

**Tompkins Shared Services Electronic Records Repository Group**  
Meeting Minutes  
February 25, 2014

**Location:** Town of Groton

**Present:**

Town of Caroline: Marilou Harrington, Christine Wilbur  
Cayuga Heights: Joan Mangione, Angela Podufalski, Jennifer Zawislak  
Town of Danby: Pamela Goddard  
Town of Dryden: Bambi Avery  
Village of Dryden: Debra Marrotte  
Village of Freeville: Ron Campbell  
Town of Enfield: Alice Linton, Sue Thompson  
Town of Groton: April Scheffler, Robin Cargian, Rosemarie Tucker  
Village of Groton: Charles Rankin, Vicki Marks, Deb Barron  
City of Ithaca: Sarah Myers, Alan Karasin  
Town of Ithaca: Lisa Carrier-Titti  
Town of Ulysses: Carissa Parlato, Patricia Halloran  
NYS Archives: Suzanne Etherington  
Tompkins County: Maureen Reynolds, Alanna Congdon, Greg Potter, Loren Cottrell  
Tompkins County Soil & Water: Jon Negley

1. **Introduction of New Members:**

Ms. Reynolds introduced the newest members to join the TSSERR group: the Villages of Cayuga Heights, Dryden, Freeville, Groton, Lansing, and Trumansburg; and Tompkins County Soil and Water Department

Ms. Reynolds reviewed the Laserfiche Repositories on the County's server (through a Power Point Presentation) so everyone could see what it looked like and how it is set up. She noted that the Tompkins County Clerk's website has every deed from 1817 to present available electronically. She encouraged everyone to take a look at the site and make use of it.

Ms. Reynolds further reported that Ms. Congdon, from the County Clerk's office, has set up a TSSERR Group website that will contain agendas, minutes, the by-laws, and information on grants. Ms. Congdon also created TSSERR business cards, which were distributed during the meeting. The business cards provide Ms. Reynolds and Ms. Congdon's contact information so that everyone can contact them directly with any questions or needs. Ms. Reynolds is also working on getting information on either tee shirts or bags for members of this group that will showcase the TSSERR logo and hopefully, generate attention and interest in the work of the group.

Ms. Reynolds then reviewed the TSSERR agreement and by-laws for all the new members. She noted that work is needed to develop policies and procedures; she has the majority of that work done but would like volunteers to assist her in this effort as well.

Mr. Potter, Tompkins County IT Director, explained that the by-laws define the TSSERR group and how it will work. The by-laws will allow the TSSERR group to add/change membership and policies and procedures without having to go through the Tompkins County Legislature for approval. As such a document, it requires that formal positions of Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson be elected each year in January to oversee the meetings and activities of the group. In addition, formal minutes of this group will be needed, approved, and posted to the County's website each time the group meets. The by-laws also require that this group establish a work plan for each year and provide a brief presentation annually to the Tompkins County Governance Committee on that plan.

**Nomination for Chairperson of the Tompkins Shared Services Electronic Records Repository Group**

By Pamela Goddard: Seconded by Sarah Myers

**RESOLVED**, That Maureen Reynolds be nominated as Chairperson of the Tompkins Shared Services Electronic Records Repository Group with a term to expire December 31, 2014.

**Carried Unanimously**

**Nomination for Vice Chairperson of the Tompkins Shared Services Electronic Records Repository Group**

By Greg Potter: Seconded by April Scheffler

**RESOLVED**, That Bambi Avery be nominated as Vice Chairperson of the Tompkins Shared Services Electronic Records Repository Group with a term to expire December 31, 2014.

**Carried Unanimously**

**Minute Taker for Tompkins Shared Services Electronic Records Repository Group**

Sarah Myers, City of Ithaca, volunteered to be minute taker for the TSSERR group meetings.

Mr. Potter encouraged everyone to re-read the by-laws and group agreement so that they fully understand their contents and each municipality's responsibilities as members of the TSSERR Group. He stated that the by-laws define the representation by municipality which allows for one vote by a designated person for each municipality. The vote can be made by the designated person or a stand-in for the designated person. In order to increase membership requires a 2/3 majority vote of the entire group. At this point, the villages and soil and water conservation district need to be formally voted into membership of the TSSERR group.

**Nomination of All Tompkins County Villages and the Tompkins County Soil and Water Conservation District to the Tompkins Shared Services Electronic Records Repository Group**

By Bambi Avery: Seconded by Pamela Goddard

**RESOLVED**, That the Villages of Cayuga Heights, Dryden, Freeville, Groton, Lansing, and Trumansburg and Tompkins County Soil and Water Division be approved for membership into the Tompkins Shared Services Electronic Records Repository Group.

