thrive as a woman in county government. (*Monday, September 9, 2024, 2:00pm-3:15pm*)

Tourism, IDAs, and the Local Economy: A Data Discussion

Tourism done right drives sustainable, responsible economic growth through job creation, small business activity, revitalization, increased local and state tax revenues, and a better quality of life and pride of place for the community. A growth in tourism benefits the state, our local communities, businesses, and residents. Join us for a discussion to learn the facts on tourism, and how local IDA's are driving growth across the state. (*Monday, September 9, 2024, 3:45pm-5:00pm*)

Celebrating A Decade of County Climate Leadership

Celebrate ten years of climate action through the Climate Smart Communities Certification program. This session will highlight standout projects, honor significant achievements, and discuss resources to continue driving progress in your county. (*Monday, September 9, 2024, 3:45pm-5:00pm*)

Bridging the Gap: The Culture of Poverty & Public Health

Delve into the complex issues of poverty, race, and ethnicity in healthcare. Learn how counties can identify and address disparities to promote equity and improve health outcomes for all residents. (*Monday, September 9, 2024, 3:45pm-5:00pm*)

How to House the Hard to House

Counties across the state are struggling with finding appropriate shelter for people with mental health, substance abuse, and other behavioral health issues. At the same time, the state is expanding mental health treatment capacity for inpatient psychiatric treatment beds and adding housing units serving individuals with mental illness. This session will highlight how counties are creatively approaching these challenges and opportunities. (*Monday, September 9, 2024, 3:45pm-5:00pm*)

Building Consensus in a Political Environment

(County Government Institute Core Session) County leaders are often confronted with the need to settle political differences so that the greater interests of the public can be served. During this session, county leaders will learn skills and techniques to help manage and resolve political conflicts. This is an interactive session, where participants will be grouped with other county officials to

WORKSHOP TOPICS



jointly work on significant issues facing your county so that practical application of the techniques can be demonstrated. This session will be led by representatives from the NYS Dispute Resolution Association. (County Government Institute Core Requirement –4 credits [\(Tuesday, September 10, 2024, 10:45am-12:00pm\)](#))

Artificial Intelligence and Government: Exploring the NACo AI Toolbox

The advent and growth of generative artificial intelligence (AI) presents unique opportunities and challenges for county governments. The National Association of Counties (NACo) established an AI Exploratory Committee, published a primer for county leaders, and this summer unveiled a toolbox designed to help county officials use AI to improve services and programs. This workshop is designed to unpack NACo's new toolbox to help your county with the practical and governance challenges and opportunities associated with AI. [\(Tuesday, September 10, 2024, 10:45am-12:00pm\)](#)

Providing More for Less: Increasing Services to Children at a Lower Cost

Hear from county officials on their plans to address a variety of children services capacity shortfalls in their county and surrounding area. A lack of day care providers and facilities, along with a decrease in Early Intervention and special education pre-k capacity, mental health, child nutrition and other services are making it harder for counties to help children and their families. This workshop will discuss creative solutions for addressing these service shortfalls while also improving service delivery and providing county savings. [\(Tuesday, September 10, 2024, 10:45am-12:00pm\)](#)

An Overview of the NYS Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team

The workshop will provide an overview of the NYS Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team and what the team has learned through its review of deaths and near-deaths related to domestic violence in New York State since 2013. The presenters will share the findings of the team, including lethality indicators, systems accessed by individuals prior to the death, strengths and challenges identified by the team, and implications of the team's findings for municipalities. County leaders will learn about best practices and recommendations for responding to domestic violence with the goals of preventing fatalities and empowering survivors. [\(Tuesday, September 10, 2024, 10:45am-12:00pm\)](#)

Cannabis Crackdown: Combating Unlicensed Businesses

This year's state budget granted counties and cities the authority to shut down unlicensed cannabis operations. This workshop will explore how localities are using their enforcement powers to crack down on the illegal market



WORKSHOP TOPICS

and protect public health and safety. *(Tuesday, September 10, 2024, 10:45am-12:00pm)*

Risk Management, Reducing Accidents and Costly Claims Against Your County

Accidents happen but they are also avoidable. Your county's exposure to costly damages can happen everywhere—garage fires, car accidents, cyber-attacks, personnel issues—they all can and will happen to your county resulting in thousands if not millions in unexpected costs. Join us for this workshop that will go over the most common areas where a county is exposed to this risk and, more importantly, what proactive steps can be taken by county officials to avoid these from happening. *(Tuesday, September 10, 2024, 2:00pm-3:15pm)*

Opioid Epidemic to a Fentanyl Epidemic, New Public Health and Safety Challenges

New York's local governments have been on the frontlines battling the opioid epidemic for decades, and now fentanyl posing new challenges. While many think of fentanyl as synonymous with opioids or morphine, it is not. It is a synthetic that is 50 to 100 times more potent. Illegally made fentanyl is being put in street sold drugs to hook the end user. Drugs such as heroin, cocaine, and even marijuana are all being laced with fentanyl and because of its potency. This is causing increased dependence and a spike in overdose deaths. This workshop is designed to provide the latest on how counties are fighting back against this scourge in our communities. *(Tuesday, September 10, 2024, 2:00pm-3:15pm)*

Plugged In: Developments in Energy Siting and Transmission

Explore the recent changes to state laws and regulations governing the siting of renewable energy projects and transmission facilities. Learn about the state-level developments, the critical role local governments play, and strategies to address key issues like farmland protection. *(Tuesday, September 10, 2024, 2:00pm-3:15pm)*

Ethics for County Officials

Local officials are held to a high standard of ethical conduct and need to avoid even appearances of impropriety. It is important that officials understand the laws governing this area. This session will provide an overview of Article 18 of the General Municipal Law and the requirement for local codes of ethics. *(Tuesday, September 10, 2024, 2:00pm-3:15pm)*

Sustainable Solutions: Tackling Food Waste in NYS (Inter-County)

Uncover practical solutions for reducing food waste in your county. This presentation will offer easy-to-implement strategies and resources for local governments and businesses to minimize waste and promote sustainability. *(Wednesday, September 11, 2024, 8:00am-9:00am)*