

Executive Director's Report

1. A public hearing is being scheduled for May 19 for a likely Greene County application for funding under the CDBG-CV Cares Act funding. The county is eligible for up to \$1 million in funding for a single projects related to the response to the coronavirus, and up to \$2 million for multiple projects. The most likely eligible categories for the County to apply in are assistance to small businesses and expansion of broadband. Funding applications are being accepted in an open round until August 27, 2021 or funding is all committed, whichever comes first. We also anticipate a 2021 CDBG round of funding with the return of the New York State Consolidated Funding Application, as well as a special round of CDBG funding for projects related to the CARES Act and coronavirus.
2. Median housing prices in Greene County continued on a tear in the first quarter of 2021, hitting a record of \$267,000, up 29.0% from a year ago. Closed sales also rose from 141 to 196, a 39% increase, while inventory for sale dropped by 44.7%.
3. Greene County sales tax collections were up 12.1% for the first three months of the year, though \$202,050 was diverted for a new fund to support hospitals during the pandemic and therefore not transmitted to the County. The stimulus checks the Federal government issued during the first quarter did a great deal to boost retail sales and sales tax collections.
4. The Small Business Administration's Restaurant Relief Fund will be accepting applications beginning on Monday, May 3. Eligible businesses may register on the website restaurants.sba.gov beginning on Friday, April 30 to begin the process of applying. There are set-asides for small restaurants (under \$500,000 and \$500,000-\$999.999 in revenue) and certain groups of owners, though it is anticipated that funds will be moved quickly.
5. The EDC and Tourism Office, along with Columbia Greene Workforce NY, have been working with hospitality owners in Durham in order to coordinate a job fair to assist these businesses in re-opening. The job fair will be Sunday, May 2 from 1-3 pm, and 10 businesses are signed to participate to date.
6. Greene County had an unemployment rate of 6.5% for March 2021, an increase from the 5.2% in March 2020. March marks the last month of data since the pandemic started. There were 19,000 County residents employed in March 2021, the same as in March 2020, and 1,300 people unemployed.