**Carried Unanimously**

**TSSERR Group Meeting Schedule:**

Ms. Reynolds proposed quarterly meetings or webinars for the group throughout the year, which was fully supported by everyone. She will develop a 2014 meeting schedule and e-mail it to all members in the near future.

2. **Laserfiche Empower 2014 Conference:**

Ms. Reynolds reported that she and Greg Potter from the County; and Julie Holcomb, Sarah Myers, and Alan Karasin from the City of Ithaca attended the Laserfiche Empower 2014 Conference in Anaheim, California the week of January 13<sup>th</sup>. She went to the conference with the goal of learning more about the Forms Module of Laserfiche and to network with other users and information technology staff. She is also interested in the Workflow Module, which works with Laserfiche Forms.

Ms. Reynolds stated that she would set up a meeting at Tompkins County with representatives of General Code Publishers to provide some basic training on Laserfiche Forms and Workflow for anyone interested in that information.

Mr. Potter noted that the County's IT Department still needs to do some coordination within the County's network and with General Code on the development and use of Laserfiche Forms and Workflow which are pretty sophisticated programs. He would be very interested, moving forward in determining whether or not there are common forms and processes that all municipalities use that could be developed within Laserfiche Forms and Workflow so the designing of the programs could be done once and then tweaked to meet individual needs.

He further noted that the County IT Department also needs to coordinate with General Code regarding the Public Portal program of Laserfiche. A determination needs to be made whether each municipality should have a separate page for the public to access information or whether there should be a common page with a link to each municipality. There is much more work needed this part of the program. In addition, individual municipalities will need to make decisions as to what it wants available for the public through the web portal. As the default setting, for now, everything is considered private. Research is needed to determine what data sets are clearly public; for now, they will start with just minutes on the public portal side.

He further stated that County staff are here to assist and not dictate how or what the records management portion of the program should be for each municipality.

Mr. Potter provided a status update on the current grant project, which is the County and Challenge are finishing the work with all the Towns, and starting work on scanning and importing into Laserfiche the City of Ithaca records. The County will work on an ongoing basis to assist the towns and villages to get them up and running on how to use Laserfiche and their repository.

Ms. Congdon provided a brief PowerPoint demonstration of the Town of Dryden's repository in Laserfiche to show everyone what their repository will look like, what will be there, and the need to develop a plan for what to do going day forward from here.

Ms. Reynolds stated that they are considering what might be included in the next grant application; she feels that the town court records would be a great place to expand to; or the highway department records. Another possibility for a grant is to look at scanning the larger format type maps, since those are more expensive to scan and store. She reminded everyone that the County has a large scanner that is available anytime for anyone to come in and use for scanning large maps and documents. She noted that all the minutes done through the grant process were OCR'd – but not the building permits. Mr. Potter stated that when documentation is OCR'd, queries can be run based on any text within the documents.

Ms. Reynolds reported that she will be conducting a Continuing Legal Education class for attorneys in this area soon. She plans to show them what information is on the County's website, talk about Laserfiche, and future plans for records management.

Ms. Reynolds reminded everyone that Ms. Congdon is available anytime to provide software assistance, and to call Mr. Potter for IT type questions or server problems. Ms. Congdon can set up custom searches for anyone too that then can be saved for future use.

Mr. Potter reported that as part of the last NYS archives grant, Tompkins County upgraded the storage area on their network equipment and devices. They also are working to have complete redundancy of their network. Each storage location has a generator to provide for an uninterrupted power supply so that if power were lost, there would be access to records and information where needed. He assured everyone that their data would be safe and secure. They also do routine back-ups of the network, and are considering a fourth off-site storage location for data, so that the information is available at up to 4 data centers at anytime. They also will have the ability to incrementally add space to that network to build capacity loads as time goes by and more information is put into Laserfiche.

Public portal: - who is interested/what records are important that the public have access to at anytime? Ms. Reynolds will send an e-mail to everyone for an answer to those questions, and she will also work with Mr. Potter and Mr. Karasin to determine what will work best for everyone.

Forms:

Ms. Reynolds asked if there are common forms, such as dog licenses, marriage licenses? It was noted that most clerks use a different software for marriage licenses with forms provided by New York State so they might not work; however, Ms. Reynolds will talk with New York State to see what/if any changes can be made to those State forms and programs. She is actually working with the Court system on that same question.

