

TOMPKINS COUNTY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
MINUTES
January 25, 2007

PRESENT: D. Austic-T. Ulysses, D. Barber-T. Caroline, R. Dietrich-T. Danby, R. Dolge-T. Newfield, H. Engman-T. Ithaca, R. Harvey-T. Enfield, T. Joseph-County Legis, W. Lynn-V. Cayuga Heights, C. Peterson-City of Ithaca, C. Rankin-V. Groton, M. Robertson-County Legis, R. Taylor-V. Dryden, S. Trumbull-T. Dryden, D. Hartill-V. Lansing, S. Whicher-County Admin, M. Lynch-County Admin.

Meeting Minutes:

Motion: To adopt the minutes from the December meeting.
Made by: D. Austic
Seconded: M. Robertson
Carried

Discuss Emergency Radio Communications Protection Law:

County Attorney Jonathan Wood reported out that all towers in connection with the county microwave system are up, the buildings are up, the equipment is here, in storage, and ready to go. They should start assembling the antennas this spring.

Attorney Wood explained that there are two types of paths:

1. Tower to Tower
2. LMR-Handheld device to tower

There is concern within the County that large structures, something over 50 feet tall, will interfere with the microwave communication system that would be very expensive to correct. The proposal is to require a review of anticipated construction to determine if it might interfere with the microwave path. There have been microwave path surveys done. Someone could come to individual town/village/city board meetings, in an executive session, to discuss where the microwave paths are. The County would like the TCCOG members to take this proposed local law back to their municipality and discuss this with them. Attorney Wood will be available to answer questions. If you do not feel this is something your municipality can support, please contact County Administration.

Discuss Resolution Regarding the Fire Advisory Board By-laws:

S. Whicher reported out that after researching changes to the Fire Advisory Board, it was discovered that this does not require a County Charter change but can be accomplished through a change in the Advisory Board by-laws. The concern is that it will take a two-thirds vote of the existing board to make the by-law changes and there has not been a quorum for that meeting for quite a while. L. Shurtleff is trying to coordinate this effort.

The proposed resolution is to replace the membership of the old board in an attempt to coordinate efforts with the municipal governments, their fire disaster teams, the County Emergency Response services, and New York State government. The need is for a collective group to review information with Lee Shurtleff, collaborate efforts Countywide, to share services, and possibly benefits to decrease expenses.

Motion: To adopt Resolution number 1-In Support Of Changing The County Fire Advisory Board By-laws To Modify Membership

Made by: R. Dolge

Seconded: R. Dietrich

Motion carried.

11 in favor

1 abstained

The resolution will be forward to the County Public Safety Committee by Administration staff.

Outreach for Community Budget Forums:

M. Lynch reported out regarding Tompkins County's efforts in planning a series of meetings to discuss the county budget with taxpayers before the Legislature budget retreat in April. She would like to enlist the services of the TCCOG membership to assist in the invitation process by suggesting key people or organizations who might be interested in attending. The plan is to meet from 9:30 AM to 12:30 PM on three Saturdays in March at the following locations:

- Saturday, March 3, at the Neptune Hose Company/Dryden Fire Station
- Saturday, March 10, at the Enfield Elementary School, and
- Saturday, March 24, at the Tompkins County Human Services

Please get your suggestions to Ms. Lynch by February 12th, if possible. Her email address is: mlynch@tompkins-co.org, or contact her by telephone at 274-5555.

Report Out About January Affordable Housing Meeting:

There were several members of TCCOG at the meeting, C. Peterson, D. Austic, H. Engman, T. Joseph and M. Robertson.

Mayor Peterson reported that guests for this meeting were contractors/builders who have actually built affordable housing who explained what it is like and what the issues are.

Topics of discussion at the January meeting were:

P. Mazzearella, INHS, talked about housing costs and constructions types: stick, modular, manufactured.

D. Stoyell, COFA, discussed issues with senior housing, especially with Baby Boomers reaching retirement age.

There are over a million dollars in block grants for the City to be distributed before March.

TCAD choose 3 major areas for economic development in Tompkins County and one of those choices was housing.

There is a lot of awareness in this area but there are still many unanswered questions: where are we going with it, what needs to be done and where do we obtain assistance.

The County Planning Department is working on a document to address this and is planning to bring it to TCCOG and the intent is to address this issue with Cornell with a unified voice. M. Robertson will ask for representation from Planning to address TCCOG.

It was stated that there is nothing in the pipeline for affordable housing in Tompkins County.

Next week the master planners from Cornell will do presentations; have open houses, which will be a learning opportunity for the community.

Housekeeping:

A discussion item for the next meeting is; do we want to meet at the Ithaca Town Hall or Old Jail Conference room? If we meet at 4:30 p.m. there will be free parking at the Ithaca Town Hall.

Possible Agenda Items for the February Meeting:

- Countywide housing strategy, M. Robertson
- MS4-Storm Water: for smaller groups, not TCCOG as a whole.
- John Bosak/TC Local Energy Decent and Localization: smaller venue.
- Mayor Peterson, Greenhouse reduction with diesel fuel, what are others doing.
- M. Robertson will contact Monika Roth regarding a resolution for deer management.
- An update from Cornell.

Add Consolidated Courts to the list of future topic.

Meeting adjourned for the press conference at 4:30 p.m.