

Tax credit increase would benefit Depew taxpayers

By **Jim Herr** - April 30, 2018

CHEEKTOWAGA – The police service tax credit the Town of Cheektowaga provides to the Village of Depew could increase next year if a deal brokered by leaders of the town and the village is approved by the town council this fall.

Supervisor Diane Benczkowski's office says she, Councilmember Linda Hammer, and Village of Depew Mayor Jesse Nikonowicz have been working together to increase the police services tax credit for Cheektowaga property taxpayers in the village.

According to a media release from Ms. Benczkowski's office, she is in favor of proposing an increase to the police services tax credit from its current level of \$440,000 to \$500,000, an increase of \$60,000, in her 2019 budget that will be filed in the Town Clerk's office on October 1st of this year.

"I recognize that as time goes on, costs increase and the police services tax credit the Town gives to Depew property taxpayers should be reexamined," said Ms. Benczkowski. "This will not change any of the many services the Town provides to Depew residents. Additionally, the Cheektowaga Police Department will continue to assist the Village of Depew Police Department as needed."

The police services tax credit was last increased in 2013 when it went from \$390,000 to \$440,000, an increase of \$50,000.

Councilmember Linda Hammer's insight through her experience as a village trustee for eight years helped both the town and village understand the situation more clearly.

"I am pleased that Supervisor Benczkowski and I have been able to work out this agreement and hope to see it implemented by her Town Board," said Mr. Nikonowicz. "I also look forward to continuing our dialog and working together with the supervisor to provide more shared services with the Town of Cheektowaga and the Village of Depew."

Village property owners west of Transit Road contribute towards the Cheektowaga General Town Tax Fund. The police services tax credit would be

applied to individual property tax bills in the form of a lower tax rate when County and Town Property Tax bills are issued.

In addition to mutual-aid assistance from the Cheektowaga Police Department, village residents have full service at the Town Clerk's office and collection of School, County and Town taxes; Assessors Office for STAR, veterans, disabled persons and senior exemptions; Community Development Office for the Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program that assists eligible homeowners with essential repairs; and all Town Parks, Recreation and Senior Programs.

The tax credit, as well as the tentative budget, must be approved by the Town Board.