Mr. Potter asked if we could identify a piece of paper that people are filling out by hand that becomes a cover sheet for something submitted. The use of Laserfiche Forms would convert hand writing to digital which can create an index that could be queried in the future. As subsequent information comes in, it can then be dropped into same location for completion of the associated task.

Maintenance - Day Forward Process:

Mr. Potter explained that the focus, so far, has been on archiving what records are in place with grants to make them easy to find. The true value and future benefit is to keep pace with those digital record sets so that are they're received we don't end up with a lot of paper to then scan into Laserfiche. How can we incorporate scanning and using Laserfiche on a day-to-day basis going forward to eliminate paper? We can't go back and pay to re-scan records again, and documents received electronically now can be put right into Laserfiche. He wondered if any municipalities were doing that now, do they want to, and how can the County help with that process? Town of Ithaca and Town of Enfield are doing that with minutes currently.

Ms. Congdon can take digital records and put them into Laserfiche if a municipality's connectivity is slow or provide assistance if there is a request for a large amount of information to be e-mailed. Mr. Potter stated that everyone needs to pay close attention to the size of documents, especially large format drawings because if a file is too large, then it becomes a problem to e-mail it to anyone. He noted that is an issue the County will need to determine how to manage.

Mr. Potter asked what everyone's experience has been in using Laserfiche? It was noted that it is very helpful in responding to FOIL requests because it saves time. He further noted that the County GIS Department no longer has its big plotter, and they do not produce maps anymore. He stated that the Tompkins County Assessment Department has tax maps and those are available on the County Clerk's website.

One tip that was provided to help locate documents in the future – especially hand written documents is to add a sticky note to the document. You will then be able to search for that document because there is now text associated with the document. Make sure to use an identifying word on the sticky note that would help you locate that document when you perform a search in the future.

Mr. Potter explained that the County can help set up folder structures, and noted that General Code provides great support and can help design file and folder structures that meet a certain municipalities' needs.

NYS Archives Representative, Suzanne Etherington, asked what the audit trail and history of searches looks like in Laserfiche.

Ms. Congdon responded that going forward that is something the County needs to work on; it has not been done yet because it will take up a lot of space on the network.

Mr. Potter noted that audit trail capability was a key factor that differentiated Laserfiche from other companies in that it has a very robust audit trail ability, and the ability to create audit records.

Ms. Reynolds stated that the United States Department of Defense has certified Laserfiche for its use; however, New York State still has questions about whether they want to certify it or not. She did note that an audit trail is needed for admissible items in a court situation.

Status of next grant: Ms. Reynolds stated that work has begun on the next grant application. They hope to receive a grant to bring in the Villages and the Tompkins County Soil and Water Division to the TSSERR group.

Ms. Reynolds further reported that she does not have the annual Laserfiche license cost and license distribution information yet; she will let us know as soon as she does. She stated that it has been great to meet and work with everyone through this process. Going forward we will work to determine where there is redundancy and where there might be similar information that could be shared between municipalities.

Ms. Etherington reported that everyone is watching this project from NYS Archives with great admiration. They all think this is a wonderful records management project and that it is wonderful to have all municipalities in Tompkins County working together on it.

Town of Groton Historian, Rose Tucker, stated that all the historians in New York State are very interested in this project. Having all this information available electronically will be so helpful to them as they assist the public in their research. She suggested to Ms. Reynolds that if she could do a presentation to the historians that it would be well received. Ms. Reynolds stated that Tompkins County Historian, Carol Kammen, is thrilled with this project as well.

Next Steps:

Mr. Potter stated that the next thing to do is for this group to determine its work plan/priorities, and develop policies/procedures. He feels that a sub-committee to work on the policies would be the best way to proceed, and then their recommendations can be presented to the larger group for review, input, and approval. He stated that some structure to this process will be needed as well as defining the responsibility of the county versus each agency. In addition, the groups' 2014 Work Plan will need to be quickly presented to the County's Governance Committee, and then lastly, prioritization of the county's time and direction it should go needs to be done. From his perspective, the first priority is getting the public portal up and running, and having that information available to the public. Everyone agreed that is a priority.

Next Grant application:

Ms Reynolds stated that she will need the following information from all the Villages for the next grant application: when their records retention schedule was adopted and date/information regarding appointment of records management administrator.

Digital signatures-Filing Dates:

A very brief discussion was held regarding digital signatures and filing dates, and what constitutes a signature, and the official filing date of documents. Research will be needed. Ms. Etherington stated that this is a gray area and that a written policy should be established concerning both, and then that policy followed consistently.

Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at 11:03 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Sarah Myers, Information Management Specialist, City of Ithaca  
March 6, 2014