





Jefferson County Clerk

Honorable Members of the Jefferson County Legislature  
195 Arsenal Street  
Watertown, NY 13601

Honorable Colleagues:

I hereby submit the 2021 Annual Report of the Jefferson County Clerk. The duties of the County Clerk are mandated by the New York State Constitution and by federal, state, and local law. The dedicated staff works diligently to carry out these duties and serve the public.

The County Clerk's Office is a state constitutional office that is the primary depositor for records created within the County. The County Clerk serves as the Clerk of the Corporation of Jefferson County and a register of mortgages, deeds, and all real property records within Jefferson County. The County Clerk also serves as Clerk of the Supreme and County Courts and is commissioned to collect all fees of the courts and protect, produce upon request, and preserve court records. Under Vehicle and Traffic Law, the County Clerk acts as an agent for the Commissioner of the New York State Motor Vehicles Department.

The Jefferson County Clerk's Office collects and distributes monies for various state agencies. The County's share of these collections is submitted monthly to the County Treasurer with a report detailing the collections. The following pages detail the monies collected by the Jefferson County Clerk's Office and the Department of Motor Vehicle Office paid to the County Treasurer and disbursed to different agencies throughout the state.

With tremendous pride, the County Clerk's Office finished 2021 with the highest fund balance in at least 20 years, and this milestone should not go unrecognized. Significant factors contributing to this positive balance include but are not limited to:

- The closure of the Fort Drum Satellite DMV Office.
- The consolidation of Land and Court Records sub-departments.
- The elimination of eight positions through attrition.

I do not attribute success to one person. In this case, it is primarily due to my team's dedication and hard work. I aspire to provide outstanding services while always striving to do better than before. I can confidently say that we achieved this in 2021 with a fund balance of \$614,971.00. You will find a chart showing the net revenues to expenses for the County Clerk's Office for the last twenty years on page four of this report. We will continue to work hard to serve the constituents of Jefferson County and hope to contribute even more to the overall fund balance for the County in 2022.

As always, should you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out to me at any time.

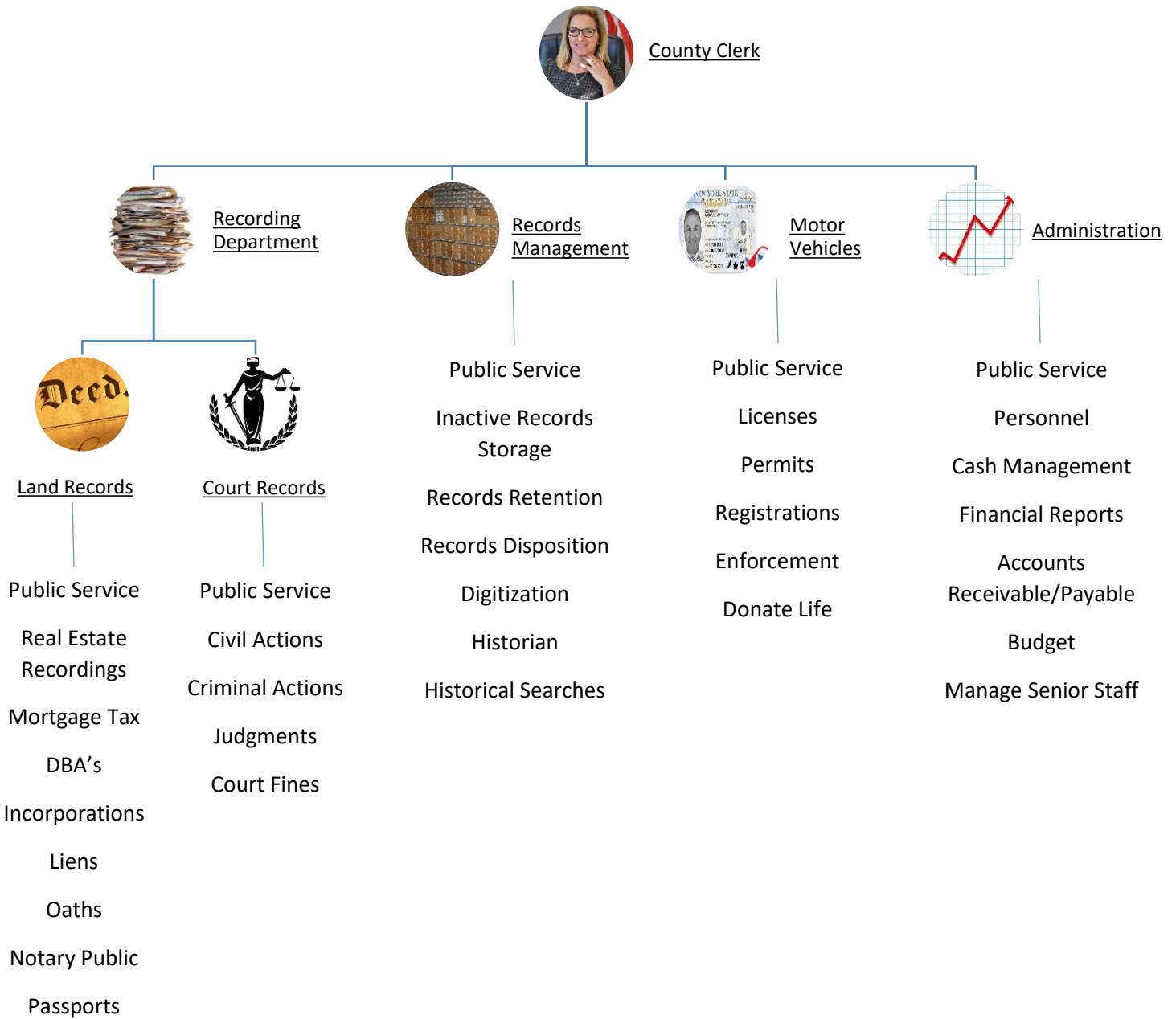
Respectfully Submitted,

Gizelle J. Meeks  
Jefferson County Clerk

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# Jefferson County Clerk Organizational Chart



