

**Tompkins County Council of Governments**

**August 26, 2010**

**3 p.m.**

**Scott Heyman Conference Room**

**Draft**

Members Present: (14 municipalities)

T/Caroline – D. Barber

T/Danby – R. Dietrich, L. Shawley

T/Enfield – R. Barriere

T/Ulysses – E. Thomas, R. Marino

T/Dryden – M. Sumner

T/Lansing – C. Miller

T/Ithaca – H. Engman

T/Groton – G. Morey

C/Ithaca – C. Peterson (arrived at 3:12 p.m.)

Co./Tompkins – M. Robertson

T/Newfield – R. Driscoll (arrived at 3:40 p.m.)

V/Groton – B. Conger

V/Trumansburg – D. Nottke

V/Cayuga Heights – K. Supron

Municipalities Not in Attendance: (3 municipalities) V/Dryden, V/Lansing, V/Freeville

Guests: B. Wilbur, former Chief, City of Ithaca Fire Department; J. Carey; WHCU; L. Lawyer, S. Shackford, Ithaca Journal; E. Gottlieb, Pretreatment Coordinator, Ithaca Wastewater Treatment Plant

County staff: M. Lynch, J. Mareane, County Administration; M. Pottorff, Legislature Office

**Call to Order**

Mr. Barber called the meeting to order at 3: 05 p.m.

**Changes to the Agenda**

Mr. Engman asked to make an announcement at the end of the meeting on MS4 regulations.

**Minutes Approval - July 22, 2010**

It was MOVED by Ms. Sumner, seconded by Ms. Robertson, to approve the minutes of July 22<sup>nd</sup> as submitted. A voice vote resulted as follows: Ayes – 12, Noes – 0, Abstentions – 2 (Supron and Nottke). MINUTES APPROVED.

**Report on Household Pharmaceutical Collection Event**

Ms. Lynch reported the Tompkins County Coalition for Safe Medication Disposal will hold a second event at TCAT (Tompkins Consolidated Area Transit) on Saturday, October 16<sup>th</sup> from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. This event is being held again because the first collection event that was held in March was very successful. Municipal partners include the Tompkins County Health Department, Sheriff's Office, Ithaca Area Wastewater Treatment Facility, Ithaca Police Department, Tompkins County Solid Waste, Cornell University, and the Community Coalition for Healthy Youth. She introduced Ed Gottlieb, Pretreatment Coordinator at the Ithaca Area Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Mr. Gottlieb said the purpose of the event is to remove unwanted pharmaceutical items from households and noted without opportunities such as these, items are often flushed down toilets. This results in items being untreated in the Wastewater Treatment Plant and then going into the Lake. He said medications are also left in a home with increased chances of overdose, and controlled substances sitting around a home can be a tempting target for teens.

Mr. Gottlieb spoke of the March event and said during a period of six hours there were 509 vehicles that drove through (1.4 vehicles per minute). During this collection, 22 barrels were filled with medications in addition to 20 cases of medicated IV's, and the net weight collected was 1,741 pounds. He noted the event set a national record for the amount collected in one day at one location. Mr. Gottlieb also called attention to the results of surveys completed by participants following the first collection event and noted there were participants from neighboring counties.

Ms. Peterson arrived at 3:12 p.m.

Mr. Gottlieb requested members support Federal legislation titled “The Safe Drug Disposal Act of 2010”. This legislation amends the Controlled Substances Act to make the safe collection of unwanted medications for disposal easier than it currently is. HR 5809 is currently being considered by the full House and the Senate has unanimously passed a similar bill. He said this legislation is an important part in addressing the issue of unwanted medications and makes coordinating collections much easier. He asked that members contact Representative Hinchey and voice support for this legislation. Additional information can be found at [www.recycletompkins.org](http://www.recycletompkins.org) or by calling 211.

*Ms. Lynch will send Ms. Pottorff an electronic copy of the brochure and it will be distributed to all members.*

### **Report from the Health Insurance Consortium**

Mr. Barber reported significant progress has been made in the last month. Steve Locey will be here at 4:30 p.m. prior to the Board of Director’s meeting to answer any questions members may have. Mr. Barber said there are three remaining things that need to be accomplished in order for the Consortium to receive its certificate:

1. Adopt a resolution that is on this evening’s agenda authorizing the Chair to execute an agreement with New York State;
2. All participating municipalities need to sign the MCA (Municipal Cooperative Agreement); and
3. Reserves must be posted in a bank (\$1.2 million) and made available

He said David Squires is the Chief Fiscal Officer and will be sending out bills to municipalities for their portion of the Reserve Fund; participants will receive a second bill for the premium.

### **Report on Changes in State Laws Pertaining to Fireworks Displays**

Brian Wilbur, Former Chief of the Ithaca Fire Department and Fire Protection Consultant, distributed a press release from the New York State Department of Labor that highlights many of the changes in State laws regarding fireworks and pyrotechnics. A second document he distributed was a summary he prepared of those changes that are intended to protect public safety by ensuring that those putting on fireworks displays have the proper authority, training, and insurance.

Mr. Wilbur said the City of Ithaca already has a process in place for authorizing the Ithaca Fire Department to issue permits. As the former Chief of the Ithaca Fire Department, he has several years of experience with issuing permits and is well-versed in codes and standards relating to fireworks displays. Mr. Wilbur said he has recently been working with the Towns of Ulysses and Caroline who were each looking for some insight and information about what is involved in bringing a code enforcement officer up to speed on changes in State laws. He has also spent time looking into what would be needed for code enforcement officers to be able to administer, evaluate, monitor, and inspect fireworks displays.

