

Tompkins County Council of Governments
 Regular Meeting Minutes - APPROVED
 Thursday, October 24, 2013 3:00 PM
 Scott Heyman Conference Room

Attendance

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Betty Conger	Member, Village of Groton	Present	
Mary Ann Sumner	Member, Town of Dryden	Present	
Herb Engman	Member - Town of Ithaca	Present	
Bill Goodman	Member - Alternate, Town of Ithaca	Present	
Irene Weiser	Member - Alternate, Town of Caroline	Present	
Don Barber	Member - Delegate, Town of Caroline	Present	
Martha Robertson	Member, Tompkins County	Present	
J.R. Clairborne	Member - Alternate, City of Ithaca	Present	
Elizabeth Thomas	Member - Town of Ulysses	Present	
Richard Driscoll	Co-Chair, Town of Newfield	Present	
Ann Rider	Vice Chair, Town of Enfield	Present	3:55 PM
Joe Mareane	Tompkins County Administrator	Present	
Donald Hartill	Member, Village of Lansing	Present	
Katie Borgella	Planning Department	Present	

Guests: Jennifer Dotson, TCAT; Kevin Crawford, NYMIR (New York Municipal Insurance Reciprocal); Don Patterson, Partner's Insurance Brokerage; Darby Kiley, Town of Ulysses Planner

Call to Order

Mr. Driscoll called the meeting to order at 3:08 p.m.

Greeting/Sign In/Review Agenda

There were no changes made to the agenda.

Minutes Approval

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RESULT:	ACCEPTED [9 TO 0]
MOVER:	Betty Conger, Member, Village of Groton representative
SECONDER:	Donald Hartill, Member, Village of Lansing
AYES:	Conger, Sumner, Engman, Weiser, Robertson, Clairborne, Thomas, Driscoll, Hartill
AWAY:	Ann Rider

New York State Municipal Insurance Reserve

Mr. Crawford said this is NYMIR's 20th Anniversary; they have been reaching out to members to express their appreciation for their cooperation and loyalty to the program. He said NYMIR is a great example, like TCCOG, of intermunicipal cooperation and what local governments can do when they come together to solve problems jointly. He said their members include counties, cities, towns, and villages. They began with 26 municipalities and now have 750 members. They have six brokers that work with them and who they attribute much of their success to. Mr. Crawford said they have been able to reduce their pricing for members in each of the last six years and have done that by carefully managing

resources as they made a commitment from the beginning to return funds that weren't needed to members. He explained when municipalities join the program they become an owner and the statute requires they put up some capital. They are now returning that capital to members who have been in for five years and for those that have been in the program for a long time they are returning the interest on the capital.

He said this speaks to the sound financial position the program is in and stated the NYMIR Board has managed it very well over the last 20 years. They continue to reach out and grow and provide key quality service to members. He spoke of the flooding events that have occurred: Hurricanes Irene, Lee, and Sandy, and said they were each \$10 million events but NYMIR was able to provide funds for claims to members without delay.

Mr. Crawford said they are now working towards providing members cyber coverage and hopes to have something in place by next year. Mr. Patterson said they have represented NYMIR almost from their beginning and they have been appointed to provide this insurance and risk management program to members. He said it is a great program and took very good care of the municipalities in the Owego area during the flooding events a couple of years ago.

At this time Mr. Crawford distributed interest checks and also provided each municipality with a United States Flag in celebration of NYMIR's 20th Anniversary.

Update on Community Dispute Resolution Center (CDRC) Training

Ms. Sumner reported on the recent training CDRC provided municipal officials. She said she found the training on facilitating meetings very timely, helpful and highly recommends the training for both elected and appointed officials. Mr. Engman said he appreciated the portions of the training that were directed towards structuring meetings in a way to avoid heated meetings. There were a lot of strategies and approaches presented and Mr. Barber did a very good job at laying the ground work. He spoke of the exchanging of experiences that took place among elected officials and said he found it very useful. Ms. Thomas suggested a future agenda include time when members can exchange information and ideas. Mr. Driscoll noted this was a pilot project.

Mr. Barber said this is critical to the political process and said the exchange between participants was extremely good and he came away with a tremendous amount of respect for what those present are going through.