## Statement of All Funds Collected and Disbursed

	<b>Jefferson County</b>	<b>Towns</b>	<b>NYS</b>	<b>Total Rec'd</b>
Mortgage Tax	\$ 348,998.10	\$ 3,260,857.65	\$ 1,322,156.13	\$ 4,932,011.88
Real Estate Transfer Tax	\$ 4,908.00	\$ -	\$ 2,511,460.69	\$ 2,516,368.69
NYS ORPS	\$ 39,375.00	\$ -	\$ 610,500.00	\$ 649,875.00
Court Fees	\$ 67,246.25	\$ -	\$ 698,640.28	\$ 765,886.53
DWI Fines (Probation)	\$ 20,990.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 20,990.00
Cultural Education Fees	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 257,483.87	\$ 257,483.87
Records Management Fees	\$ 18,066.00	\$ -	\$ 85,851.74	\$ 103,917.74
Notary	\$ 6,777.00	\$ -	\$ 10,320.00	\$ 17,097.00
County Clerk Fees	\$ 1,147,442.81	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,147,442.81
Department of Motor Vehicles	\$ 740,394.40	\$ -	\$ 3,313,687.06	\$ 4,054,081.46
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>\$ 2,394,197.56</b>	<b>\$ 3,260,857.65</b>	<b>\$ 8,810,099.77</b>	<b>\$ 14,465,154.98</b>

### **County Clerk Fees Breakdown**

Copy Fees	\$ 36,504.39
E-Commerce Subscriptions	\$ 70,234.50
Cover Page Fees	\$ 78,265.00
Filing Fees	\$ 34,560.00
Recording Fees	\$ 891,747.34
Miscellaneous	\$ 3,101.00
Overages	\$ 3,867.13
Passport Fees	\$ 6,965.00
Photo Fee	\$ 2,560.00
UCCs	\$ 19,600.00
General Interest	\$ 38.45
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$ 1,147,442.81</b>

*\*There are still several Notary and Incorporation Receipts pending from NYS. An approximation of this revenue has been included.*

## Expenses by Sub-Department

### 1410 - County Clerk Expenses

Personal Services	\$ 324,998.44
Office Expenses	\$ 124,561.35
Retirement/Insurance/SS/Workers Comp	\$ 225,367.56
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$ 674,927.35</b>

### 1415 - DMV Expenses

Personal Services	\$ 453,668.75
Office Expenses	\$ 15,565.76
Retirement/Insurance/SS/Workers Comp	\$ 332,993.24
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$ 802,227.75</b>

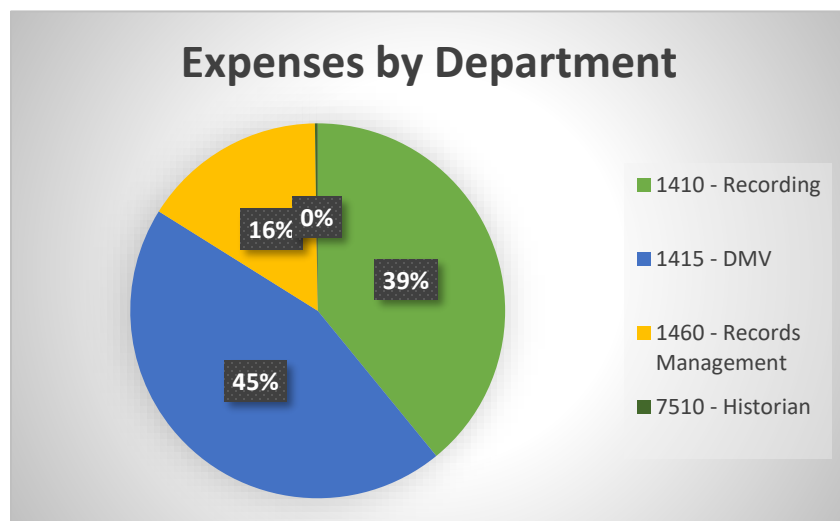
### 1460 - Records Management Expenses

Personal Services	\$ 159,171.39
Office Expenses	\$ 6,897.04
Retirement/Insurance/SS/Workers Comp	\$ 111,036.14
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$ 277,104.57</b>

