

Tompkins County Council of Governments
 Regular Meeting Minutes – APPROVED 4-25-2013
 Thursday, March 28, 2013 3:00 PM
 Scott Heyman Conference Room

Attendance

| Attendee Name | Title | Status | Arrived |
|----------------------|--|---------------|----------------|
| Martha Robertson | Member, Tompkins County | Present | 3:17 PM |
| Richard Driscoll | Co-Chair, Town of Newfield representative | Present | |
| Fredric Dietrich | Member, Town of Danby representative | Present | |
| Herb Engman | Member - Town of Ithaca | Present | |
| Elizabeth Thomas | Member - Alternate, Town of Ulysses representative | Present | |
| Kate Supron | Co-Chair, Village of Cayuga Heights representative | Excused | |
| Laura Shawley | Member - Alternate, Town of Danby representative | Present | 3:34 PM |
| Betty Conger | Member, Village of Groton representative | Present | |
| Debbie Nottke | Member, Village of Trumansburg representative | Present | |
| Mary Ann Sumner | Member, Town of Dryden representative | Present | 3:15 PM |
| J.R. Clairborne | Member - Alternate, City of Ithaca representative | Present | |
| Donald Hartill | Member, Village of Lansing | Present | 3:16 PM |
| Ruth Hopkins | Alternate, Town of Lansing | Present | |
| Dominic Frongillo | Member, Town of Caroline representative | Present | 3:30 PM |
| Ann Rider | Member - Alternate, Town of Enfield | Excused | |
| Glen Morey | Member - Town of Groton | Absent | |
| Charlie Becker | Member, Village of Dryden | Absent | |
| Jeff Smith | Highway Director | Present | |
| Lotte Carpenter | Village of Freeville | Absent | |
| James Dennis | Legislator | Present | |
| Joe Mareane | Tompkins County Administrator | Present | |
| Scott Doyle | Planner, Tompkins County Planning Department | Present | |
| Marcia Lynch | Public Info. Officer, County Administration | Present | |
| Michelle Pottorff | Minute Taker, Legislature Office | Present | |

Guest: Louis DiPietro, Ithaca Times/Finger Lakes Community News

Call to Order

Mr. Driscoll, Co-Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:08 p.m.

Greeting/Sign In/Review Agenda

There were no changes to the agenda.

Update on Communitywide Hazard Mitigation Plan

Mr. Doyle provided an update on the Hazard Mitigation Plan. The Plan is something that ultimately all jurisdictions will have to endorse or adopt to help collectively implement risk reduction measures. He said a draft of the Plan is now available for review and noted it is a mitigation plan and not a response plan; it is required by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) every five years in order to be eligible for funding.

Mr. Doyle explained what has been changed in the Plan since the last update in 1996. At that time there was involvement from only half of the municipalities in the County; this Plan has involvement at some level from every jurisdiction in the County. The 1996 Plan looked at 14 different hazards, both

natural and man; this plan looks at 22. The update also looks forward and brings in the latest data that is available on the climate and also includes potential impacts and hazards from gas drilling. Tornados and earthquakes are also addressed. He said one of the most important parts of the Plan is that the last Plan had over 200 actions included and was very cumbersome; the update has 84 actions. He said even if an action is included within the Plan it does not mean that it is FEMA-funded.

Mr. Hartill arrived at 3:16 p.m.

Mr. Doyle said there were 15 high priority actions that were identified that included developing a Countywide Debris Management Plan, updating the County's flood insurance rate maps, conducting an enhanced inventory of critical facilities in the County, and sharing information with municipalities and other facility owners. The inventory should include facilities for water and wastewater treatment, transit operations, emergency responder operations, and culverts and bridges. He said in looking at these on a case-by-case basis they want to know what some of the impacts might be on municipal buildings.

Ms. Robertson arrived at 3:17 p.m.

Mr. Doyle read from the following mitigation action within the document: "Once critical facilities have been inventoried, perform engineering-based risk assessments that take into account projected climate change, to understand potential impacts to critical facilities and service operations under different climate change scenarios. Assessments should include complete adaptations plans, including recommendations for retrofits or acquisitions based on these assessments." He asked if whether TCCOG could work with municipalities to do this and take the lead in analyzing priorities for these critical facilities and look collectively at the list of facilities to see what would be at the highest risk. He gave examples of critical facilities as being things such as nursing homes, schools, childcare centers, municipal buildings, and libraries. Mr. Doyle said staff would identify each of the facilities within municipalities; once this is done he would like TCCOG's help in an added analysis to look at the risk picture and decide what could be done about it. Support agencies would include municipalities and the County Department of Planning.

