

Tompkins Shared Services Electronic Records Repository Meeting (TSSERR)

September 30, 2014 – Town Hall of Ithaca

9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

1. Introduction of Members and Guests:

Tompkins County: Joe Mareane, Administrator

Tompkins County: Maureen Reynolds, Alanna Congdon, Greg Potter, Loren Cottrell

Tompkins County: Environmental Health Director Liz Cameron,

Cayuga Heights: Joan Mangione, Angela Podufalski

Town of Danby: Pamela Goddard, Mary Ann Barr

Town of Dryden: Bambi Avery, Erin Bieber

Village of Freeville: Ron Campbell

Village of Lansing: Jodi Dake

Town of Enfield: Alice Linton, Sue Thompson

Town of Groton: Robin Cargian

Village of Groton: Charles Rankin

City of Ithaca: Sarah Myers

Town of Ithaca: Paulette Terwilliger

Town of Ulysses: Carissa Parlato

NYS Archives: Kent Steutz

Tompkins County Soil & Water: Jon Negley

General Code: Liz Mistretta, Brian Hoody

Challenge Industries: Alan Thomas

Joe Mareane, Tompkins County Administrator:

- Mr. Mareane discussed Gov. Cuomo's directive to local governments encouraging them to consolidate and share services wherever possible. In response, Tompkins County Council of Governments (TCCOG) established a sub-committee to research where money might be saved, show cooperation between local governments, and where it might be possible to merge and consolidate. In addition, the County is trying to keep the tax levy beneath the property tax cap and find shared services that save 1% of its tax levy. If the county is successful in satisfying both of those requirements, tax payers will receive a rebate check. The local rebate check will be approximately \$7.00. At the same time the tax payers want consolidation and shared services in their local governments. Mr. Mareane stated that local governments should be looking at ways they could consolidate and share services anyway; for example, like what Tompkins County and the local clerks have done in the past few years. The TCCOG committee has developed four key points for study related to possible consolidation and shared services as follows:
 - Public safety
 - Highways
 - The Municipal Court System

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- Back Office Services/administrative services - could the County take on some of the local government administrative/IT duties? The County is larger and has the capacity to take this duty on. This item will be reviewed first to determine which local clerks might be interested. They will then review the area of finance (payroll/purchasing) and code enforcement. Could the County become a "contractor" for local governments for these types of duties?
- Tax collection – the committee will review this item in the next couple of months
- HR/Personnel - can the County do anything that would support local governments in this area?
- A Centralized Grant Management Office – create a central office to look for any grant money available for towns, villages, and the city.

Mr. Mareane stated that the County wants all the appropriate stakeholders at the local government level in Information Technology (IT) to have a place at the table for discussions related to any possible IT consolidation; many clerks may want to attend that meeting. He stated that the County will send notices to stake holders to invite them to appropriate meetings, which will take place within the next couple of months, and then go from there. Any recommendations that come out of the discussions have to be submitted to the Governor's Office by May 2015.

Dryden Town Clerk Avery requested that Mr. Mareane include "all clerks" in those meeting notices because they might not get the information otherwise. Tompkins County Deputy Clerk Reynolds stated that she would provide her list of clerks to Mr. Mareane for distribution of this information.

A brief discussion followed on the floor regarding the Governor's "look back" time period related to past work by local governments towards shared services/consolidation efforts. The look back period is only back to 2012. Mr. Mareane stated that during the past decade the County has been involved in a lot of work towards shared services and consolidation. Some of the work includes the creation of the Tompkins County Health Consortium, and the Tompkins County Council of Government. They should be counted towards that savings; however, they were created in 2011. He stated that if the "look back" could be extended to 2011 the County would have met its' \$1,000,000 threshold for savings related to the decrease in health insurance costs. He encouraged everyone at the meeting to advance that message to put the look back further than 2012.

2. Laserfiche Tips and Tricks (via Web Access Client):

Brian Hoody from General Code provided the following tips and information for use of and navigation through Laserfiche (LF):

LF can accept the following formats: tiff, pdf, word - tiff format is highly recommended since it can't be altered.

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If the document is not OCR'd a search can be done by using the word "none" and it will pull up those documents because that is one of the indexes that can be searched. This search can be done through the column view.

Multiple column views can be created depending upon the types of documents scanned

Annotations/redactions do not modify the original document in anyway.

Depending on views people are allowed, the redaction area would show up as a black box to some and others would be able to see through the redaction.

Creating multiple documents to "save" the original is not necessary and would require records management and archiving of all the documents. Only the original document needs to be retained.

Mr. Potter stated that he still needs to work with municipalities about what they want to have placed in their public portals on the web access version of LF; what are public documents, etc. - this needs be discussed further with clerks.

Newer versions of LF have addressed the problem of being able to export/e-mail large documents; however, depending upon your e-mail system some may still be too large.

General Code would recommend not using PDF as the archived version of records in LF. PDF-A is archival quality; but they would encourage the use of TIFF for placing documents in LF.

Mr. Steutz stated that he would not recommend storage of permanent records in LF, unless they are in TIFF format, since TIFF documents cannot be altered and can be open in many various types of software programs.

LF is a repository for records
TIFF format is permanent format

Tompkins County has redundant back-up systems so LF should be acceptable for most format types of documents, although TIFF format is always preferable.