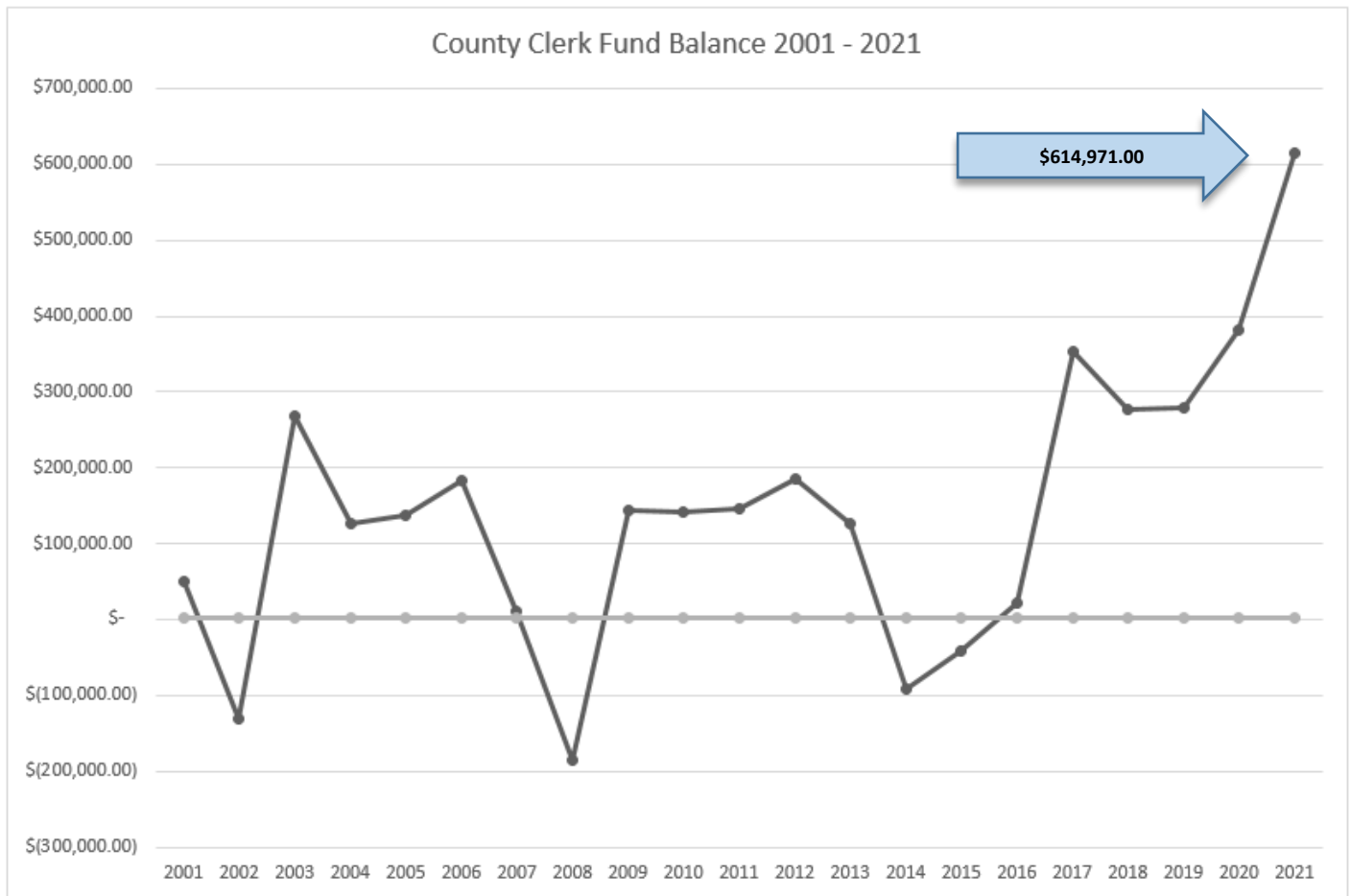
### 7510 - Historian Expenses

Personal Services	\$ 2,650.20
Retirement/Insurance/SS/Workers Comp	\$ 1,803.44
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$ 4,453.64</b>

<b>Total County Clerk Expenses 2021</b>	<b>\$ 1,758,713.31</b>
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## End of Year Fund Balance 2001-2021