Mr. Wilbur said the fireworks industry has evolved a great deal and well beyond the laws New York State had originally written to manage them. He displayed a large notebook containing detailed regulations that code enforcement officers must now follow to issue permits. He said he has talked with attorneys for towns about this and from those discussions an idea evolved to hold annual or semi-annual training sessions for code enforcement officers. He said there are knowledgeable people who could conduct these trainings, including himself, and offered to provide group trainings at a reasonable cost.

Ms. Marino said because of planning for the Trumansburg Fair, the Town of Ulysses now has a permit planning process in place and offered to share this information with other municipalities through the TCCOG website.

Ms. Peterson asked if a municipality could refuse to allow fireworks. Mr. Wilbur said he believes they can say no; Ms. Sumner said it is her understanding that municipalities are authorized to issue permits but are not required to. Mr. Engman said the Town of Ithaca was told it must have regulations in place and if an applicant meets all the regulations a permit must be issued. Ms. Peterson said this question came up when there was discussion of setting off fireworks in the Lake. *Mr. Wilbur said he will look into this and will provide Mr. Barber with an answer.* Ms. Sumner the Town of Dryden had a parallel process used for people who conducted backyard fireworks although she is unsure whether this will be allowed to continue because of the pyrotechnic licensing requirements. She said it worked well because it created an opportunity for people to learn about safety.

Mr. Barber said Mr. Wilbur has provided his contact information for anyone who would like to talk further about training.

### **Report on Cell Towers**

Mr. Engman said since the last meeting Ms. Robertson drafted a resolution for municipalities to consider and it has been circulated. It is now up to municipalities to adopt the resolution that would authorize the signing of an agreement with a payment of up to \$1,500. Those resolutions should be submitted to Ms. Pottorff. Ms. Peterson said Dan Hoffman, attorney for the City of Ithaca, will continue working on this and said company will not be able to start work until after September.

Mr. Driscoll arrived at 3:40 p.m.

Ms. Supron reported the Village of Cayuga Heights has already adopted regulations but will bring this back up for discussion with the Village board. Mr. Engman said although it is redundant in some respects, the purpose of this is to try to get better coordination among municipalities and have consistency in regulations. Ms. Robertson said it is also hoped that by having better coordination municipalities will have more leverage in where cell towers are sited in the County.

*Ms. Chock requested a description of the process and background information.*

### **Update from TCCOG Funding Subcommittee**

Mr. Mareane said a meeting will take place in the next couple of weeks and he will provide a report at the next meeting.

### **Welcome to Cathy Miller, Town of Lansing**

At this time Cathy Miller from the Town of Lansing Board was welcomed and introductions were made of those present.

### **Update from Gas Drilling Task Force**

Ms. Thomas said the Gas Drilling Task Force met last week. At that meeting, Susan Christopherson, a Cornell Professor and an “economic geographer” was in attendance and reported on the \$100,000 grant to study the long-term economic impacts of gas drilling. She said the dSGEIS was written using old studies of economic impacts and hers would be a new model and system using new information. She also said she didn’t believe the previous studies pulled in the negative effects in addition to positive effects and stressed long-term economic impacts. The areas she will be looking at are: long-term

economic development, employment, tax revenue distribution and how that will affect the area, impacts on tourism, agriculture, and quality of life.

Ms. Christopherson also spoke of the economic diversity of the region and how drilling will interact with the many industries and how they may pull or push jobs from one industry to another. She also mentioned the cost to local governments and the impacts on public safety. She will not be studying housing, impacts on air, water, or pipeline issues. Ms. Thomas said the study is targeted to be completed this Fall and she is using the information from Pennsylvania so there is a case study from nearby. She will come back and provide a report to the Task Force once the study is complete. Ms. Thomas said anyone wanting information can contact her and she will place them on the distribution list.

Mr. Driscoll said it was reported yesterday by Christine Sanchirco of Catholic Charities that Cortland and Elmira are experiencing a surge of people living in their cars. He said local people are no longer able to afford to live in Bradford County. Ms. Miller spoke of friends she knows who reside in a Pennsylvania who are saying rents have increased dramatically and people are no longer able to afford them.

Ms. Thomas said there is not a focus group that will be addressing community impacts; however, this may be one area the Planner could look at. She reported on a webinar she participated in by the University of Pennsylvania. She said the University has a great amount of information and is right in the middle of drilling occurring in that area. Ms. Thomas also reported on a training session she attended on a geographic information system called "Fractracker". The tool can be accessed at [fractracker.org](http://fractracker.org)

Ms. Thomas reported Ken Zesserson will be bringing a resolution to the Town of Ulysses to ban drilling altogether and she will keep members informed as this proceeds.

The next meeting of the Gas Drilling Task Force will be September 16<sup>th</sup> at 3 p.m.

Mr. Driscoll reported the Land Use Focus Group will be presenting a report on model noise ordinances at the September 18 Land Use Focus Group meeting.

Ms. Thomas reported on the Planner position asked that members send comments to her, Mr. Marx, and Mr. Barber on what areas the person should focus on to make the best use of the one-year period of time they will be working on this.

### **Report on Emergency Services**

Mr. Dietrich reported no progress made in this area.

### **Announcement on MS4 Regulations**

Mr. Engman said the Stormwater Coalition of Tompkins County is sponsoring a workshop is scheduled on new MS4 regulations and municipalities should consider sending a representative.

### **Next Agenda Items**

The following was suggested for inclusion on the next agenda: update on the Planner position; report on impact of the County's tentative budget on municipalities; and a report from subcommittee TCCOG resources.

Minutes  
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**Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 4:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Michelle Pottorff, TC Legislature Office