

**Tompkins County Council of Governments**  
 Regular Meeting Minutes - APPROVED  
**Thursday, May 22, 2014 3:00 PM**  
 Scott Heyman Conference Room

**Attendance**

<b>Attendee Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Arrived</b>
Fredric Dietrich	Town of Danby	Present	
Kate Supron	Co-Chair, Village of Cayuga Heights	Present	
Laura Shawley	Town of Danby	Present	
Betty Conger	Village of Groton	Present	
Bill Goodman	Town of Ithaca	Present	
J.R. Clairborne	Vice Chair, City of Ithaca	Present	
Ann Rider	Co-Chair, Town of Enfield	Present	
Marty Petrovic	Village of Trumansburg	Present	
Jim Zimmer	Village of Dryden	Present	
Kelly Smith	Town of Groton	Present	
James Dennis	Tompkins County	Present	
Don Barber	Town of Caroline	Present	
Ruth Hopkins	Town of Lansing	Present	
Joe Mareane	Tompkins County Administrator	Present	
Marcia Lynch	Public Info. Officer, County Administration	Present	
Michelle Pottorff	Minute Taker, Legislature Office	Present	
Mary Ann Sumner	Member, Town of Dryden	Present	3:00 PM

Municipalities Not Present: Town of Newfield, Town of Ulysses, Village of Lansing, Village of Freeville  
 Guests: Roxanne Marino, Solar Tompkins; Keri Blakinger, Ithaca Times

**Call to Order**

Ms. Rider called the meeting to order at 3:02 p.m.

**Changes to the Agenda**

A report from the Sustainability Committee was withdrawn from the agenda. A presentation from Solar Tompkins was added to the agenda.

**Minutes Approval**

**4/24/2014 Minutes**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>ACCEPTED [9 TO 0]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Betty Conger, Village of Groton
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Kate Supron, Co-Chair, Village of Cayuga Heights
<b>AYES:</b>	Dietrich, Supron, Conger, Goodman, Clairborne, Zimmer, Smith, Barber, Hopkins
<b>ABSTAIN:</b>	Ann Rider, Marty Petrovic, James Dennis

**Update on Road Preservation Meeting**

Mr. Barber reported on a meeting that was held and most municipalities were represented to discuss road preservation laws which some municipalities have adopted and some have not. He said the

Town of Danby is the furthest along in the process and has issued permits and had developers go through a process. He said there are many projects in which developers have to travel through other municipalities, particularly the Town and City of Ithaca. The City and Town have several permits that they work through and expressed concern over the additional work that would be required. Mr. Barber said there was also discussion about a possible threshold. The meeting concluded with a request being made to the City and Town to think about how this may work with their permitting process; once information is received the group will likely meet again.

### **Report from Solar Tompkins**

Ms. Marino said Solar Tompkins is a countywide community solar program working to double the total amount of solar PV (photovoltaic) installed at Tompkins County to date, and to leave the market with a permanently increased rate of solar power adoption. The program will reduce the barriers to switching to solar by providing attractive lower-than-market pricing, a simple process with vetted technology and installation partners, and educational outreach throughout the County. The program will launch on May 27, 2014 and educational events and enrollment will run through July 31, 2014.

The goals of the program are: 1) rapid acceleration of the sustainable deployment of solar PV in Tompkins County; and 2) Strong and lasting positive effects on local community and companies currently working in the renewable energy sector.

#### Program Structure:

- Solar Tompkins is an incorporated non-profit organization governed by a Board of Directors, consisting of one representative from each town in Tompkins County, with liaisons from our partner organizations;
- Board members are the interface with Countywide community volunteers on individual town committees. The volunteers organize local community outreach;
- The program is supported by a grant from the Park Foundation. This funding supports the salary of a Project Director, as well as development of printed and electronic materials for education and outreach to implement the program.
- Tompkins County serves as the fiscal sponsor for the grant, as well as a partner providing important support to the program.