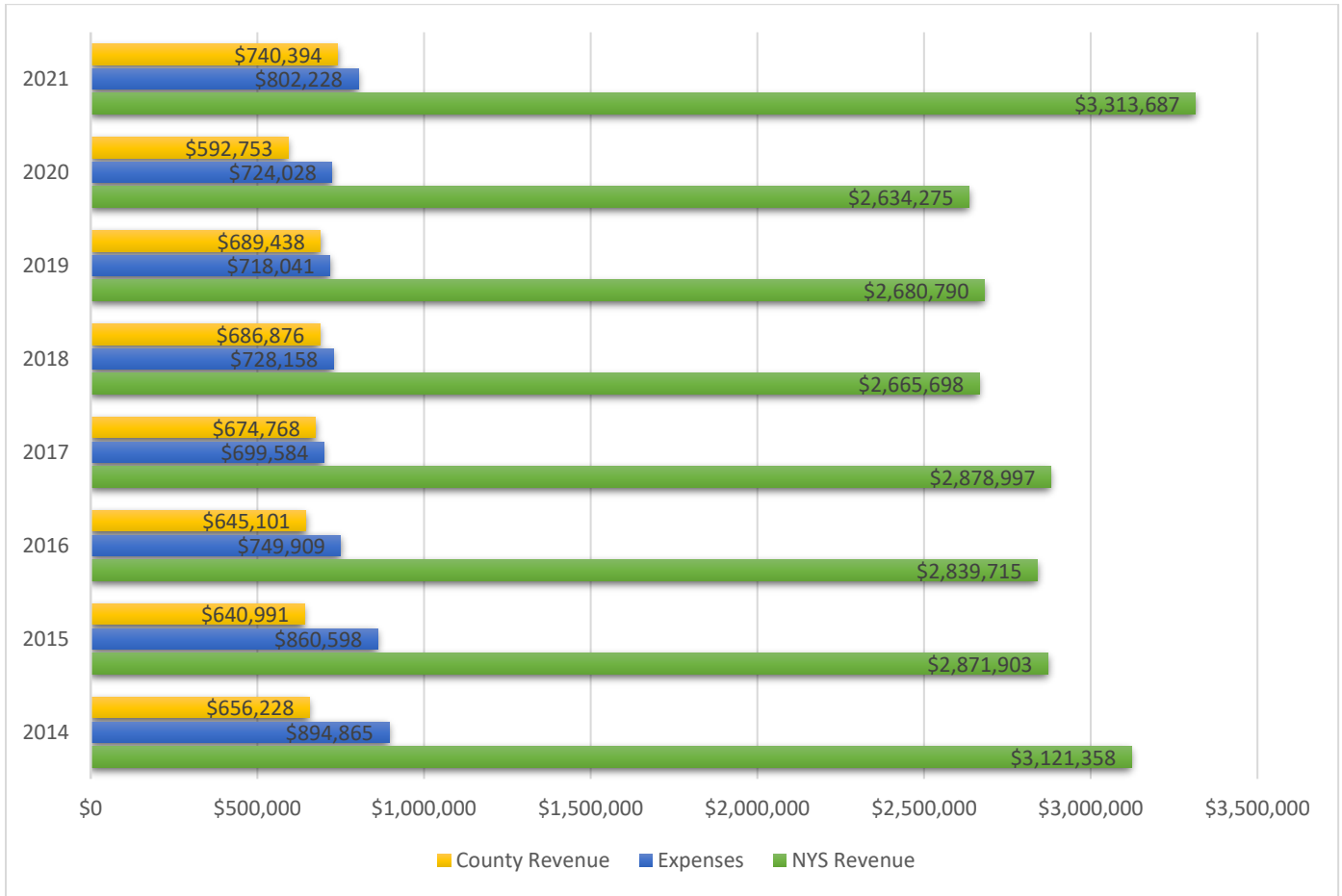


### Fund Balance – General Information

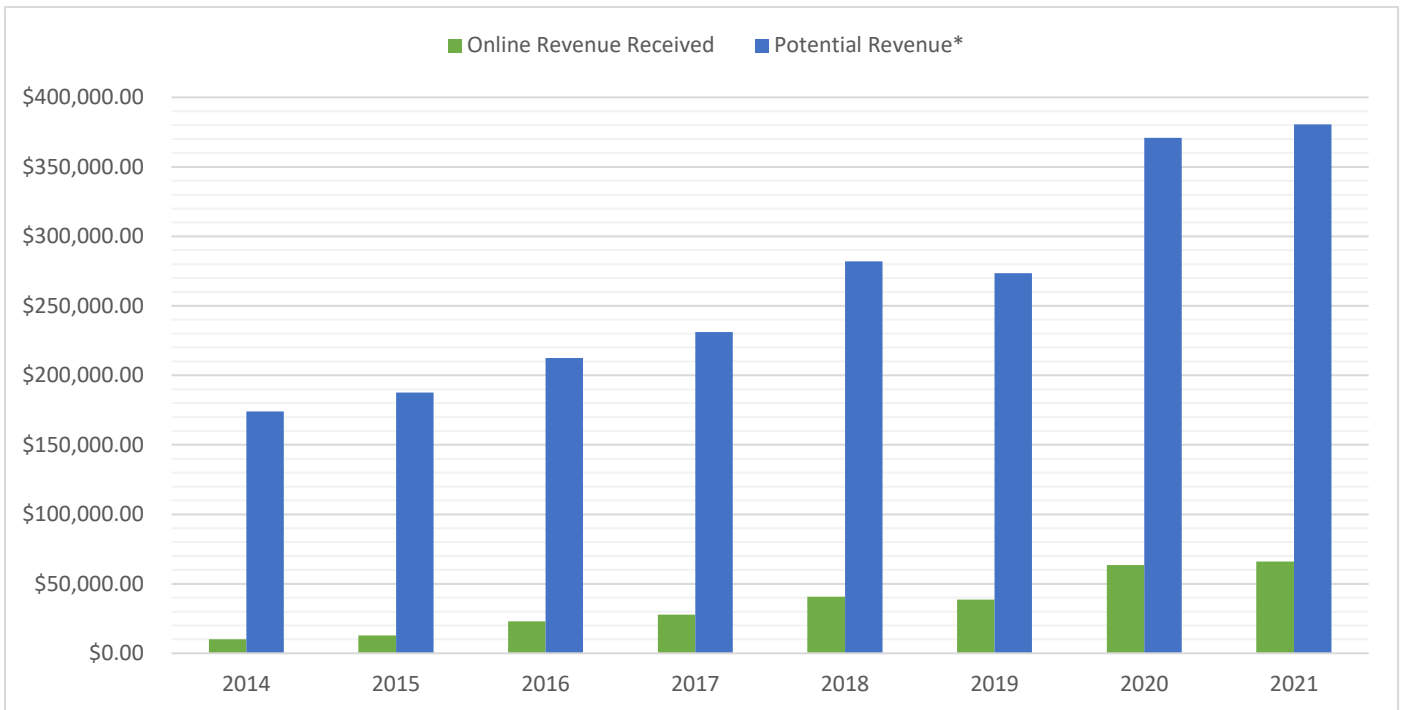
- Since 2014, eight positions have been deleted.
- In 2015, two sub-departments were consolidated resulting in lower overall expenses.
- 2021 had the highest fund balance in the last twenty years, and possibly the highest in the history of the County Clerk's Office. The balance of \$614,971.00 is a 61% increase from the previous year.