Ms. Robertson said TCCOG is a good place to communicate with people but thinks at each municipal level there might need to be a presentation to each board and an engagement of the full board including staff from highway and public works, staff from nursing home, shelters, and the Human Services Coalition. Mr. Doyle said perhaps it would make more sense to have municipalities as the lead but to have TCCOG as an involved partner or support agency. Ms. Sumner said as the Town of Dryden Supervisor, she would welcome a presentation on the Countywide inventory and having some framework about addressing Countywide vulnerabilities. She said everyone on TCCOG should be encouraged to comment on prioritizing the priorities.

Mr. Doyle said the Plan will be submitted to FEMA to see if all standards are met and he will reconnect with that information once they are further in the process. He noted the report is available on the Planning Department's website.

Request for Alerts Regarding Major Construction Projects/County Road Preservation Law

Jeff Smith, County Highway Director, said most members are aware of the Road Preservation Law and the background reasons for it. In early March he mailed a letter to all municipalities and copied highway superintendents. The letter contained two requests: 1) when there is a large project in the planning stages he asked that the County Highway Department be made aware of the project so they can begin a conversation at that point with the developer to see if they will be triggering the Road Preservation Law; and 2) they are looking at having a checkoff box included a building permit to make

sure the County has been contacted in regards to the Road Preservation Law. He said some of the early discussions in regard to this have in a lot of ways made them realize that they need to be part of the process at the planning phase and before there is an actual formal permit.

Mr. Frongillo arrived at 3:30 p.m.

Mr. Smith said if anyone would like another copy of the letter or if anyone would like to talk about this further they should contact him at the Highway Department. An outcome of a County Facilities and Infrastructure Committee meeting was that he would do some outreach with some supervisors and highways superintendents throughout the County and in the bordering towns.

Ms. Shawley arrived at 3:33 p.m.

Mr. Engman asked that Mr. Smith resend the letter.

Mr. Hartill said New York State counties do not have any land use authority and asked how the law applies to the towns on a building permit aspect. Ms. Robertson said the County has jurisdiction over its own roads; the consequence of having a project going over the thresholds is that the developer then has to put up a bond that is adequate of repairing the road and returning it back to the original shape. It is not that the County would say that a project could not be done but could say if a project exceeds the threshold there needs to be security that the resources are there.

Mr. Driscoll said we are beginners in this process and need to understand that and that everyone will be getting on board at different times; therefore, the conversation will continue to refine itself as this moves forward. Mr. Dietrich encouraged everyone to participate in a process.

Reserve Fund

Mr. Engman said at the last meeting there was discussion of whether municipalities would be asked to contribute to the TCCOG Reserve Fund in 2013 since the Fund appeared to have an adequate balance, but that there would be discussion of what needs may be upcoming this year, particularly with regard to gas drilling.

Mr. Driscoll said there has been such a focus on what was going on in Albany that what has been lost is a sense of how to proceed locally. The priority topic has been on environmental issues and he does not believe everything else has not gotten enough attention. Those other things include things such as municipal budgets, severance tax, mortgage issues, land values, housing and an ad valorem tax. He asked Ms. Thomas to get together to talk about rejuvenating the Task Force on Gas Drilling.

Ms. Thomas said there was a lot of momentum and a lot of towns did bans on gas drilling. She said it would be a good time as the budget will soon be passed, to get familiar with the bills that have been introduced in the State Legislature and offer opinions on them. She said things are in a holding place right now as it is possible Albany will pass a moratorium. Ms. Sumner suggested clarifying what issues TCCOG would like TANG (Task Force on Natural Gas) to address. She also expressed great appreciation to TANG for the tremendous amount of work they have done.

Gas Drilling Update

Ms. Sumner reported she traveled to Albany to attend the hearing on the Town of Dryden and Town of Middleton cases. She said she found the judicial process very inspiring. There were very insightful questions asked and although questions were asked of both sides she thinks the questions seemed to support the home rule issue that they are fighting for. She looks forward to the decision that

will be made in the next six to eight weeks.

Ms. Robertson provided an update on bills in the State Legislature and stated the two-year moratorium passed the Assembly and a bill is being proposed in the Senate. She thinks its likely there will be some type of delay. Mr. Frongillo reported there are now over 75 signatures in the letter from the State from Elected Officials for New York.

Gas Drilling/Funding Request

Request for Funding - Presentation Video

Ms. Thomas distributed a flyer on a presentation being given on the Impacts of Gas Drilling on Human and Animal Health on April 16th at 7 pm.. at the Unitarian Church. TCCOG is co-sponsoring this evening along with the First Unitarian Social Justice Committee. She requesting funding in the amount of \$250 to have the event videotaped.

It was MOVED by Ms. Sumner, seconded by Mr. Dietrich, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, to approve funding the amount of \$250 for video taping of the April 16, 2013 presentation at the Unitarian Church on "Impacts of Gas Drilling on Human & Animal Health.

Ms. Thomas also distributed a list of area events on gas drilling that will take place in the next month.