#### What is the Program?

- Solar Tompkins is a Countywide solar program working to significantly the total amount of solar PV installed at Tompkins County, and to leave the market with a permanently increased annual rate of solar power adoption
- The Solar Tompkins program draws inspiration from successful “Solarize” projects across the country, and is focused mostly on the residential sector;
- The aim of the program is the deployment of 300 solar PV systems (the equivalent to 1.5-2 MAW in Tompkins County, which would roughly double the existing residential solar PV capacity installed to-date.
- The program has 3 Installer Partners - 2 of these spots are designated for local installers (defined as having a physical place of business within 35 miles of downtown Ithaca in 2013) and the other spot is for any installer. Installers and installation options are selected by a RFP process, using clear criteria chosen to reflect a range of community values.
- Purchasing, low-interest loans, and no upfront cost leasing options for solar PV systems will all be available;
- The program has a set of minimum best practice installation standards for all solar PV systems sold through it and these standards are based on respected third party industry sources.

- The increased adoption of solar will be promoted in this program through the established set of “solarize techniques” which reduce the barriers of technical complexity, inertia, and cost for consumers to install solar PV systems:
  - Lower than market pricing that decreases for everyone as more people sign up (because of increased volumes and the reduction of the soft costs of customer acquisition for installers;
  - Simplified process of going solar, with vetted technology and installation partners and a focused, limited timeline;
  - Grassroots community outreach and education about the benefits and feasibility of adopting solar power and the program offerings.

Outreach and education campaign will include solar tours in every town from May through June 2014 and at least 20 community meetings will be held in June and July (two per town).

Ms. Marino explained how a person can sign Up and how it will work and stated as more people sign-up and decide to go solar through the Solar Tompkins program the price for the system will decrease.

The program will launch on May 27<sup>th</sup> at 10 a.m. at the Sustainability Center.

- Educational events and enrollment in the program will run through July 31, 2014;
- Installation contract signing deadline - October 1, 2014;
- Installations will proceed as rapidly as possible after a contract is signed, starting in August 2014 and going through 2015. Additional information can be found on the Solar Tompkins website: [www.solartompkins.org](http://www.solartompkins.org) <<http://www.solartompkins.org>>.

### **Follow-up on Discussions with State Legislators on the Shared Services mandate**

Mr. Mareane provided an update on discussions that have taken place with regard to the shared services mandate by the State. He said the State law allows a look-back provision to see what has been done by local governments in the past to achieve the goals that are a part of the shared services mandate. However, the look-back period is undefined and there have been a mix of responses on it. He said work is being done on developing a thorough inventory of consolidations, mergers, shared services, efficiencies, and reforms that have saved money that can be put into a document that represents all of the municipalities in the County and presented to the State Budget Director in June as a part of Tompkins County's report. He said this will require help from all of the municipalities in providing information. There was discussion by the group that met about creating workgroups based on functional areas to discuss what further could be done. There was also discussion of exploring the possibility of a grant and learned State grant funding isn't usually available for these type of "reconnaissance" activities but rather planning activities; therefore, he believes local resources will need to be used for this.

Mr. Mareane said TCCOG will need to discuss what to do with functional areas if that is what it chooses to do. He said they are also reaching out to Cornell programs to see if there are resources from CARDI or CIPA such as intern assistance that can be provided.

### **Report from the Cable Committee**

Mr. Dietrich said there is no new information on the Time Warner/Comcast merger.

### **Next Meeting Agenda Items**

The following topics were suggested for inclusion on the next agenda:

Minutes  
Tompkins County Council of Governments  
Thursday, May 22, 2014

- a. Discussion of TCAT and helping municipalities close the funding gap; Ms. Sumner said it would important to convey to TCAT its value to towns.
- b. Update on suggestions made by the Youth Services Board

**Adjournment**

On motion the meeting adjourned at 4:05 p.m.