# Department of Motor Vehicles

## Overall Revenues and Expenses 2014-2021:



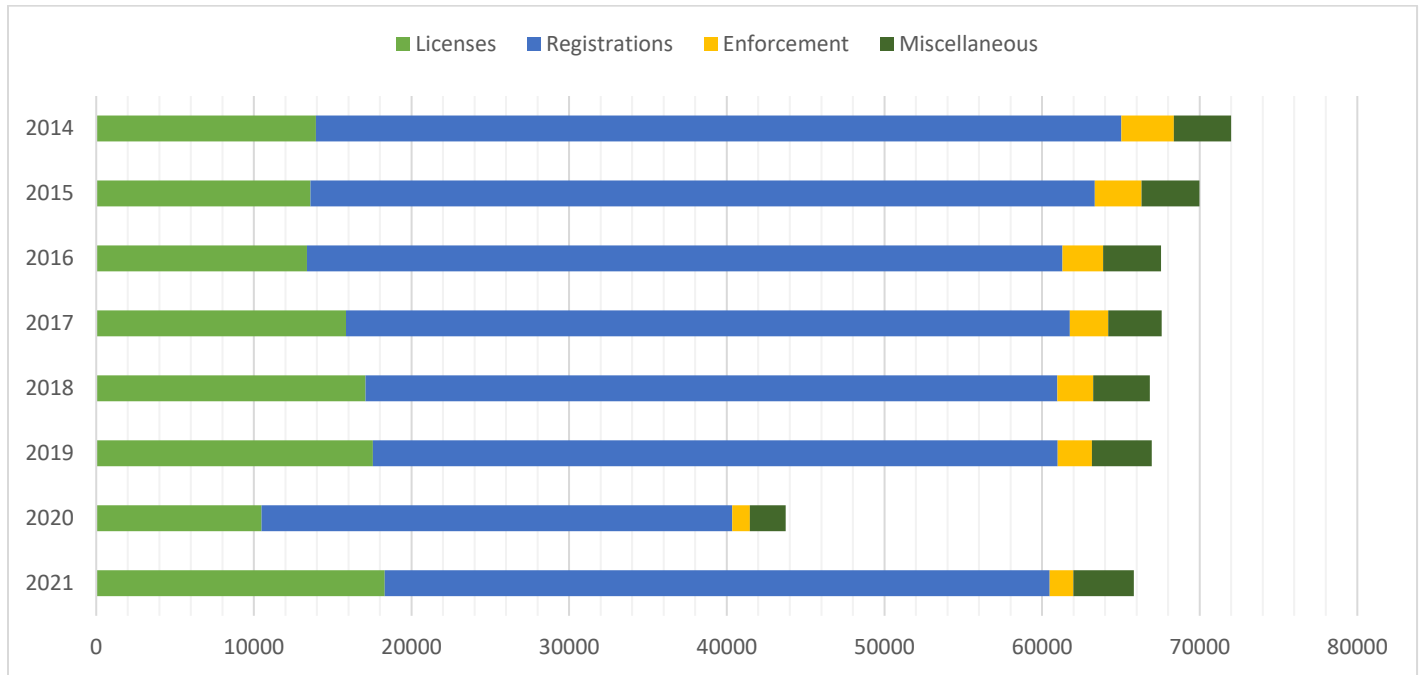
## DMV Online Revenue:



\*Potential Revenue totals are what Jefferson County would have received if all of the online transactions were processed within the office at a retention rate of 12.7%.



## Total Number of DMV Transactions 2014-2021



## DMV – General Information

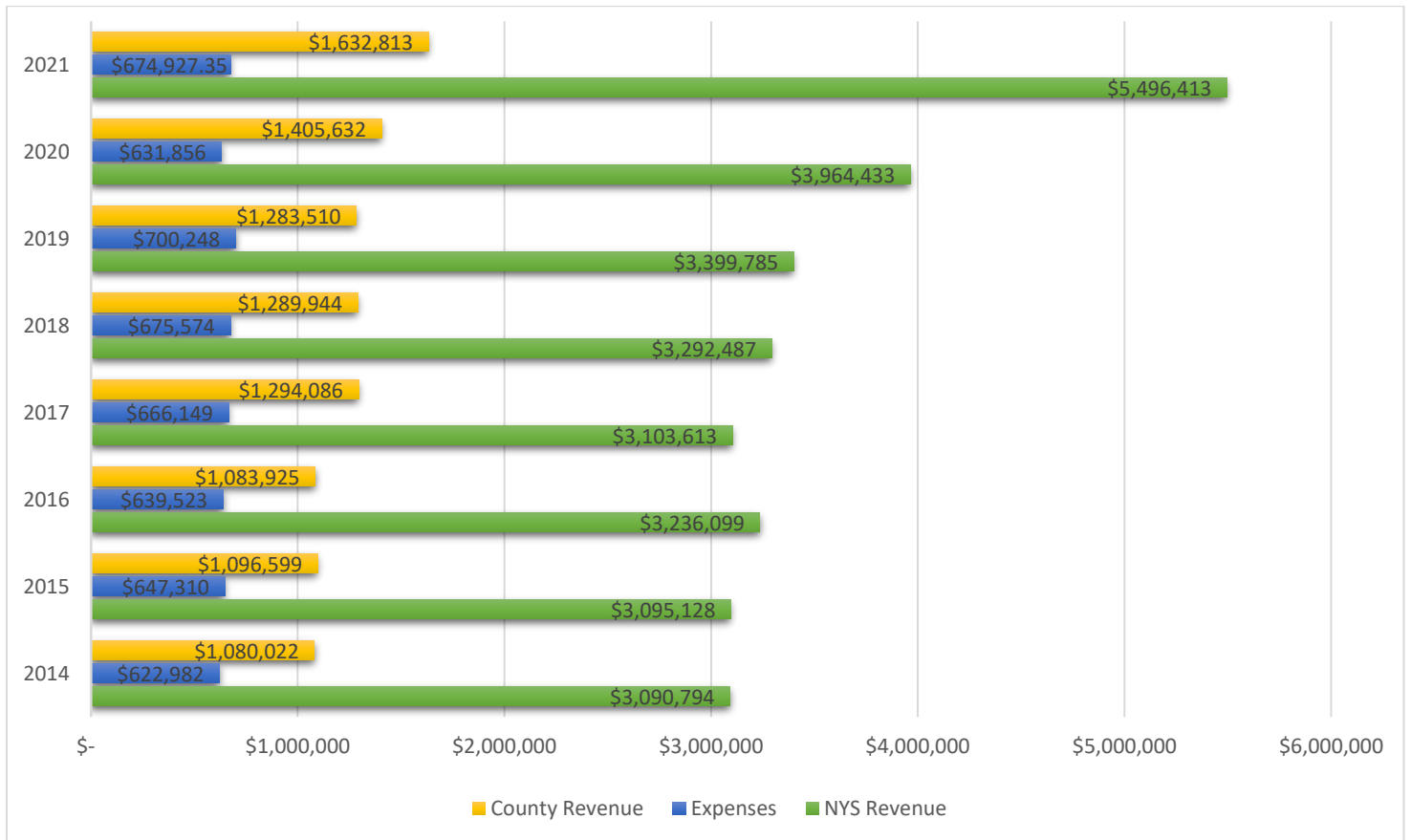
- Jefferson County retains 12.7% of most transactions performed within the office.
- Jefferson County receives 3.25% of online transactions over and above the threshold of \$965,703.75.