Index or field is really the same thing in LF

Templates with fields filled in with specific information are very important for documents that are handwritten such as marriage records, birth, and death records.

Searches can be saved for specific types of documents to make locating information easier. Mr. Hoody will research the question and let us know whether a specific search could be set up and saved that would look for social security numbers or driver's license numbers prior to releasing any information to the public?

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Scanning through the Web Access Version of LF can be slow at times because it has to go through Internet.

Scanning - make sure you're not scanning black and white documents in color; 300 dpi is minimum requirement per NYS Archives.

Tompkins County has production and large map scanners that they are happy to share with anyone who might need them.

Municipalities can disable the ability to download documents from their website if they do not want the public to be able to do that.

The following municipalities use LF and have public portals on their website for people to access documents in LF. Mr. Hoody encouraged everyone to take a look at the websites to see how the public portal for their municipality might be set up on their websites.

Town of Lexington, Mass

Town of Framingham, Mass

City of Saco, Maine

Mr. Potter explained that the County's goal would be to create one custom template hooked to agendas and minutes. In addition, he stressed the importance of planning carefully the folder structure of the repositories and naming conventions. He stated that they can automate some of the naming conventions through the import and scanning of documents into LF.

Ms. Mistretta asked everyone to think about how the public would think about looking for a document. We want them to be able to find the information without having to call us; that defeats the purpose of LF.

E-Mail – Tompkins County has an archiving system for e-mail; public officials should have separate e-mail addresses for public and personal use. The use of just one e-mail address for both is not a good practice. LF can document or store e-mail as an electronic public record. The County keeps everything for 7 years.

New County Projects:

Municipality to accept online payments (Town of Ithaca using it; City of Ithaca using something different)

Excella Permitting Software (rabies vaccinations, dog licenses, onsite wastewater treatment systems). The County and Town of Dryden are using this software for permitting.

First permitting process in LF will be the onsite wastewater treatment system; they are about to go live using Excella to host that data.

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Liz Cameron, Tompkins County Director of Environmental Health explained that she recently attended a dog licensing meeting with the various local clerks and supervisors. She stated that the County has created a public portal on their website, this is the first group to preview it, which they are hoping to use for all permits issued through the department of environmental health such as food service permits, hotels, etc. They are starting now with sewage system permits, and she showed the group how to use the website. She noted that if the public wants to do research they will have to log-in, which is required for security of public records per Tompkins County's policy so they know who is searching the records. Through the new program the public will be able to schedule inspections online, and view the status of permits. The County will no longer need to mail out huge packets to the applicant, as the information will be sent in an e-mail and the applicant can print what they want. Starting in 2015, the County will be able to process payments on line.

Ms. Cameron will come back to this group to do a demo of the program, once it's up and working. She further noted that in 2015 all the rabies vaccination certificate information from the free clinics will be entered so that clerks can look up rabies information online. She would like to, ideally, work with all the clerks and vets in the area so there is a county wide database for rabies vaccinations. The Excella program is very flexible so they will be able to add different permit types as time goes by. This will help Department of Health staff work in the field easier, since they will be able to input and view information online.

Mr. Potter stated that the County has plans to use LF for personnel related records, information and civil service processing, as well as for the district attorney's office. This will be a huge undertaking.

Mr. Potter further noted that the Tompkins County Assessment Department has a new website, and the URL for the "Image Mate" tool has changed to: ww.property.tompkins-co.org.

Laserfiche Conference - January 13-16, 2015:

Ms. Reynolds reported that she, Alanna Congdon, Paulette Terwilliger, Bambi Avery, as well as staff from the County's IT Department and the City of Ithaca are registered to attend the conference. Tompkins County is receiving the "Run Smarter Award" at the conference. She invited anyone who might be interested in attending to touch base with her. She explained what a great conference it is, the great classes offered, as well as the fact that you are in sunny, southern California in January!

Status of Current Projects:

Village of Cayuga Heights has had their microfilm converted to LF. She and Alan Thomas from Challenge need to talk with clerks from the Villages to see when they want to start having records scanned as well as to show them what records and where they are stored.

Ms. Reynolds reported that she attended the NYCOM conference last week, and there is a lot of interest in shared services; which she is working to spread the word about.

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Ms. Reynolds further noted that there are still some shared services contracts with the villages that need to be ratified at their earliest convenience so that projects can begin.

Policy and Procedures:

Ms. Reynolds reported that work on policy and procedures for work involved with shared services between the County, towns, villages and the city will begin soon. This work was delayed since Spring due to unforeseen circumstances, and she will be in touch with everyone to set up a meeting.

Forms – Freedom of Information Workflow:

Ms. Reynolds reported that the City of Ithaca FOIL automated workflow was recently developed, and is being tested. It seems to be working well and should be ready to be released to the public soon. The County is using the same Workflow to handle FOIL requests which are routed through the County Administrator's office for processing. The County hopes to share this automated FOIL Workflow program with the members of the shared services group in the near future.

Status of Next Grant/Expansion of Records Set:

Ms. Reynolds asked everyone to think about what the next record set should be chosen for scanning and placed in LF. She needs ideas; the next grant applications needs to be submitted by March 1, 2015 so she would like project ideas to her by January. She asked everyone to think about what record series are important to our offices to be scanned and placed in LF and to e-mail her ideas.

Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah L. Myers,
Information Management Specialist
City of Ithaca – Department of Public Information & Technology

Dated: October 2, 2014