Discussion: Working With School Districts

Ms. Sumner said she doesn't oppose talking about this but doesn't think there is a lot of time to do so. Mr. Dietrich said he thinks there will be a need at some point to meet with school districts if there is going to be a discussion of maximizing youth services. Mr. Dietrich recalled previous discussions and said it was suggested that each municipality engage in a conversation with the President of the Board of Education or the Superintendent to see if there was interest in coming together once or twice a year to discuss specific issues. Ms. Nottke said the Trumansburg School Board President was willing to participate. Ms. Sumner suggested contacting TST BOCES. Mr. Driscoll said he wasn't clear if discussions should be held with school boards or Superintendents. Ms. Sumner said her preference would be to talking to BOCES to see if there are issues the County should be aware of as a whole. Mr. Frongillo suggested going to a meeting of that group and talking about some of the issues that could be potentially collaborated on with TCCOG. It was agreed this item would be deferred at this time.

Report from Health Insurance Consortium

Mr. Barber reported on the audit being performed by the New York State Department of Financial Services and said one of the items the Consortium will be sited for relates to the meetings of the Joint Committee on Plan Structure and Design and its inability to have quorum at meetings. He said Westchester County has had one of these Committees and it has functioned well; however, that is not the case here. Mr. Barber said there needs to be a solution to this and if it results in not having this Committee there will need to be discussion of how to have a meaningful role for labor. He asked that members consider this and offer suggestions.

Mr. Barber said the Consortium is trying to manage costs of which 95% are from claims. He announced Cayuga Medical Center is introducing Clinical Integration. This means physicians are working together collaboratively on their protocol as well as testing agencies, prescriptions being filled

and not filled. He said it is a way to improve the efficiency of the health care system and he sees this as potentially having an impact on claims costs. He said the biggest way to have an impact on claims is for people to manage their own health through lifestyle choices and understanding what a doctor says. The Consortium has to come up with a way to bring labor and management together to understand that if costs are not driven down it will mean jobs.

Mr. Barber said the Consortium is in good shape financially and has reached its minimum reserve requirement. The City of Cortland and the Town of Lansing joined effective January 2, 2013.

Mr. Barber explained the composition of the Joint Committee on Plan Structure and Design and stated each municipality and each bargaining unit has one representative on the Committee. Ms. Sumner asked if labor groups are challenged to attend a meeting at noon. Mr. Barber said other times have been proposed and that also has not worked. He said there are challenges and if there are suggestions for getting around these challenges he would welcome them.

Ms. Robertson asked if there is labor representation on the Board of Directors and if that would be a sufficient meaningful role. Mr. Barber responded that there is labor representation on the Board and the Joint Committee is included in the Municipal Cooperative Agreement. Ms. Sumner said while the quorum requirements are not working she doesn't believe the Committee isn't working and that could be looked at as well as other areas that could be impacting the Committee.

Ms. Thomas suggested getting in contact with the Cornell Program for Healthy Living and look at paralleling some of their work. Mr. Barber said this can be done but it will ultimately require a change in culture. Mr. Frongillo noted that infrastructure plays a role and anything that can be done to provide opportunities and things like bicycle racks would be helpful.

Report from Cable Committee

Mr. Engman reported a subcommittee has been working on the draft franchise agreement. They now have that and document it is 61 pages long; the original agreement sent to the Town of Ithaca by Time Warner recently was only 18 pages long. He said this means there is a big disagreement as to what belongs in a franchise agreement. The document has been distributed to all municipalities. At the next meeting on April 29th there will be a review of comments on the changes to the document, followed by a professional review. There will also be consideration of whether there is a need for a technical review.

Nomination of Vice Chair

It was MOVED by M. Driscoll, seconded by Ms. Sumner, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, to approve the nomination of Ann Rider, Town of Enfield, as Vice Chair of the Tompkins County Council of Governments.

Communications - Sharing of Information

Ms. Thomas recalled this was a discussion item brought up several months ago for the purpose of members sharing information about ways in which information is communicated to residents, particularly where there are big issues being discussed. Members shared different ways of sharing information, including e-mail distribution lists, distribution of information to key contact people within a community or neighborhood, newsletters, information left in popular areas within a community, and the website.

Ms. Sumner encouraged municipalities that have newsletters to add TCCOG members to distribution lists.

Minutes
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Ms. Conger was excused at 4:25 p.m.

Update on Broadband Grant

A brief update was provided on the receipt of the Broadband grant and efforts are underway to fill the funding shortfall of \$.5 million. Mr. Mareane noted the State is contemplating another grant round.

Minutes Approval - February 28, 2013

It was MOVED by Ms. Sumner, seconded by Mr. Frongillo, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, to approve the minutes of February 28, 2013 as submitted. MINUTES APPROVED.

Adjournment

On motion the meeting adjourned at 4:32 p.m.