## DMV – 2021 Highlights

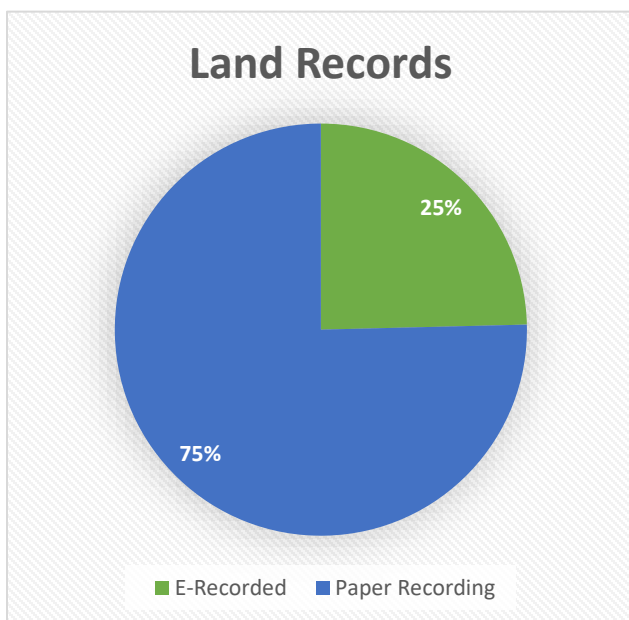
- Revenue is up 23.40% from the previous year.
- Revenue is 38.50% higher than original estimates.
- Revenue from online transactions increased by \$2,506.10 from last year – an increase of 3.95%.
- The total number of transactions processed increased by 50.52%.
- DMV cost taxpayers \$2,966.71 in 2021.
- DMV will continue to operate on an appointment only basis.

# Recording Department

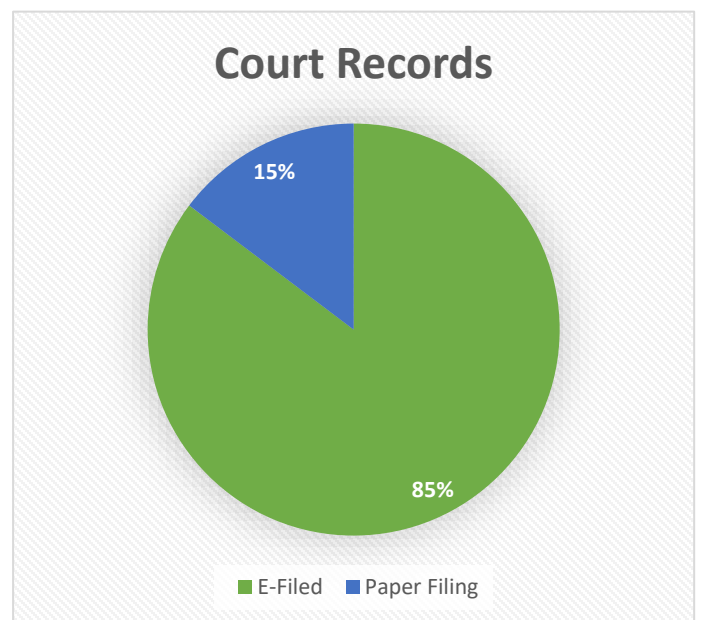
## Overall Revenues and Expenses 2014-2021