Presentation on TCAT (Tompkins Consolidated Area Transit) Financing

Ms. Dotson, Chair of the TCAT Board, distributed copies of the draft budget presentation that was presented during the summer. She said the purpose of her attendance at this meeting is share information on what the future of TCAT looks like. She said it is a community resource that will be faced with difficult decisions and it is important that people understand what currently exists.

She shared information on TCAT ridership and stated there are currently 4.5 million rides in Tompkins County annually and that number is expected to continue grow. TCAT also works with Gadabout to provide ADA Paratransit Service. She said the per capita rides in 2012 was 40.3 and noted this is much higher than Syracuse, Rochester, Albany, or Binghamton areas. Ms. Sumner asked what percentage of the Tompkins County population is taking advantage of the service; Ms. Dotson said this is unknown and would be difficult to put together due to those who pay cash for the ride. The adult base fare is \$1.50.

Ms. Dotson said given the growth it is experiencing they are looking forward. TCAT's information technology is way behind the times; they are moving ahead but are still behind and much of

the work is still done through manual processes. Current projects include: Implementation of an information technology plan, continue to participate in regional transportation study, plan for facility expansion/satellite facility, develop five-year capital plan, project: "What's a Bus Stop?", and bus shelter replacements. Mr. Hartill questioned the requirement that busses need to be stored inside a building. Ms. Dotson said she will look into the specific requirements.

Ms. Dotson said the largest item in the TCAT budget is State Transit Operating Assistance (STOA) which is calculated based on a formula. TCAT is benefiting from this because ridership, which is part of the formula, is increasing. TCAT is a partnership between County, City, and Cornell University that was established ten years ago. Each participant's contribution (approximately 6% of revenues) is important; however, it does not represent the bulk of TCAT funding.

Ms. Dotson said that when TCAT did five-year operating budget projection they found that unless something changes it will use up its entire fund balance. She noted the figures have been updated to include the newly approved Mortgage Recording Tax in the partner share. She stressed the importance of partners working together on a system that works well and would like to see that continue. Although the system is alright at this time there are difficulties on the horizon and would like there to be the greatest community understanding as possible of the situation. Mr. Mareane said effective December 1st the County has secured an additional 1/4% Mortgage Recording Tax and proceeds will be dedicated to mass transportation. This will bring another \$680,000 conservatively into the TCAT Budget. The County will keep approximately 15% of yield for administration of the Tax (\$120,000) and is dedicating that money back to TCAT as the County's contribution.

Ms. Robertson questioned the Cornell University fares; Ms. Dotson said she believes those fares are increasing to \$1 per ride.

Report from Smart Energy Policy Committee

Ms. Kiley reported on priorities of the Smart Energy Policy Group has been working on. The initiative is designed to identify actions local governments in Tompkins County can take in the near term to help accelerate the transition to a more efficient, renewable energy future. She said the group feels it is important to inform TCCOG of this and to get some "buy-in" that may include more municipal representation. She provided steps that were developed by the ad hoc group and proposed that all be completed over the next two years. Ms. Kiley and Ms. Borgella provided an overview of each of the following steps:

- Uniform Solar Permitting. In August the Towns of Ithaca, Ulysses, Danby, and Caroline submitted an application under the Cleaner Greener Communities Phase II Implementation Grants funding to do this project. The NYSERDA (New York State Energy Research Development Authority) is expected to announce the grant awardees in December 2013. If this project is not selected the group plans to apply to other granting agencies, such as the Park Foundation, the New York State Department of State, or the United State Department of Energy. They will keep TCCOG updated on the status of this application.

Ms. Rider was excused at this time.

- Home Energy Rating and Disclosure;
- Energy Conservation Code Education Program; and
- Building Labeling for Multi-Family Rental Properties

Ms. Kiley reported on the Southern Tier Regional Solar Permitting Workshop that will be held in December and encouraged members and code enforcement officers to attend. They will continue to keep

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TCCOG informed on this initiative.

Report from Cable Committee

Mr. Engman reported the negotiating committee is continuing to work on the draft franchise agreement.

Next Meeting Agenda Items

Ms. Sumner reported on the Deer Management summit held at Cornell University and said attendees were asked to draft a resolution for municipalities to take back to municipal bodies promoting changes in regulations. It was suggested that the speaker at the Summit be invited to attend a TCCOG meeting and the subject of assessing the impact of the deer population be included on an agenda. Mr. Engman said he would like to make sure that TCCOG listens to both sides of the issue.

Adjournment

On motion the meeting adjourned at 4:20 p.m.