## Percentage of Total Documents Recorded or Filed Electronically

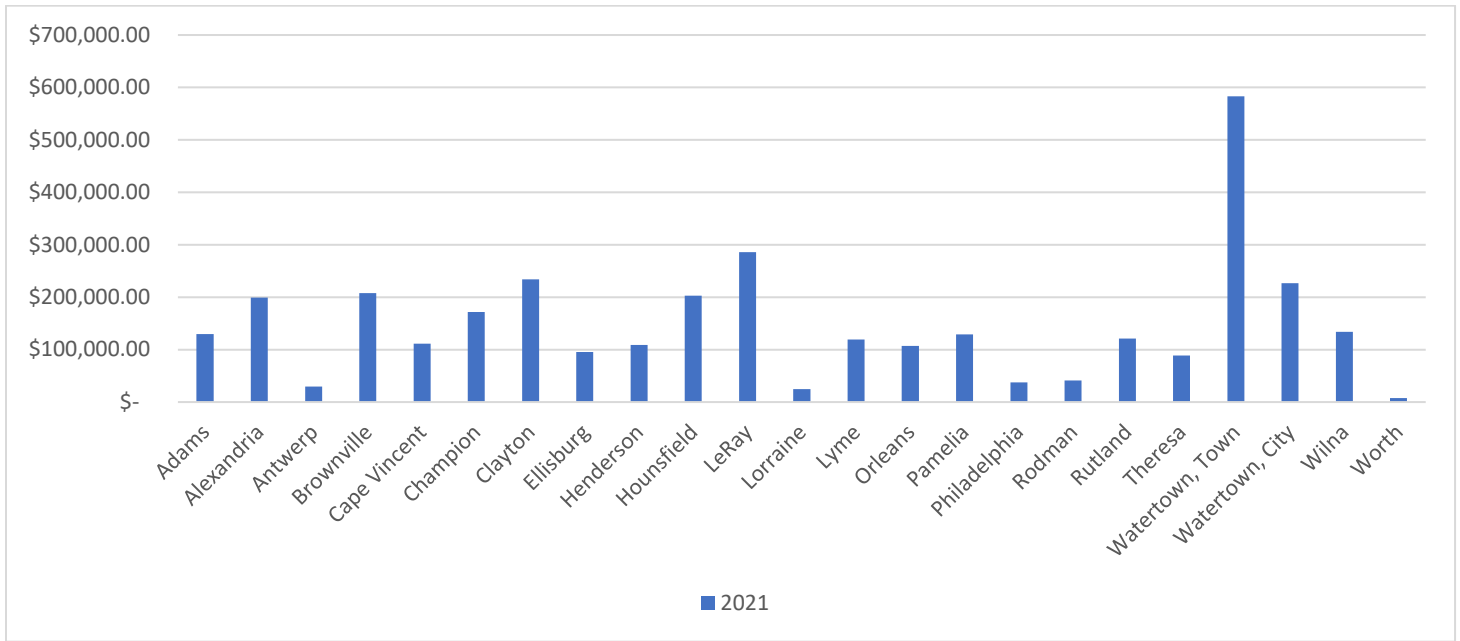


E-Recording is NOT required by the submitter.

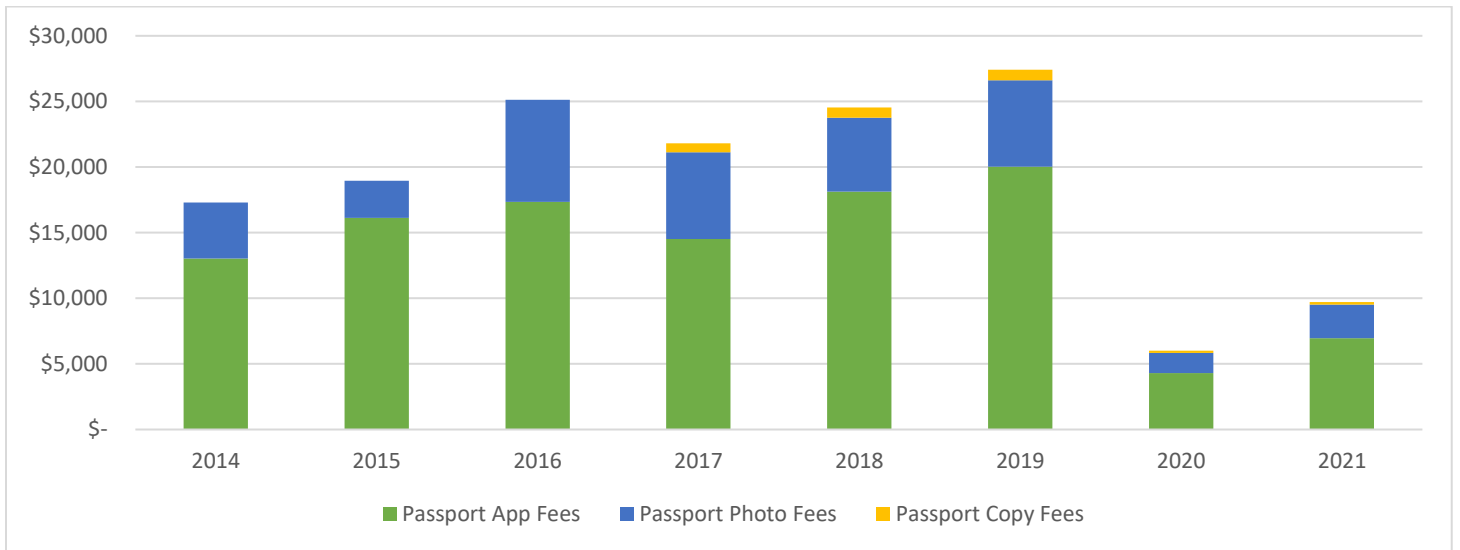


E-Filing is MANDATED for most case types.

## Basic Mortgage Tax Collected for Each Town - 2021



## Passport Revenue 2014-2021



## Recording Department – 2021 Highlights

- Revenue is up 16.77% from the previous year.
- Revenue is 32.19% higher than original estimates.
- Total Mortgage Tax Collected increased 30.96% from the previous year.
- Revenue from this department covered all other expenses of the County Clerk budget and resulted in the largest fund balance yet for the current County Clerk.

# Records Management

## Totals by Department

Requests		Transfers		Destruction	
Administration	0.00	Administration	0.00	Administration	16.00
Board of Elections	3.00	Board of Elections	0.00	Board of Elections	61.00
Buildings & Grounds	0.00	Buildings & Grounds	0.00	Buildings & Grounds	0.00
Code Enforcement	35.00	Code Enforcement	0.00	Code Enforcement	0.00
Community Services	4.00	Community Services	44.00	Community Services	27.00
County Attorney	0.00	County Attorney	0.00	County Attorney	0.00
County Clerk	191.00	County Clerk	11.00	County Clerk	49.85
District Attorney	42.00	District Attorney	0.00	District Attorney	0.00
DSS/County Home	0.00	DSS/County Home	0.00	DSS/County Home	10.00
Dog Control	0.00	Dog Control	0.00	Dog Control	14.00
Employment & Training	0.00	Employment & Training	30.00	Employment & Training	5.00
General Public	71.00	General Public	0.00	General Public	0.00
Highway	0.00	Highway	0.00	Highway	48.00
Human Resources	21.00	Human Resources	11.00	Human Resources	11.00
Information Services	0.00	Information Services	0.00	Information Services	0.00
Insurance	9.00	Insurance	0.00	Insurance	4.00
Medical Examiner	20.00	Medical Examiner	5.00	Medical Examiner	0.00
Office for the Aging	0.00	Office for the Aging	0.00	Office for the Aging	7.00
Planning	0.00	Planning	0.00	Planning	0.00
Probation	57.00	Probation	0.00	Probation	3.00
Public Defender	34.00	Public Defender	53.00	Public Defender	0.00
Public Health	0.00	Public Health	0.00	Public Health	33.00
Purchasing	65.00	Purchasing	53.00	Purchasing	107.00
Real Property	0.00	Real Property	0.00	Real Property	0.00
Sheriff	0.00	Sheriff	0.00	Sheriff	108.00
Treasurer	0.00	Treasurer	0.10	Treasurer	9.00
Veterans Services	0.00	Veterans Services	0.00	Veterans Services	0.00
<b>Total:</b>	<b>552.00</b>	<b>Total:</b>	<b>207.10</b>	<b>Total:</b>	<b>512.85</b>

*\*The majority of boxes destroyed for Public Health and Sheriff were stored, prepped and destroyed at their site.*

## Records Management – General Information

- The County Clerk is the Records Management Officer for Jefferson County
- This Department is responsible for managing records for all County Departments
- Increased Digitization is resulting in fewer requests, fewer transfers, and more destruction across all departments.
  - Since 2014, the County Clerk’s Office has been able to destroy 909 boxes of records due to digitization, which frees up valuable space in our Inactive Records Center.

## Potential Revenue Sources

Revenue Source	Potential Annual Revenue
*Imposition of Local Mortgage Tax	\$ 1,300,000.00
*Increase of Real Estate Transfer Tax	\$ 1,185,000.00
**Imposition of County Passenger Vehicle Use Tax	\$ 522,000.00

*\*Potential Revenue based on 2021 Actual Revenues*

*\*\*Potential Revenue based on Current Registration Information available at data.ny.gov*

### Local Mortgage Tax

**What Would Change:** Currently  $\frac{3}{4}$  of 1% is collected on the amount of mortgage. This would increase to 1%.

**Who Does it Affect:** New Mortgages. Affects taxpayers maybe 1-2 times in a lifetime. Most borrowers are not even aware of this fee as it is often included in closing costs.

**How Many Other Counties Have It** – 27 (Only 8 Counties are left at .75%)

**Note:** The allocation of this additional revenue is decided by the Board of Legislators.

Mortgage Amount	Current Tax	New Tax	Difference
\$100,000.00	\$750.00	\$1,000.00	\$250.00
\$250,000.00	\$1,875.00	\$2,500.00	\$625.00

### Passenger Vehicle Use Tax

<https://dmv.ny.gov/registration/registration-fees-use-taxes-and-supplemental-fees-passenger-vehicles>

#### **What Would Change:**

Passenger Vehicle  $\leq$  3500 = \$10.00 per two-year registration

Passenger Vehicle  $>$  3500 = \$20.00 per two-year registration

**Who Does it Affect:** All registrations of **passenger** vehicles with Jefferson County Address. (All other classes including Commercial are exempt from this additional fee.)

**How Many Other Counties Have it** – 39

**Note:** We get this \$\$ no matter where they register (Online or other DMV Office.)

Vehicle	Current 2yr Reg.	New 2yr Reg.	Difference
2020 Hyundai (3126 lbs.)	\$50.00	\$60.00	\$10.00
2017 Chevy 1500 (5276 lbs.)	\$79.00	\$99.00	\$20.00

### Real Estate Transfer Tax

**What Would Change:** Currently \$4/\$1,000 on amount of sale price. This would increase to \$6.

**Who Does it Affect:** Purchaser(s) of new property. Affects taxpayers may 1-2 times in a lifetime. Most borrowers are not even aware of this fee as it is often included in closing fees.

**How Many Other Counties Have it** (Not all are the same rate) – (Columbia, Essex, Broome, Nassau, Tompkins)

Sale Price	Current Tax	New Tax	Difference
\$100,000.00	\$400.00	\$600.00	\$200.00
\$250,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,500.00	\$500.00